



# Voices of the Heart

NEWSLETTER OF THE AVALON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP  
ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
JUNE 2005

## June Worship Services

**June 5**  
Worship Service &  
ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING

**June 12**  
Prayer  
Wanda Barrett

**June 19**  
The World Needs  
Educated Women  
with Elizabeth  
Rochester

**June 26**  
Working at Home  
and Working  
Abroad  
with Dave  
d'Entermont

**ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING**  
Sunday, June 5  
11:00 am  
**DON'T MISS IT!!!**

**AVALON  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
FELLOWSHIP**

**Celebrating 11 years!**

Services every Sunday  
from 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.  
Anna Templeton Center,  
278 Duckworth St.  
St. John's, NL

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

## ONE WARM LINE

*Highlights of sermon delivered at the CUC ACM in Hamilton, Ontario, May 2005 by Rev. Allison Barrett - Hamilton, ON*

People, we have hit the big time! The day before the Sunday morning worship of our national conference, Tom Harpur, our country's most prolific and well-known writer on religion, writes an article in the Toronto Star that might as well be an advertisement for our faith. He says, among many other things, that there are "hundreds of thousands of Canadians currently looking for a spiritual home..." and that Unitarians, "Canada's most unusual religion...face a unique opportunity to fill the growing spiritual vacuum."

Where I come from up the Ottawa valley, kids spend hours in the summer trying to catch minnows with a little net that you pull up and small pieces of bread that you use for bait. As anyone who's ever tried knows, this is a two person job; one to chase the minnows into the net and the other one to pull it up at just the right time. Well folks, Tom Harpur just sent a giant school of minnows swimming in our direction. The question is, what will happen when they get there?

I ask this because in some ways, this is the heart of why we are gathered here, getting to know one another and the world we serve as religious people. We are gathered this weekend - to learn and grow, to inspire and inform, so that when we go back

*Cont'd on page 3...*

## ABOUT THE AUUF



**Welcome one and all to the  
Avalon Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship (AUUF)**

We are a lay-led fellowship,  
where worship services are  
facilitated by members.

Through our liberal faith, we  
affirm and promote the  
following seven principles:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
  - Justice, equality and compassion in human relations;
  - Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth;
  - A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
  - The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process;
  - The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all; and
  - Respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are all a part.
- We emphasize the importance of religious community as we believe that the individual's journey is facilitated by the presence of others who both support and challenge us.
- We're glad you're here!

**CONGRATULATIONS TO  
AUUF MEMBERS VYDA &  
PENNY!!!!!!**

*Announced at the Annual  
Congregational Meeting of the  
Canadian Unitarian Council,  
May 2005, in Hamilton, Ontario:*

**VYDA NG-CORNISH, on  
becoming Vice-President,  
CUC Board of Directors**

**REV. PENNY ALLDERDICE,  
on attaining of  
Provisional Supervisor  
status in the ministry of  
Community Chaplaincy in  
both Newfoundland and  
Ontario**

*We give thanks for you who  
venture into unknown waters,  
accepting new challenges, for  
this is how we grow ourselves  
and our communities.*

*We are very proud of you  
both.*

## CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL NEWS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S  
ANNUAL REPORT

After five years of rapid change, CUC is ready for a period of stability and sustainability. I was appointed executive director in May 2000, ... just before the vote in Calgary that determined the direction of expanding CUC's services and staff. Creating this "new CUC" has meant enormous change for all involved. Like most big decisions, while some of the repercussions were no surprise, living the change has been more challenging than any of us would have thought. And now we're ready to "live the change" in a way that can be sustained over the long term.

In the administrative area, we have been doing about twice as much volume with almost exactly the same staffing complement—two full-time staff—as we had five years ago. We've found cost-savings by using electronic communication; planning well in advance; using inexpensive phone lines and teleconference services.

We have moved offices twice during this time—a change required by others,

not something we sought out. That said we are very happy in our new Parkdale offices and I predict we will stay there for a very long time. Thanks are due to Toronto First congregation who generously let us have meeting room and storage space during the past two years, when we were in "tight quarters".

As the staff team has moved from two to five, an increasing percentage of my time is spent on staff management, human resources and team development. Processes appropriate for a growing organization have come on stream over the past four years and we are ready to standardize the forms, dates and procedures. Our yearly

HR cycle includes staff writing specific, measurable goals with quarterly checkpoints; a yearly job satisfaction interview to look at whether there are areas of stress and challenge; but also to celebrate successes and share "proud moments"; and a yearly performance review which includes feedback from those we serve. (Just so you know, I also participate in these processes with the board as my manager. This year, we included a staff focus group as part of my evaluation as well.). We have regular staff meetings by teleconference and a once a year "AHOD" (All Hands On Deck!) meeting face-to-face in Toronto. Much of what has been accomplished this year is written elsewhere. So let me simply thank all those who have been part of Team CUC over the past

year, as well as those who have brought us to what we now call "Today's CUC". I am privileged to be in a position to see a breadth and depth of Unitarian\*Universalist activity in Canada. So many contribute so much, from their very depths. Along the way they get challenged, excited, stretched, frustrated, satisfied, inspired, proud—and that is how we live this religion.

Carry the flame!  
Mary Bennett,  
Executive Director, CUC  
mary@cuc.ca  
1-888-568-5723

## CLEAR NIGHT

Praise stars!

Look up at the night sky.

As clear as expansive

Gold streaks and patterns.

And a lone moon

emoting a stare

of silver glowing motherhood.

A garden of holy-city lights

my mind images

wandering the paths

of Milky ways

and Zodiac clusters clinging

to their assigned patches.

Lost in the beyond imaginable  
distances

I look for God

any God

that I can name by name

and in innocence may claim

to know HIM.

Only my heart grasps HER

magnificence

by feeling bliss

of being part of this

in utter insignificance.

- Arie Vander Reyden

## ONE WARM LINE, CONT'D

to our own congregations, we have a message for our city or neighbourhood that is so compelling that people will not be able to resist taking up our song.

I want to tell you a story that illustrates what I believe has stood between our religion's worthy goals and the kind of vitality of which Tom Harpur speaks.

Once upon a time a young Rabbi was called to a new congregation. During the Friday service, half the congregation stood for prayers and half remained seated; with both sides shouting that theirs was the true tradition. Nothing the young Rabbi did could break the impasse, so finally, in desperation, he sought out the 90 year old Rabbi who had been a founding member of the synagogue.

"So tell me," he pleaded, "Is it the tradition for the congregation to stand during the prayers?" "No," answered the old Rabbi. "Ah, so then it is the tradition to sit during the prayers?" "No," answered the old Rabbi. "Well," the young man responded, "what we have now is complete chaos! Half the people stand and shout, the other half sit and yell." "Ah, Yes" said the old Rabbi "That is our tradition!"

Too long, too long, people - as Unitarians has this been our tradition... and too long

as religious people, has this been our tradition, and too long - My God, how long, since the beginning of time - has this been our human tradition? Absolutely no later than now must we seek a new way... we owe it to the world to start a new tradition...because O Siem, we are one family, we sing with one voice, we gather under one sky and look up at the same stars.

Do you remember the first time you saw that incredible picture of the world taken from the moon or space? Everyone is in the picture! The photographer didn't even have to say "OK, guys, squeeze in." We're all in it. Now is the time when we must meet each other beyond the field of right and wrong. The fate of our world and our planet depends on it. This kind of radical vision, radical love was best expressed for me in the words of Bill LaFerla of this congregation, words I still find so moving - who endured with good nature, as he said, years of being our

"token gay" male.... When we were walking our church through the steps of becoming a Welcoming Congregation Bill said "We have to make room for the people who are still uncomfortable with me." That is the place we need to meet.

Our meeting this weekend is one way of meeting there. As Canadian UUs, gathered here at our National Conference, welcoming friends from far away... we have come from across the country to form "One Warm Line" like the Stan Rogers song says, "through a land so wide and savage."

And our religion chooses to bend that warm line into a circle that expands ever outward, including all who would share in a vision of One World... because you see, it doesn't interest me whether you are a fellowship of 50 or a church of 500...it doesn't interest me whether you are old or young... and it sort of doesn't interest me whether you are a Unitarian

or a Universalist, a Christian, a Pagan or a Humanist, a Muslim, a Buddhist or Jew, and it doesn't interest me whether you call it God or Goddess, Spirit of Life, Human Conscience, Mother Earth or the Universe... I just want to know how you are going to stand in the service of something greater than yourself, and make your life matter... I just want to know (like Mary Oliver) "what it is you plan to do with your one wild and precious life."

A. Powell Davies, the minister of All Souls church, in Washington DC said in a sermon once: "Do you belong to a religion that says that humankind is not divided, except by ignorance and prejudice and hate; the religion that sees humankind as naturally one and waiting to be spiritually united;

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### 2005 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

of the Avalon Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

*Sunday, June 5, following our Worship Service*

**PLEASE JOIN US!!!!!!!**

## ONE WARM LINE, CONT'D

the religion that proclaims an end to all exclusions – and declares a brotherhood and sisterhood unbounded! The religion that knows we shall never find the fullness of the wonder and the glory of life until we are ready to share it, that we shall never have hearts big enough for the love of God until we have made them big enough for the worldwide love of one another?”

As you have listened to me, have you thought perchance that this is your religion? If so, do not congratulate yourself. Stop long enough to recollect the miseries of the world in which you live; the fearful cruelties, the enmities, the hate, the bitter prejudices, the need of such a world for such a faith. And if you can still say that this of which I have spoken is your faith, then ask yourself this question: What are you doing with it?

I know you are only one, but if you ever doubt the impact that one independent-minded, stubborn, eccentric human being can have in this world, think of Tommy Douglas, (who was responsible for Universalist health care – thank you Tommy!) think of Terry Fox, or the lone student in Tiananmen Square facing down the tank; think of Jesus of Nazareth, or Nellie McClung, (who made me a person, thank you Nellie!) Do

the one thing you can do, or even as Eleanor Roosevelt said, sometimes you must do the thing you think you cannot do.

I don't know what your one thing is; but that's your job, that's your one thing - to figure it out. And this Unitarian community exists to companion you while you find out what it is. And even if you've already done a lot, I'm here to remind you as a wise one once said "If you ask me when your task on earth is finished, the answer is – if you're alive, it isn't."

I don't know what your one thing is. Maybe it's singing your heart out at a coffee house, or connecting with your Unitarian brothers and sisters from Budapest, Boston, or Cuba, or reaching out to your interfaith neighbours across the street to say "Isn't there more among us than between us?" Isn't it one God, one world, one light shining through all our windows, one source of Love?

I don't know exactly what justice and equity look like where you live, but you do. I just know that the Cree of Northern Quebec and the Innu of Labrador, the Iranian Doctor driving cab in Toronto to feed his family...the aboriginal community in Saskatoon,

and the women of Vancouver's East Side, are in need of it, and if that's where you live, making justice there could be your one thing.

Maybe it's a very small thing, a tiny random act of kindness or senseless act of beauty that will make all the difference in someone's life – and you may never even know how or why, because we're all just passing it around anyway, and it doesn't matter, except that you do it. There IS more love somewhere; just keep on till you find it.

Emily Dickinson who lived her whole life circumscribed by the boundaries of home, garden and church, wrote: "If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain; if I can ease one life the aching, or cool one pain, or help one fainting robin into his nest again, I shall not live in vain."

I don't know what it is you need to do; I only know that we need each other to get through this life, because it's a wild ride; life is a wild ride. It takes you from the sublime to the ridiculous, from the sacred to the mundane, often in dizzying order, and you know exactly what I mean, those of you who stood in silence a few minutes ago, and those who didn't. We live and reason between a world of order and chaos, a world that's messy and frayed and torn around the edges, and you never know what is around the corner. You lose your job, you lose your way, you lose your mind... you find a friend, you

find hope, you find a lump...you try your hardest and fail, and are dealt the unthinkable diagnosis, the irreparable tear, the seemingly endless defeat.

But somehow, *somehow*, some radical Love finds you in your family of friends, in your spiritual home, in the world community and calls to you, and because you cannot do everything, you cannot refuse to do the thing you can do. When we unwind the warm line we have formed this weekend, and you go back to your people, and look for that Blue Heron heading out over open water, I hope you will take with you a radical hope, a radical vision, a radical love for this faith of ours and for this world. I hope that you promise to do the one thing that you and your people can do.

UU Minister Ralph Waldo Emerson said... "To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded." When all the people of the world join in this song – that's when we'll be free. So may it be, and Amen.



## CU\*UL SCHOOL 2005 – FOR EMERGING U\*U LEADERS

**Mount Royal College  
Calgary, Alberta  
Thursday, July 28 – Sunday,  
July 31**

### WHAT IS CU\*UL SCHOOL?

With graduates from Newfoundland to British Columbia, residential leadership training has helped Unitarian Universalists in Canada build our congregations, our denomination and our spiritual selves. The year 2005 sees the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot of a new Residential Leadership program known as CU\*UL School, or the Canadian Unitarian Universalist leadership School.

### IS IT FOR ME?

Leadership development is for you if:

- Your congregation has designated you for leadership, now or in the future;
- You want to become a better leader;
- You are open to challenges and changes in outlook;
- You are committed to growing as a Canadian Unitarian Universalist;
- And you have the support of your congregation's Board of
- Trustees to attend the program.

As a participant, you'll explore Canadian U\*Uism on spiritual, intellectual,

personal, and practical levels.

You'll acquire skills to strengthen and build your congregational community, as well as to help you in your professional and personal life.

### JOIN US TO ...

- Learn U\*U history, traditions and values in a Canadian context;
- Understand organizational structures of Canadian contextual theology and our identity;
- Learn about governance and congregational polity in a U\*U context;
- Discover leadership styles and behaviours;
- Experience small group ministry and deepen your spiritual awareness.

### WHAT IS IT LIKE?

Mount Royal College, Lincoln Park campus, provides a calm and aesthetically appealing setting. Located on the edge of Calgary, Alberta, the campus is 20 km from the Calgary airport. Check out [www.mtroyal.ab.ca](http://www.mtroyal.ab.ca) for campus details.

Learning occurs in both plenary sessions and small groups. Each day begins and ends with simple worship services. And then there is the optional socializing into

the night.

Accommodations are dormitory rooms, single occupancy; every 2 rooms share a bath. Meals are served in the main meeting room.

The program will commence at noon on Thursday, July 28 and will conclude at 2 pm on Sunday, July 31.

### HOW DO I APPLY?

Talk to your board President about your desire to attend, and obtain the application form from the CUC website.

### HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

The cost for CU\*UL School is borne by both your congregation and you. Sharing the cost in this way ensures your congregation's acknowledgement of your leadership potential, and your commitment to the program. You are encouraged to speak to your congregation's Board of Trustees to let them know of your interest.

The registration for CU\*UL School will ensure the program is self-supporting and covers the cost of materials and equipment, participant resources, accommodations and food, and partial expenses of CU\*UL leaders.

Total 2005 Cost: \$549 for a single participant from a congregation; \$499 for additional participants from the same congregation. Contact [cuul@cuc.ca](mailto:cuul@cuc.ca) for information about scholarships, if required.

Here is a suggested breakdown of cost sharing:

Participant: \$225  
Congregation: \$375 for one enrolment, \$274 for 2<sup>nd</sup> or more.

### WARNING!

Most participants really love their time at leadership school. This could happen to you!!! Space is limited, so register early. Don't be disappointed – registration deadline is June 20, 2005.

Mail cheques and application to:  
Jan Schwartz, Co-coordinator  
98 Mountain Drive,  
Calgary, AB T2Z 1S1  
Make cheques payable to The Unitarian Church of Calgary (re CU\*UL School 2005)

## **WELCOME NATHALIE, NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

THANK YOU to all who contributed content and feedback during my stint as editor - it was a most enjoyable and welcome creative learning experience for me! -Sherril

As of July, your new newsletter editor will be Nathalie Brunet. Please support our fellowship and Nathalie by sending in your comments, articles, poems, announcements and other material to [nbrunet@nl.rogers.com](mailto:nbrunet@nl.rogers.com).

## **WORSHIP SERVICES**

### **WANTED!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

#### **NEW WORSHIP SERVICE COORDINATOR(S) WANTED FOR SCHEDULING SUNDAY SERVICES**

**GREAT HOURS, FUN JOB, INTERESTING & REWARDING POSITION!**

**Contact Terry for job description or more information.  
[tbp@nfld.com](mailto:tbp@nfld.com) 895-8333**

## **MORE IDEAS FOR CONGREGATIONAL GROWTH...**

Submissions to the newsletter are welcomed and encouraged. Please send your contributions of events and items of interest, announcements, reminders, meeting dates, poetry, reviews, and so on, before the 23rd of each month, to Sherril Gilbert at:

**[sherril\\_g@hotmail.com](mailto:sherril_g@hotmail.com)**  
T: 709-895-8333  
F: 709-895-8333



### **AVALON UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP**

**President:**  
Nathalie Brunet  
[nbrunet@nl.rogers.com](mailto:nbrunet@nl.rogers.com)

**Music Director:**  
Terry Rielly  
[tbp@nfld.com](mailto:tbp@nfld.com)

**Affiliated Community Minister:**  
Rev. Penny Allderice  
[pallderd@mun.ca](mailto:pallderd@mun.ca)

**Lay Chaplains:**  
Louis Chiaramonte  
[louischi@mun.ca](mailto:louischi@mun.ca)  
Sherril Gilbert  
[sherril\\_g@hotmail.com](mailto:sherril_g@hotmail.com)  
Terry Rielly  
[tbp@nfld.com](mailto:tbp@nfld.com)

- Hold special events for newcomers, such as an informal orientation dinner, dessert, or a luncheon following the Sunday service.
- Appoint someone to be responsible for following up on all visitors, including children, youth and young adults. When a member calls on a newcomer within 72 hours after the visit, the chances for a return visit increase by more than 50%.
- Hold regular "Invite-a-Friend" Sundays when active members are encouraged to bring friends who are potential U\*Us.
- Make regular announcements regarding how one becomes a member.
- Have regular adult education programs to which newcomers can be invited. One-time events or a discussion series should be planned throughout the year, including summer months.
- Hold Sunday services all year long.
- Put all visitors on your mailing list without requiring them to request it.
- Give an attractive "welcome bag" to all first time visitors. In might include a pen with your congregation's name on it, RE offerings, a newsletter, your mission statement, a description of ways to get involved, a card listing the UU Purposes and Principles, and introductory pamphlet on UU and ways to contact the leadership.
- Take time in the service to joyfully welcome all visitors. Invite them to raise their hands and have the ushers give each of them a "welcome bag."
- Have specific breakfasts or luncheon pot lucks so newcomers can meet members and leaders of the congregation.
- Make sure that your membership committee has a budget that enables it to do the best possible job.

*-adapted from [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)*

## **CLOSING WORDS...**

There is an immense, painful longing for a broader, more flexible, fuller, more coherent, more comprehensive account of what we human beings are, who we are and what this life is for.

*Saul Bellow*