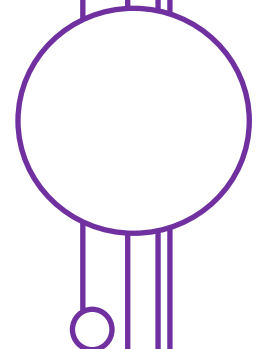




**CANADIAN
UNITARIAN
COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2015**

MAY 2016



CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Glenda Butt

National Vision Statement

This last year has been most eventful in the challenging life of the CUC Board. The Visioning Task Force has put the final touches on the Vision Statement (and five aspirations) which will be voted on by delegates at the 2016 AGM after a sound hearing with many UU communities including congregations, UU Ministers Of Canada, Youth and Young Adults. Thank you especially to Board member Rev. Fiona Heath for her creative thinking and many revisions in our quest for wide ownership and acceptance.

Task Forces

New members bring new perspectives and energy to the Board. This last year did not disappoint with the additions of Keith Wilkinson (Vancouver), Susan Rattan (Edmonton), Jane Ebbern (Calgary) and Neal Cameron, Youth Observer (Winnipeg). Three task forces emerged from the May 2015 Board meeting. Keith chaired the Alignment Task Force with commitment and many hours of work. The Board approved the report which ensures Board Ends or goals, and the staff engagement plan. Yearly AGM approved Board priorities, are working in parallel; and all are compliant with a revised Board policy manual.

Jane Ebbern and Susan Rattan worked on the Fundraising Task Force which is ongoing as they have developed a Fundraising Plan, which has been approved by the Board. Neal Cameron led the Youth Task Force. He attended and networked at three Regional Fall Gatherings and reports regularly at the Board monthly meetings.

Canada Revenue Agency Audit

Shortly after the ACM last May the much anticipated CRA visit was made to the new CUC office at the Center for Social Innovation. A member of the Board CRA committee accompanied CUC Executive Director, Vyda Ng, for the on-site visit. By all accounts, the two day meeting was conducted professionally by both parties and went as well as can be expected.

We thank Vyda for her ongoing and tireless work on this file. We are also eternally grateful for the current federal government's decision to discontinue political audits of charities. In reality the good news effect is reduced when considering the necessary expenditures incurred in energy and legal fees. The Board awaits the final report from

The CRA¹. Vyda has developed a repertoire of resources on charity law and best practices for congregations.

Social Responsibility

On a positive note, all might agree that one of two high profile events of the year was the heart warming response of over 38 UU congregations to the Syrian refugee crisis. Thank you to April Hope, CUC Social Responsibility coordinator, and Vyda for all their efforts, in addition to the many other projects in the social responsibility file.

For some time the CUC has been a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) in its attempt to facilitate a smooth successful process for groups and communities wishing to sponsor people forced to leave their country of origin. Processes and guidelines have been developed for congregations involved in sponsoring refugees.

The second highlight emerged from the Truth & Reconciliation resolution in 2014 when the CUC and UUMOC (UU Ministers of Canada) made a commitment to the indigenous peoples of Canada. In progress is the development of our Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guides for all Ages.

This project was selected to receive Northern Lights funding. This year, the longstanding fundraising program experimented with crowdfunding as a pilot project. Thank you to young adults Liz James, Sean Neil-Barron and Christopher Wulff for leading this initiative, after discussions were started at the joint meeting between CUC and UUMOC after the May 2015 conference.

Appreciation & Reflections

Once again at the upcoming AGM, we say thank you and goodbye to some Board members and welcome others. Thank you and good wishes to Board secretary, Rev. Fiona Heath who completes her 3 year term in May. We wish Rev. Carly Gaynor well and thank her as Minister Observer. Neal Cameron has served well as Youth Observer, and we await the outcome of the Youth Observer elections at the 2016 CanUUdle, the youth conference that runs concurrently with the national conference. The Board experience was richer for their youth and young adult perspectives.

CUC BOARD:

Glenda Butt: President
Keith Wilkinson: Vice President
Kristina Stevens: Treasurer
Rev. Fiona Heath: Secretary
Jamie Dunton
Lorna Weigand
Susan Ruttan
Jane Ebbern
Rev. Carly Gaylor : Minister Observer
Neal Cameron: Youth Observer

¹ At time of going to press, the CUC has received word from CRA about the outcome of the audit.

We welcome Tanya Cothran (Toronto First) representing Central region and Carol Cumming Speirs (Montreal) representing the Eastern region. UUMOC has selected Rev. Debra Faulk as the next Minister Observer. Best wishes also to Ariel Hunt –Brondwin, Director for Youth & Young Adults, who is on maternity leave. We welcome her replacement Asha Philar (Guelph) and Rawaa Shubbar, the CUC's new Administrative Coordinator.

This will be my last Report to the AGM as I complete six years of two terms on the Board as secretary, vice-president and president. I've been part of many changes over that time. 2010 had evolved to be an uncertain time on the Board with many resignations of members not completing their terms. Measures were quickly taken to ensure Board stability so that meaningful ideas and work could come to fruition. Other major changes in the following years included the demonstrated need for a change in executive directors and the elimination of the \$500,000 deficit (which had been approved at the 2010 AGM with the good intention of growth in UU communities). Both changes were successful.

More routine Board work did see significant revisions of the policy manual, by-laws, nominating committee engagement and new member orientation. However, it has only been in recent years that the Board has reached a place where the focus could be on bigger picture "real" Board work. Future challenges led us to this third year of visioning with all member congregations and other UU communities.

"I thank my Board colleagues for a wonderful and deeply rich experience with wonderful, caring and committed individuals"

The need to enhance the relationship with UUMOC was necessary for cooperation on joint projects, eg. Northern Lights, Visioning initiative, etc. CUC & UUMOC started meeting at the national conferences in the mid 2000s. A covenant was developed between the CUC and the UUMOC executive. A National Voice Team was initiated, consisting of the President of UUMOC, the President of CUC and the Executive Director of CUC. The National Voice Team deals with issues which need a national presence. The relationship has developed significantly from the early days.

As Board president, I didn't manage to escape that a significant event that drains energy, revenues and causes all manner of disruption and fallout. That event on my watch was the CRA audit. With the audit in progress it was challenging for the Board to decide on when to speak out on issues of concern to Unitarians. Subjectively, it was not my nature to remain silent. However, Board of Trustees, as a matter of good practice, followed legal advice. (Tony Turner is still my personal hero.)

On that note I want to thank all of my Board colleagues over six years, for a deeply rich experience with wonderful, caring and committed individuals. We have worked hard to

get the Board to this healthy, productive and future focused place. May it continue to be so.

Glenda Butt, President

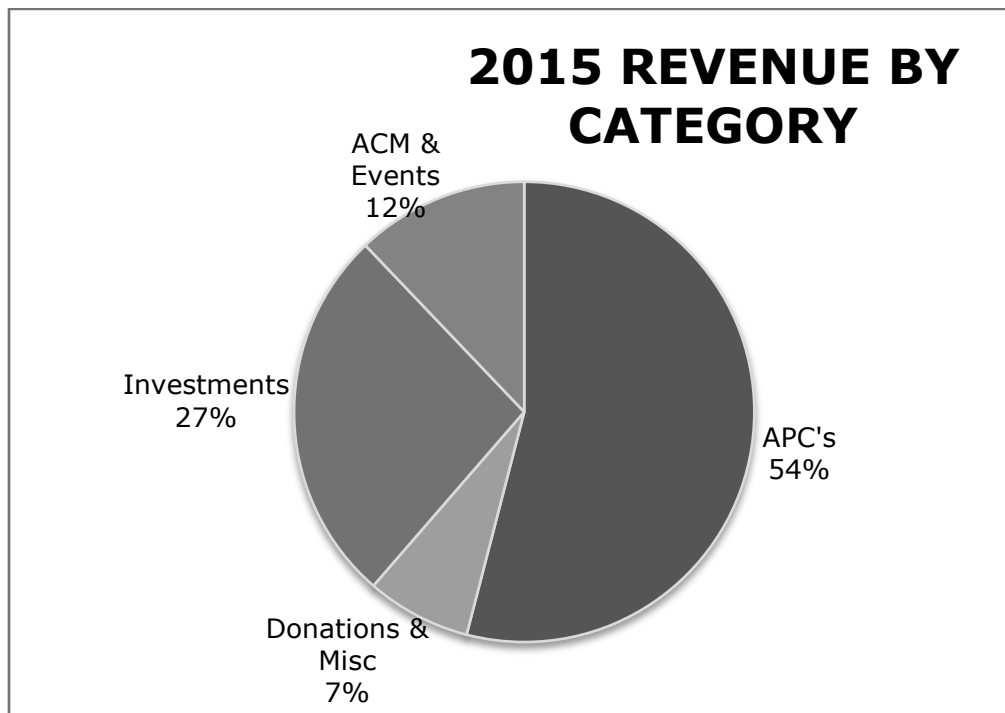


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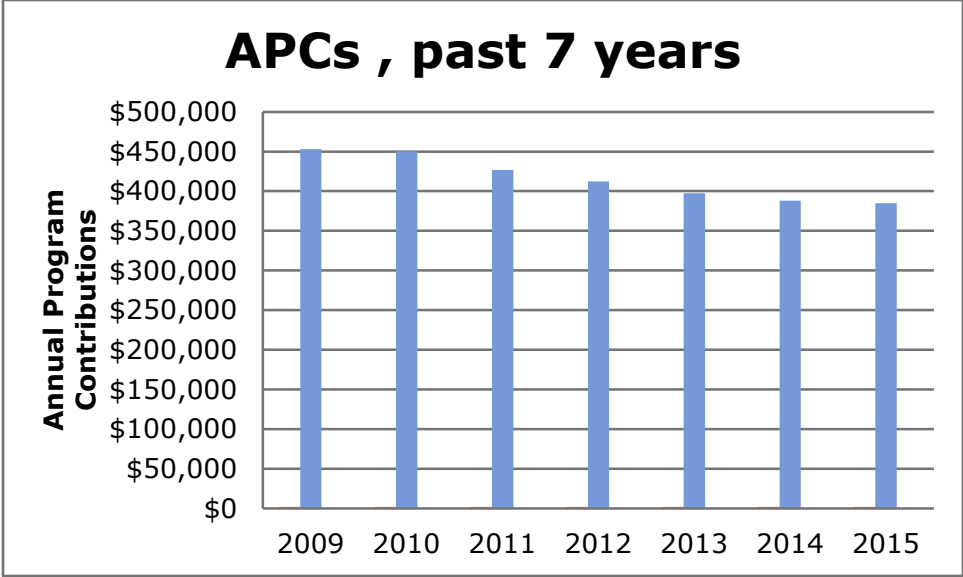
TREASURER'S REPORT – Kristina Stevens

2015 Treasurer's Report

As in previous years, the majority of CUC revenue in 2015 was received from member congregations as Annual Program Contributions in support of CUC work. Income from the Annual Conference and Meeting and other events such as youth conferences and regional fall gatherings was used to help cover the costs of those events. Income transferred from investments is based on a five-year moving average of net returns less inflation; this average increased in 2014 resulting in an increase in this item for 2015. Donations from Friends of CUC made up an important part of revenue, increasing slightly over 2014.

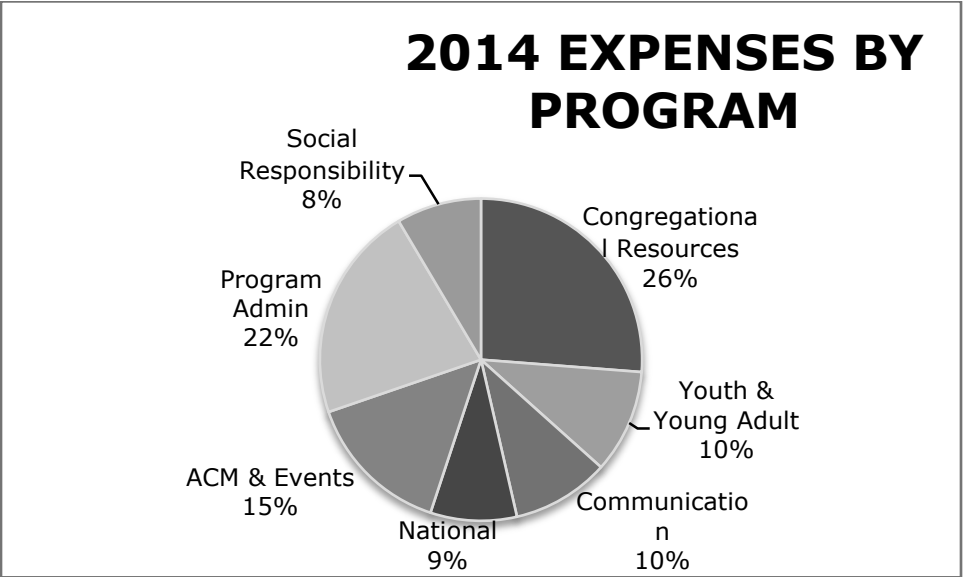


Annual Program Contributions (APCs) received in 2015 decreased slightly, as has been the case each year at least since 2009. The amount is based on a set dollar per member, and membership in Unitarian Universalist congregations has been slowly declining across Canada. The following chart shows the pace of decline in the amounts transferred from congregations to the CUC over those years.



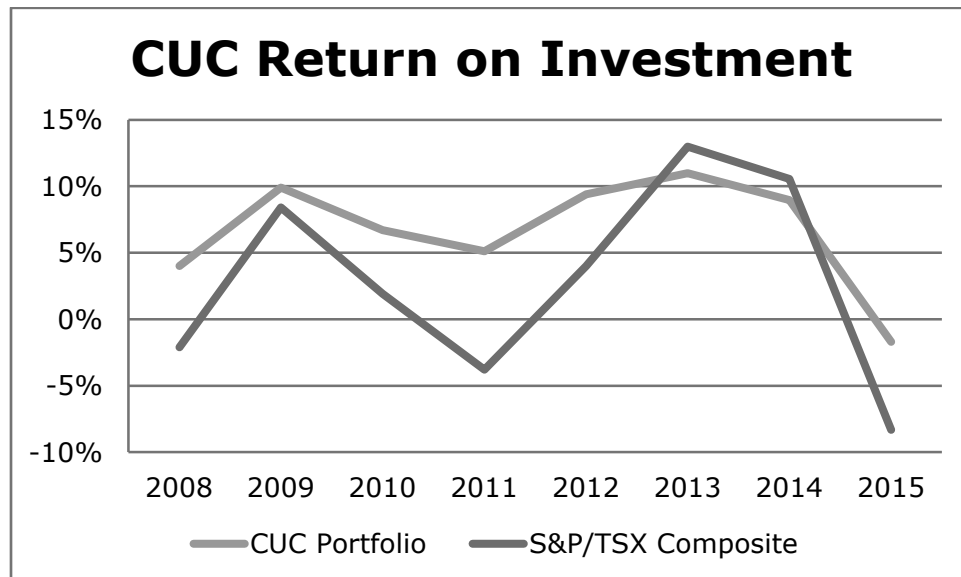
The following chart shows the percentage of expenditures on different areas of work done by the CUC. Staff and office expenses have been allocated to these areas, to provide a more complete picture.

Expenditures in 2015 followed a somewhat different pattern from the previous year. The Congregational Resources category was the largest in both years, and both Social Responsibility and Communication received the same proportion of resources as in 2014. However, the ACM and Events, Youth and Young Adult and National categories saw lower expenditures while Program Administration increased significantly. Both the physical office move and administrative staff turnover contributed to this, but the biggest reason for the increase was due to expenses caused by the Canada Revenue Agency audit during the year. This required a major time commitment from the Executive Director in terms of hours spent on this category, as well as more than \$38,000 in unbudgeted expense for legal advice.



Revenues in 2015 fell somewhat short of the budgeted amount, however expenditures were also lower than budgeted due to management during the year. The net result was an over expenditure of \$27,500, significantly lower than the unbudgeted amount spent on the legal contract in response to the CRA audit.

CUC investment returns recorded a net loss of 1.7% in 2015. This performance was significantly better than the Standard and Poor/TSX Composite performance of negative 8.32% over the same period, partly due to the gain in the value of our investments in US dollars as the Canadian dollar fell. As indicated in the following chart, our returns have outperformed the composite index in most of the past eight years. Our return on investment since inception more than 10 years ago is a net 5.84%. Our investment manager, Alan Harman of Scotia McLeod, applies socially responsible filters based on analysis from Sustainalytics which address environmental, social and governance factors.



Kristina Stevens, Treasurer



PORTFOLIO MANAGER'S REPORT - Alan Harman, Scotia McLeod

Market Summary

Over the final quarter of 2015, markets were again driven by anticipated monetary policy decisions in the U.S. and Europe as well as low oil prices and concern over a decelerating Chinese economy.

In the U.S., equity markets remained solid as participants continued to wait on data from the Federal Reserve. This meant the markets were intensely focused on U.S. labour figures and inflation data. The quarter began with a soft October labour figure which cast doubt about a rate increase at the October meeting with some calling for no increase until the New Year. However sentiment turned in November following a strong labour release and solid inflation figures. The data outstripped expectations by a large margin which sent yields higher and the equity market reversing gains as expectations of a Fed "lift-off" in December were partially restored. Those expectations were all but confirmed following another strong labour report in December accompanied by large upward revisions to September and October. The report led to volatile U.S. and global equity markets in December and lower U.S. bond yields. Finally, on December 16th, the FOMC released their decision to increase the Fed Funds rate by 0.25% for the first time since 2006. By that time markets had priced in the increase and the S&P500 and Dow Jones ended the quarter 6.45% and 7.00% higher.

In Europe, equity and bond markets followed a similar pattern to the U.S. but had their own monetary policy concerns. Over the quarter, Europe was looking to their inflation figures as an indication to potential moves by the European Central Bank. However, unlike the U.S., European markets were weighing expansionary measures rather than contractionary. On December 3rd, the ECB announced a 0.10% decrease to the deposit rate from -0.20% to -0.30% as well as an extension to the quantitative easing program from September 2016 to March 2017. The decision started an equity correction on the European markets that coupled with U.S. labour data and the Fed decision removed most of the quarter's gains.

In Canada markets were affected by both U.S. and European monetary policy decisions, but also by a slowing Chinese economy and the resulting freefall in commodity prices. Canadian markets rose to quarter-highs at the beginning of October almost in tandem with oil, but as supply concerns mounted, oil began to fall and took equities with it; OPEC's production decision and Iranian oil exports were both major contributors. Over the quarter, the TSX fell 9.18% from peak to trough before recording a loss of 2.23%. For the calendar year the TSX was down 11%. The declines in oil also hurt the Canadian dollar, which tracked with the commodity and closed out the quarter at C\$0.7227/USD.

The bond market continued its winning streak in 2015 as bond yields hit all-time lows in December. This is a reflection of: 1. moderate and tentative rate increases in the U.S.

and the assumption of interest rate declines everywhere else in the world 2. Slowing Chinese growth and 3. Rapidly slowing Canadian economy.

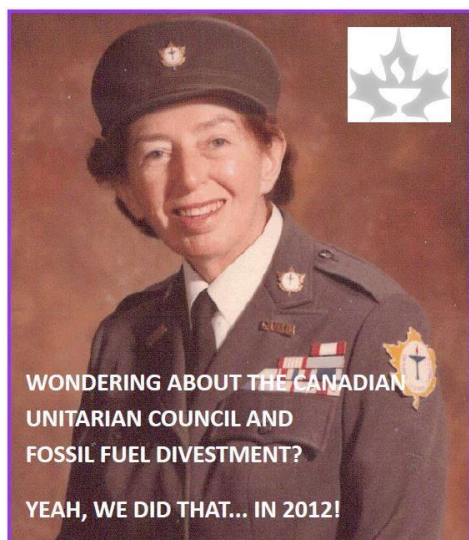
Many of the factors that led to the poor markets in 2015 remain as challenges for 2016. Despite mounting strain on OPEC and non-OPEC producers alike, the ongoing global oversupply situation for crude oil shows no sign of reversing in the near-term. Similarly, the deceleration in the Chinese economy and general slow pace of global growth has also resulted in oversupply conditions for many other non-food commodities. Finally, low absolute interest rates, worries about potentially higher loan losses, and a stretched housing market are keeping sentiment on the Canadian financials low. So long as these factors persist we think that the Canadian equity market will continue to be hard-pressed to attract the funds flow required to generate meaningful returns in 2016.

CUC portfolio

The CUC portfolio performed relatively well in 2015 falling only 1.70% net in a year when the TSX total return index was down 8.32%. The portfolio return since inception now stands at 5.84% per year net vs the TSX annual return of 4.62%. The largest contributor to performance was our U.S. equities (mostly due to currency gains). Performance this

year was hurt by our investment in rate rest preferred shares which float with short term interest rates. As rates fell so did the preferred dividend rates taking the prices down with them. With rates so close to zero we feel comfortable that these securities will migrate higher when rates eventually go up.

The CUC portfolio continues to be aligned with the Unitarian guiding principles and the SRI investment policy statement. We hold no mining stocks and no oil/gas stocks.



Alan Harman, Portfolio Manager

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Vyda Ng

Overview of 2015

Canada Revenue Agency Audit: 2015 started off in an exciting way. In mid-January, notice was received from Canada Revenue Agency that the CUC would undergo an audit for the fiscal years 2012 and 2013. All aspects of our charitable organization would be scrutinized. Legal advice was immediately sought from Carter's Professional Corporation, one of Canada's leading law firms on charity law, and the CUC Board established an Audit Committee. After correspondence with CRA via Carter, the audit was conducted at the CUC office over a two day period in late May².

Office Move: In March 2015, the CUC moved from Dupont Street to a co-working space on Spadina Avenue, in the heart of Toronto's Chinatown. This social enterprise concept by the Centre for Social Innovation is home to 1,000 nonprofits, charities and social ventures in Toronto alone, and employs over 2,500 people and generates combined annual revenues of \$250 million. It has been a good move for the CUC.

Staff: In the fall of 2015, Tisann McSween left the CUC, and Rawaa Shubbar joined us in November as the new Administrative Coordinator. Ariel Hunt-Brondwin, Youth and Young Adult Ministry Development staff, announced that she would be taking maternity leave in March 2016³.

Refugee Sponsorship: The CUC has been a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) for over 20 years, but the Syrian crisis propelled our work to new levels in the fall of 2015. Here are some noteworthy details of what we've been able to do together:

- Since September 2015, 38 of 46 Canadian UU congregations are directly or indirectly involved in refugee sponsorship, from Halifax to Victoria
- Our congregations are working with 13 new and outside groups to sponsor refugees in their local communities
- The CUC is working directly with 4 outside sponsoring groups to provide connections to Syrian and LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer and questioning) communities across the country
- Nearly 50 applications have been approved
- 15 families (almost 60 people) arrived safely in Canada



² At time of printing, CUC has received word from CRA about a Compliance Agreement. Process is underway for responding in full by July 14, 2016.

³ Ariel and Chris Wulff's baby was born on March 29, Rowan Lawrence Wulff. Asha Philar joined us in February 2016 in the YaYA position.

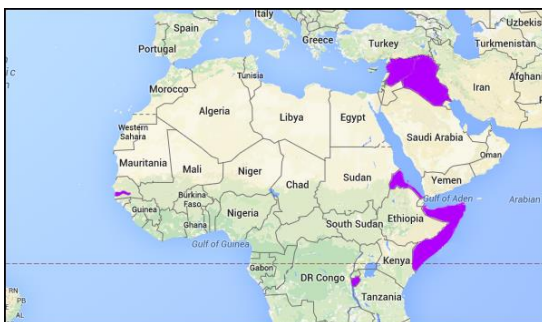
- Majority of refugees are from Syria (88%), but we are also providing refuge for people coming from Iraq (2%), Somalia (2%), Eritrea (4%), The Gambia (2%), Burundi (2%)
- Settlement has been established in large, medium, and small sized cities, the majority of which have been in Ontario
- We are working with several urgent protection cases where the lives of refugees are severely and directly threatened. Some of these cases are from Afghanistan and Burundi, and are sponsored by congregations in Peterborough, Saskatoon and Ottawa.

"April Hope has been worth her weight in gold and should be paid double whatever she's making since she seems to be able to be in three places at once. The refugee efforts have been very challenging, but have galvanized the congregation in a new way, and it is exciting to be part of the bigger community of congregations doing this work. April's help, resources and encouragement have helped GRU to do far more than we'd dreamed was possible." *Rev. Jessica P Rodela, Grand River Unitarian Congregation*

Many applications are still in process, and even more requests come in daily – we have capped our waiting list with over 200 requests as we are unable to process any more. Another 35 families have been approved but have not yet arrived. The new allocations for 2016 will limit what we can do to the number of spaces we are allocated as a SAH.

April Hope, Social Responsibility Coordinator, has been the lynchpin in Canadian Unitarian work with refugee sponsorship. April has worked tirelessly with congregations to support, inform and coordinate

refugee efforts, is and a member of the SAH Council Public Relations Committee and a member of the Steering Committee for Refugee613, representing the Canadian Unitarian Council in promoting and engaging with global refugee issues.



Legislation on Medical Assistance in Dying: 2015 was a monumental year for the choice in dying movement. Since the 1970s, Canadian Unitarians have been advocates for the right of a grievously ill individual to have the right to make decisions about the



time and manner of their death. We were involved as Intervenor in the Taylor case in 2012, and were present at the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) in October 2014 with our submission as Intervenor when the Court heard presentations on the matter.

In February 2015 when the SCC returned a unanimous decision in favour of medical assistance in dying, many Canadian Unitarians applauded the bold move.

Our national voice has continued to be heard as the CUC has remained actively involved in consultations for

thorough, equitable and consistent legislation.


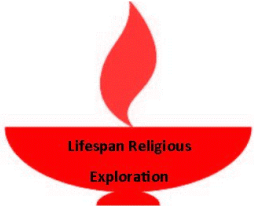


Best Practices for Canadian UU Congregations: As a result of the Canada Revenue Agency audit, resources on CRA guidelines for religious charities have been consolidated and developed. These are intended for our UU congregations to become more informed and aware of best practices and to avoid pitfalls. These resources can be found on the CUC website, and encompass topics like defining and tracking political activity, charitable purposes, and rental policies.

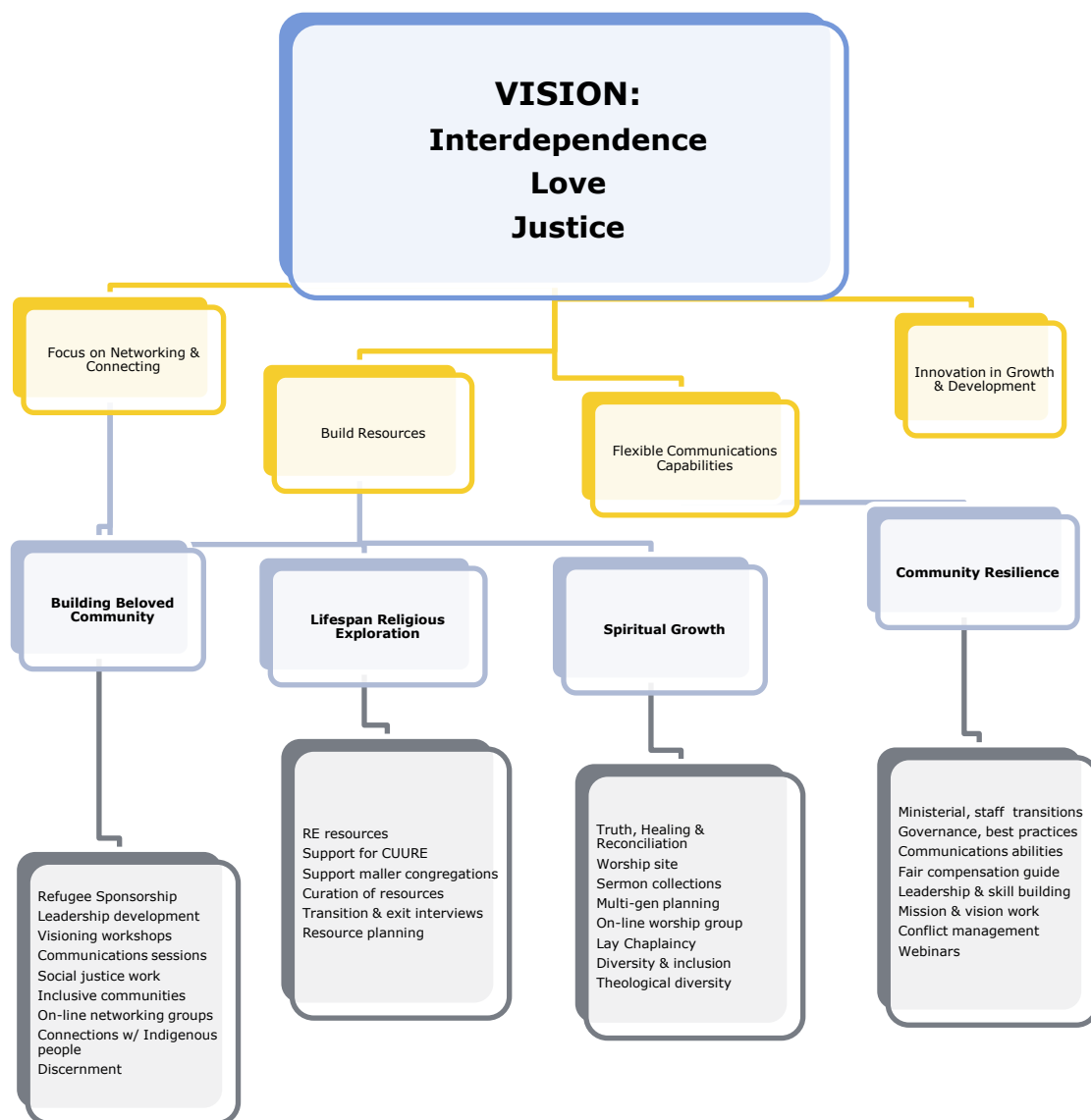
Congregational Engagement: CUC staff, in fulfillment of the CUC priorities, engage with our congregations in 4 broad categories. These areas help to shape and inform our work with congregations, and ensure that we remain in alignment with the priorities.

CUC PRIORITIES:

1. *Focus on networking and connecting*
2. *Develop repository of resources for the benefit of our UU communities*
3. *Develop flexible communications system*
4. *Foster innovation in the growth & development of UU communities*

Areas of Congregational Engagement:

 <p>BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY, which includes:</p>	 <p>LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION, which includes:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping our leaders lead • Connecting, strengthening and growing communities • Radical inclusion and solidarity with justice-seeking groups • Small group ministry • Social justice • Multigenerational relationships • Professional and shared ministry • National and international communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster learning and faith development • Safe congregations • Program and curriculum consultation • Religious Exploration staffing and volunteer support
 <p>SPIRITUAL GROWTH, which includes:</p>	 <p>COMMUNITY RESILIENCE, which includes:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence in worship and programming • Celebration of theological diversity • Living values of inclusivity • Multi-generational worship and programming • Lay chaplaincy • Spiritual deepening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance: structures, policies and processes • Vision and mission • Pathways to membership • Leadership development • Managing transformation and change • Financial stewardship • Conflict management • Volunteer engagement



CUC STAFF

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CUC Staff Support / eNews Editor

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Conference Convenor

APRIL HOPE

Social Responsibility Coordinator

VYDA NG

Executive Director

JOAN CAROLYN

Congregational Devt, BC & Western

ARIEL HUNT-BRONDWIN

Youth & Young Adult Ministry

JORGE MOREIRA

Tech Support

REV. LINDA THOMSON

Congregational Devt, Central, Eastern

Over 2015, staff has tracked the amount of time spent with each congregation, and how that time was spent. In part, this was an effort to more accurately account for how we spend our time, and also to see where our congregations need support and resources.

TRACKING BY AMOUNT OF TIME		
Well in excess of 20 hours	Between 10 – 15 hours	Between 5 – 10 hours
29 congregations ➤ 16 large congregations ➤ 13 smaller congregations	8 congregations ➤ 2 large congregations ➤ 6 smaller congregations	9 smaller congregations



"One of the biggest ways the CUC has been of support to Regina is through the work of Joan Carolyn, the Western Region Congregational Development staff. We have benefited from her expertise in facilitating meetings with our Board of Trustees and congregation in aid of our goal to revitalize and reach out to the community."

Joanne Green, Unitarian Fellowship of Regina

ENCOURAGING INNOVATION

As part of fulfilling the priority on “Encourage innovation in the growth and development of UU communities,” staff has been collecting ideas and nurturing initiatives. The Northern Lights Crowdfunding project has been one such concept. Led by Sean Neil-Barron, Liz James and Chris Wulff, and with the support of the UU Ministers of Canada and the CUC, Northern Lights fundraising piloted a crowdfunding experiment. In a departure from the traditional model of sending letters, Northern Lights took to the web to raise funds. At the pilot’s end, an evaluation will help decision-making about the feasibility of future crowdfunding.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The CUC is re-writing partnership agreements with two international partners that are in compliance with Canada Revenue Agency guidelines and that will allow the CUC to carry out the work of advancing UUism internationally. The UU United Nations Office, under the umbrella of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and the International Council of UUs, will continue to be CUC partners with a different role for the CUC.

“Linda Thomson is one of those rare individuals who is always willing to assist when help is needed. With her fast knowledge and experience it is a real pleasure to work with her... In April 2015, we had started on crafting a Mission for the future of our UCM congregation. Linda facilitated a seminar to help us in a structured way to discuss our purpose as a congregation. With her input we have been able to bring this project to a successful conclusion. *Ted Kloosterman, Unitarian Congregation in Mississauga*

IN SUMMARY...

The work of CUC staff continues to change and expand. The opportunity to work with UU congregations and is an ever-evolving experience, and a worthwhile and fulfilling journey.

Vyda Ng, Executive Director

Report on the Action Plan for Truth and Reconciliation between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Peoples

By Rev. Samaya Oakley and Rev. Meg Roberts
and the CUC's Diversity Monitoring Group



At the 2015 AGM, CUC delegates voted in an action plan for their congregations, Board and staff on truth and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Peoples.⁴ This was a response to the CUC's and UUMOC's *Expression of Reconciliation* presented to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in March 2014, and on the 20th anniversary of the last CUC resolution on Aboriginal issues.

The *Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guide (THRRGuide)* task force has been assembling and promoting the life-span educational materials for our congregations regarding colonization (including the history and impact of the Indian Residential School system) and its ongoing impacts in consultation with Aboriginal individuals and groups.

To date, the adult *THRRGuide* has been created and piloted in three different formats:

- In 4-sessions: piloted at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, Westwood Unitarian Congregation (Edmonton), Grand River Unitarian Congregation (Kitchner/Waterloo), the Unitarian Church of Hamilton, and the Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon. There were some wonderful adaptations along the way. We learned from the creativity of the facilitators and have benefited from some of their additional resources.
- A one-day workshop: piloted as a stream at the CUC ACM 2015 in Ottawa.
- Two one-session workshops, one using the Kairos Blanket Exercise and one using Reconciliation Canada's Kitchen Table Dialogue Community Tool-kit. The first was piloted in Mississauga and Grand River. Other congregations who held a Blanket Exercise workshop include: Eastern Fall Regional Gathering, Ottawa Fellowship, First Ottawa, First Victoria, Hamilton, Comox Valley. The Reconciliation Dialogue was piloted as a workshop at the BC Fall Regional Gathering and at the Unitarian Fellowship of Peterborough.

Six other congregations have expressed interest in offering the *THRRGuide* in future.

Here are a sample of feedback comments from participants:

- "I learned a lot more about the history of the impact of colonization on First Nations People. To share this in an active, 'kinesthetically' engaging workshop rather than just reading about it is extremely powerful, core learning."

⁴ 'Aboriginal peoples' is the term we have used that includes First Nation, Indian, Métis, and Inuit peoples. 'Non-Aboriginal peoples' is the term we have used that includes people from cultural backgrounds other than these.

- “It really opened my eyes. I really hope this will contribute towards a BETTER CANADA for both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People. I think strongly that it is very important we start now. This Reflection Guide has a potential to give good influence to young children from kindergarten to high school students and all adults.”
- There was also a one-session youth *THRRGuide* piloted with Westwood and the Unitarian Church of Edmonton as part of a youth sleepover. A conversation about truth and reconciliation was also an option at the 2015 BC Fall Con.



For educational opportunities for CUC Board and staff, some staff have been present for partial training, and a training is planned for September for Board and staff.

We have learned a lot from the opportunity to offer these pilots. In particular, we heard how important it is to offer more sessions and allow more time for people to reflect on and integrate what they are learning. It is very challenging and yet fulfilling work and people in our congregations are telling us they want these opportunities to wrestle with these difficult issues together in a supportive environment. We will be revising the adult *THRRGuide* and plan to have it available by end of August for congregations to use in the

fall 2016.

Many other congregations have done programming about truth and reconciliation, such as Ottawa Fellowship and Hamilton (using the CBC 8th Fire series), Toronto First, Montreal (in their children's program the year long theme has centered on reconciliation?). There are also outreach programs and partnerships, such as Ottawa First's poverty awareness group who has contributed significant dollars and volunteer hours to keep open an Aboriginal daytime drop-in center for the homeless, and has also provided furniture and household goods for 28 women leaving the Aboriginal shelter for social housing and their families in 2015-2016.

The upper elementary 4-session *THRRGuide* was being created this winter and spring, and will be available for piloting this fall (along with supplementary materials for other complimentary programs). The lower elementary, youth and young adult *THRRGuides* will be created and piloted in 2016-2017.

We also offered two congregational facilitator training webinars this spring, which were attended by 17 participants (including also CUC staff and our task force members).

Through the Northern Lights program, donations received will be added to a generous donation by the CUC of \$5,000 (which paid for the lower elementary and adult Reflection Guides, and for experienced Indigenous educators to lead our CUC ACM 2016 workshop). The Northern Lights program raised close to \$14,000 this year. We offer our heart-felt thanks to all who gave their financial support.

We continue our fundraising by selling beautiful t-shirts for sale at the CUC ACM with our *THRRGuide* logo. The logo and t-shirts were designed by Jenna Oakley. If you would like to purchase one and help support our project, they will be available at the conference. If you weren't able to donate to our Northern Lights campaign and would still like to give, please contact us as well.

The *THRRGuide* Task Force also took on the task of compiling the resources for this year's Sharing our Faith packet. Most of the resources were drawn from work and reflections that the team used for its meetings, and doing its own work in curating the vast and varied resources available. Opening and closing words were pulled from minutes, check in questions served as reflection questions, and sermons were provided by the co-chairs, Revs. Meg Roberts and Samaya Oakley.

"It really opened my eyes. I really hope this will contribute towards a BETTER CANADA for both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People. I think strongly that it is very important we start now. This Reflection Guide has a potential to give good influence to young children from kindergarten to high school students and all adults."

The UU Ministers of Canada are fully supportive of the work being undertaken. This last year they have agreed to provide the housing and transportation costs for Kathi Camilleri and Meredith Martin, our two Aboriginal educators in this year's stream, "Building Bridges Through Understanding our Village." As well, last May ministers engaged in thematic ministry decided to share the theme of reconciliation for the month of February. All across Canada congregations engaged in common or similar spiritual practices and questions to wrestle with on the theme of reconciliation. We thank our colleagues for sharing their theme packets resources so all of ours were enriched, and for the inspiring programming and Sunday services that were offered across Canada on that theme this year---the list is too wonderfully to list everyone!

For their own professional development, UUMOC West's winter retreat 2015 had Aboriginal educator, Wedlidi Speck, come to talk to them about cross-cultural communication. Based on that success, the UUMOC annual gathering in May 2016 has invited Wedlidi to do a one-day workshop with them. Ministers have been key as well in supporting the piloting of the *THRRGuides* in congregations across Canada, and have been facilitating and/or attending these sessions.

"Reconciliation is about forging and maintaining respectful relationships. There are no shortcuts." *Justice Murray Sinclair*

We are grateful for all the support we have received across the country as people have suggested resources to us, put us in contact with Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal educators in these areas, and offered their moral support for the project. We thank the CUC staff for opportunities to share what we are doing as well as give updates on

what congregations have been doing. There were articles in the CUC Canadian Unitarian in the fall 2015 and spring 2016 issues, as well as regular updates in the CUC monthly e-newsletters, on the CUC website and on the CUC Facebook page. We were able to communicate with leaders through the CUC leaders, ministers, and presidents google groups, and the UUMOC chat-line. We also offer our thanks to as well as the Northern Lights crowd-funding team who helped us navigate new waters with expertise and grace.

In particular, we would like to thank our committed and inspiring task force members:

April Hope (CUC Social Responsibility Coordinator), Marlene Blake Seale (CUC Diversity Monitoring Group chair), Casey Stainsby, Amber Dawn Bellemare, and Leslie Kemp.

This has been an amazing journey these past two years and we value being able to continue this valuable and necessary work together in the coming year.

If your congregation is interested in knowing more and/or offering the *THRRGuides*, please contact us: Rev. Meg Roberts (mroberts@uuma.org), Rev. Samaya Oakley (soakley@uuma.org), or April Hope (april@cuc.ca).



MONITORING GROUP REPORTS

Criminal Justice Monitoring Group

criminaljustice@cuc.ca

The Criminal Justice Monitoring Group is focusing on promoting our general policy statement in a new political climate. In particular, we have noted that there has been an increase in incarceration since Bill C-10 and other crime bills, and that an even higher percentage of inmates are Indigenous or Muslim or Black with many people in jail awaiting trial who have not been convicted. Aboriginal women make up 68% of the women in jail.

We also have noted frequent reports in the news of the use of solitary confinement for a variety of reasons. We have decided to focus on the kinds of changes required to divert

aboriginal people to alternative dispute resolution and restorative justice practices; to ensure that aboriginal people are treated respectfully in jail and that mentally ill people are not subjected to solitary confinement; and to ensure the programs and healing centres are available to reduce recidivism and help aboriginal people to find a valued place in this world. We expect this to be a long campaign, and we would welcome new members to our group to follow these issues and take action across the country. CUC letters will be posted to the Criminal Justice page. To get involved please contact Frances Deverell (frandev@sympatico.ca) or April Hope. (april@cuc.ca)



Rev. Frances Deverell, Chair

Diversity Monitoring Group

diversity@cuc.ca

The Diversity Monitoring Group continues to develop small workshops called 'Diversity Dives' for congregational use. Two congregations have used these workshops to date, with great success and positive feedback. One of these workshops will be used during the multigenerational time of our national conference. The group has also had 3 people recently join who are interested in exploring the challenge of Diversity within their congregations and how that may translate at a national level.

Marlene Blake-Seale continues to represent the CUC in Diversity Roundtable Discussions in the Peel Region. These discussions have evolved into a very

comprehensive Diversity and Equity program which we have been invited to use with our communities and provide comment and feedback.

This group also hosts the discussions and planning for the CUC Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guides, a separate report is available.

Marlene Blake-Seale, Chair



Environment Monitoring Group

environment@cuc.ca

The environmental monitoring group membership includes representation from BC, Ontario, and Manitoba. The group focus has included: letter writing, introducing our FaceBook group and partnering with others who share our values. The current focus and priority issue is the very real threat of “Climate Change” with emphasis on: conservation of energy, a shift to renewables and proactively planning

for change/adaptation. Appreciating the philosophy of “think global, act local” the key environmental thrust going forward is at the community level and in particular reducing our congregations and fellowships climate change impact.

In 2016/17, we plan to follow up further on the following: the ACM 2015 Divestment Resolution—is divestment continuing; on the ACM 2013 Climate Change Resolution—has climate change training and/or awareness occurred or is it planned is the question; and, a survey, modeled on the UUA Green Sanctuary Program, initiated in 2014 and designed to determine where congregations/fellowships are at in their journey to sustainability. In addition we will initiate a trial of Natural Resources ENERGY STAR PORTFOLIO MANAGER and validate its usefulness as a benchmarking tool to monitor, optimize a sanctuaries energy use, and rate/compare those efforts with sanctuaries. The plan is to have at least two congregation’s building registered by December 2016. All congregations/fellowships are encouraged to respond to our surveys and to contact environment@cuc.ca if they have any questions, concerns or interest in participating with our team.

The bottom line, your local effort is where the rubber really hits the road so all are encouraged to just do it!

Forrest Smith, Chair

Peace Monitoring Group

peace@cuc.ca

The Peace Monitoring Group has been mildly active over the past year. Prior to the election there was little confidence that the government at that time would be receptive to many of the issues and positions that we believe valuable. During the election we drafted a letter to "... express our concerns about the direction of Canada's foreign policy as it relates to promoting peace" in an attempt to get the issue of peace onto the political agenda. With the change in government, there is optimism that we might see more movement on many of the peace issues. We drafted a letter encouraging the current government to "take whatever action is needed to have Canada accede to the Arms Trade Treaty". There are two other directions we are following: one is to convince the government to cancel the sales of Canadian weapons to Saudi Arabia, and the other is to urge the government to move towards a culture of peace that would include re-opening the Pearson Peace Centre. More work on these areas is planned.

Project Ploughshares Update for the CUC

Project Ploughshares celebrates its fortieth birthday this year, and the future looks good. There is a renewed energy, partially brought on by the return to a more open relationship between Ploughshares staff and government ministers and staff. There have been internal changes to, as Cesar Jaramillo took over the role of Executive Director from John Siebert, who had held the post for the past ten years.

On December 24, 2014, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was brought into force. Project Ploughshares played a major part in this Herculean task of bringing almost all of the world's countries together to agree on a treaty to regulate the trade in conventional arms that would help prevent human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. Alas, our government at that time missed the deadline for ratifying the treaty.

Ploughshares continues towards the goal of having Canada accede to the Arms Trade Treaty. The recent book *Disarming Conflict* by Ernie Regehr, co-founder of Ploughshares, leads to the conclusion that history has proven time and again that military-only solutions will not produce sustainable peace. Ploughshares has worked with other NGO's, the United Nations, and governments to promote the kind of policies and dialogue that is necessary to not only defuse conflicts after they arise, but promote diplomatic solutions to prevent conflict from escalating into violence. As shown by the war in Iraq, military responses are not guaranteed to leave a sustainable peace. Ploughshares continues to caution strongly against the reliance on military responses to conflict in the absence of a broader political strategy that can create the conditions for sustainable peace.

Their recent work includes a critique of the Canadian Government's recent multi-billion dollar contract to provide Saudi Arabia with military hardware, a contract that violates Canada's own weapons export policies.

As the CUC representative at Ploughshares, I want to convey to all of you the deep gratitude that the staff of Ploughshares have towards the CUC and all the sponsoring churches whose support allows them to continue their work.

Colin Read, Chair

TESTIMONIALS FROM CONGREGATIONS AND MEMBERS

Bill Baylis, UU Church of Olinda: The help we have received from contacts and visits from (CUC Congregational Development staffer) Rev. Linda Thomson and Rev. Allison Barrett after the rather sudden death on Aug. 8, 2015, of Rev. Christine E. Hillman, of our minister for 14 years, has been especially noteworthy. Linda came to the Northwest Unitarian Church on Aug. 22, 2015, for the memorial service held for Christine in Detroit, and Allison participated in the memorial service at Olinda on Sept. 20 and then held a transition interview with the Board after the service.

Linda returned to Olinda and gave the service here on Nov. 1, 2015. At that time she completed the transition interview and discussed next steps with the congregation.... Linda has continued to provide help and advice as we prepared our application for an interim minister to be submitted to the UUA in April 2016.

Maury Prevost, First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa -- This has been a big year for the CUC, and its staff have provided our congregations with amazing support. This fall alone, Linda Thompson helped Ottawa First with exit interviews and board training on policy management; (CUC executive director) Vyda Ng gave us a workshop on Canada Revenue Agency Compliance; (CUC social responsibility co-ordinator) April Hope gave us and congregations across the country support and guidance on the refugee process, and we got a seat from the CUC at a Charity Law seminar. Our deepest gratitude to all for an outstanding job.

Barbara Bowmar, UU Fellowship of Kamloops -- Joan Carolyn (CUC Congregational Development staffer) has made two tours of B.C. congregations since her appointment. She has visited our B.C. interior congregation twice and has demonstrated her knowledge of the support needed to small congregations. She is always ready to listen and I find her advice sound. She provided a workshop recently and it went well. She is also working to revitalize a congregation that died ten years ago and, while it will always be a small congregation, she has made two visits and I think suggested creative directions for them. I am impressed with her willingness to go to this group and for a prairie woman her willingness to drive the mountain roads! Both Vyda Ng and Joan Carolyn helped in the posting of a quarter-time ministerial position for our Fellowship and with advice regarding selection of candidates.

Rev. Brian Kiely, Unitarian Church of Edmonton -- The stand-out contribution this year has been the incredible support the CUC has offered as we have embarked on sponsoring a Syrian refugee family. The education and support as we walked through the paperwork made it all so much more manageable, and April Hope's advocacy work on behalf of all sponsorship groups is bringing positive governmental change.

As well, we had a great visit from CUC staffer Joan Carolyn who shared a wonderful service that fully supported our worship theme for that month. In the past year she has also met with our Board and other leaders offering encouragement and support.

Rev. Jessica Purple Rodela, Grand River: April Hope has been worth her weight in gold and should be paid double whatever she's making since she seems to be able to be in three places at once. The refugee efforts have been very challenging, but have galvanized the congregation in a new way, and it is exciting to be part of the bigger community of congregations doing this work. April's help, resources and encouragement have helped GRU to do far more than we'd dreamed was possible.

Ted Kloosterman, President, Unitarian Congregation in Mississauga -- Linda Thomson is one of those rare individuals who is always willing to assist when help is needed. With her fast knowledge and experience it is a real pleasure to work with her.

In April 2015, we had started on crafting a Mission for the future of our UCM congregation. Linda facilitated a seminar to help us in a structured way to discuss our purpose as a congregation. With her input we have been able to bring this project to a successful conclusion.

In February 2016 the Board wanted to start working on a Strategic Plan to bring us into the future... The Board did not have an idea where to start and thought: "Let us talk to the CUC and ask if they had someone who could assist us". Again, Linda was more than willing to assist... In February the Board spent 75 minutes with her. At the end of that session we gained a better understanding of how to develop a strategic plan for the next 5 years.

Joanne Greene, Unitarian Fellowship of Regina -- One of the biggest ways the CUC has been of support to Regina is through the work of Joan Carolyn, the Western Region congregational development staff. We have benefited from her expertise in facilitating meetings with our Board of Trustees and congregation in aid of our goal to revitalize and reach out to the community.

We have also received financial support for our Consulting Minister in the form of a Sharing Our Faith grant. Our work with Rev. Karen Fraser Gitlitz has challenged us to look deeply at our congregation. She facilitated and led workshops to determine concrete actions in support of our goals... Finally, we have frequently made use of the many resources available on the CUC website in areas such as sermons, news items, congregational development, leadership development, etc. The ability to use sermons on Sunday mornings that are already prepared is wonderful.

Elizabeth Goodger, Comox Valley -- The Comox Valley on Vancouver Island is a beautiful place to live, but for a small Unitarian fellowship it can feel isolated from the wider UU movement. Every year members from our congregation take advantage of learning, connecting and communicating with others at special trainings, at Fall Gatherings, at Youth Conferences and at the Annual Conference & Meeting. The CUC has helped our fellowship specifically over the last few years. ... In the fall of 2015 Joan Carolyn and Ariel Hunt-Brondwin facilitated a workshop where we began the work to

create our own Covenant of Right Relations. We value and are grateful for the support and resources available to us from the CUC.

First UU Church of Winnipeg - First UU of Winnipeg has had a challenging two years. Late in 2014, we were informed of the loss of our charitable status due to failure to file our annual report for 2013. Our application for reinstatement as a charity met with several pages of questions beginning with the statement that the church would likely not qualify as a registered charity because its purposes were too broad and vague to ensure that activities undertaken would be exclusively charitable. The CRA letter went on to request detailed information and clarification of many of the congregation's activities.

In drafting our response to the Charities Directorate, Vyda Ng was a vital support and the CUC assisted us to secure the services of Carters Professional Corporation to provide legal assistance. With their help, our status as a registered charity was reinstated in November 2015.

With the retirement, in 2015, of Rev. Millie Rochester, we applied for a two year interim ministry and were fortunate to have Rev. Nicoline Guerrier join us last August, for the interim. Nicoline arrived to find us still waiting for word on our charity status, hosting the Western Regional Fall Gathering and preparing to celebrate 125 years as a congregation.

We may be feeling as if we have emerged from the calm waters of a settled ministry, into somewhat choppy seas, as we celebrate our congregation's heritage and re-assess its life – in governance as well as ministry. However, connections with other congregations and the staff of the CUC, through our staff members' professional network, the CUC newsletters and contact links have helped us in numerous ways. Just for example, news of our 125th Anniversary brought us congratulations and even an artefact from our own history which the First UU of Hamilton had located in their archives.

The members of our youth groups are especially grateful for the connections they have made with other youth groups across Canada. Winnipeg UU Church has no near neighbours in our faith movement, but our youth and their advisors will drive through blizzards to share the warmth of sharing with other UU youth.



CANADIAN UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATIONS

British Columbia	Western	Central	Eastern
Nanaimo	Edmonton	Huron	Kingston
Capital	Westwood	Elora-Fergus	Ottawa First
Victoria	Calgary	Guelph	Ottawa Fellowship
Salt Spring	Winnipeg	Hamilton	Montreal
Comox Valley	Arborg	London	Lakeshore
Vancouver	Saskatoon	Niagara	UUEstrie (North Hatley)
Beacon	Regina	Olinda	Fredericton
South Fraser	Regina	Owen Sound	Saint John
North Shore	Lethbridge	Peterborough	Halifax
Kelowna	Red Deer	Sarnia – Port Huron	Prince Edward Island
Kamloops	Lakehead	Stratford (emerging)	
		Durham	
		Don Heights	
		Neighbourhood	
		Northwest Toronto	
		Mississauga	
		Toronto First	
		Grand River	

