

CUC endowment campaign shifts into high gear



So, what exactly is a former Pentecostal minister doing as ringleader of the campaign to raise \$1 million in endowment funds for the Canadian Unitarian Council? Meet Paul Evered, the easy-going guy who was hired on a 14-month contract last fall to lead the CUC's *Growing Forward* campaign. Although he served Pentecostal congregations for 18 years, Evered left the ministry five years ago – "I was too much of a free thinker," he explains – to become a fundraising consultant.

Evered has met Unitarians in every part of the country over the past four months. "I'm finding that Unitarians have a valid and valuable message," he says. "It's almost an oasis of love where anyone can come and be heard. Unlike in the evangelical groups, you have an ability to hear people's hearts."


Growing Forward started with a bang in early 2004, with three "pace setting" gifts of over or near \$100,000. By spring the campaign had already raised nearly \$600,000 – over half the total – and it has now entered the second phase: identifying and canvassing members who can consider gifts of up to \$2,500, in five yearly instalments of \$500.

The committee directing the endowment campaign, led by former CUC president Kim Turner (see page two), decided early on to use face-to-face visits, rather than relying on a national direct mail campaign. But Evered isn't making house calls as the campaign broadens past the initial donors. Instead, he's setting up canvass teams in individual congregations, who are doing face-to-face visits with their own members.

The key message they're taking to individual Unitarians is this: the CUC needs a larger endowment in order to seed the new organization (hence the campaign logo – an acorn, see above). *Growing Forward* is aimed at establishing a base of stable income upon which a viable national organization can flourish, now that it is largely separate from the continental Unitarian Universalist Association.

The campaign is different from the annual CUC Friends effort, which is for donations that go straight to the annual budget. *Growing Forward* is to create a permanent endowment that will exist for generations, providing the CUC with annual revenue from its interest income.

But won't *Growing Forward* be competing with local congregations for donation dollars? Not according to Evered. "We're asking members to consider giving above and beyond their local contributions," he says. "And we're finding that many people perceive a gift to the national organization as different from a donation to their church – it's part of their vision for growing the broader denomination."

For more information about the CUC endowment campaign, go to www.cuc.ca/endowment, or contact Paul Evered directly at: paul@cuc.ca, 1-888-568-5723. 

Belief in the afterlife

BY REV. CAROLE MARTIGNACCO

Belief in the afterlife need not be limited to humans.

When it reaches the highest chakra, an orange becomes the sun, evaporates, is taken up into the source from which it emerged ages and untold ages ago when the universe was itself a fiery hot orange.

In death it sometimes outclasses its humbler origins, comes back as Grand Marnier or Cointreau, posthumously promoted to a spirited rich aristocrat with a French title.

Sometimes in spring oranges rise up out of the earth as daylilies, recognized in this disguise only by those who have themselves learned how to flower.

Carole Martignacco is minister to the UU Church of North Hatley. This poem is part of a work in progress, entitled The Orange Obsessions. Carole's 2003 book The Everything Seed: A Story About Beginnings is available at bookstores or on-line.

Poetry Contributions

Short, spiritual poems by CUC members are invited. Please send them to poetry editor Franci Louann, flouann@telus.net, or by fax to: 604-731-0228.



Paul Evered



Mary Bennett

CUC Executive Director

Faith community wanted – individuals apply within

It would seem that we U*Us view ourselves as rugged individuals desiring freedom of choice. But we also yearn deeply for community – with other rugged individuals, if that’s not too much of a contradiction in terms!

This is the initial impression I get from 350 submissions to the CUC’s Statement of Principles Task Force, from workshops held at about half of our congregations earlier this spring.

We looked for frequently repeated themes, phrases and words. The word most frequently used throughout answers to all six of our key questions was “community.” Others that came up frequently (more than 100 times each) were: justice, life, live, love, others, peace, people, values and world.

The Task Force will be presenting a workshop at the Annual Conference, and full details of the submissions will be on-line after they’re all in. There is still time to have your say. Just go to: www.cuc.ca/sptf/response_form.htm.

Why are we doing this? Two years ago, as we were separating from the UUA, we brought a slight adaptation of the “seven principles and six sources” to our Annual Meeting for adoption as our own. Some delegates argued that now the CUC was autonomous, we should consider our own statement, and the Board set up the Principles Task Force.

We have not yet determined whether to recommend the current Statement of Principles “as is,” amend it slightly, or create an entirely new statement. What is clear is that you will continue to have ample opportunity to participate in this process. A draft statement will come to next year’s Annual Conference in Hamilton, and a final statement is planned for 2006.

In the meantime, we’ll keep in touch about where we are in the process, and we’ll invite feedback along the way.

Growing Forward

Why I support the CUC endowment campaign

GROWING UNITARIANISM

“In 1961, the founders of the Canadian Unitarian Council envisioned a liberal religious organization that would strengthen and grow Unitarianism and Universalism across Canada. Since then, the CUC has grown, in numbers and in responsibility.

“In May 2000, CUC delegates embraced this early vision as their own. In recent years, we have seen the ‘new’ CUC come to life. The Endowment Fund will ensure that the CUC has the necessary long-term financial resources to further this vision.

“A pledge to the *Growing Forward* Campaign is a pledge for the future of Unitarianism and Universalism in Canada. I urge you to give generously in support of this Campaign.”

– Kim Turner,
Growing Forward Campaign Chair

CONTROL OVER THE FUTURE

“As someone who helped devise the plan for the new CUC, I am proud of what we are becoming. It seems like taking control of our own future came at just the right moment in our history. I plan to support the Endowment Campaign to make sure this momentum continues.”

– Rev. Brian Kiely,
*CUC Vice-President and Minister,
Unitarian Church of Edmonton*

INSPIRATION AND SPIRIT

“The CUC has been for me a place of inspiration and spirit, one in which the

principles of our faith are enacted in all their complexity. Unitarians need to know that the movement exists beyond their own congregation, to know that there are communities of love and hope throughout the world, and that the CUC is part of it.”

– Christopher Wulff, *Kingston*

CUC IS A FAMILY

“As a founding member of the Canadian Unitarian Council I have enjoyed the growth of our ‘baby’ through many stages into its present adulthood. To me, the CUC is a family, with all of our UU communities in Canada as members. As families help to support each other’s goals, so does the CUC.

– Bunny Turner, *CUC Founding Member, Halifax*

PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR ME

“When I found the people from the Unitarian Church of Vancouver and the Canadian Unitarian Council, I felt like I had come to a safe home. I know that there is a place at the table for me in my new community.”

– Dawn Barbeau, *Chair, Gender and Sexual Diversity Monitoring Group, Vancouver*

A BETTER WORLD

“The Canadian Unitarian Council has impressed me enormously when I’ve seen it working at its Annual Meetings. Discussions are always considerate and careful of people’s feelings. If governments worked this way we would have a much better world.”

– Philip Symons, *Chair, Imagine Democracy Study Group, President, Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice, Victoria*



Across the Country



The 40-member Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo bought this building from a local service club late last year, then rented part of it back to them plus two other tenants. Now the fellowship has its own building, for the first time in 40 years. Volunteer Bill Paterson organized the landscaping, at right.



Nanaimo fellowship buys a permanent home

Can you imagine a mouse swallowing an elephant? That's what the Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo did earlier this year when the small congregation purchased a commercial property for \$500,000. They moved into the building in March – their first permanent home since they were founded 40 years ago.

The idea of purchasing a building of their own was first floated almost a decade ago, so it was a while in coming to fruition. Part of the problem was their rental agreement at the Mason's Hall – at \$1,700 a year there wasn't much incentive to move. Still, many members felt that getting a place of their own would be an impetus to growth, and perhaps the hiring of a part-time minister.

But with 40 members and an annual budget of only \$14,000, the congregation didn't have a lot of purchasing power. So how did they manage it? By

buying a building much larger than they needed, and becoming a landlord. Their 10,000-square-foot building is leased to three other tenants; this rent income covers almost all the mortgage and operating expenses for the entire building. The fellowship occupies 3,000 square feet.

They still had to come up with about \$100,000 for the down payment, renovations and working capital, but that was quickly raised through an internal capital campaign.

Member Rob Stewart – who is a real estate agent and husband of fellowship president Wendy Stewart – worked out the creative financing. "It's a growth initiative," he says. The fellowship has bi-weekly services, and in the intervening weeks it now offers "outreach programming" to bring in new members.

Nanaimo's grand opening was in late March, with the new 90-seat sanctuary full to capacity. With a kitchen, two RE rooms, a boardroom, a bus stop and parking for 50 cars as well, the fellowship is well positioned to expand Unitarian Universalism on central Vancouver Island. ☐

Unitarian People

UNITARIAN WINS PEACE AWARD

Leslie Kemp, chair of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver's Social Justice Committee, was awarded a YMCA Peace Medallion in April. Peace Medallions have been awarded since 1988 to individuals who find peaceful solutions to violence, discrimination and injustice, and who volunteer their time working without special recognition, financial status or otherwise to create a culture of peace. Leslie said, "This work has been a collective effort of members of the UCV Social Justice Committee and others. I am deeply honoured to be receiving this award."

MINISTERIAL UPDATES

Rev. Anne Orfald of Peterborough is retiring this June and **Rev. Anne Treadwell** of Waterloo is retiring at end of December. **Rev. Ann Buckmaster** has left the position of Minister of RE at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver. **George Buchanan** will be the Intern Minister at Westwood and Edmonton starting in August. **Rev. Daniel Owens** is serving as an intern minister at the Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa this year.

UNICAMP TURNS 35 THIS SUMMER

Unicamp is celebrating their 35th Anniversary this year. This 50-acre property, located on the Niagara Escarpment north-west of Toronto, is a non-profit facility for retreat and recreation for UUs and others in southern Ontario.

Jamie Milroy, the director of RE at Neighbourhood UU in Toronto, is Unicamp's director this year. Later on in the summer, Unicamp will host two important UU events. The second annual Quebec-Ontario-Maritimes youth conference meets there Aug. 29 to Sept. 3. And the CUC board will meet there in mid-September. For more about Unicamp, go to: www.gpcamp.com/unicamp.





PHOTO: LEE DICKEY, WATERLOO

“We won’t flourish as a denomination if we’re token givers.”

— GRACE FLESHER

THE UU CULTURE OF MONEY

Churches test out new approaches to fundraising

As he introduced the weekly offering at Toronto First Unitarian’s service earlier this spring, Mike Durall did a surprising thing. He announced: “This week’s offering will not be used for church expenses. It will be donated to Second Harvest, a program that collects surplus food from stores and hotels, and distributes it to people in crisis.”

The result? The offering plates garnered \$2,700 – twice the usual amount donated in cash on a typical Sunday in the large congregation.

Durall was visiting Toronto First as a consultant from the UUA, helping the congregation re-think its approach to money, membership, and stewardship. The offering illustrated one of his basic points: that charitable giving works best when people feel good about it, and when it connects to their yearnings about the good things the church can do. Budgets and bills don’t inspire giving; hopes and dreams do.

“Those involved in stewardship have to believe in their hearts and souls that charitable giving is fun,” says Durall, “that giving is one of life’s great privileges, that it helps make people whole.”

The Toronto congregation isn’t the only one searching for a new approach to money and canvassing. Some other examples:

- **Waterloo First Unitarian**, a medium-size congregation, made two important changes to its annual canvass last fall. It formulated a specific amount to ask for in each canvass visit, rather than leaving the contribution to chance. And it compressed its campaign into three weeks instead of the usual six. Their result? A 19 per cent increase in pledges.

- **First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa**, the largest UU congregation in the country, felt it had grown substantially in recent years but that its programs hadn’t kept up; they needed money to hire more staff, including a second minister. Their “Challenge Campaign” last fall revolved around these aspirations for the future, and it worked. They increased the average pledge amount (to \$880), and the number of pledges (up 14 per cent), for a total increase of 24 per cent.

- In early May, representatives from every Atlantic congregation met in Fredericton for a **Dreams and Dollars** workshop sponsored by the cuc. The focus

was on a new approach to money – one that places higher expectations on church members, and isn’t afraid to ask for their money as well. The workshop also advocated a more open approach to the culture of money, with ethical investing courses for adults and RE money lessons for kids.

GENEROSITY AND STEWARDSHIP

Grace Flesher, a newcomer to the London Unitarian Fellowship, is a former banker who is now volunteering as a service consultant to congregations in the cuc’s Central and Eastern Regions. She shares this new approach to giving. “In a canvass, it’s more effective to talk about generosity, stewardship and sharing than it is to say, ‘the heating bill is going up eight per cent.’”

She believes it’s wrong to make the church budget the centrepiece of the annual canvass. “If you do that, you’ll probably fall just shy of your goal, which was the most pared-down budget to start with.” Instead, she advocates a canvass strategy that links giving to something loftier and more long-term – like they did in Ottawa.

From experience she’s had with UU

churches in the U.S., Flesher knows that our denomination is one of the lowest-giving of them all – an average of about 1.5 per cent of gross income, continent-wide. “This compares to the Protestant religions, where the figure is 6–8 per cent, and what I call the ‘high expectation’ religions – Mormons, Jews, and fundamentalist Christians – where 10 per cent of income is the starting point.”

The bottom line, according to Flesher, is that, “we won’t flourish as a denomination if we’re token givers.”

WATERLOO’S TARGETED CANVASS

Flesher visited the Waterloo congregation early last fall. She felt the canvass leaders in the tightly-knit church should be more direct in their requests, and could probably estimate very well what each member might be able to afford. She also advised them to link giving to the most highly valued programs in the church – its burgeoning music and RE programs.

“We’d heard this before,” says Waterloo president Lee Dickey, “but now someone was saying it directly to our face. We decided to trust Grace’s advice.”

Here’s what they found as they began canvassing. “Nobody was offended by the direct approach. We generally got one of three responses. Sometimes people just said ‘no,’ and named a lower figure. Sometimes they said, ‘I can do better than that.’ And sometimes they said,

‘I don’t want to hear a specific amount,’ then pledged the amount we had anticipated all along!”

It probably wasn’t any single change that turned things around for Waterloo, but rather a combination of big and small things – the “dreams” argument rather than a budget-based approach, the targeted asking, and a simple administrative change. Instead of letting the canvass drag on over almost two months, Flesher advised them to shorten the canvass period. “When it’s fast and furious, you get better results,” says Waterloo canvass chair Mag Horman. “There’s a law of diminishing returns as you pursue it over a longer period of time.”

OTTAWA’S AMBITIOUS GOAL

Ottawa’s experience was different, but with a similar result. An internal review and an outside consultant’s report had come to similar conclusions, says canvass co-chair Chuck Shields – “that the congregation was capable of doing more, and needed to set higher goals for itself.”

The canvass committee, which met weekly beginning in July, decided on several new goals and approaches:

- a 25 per cent increase in pledges, linked to the long-term plan of hiring more staff and broadening church programs
- having board members pledge first, who led by example with a 27 per cent increase in pledges
- reporting the campaign results weekly in church, including a dramatic thermometer style “pledge-o-meter”
- canvassing new members and “friends,” who had not been canvassed in recent campaigns
- having pledge tables set up before and after the weekly services
- sending immediate thank-you notes to pledgers (instead of just a thank-you letter 16 months later with their tax receipt)

Ottawa’s campaign lasted six weeks,



Waterloo’s canvass talked about funding ‘dreams’, like their RE program

and reached more people than ever before, for a record increase in pledged amount – 24 per cent. Unlike in previous years, where the ad hoc canvass committee disbanded by Christmas, the “development committee” is now year-round. It is investigating “planned giving,” where members are offered a way to will money to the church endowment, and it’s also involved in two smaller campaigns, to raise money for a new church roof and for a grand piano.

Art Brewer of Toronto First Unitarian says his congregation is ripe for a new approach to membership and finances. After his spring visit, consultant Mike Durall put several provocative new ideas on the table for Toronto’s consideration. The most radical one might be that the church give away 10 per cent of its funds every year to charities and outreach. His theory is that a generous church will attract congregational support.

A COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE

His advice – still under discussion in Toronto First – connects to what Grace Flesher has been telling congregations as she does the rounds as a CUC service consultant, and to what the CUC team was teaching at the Dreams and Dollars workshop in Fredericton.

“What our congregations really need is their members’ commitment to the future,” says Director of Regional Services Linda Thomson, “not just to paying the bills.” ☐



In Ottawa, canvass committee members like Mary Jo Jones gave weekly updates in church

PEACE WAS HIS MISSION

A founding father of the Saskatoon Unitarian Congregation, **Frank Coburn**, died in early April. He would have been



93 on April 24, the day of his memorial service. Frank was one of the early participants in the CCF and a long-standing supporter of the NDP. In addition, he

supported with time and money many social justice causes in the area, most particularly those relating to peace.

HALF CENTURY OF SERVICE

Palmi Palsson, whose influence affected the Unitarian movement in the smallest and the greatest of ways, died in early March. Palmi's 50 continuous years of service to the Arborg Unitarian Church's board of directors, were celebrated and honoured in 2000. Palmi received the Western Canada District Jennie McCaine Peterson Award for his contribution to the Unitarian movement. Arborg is close to Winnipeg, and was founded by Icelanders who had emigrated to Manitoba.



DIED DURING HOMELAND VISIT

Angus Bramadat, active Unitarian and husband of Rev. Jane Bramadat, died in his sleep while on a recent visit to his original homeland of Trinidad. Angus will be remembered for his contribution to the CUC's two videos, and more recently at the Cascadia Conference Information Desk in Victoria. He retired from a successful career as a school principal in Winnipeg, in support of Jane's career as a Unitarian minister. Jane and Angus along with their two daughters, visiting daughter-in-law and grandson Max experienced the joy and pride in hearing their son, Dr. Paul Bramadat, preach recently at the First Unitarian Church of Victoria.

NOT RECENT UNITARIANS

I would like to correct three points made in your front page article last issue, about my son Nicholas Dodds and his campaign to expose school contracts with Pepsi and Coke.

On the soft drink issue, I think your point was well made – i.e., the opposing sides of the issue. However, we feel you missed the real story: that Nicholas' social consciousness grew out of his UU background. That was the story angle we expected.

My husband Jack Dodds and I are not recent Unitarians, as your article implied near the end. Jack was born and raised a UU. We were married at Toronto First Unitarian Congregation in 1976. We were members of the Halifax UU Congregation for four years, before we had children, and we returned to Toronto First on a regular basis seven years ago.

Finally, I take exception to the last line of the article in which you call Nicholas a "rabble-rouser." I'm sure he used the term in jest; to have you label him as such is inappropriate.

– Carol Dodds, Aurora, Ont.

A MEATY NEWSLETTER

The latest Canadian Unitarian was just great – the articles had so much meat and really gave a picture of U*Us across the country. Thanks for all your hard work. Having the annual meeting brochure included is a good idea too – keeps everyone informed about what's going on.

– Joy Johnston, Comox Valley

NO ASTERISKS PLEASE

In her recent column, Mary Bennett advocated the new acronym "U*U" as a short form for Unitarian Universalism. This is very troubling. It is described as a "wild card," which to me implies that anything goes. I don't believe that Unitarian Universalism stands for anything that anyone wants it to be. Without a creed we have no "means test" for newcomers, so it is up to us to stand firm on what it means to be a UU and impart that to people who come searching. I think that changes to our identity should be put on hold until all UUs across Canada have had a chance to discuss this.

– Sue McLeod, Toronto

Goodnight, Angus

BY FARRELL BOYCE

Angus, you sly old dog,
Slipping off home and telling no one.
I'll miss hearing you sing beside me in the choir
And the comfort of knowing that you, like me
Were struggling with the little dots
And the task to make them heavenly music.
Well maybe you can hear the real thing now.

I'd like to think you died a happy man.
Not happy to die – as if anybody asked you,
But happy enough with pride in strong children
And a bonny grandchild,
Happy to be in a familiar place with friends.
I'd like to think that you went to bed with their voices' soothing in your ears,
Your tummy full of good Trinidad food,
And that you later dreamed of loving.



Farrell Boyce is a member of First Victoria, a musician and a poet. He wrote this poem in response to the death of Angus Bramadat. Angus and Farrell sat next to one another in the bass section of the First Unitarian Church of Victoria choir.

Testimony

by Grace Flesher

It's all about being a good steward of my gifts

One of the principles I was taught as child is that we should always be good stewards of all our gifts. My family were loggers in a remote area of the B.C. coast, accessible only by seaplane or boat. A government program allowed us to harvest timber, but we did not own the land we logged, or even the land on which my father built our house. Ours was a small, family business – we cut trees, tended the forest and planted seedlings for the future.

Logging is not an industry traditionally associated with the notion of stewardship. For the large corporations whose practices involve mechanized mass-cutting, or even clear-cutting, that is true. My father and grandfather protected the streams and riverbanks, cut prudently and pioneered reforestation in the province. They considered it a privilege, indeed a gift, to live and work on that land.

The context of my life journey is always framed with the question: Given my resources, my talents, my experiences to date and the opportunities presently before me – how might I be a good steward of all my gifts?

I did not follow in the footsteps of my parents; my interests and abilities are in the area of finance rather than logging and silvaculture. For as long as I can remember, I have felt comfortable talking about money. Economics, budgeting, investing, fundraising and endowments are all subjects I understand and find interesting.

For so many people money is confusing and hard to talk about, a subject shrouded in taboo and myth, so I have always considered my comfort with the whole subject of money as a talent or gift.


I gravitated to a field of employment that reflected my interests – banking. The volunteer hours that I gave to community agencies often involved me in capital or major gift campaigns, sitting



on finance committees, writing budgets, being a treasurer or organizing fundraising events. That service work was my way of being a good steward of the talent/gift.

Unitarian*Universalism is like the land upon which I was raised; it is a privilege and magnificent gift which I must tend by planting for the future. I must be a good steward of this free faith, nurturing my congregation and my denomination, sharing my resources and abilities.

I believe my work will always be at that place where “people” and “money” intersect. My greatest joy comes when I can help individuals and organizations discover a sense of empowerment about money – fostered by honest and open dialogue and knowledge.

The CUC offers me a wonderful new way to enact my stewardship values, working with U*U congregations and facilitating that healing dialogue as a CUC service consultant. 

– Grace Flesher attends the London Unitarian Fellowship. She is also a volunteer service consultant for the CUC Central Region, advising congregations on finance and fundraising. Contact: graceflesher@sympatico.ca.



Elizabeth Bowen

CUC President

I've enjoyed serving as a 'pioneer' on the CUC Board

We are the New Pioneers! That's the theme of this year's annual conference and meeting. When I first heard about it, I had visions of Red River carts squeaking their way to Edmonton!

Are we really CUC pioneers? I think so. Pioneers prepare the way for those who come after them. Our earliest pioneers founded the CUC in 1961. Our journey had begun.

I've been incredibly fortunate to serve on your board during the last six years of this journey. John Hopewell was CUC President when I was elected to the Board in May 1998. He said at the time that, “the CUC has entered a very critical stage in its development.” He was right!

At the 1999 annual meeting, we decided to become more independent of the UUA. A year later in Calgary, delegates gave our board a mandate to negotiate a new relationship with the UUA. Our board visited every congregation twice over the next two years, to present and get feedback on plans for the reorganization.

In 2001, delegates accepted the negotiated agreement with the UUA. A flurry of activity in the next year led to the plan to transfer responsibility for the delivery of services, from the UUA to an independent CUC. Delegates to the 2002 annual meeting in Kelowna adopted the plan unanimously. There were hugs, joy, tears and laughter following that decision. Within two more years, our staff, board members and volunteers successfully built the new CUC structure.

Our journey continues. As new pioneers, we must share our skills and talents, work together, support one another, and take a few chances as we continue to build the CUC for those who follow us. As my term as CUC President ends, I look back at the exciting journey we shared and thank everyone for their help along the way.

The Canadian Unitarian is the quarterly newsletter of the Canadian Unitarian Council. It's mailed free to all members for whom the CUC has a current address.* The Unitarian reports on newsworthy events in the denomination, including the annual conference each spring. It attempts to reflect all segments of Unitarianism and Universalism in Canada. We welcome all submissions, however, publication is based on the criteria of newsworthiness, relevance to readers, length and balance. We try to publish all letters to the editor, although they may be edited for brevity and clarity.

* Non-members can subscribe to the Unitarian for \$15 Can. or \$10 U.S. Send name, address and cheque to CUC office.

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We've got Friends!

Montreal couple are Friends

Denis Barsalo and Alison Hall are both mainstays at the Unitarian Church of Montreal – and they're both donors to the annual CUC Friends Campaign.

Denis grew up in a French-Canadian, Catholic family. Alison grew up as a Unitarian at Ottawa First. They married in 1985. Alison, who is a graphic designer, was approached by the UCM in 1996 to create a bilingual Principles and Sources display. She and Denis began attending services and got hooked. She now jokingly refers to herself as a "born again Unitarian." Denis says he found his "touch stone" at the congregation.


Denis says, "I believe in the potential of the CUC and the future of U*Us. I suspect that many Canadians would find common values if they just knew about us. I figure someone needs to help finance the CUC's growth, so I might as well lead the way."

Alison's explanation for her financial support of the CUC goes like this: "I believe we have something worth-



Denis Barsalo and Alison Hall, in front of her Principles and Sources installation.

while – a religious community that gives us a place to become our whole and holy selves, where we can come together from congregations large and small to share and support and work."

Denis enjoys a spiritual practice in the art and science of brewing. Working out of his garage brewery, he also attends home-brewing conferences as a Certified Beer Judge. Alison follows her passions in gardening and social justice, plus she designs the church newsletter. 

– For more info.: www.cuc.ca/friends

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CUC Friends are special people who help the organization meet its annual goals through direct financial gifts. Will you become a Friend?

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Send to: CUC Friends, 502-112 St. Clair Ave. W., Toronto, ON, M4V 2Y3