

As I write, rain is pouring hard on an already flooded landscape, and is forecast to continue for several days ..... I am very glad that our home is on a slope down to the sea, but my mood is dampened(!), to say the least, by this sodden state of things! Meanwhile, in Ontario it's bright and frosty ..... and just recently I was telling you all that we'd had a glorious summer and early Fall; what a varied climate we live in!

Only one person (besides me) has "*checked in*" this month; I know there have been events both glad and sad in your lives – so just remember, please, that you can share these happenings, and your responses to them, "**between-times**" by emailing me (to distribute to the list) or emailing specific others who're part of this IMaUU network.

from **Janet Vickers** ([janetvickers@shaw.ca](mailto:janetvickers@shaw.ca))

*Loved Lloyd's information about Ken Wilbur - and his letter to MacLean's.*

*I am becoming a member of the First Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo and will be welcomed in a ceremony on November 14th. Have appreciated the members - May and Bruce, and Anne and Hugh, who have picked me up at the harbour so that I can walk on the ferry, which is much cheaper than bringing a car. Have also enjoyed getting to know the choir director - Leah Hokanson, who also lives on Gabriola. We are so lucky to have her here - she brings out the best in us so gently. I go on the Sundays when there are choir practices and have also joined the choir. This is great for me because I can get back into singing again - something I haven't done in a community sense for many years.*

*On Gabriola I have a small part in the pantomime produced by the Gabriola Players. The panto is Scrooge and I have the part of Elizabeth (the nephews wife). The panto departs from the original story in some ways, of course, and I think its going to be a lot of fun.*

*I attach a fall photo, of a Japanese maple in our garden which is spectacularly red just now.*

*Regards, Janet*



Janet also sends this note, which I think may be of interest beyond this province:

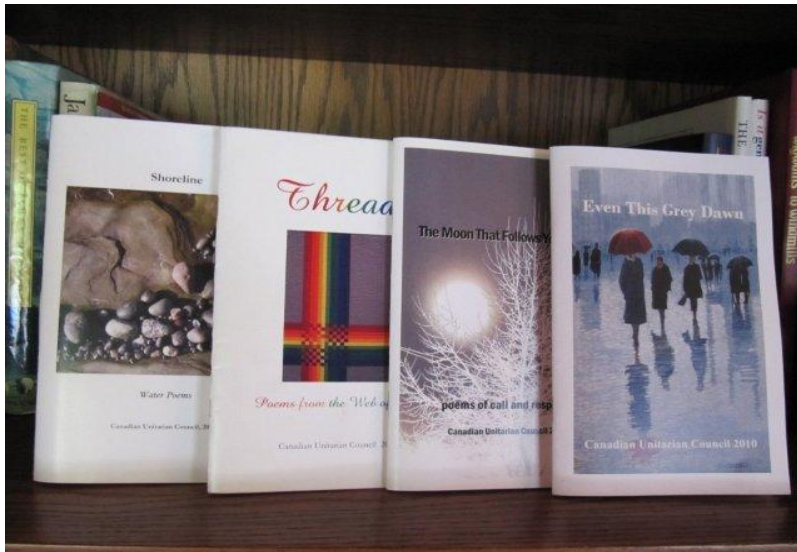
**Seasons' Light: Poetry and Images by Nova Scotians**

*Six members of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax, NS are featured in a new anthology of poems and art images by 20 Nova Scotians. The book includes poetry by nine writers and one image each from 10 artists. Each section of six to eight poems will have an introductory greytone image of a painting, print, photograph or drawing. The contributors are all residents of Nova Scotia and are active in the arts and writing culture.*

*UUCH members Laszlo Szantor, Joanne Light, Michael Seary, Barbara Harsanyi, and Norm Sabowitz have poetry selections, Ann Hart has a watercolor image in the book.*

*The 96 page softcover book is being published in limited edition by A. Hart Press. It will be out in late November and will be available in bookstores and online at <http://www.ahartstudio.com/>. Work from the book is posted at <http://seasonslightpoetry.blogspot.com/>.*

And another note which is of cross-Canada interest:



**CUC Seeks Poetry for its Fifth Annual Chapbook**

*The Editorial board of the CUC Poetry Chapbook 2011 seeks submissions of poetry in English or French (maximum of five poems per submission, each poem 45 lines or including title and blank lines), from Canadian Unitarian Universalists or UU residents of Canada, who are CUC congregational members, CUC members-at-large*

*or self-identified Unitarians. The theme for this fifth annual chapbook is **Trust the Dawning Future/S'Ouvrir au Monde a Venir**, and will be launched at the 2011 ACM in Toronto (celebrating the CUC's 50th Anniversary). The editors also seek submissions of artwork for the cover.*

*Please submit unpublished material to: CUC Chapbook Editors at [keithwilkinson@telus.net](mailto:keithwilkinson@telus.net) or mail to Keith Wilkinson, #12-1820 Bayswater Street, Vancouver, BC V6k 4A4. If submitting by land mail include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please also include a 50 word bio.*

*Deadline for Submission is November 30, 2010 Acceptance or regret notification will be sent by March 21, 2011.*

And although it didn't come in the form of a check-in, I'll include the following note which came in early October from another of our members – for its wonderfully co-incidental information about UU friends, which I think may reinforce our sense of connectedness, especially as Janet's on the West Coast and Alison on the East!

from **Alison Kilpatrick** ([akilpatrick@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:akilpatrick@ns.sympatico.ca))

*We are hosting our first batch of guests, beginning this Monday. May and Bruce Partridge are long-time UUs -- they met in Vancouver, migrated to Victoria, and are now with the Fellowship in Nanaimo. We're going to traipse our way around the concert, ceilidh and dance venues that make up the Celtic Colours festival on Cape Breton during Thanksgiving week.*

(Hope you all had a great time, Alison – it's not too late to tell us about it, and I'll send a copy of this newsletter to May and Bruce, who may also want to contribute a note.)

Here's a photo from **Danielle Albert** ([albert.danielle@gmail.com](mailto:albert.danielle@gmail.com)) which seems pretty self-explanatory – she has two beautiful children, Callum and Charlotte:



And on the right is Bunty Albert (, proud grandmother of these two little ones, and another IMAUU member.



Last month I included a photo from **Lloyd Ryan** ([execontrol@gmail.com](mailto:execontrol@gmail.com)) showing progress on his building project. It was the first of several photos, and here's the last one in the series (though probably not the last ever!) taken from the other side:



A thoughtful question from **Maureen Killoran** ([mmk@spiritquest.ws](mailto:mmk@spiritquest.ws)):

*I find myself pondering issues of Trust these days . . . what does it mean, "to trust?" How would you fill the blank in, "In \_\_\_\_\_ I trust?" Why?*

**Stacey Anne Vickery** ([greenwillowwyth@yahoo.com](mailto:greenwillowwyth@yahoo.com)) wrote on October 31<sup>st</sup>:



The Halloween party is OVER! Lots of fun, great costumes and plenty of good eats... I hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did. HapPy HAIloWEeN!!! The Bee, Fairy and Cowboy are home and headed for bed - Fun was had, treats are plenty, and life will slow down a bit .....

And now, because Halloween is still in just the very recent past, here is part of a service given on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1998:

### Welcome

..... to all of you -- lovers of ghosts and goblins, deniers of the supernatural and spooky, happy with Hallowe'en, glad that it's over, grieving your dead, remembering those who are gone, whoever you are, wherever you are on your journey, welcome, here, today.

### Opening Words

*We are part of the great circle of humanity,  
gathered around the fire, the hearth, the altar.  
We gather anew this day  
to celebrate our common heritage.  
May we recall, in gratitude, all that has given us birth.*

### Hymn 39: Bring, O Morn, Thy Music

### Chalice Lighting

Let this flame be to us a symbol of the wholeness we seek,  
ITS BRIGHTNESS DISPELLING GLOOM, LIGHTING A PATH TO FAITH  
AND HOPE,  
Its glow reminding us of the sacred bonds which link us to all people,  
ITS RADIANCE CALLING US TO FULFIL OUR DESTINY, TO CAST THE  
LIGHT OF FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE UPON ALL THE WORLD.

### Children's Time

Did you go out trick-or-treating last night? Was it fun? Was it a little bit scary, too? Was it dark outside? Did you go to some houses that were dark, too? What about most of the houses -- did they have lights on? Sometimes they had porch lights, and sometimes pumpkin lights, didn't they, and sometimes candles in the window.

It's kind of nice to see a light on the porch or in a window, isn't it -- it makes the darkness feel less scary and it seems friendly. A light seems to say, "*Welcome!*" It seems to say, "*This is a safe place to be!*" It seems to say, "*We can be friends!*"

I think our chalice light is a bit like that, too. We light it each week to say "*Welcome!*" We light it to say, "*This is a safe place to be!*" We light it to say, "*We can be friends here!*"

You're here when we light the chalice, but usually you go to your classes after the children's time, so you don't know what happens at the very end of the service. At the end of the service, after the last song, we blow out the candle in the chalice, and we say, "*We gathered to light this chalice; we go, the flame lit within us.*"

That doesn't mean that there's a candle burning somewhere inside us -- that would be very hot and uncomfortable and probably wouldn't work because as some of you older ones know, a candle needs oxygen to burn and it wouldn't get much oxygen down in your stomach or somewhere. So when we say the flame is lit within us, we mean something else. We mean that all the things our chalice stands for can still be true even when the candle is blown out. It can still be true that we say "*Welcome!*" to each other. It can still be true that this is a safe place to be! It can still be true that we are friends here!

You may have heard a song about having that little light inside us that says, "*Welcome! You're safe with me! We can be friends!*" Has anyone here heard that song? I rather thought so, and we're going to sing it together now, because a light is a good thing to keep shining all year round, not just at Halloween.

Singing: "*This Little Light of Mine*" (# 118)

Children's Departure Song (seated):

Go now in peace, go now in peace;  
May the love of all surround you  
Ev'rywhere, ev'rywhere you may go.

Meditation Hymn 123: Spirit of Life

Spoken Meditation: Words from John Hanly Morgan

*The ghost of graveyard, wailing wind, cold rattling limb,  
Of foggy hollow, owl cry, bat cry, howl of hound.  
These hauntings are easily cast off:  
They are Other.  
But you, your ghosts, your own self-hauntings,  
Doubt, grief, remorse, fear: these are harder to cast out.  
Well, welcome here, self-haunted.  
Here are magic words  
To chase away those ghosts,  
Such simple words  
To cast out the inner ghosts, to heal the self-haunted;  
Magic words: "**Good morning friend.  
We care for you.**"*

Sermon excerpts: *Spirits and Ghosts, All Saints and All Souls*

Having grown up in England, where Halloween is not celebrated (or at least, wasn't when I was a child), I've never quite cottoned-on to the excitement of trick-and-treating. In fact, when my own (very Canadian) children were small, I rather dreaded Halloween because it meant I had to make costumes for them, and I never had any original ideas. Also, all that candy seemed a bit gross to me.

I was always glad when October 31 was over, and I'm still not especially enthusiastic about it. But I am a bit more intrigued than I used to be about why we keep Halloween at all, and today I'll explore that a little, along with the much less-observed festival which takes place on November 2, All Souls Day.

Halloween, or All Hallows Eve, is the eve of a Christian festival, the feast of All Saints, or all hallowed, holy ones, on November 1<sup>st</sup> -- **today**. In traditional Christianity, you only get to be a saint after you're dead, so All Hallows are all dead, and here's where it gets a bit murky. Christianity doesn't have much to say about the spirits of dead people hanging around the earth, but more ancient religions certainly do, and as usual those ancient beliefs have persisted and gotten mixed up with the Christian observances. In fact, the old ideas, which some of us might call superstitious, have more or less taken over Halloween. I'd be willing to bet that for every thousand children who go out dressed as some kind of spooky creature, some spirit of a ghostly world, and for every thousand grown-ups who shell out candy to appease the hobgoblins, there's maybe **one** who remembers all the heroes and holy ones who have passed away from this life.

Why the attraction of ghosts? Why do some of us read ghost stories, or see horror movies full of the supernatural, or (if we fancy ourselves a bit more sophisticated) find stories of the paranormal, of telepathy and extrasensory perception, so fascinating? On the other hand, if we're convinced rationalists, what is it that we find **threatening** about the very idea of another world, of spirits, ghosts and souls, so that we have to reject them deliberately from our belief system, as if our openness to evolving knowledge has a rational boundary?

Whichever side of the supernatural fence we come down on, there's something a little frightening about the very idea of ghosts. I had a Clergy Calendar one year, put out by Richard Gilbert, the Unitarian Universalist minister who wrote *Building Your Own Theology*, and in it October 31 was not called Halloween but Reformation Day. This is not chance. The Christian Reformers, in whose footsteps we follow as dissenters, wanted to eliminate spookiness from the church, but somehow I don't think they've been terribly successful. Ask the next child you talk to which she looked forward to most, Halloween or Reformation Day. And notice, by the way, that ghostliness is at the same time frightening and fun. It's fun because it's frightening. **Why?**

*(and that's where I'll end this sermon excerpt – with a question. **Please respond!!**)*

Hymn 103: *For All the Saints*

Closing Words

We gathered to light this chalice;  
WE GO, THE FLAME LIT WITHIN US.  
Connected to all who have lived, we go,  
AND WE KNOW WE ARE NOT ALONE.

