

# THE CANADIAN UNITARIAN



NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL • VOLUME 56 • NUMBER 2 • FALL 2014

## “I will never be out there getting arrested,”

I was once told by a Unitarian who has accomplished stunning things in Environmental Justice over many decades “Because it would undermine my ability to interface with the government on policy and research. But I am always mindful that we need people out there taking those kinds of actions because we all fit together as a movement to accomplish our goals. They need me at home, reading research, and creating careful and considered statements. And I need them out there doing big public actions that create political pressure. It’s symbiotic.”

We heard about a complex ecosystem in this year’s ACM Confluence Lecture—about how the future landscape of Unitarianism might encompass many diverse, yet intertwined and interrelated elements. I can’t help but think about how that might apply to social justice. I imagine a movement where we’ve taken the energy that we (sometimes) put into achieving a unified voice and pour it unequivocally into giving voice to the things we are each called to say—individually and in sub-groups—with passion and zeal. I dream that we might have a minister working in an interfaith setting, having tough conversations in a moderate and careful way, at the same time as another group of Unitarians might be holding a dramatic and unequivocal protest. Still another group might be lobbying the government, while another launches a “voice for the voiceless” campaign on social media, and yet another is hosting conversations on economic justice in our investments. As a movement, we might embody a diversity of both methods and perspectives.

We come from a long tradition of rich conversations and thoughtful stances. I don’t think that era has ended, but I think it is time to recognize that our modern world has an incredible diversity of venues for those stances.

When working for justice, equity, and compassion, it is worth spending some time to choose the right tool for the job. Some issues will lend themselves to unity. For others, the time required to reach consensus will simply

not offer a good enough ‘return on investment’. Sometimes the issues at hand will be more amenable to the complex ecosystem approach, seeing Unitarians on the front lines tackling injustice from many angles in ways that are interconnected, mutually trusting, and heartfelt.

And yes, we run the risk of having conversations that start out with “You’re Unitarian, right? How is it that you’ve got some of your people cozying up in interfaith stuff and others on protest lines, and you guys

are doing all these different things at once that sometimes contradict?”

I am not scared of that question. I am happy to explain about how we are called to different things in different ways but we hold that tension in covenant and support one another through thick and thin. I dream about the day I get to answer that question.

It beats “Unitarian, what’s that?” any day of the week.

“I am large,  
I contain  
multitudes.”  
— Walt Whitman

*Liz James*

*Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon*



# THE CANADIAN UNITARIAN

VOLUME 56 • NUMBER 2 • FALL 2014

<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 \$9 CDN or USD. 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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A beautiful day and a rainbow of colours: second in Canada to perform a same-sex marriage (back in 1976), the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax was out in force for the 2014 Halifax Pride Parade.



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## Letters to the Editor

### *Breath of spring air*

I read online the spring issue [The Canadian Unitarian, vol 56, no. 1] cover to cover. It was my breath of spring air in this cold winter. So much is set out in 32 pages, ending with a poetic focus on one of our key sources, the inter-dependent web. (The six Sources identified by the UUA mean even more to me than the seven Principles. The former feed our faith.)

Plaudits and congratulations,

*Charles Eddis,  
Montreal, QC*

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### *Support for Boycott and Divestment*

As a Unitarian through baptism, I must tell you I fully support the [Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ)] lucid and courageous discussion paper on Israel and Palestine, and the study group's decision to adopt the Boycott and Divestment Strategy. I have been there; I have seen [Palestinians'] conditions. I have seen the lack of progress, not to say deplorable reversal of progress, in that context.

*Mary Ellen Davis,  
Montreal, QC*

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Thanks to Rev. Norm Horofker



## Change in Direction—In Search of a New Vision

It's been five months since the 2014 May Annual General Meeting and conference. The CUC Board of Trustees has been following up on major agenda issues from that meeting. The delegates had given the Board approval to consult with CUC member congregations to determine the process by which they will be consulted about a Vision for the UU Movement in Canada in changing times.

For many of us the term "visioning" may conjure up past workshop exercises, with varied reflections. We've been talking about "growing" congregations and our CUC organization for decades. I recall Tom Harpur's article (author of *The Pagan Christ*) in the *Globe and Mail* in 2005, stating that, "...Unitarianism is the best kept secret..."

So where are we with all that growth effort in our liberal faith tradition? For many organized religions, attendance and contributions have plummeted in recent years. The CUC overall has experienced a decrease as well. However, some of our congregations, both large and small, are doing very well.

At this point in our history in a rapidly changing world, what form will visioning take, for our faith community in Canada – for all Canadian UUs, not just the CUC or individual congregation?

There are some things that we do know.

As a faith community, we are not insulated from changes in technology, communication, globalization, personal and group codes of ethics, social responsibility, world views, etc. How we adapt to change impacts whether we merely exist or thrive as a faith community. We also know that any new direction for Canadian UUs will have to go beyond the Sunday morning service and our congregational walls.

It has been helpful to Board work to have developed a greater collaboration with the UU Ministers of Canada UUMOC) on several issues in recent years. A new vision for the UU Movement would explore partnering with professional ministry in many different contexts.

In preparation for developing a process for consultation with CUC members, the Board plans to gather responses from all congregations and communities. Our congregations, communities and affiliates include congregations, Youth, Young Adults, Canadian UU Religious Educators (CUURE), Music directors, Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ), Lay Chaplains, and UU Ministers Of Canada, to name a few.

*continued on page 5*

## Staying in School in Burundi

Angelica Niyonzima, 14 years, is an orphan living in Muyinga province and supporting her three brothers. Irakoze Gloria, 12, lives in Gitega. Her father is a farmer who cannot support the education of all his children. Nine year-old Jean lives on the streets of Muyinga, doing small jobs after school and begging to survive.

Over the past two years, the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) and some of its member congregations took up special collections, then partnered with the Unitarian Church of Burundi, (*Assemblée des Chrétiens Unitariens du Burundi*, or ACUB) on a series of projects, the first of which is aimed at supporting school children, many of whom live on the street. Other orphans live with grandmothers, aunts, or other relatives.

This special collaboration fits perfectly with the social justice work of the Unitarian Church of Burundi, which

strives to care for and all vulnerable people, especially children and youth.

Although the children who need support for their basic needs and education were many—up to 600—we had to make a hard choice and select 150 vulnerable children, 100 of whom are girls. (Girls are often the first in families to be pulled out of school to help at home and in the fields.) We were able to distribute to each school child, a bag, copy books, a mathematical box, school uniform, and pens. A full report, including financials, is available from the CUC.

Today, with help from the CUC and its members, Angelica is able to continue her studies in 8th grade. She is very happy to be supported by the Unitarian Church of Burundi and hopes to be able to support others when she finishes her education. Irakoze is enjoying 6th grade, and 4th grader Jean, who depends on support for his education every year, feels grateful he is not alone.

*continued from page 4*

Those of us who attended the “Imagining New UU Communities” stream at the 2014 Annual Conference and Meeting, recognize the creative juices of Young Adults. The voice of youth and young adults will be a critical component of any future direction for the UU Movement.

The CUC priorities that were approved at the AGM are worth noting because they point toward the future and indirectly relate to the visioning process. These are: i) to focus on networking and connecting, and gather resources for our shared ministry; ii) to develop a flexible communication system (tools, platform and strategies); and iii) to foster innovation in the growth and development of UU communities.

The Board is developing a process model for use by congregations and communities as they discuss visioning and record outcomes.

The first trial run of this process was done by the Board and staff at the face to face meeting in September 2014. UUMOSO (UU Ministers of Southern Ontario) has also tested and given input on the model. Further opportunities for this conversation will also be available at the three 2014 Regional Fall Gatherings and the

Central Region Networking Day. A final version of the visioning process model, and schedule of events with timelines, will be distributed to all congregations and communities with ample time for a response.

To get back to where we started - will this exercise be visioning as usual? We hope not. For those doubting souls who still wonder why we are spending the time, I borrow from my education background. Some wise person once said, ‘If you don’t know where you want to go, there’s a good chance you won’t get there’.

With the participation of our congregations and communities, we are hoping for a rich, creative and inclusive perspective to guide our next steps toward a future-ready Vision for the UU Movement.

Don’t miss the opportunity to participate and share in the process. This could be the start of something big!

In UU commitment,



*Glenda Butt  
President*

*Canadian Unitarian Council*

### **Next Steps: Health and Well-Being**

In terms of the future, we plan to support the children with healthcare cards that allow each child and family members to have access to the doctors, medications, immunization, and hospital care. The plan is, with support from the CUC, to provide these cards to 600 children and their families.

Many of these orphans are cared for by their grandmothers, their aunts, or other relatives. We are planning to give seeds and organic fertilizers so that they may grow vegetables in the gardens around their houses, to have additional nutrition for the children.

This project was the first of its kind between the CUC and the ACUB and we think and hope it is only the beginning of a fruitful partnership between the two organizations, for the advancement of our values, and the benefit of people in need.

*Rev. Ndagijimana Fulgence*

*Coordinator of the project*

*Assemblée des Chrétiens Unitariens du Burundi*



With help from CUC members, 4th grader Jean is able to continue his studies this year. Jean lives on the street; after school he does odd jobs and begs to support himself.

## Network. Connect. Communicate. Innovate. Grow.

These words, for me, are the focal points in the priorities outlined by the CUC Board. As staff who is charged with carrying out these priorities, I would like to share with you how we, as a staff team, have developed a creative and reasonable plan to meet the priorities, and engage with congregations. First we created a guiding statement:

*“As Canadian Unitarian Council Congregational Development Staff, guided by our Principles, we engage with congregations and communities in becoming transformative, dynamic and joyful, and grounded in Unitarian Universalism by sharing best practices. Staff work by connecting, consulting, convening, and communicating.”*

Using this guide we will engage with congregations and communities in these areas:

**Building Beloved Community**, helping our leaders lead; connecting, strengthening and growing communities; radical inclusion and solidarity; small group ministry; social justice; multigenerational relationships; professional and shared ministry; national and international communities;

**Lifespan Religious Exploration**, including fostering learning and faith development; safe congregations; program and curriculum consultation; Religious Exploration staffing and volunteer support;

**Spiritual Growth**, including excellence in worship and programming; celebration of theological diversity; living values of inclusivity; multi-generational worship and programming; lay chaplaincy; spiritual deepening;

**Community Resilience**, including governance: structures, policies, and processes; vision and mission; pathways to membership; leadership development; managing transformation and change; financial stewardship; conflict management; volunteer engagement.

How will we do this? By networking and connecting, gathering resources for the benefit of the UU community, developing a flexible communications system, and fostering innovation in the growth and development of UU communities. In addition, wherever possible, we aim to achieve several priorities in any given interaction.

For example, in *Building Beloved Community*, we will connect a congregation interested in sponsoring a refugee family, with a congregation that has successfully completed a sponsorship process, using staff as intermediary and support, through a web-based conferencing tool. Resources derived from this exchange of support, networking and knowledge-sharing will all be further shared with our national community on the CUC website.

## CUC Board Priorities:

**Focus on networking and connecting, and gather resources for the benefit of our shared ministry**

**Develop flexible communications capabilities**

**Foster innovation in the growth and development of UU communities**

Additionally, staff will push beyond our own boundaries. The regionally based staffing and congregational model served us well in getting the CUC started as we transitioned away from the Unitarian Universalist Association in 2002.

Now, using that model as a base, our staffing positions will be national in focus. While the Congregational Development staff will remain the lead staff for their regions, they will also engage with congregations in other regions as the need arises, according to their areas of specialty.

Further, the CUC board is leading the entire Council through a visioning process, started in 2013. Over the coming fall and winter, you will be asked to help shape a vision, for the future of Canadian Unitarian Universalism. Information will be shared continuously on the CUC website and on Facebook.

As a faith community, we know the value of our Principles and how these guide our lives. In order to sustain ourselves and thrive in the future, we need to go into new territory. The priorities that the board has envisioned, and the plan that staff have developed, will take us there.

In faith,



*Vyda Ng*  
Executive Director  
Canadian Unitarian Council

## May the road rise up to meet you...

The CUC extends warm wishes to Rev. Antonia Won, leaving her role as Congregational Development Lead in British Columbia and the Western Region. Since 2010, Antonia has brought us her deep knowledge of congregational dynamics, ministerial processes, and strong commitment to Unitarian Universalism. Antonia has taken a full-time developmental ministry position with the UU Fellowship of Central Oregon.

**The CUC also takes pleasure in welcoming new staff:** Joan Carolyn as Congregational Development Lead in British Columbia and the Western Region, and Tisann McSween in a new role combination, as Office and Events Coordinator. All staff biographies can be found at, <http://cuc.ca/staff/>

## National Approach to Social Responsibility

How can we find creative ways and means to connect members and friends across the country, that have an interest in the same issues—for better, stronger, more effective networking and actions?

After consultation with CUC Monitoring Group Chairs, congregational leaders, Youth and Young Adult (YaYA) leaders, other interested or concerned UUs, as well as several interfaith community representatives, a National Social Responsibility Initiative has been presented to the CUC board, using the new Board Priorities as a guide:

My role as the CUC Social Responsibility Coordinator is to help facilitate this new, cross-nation focus—connecting groups and individuals, supporting initiatives, and sharing successes. My goal is to expand collaborations with existing and new social justice leaders to help coordinate our congregations' efforts regarding issues of a national nature. A few projects and resources we are currently working on include: the Truth & Reconciliation Curriculum: the revision and launch of a new Diversity program; a UU refugee sponsorship guide; and follow-up regarding the 2013 Climate Change resolution.

### Here's a sneak peek at the goals of the revised Celebrating Diversity (CD) program of the Diversity Monitoring Group (DMG):

"We are framing the new CD program not only around the social identity of Ancestry & Culture (ethnicity, race, shade, national origin, and language), but also around seven other social identity groups. The DMG intends to create a space where all people can be treated with respect and dignity in their own social setting, while addressing issues relevant to their community."

Key to the ongoing success and growth of this national approach, is continued communications with you on best ways to 'do' Social Responsibility (SR); how to become involved, support, and lead SR efforts. Please forward your thoughts, ideas, and any related questions to [april@cuc.ca](mailto:april@cuc.ca).

I would like to thank those who have shared their thoughts and inspirations with me, and look forward to making new connections to see what other amazing ideas spring from our UU community!

*April Hope*  
Social Responsibility Coordinator  
Canadian Unitarian Council



# Selma in '65

I was 16 years-old and a member of a Chicago LRY (Liberal Religious Youth) group in 1965, when suddenly several members of our congregation flew or drove to Selma, Alabama, to help Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. with a voter registration drive. We kids heard the Selma racists had killed a Unitarian minister, and that the police were on the racists' side. We were scared.

We didn't know then that Selma would be a turning point in white America's awareness of just how brutal racism is, or that Unitarians would emerge as national leaders for the civil rights movement and other human rights movements after that.

Now former CUC president Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed untangles the narrative threads of that event, through documents and oral histories. He's woven these into a tapestry of religious growth—from a religion that started asking the right questions about civil rights, to a religion that worked and sacrificed to advance the cause.

Unitarians can count at least five good souls martyred to civil rights fights in the 1960s—their deaths catching valuable news media attention, while equally tragic African-American deaths did not. When Selma racists brained Rev. Jim Reeb from behind, using a lead pipe, TV and print media reported US President Lyndon B. Johnson's condolence call to Reeb's wife, and how he sent a private jet to bring her to her dying husband's bedside. Meanwhile media and politicians alike ignored the slow, grisly death of black-American labourer Jimmie Lee Jackson, shot in the stomach by a State trooper.

Before Selma, Unitarians talked a good game on civil rights, but a report prepared for the 1959 Unitarian-Universalist merger described only "token" black membership. Most US Unitarian congregations were intellectual, humanist, and located in mainly-white suburbs. Still in post-war mode, they were deeply concerned about peace, and unprepared for civil rights issues.

"Unitarian Universalists still held a narrow, often self-serving understanding of race relations," writes Morrison-Reed. But, "By 1965, enough UUs were embedded in a web of relationships that these connections – white to blacks, and liberal religion to the cause of civil rights – compelled them to respond." That response cost Unitarian blood, starting with three UU teenage volunteers who died in Mississippi in 1964, followed by the violence in Selma, (where also UU volunteer Viola Liuzzo was shot in the head, for driving black voters to register).

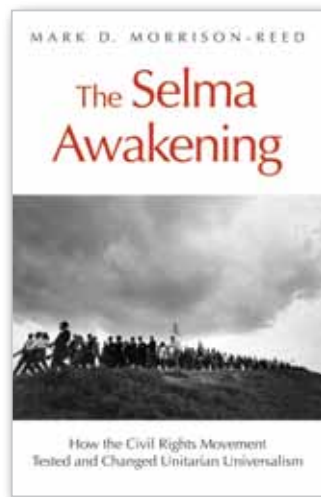
When the group Concerned White Citizens of Alabama (including UUs) marched on the outside of the parade to protect black Americans from police batons and attack dogs, Morrison-Reed reports Rev. King's aide James Bevel reaction on seeing whites protecting blacks, "Damn, the Kingdom's come."

Morrison-Reed sees a different breakthrough: "Selma was about being in authentic relationship to one's values, promises and hopes, and honouring them by committing one's life even unto death." After Selma, Unitarians raised high our First Principle and marched on to show leadership in the anti-war, women's rights, and gay rights movements.

In 1965, we scared teenagers could not have known all that Selma would come to mean, to the nation, or to Unitarian-Universalism. But as Morrison-Reed writes: "It is not possible, nor necessary,

to know the outcome of our actions... Therefore, we act in faith... That is the price those who cleared the way for us accepted. It is what living fully, deeply and with integrity demands." Mark Morrison-Reed has crafted a well-written, deeply researched, stirring account of a critical moment in history. Although of special interest to Unitarians, this book is essential reading for anyone interested in tracing the development of human rights.

*Penney Kome  
Unitarian Church of Calgary*



*The Selma Awakening: How the Civil Rights Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism* by Rev Dr Mark D. Morrison-Reed, Skinner House Books, 2014, 291 pages, \$18.00 USD



## Save the Date: ACM 2015!

Hosted by the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa under the theme, Seeking Justice in a Changing Land—*À la recherche de la justice sur une terre changeante*, the CUC Annual Conference and Meeting 2015 promises to bring together Unitarians and Universalists of all ages to explore how we live out our faith as engaged and compassionate global citizens.

**Where:** Algonquin College, Ottawa ON

**When:** May 15–17, 2015

In lieu of a keynote speaker, this ACM weekend will begin with a Friday evening opening and welcome event that combines music, spirit, and justice, led by percussionist and worship leader Matt Meyer ([www.rhythmrevelations.com](http://www.rhythmrevelations.com)): “Through rhythm and music we have the potential to grow our relationships, with each other and the divine.”

Rev. Stephen Atkinson of North Shore Unitarian Church will be giving the Confluence Lecture, which will discuss spiritual growth as a foundation of social justice work—and the human brain as a spiritual organ.

## Call for Facilitators, ACM 2015:

The CUC Conference Program Planning Committee is inviting proposals to facilitate streams-workshops, and spiritual practice sessions on the Conference theme, Seeking Justice in a Changing Land.

For more details about these different opportunities, and how to submit a proposal:

<http://cuc.ca/2015-acm-call-for-facilitators>.

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**ACM 2016** is being jointly hosted by the congregations of the BC lower mainland: Unitarian Church of Vancouver, North Shore Unitarian Church, Beacon Unitarian Church, and the South Fraser Unitarian Congregation.

**Where:** University of British Columbia (UBC) Campus, Vancouver BC

**When:** May 20–22, 2016

## Abortion Rights Resolution

Canadian Unitarians were prompt to approve a resolution in 1980 that supported the right of women to make decisions regarding their own bodies, particularly with respect to choice around pregnancy.

In 1988 Canada became one of a small number of countries without a law restricting abortion. Abortion is now treated like any other medical procedure and is governed by provincial and medical regulations.

Nevertheless, abortion remains an issue in Canada. In July 2014, the Morgentaler clinic in New Brunswick was closed because of a lack of ongoing operational funding. In several other provinces, women cannot obtain a safe abortion unless two doctors have medically examined her and approved the procedure.

Women need safe, supportive, and affordable access to abortion facilities and experienced counselling—in all Canadian provinces.

It is time to update the CUC Resolution. The Reproductive Justice Committee of the Canadian UU Women’s Association (CUUWA) is circulating a draft resolution to CUUWA members this fall.

**This proposed resolution requires the support of at least twenty-five individuals, who are members of at least three different member congregations, located in at least three of the four CUC Regions. The proposed resolution will be sent out to congregations in early January 2015 for discussion, to be ready for presentation at the AGM in May 2015.**

If you have an interest in this issue, please contact CUUWA via our web page or email ([info@cuuwa.org](mailto:info@cuuwa.org)). The Reproductive Justice Committee would like to hear from you, so that Canadian Unitarian Council policies on this fundamental issue remain proactive.

Betty Donaldson  
Chair, Canadian UU Women’s Association

## Examining the Annual Program Contribution

As you probably know, our UU congregations provide operating support for the CUC in the form of an Annual Program Contribution (APC). This contribution has been calculated for years by multiplying a dollar amount (currently \$93) by the number of current members in each congregation.

For some time, there have been reports on negative effects from this method of calculating a 'fair share' from each congregation. Congregations are asked to increase their contribution each time a new member joins their church, regardless of the amount the new member pledges. It has even been reported that potential church members have been discouraged from formally joining because then the congregation would have to pay more to the CUC.

Another difficulty resulting from this method of calculation is the fact that the number of members of UU congregations in Canada has been gradually decreasing over the past decade or more. This has meant that each year the CUC receives less total support from congregations for its work. As of 2013, the per member amount would have to be raised to more than \$96 for total APCs to equal the level in 2007.

As responsible stewards, the CUC Board of Trustees decided that it was time to examine the basis for the APC to see whether we could come up with a better way. As Treasurer of the CUC, I gathered volunteers from across Canada to form a Task Force, seeking interested people from congregations of varying sizes.

### Members of the Task Force are:

Kristina Stevens (Victoria);  
John (Mich) Michel (Calgary);  
Joanne Green (Regina);  
Kathy Yach (Ottawa);  
Andrea Reichert (Montreal);  
Marilyn Shinyei (Halifax);  
Keith Wilkinson (Vancouver);  
Vyda Ng, Executive Director, CUC.

We have come up with four objectives that must be met by the new system. The Annual Program Contribution from member congregations should:

- Be a fair share from each congregation, based on their financial resources;
- Be easy to describe, determine, and administer;
- Change only gradually, with no sudden surprises; and
- Provide a stable funding base for CUC operations.

After researching options, including those in use by the Unitarian Universalist Association in the United States, we have come up with the following possible calculation methods:

- A set dollar amount for each member of a congregation (the current method)
- A percent of each congregation's annual operating expenditures
- A percent of each congregation's annual operating income
- A percent of each congregation's annual donations

Each of the new options requires further definition, for example, defining exactly what is included in operating expenditures. We are working through these, and will be examining the impact of each option on our own congregations.

We hope to present a recommendation to the CUC Board—either to keep the current calculation method or to make a specific change—in November. Since any change could have impacts on each member congregation which need to be examined, consultations will occur throughout the coming year, and a final proposal will be brought to the 2016 Annual Meeting.

A consultation plan will be forthcoming early in 2015. The Annual Program Contribution Task Force will also be making more detailed information on our discussions available through the cuc-money list serve.

*Kristina Stevens  
Treasurer, Canadian Unitarian Council*



## Religious Explorations

History, Theology & Spiritual Values

Donald A. Bailey  
University of Winnipeg

- Life can be sacred and meaningful without belief in a deity
- History of religion in general, and of Unitarian Universalism in particular
- Biblical study from a non-believer's perspective
- Social Justice and the challenges in staying committed

Available directly from the author at \$22.50 + half postage. Email Don Bailey: [don3bailey@gmail.com](mailto:don3bailey@gmail.com) OR \$7.99 as an e-book from Internet.

### Are You a Northern Lights Chalice Lighter?



Created by the UU Ministers of Canada and the CUC to support grassroots, transformative initiatives, the Northern Lights Chalice Lighter Program recruits and maintains an ongoing pool of individual donors who pledge to provide two annual donations toward selected projects.

Becoming a Chalice Lighter is easy: simply pledge a sum of money for donation twice a year, toward a project approved by the grant selections panel.

Use the online form to become a Chalice Lighter:

[www.cuc.ca/northern-lights](http://www.cuc.ca/northern-lights). You'll be in direct contact with successful grant recipients about your sponsored project, and have the satisfaction of knowing that 100% of your pledge goes to the funded project or initiative.

#### Is your UU community ready to launch a new project or initiative?

The next application dates for a Northern Lights Chalice Lighters Grant are:

Intent to Apply: **December 1, 2014**

(visit [cuc.ca/northern-lights](http://cuc.ca/northern-lights), for complete information)

(must be submitted prior to full application)

Full Application: **January 15, 2015**

## SUPPORT

# The Lotta Hirschmanova Legacy Fund



**Dr. Lotta**  
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**Unitarian Service Committee** in  
1945.

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[rain@usc-canada.org](mailto:rain@usc-canada.org)

[www.DrLotta.ca](http://www.DrLotta.ca)



## Comox Valley Grows

The Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship on Vancouver Island is happy to report that not only have we signed a third-year contract with our part-time Consulting Minister, Rev. Meg Roberts, but we are now experimenting with weekly services after decades of twice monthly services.

On a very sad note, our wonderful and gifted pianist, Jean Turner, died this summer. Since she spent many years in Alberta congregations, we're sure that many Unitarians will share our sorrow.

We have also really expanded our Lifespan Learning offerings. We have three active Chalice groups, a book group, regular film nights, active women's & men's groups. Courses offered this fall include: Facing the Climate Change Era; Cakes for the Queen of Heaven; Unplug the Christmas Machine; and Finding Presence: A Workshop on Embodied Spiritual Practice (co-led by Wendy McNiven, retired Kamloops Unitarian minister who now lives here—lucky us), and a Soul Matters Circle, led by Rev. Meg that meets once a month to explore how the monthly theme is intricately woven into the tapestry of our days.

We are very grateful to our fellow Canadian Unitarians for this year's Northern Lights grant, which has helped us support consulting ministry for this third year, and expanding it to weekly services. If you'd like to add your support, please visit our website at [cvuf.ca](http://cvuf.ca) and click on the 'Donate Help' button on our home page. Your generous support helps Unitarianism grow in Canada!

*Heather Kennedy-MacNeill*



Consulting minister Rev. Meg Roberts (far right) shares a moment with some board members of the Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship.



Rev. Shana Lynngood performs a Blessing of the Bicycles, near the newly constructed bike shelter at First Unitarian Church of Victoria.

## Victoria: cycling, jazz, and a helping hand

In April our Environment Action Team (EAT) at First Unitarian Church of Victoria, challenged us to find environmentally friendly ways to travel to church. With no Sunday bus service to our rural location, we were encouraged to share rides, ride bikes, or walk. To make it fun, our 12 Neighbourhood Groups competed with each other for the whole month, earning points for the number of people in their vehicle and extra points for biking, walking, or bringing a non-driver.

First place went to one of the neighbourhoods farthest from the church. Their prize was awarded June 1, when Rev. Shana conducted a Blessing of the Bicycles to honour all those who ride their bicycles to church or to work. She also inaugurated the new bike shelter, constructed by member Nellie van Leeuwen.



At Victoria First, second Sundays of the month offer an evening service of Jazz Vespers—Spirited Jazz.

Also in June, Rev. Shana initiated a new program: Jazz Vespers—Spirited Jazz. The services take place on the second Sunday evening of the month, alternating between our church and the University of Victoria Interfaith Chapel.

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Ten years ago, church member Don Vipond created the Lifeline List, a project that provides one-time financial help to a person referred to us with an urgent need. An assessor from the church interviews the person to determine if the need is genuine. Then a sponsor is contacted. Sponsors are people who have agreed to donate up to \$200 once a year on short notice, when asked.

At the moment we have 77 sponsors and in ten years have responded to 262 calls for help. This represents about one family every two weeks for the past ten years, or 500 people who have been given a hand up, and a little hope.

*Suellen Guenther*



Commemorative street banners at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver were designed by artist and UCV member Catherine Stewart.

## Anniversary Milestone at Vancouver

While the Unitarian Church of Vancouver as an institution is 105 years old, September 2014 was the 50th Anniversary of moving to the present location at 49th and Oak. Street banners were hung outside, and a grand potluck dinner, in the style of the 1960's congregation, attracted over 100 present-day members and pioneers. Three new art acquisitions (all by members) were unveiled and hung in Hewett Hall, speeches were made, songs were sung, and stories of the past, present (and future!) were told.

The award-winning design of the present-day church, by church member and architect, the late Wolfgang Gerson, was featured in an exhibit curated by Rev. Steven Epperson, and Gerson's daughters, Katie and Erika.

Minister Emeritus Rev. Phillip Hewett of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver delivered the 50th anniversary Sunday sermon.

Rev. Phillip Hewett ("happy to still be here 50 years later!") delivered the Anniversary Sunday sermon, along with special words from Rev. Steven Epperson. There was palpable emotion in the Sanctuary as congregants spoke the Call to Rededication. This was followed by a panel of architects and heritage consultants, who spoke to the significance of the UCV 'campus' as a special gathering place in the City. And Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson proclaimed Sunday, September 14, as "50th Anniversary Day – Unitarian Church of Vancouver's Heritage Campus." Member Michael Clague expertly oversaw the event planning committee, with the usual cast of many helpers!



*Diana Ellis*

## Beacon: the little church that can

This past spring, Beacon Unitarian Church in New Westminster, BC, received a gracious, anonymous donation to help us create and carry out a plan for growth. Under Rev. Debra Thorne's guidance, we began this journey by revisiting and revising our Vision and Mission statements. The entire congregation was involved. Our new Vision is

### CONNECT • INSPIRE • TRANSFORM

Our Mission is to connect with each other in compassion, joy, and celebration, inspire learning and personal growth, and transform spiritual energy into social action.

We accomplish our Mission to live deeply by respecting the inherent worth and dignity of all peoples and practice living in conscious relationship with the earth. For inspiration, we draw on the world's great scientists, artists, humanists, and religious minds, as well as our own personal experiences. We are moved to create greater equality, greater justice, and greater hope for our world. *Please Join Us!*

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So, we are starting this fall with a great deal of enthusiasm! September began with a congregational leadership workshop to talk about what we wanted 'growth' to signify. And Rev. Debra is implementing many new programs this year, from evening Theology Pub Nights (organized with Rev. Amanda Aikman of South Fraser Unitarian), to a class on Meditation and Prayer, as well as Soul Matters Groups to deepen our experiences of the monthly themes.

## Farming Frontlines at Kamloops

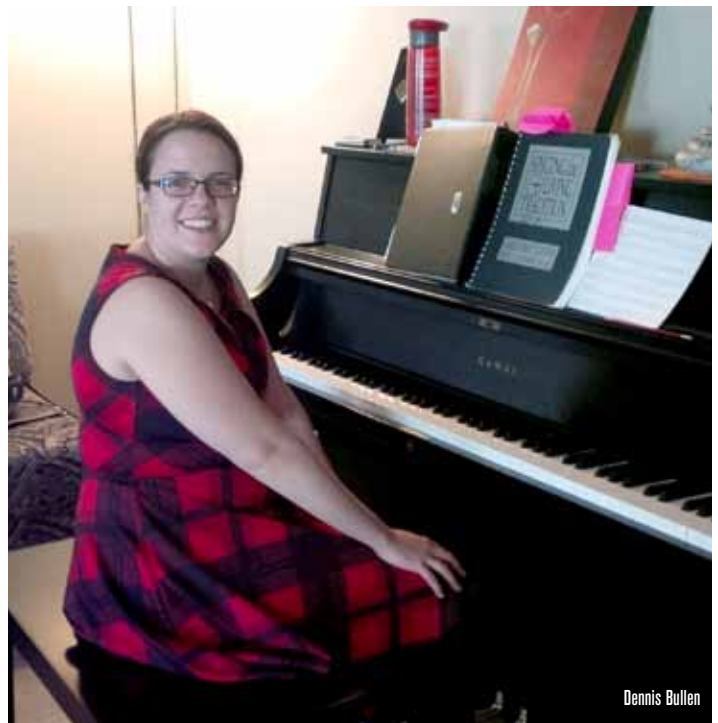
This summer, our Social and Environmental Action (SEA) Committee at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kamloops organized a day-long tour of three local organic farms. Each had a different story to tell. The first was Thistle Farm, established about 15 years ago. We learned about the challenges of building greenhouses, irrigating, dealing with pests (including deer), weeding, harvesting, and marketing.

The second farm, Tranquille Farm Fresh, was started only six months ago; the owner is working it mostly by herself. The third visit was to Gardengate, a farm project supported by Interior Health, which provides training and support to people with mental health problems. We toured their root cellar, which was constructed under the supervision of our UU president, Dennis Bullen. The manager also showed us wire worms and their methods of dealing with these pests.

We thoroughly enjoyed hearing all the stories from these farm managers—a most rewarding tour, accomplished under umbrellas on an unseasonably damp and drippy day!

On the musical side, Marg Walden, our choir director (or music animator as she prefers to call herself), retired after working with our UU singers for three years. For her successor, she recommended piano and voice teacher Sabrina Trigg. Sabrina will be leading us in choir practice every week, and will share her musical talents on piano and clarinet at two services a month. She brings a new dynamic sound to our 'small but mighty' choir, plus her youth and enthusiasm is showing in our music performances.

*Anne Neave and Dennis Bullen*



Sabrina Trigg is the new choir director for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kamloops, leading practices and providing music at services.

## Calgary Flourishing

This church year we have begun Theme-based programming and the small groups, TLCs (Theme-based Listening Circles) are now up and running. September was our kick-off month and the feedback has been very positive.

Our music program is flourishing with numerous concerts and event—the choir now has 40+ members—Music Director Jane Perry is such a gift!!

We are very pleased this year to welcome Chris Rothbauer as our Intern Minister and Danielle Webber as our student minister. We have an great new office administrator Ryan Peters since May and staffing is now complete with our awesome new DRE Shannon Mang, who comes with wonderful experience and enthusiasm.

The upgrades to our AV system have enhanced our services and our rental potential. This is part of a long range plan to deal with crowding and prepare for possible satellite sites. We are exploring different governance models as well as we move into significant strategic planning.

*John Michell*

Sara Hoiseth



Bringing a food garden to the front lawn of the Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon (UCS), was a cornucopia of volunteers—friends and UCS members alike—working to a design based on permaculture principles.

## Westwood Invites You to The Grove

Living our purpose is a familiar theme at Westwood Unitarian Congregation in Edmonton, AB, and our blog, “The Grove”, invites all people to participate in our compassionate UU community, onsite or online.

We hope to support spiritual development and raise awareness of Westwood and Unitarian Universalism by showing what lived UUism means to different people in the congregation. There is a weekly post; by the minister and the DRE every month, and members blog the remaining weeks. The Grove is loosely organized around these three themes, taken from our purpose statement:

- Rest:** refreshing, contemplative, supportive
- Grow:** challenging, stimulating, experimental
- Serve:** inspiring, strengthening

For the statistically minded, there have been 3,500 visits since opening last November. On average 250 visits per month, reading our four posts a month. Monthly visits range from 118 to 394, with one outstanding month counting 1,945 visitors, when one of Rev. Anne Barker’s posts was included in the UUA blog round-up (in the last church year, two of her posts have been included.)

Visit The Grove (<http://westwoodgrove.org>) and sign up to receive weekly updates.

*Brenda Jackson*

## Saskatoon Getting Green

The Green Sanctuary Team of the Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon (UCS) is happy to be implementing our congregation’s decision to become a UUA-certified Green Sanctuary congregation. Here is what we’ve been up to over the last year:

We developed a strong team, a logo, a Green Sanctuary page for our newsletter, a guide for project leaders, and an educational brochure, and launched our implementation plan with the congregation on April 27, 2014.

After a summer break, we continued to collect information to create a snapshot of our current ‘green’ programs and activities in four areas: Worship and Celebration, Religious Education, Sustainable Living, and Environmental Justice.



The Green Sanctuary logo has been developed as part of the UCS initiative to be certified as a Green Sanctuary congregation.

To help identify future projects, we secured a professional energy audit. RE will focus monthly on environmental topics, kicking off their plan with a musical treat from guest Charlotte Diamond, a well-known performer of children’s music. The children and congregation are learning a song for our Green Sanctuary anthem. This fall we are offering the UUA course, Our Place in the Web of Life, to adults, youth, and inviting some community groups.

If we can make plans for eleven projects this winter, we will be able to apply to be a Green Sanctuary candidate. Two projects have already started. One project involves major insulation upgrades to our building. The other is our Permaculture Garden Project, which was launched in June and is in the first stages of construction. Exciting times!

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Every year, Saskatoon holds a ‘Parking Day’, where local groups can each adopt one parking stall and transform it.

Picture a downtown street lined with mini parks, cafes, musicians, a bike-powered cider press, a tumbleweed tiny house, and more. This year Unitarians offered a Milestones ‘station’: a small altar amid a patch of grass, where people could mark something important for them—maybe a beloved pet that died in the last year, or a new relationship. People wrote a word on a stone and placed it in the water, and the stones were later taken to the river to be released. “In our joy and in our sorrow, we do not walk alone”.

*Gail Stevens and Liz James*



*Karen Fraser Gitlitz*

Writing a word on a stone as an offering or prayer is part of the worship tradition at Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon.

## Lakehead in the Community

2014 has been a busy year for Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship (LUF), celebrating 55 years in Thunder Bay. In February a very successful 55th Anniversary weekend was held. Friday night saw a wildly popular Open House, followed on Saturday with a workshop on looking to the future, and a service on Sunday on the same theme with Rev. Karen Gustafson, who has long history with the Fellowship.

On May 9, the Ken Morrison (Big Ideas and Hard Questions for Our Time) Lecture Series presented a widely attended lecture by Dr. Evelyn Forget titled, “The Town with No Poverty: Would a Guaranteed Annual Income be Good for Canada?” (read more on this, page 21).



*Brian Holden*

Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship walks in the Thunder Bay Pride Parade—one of many Fellowship engagements with the events of Thunder Pride in 2014.

In June, LUF members were involved in the week-long series of Thunder Pride events. Two members presented a Night of Healing, others were active in the Equality Rocks chorus, which performed at Pride in the Park and a Sunday service. Many members and friends walked in the Pride parade on June 14. LUF continues to demonstrate its commitment as a Welcoming Congregation.

*David Belrose*

## London: new minister; founder mourned

This is an exciting year in terms of opportunity for growth at the Unitarian Fellowship of London. Rev. Linda Thomson has joined us as quarter-time minister; we value her perception and guidance. Rev. Linda, the committees and board trustees, together with the congregation, continue to meet and work together on a full and stimulating year of worship and activities.

Dr. Hanna Spencer, one of the founders of the Unitarian Fellowship of London, passed away on August 17, 2014, in her 101st year. A memorial service took place at the UFL on September 20, 2014.

*Karen Kidd*



*Karen Kidd*

Gather together: the congregation of the Unitarian Fellowship of London.



## Mississauga is 60!

There is much to celebrate at the Unitarian Congregation in Mississauga (UCM) during this, our 60th anniversary year. Originally founded as the Unitarian Congregation of South Peel (UCSP), it was on October 6, 1954 that the congregation became an official entity. We are grateful to our founders for their vision of building a liberal religious community on the outskirts of Toronto.

We begin our year-long anniversary celebrations with the installation of the Reverend Fiona Heath on November 1, 2014. A commemorative logo, created by Leslie Webb (a talented young adult member), will be used on all anniversary materials. We are hosting the concert series Four Seasons, featuring The Farfarones. Selected sermons of the beloved Rev. Mark Mosher deWolfe, recorded during his years at UCSP, will be available on CD. University of Toronto Professor Emeritus Peter Russell will speak on the merits of proportional representation, at a public lecture on March 10, 2015.

Next spring, as part of the continuing Greening Initiative, we will plant a Peace Pole, the universal message of peace. A history of the congregation is in the works; if anyone has as memories of UCSP/UCM, please share them with us. We will end our 60th year with a gala celebration dinner and dance at the end of May.

Visit our website [www.uucm.ca](http://www.uucm.ca) for full details, and please join us if you are in the area.

*Wendy Shusterman*



## Halifax: See and Be Seen

In July the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax had a proud and colourful contingent in the annual Halifax Pride Parade. A record 39 UUs and friends came and won “Best in Parade - Non-Profit Category” for the first time ever, with a Standing on the Side of Love-themed float, depicting a same-sex marriage. The Halifax Church was the first to perform a same-sex marriage in Atlantic Canada in 1976, two years after the first same-sex marriage in Canada by Winnipeg First. Beautiful weather aided 2,500 parade marchers in wowing a crowd of almost 80,000 spectators along the parade route. UUs handed out just over 3,000 “Standing on the Side of Love” pamphlets, taking advantage of the largest single outreach opportunity UUCH sees all year.

On September 21, UUCH was part of 400 enthusiastic people of all ages, marching in Halifax in solidarity with the People’s Climate March in New York City and around the world. Since many of our local environmental leaders were participating in New York, the organization of our event resulted in collaboration with the Shambala Buddhist community and an Avaaz volunteer from rural Nova Scotia, with participation from a local Mi’kmaq elder, an Earth Spiritualist group, and marchers brought together by the internet through Avaaz, 350.org, Leadnow, and Facebook. We were an eclectic group, representing the wide variety of those affected and concerned about climate change.

In October Halifax UUs helped organize a public rally for Dying with Dignity, joining others from the medical, legal, and compassionate care communities, on the steps of the Provincial Legislature on the opening day of the Supreme Court case on legalizing medically-assisted dying.

We are also hosting the Eastern Region Fall Conference this year, from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2, with one of the themes being Social Justice—how we can live our principles in the world and make ourselves known at the same time. We have been practising!

*Margaret Galbraith*

With the bargain-purchase of a bouncy castle for the RE program, open house was a huge hit at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax.



Rev. Norm Horotker

## Young Adults Say Divest from Fossil Fuel Industry

Opponents of divestment claim it is hypocritical to divest from fossil fuels when we are so utterly dependent on them. But this is precisely why divestment matters: to help loosen the grip fossil fuels have on our economy, our political systems, and our imagination. We believe it will help create the political space for carbon-restrictive legislation, one of the few tools able to create the systemic change we so urgently need.

Yes, we may be profiting from fossil fuels, and yes, we could continue to profit from them in the near future. But what does it mean to profit from—not just participate in, but profit from—unjust social and ecological relationships? When we invest in something, we are saying, “We want this to grow.” But fossil fuel use needs to begin shrinking immediately in order to minimize the already occurring adverse effects of climate change.

Further, because of the movement for legislative restrictions and the increasingly severe ongoing effects of climate change, fossil fuels are a decreasingly sound investment. Financial advisors are realizing fossil fuel companies with large reserves may be significantly overvalued. Financial circles call this phenomenon “the carbon bubble,” and compare it to the overvaluation of mortgages prior to the 2008 financial crisis. See Carbon Tracker’s Unburnable Carbon 2013 report. Morgan Stanley Capital International’s number one 2014 trend for investors to watch is divestment and options to reduce fossil fuel exposure. (See Morgan Stanley’s 2014 ESG Trends To Watch report).

If we want to honour our UU Sources, including: “Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science,” then the choice for divestment is clear. To choose to continue profiting from this industry is to fall victim to the idolatry of money and economic growth, which is poisoning our world and our bodies, and doing particular violence to indigenous peoples and other frontline communities. Instead, we should remember that our Seventh principle connects us cosmologically to those communities, and to all living beings and the earth. Harm done in this interconnected web harms us all.

This is a question of faith. Do we place our faith in the market, believing we can ensure our future by maximizing the performance of our endowment fund? Or do we place our faith in one another, believing that it is our moral obligation to act with integrity in the present to create a more just and sustainable community together?

We Young Adults are speaking to this issue because younger people will face ecological instability within our lifetimes to a much greater extent than our elders. Young adults are also less likely to see continued economic growth as an inevitable feature of our world. Our material resources have limits, yet there are no limits upon the creative power of intergenerational community committed to working for a more just and sustainable world.

Unitarian Universalists have long been leaders in social and environmental justice movements, and our decision to divest from fossil fuels will build on this legacy. Our American UU neighbours recently pledged to take this step at their General Assembly in Providence this past June, and we will be proud to see the Canadian Unitarian Council do the same.

*UU Young Adults for Climate Justice*  
(Find us on Facebook, or at [uuyacj@gmail.com](mailto:uuyacj@gmail.com))

At Grand River Unitarian Congregation, two Little Libraries wait to be installed at adult- and child-friendly heights.





## Building Little Libraries at Grand River

What's small, lends itself to individual expression, and reflects Unitarian collaborative ingenuity and spirit in local communities? At Grand River Unitarian Congregation in Kitchener-Waterloo, the answer is a Little Library.

What do we mean by small? Tiny. A Little Library structure looks much like doll house mounted on a sturdy post or tree trunk. The whole structure, typically painted and decorated, comes about waist-high. It features a plexiglas window, and a door that swings on a hinge. Think frosted gingerbread house, only full of books, Little Libraries are permanent outside structures that stand in the front yards of houses, stores, and churches.

The Little Libraries credo is "take a book, leave a book." It's a barter and open learning system.

Originally hatched as a concept by Wisconsin resident Todd Bol ([littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org)), who has been increasingly honoured for this innovation through public awards, the Little Library surge in the twin cities of Kitchener and Waterloo has emerged as an authentic expression of local collaboration in our thriving congregation.

The Grand River congregation has found a way of networking with other community groups to foster and promote 'live builds': hands-on, day-long, get-togethers where people can work together to assemble Little Library structures from pre-cut kits. These attract all kinds of individuals and families who otherwise might not have the confidence to build the structure themselves. A Facebook group acts as social outreach for all Little Library activities.

Who kicked all this off? Congregation member Tom Nagy and his wife Susan Deefholts were enchanted by the idea that people could freely borrow books, while stopping to chat with their neighbours. "Reading for everyone... literacy," Tom explains. "Involving both grown-ups and kids too. We loved it as soon as we heard about it!"

The cost of online kits was high. Instead, Tom and Susan explored an approach that would make building library structures an appealing social activity. As Tom puts it, "We pictured this book barter system spreading. We wanted to find a way that would work for our community."

That is exactly what happened. Tom forged alliances with a local construction company, who agreed to produce pre-cut kits in their own carpentry shops. Longtime



Grand River Unitarian Congregations member Tom Nagy inspired the Little Libraries movement now flourishing in the Kitchener-Waterloo region.

Unitarian and Grand River member Dave Keller designed a template for the kits. And the Boy Scouts of Canada, in return for a donation, assist with building and installation for those who need help establishing their Little Library structures. Local Unitarians and their families have taken part throughout. "The kids come along," says Tom. "They like to decorate the structures too, once they're brought home."

Over the past two years, the number of hands-on build events has multiplied each season. There are about 60 or so Little Library structures, sprinkled throughout the Waterloo Region, estimates Tom.

Rural communities are also starting to take part. With growing numbers of 'works in progress' shown on Facebook, 526 members in the local Facebook library group, and dozens of Little Library enthusiasts swapping ideas in photos and stories online, Unitarians at Grand River Congregation have made it possible to build community, friendliness, and book exchanges—to bring back the lost art of neighbourhood collaboration.

As a finishing touch, the Grand River Congregation has planted two Little Library structures on the front lawn of the church building itself (one is shorter, for children's use). Is there a better, more genuine, creative way to express the church's role in an interdependent neighbourhood web?

*Christa Van Daele  
Grand River Unitarian Congregation*

## Interfaith in Kingston

In December 2012, Iyr HaMelech (IHM), the reform Jewish congregation in Kingston, ON, and our neighbour at Unitarian Place, invited Kingston Unitarian Fellowship (KUF) members to a dedication ceremony to celebrate the return and repair of a valuable Holocaust Torah, which they were granted on permanent loan. It had been used by the members of a synagogue in Třebíč, a city in the Moravian part of the former Czechoslovakia. Only ten of its members had survived the holocaust. “This Torah,” the IHM announcement reads, “stands as a beacon to the world that it survived; as have we.”

By tradition, it is only after a painstaking restoration process that IHM could use this ancient Torah in their services. Tears, holes, and other war-related damage was repaired, including the reconstruction of missing script on the pages. With the IHM Torah, what remained missing were the names of those synagogue members who had originally used the sacred scroll. Acknowledging their names would honour and keep alive their memories.

Cindy Harvey (then president of the Kingston Unitarian Fellowship) was intrigued by the history and the missing names. “Since I had already decided, with my daughter Tara, to backpack through the Czech Republic, I offered to try to find the names.”

So rather than searching for the roots of Norbert Capek, the founder of Unitarianism in Czechoslovakia, Cindy and Tara searched for the missing names of those who had worshipped with the Třebíč Torah.

In Prague, Cindy and Tara found The Pinkas Synagogue in the Jewish Quarter. It functioned as a kind of museum to illustrate how Jews had lived before the war. It had wall after wall filled with names—almost 80 thousand Jewish victims from Bohemia and Moravia who had been exterminated. In the fourth room of the upper floor Cindy and Tara found the names of those from Třebíč. Copying down the names, they achieved their goal!

“No sounds. No voices. Silence. And yet the walls yelled,” Cindy observed. “I never experienced anything like it . . . although life goes on outside. It is as if life just doesn’t penetrate. You walk outside to breathe and find yourself in the old Jewish cemetery . . . stone after stone, all piled up, stacked into a walled-off space.” Tara said,

“The headstones are just piled in, strewn around with not too much care. They were all moved to this one location during the war.”

Having succeeded in finding the names, Cindy and Tara left Prague and set out to visit the Jewish quarter of Třebíč, which had once been the centre of Jewish culture in Moravia. The quarter’s houses, synagogues, cobblestone paths, and winding narrow streets are part of a UNESCO-designated World Heritage Site, and illustrate how Czech Jews lived prior to the Holocaust.

Cindy and Tara returned to Kingston and presented IHM with the names. To recognize the occasion, IHM invited KUF members to a celebration and pot luck dinner. Rabbi Kaufman introduced the evening with a beautiful and short service, a Havdolah, which marked the end of the Sabbath. The Třebíč Torah was discussed, and Cindy Harvey gave a presentation on her trip to the Czech Republic.

The next day KUF invited the IHM community to join the Unitarians for their Sunday service, where Rabbi Kaufman discussed the beauty and importance of the Třebíč Torah, starting with its origins in the Czech Republic, being rescued from the holocaust, to its significance and restoration. Cindy Harvey was service weaver and added some of her own insights.

Now both IHM and KUF have strong religious connections with the holocaust in the Czech Republic. Unitarians will feel this connection strongly when we celebrate our Flower Communion, inspired by our own holocaust martyr, Norbert Capek. We will also honour the Třebíč Jews who worshipped with the Třebíč Torah, now residing with the Kingston Reform Jews in Unitarian Place.

*Elaine Harvey  
Kingston Unitarian Fellowship*

[Strewn headstones in the old Jewish cemetery in Prague, Czech Republic—part of the journey to find the missing names of the Třebíč Torah, for the reform Jewish Congregation in Kingston, ON.](#) ►



## Town Without Poverty

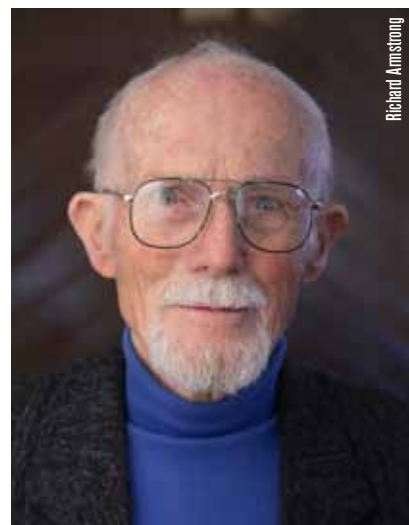
The Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship (LUF) in Thunder Bay sponsored the fourth in a series of the Ken Morrison Lectures, on May 9, 2014. Ken, a long time outspoken member of LUF, passed away in 2010 and the lecture series was established in his name to provide a public forum for the discussion of contemporary issues.

This lecture was titled, “The Town With No Poverty—Would a Guaranteed Annual Income be Good for Canada?” The guest lecturer was Dr. Evelyn Forget, a health economist professor in the Department of Community Health Sciences at the University of Manitoba. Her current research focuses on the health and social consequences of anti-poverty interventions and the cost effectiveness of healthcare interventions.

Dr. Forget studied the healthcare use of the citizens of Dauphin, MB, who were guaranteed freedom from poverty through an annual income supplement over the years 1974-1978 (This was known as, “The Dauphin Experiment” or “Mincome”). The data from this social experiment was warehoused, but not analyzed until Dr. Forget spent three years analyzing and comparing the administrative healthcare records relative to the control group.

The analysis found positive health results (an 8.9% reduction in accessing the healthcare system). She also found that teens (especially young males who had been forced to leave school for a job) stayed in school longer, many completing high school and more. To learn all the positive social effects Dr Forget identified, view her

Ken Morrison (1923-2010), activist and longtime member of the Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship, is the inspiration for a lecture series founded in his name.



complete lecture at, [www.netnewsledger.com](http://www.netnewsledger.com) (search “Town With No Poverty)

Dr. Forget reported, “I think people living in poverty are living with a great deal of stress. In fact, stress is almost too mild a word for the kind of terror that people live in while trying to care for their children when they don’t have the capacity..”

An overflow crowd of 155 people was drawn—the result of a community and media blitz by The Ken Morrison Lecture Series Committee that included a poster campaign, media interviews, contacting anti-poverty and social justice groups, as well as hand-delivered invitations to politicians at federal, provincial, and local levels.

Those attending the lecture were left asking if Canada has the political will to move forward to a Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement for people with low income or less—something similar to the non-taxable Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for Old Age Security (OAS) recipients who have a low income. The feeling was that there would be long term benefits from health cost savings, a re-structuring of social assistance administrative programmes—and that life without the stress of poverty is possible.

*Richard Armstrong  
Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship*

*Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship gratefully acknowledges the support of the Bay Credit Union of Thunder Bay, in bringing this lecture to the community.*



## Why I wanted a CUC Resolution

Growing up in England gave me a patriotic view of British history and democracy. Since before 1948 I have been aware of trouble between the Palestinians and Israelis. I accepted the image of a young Israel as David against the Goliath of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. Today, Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967 and blockaded Gaza since 2007. The peace talks going nowhere have further added to the distrust of those who would see Palestinian rights reinstated.

In 2011 I read *I Shall Not Hate* by Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish and heard him speak in Comox, BC. As a physician in Gaza, he negotiated checkpoints and obtained travel permits to work in Israel. His story led me to study the subject in more depth. *The General's Son* by Miko Peled gives an Israeli perspective. As a result of these and other books, I joined with Christine Johnston and Anita MacLean to propose a resolution at the CUC Annual Conference and Meeting 2014, "Human Rights in Palestine and Israel".

Peled and Abuelaish are of the same generation. Abuelaish was born in a Gaza refugee camp, living in poverty doing odd jobs to help with family finances. He obtained a scholarship to study medicine in Cairo.

By contrast Peled was the son of an Israeli general. Born in Jerusalem and educated in Israel, he served his time in the Israeli Defence Force, becoming a Red Beret of a crack regiment. He freely admits that he had very little contact with Palestinians while growing up. He now lives in California but spends time annually in Israel where most of the family live.

Both men have lost close relatives. Peled's 13 year-old niece, Smadar, was killed by a suicide bomber in Jerusalem in 1997. In 2009 Abuelaish's three daughters—Besan, 21, Mayar, 15, Aya, 14, and his niece Noor, 16—were killed when his home was targeted during the Israeli operation "Cast Lead". Other members of the family sustained severe injuries.

Abuelaish worked with medical colleagues in Israel and had sent his eldest daughters to a peace camp in the

*continued on page 23*

## Proposed Resolution Should Have Passed

As one who believes to the depth of his being that our Unitarian principles express the fundamental precepts of a spirituality of democracy, I am deeply saddened that at the Annual General Meeting 2014, our delegates voted to indefinitely table the proposed resolution that the CUC, "assemble information and resources to enable congregational study of the history of the conflict in Palestine and Israel"—in seeming fear that to know might compel us to do something about it.

But what anguishes my soul is the follow-up letter by the CUC ministers (see page 25) supporting the tabling of this proposed resolution. Instead of urging us to consider the implications of principles like "The inherent worth and dignity of every person", our ministers seem to be promoting a vision of democracy in

complete contrast to the Tommy Douglas assertion that democracy—to be minimally meaningful—must be more than two wolves and a sheep voting on what's for dinner.

I'm reminded of the great spiritual leader Martin Luther King Jr., who once said,

*This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy... Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children... With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.*

*continued on page 23*

*continued from page 22*

U.S. He has faith that personal contact and respect can break barriers of hate. Peled attended Muslim/Jewish contact groups in the US. He and a fellow Rotarian of Arab background have delivered wheelchairs for both Palestinian and Jewish children. He also travels extensively in the West Bank contacting bereaved families and Palestinians who are pursuing non-violent ways to end the occupation.

People ask “Why emphasize an internal Palestinian-Jewish problem over other world problems?”

While it seems an internal problem, Israel has not become such a military power without considerable financial aid; for example, the US has a 10-year agreement to donate \$30 billion dollars of military aid to Israel. Western involvement has muddied the issue for years. Individual Israelis and Palestinians have crossed the divide to establish respect and trust. These courageous individuals need our support as they may be regarded as renegades in their communities.

There are many sides to any story—even David and Goliath’s. As an adult I had to face the dark side of history. This is part of one’s growth as a citizen. Peled learnt this painfully and has moved beyond the pain and guilt to build bridges. Our resolution aimed to bring this knowledge to a wide spectrum of Unitarian Universalists, who hopefully will work with the Peleds and Abuelaishs to bring about peace.

*Joy Johnston,  
Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship*

*After much animated discussion of diverse points of view, it was decided that tabling the proposed resolution “Human Rights in Palestine and Israel”, allowed for a return of the motion, or a similar one, to future AGMs.*

*continued from page 22*

My God, if only our ministers could share a vision like Dr. King’s!

What kind of a “I have a Dream” speech would flow from the CUC ministers’ stand on spiritual mediocrity? It might go something like this:

We have a nightmare. We awoke in a sweat from dreaming that the CUC might stand up for its principles and that in standing up it might offend someone. And besides we had a vote to remain ignorant of human rights and so let’s stop this talk of racial justice and rights for all people, it could offend someone. Let’s all just keep calm and quiet and ignorant. Maybe some day Palestinians will have rights, but that’s not the kind of thing you say in church and its not the kind of thing you say where it might upset people. Now is definitely not the time to talk

of justice for ALL God’s children. We might hope that Israel, a state that might be a tad unjust to Palestinians, might one day be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. But that doesn’t mean we have to learn or do anything about it now. Let’s just all go quietly back to our churches and fill the collection and take a nice nap. We have a dream that all will sleep soundly and not be disturbed again by the so called injustices of the world.

In 1967 Dr. King declared that, “a time comes when silence is betrayal.”

May 2015 be a better year for actualizing our Canadian Unitarian principles.

*Norm Reynolds  
Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship*



## The Policy of Israel (& recommended reading)

In 1895 Theodore Hertzl, one of the first Zionists, wrote the book *The Jewish State*, outlining strategy on how to occupy the region.

David Ben Gurion, in 1937 wrote to his son saying: “The best time to acquire land is in time of war, so we have to wait for the opportune time”, (which, of course, came in 1948). He also said in 1947: “We'll take now what the UN gives us and take the rest later”. Please read the book by senior Israeli historian, Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, concerning the happenings of 1948.

Since 1967, Every Prime Minister of Israel, without exception, built and expanded the settlements. As one example, past Prime Minister Itzhak Shamir said, “I will engage with peace talks for the next ten years, while all along I'll build settlements as fast as I can.”

In peace talks Israel has required hundreds of conditions, which no Palestinian could accept. At other times, Israel bombed Palestinians either just before or during negotiations, then stopped negotiations because of Palestinian retaliations. Please read former President Jimmy Carter's book: *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid*.

Israel has been unresponsive to more than a hundred UN resolutions regarding human rights violations, using excessive force, using illegal weapons, occupation, settlements, transfer of population, theft of water resources, house demolitions, murdering peace activists in international waters, mass incarceration, among other crimes and war crimes.

Unitarians alone may not have effect, but our voice can be added to others. That is the only hope for the Palestinians: world pressure, and it will not come from governments.

It has been suggested that because of past history and treatment of Jews, we do not have the moral authority to lecture or pressure Israel. But aren't we allowing the same thing to be done to Palestinians, by not pressuring Israel? Please read Dr. Norman Finkelstein: *The Holocaust Industry*, and *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and Abuse of History*.

Within the last nine months of so-called negotiations, Israel built 11,000 new units in West Bank, has programs for 1000's more, has killed 30 Palestinians and demolished 400 Palestinian homes, etc. For anything to have any effect against actions such as these, total world pressure has to be applied, and we can be a small part of it.

*continued on page 25*

## Ottawa First Launches Study Program

The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa has started our own UU Study Program on the Israel/Palestine Conflict. We had our first session in early October, with more than 80 attendees, many of them non-members from our community and also members of various churches in the area. Rabbi Steven Garten—an exceptional speaker—addressed Jewish History. We have seven more sessions planned, which will be kept friendly in tone. We tell the audience that we are not here to win an argument but instead to start a conversation.

- Palestinian History, by Dr. Peter Larson
- Palestinian Refugees: a personal story by a Palestinian
- The Israeli Occupation of the West Bank, presented by the Palestinian Delegation, here in Ottawa
- Anti-Semitism, by Author and Professor Michael Keefer
- Democracy in Israel, by Dr. Peter Larson
- Abraham's Sons by Frances Deverell

*Anita MacLean  
First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa*

*continued from page 24*

A boycott, for example, is one totally peaceful means by which people can fight for justice. It is a symbolic gesture but will add to awareness.

I wish UUs could live in West Bank or Gaza for awhile, and witness when a dozen Israeli Jeeps come to a Palestinian home at 5:00 am, giving a half-hour notice before the house is demolished, or witness the nighttime invasion of hundreds of homes, using German Shepherd dogs just to terrorize and humiliate Muslims. 950 ex-Israeli soldiers testified to this in a recent book: *Our Harsh Logic* by Breaking the Silence, an activist group in Israel.

The Palestinian situation is worse today than ever before. More loss of land, more loss of water, more movement restrictions, more settlements, more damage to their economy and education. I strongly feel we should be outraged that Israel has gotten away with atrocities for so long.

*Jake Javanshir*

*Don Heights Unitarian Congregation*

*(Adapted from a post on the Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) discussion group, May 1, 2014)*

*Jake Javanshir (jjavanshir@rogers.com) grew up in Israel, lived there for 20 years, and served in the army. His immediate family and most of his extended family live in Israel. He visits there often.*

## More recommended reading

*The General's Son: Journey of an Israeli in Palestine*  
by Miko Peled

*A Threat from Within: A History of Jewish Opposition to Zionism* by Yakov Rabkin  
(Canadian professor at McGill)

*Goliath: Life and loathing in Greater Israel*  
by Max Blumenthal

*The Invention of the Jewish People* by Shlomo Zand  
(19 weeks best seller in Israel)

*The Founding Myths of Israel* by Zeev Sternhell.

*Anti Semitism Real and Imagined*  
by Michael Keefer. (Canadian professor).

*Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism* by Judith Butler.

*The Crisis of Zionism* by Peter Beinart.

*Palestine, Israel and the US Empire* by Richard Becker.

*Palestinians in Israel: Segregation, Discrimination and Democracy.* By Ben White.

*Jewish history, Jewish religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years,* by Israel Shahak.

## Dear Canadian Unitarian Universalist Congregations and Communities

**...We have heard confusion and disappointment expressed around the resolution process and the carried motion to "Postpone the Resolution (named Human Rights in Palestine and Israel) Indefinitely". We are mindful that many hearts are especially tender at this time...**

**Any discussion of the tensions between Israelis and Palestinians is complicated by the deep emotions that inform our hopes and fears. People of good will often hold differing opinions about how peace could best be achieved. We members of UUMOC hold a very wide range of opinions.**

**We appreciate the passion and efforts of those who brought forward the resolution. We recognize that it was their hope to bring about a broader discussion.**

*—The UU Ministers of Canada (UUMOC)*

*(Adapted from a letter from the UU Ministers of Canada, addressed to all Council members.*

*Download the complete letter at <http://cuc.ca/governance/resolutions-process>, under 2014 Resolutions.)*

## Jacob, Esau, and the Battle for Birthright

Every year my Israeli friend tells me: “You have to be on our side. You have no choice, because you married an Israeli, you have Israeli family.” I initially resisted this, because of an attachment to freedom of thought, my right to choose my allegiances based on rationality, not tribalism.

But now I understand what she is saying: this ‘freedom’ I cling to, from my comfortable Canadian armchair, is a privilege and an illusion. Palestinians don’t have it when they are being bombed into the stone age, and Israelis don’t have it when their citizens are threatened with attack. There is very little freedom of self in any kind of war, even a war of words.

If you are looking for a secure place to stand on this conflict, get in line and good luck. The Israel/Palestine conflict, it may have been said before, is really a brutal fight between siblings—or like a long, protracted divorce.

Like any toxic relationship, it sucks people on the outside into its contradictions, points and counterpoints, judgments and interpretations. The whole region suffers from a chronic case of hurt feelings, calcified into hate: using weapons instead of screaming matches; videos and press releases instead of lies; embargoes and ransoms instead of call screening and restraining orders.

Like an ugly divorce, both parties’ narratives can be in turns utterly, exhaustingly convincing. We are all the descendants of Esau and Jacob. Some of us are stuck as the biblical Jacob; we have run away from the past, but have not yet wrestled with ourselves and been re-named. Some of us are Esau; still cursing our brothers, without the gifts of hindsight and understanding. No matter where we stand, or think we stand, we did not create or form our views on this conflict out of the ether; left or right, pro or con, we inherited them—and will lose nothing by examining them.

This past summer I was pregnant (with a future Israeli citizen) when a group of Gazans kidnapped and killed three young Israelis. I was even more pregnant when three Israelis kidnapped a Palestinian teen and set him on fire. I saw Muslim families at the mall and wished I had the courage to apologize to them. I sent my Muslim friends letters and texts that cried: Not in My Name. I wept for both sides; for my Israeli family, and my Arab cousins, living and dying in fear. I watched in horror as Gaza was reduced to rubble, as the death toll of women and children mounted.



Jacob and Esau (1878), The Biblical story of sibling rivalry is the subject of this painting by British artist George Fredrick Watts.

Then Jewish houses of worship were attacked in Europe, Canada, and the US; rabbis in Africa were left beaten to a pulp; Jewish children in secular countries were shot at as they played in their secular schoolyards; neo-Nazis marched among pro-Palestinian groups. I certainly wished then that someone would say to me: Not In Our Name.

In the meantime rhetoric, and rockets flew. I argued with my Israeli, Canadian, European, and American friends and family, answering meme for meme, article for article, trying to deconstruct the falsehoods and subtle forms of entrenchment sent to me on Facebook and by email: justifications, tropes, misinformation, and clichés that dehumanize Jews, Zionists, Arabs, Muslims or Palestinians.

Passion is understandable in this situation, but it acts like a blindfold. People who speak of peace in a voice full of rage are not interested in peace. People led by their tribal loyalties based on a sense of personal context or identity are walking a dark and confusing path. If we want to be effective we must begin with introspection into why we believe what we do. I don’t believe boycotts, petitions, and resolutions work. They are all expressions of alienation and that’s pretty much all they achieve. Rather than contribute to the cacophony of punishment and retribution, I believe support is what’s necessary—support of the people on both sides, doing good, hard work on the ground. They are small seeds, but they are there and they need help to grow.

*Noemi LoPinto*

*(Adapted from her blog: [www.dispatchesfromoz.blogspot.ca](http://www.dispatchesfromoz.blogspot.ca))  
Noemi LoPinto is a writer, photographer and former broadcast journalist. She lives in Edmonton, AB, with her husband and their five children.*



## The World Needs Mediators

During last year's debate over the so-called Charter of Quebec values, I worked with members of the Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Sikh communities of Montreal to raise awareness about the discriminatory effects of that proposed legislature.

There were amazing moments in the process. One day I sat with a diverse group of religious leaders including a rabbi who is openly lesbian, a Mormon, and a Catholic marriage counsellor who had done an internship in Montreal's most famous gender reassignment clinic. Together we created a social media campaign that contributed to the defeat of the charter.

Had I not been at that table, the voices of atheists and agnostics might not have been included in that campaign. Had the CUC joined the boycott movement against Israel, as the United and Presbyterian Churches have done, it would have limited me from having a real voice for local change (a loss that my UCC colleagues painfully felt during the debate). I've learned that I can have more effect in the conflict between Jews and Palestinians by being someone who can communicate with both groups. The world needs those who stand in opposition to certain wrongs, but it also needs mediators.

I still consider myself a Jew, and I have always been grateful that Unitarianism enables me to embrace my multifaceted identity. I do not support the actions of the Israeli government, but I also recognize that there is a difference between the actions of a government, its people, and the love-centred Judaism that I grew up with.

Every day, as the Gaza War raged this summer, I cried as I read accounts from Palestinians, Israelis, Jews, Arabs, and Christians living in the midst of the crisis. How can you live with the needless loss of any human life? How can you forgive the deaths of inno-

cent children or adults? Like so many of us, I want to do something to stop the hatred and fear that is fuelling the ongoing violence.

I believe that ours is a faith that is called to build bridges, not divisiveness. This fall, the Unitarian Church of Montreal was approached to serve as neutral ground for members of the local Jewish community who are opening a critically needed conversation about human rights. As one Jewish friend wrote to me, "This is a fraught, fractured, and critical moment within the Jewish community. In the aftermath of the recent Gaza War, difficult questions are being asked—questions that were continuously swept under the carpet or locked in a closet in the past."

Unlike the United or Presbyterian Church, we are a people who share a diversity of religious backgrounds and perspectives. That puts us in an ideal position to be bridge builders within our congregations, our communities and the wider world.

I honour the right of individuals to join the sanctions movement. But to take such an action as a religious body would have little effect on Israel. If anything, we're more likely to add to the hardening resolve of Israel's right wing. At the same time, we would alienate many in our movement and weaken our interfaith voice—the one place where we can have significant influence in this very debate.

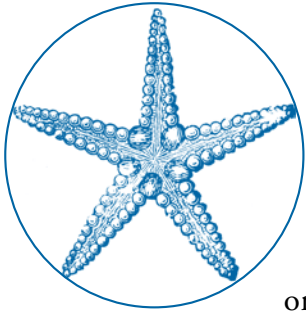
I encourage us to be communities that create forums for Palestinians and Jews to share their stories, that offer a space for compassionate communication. Let us find a way to stand up for human rights with compassion.

With love and respect for all your care and concern for human rights and for your desire to make this world a better place,

*Rev. Diane Rollert  
Unitarian Church of Montreal*

[www.uujme.org](http://www.uujme.org)

UUs working for a solution for Israel and Palestine  
that affirms the dignity, freedom, and security of all peoples involved.



## Narrowing Focus to Widen Impact

Throw starfish back into the ocean whenever you find them and you can make a difference, one starfish at a time. But many of us long for ways to widen our impact and get at root causes. We are hurting from the debilitating effects of climate change, poverty, mental health, discrimination, violence, isolation, suffering, war, and more. How can we make a real difference—how can we reduce the number of beached starfish in the first place?

As UUs we aspire to inclusivity; to accept more people, to include diverse theological orientations and spiritual practices, to adopt more worthy projects. Sometimes this looks like a collage of beauty, passion, and interdependence. And sometimes it seems like a hodgepodge of activities, with people pulled in many directions to the point of burnout. What if we stopped? How would our lives change? Would anyone outside our community notice?

This year, the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton has embarked on an exciting pilot project to discern how we can focus efforts, widen impact, and live our faith and values together as a church community. I am thrilled to be along for the journey as the Assistant Minister for Outreach and Social Justice, working with the congregation to design a process for selecting outreach and social justice projects, and then acting together for change.

The first step of the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton outreach ministry project is gathering all of our ideas. The second, more challenging, step is applying a process of discernment to focus us in our outreach ministry.

Just what makes a meaningful social justice or outreach project? There is a vast circle of possibilities. In UU tradition, we are starting with more questions than answers, to help narrow our focus and widen our impact:

Of all of the worthy social justice and outreach projects, what makes a meaningful project for us as Unitarian Universalists? This reduces the circle of possibilities, basing it exclusively on our shared values and interests.

What makes a meaningful project for a church community, allowing people of all ages, all financial means, all backgrounds, and all abilities to contribute? The set narrows again.

What makes a meaningful project in Hamilton, taking into account local needs and opportunities?

What projects draw on our particular skills, and resources as a congregation? A tight circle, filled to the brim with potential.

What projects are sustainable in terms of our space, time, and energy?

And finally, what projects are transformative? Out in the world, yes, but also transformative in each of our lives and in our shared life as a congregation? What outreach helps overturn hierarchies and barriers of ‘us’ and ‘them,’ build relationships, step outside our comfort zones, honour our interdependence, and live our outreach as a deeply transformative spiritual practice?

We don’t yet know the answers to these questions, but we are engaging with them so that we can work effectively for change in ourselves, our congregation, our UU faith, and our world. Because there are too many starfish on the sand.

*Rev. Carly Gaylor  
Assistant Minister for Outreach and Social Justice,  
First Unitarian Congregation of Hamilton*

## What Does Reconciliation Mean to You?

We are learning more about the truth of what happened in the Canadian Indian Residential School System, and what prejudices and injustices continue, and why. The process of truth, healing, and reconciliation brings up this question: What does reconciliation look like? I wonder what other Unitarians think. I asked my colleagues and here are a couple of their responses.

Rev. Debra Faulk (Unitarian Church of Calgary, and UUMOC President):

Seems to me that reconciliation requires awareness (education and acceptance), forgiveness, and then unity. First is acceptance of the need for conciliatory action and then educating ourselves about the circumstances involved that led to the need for reconciliation. Forgiveness involves opening to the pain, current and endured, and being willing to hold it without being controlled by it. Finally unity moves us to a place of willingness to recognize our commonality and our differences and strive to be related.

Rev. Brian Kiely (Unitarian Church of Edmonton):

Reconciliation is more than confession and forgiveness. Reconciliation only occurs when both parties are willing to listen and accept the truth of the other and then find ways to move ahead together in mutual respect and with a new enlightenment. The key is that all parties are changed.

Last June, Casey Stainsby did a pilgrimage between Old Montreal and Kahnawake outside Montreal as part of a Concordia University course. A Unitarian young adult, Casey says,

So many of the contemporary Aboriginal-initiated sacred journeys that we looked at in class (and actions that I've seen happening across the continent in recent years) uphold healing and reconciliation as their central purpose, and are adamant that both Natives and settlers have need of healing from colonial trauma. And, as I have really come to understand over the past few weeks, reconciliation is about healing the relationship. This is not a one-sided affair. So I see it as utterly appropriate and way past due that a group of

non-Native settlers from a Christian university department are making a trek of our own initiative towards understanding. That we humble ourselves with walking on foot into 'Mohawk territory', that we make this small effort and gesture of willingness to learn what has come to pass and how we can move forward together.

(Casey was interviewed on CBC radio: <http://www.cbc.ca/allinaweekend/episodes/> under, "Kanawake pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Kateri.")

What does reconciliation involve for me? Learning more about what happened and is happening to Aboriginal people in Canada. Acknowledging the wrong, and what led to it. Not getting trapped in feelings of shame for things I did not do. Instead, owning what I could have done and didn't do in my lifetime, acknowledging my feelings, and forgiving myself. Then finding out what I can do now in the process of healing, and advocating for proper redress and justice. Reconciliation is based on the process of building a relationship again—which is founded on seeing the worth and dignity of all those involved. It means risking being vulnerable when getting to know others. It means knowing I will make mistakes and not letting that stop me: owning them, learning from them, apologizing, taking the time to rebuild trust. And it means staying engaged in the process, with humility and humour.

What does reconciliation mean to you? Reconciliation Canada's Community Action Toolkits can be found at <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/reconciliation-begins-with-me//participate/>. They include how to create 'a kitchen dialogue on reconciliation; resources for youth and young adults; and how to plan your own reconciliation event. Maybe we could create a reconciliation event for the CUC ACM in May 2015 in Ottawa!

I'd love to hear your thoughts on reconciliation: [mroberts@uuma.org](mailto:mroberts@uuma.org).

*Rev. Meg Roberts  
Consulting Minister  
Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship*



## Canadian Unitarians Work for Truth & Reconciliation

On March 29, 2014, Rev. Meg Roberts and Dr. Gary Groot presented an Expression of Reconciliation to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at the final event in Edmonton, Alberta. Representing the UU Ministers of Canada (UUMOC) and the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC), they committed to the journey of healing and reconciliation between Canadian Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people, and three steps to advance that journey.

**1. To assemble and promote educational materials** for our congregations regarding the history and impact of the Indian Residential School system. A task force is creating this lifespan curriculum, co-chaired by Rev. Samaya Oakley and Rev. Meg Roberts. If you have resources on this topic for children, youth or adults, please email Rev. Meg Roberts by November 30 ([mroberts@uuma.org](mailto:mroberts@uuma.org)). Launch of the curriculum is planned for the CUC ACM 2015.

**2. To create and promote a new program** for congregations about racial equity and intercultural competency. The CUC Diversity Monitoring Group is re-launching the Celebrating Diversity Program. It helps us become more aware of the various social identities we all have: ancestry & culture; gender identification & sexual orientation; age; ability & accessibility; socio-economic status; theology; family structure; political/ideological. Like the Welcoming Congregation program, congregations will decide when to begin working towards their Celebrating Diversity accreditation, and will design the program for their own context (with support from the monitoring group). For more information, contact [diversity@cuc.ca](mailto:diversity@cuc.ca).

**3. To continue to encourage our congregations** and their members to learn more about the richness of Aboriginal spirituality and cultures, working together to advance the struggle for justice for Aboriginal people. Some CUC congregations have been working on these issues for years, as have individual UUs. Various congregations

sent inspiring descriptions of what they've been doing (including Victoria, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Thunder Bay, Mississauga, Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa, and those below). Congregations have formed groups to focus on these issues and/or done congregational programming, such as inviting First Nations speakers, showing films, offering adult programming, going to public events, and building connections with local First Nations leaders and groups. Here are a few examples:

**At the Grand River Unitarian Congregation** in Kitchener, ON, Anne Dahmer offered an adult program: "We used the CBC DVD series 8th Fire, which is a four-part documentary series." Then they toured an Aboriginal-run museum that highlights Six Nations' heritage and culture.

**Unitarian Church of Peterborough's** Indigenous Working Group member Ian Attridge writes, "Over the last year or so we have been part of a local Truth and Reconciliation circle, written letters, hosted and assisted workshops, and learned from our local First Nation chief and Aboriginal women's organization."

*continued on page 31*



*continued from page 30*

Inspired by his experience at the TRC last March, Dr. Gary Groot (CUC past president) applied for a study grant, “to develop a conceptual model for shared decision making amongst aboriginal peoples that is relevant to their cultural context, using decision making in early stage breast cancer as the clinical issue requiring decision.”

The UU United Nations Spring Seminar –bringing together UU youth and adults from around the world. The 2014 theme was Rights of Indigenous People. The CUC/UUMOC Expression was part of the keynote speech delivered by Vyda Ng, CUC Executive Director.

UU Ministers of Canada chose for ‘UUMOC Reads’: *The Orenda* by Joseph Boyden and *The Inconvenient Indian* by Thomas King. These will be discussed in regional ministers groups. You are invited to read and discuss them in your circles.

If you or your congregation has done something you would like to share, please contact Rev. Meg Roberts (mroberts@uuma.org), to be listed on the curriculum website and help inspire others to join the CUC and UUMOC in taking more steps along this journey of truth, healing, and reconciliation.

*Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada  
and Canadian Unitarian Council*



The 2014 IARF Congress was held in Birmingham, UK, home of the famous Coventry Cathedral, destroyed in the WWII blitz, now a memorial to forgiveness and peace. The International Association for Religious Freedom was founded by Unitarians in 1893. It supports human rights and interfaith dialogue among its national Chapters, and with international Congresses every four years. – Christine Johnston

## You say you want a resolution...

**Is your congregation or community considering bringing a resolution to the AGM in the spring?**

**If so, here are some helpful tips to get started:**

Is the subject linked to UU sources and principles?

Does it have broad appeal for all UUs? (if not, local or regional action might be more appropriate, timely, and effective)

Is there a similar, previously approved resolution? If so, this might be amended (look for past resolutions at [cuc.ca/resolutions/](http://cuc.ca/resolutions/))

Does this have the support of one of the five categories of approved Proposers? (These can be found in the CUC Resolutions Process document, available for downloading at [cuc.ca/governance/resolutions-process](http://cuc.ca/governance/resolutions-process).)

**If you've answered yes to all the questions, and are ready to proceed:**

Review the CUC Resolutions Process ([cuc.ca/governance/resolutions-process](http://cuc.ca/governance/resolutions-process)) or contact the Resolutions Advisory Committee ([resolutions@cuc.ca](mailto:resolutions@cuc.ca)).

The Resolutions Process and Timeline are designed to help CUC communities prepare for the successful submission of proposed resolutions. The deadline to submit proposals is **December 15, 2014**.

## AU MARCHÉ ATWATER

Shafts of sunlight pour into the café  
casting purple shadows. A lone pigeon coos.  
Warm croissant crumbs around my ravenous mouth.  
Coffee aromas nuzzle and tug, wake me with a jolt. I have my Gazette.  
It's Saturday morning. All's right with the world.  
Outside, vendors bustle. They unfold tarps - secret stashes,  
Pools of color. Speak French with a pomp, an air  
of Doolittle. It's 1962 and I'm back at Covent Garden.  
The icy air beckons. I fold my paper.  
Push the green door and walk out.  
Stall upon stall the pungent cadmiums, viridians, ochres  
leap out in frenzy. Hairy cobs of corn,  
Asian veggies, blobs of cheese, chocolate, jams,  
maple, pizzas, organic—all lie naked, shy, fresh.  
Sweet berries, apples, tomatoes, carrots vie for first place.  
And the peppers, oh the bountiful polished peppers,  
Reflecting moonlight, sunsets, oceans,  
Crunchy, long and fat, voluptuous and divine,  
leave me speechless and numb. Enough enough. I hurry on.  
A certain melancholy as I head to the canal. The pumpkin lady sits  
alone humming an orange tune, lost in planets of fire.  
I dreamed of her last night with her distorted mandalas,  
Her yings and yangs that once showed me the way.  
Now, perched precariously, she heralds the passing of time.  
A journey all too soon, to a snowy, frosty, creamy  
Pisarro landscape.

*Cheryl Braganza*

Montreal artist Cheryl Braganza was born in India and has lived here since 1966. She has complemented her painting with poetry for the past 45 years, holding a solo exhibition in 2010 of 50 artworks and 15 poems. As a friend of the Unitarian Church of Montreal, Cheryl has attended services, joined in the drumming circle, and played piano for summer services.  
[www.cherylbraganza.com](http://www.cherylbraganza.com)