

THE CANADIAN

# UNITARIAN



Newsletter of the Canadian Unitarian Council • VOLUME 54 • NUMBER 1 • WINTER 2012

## What Makes Leadership Spiritual?

For most of my life I have tried to understand the qualities inherent in successful leadership. Growing up, I became particularly drawn to spiritual leaders. What made Dr. King so compelling? How was Gandhi able to inspire? What about the many lesser-known community leaders who help us to stand up for our own beliefs, and to find hope in trying times? In the Hebrew Bible I discovered many stories of leaders, such as Moses, who are initially filled with doubt but learn to trust the Spirit God enough to reply, “Here I am. Send me.”

This May, the CUC and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada invite you to participate in a unique exploration happening over the long weekend—an exploration where spirituality and leadership intersect. Each of these ideas mean a great deal alone, and yet together they offer only a vague image of what their combined value might be. At the upcoming Spiritual Leadership Symposium we hope to shed light on both concepts, and their potential power in tandem.

“Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am.”

*Parker Palmer, Let Your Life Speak*

The Symposium includes a keynote conversation, worship services, Touch Groups (small group ministry), as well as opportunities to explore the spirit and leadership through different modalities such as singing, image, movement, discussion, and more.

You will also be able to choose a special Focus Stream to deepen your experience from a particular perspective. Six Focus Streams are being offered; for detailed descriptions of the Spiritual Deepening Focus Streams, see page 12.

Since I will be helping to lead the Focus Stream titled Self as Source, let me try to illustrate the opportunity for deep reflection the Symposium is offering. The Self as Source stream will be a good fit for those who want to explore what gifts and skills they bring to spiritual leadership. The

*continued on page 3*





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VOLUME 54 • NUMBER 1 • WINTER 2012

[cuc.ca/the-canadian-unitarian](http://cuc.ca/the-canadian-unitarian)

ISSN 0527-9860

*The Canadian Unitarian* is the newsletter of the Canadian Unitarian Council. It is free to all members for whom the CUC has a current address.\* *The Canadian 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. Signed letters to the editor will be included, after being edited for length and content.

\* Non-members can subscribe to *The Canadian Unitarian* for \$15 CDN or US. Send name, address, and cheque to CUC office.

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Opinions expressed in *The Canadian Unitarian* are those of the contributors. Sources and numerical values reported within articles have been verified by the authors.

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THE CANADIAN UNITARIAN

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*continued from page 1* central question for this focus stream will be “Who am I as a spiritual leader?” Here are some other questions we might consider: In all the places where I might bring a spiritual perspective, how might I lead? How is my spiritual life informed by who I am? How does the way I lead flow from who I am? Posing these questions helps people uncover potential. It becomes clear that neither leadership nor spirituality are as far away as we think.

We all have the capacity to lead in a way that holds spirituality at the centre. How might we bring a spiritual dimension to the way we lead a finance committee meeting? How might we lead our local strata council meeting in a way that honours every person’s inherent worth and dignity (especially the person with whom we always seem to disagree)? What is our own particular leadership style?

I hope many of you will come to the Symposium. It will be multi-generational, multi-learning styled, smaller-group focused, and is designed to engage your whole being. Those of us on the Planning Team are looking forward to it as a transformative weekend. Please join us.

*Rev. Shana Lynngood,  
Co-Minister First Unitarian Church of Victoria &  
Co-Chair of the Spiritual Leadership Symposium Planning Team*

**2012symposium.cuc.ca**  
keeps you up-to-the-minute on  
all information related to the  
Spiritual Leadership Symposium

## Letters to the Editor

### *Looks Great, Can't Read*

My copy of the recent *Canadian Unitarian* looks great but it is very difficult to read, especially for someone whose eyesight is not 20-20. I hope that you can improve upon this for the next issue. There are specialists out there who can look at the publication and advise accordingly.

*Barbara Beck*

Thanks to the many readers who wrote in about this problem. *The Canadian Unitarian* has made changes to type-size, colour choice, and layout, in accordance with reader response and published legibility guidelines for the visually-impaired.

*Editor*

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### *One Size Doesn't Fit All*

I'd have a difficult time if I chose to "Pass on the Meat, Milk, Eggs" (title of the article on page 27, fall issue, *The Canadian Unitarian*). I have huge complications in my G.I. system if I eat grains, soy, legumes, sugars and milk products. Some estimates now put the number of people in North America suffering from some level of Irritable Bowel Syndrome at 20% and many blame meat and animal fat for the problem. But we are discovering a great deal about genetics' influence. Also, industrialization has altered both vegetable and animal products, which may be more relevant to the general diet problems in the industrialized world than the consumption of animal products. Bread with GMO wheat, GMO canola oil, sulphites and high fructose corn syrup may be a lot worse than a free-range chicken breast or goat meat from a small, organic farm.

The article "How to Cook the Rest of the Animal" (page 30) contained practical and ethical principles.

*Jay Moore,  
First Congregation of Waterloo*

### *Communist Controversy*

This is a rejoinder to Christine Johnston's interesting letter ["Fritchman's Canadian Sojourn"] on page 3 of the fall 2010 edition of *The Canadian Unitarian*. I am afraid there has been some historical revisionism in our memories of Stephen Fritchman.

Phillip Hewett wrote an excellent review of my book for the summer 2010 edition of *The Canadian Unitarian*. He did not, however, go into any of the details of the Fritchman controversy.

It is somewhat too facile to set the whole controversy aside by acknowledging many good people were communists. In his loyalty to the Stalinist Communist cause, Fritchman betrayed his fellow Unitarians in the 1940s, and violated their principles.

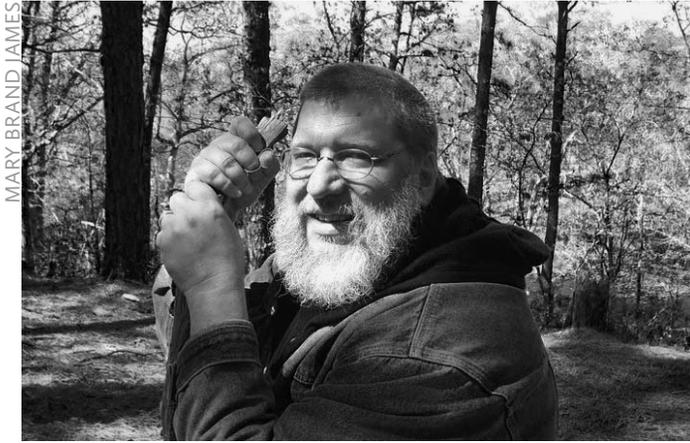
You have a good publication. I am heartened to see it and read it.

*Charles Eddis,  
Montreal, QC  
author of Stephen Fritchman: The American  
Unitarians and Communism (lulu.com, 2010)  
print edition and \$2.90 ebook available.*

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## No Tricks, Just Wonder: *Conversation with Keynote Speaker and Symposium Special Guest Erik Walker Wikstrom*

The Symposium Planning Team is pleased to announce that Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom, author of *Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice* (Skinner House Books, 2010), will be our special ‘guest provocateur’ during the Spiritual Leadership Symposium this May.

*The Canadian Unitarian* caught up with Rev. Wikstrom by telephone to ask: beyond that of keynote speaker, what is his role as special guest of the Symposium weekend—what is he planning to do?

“I’ve been told—and what excites me—is that I’m supposed to throw out challenges, new ideas, or things that people have thought, but not felt allowed to think.”

This is what Rev. Wikstrom loves, to be involved in an exchange, “using what I know and inspiring [others] to tell each other what they know. I learn more, we all learn more. Lay people know a ton of stuff about what it is to be alive.”

This spirit is in keeping with what he describes as his “expansive view of the religious endeavour.” It is an endeavour that began for Wikstrom during childhood summers at Methodist church camp. By his teen years, Wikstrom knew he wanted to be an ordained minister, but first spent more than a decade as a performer—as magician, clown, and juggler—playing in communities across America.

Wikstrom considers that it was not so different from what he seeks to do today: in the old days, his magic tricks were less to fool the audience than to inspire wonder. By his late 20s, Wikstrom felt it was time to settle into one community, one spiritual context—one congregation—and began the training necessary for ordination.

Since then, Wikstrom has served congregations in Yarmouth, ME, and Brewster, MA, and as Worship and Music Director with the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA). He has written three books and maintains a blog.

It was an unusual kind of crisis that began Rev. Wikstrom on the long process to becoming an author. His mother’s death seemed to spark “a discovery of a faith I had discarded.” Up to that point his god had been an impersonal force, “like gravity or electricity.” Now a very different sense emerged: “It felt like being loved, cared about, connected.” It recalled for Wikstrom the teachings of Christian mystics; subsequent research led to his first book.

*Serving with Grace* is his latest, which addresses many of the same issues that inspired the creation of the Spiritual Leadership Symposium. The book itself originated from discussions among Rev. Wikstrom and his congregation, on fundamental questions around church leadership: “Churches are supposed to be for the spiritual betterment of their congregation, community, and the world. But more and more energy goes into perpetuating and managing the institution.

“People don’t come to church to work, to perpetuate a bureaucracy,” Wikstrom determined. But if

a church was going to perform its spiritual function, it was necessary work. “What if,” he began to think, “volunteering to support the church was a spiritual end in itself?”

Part of the difficulty for westerners, Wikstrom believes, is that we are accustomed to making separate segments of our lives—work, family, spiritual life. But, as Wikstrom contends, “spiritual masters from all traditions affirm that spirituality is everything. How can we frame this so that people experience it like that?” *Serving with Grace* considers “concrete ways to foster this vision of spiritual leadership”.

The chapter titled “Hold Your Tongue” was born from Wikstrom’s experience in a peer support group of “bright, intuitive people. We talked a lot. Other peer groups were more quiet—they left a lot more space in their meetings.” Wikstrom’s group decided to try this method and Wikstrom himself, as a personal practice, decided to remain silent through the meeting.

When the first issue was brought to the group, “immediately I had nine responses that were important for this guy to hear.” But Wikstrom kept

his peace while other people voiced much of what he’d been thinking. “What is important in a meeting: “Does it get said—or do I say it?” Toward the end, he offered his remaining insight as a unique contribution to the pool of ideas.

The chapter “The Agenda as Prayer Book” suggests practical ways to engage in meetings in a more intentional manner. “Walk yourself through the agenda: what do I think? What are others going to say? Catch your breath. Have your knee-jerk responses at home.” Wikstrom equated the process with that of a Japanese tea ceremony: “When you get to the tea, you are present for the moment.”

As UU members across Canada prepare for the Spiritual Leadership Symposium—whether they plan to attend themselves, or send representatives from their congregation—Wikstrom suggests considering spiritual leadership through the model of a total-immersion language school, where the whole of life is experienced through a new language. “This thing we do called church can be so much more exciting than many—even most—of us know.”



## **Knight Award: Call for Nominations**

Since 1995 the Knight Award has been presented annually to a living person who has, as a volunteer, contributed at the national level to furthering the principles of Unitarianism in Canada. The award honours the ideals exemplified by the lives and work of Victor and Nancy Knight.

Nominations for the 2012 award may be submitted by any member or friend of a Canadian UU congregation, and must be accompanied by a citation describing what the nominee has done at the national level to promote liberal religious principles in Canada, and why she or he should be considered for the award. The citation should be at least 200 words in length and may be submitted to Mary Lu MacDonald (jbmlmac@ns.sympatico.ca) or by mail to her at 1206–2677 Gladstone Street, Halifax, NS B3K 0A3.

Nominations must be received by March 31, 2012.

## Open Source Church

We watch TV on demand, creating our own programming line ups. We download music to our mp3 players, creating our own—excuse the anachronism—albums. We are becoming accustomed to having input into nearly everything and being able to actively arrange things (and then easily rearrange them) as we wish. And there is a growing generation that expects this, having known nothing else.

And then folks come to church where a few people (the leaders) with one particular person (the minister—as if there’s only one) act as ‘experts’ and set forth a vision and an agenda and then invite people to join them in enacting it. There’s a whole committee devoted to helping people find the ‘slot’ on the slate that fits them best. And if you have an idea for something new and exciting there may be several levels of committees and councils and many, many meetings before you’re told that there isn’t enough money, or there isn’t enough volunteer energy, or that we’ve tried something like that before and it didn’t work.

Is it any wonder that membership, participation, and the perception that the church is a relevant

institution in today’s world are all way, way down? Something isn’t working. Perhaps it’s time for us to look at another model.

Rather than limit itself to the input of a few ‘experts’, Wikipedia relies upon the tremendous pool of knowledge generated by bringing together a group of diverse people. Few of us may be able to call ourselves experts, but each of us knows something and, if we’re honest, the vast majority of us know a whole lot about at least a few things.

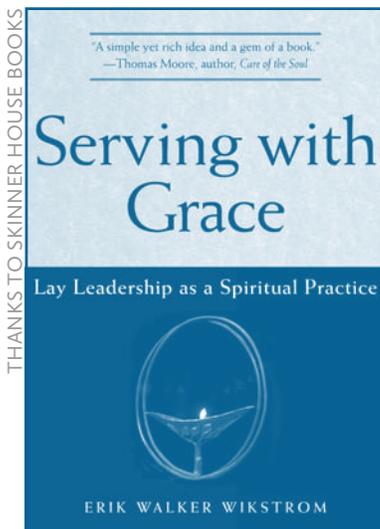
If we were to pool our various areas of knowledge together we would, in essence, create a new kind of expert—a communal expert. And this expert would have access to all of the information that’s in all of our heads.

Of course, mistakes might creep in. When Sarah Palin recently spoke about Paul Revere warning the British with bells and shots, some tea party supporters went to Wikipedia and edited the article about Paul Revere’s Ride so that it more smoothly coincided with Palin’s description. Yet other folk, from Revolutionary War scholars to armchair historians, were right there to change things back. Over time, Wikipedia proves itself incredibly accurate.

And up to date. As our knowledge base increases, Wikipedia is able to keep up with it in a way that more traditional encyclopedias never could. In the first month of its existence Wikipedia generated a thousand articles; nine months along, and it had ten times that many articles; and over the next three months that number jumped to twenty thousand—forty thousand before another year had passed.

Now that’s responsiveness. That’s creativity unleashed. Can you imagine that kind of energy in the church?

*(Adapted from Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom’s sermon “Open Source Church” on his blog ([a-ministers-musings.blogspot.com/2011/07/open-source-church-sermon.html](http://a-ministers-musings.blogspot.com/2011/07/open-source-church-sermon.html))).*



## What is the Spiritual Leadership Symposium?

In recent conversations, UU leaders expressed a need to develop spiritual leadership that lives—out in the world—the values expressed by our seven principles, and to explore how spiritual leadership helps us discern meaning in our lives.

The Spiritual Leadership Symposium will gather together a multigenerational community to seek answers to these questions through worship, workshops, music, arts, and discussions that will engage our heads, hearts, and hands—taking us far and deep into a greater understanding of shared ministry, and renewing spirit and leadership across Canada.

The Spiritual Leadership Symposium is for:

1. Sharing ideas and approaches related to spiritual leadership
2. Inspiring transformation in our congregations and in our movement
3. Discerning our future as a Canadian UU movement and the role of the CUC in fostering this.

Themes to be explored in depth include:

### Multigenerational Shared Ministry

- Value and share leadership from across the age spectrum in the work of our religious communities
- Understand ‘ministry’ not just as an operational task but as a religious expression

### Social Justice as Spiritual Practice

- Social justice as a spiritual practice for individual UUs
- How congregations can have impact on their wider community
- How the broader UU movement can have impact on the world

### Culture of Leadership

- Shifting the culture of leadership towards an approach that aligns needs of the congregations, communities, and the world, with the gifts of people in our movement.

The opening on Friday evening begins with a call for engagement and exploration. On Saturday, individuals participate in their chosen Focus Stream, to deepen inquiry and learning. Throughout the weekend, opportunities for conversations, inquiry, and sharing of experience and wisdom are guided by experienced facilitators. A variety of participatory approaches are invited, using art, movement, singing, and multimedia, as well as small- and large-group dialogue and learning. Over the weekend, we will tap into the wisdom within each of us, and the collective wisdom of the whole.

### ENGAGEMENT FOR EVERYONE

The Symposium structure models that of shared leadership, working from the understanding that we are all leaders. Each session is designed to invite full participation from every person. Bring your whole self: the creative, the imaginative, the innovative, the skeptic, the optimistic, the sage, the playful, and all the rest. We will be engaging multiple forms of expression and media throughout the Symposium, including an art project, music, movement, and spiritual inspirations. By contributing fully you make this a memorable and transformative experience with lasting impact. (Please also see the call for volunteers on page 11.)

*continued on page 15*

## What About CanUdle?

This year's national gathering is going to include our much-loved CanUdle Youth Conference, but as the Symposium is not our usual Annual Conference and Meeting, so too will this Con be different. Here's a quick run-down of some of the similarities and differences you can expect at this year's CanUdle in Ottawa:

### SAME

- youth & adult volunteer staff team
- Touch Groups
- nightly youth-led worship services
- interesting and interactive workshops that youth help to lead
- the Bridging ceremony
- time for cuddle-puddles, mail bags and maybe even Wink ;)
- an evening dance
- support from amazing youth advisors and other youth allies
- youth from across Canada will be in attendance



### DIFFERENT

- this year we have a dedicated CUC staff to help support the CanUdle planning process
- youth and adults will all participate in the same multigenerational Symposium workshops during the day on Saturday and Sunday
- Touch Groups will also be multigenerational and youth Touch Group leaders will be paired with adult co-leaders to share facilitation of these groups
- instead of being in a separate service, this year's Bridging ceremony will be part of the main Sunday morning worship service. There will be no youth-led and young adult-led multigenerational worship services.
- the Senior Youth and Young Adults will still share a special meal together, but it might not be for dinner and it might not be on the Sunday evening. Stay tuned for more details!

At this point there are many aspects of the program that still need to be finalized. This is new territory for the CUC, to hold such a specially focused conference, with youth and adult programming so intertwined—we are learning as we go! What will be the same for this year's CanUdle and Symposium is the chance to go deep: in exploring spiritual leadership, in connecting with new and old friends, in creating strong, inclusive, and intentional UU community.

For more information about this year's CanUdle, contact Co-Deans Kaleb & Andrea at: [canuudle-staff@cuc.ca](mailto:canuudle-staff@cuc.ca).

*Ariel Hunt-Brondwin,  
National Youth and Young Adult Programming  
& Ministry Development,  
Canadian Unitarian Council*

## When Social is Spiritual

In a real sense, the idea whose time has come today is the idea of freedom and human dignity. Wherever men are assembled today, the cry is always the same, “We want to be free.” And so we see in our own world a revolution of rising expectations. The great challenge facing every individual graduating today is to remain awake through this social revolution.

*Martin Luther King*

Unitarians are among the thousands of Canadians and others around the world who are demanding social change. What began as the Occupy Wall Street demonstration last October in New York City has since swelled to an international movement that expresses the public’s growing discontent with inequality. Today’s revolution is given voice by the Occupy Movement ([occupytogether.org](http://occupytogether.org)).

For many involved in social justice work, the connection between social justice and spirituality may not be so obvious.

Margaret Rao of the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto suggested that the Occupy Movement embraces the spiritual, as well as social movements, citing Occupiers who see the movement as more spiritual than anything else. As for herself, Margaret explained, “social justice is an integral part of spiritual practice. It is faith in action. We tend to divide categories into social versus spiritual, private versus public, but for me this is an artificial divide. The whole person includes body, mind, and soul. The political arena is the personal arena writ large—the whole human family, so to speak.”

For Rev. Fred Cappuccino, spirituality includes politics. In answer to the question, what gives him hope, he too cited the Occupy Movement. “There is power in truth. This is why the Occupy Movement has so much power—people are telling the truth.”

Christine Johnston, of the Social Responsibility Committee (SRC) of First Unitarian Church of Victoria, noted that “social justice activities are spiritual practice to several of us in the SRC. Even those of Buddhist persuasion, who favour meditation, use the phrase ‘Engaged Buddhism’ to sanctify social justice actions.”

How can congregations engage in social justice that is spiritually grounded? Rev. Fred Cappuccino maintained that it is important for social justice to connect with a religious tradition; for Unitarians, our seven principles serve as a guide. “You can’t build a church on social action—people go to church for comfort. On the other hand, if comfort is all there is, we are missing the mark.”

At Victoria First, according to Christine Johnston, “most of our actions relate directly to the seven principles, often to several of them. When we discuss the pros and cons of planned activities, this leads to a better awareness of the many issues involved. We have been talking recently in our meetings how misguided some so-called ‘charity’ is. In some cases a high percentage of donations goes to administration, fund-raising, and perks for staff.”

Christine also emphasized that sometimes people, including ministers, “focus on charity and food kitchens but have discouraged real social action. This is so blind. It is rescuing the drowning, but not looking upstream to dam the river which is causing it all. [Victoria First’s SRC] does both charitable giving—especially in crises (our life line service)—as well as social action. We involve the whole congregation in Action of the Month, and “Share the Plate” on Sundays, and this money goes to social action charities as well as ‘rescuing’ ones.”

Margaret Rao suggested, “one way we can engage our congregations in social justice that is spiritually grounded, is by working with other faith groups, including Kairos, the United Church, and other denominations who involve themselves in social justice work—on housing and refugee issues, for example. In Toronto we now *continued on page 11*



*continued from page 10* have an interfaith group in alliance with Occupy Toronto, called the Interfaith/Occupy Group which meets monthly at different congregations. [First Unitarian Church of Toronto] hosted the first such meeting and we are hosting another meeting in late January.”

Margaret is involved in another social justice organization, Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ). In addition to the website (cusj.org), “we’re also on facebook and we have a growing listserv (cusj-l@uua.org).” She noted that CUSJ President, Rev. Frances Deverell, “always begins and ends our meetings with a chalice lighting and prayer. Also, we are selling t-shirts with the message ‘Standing on the Side of Love and Justice’. It all begins and ends with love, which is a powerful spiritual message, I believe.”

So how can our UU movement in Canada have an impact on the world through our social justice work? Christine referred to Unitarian Universalists’

reputation for social justice and action: “One person can offer leadership to change our world. More and more we try to work with other agencies, whether interfaith, or with environmental groups, or USC [Unitarian Service Committee] or democracy and voting groups, etcetera.”

Margaret pointed out the global leadership of the UU-UNO office and its *Window on the World* newsletter. By thinking globally and acting locally, she said “individual congregations and CUSJ actions already have an impact on the world.” She highlighted the importance of building coalitions and alliances, to create a global justice network. Fred’s response was simple and to the point: “Do the things that have to be done.”

*Leslie Kemp,  
Social Responsibility Liaison,  
Canadian Unitarian Council, &  
Co-Chair, Spiritual Leadership Symposium  
Planning Team*

## **Be a Symposium Leader—Be a Volunteer**

There are many opportunities to share your gifts and wisdom during the Spiritual Leadership Symposium long weekend. Look for application information in your monthly e-news. Volunteers are being sought in areas such as:

- Assisting with the logistics of registration and session coordination
- Leading a spiritual practice session on Saturday and Sunday Co-leading a Touch Group



- Bringing art, music, dance, poetry, and other forms of artistic expression
- Being a facilitator—for one who has personal awareness, strong listening skills, and a holistic approach
- Bringing multi-media experience and talents
- Organizing children’s programming

## Spiritual Deepening Focus Streams

On Saturday, every participant will choose a Focus Stream from six being offered. Each stream contains a morning and afternoon session, with breaks. Focus Streams are designed to allow Symposium participants to deepen and expand their perspectives in a particular area. Opportunities to connect with participants in other Focus Streams are provided at lunch and the end of the day.

### 1 Spiritual Leadership: Self as Source

“Our deepest calling is to grow into our own authentic self-hood, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we ought to be. As we do so, we will not only find the joy that every human being seeks—we will also find our path of authentic service in the world.” ¶ *Parker L. Palmer, Let Your Life Speak*

What would it take to create a more integrated view of our sense of ourselves as leaders—allowing us to bring our full potential to the world? This stream is an exploration of ‘self’ and how we may authentically express ourselves as spiritual leaders. We will embark on a contemplative inquiry into the meaning and source of spiritual leadership. This stream will generate the clarity of a strong personal foundation. Then we will explore how to be fully available to the emergent future, guided by our deepest personal longings and aspirations.

### 2 Spiritual Leadership in Social Justice Work: The Joys and Challenges

“In my vision, ideally, every UU congregation serves as: a place to cultivate spiritual deepening, a place to coordinate social action efforts; and a place to explore and deepen the sense of connection between the two.” ¶ *Rev. Melora Lynngood*

How can social justice work be effective, sustain energy and commitment, and feed the soul? Through sharing stories of success and struggle as spiritual experience, the group will identify practices and strategies for increasing effectiveness and for nurturing the soul. Small groups will work with one of the several modalities: conversation, visual art, dance, music, writing, and poetry. Together we’ll reflect: What are we learning? What is the connection to spiritual leadership?

### 3 Growing Community: Spirit- ual Leadership in Daily Life

“If spirituality is anything, it is everything. Those who think about their spiritual lives as somehow separate and distinct from the rest of their lives don’t yet understand that spirituality is about wholeness. There is no separate spiritual sphere...” ¶ *Erik Walker Wikstrom, Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice*

This stream explores the link between spirit and active engagement in the world. Beginning with an exploration of what matters most to people, the group will engage body, mind, and heart to affirm their perspectives on spirit in action in the world. How can we bring our whole selves to daily leadership of organizations and communities? We will share stories, then engage with practices for expression of our whole selves, whatever the context.



## 4 Anyone's Ministry: Spiritual Leadership in Shared Ministry

“Whenever there is a meeting that summons us to our better selves, wherever our lostness is found, our fragments are united, our wounds begin healing, our spines stiffen and our muscles grow strong for the task, there is ministry.” *¶ Gordon B. McKeeman, Anyone's Ministry*

We all can ‘do ministry’ at any age, as an expression of our personal passion theology. This stream focuses on exploring the creative tension between ‘leadership’ and ‘ministry’. Provocateurs will be designated to stimulate and expand various perspectives.

## 5 Using Power and Authority Effectively, Ethically and Spiritually

“Show me the patterns of your church organization, and I’ll show you what the people of the church find worthiest of their loyalty. Organization and theology are not two different things. Our organization is a function of our actual theology.” *¶ Alice Blair Wesley*

In this stream, individuals focus on congregational leadership, examining distinctions between responsibility, accountability, and authority from a spiritual perspective. The facilitated sessions explore power from many perspectives, including our ambivalence, and the dynamics of power in decision-making and leadership. The group will explore impact and influence, sharing power and building a culture of trust. With all this in mind, we will explore approaches for getting things done in congregations.

## 6 Open Space: The Quest for Spiritual Leadership

What are you passionate about and willing to be responsible for exploring?

Open space technology is a process that consolidates the wisdom of the group to create the focus and range of dialogue that individuals desire. This alternative stream is designed for those who have a particular passion and perspective that the other streams may not address. It is a self-organizing process that is flexible, while being facilitated and structured to allow range and depth of conversations to occur. The process will continue throughout the day as a parallel stream, or streams.

## Will We Attend the Symposium?

You may be wondering whether a symposium on the topic of spiritual leadership is for you.

If you are someone who has attended CUC annual conferences in the past, you might be wondering what is a “Spiritual Leadership Symposium?” and “Is it something I want to attend?”

Or perhaps you have never attended a conference but might wish try this out.

Helping to support your existing and new leaders is an investment in your congregation. We suggest you participate if you are:

- open to new ideas about congregational life, and
- longing to make the connection between your spiritual grounding, congregational life, UU identity, and your role as an established or emerging leader.

We encourage you to bring your vision to the Symposium if:

- You are a youth involved in your congregation, who wants to connect with other youth and adults who share their passion about UU religion
- You are a senior who’s had leadership experience, and who wants to share with others
- You are a minister, a ministerial candidate, or an aspiring minister
- You play an active role in your congregation
- You are new to Unitarianism but want to engage in a more meaningful way
- You are a young adult who isn’t connected to a congregation but wants to be connected to the UU movement in Canada
- You are active in social justice work, in your congregations and/or in the CUC

- You play a key leadership role in your congregation (such as board, committee chair)
- You think you might play a key role in leadership in your congregation down the road
- You are a professional or volunteer religious educator
- You have a passion for congregational music as a way of energizing congregational vitality and spirit
- You are a CUUL School or Goldmine graduate or facilitator
- You are interested in building a strong UU movement in Canada
- You are a life-long learner and open to learning from others as well as sharing your own wisdom

This is not an exhaustive list but we hope you get the idea. This Symposium will engage you in questioning, exploring, and sharing. It is designed to engage a different kind of participation, and result in a very different experience from the CUC annual conferences.

Our goal in offering the Symposium is to encourage a national conversation about how we make the connections between our congregational life and our personal spiritual life.

Ideally, congregations will identify a team of leaders to attend—leaders who will then return to help engage the members of their congregation in the same conversation.

We encourage you to think about the kind of team that would best represent your congregation at the Symposium. Who are your current leaders? Who are your future leaders?

If you are a large congregation, you might want to think about sending a team of *continued on page 15*

*continued from page 14* 20 or more participants. If you are small, perhaps five people will be enough. The idea is to enhance learning through the numbers of people bringing back ideas to your own congregation.

A diverse, multigenerational mix of participants will also enhance learning, so please keep this in mind when you choose your delegates for the AGM (business meeting), and in identifying others you might encourage or support to participate in the Symposium. Please note that the youth con-

ference, CanUUdle XII, is interconnected with the Symposium—youth attendees will automatically be participants in both.

As an investment in your congregation, support your existing and new leaders in attending the Spiritual Leadership Symposium this May. Support them because it is an investment in our future as a UU movement.

*Spiritual Leadership Symposium Planning Team,  
Canadian Unitarian Council*



## What is the Spiritual Leadership Symposium? *(continued)*

*continued from page 8*

### INTENDED OUTCOMES

Having spent the weekend focused on the idea of leading with spiritual intention, participants will leave with the following tools:

1. Be able to articulate faith, mission, and purpose, individually and collectively.
2. Discern the key elements of spiritual leadership as it relates to ministry and decision-making.
3. Bring ideas and support for all of these learnings into congregational and daily life.
4. Be able to articulate how to move forward individually, in congregations, and as a movement.

### OUR GUEST PROVOCATEUR

Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom, author of *Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice*, joins us for the entire weekend, leading the keynote conversation and acting as *animateur* and provocateur.

“This is the most exciting project anyone has ever invited me to participate in!”

*Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom  
Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church-  
Unitarian Universalist, Charlottesville, VA*

Erik will engage and support explorations in ways to transform the busyness of congregational and denominational life into spiritual work that nurtures our souls. 

## SYMPOSIUM WEEKEND AT A GLANCE

FRIDAY, MAY 18

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*(Preceded by the **CUC AGM Plenary Session** on Thursday evening and the **Business Meeting** all day Friday)*

**Symposium Opening** ♡ Gathering and recognizing an expansive notion of spiritual leadership, and affirm a Symposium covenant.

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*7:00PM–9:30PM*

Welcome, keynote address, dialogue, and Touch Groups.

SATURDAY, MAY 19

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**Deepening the Dialogue** ♡ Exploring one of a selection of focus streams. Meeting with the Touch Group after lunch and at the end of the day. Assembling together twice, to cross-fertilize ideas and learning.

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**Morning Beginnings** ♡ A spiritual practice menu of various activities including yoga, music, walks, meditation, drumming and circle dance (*for details on times and locations see website*).

*9:30AM–6:PM*

Symposium programming, including Spiritual Deepening Focus Streams, lunch, and Touch Groups.

*EVENING*

**Dinner and Small Groups** ♡ Off site; organized and hosted by Ottawa volunteers.

SUNDAY, MAY 20

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**Stepping Boldly into the Future** ♡ Bringing individual and collective meaning to spiritual leadership. Committing to moving forward in personal and congregational life and beyond. Developing and affirming a covenant.

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**Morning Beginnings** ♡ A spiritual practice menu of various activities including yoga, music, walks, meditation, drumming and circle dance (*for details on times and locations see website*).

*10:30AM–11:30 AM*

Sunday Worship

*12 NOON–5:45PM*

Lunch, afternoon program, and Touch Groups

*6:30PM–9:00PM*

**Leadership Dinner and Closure** ♡ Celebrating the collective discernment of the weekend—through conversation, multimedia, and artistic expression. Recognizing the diverse leadership in our midst, and manifesting a commitment to ongoing spiritual leadership.



## Register for the Symposium at: [2012symposium.cuc.ca](http://2012symposium.cuc.ca)

### REGISTRATION FEES

*(including lunch for Saturday and Sunday, and Sunday evening Leadership Dinner)*

#### Adults (18+):

\$295	By March 31
\$345	Between April 1 and April 30

#### CanWdle (14-20):

\$100	Youth by March 31
\$60	Advisors by March 31
\$125	Youth between April 1 and April 30
\$85	Advisors between April 1 and April 30

#### Young Fun (7-11)/Junior Youth Programs (12-14):

\$75	By March 31
\$100	Between April 1 and April 30

#### Children (6 and under):

\$50	By March 31
\$75	Between April 1 and April 30

### ACCOMMODATION

#### The Westin Ottawa

11 Colonel By Drive,  
Ottawa, ON K1N 9H4.

tel: (613) 560-7000

[www.starwoodhotels.com/westin/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=1083](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/westin/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=1083)

For discounted accommodations, book by April 17 and mention that it is for the CUC conference.

#### Discounted rates (double occupancy):

\$119	Traditional
\$169	Deluxe
\$139	Premium
\$20 each	3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> occupant <i>(free if under 18 years)</i>

The Symposium Planning Team is grateful for the support of the Ottawa UU community in this unique and exciting endeavour. Even without an official host congregation, we are fortunate to be able to host this event in Ottawa, and appreciate the contributions of local volunteers.

## The Big, Bad Business Meeting

“You want me to go to what?” I asked. “The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Uni—what?”

Several years ago, I was attending the May conference, and it happened that my congregation was short one official representative. So I went to the AGM as a delegate. I thought that the purpose of the meeting was to debate issues and make decisions—an assumption I made without really considering the logistics of how that might work.

As I recall, there was hardly time to hear what an issue was about, let alone have any reasonable debate before the question was called. Add to this the stifling formality of the process, and by the end of the day I was seriously questioning why I had bothered participating in the first place.

Before the Spiritual Leadership Symposium begins in May this year, there will be another AGM. For delegates and observers alike, I am hoping that your experience will be vastly better than mine was. As president of the Canadian Unitarian Council, I considered inserting a half time show—that seems to work for football. I considered incorporating fireworks into the presentation, before I remembered the difficulties just getting permission for an open flame in the chalice.

This year I would like to guarantee an AGM that is fast-paced, entertaining, and free of administrative duties—but this seems even less realistic than the fireworks idea. There will be formalities. *Robert’s Rules of Order* (the latest edition) will be the referee yet again. I can promise that some parts of the meeting will involve lively discussion, and other parts will be repetitive necessities that are part of the ritual of caring for our national organization.

But I believe that there will be a real difference this year at the Annual General Meeting, for delegates as well as those they represent—stemming from the months leading up to the meeting itself.

This year you have the opportunity to review significant issues requiring decision at the meeting through online discussion forums. My hope is to have an open forum, and a forum for delegates only, on each issue. (To this end, congregations should choose their delegates as soon as it is feasible.)

In addition, we are planning a plenary session to be held the evening before the day of the meeting, for discussion and fine-tuning of resolutions.

Our goal is to bring attention to the issues well in advance, and allow time for debate prior to the actual meeting. By doing so, we anticipate that the decisions made at the annual meeting will reflect the informed decision of the Council—decisions that your delegates will bring back home.

As the endpoint of an involved process, we hope to make this year’s AGM as effective as possible by providing the opportunity for you, the member societies, to give direction to your Board of Trustees and to hear from us about the work that we have been doing on your behalf.

I invite you to join us in this, your Annual General Meeting. I look forward to seeing you there!

Gary Groot,  
President,

Canadian Unitarian Council



## Democracy and the Millennial Generation

One of my favorite games to play with friends when we are attending certain UU events, functions or gatherings is the “We-are-the-youngest-here-by-a-gap-of-how-many-years?” game. Depending on the function it can range from a few, to upwards of forty years.

At the last Annual General Meeting of First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, one member of the congregation pointed out that I was the only member representing the so-called Millennial Generation and there were only two Gen Xers. This is to be expected; research on the Millennial Generation—those born roughly between 1983 and 2003—shows we hold distinctly new concepts about the definition of democratic engagement.

As reported by the National Conference on Citizenship, “if we compare Millennial to previous generations when they were young, the Millennials appear more engaged than Generation X and engaged in different ways from the Boomers”.

We Millennials are seeing the flouting of traditional structures of engagement: voting, political parties, local government. Instead we are witnessing more issue-based awareness, advocacy, and engagement.

Which is why, when 500 people gathered in an Ottawa downtown park, in the rain, to participate in Ottawa’s local general assembly as part of the Occupy Everywhere movement, a good preponderance of those gathered were Millennials—participating in one of this country’s most poignant experience of direct democracy in decades. I wonder how many people would show up to a congregational meeting if it took place in the rain?

But this is not to say the style of democratic engagement at Occupy Ottawa was particularly smooth, or functional. However, it was a form of engagement that included: transparency in the pro-

cess (in fact the assembly decided upon the process); equality among participants; and the decisions made had immediate and tangible results.

The general assembly, within the larger structure of the Occupy Movement, was the apex of diverse, flexible, non-hierarchical committees, in which people participated immediately and had their input considered equally.

This trait—that ideas should be judged on their own worth, combined with a disdain for a hierarchy, or structured process, for input—makes the traditional structures of many organizations stifling for the Millennial Generation. (Of course not all members of the Millennial Generation exhibit these characteristics, which are also not entirely exclusive to my generation.)

Our Unitarian Universalist history of congregational democracy is rooted in our identity and our theological outlook. This is a powerful, radical, and important tradition.

However, at times I wonder how our congregational democracy can evolve to meet the changing cultural and generational landscape. I feel we would much rather play at democracy than truly embody it.

How can we incorporate more flexible, non-hierarchical, and direct forms of democratic engagement outside of the board/AGM model in our congregations? What would be the governance structure of the Millennial Church?

This is not a call to occupy our churches or their respective boards, but a call to re-imagine our democratic structures.

*Sean Barron,  
First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa*

## New Church for a New Generation

Last night I did my first counselling session by text message.

A 26 year-old parishioner reached me by text with an immediate problem. We exchanged several messages (of 140 characters or less) wherein I mostly affirmed a choice she was making, and our appointment was done.

A year ago I would have reacted differently. Counselling happens face to face, or maybe on the phone, right? Spiritual leadership takes place in worship, or in congregational meetings, or on retreats—just like we have always done it.

Uh-oh. In the 30 years I have been a Unitarian, I've been warned about that phrase: just like we have always done it.

Text counselling is certainly not how I've always done it, but then this parishioner wasn't me (a 56 year-old guy who grew up with black and white TV and a Bakelite telephone).

As a new, networking generation grows into prominence, the expectations of spiritual leadership must change. It starts with learning the use of new technologies, but is really about how those technologies change us. Will Canadian Unitarianism be able to adapt and succeed in this environment?

It's not a message problem. Our message of personal religious and spiritual freedom suits the new age just fine. If we have to change, it will be the way we manifest our leadership.

At the CUC ACM last year, demographer David Foote demonstrated that our leadership faces a two-fold challenge. We still have a strong Baby Boom bubble moving into senior years, who think of church as a place where you go, physically. Community grows from seeing each other, worshipping, celebrating, and grieving together.

This large demographic group pays the bills in our churches and provides the decreasing num-

ber of volunteers, on which the communities rely. Foote said we had an obligation to provide these folks with their kind of church. But we also have to look to the future and prepare to serve a different set of needs.

The Network Generation is a term I coin not to describe an age group as such, but rather people who embrace the different emerging technologies. Research suggests that there is a dramatic change in how this group participates in community.

It might be that spiritual leadership will need to be more about facilitation within an ever-evolving congregation that is perpetually in flux. It might be that church events will need to be structured less around committees, and geared more to one-shot volunteer opportunities judged by a flexible standard of success.

And almost certainly, Sunday services will need to change. Readings will include YouTube videos and blog excerpts, streaming video conversations and the like. The First Unitarian Church of Victoria recently experimented with streaming their Young Adult-led service live on the Internet. You don't have to physically attend church to go to church; and you don't have to live in the same city as the church you 'attend'.

How to accomplish the routine work of the church and how to finance it are new dilemmas.

Spiritual leadership in the next few years will be asked to consider how the essence of our Unitarian tradition can be made to work in this emerging climate, even as we attend to the continuing needs of the Boomers.

*Rev. Brian Kiely,  
Unitarian Church of Edmonton, &  
President, International Council of  
Unitarians and Universalists*

## Finding Our Prophetic Voice

*Wake, now, my vision of ministry clear;  
Brighten my pathway with radiance here;  
Mingle my calling with all who will share;  
Work toward a planet transformed by our care.*

The words of Thomas Mikelson’s hymn, “Wake, Now, My Senses”, invite us to engage collectively in transforming our world. Unitarian Universalists have a long and successful history in the pursuit of social justice. Our motivation springs naturally from a loving compassion towards those who suffer and an ailing planet. We target our efforts towards eliminating (or, at least, reducing) specific ills of society, such as hunger, poverty, conflict, oppression. This form of social action is, of necessity, reactive; it seeks to transform society by moving away from its ills.

But do we Canadian Unitarian Universalists have more to offer? Our Sixth Principle asks us to affirm and promote “the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.” Rather than just moving away from a ‘bad’ world, we are invited to envision a UU equivalent to “the kingdom of heaven on earth”—in other words, a utopia. It empowers UUs to speak of a world to come, with a vision guiding us forward in social action.

We have the opportunity to engage in societal transformation that is revolutionary rather than reactionary, moving towards a shared goal. In so doing, our individual and common voices become truly prophetic.

Operating in a ‘prophetic mode’, our social justice initiatives are more likely to result in fundamental and systemic changes in society. By moving towards a compelling vision of a better world, we attain a sense of the big picture, and are able to foster a more coherent and co-ordinated strategy. Being inspired by a positive and nurturing shared vision, those initiatives are more likely to be infused with

our UU principles and values. (Traditional social action sadly often becomes derisive and confrontational, tainted by anger, and despair of the current human and world condition.)

If UUs are to embark on this mission of co-ordinated and coherent fundamental societal transformation we need leadership, both spiritual and logistical. Our spiritual leaders can help Canadian UUs articulate the world vision described in the Sixth Principle. That articulation must go well beyond vague generalizations about worthy concepts and propose tangible models of human interaction within realistic political and economic constraints.

Perhaps most importantly, our spiritual leaders can help us understand that the vision of our utopia is not some distant dream. It starts today—to all of us, with our next breath.

This turning of the heart permits us to tap into the imminent force of love and compassion that flows from our faith and trust in the dawning future, calling us to imbue every action from today onwards with the values expressed in all our Seven Principles, and to live with honour and integrity.

Our ministers can demonstrate leadership by inspiring us with the vision and its possibilities, and they can help us when we fall short in our actions, individually and collectively.

Fundamental and lasting societal transformation will only come about with a clear vision and a coherent strategy. Are Canadian UUs ready to play a lead role? To do this, we must muster the necessary spiritual leadership and speak with a truly prophetic voice—and then act as we speak.

*Kalvin Drake,  
First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto*

## Young Adults: Strong Presence and Community

Last year over 50 young adults gathered at the Annual Conference and Meeting in Toronto; together we explored our faith and continued creating a community of Young Adult UUs.

This year we are planning a Young Adult post-conference day on the holiday Monday following the Symposium, and social events outside of the Symposium schedule. We are encouraging as many Young Adults as possible to attend the Symposium and participate fully in the discussions and workshops. Much-loved traditions such as the Bridging ceremony for older youth, and the Bridger dinner—where older youth join the Young Adult community for a shared meal—will still take place, although they may look a bit different from past years. More details are still to come!

**Are you a Young Adult wondering what to expect and how to attend?** By attending the Symposium, you can use your voice to help shape our Canadian UU future. Through our fun social gatherings, Bridging events, and young adult worships, you'll also meet lots of other young adults from across Canada and continue to build our national young adult community. Join us on Monday, May 21, for a post-conference day of Young Adult community building, worship, and socializing. It should be a blast!

**Start Planning Now.** If you are part of a congregation, now is a great time to approach them about possibilities for financial support, and maybe even volunteer to serve as one of your congregation's delegates for the business meeting during the day on Friday (note: you don't have to be a delegate to participate in the Symposium, just the business meeting portion). We will be arranging billeting for as many Young Adults as possible, so contact us if you need a place to stay for the weekend, and we'll help you out! More information will be coming over the next few

months, but now is the time to start making plans to come to Ottawa if you are interested.

**Are You an Ally to Young Adults?** Would you like to support the YA community? There are several ways you can help: suggest that your congregation provides financial aid in getting some eager Young Adults to the Symposium, maybe even nominate some Young Adults to act as your congregation's delegates for the business meetings. If you live in Ottawa and can offer a bed/couch/floor space to a young adult from out of town, please let us know!

If you can contribute to our fundraising efforts to make attendance more affordable, again, please let us know!

### **Air Miles and Aeroplan Points Take Us Farther.**

If you shop anywhere that collects Air Miles or Aeroplan points, then please consider downloading and printing off our group reward miles cards and collecting miles on our behalf! These miles will help us reduce costs of attendance for our key volunteers and others who may not otherwise be able to attend our events. To learn more, and download the cards, see the side bar of the October eNews: [cuc.ca/enews/october2011/social-justice.html#ya-travel](http://cuc.ca/enews/october2011/social-justice.html#ya-travel)

The Young Adult community is growing stronger and more vibrant all the time, and this gathering in May will help keep the momentum going. Stay tuned to the Symposium website: [2012symposium.cuc.ca](http://2012symposium.cuc.ca)—for all Young Adult information.

We hope to see you there!

*Ian Corlett & Chris Mishra,  
Co-Chairs, YA May Gathering Planning Committee,  
[uu-ya-may-co-chairs@googlegroups.com](mailto:uu-ya-may-co-chairs@googlegroups.com)*

## Leadership Can Be Learned

Once upon a time my home congregation blessed me with ordination and sent me out into the world to do ministry and be a minister. They were the spiritual leaders who had guided my steps since childhood, and they sent me forth to be a spiritual leader in my turn. Ten years down the road, I think I'm beginning to get the hang of it.

What makes this leadership spiritual? In his book *Reason and Reverence*, William Murry speaks of spirituality as, "a quality of life in the here and now, a quality that has to do with genuineness, depth, and devotion to values other than my own self-interest."

As to the leadership part, folks have been trying to teach me leadership since I was a wide-eyed air cadet first accepting public responsibility. Our squadron leader was a grizzled hero with a chest full of medals earned the hard way. His demeanour inspired trust: patient, calm, and rock steady. He listened. And when he spoke, I listened. As the Buddhists would have it: "When the student is ready, the teacher appears."

What I heard him say was that when we accept a position of public trust, we accept responsibility for things beyond our control. In other words, he was responsible when things went wrong, even if it wasn't his fault, because his job was to keep his head up and keep a good look-out and keep his eye on the big picture.

Nowadays we might talk about 'the view from the balcony'. Nowadays we might talk about 'letting go of outcomes'.

We learn by making mistakes. (My mother says, "If you're not making mistakes, you're not doing any work." I cling to that thought when stuff falls apart in my hands.)

We do the best we can with what we've got, we listen to one another, and we listen for that

small voice within.

My old squadron leader spoke of choosing priorities. Make a commitment. Show up. Let your nay be nay, and your yes be present and ungrudging. We show up. In leadership there is no substitute for shared experience.

Underneath these maxims is a greater truth: leadership can be learned.

I have learned that to offer spiritual leadership, first I must learn to lead myself. "Know thyself", as the ancient Greeks were wont to say. "Then get thyself out of the way and listen to what the rest of us are trying to tell you!" as my hospital chaplaincy mentor was wont to say.

For example, knowing the self I walk around in, means knowing I need downtime to function well. I need to get out of town from time to time, to see what was in front of my face all the while. I need to get enough sleep so I don't snarl at innocent bystanders who are standing between me and my morning Sudoku.

Know thyself means this self needs to sing, needs to read, needs to walk in the rain. Know thyself means that I can prate all day long about spiritual leadership, but it is the model of my own life that is most compelling.

And that is the thought I want to leave with you: it is the example of our own life that is our most compelling contribution to spiritual leadership. Show us what it looks like, to live a life of integrity, of "genuineness, depth, and devotion to values other than [one's] own self-interest".

May it be so.

Rev. Fran Dearman,  
Interim Minister,  
Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax

## The Corner Store at Church

“Spiritual Leadership, isn’t that the minister’s job?”

“I thought that was why we have a rabbi.”

“The priest provides spiritual leadership.”

In some congregations, some denominations, these statements might be true. But Unitarians and Unitarian Universalists follow a tradition that honours the ‘priesthood of all believers’. We are all called to invest ourselves in practices that carry community towards a vision.

Vision is an individual attribute. One person’s vision will never match another’s exactly. However in a community of like-minded people, such as a congregation, these personal visions are likely to harmonize. In a congregation where ministry is shared, anyone can be a spiritual leader just by publicly acting in ways that lead in the direction his or her own vision lies.

At the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg, Steve Lennon operates the corner store/gift shop in the foyer. He is usually there setting up before the worship service on Sundays, and attending to customers in the social hour afterwards. When he can’t be there, he calls on a small cadre of people who will stand in for him. The shop handles fair trade commodities, locally grown products, and specialty items created by congregation members. Steve does not announce that he is promoting a vision of a world where the people who produce things we purchase and use are respected and justly compensated, but that is the consequence of the business he runs—and he makes money for the church.

The corner store is not Steve’s only way of connecting with the life of the church, and he is certainly not the only one practising spiritual leadership. Others are equally visible in welcoming visitors on Sunday mornings, providing refreshments for the social hour, and cleaning up the kitchen. Some people come early to clear the walkways on snowy winter mornings, or come on Saturdays to tend the gardens. Service to the congregation, freely and lovingly given, models community in ways our vision statements only hint at. Spiritual leadership is found in those who live their visions and make them real.



*Roger Rochester,  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg*