



CANADIAN
UNITARIAN
COUNCIL

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SHARING OUR FAITH

2013

A program of the Canadian Unitarian Council

Each year, the Canadian Unitarian Council encourages all congregations to hold a Sharing Our Faith service, and to take up a special collection. The service focuses on our UU connections across the country, and the collection is administered by the CUC and given directly back to congregations to enhance growth initiatives.

The 2013 Sharing Our Faith service package is designed by Rev. Julie Stoneberg and Rev. Carole Martignacco. It includes material from Rev. [Eric Walker Wikstrom](#), who was the “Provocateur” at the CUC’s 2012 Spiritual Leadership Symposium, and engaged with Canadian UUs to explore the connections between congregational life, personal spirituality and leadership¹.

For 2013, we offer you the choice of two sermons – one is by Rev. Wikstrom, and the other is by Ellen Campbell, former Executive Director of the CUC and current Vice-President of the CUC’s Board of Trustees.

Both explore the web of Unitarian Universalist connections.

We hope this collection will be a valuable aid in preparing your Sharing Our Faith service.



SHARING OUR FAITH SUNDAY RESOURCES 2013

Prepared by Rev. Julie Stoneberg and Rev. Carole Martignacco
with writings adapted with permission from Rev. Eric Walker Wikstrom

SELECTION OF OPENING WORDS

Handwoven (a newcomer poem)

~ Liz James, printed in the [Canadian Unitarian](#), Summer 2003

because our faith cannot be found
in any book, or any temple
held deep, it is most visible
in the spaces between us
when our hands touch in greeting
when our voices interweave

so much a part of daily living
we forget there are people
who had never imagined
this is possible

who sit in the corner of a service
with eyes filled with tears
and dream of belonging here

what a tragedy
if even one melts away
unwelcomed, only because
we could not hear their dreams

Welcome Here

~ Rev. John Hanly Morgan

You are welcome here;
Come in.

Drop your pebble of light
Upon these waters of life,
Watch its circle ripple, widen,



(Selection of Opening Words, cont.)

Widen, widen,
Touching other rings,
All our insights.

Welcome here,
Come ripple with us the waters of life.
Come be thoughtful.
Be home.

You are welcome here.

Opening Words

~ Rev. Phillip Hewett, in International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, "Charting Our Future Together," March 2005

Welcome to the warmth of this community
as we gather to share in worship,
in aspiration, in celebration, in commitment,
to share our hopes and fears and re-dedication,
our attempts to cultivate those aspects of our being
that we find to be of ultimate and abiding worth.

Let all that we share here
move deeply within the lives of all of us,
strengthening and renewing our resolve
to live responsibly and productively,
linking us to those ongoing rhythms
that move through all things,
that give meaning to the ways we divide our days
and maintain our commitment
to the wise stewardship of our years.



(Selection of Opening Words, cont.)

A Path ~ Cheryl Jewell

The snowflake glistens silver in the morning sky
Unique and individual
Falling silently to the earth
Joined with others on the Canadian landscape
Forming a blanket
A wonder – sparkling
Nurturing what sleeps below.

Painting the winter's palette
Creating colour and light
That is awesome and new
In your mind
Let your footsteps
Be the first to create
A path.

This Community Is...

~ Arny Maizen, printed in the [Canadian Unitarian](#), Fall 2003

A fellowship
of freedom and family
a congregation
of caring and compassion
a sanctuary
of sanity and serenity
a temple
of tranquility
a church of challenge,
change,
and the cherishing of life
a religion
of reflection and renewal
an institution
of integrity and inspiration
my haven of hope
our labour of love.



(Selection of Opening Words, cont.)

We Need One Another

~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

We come together this morning because within us there is something that knows we need more than we can find in our aloneness. We know—instinctively, in the depths of ourselves—that we need others for this journey of life even though we also guard our independence and individuality quite jealously.

And just as we come together as individuals to make this congregation, so our Unitarian Universalist congregations come together to form an association—the Canadian Unitarian Council—because we need more than we can find in our aloneness. We, too, guard our independence and our individuality, yet in our togetherness we are so much more than we can ever be on our own.

So on this Sharing Our Faith Sunday, let us celebrate all that makes us unique, yet also all that makes us one, and let us dream dreams of all that we can do... together.

SELECTION OF CHALICE LIGHTINGS

Breath of the Divine

~ Janet Vickers

(French translation available by Jo-Anne Elder Gomez from CUC Worship Resources)

Breath of the divine, light a flame of reflection
in all that we do.

Breath of creation, light a flame of connection
in our circle of care.

Breath of wonder, light a flame of inspiration
to cultivate participation.

Breath of fear, light a flame of courage
to be who we are: sentient, vulnerable, and diverse.

Breath of this moment, light a flame of celebration
for our future unfolds the covenant of this day.



(Selection of Chalice Lightings, cont.)

Theology in February

~ *Ed Braunlich*

This is the month of all the months
most given up to winter.
February is a time when,
if our mood is low,
we feel that winter
has been around for as long
as we can remember,
and that it will never end...

In winter
as in spring or at any time,
we can only strive toward the truth,
toward love and social justice,
toward a balanced environment,
with no assurance of success,
but sustained by the shared fire in our hearts,
so that together, we may keep out the cold.

The Stars In The Pews

~ *Erik Walker Wikstrom*

Each of the stars in the heavens is unique, an individual, yet together they form the night sky;
Each of us here is unique, an individual, yet together we are a congregation;
Each of our congregations is unique, an individual, yet together we are the Canadian Unitarian
Council.

For stars in the sky, for people in the pews, for all the congregations of the CUC, in gratitude, we light
this chalice.



(Selection of Chalice Lightings, cont.)

PRAYER

For All That Is Our Lives

~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

Spirit of Life, known by many names yet by no name fully known—we gather today with hopes and dreams and also with fears and wounds... [*briefly name some of the things lifted up during the candles of joy and sorrow*]. May we be reminded that all things come and go; that today's joys and today's sorrows will in time give way to those of tomorrow and that those of us who have strength to share today ought do so while we can, and that those who are in need ought allow ourselves to receive, for tomorrow those roles might well be reversed. Spirit of Life, mother and father of us all, help us to remember those who are not here with us today, those who need what we have found here and those who have what we here need. May we always be open to growth and change, to movement, to grace. In the name of all that is holy, and in all the holy names that have ever been uttered (and those that have not even yet been imagined), let us say Blessed be, Shalom, and Amen.

SELECTION OF RESPONSIVE READINGS

To All

~ adapted from a reading by Rev. John Hanly Morgan, in *Receive These Hands*, CUC, Toronto 1984

To all who seek a world without
grinding, mindless poverty, ignorance,
needless pain and early death,

*a world where classes based on wealth
have disappeared and opulent personal possession
has become an absurd superstition:*

to all who believe in the struggle for a society
whose treasures of productive science, philosophy, and art
are freely open to every citizen;

*to all who know the world can be different,
therefore must be made different, and who yet at times
grow weary in the hard struggle:*

To you, make this your home.
Here strength may be renewed,
affection and sympathy do their healing works.



(Selection of Responsive Readings, cont.)

The Central Task

~ Rev. Mark Morrison Reed, adapted from #580, *Singing the Living Tradition*
and with French translation as #73 in *Side By Side, Fulfilling A Dream*

- Service Leader: The central task of the religious community
 is to unveil the bonds that bind each to all.
- Congregation: *There is a connectedness, a relationship discovered
 amid the particulars of our own lives and the lives of others.*
- All: Once felt, it inspires us to act for justice. It is the church
 that assures us that we are not struggling for justice on our own,
- Service Leader: ... but as members of a larger community.
 The religious community is essential,
- Congregation: *... for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen,
 and our strength too limited to do all that must be done.*
- All: Together, our vision widens and our strength is renewed.



SERMON I

A “Sharing Our Faith Sunday” Sermon Template

~Erik Walker Wikstrom (Adapted by Julie Stoneberg)

February is CUC Month, and today is “Sharing our Faith Sunday,” a day the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) has suggested that we should focus not on our own congregation but on the wider Canadian Unitarian Universalist community. Now as soon as I say that, there will be some people who’ll no doubt think, “who are they to tell us what to do? Just who do they think they are telling us to celebrate Sharing Our Faith Sunday?”

And, actually, that’s a good question. But let’s put it another way—who do we think they are? Or better – who do we think WE are?

When people think of the CUC, perhaps they think of the people who work at our office in Toronto, or the people around the country who work with them. Vyda, Linda, Kelly, Jorge, Karen, Antonia, Ariel, Vidya, April... But those people are more properly called “the staff of the CUC.” They’re the people who work for the CUC. The CUC itself is better known by its full name: The Canadian Unitarian Council. The CUC is, in a very real way, not a thing in and of itself but is instead a coming together of each and every one of the free and independent Unitarian * Universalist congregations across Canada. We are the CUC. And that means that when the CUC declares this or that, it is really the association, or council, of congregations that is declaring it. Today is Sharing Our Faith Sunday because we are celebrating it, and so are [*name four or five other congregations throughout the country that are celebrating Sharing our Faith Sunday*], not the other way around.

So today is Sharing Our Faith Sunday because we’ve said it is, and because, if you want to know the truth, there ought to be at least one day out of all the other days of the year that we set aside—like Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day—to remember something that we ought to be thinking about all the



(Sermon I, cont.)

other days as well. The CUC literally would not exist without its member congregations, but we all would be infinitely less without it. We all, each of us, this congregation need the CUC because by coming together in association with other Unitarian Universalists we are capable of things that would be unthinkable if we were left on our own.

Now is not the time to rattle off a list of ways we benefit by being a part of the CUC. Things like [*here you could name a few things like ministerial settlement services, regional services, lifespan faith development curricula, worship resources, national and regional gatherings, public witness on issues of national importance, etc. and, of course, if there are ways your congregation has specifically benefited recently, these should be highlighted*] shouldn't even need to be mentioned. It should be obvious that together we are more than any of us alone.

And so the purpose of our Sharing Our Faith Sunday is not to convince anyone of the importance of our association but to encourage us to deepen and grow our association so that our movement might flourish. And of the need for that, too, there should be no doubt. Just take a look at the world we live in. Read the headlines; listen to the news. [*You could insert a couple of examples here if you like.*] Is there any doubt that a faith such as ours, that religious communities such as this one, has a place in our world today? That the world needs what we have?

It's easy to say that we need to deepen and grow our association in order that our movement might flourish, and in order to meet the needs of the world. It is more difficult to actually do it. It's not difficult because it's a terribly hard thing to do; it's difficult because here in this vast country, with just fifty congregations, we don't see each other very often, and few of us have neighbouring congregations close enough that we actively share resources and time with one another. But our incredible geography is a strength, not an obstacle, right?



(Sermon I, cont.)

It's also difficult, because we are all so focused on our own congregations. One of the great gifts of our religious tradition is the autonomy of each of our congregations. That's understandable. There's enough to do at home; it's to be expected that we find the time to reach out to other U*Us. Yet, as member congregations in the CUC we have undertaken to participate with and support one another, and that calls us to be both individuals and part of a larger community. So, our autonomy is a strength we can use to create a strong association.

It's maybe most difficult because our numbers are few. Clearly we need to find ways to grow, yet none of us can deepen and grow our association alone. We need each other in each of our unique ways and in each of our locations. But, it was once estimated that on average a Unitarian Universalist invites someone to her or his congregation once every seventy five years! Obviously that has got to change, and it is changing. The staff who work for the CUC have been doing work on this, and many of our congregations have been doing the same on the local level—getting the word out, without proselytizing, that there's something going on here worth checking out.

But, you see, it doesn't really matter all that much if we grow the size of our congregations and our movement, and deepen the spiritual maturity of our congregations, if at the end of the day we still look, sound, and act pretty much like we do right now. If the only people we attract are carbon copies of the people who are already here...well, we're already here!

And it's true that there are other folk out there like us who need what we have. But it's also true that there are other folk—folk who in very real ways are not like us—and they need it too. And what's more, they have things that we need. Their very difference is needed, because too much sameness is stultifying. CUC Board President Gary Groot spoke of this in a recent article in the Canadian Unitarian. Diversity is a strength that we need. And more diversity will mean change.



(Sermon I, cont.)

No one likes change. People may say they do, but deep down people really only like change when it's other people who are doing the changing. Yet we Unitarian Universalists are spiritually mature enough to know that whether we like it or not we need change. That's why we believe that even our beliefs—even our most cherished beliefs—should be held lightly, open to revision, because we know the importance of evolution in every facet of life. Growth, movement, change, evolution, transformation—in the long run the only alternative is extinction. Death.

The theme for this year's CUC Annual Conference in Calgary is "Diversity: Creating a Shared Understanding." In many ways Unitarian Universalism is already a pretty diverse religious tradition. We certainly are theologically. And we are around issues of sexuality and sexual identity. And our understanding about issues of race is pretty good, even though the actual experience in the majority of our congregations is still pretty white. And if we're honest with ourselves we have miles to go on issues of class. So for all the diversity we have to celebrate, there is still much work to do.

Yet as a movement we recognize that this is important work to do. It's important for the world, because we are too small a planet for us not to find ways to turn these divisions and distinctions from barriers and barricades into beautifying parts of the landscape, from reasons for us to be suspicious of one another into reasons for us to want to get to know one another, from causes of hostility into causes of celebration. It's important for us as individuals, too, because the more we expand our contact with people who are different from ourselves, the wider and deeper we can grow, the richer our own lives can be. It's not always easy. Heck, it's hardly ever easy. But we know it's right.

Here, we... *[and this is a good place to talk about how it is in your congregation. What are the realities—the successes and the challenges of your congregation—viz a viz diversity? What are the realities of your wider community? Are there any initiatives underway? Any plans in the works you could announce? Anything to celebrate? Here's a good place to do it.]*



(Sermon I, cont.)

Our congregation is a voluntary association of individuals who have come together to create [*Name of your church*]. Similarly, our congregation and fifty others have voluntarily joined together to create an association known as the Canadian Unitarian Council. It is us; we are they. And the world needs the CUC, just as our community needs us. Today we have the opportunity to help strengthen our movement for generations to come by deepening our efforts to grow in and through diversity so that we don't just talk the talk but actually walk the walk.

[It is suggested that the offering come after the sermon.]



SERMON II

THE INTERDEPENDENT WEB OF ALL UNITARIANS

By Ellen Campbell

Since we adopted our principles in 1985, the “interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part” has been a compelling metaphor to us. It places us within nature, rather than outside it. Rather than a structure with separate parts, a web is a structure that can’t be taken apart without damaging the whole. A web can expand, growing out in all directions.

Today I’d like to talk about another kind of web—a web of connections between Unitarians here and beyond, one that has grown over time and keeps on growing, and one that supports our community here, as we support others.

Phillip Hewett, the unofficial historian of our religious movement, wrote in “Unitarians in Canada,”

“The Unitarians of Northern Ireland were in festive mood as they gathered in September 15, 1843 . . . members of this body . . . had come together to celebrate not only the ordination of John Corder three days earlier but also the accession of another congregation to their ranks. Before long the reports of the [Remonstrant Synod of Ulster] would begin listing a new presbytery along with the existing ones: the Canada Presbytery, consisting for the present of the congregation in Montreal.”

These two events were part and parcel of one another; the Irish Unitarians sent Corder to serve as the first minister in the Montreal church. From then until 1872, he was to serve the Montreal congregation. Both the British and Foreign Unitarian Association and the American Unitarian Association (the AUA) supported his ministry financially.



(Sermon II, cont.)

Just two years later, John Cordner travelled to Toronto to preach two sermons on two consecutive Sundays, out of which came the decision to form a Unitarian church there. The Montreal congregation contributed £100, despite its financial difficulties, to help launch a new congregation in Toronto. The AUA contributed \$100 to help pay the salary of the first minister here, William Adam. And he was sent almost immediately on a cross-border speaking tour, successfully raising additional American dollars from Boston-area Unitarians.

A hundred years later, the Toronto congregation was thriving (though not without undergoing some tough times through its history). The boomers actually were babies, and the “return to normalcy” after World War II included church attendance. The congregation, like many in Canada and the US, had a strongly humanist and individualist direction, which was attractive to many people in a period of economic prosperity, scientific interest, and social change. As the congregation—and the religious education program—grew beyond the capacity of its building, they began to spin off new congregations in other parts of Toronto. In 1953, Avis McCurdy, known better today as Dorothy Keeler’s mother, began to work as an assistant to the minister, Rev. William Jenkins, developing fellowships. Early in the new year, services began in public schools. At one time, Toronto First had spun off as many as five functioning congregations.

[Congregations can add their own history here, or use:]

And not just in Toronto. In 1959, Bill Jenkins traveled to Peterborough, to meet with a small group of interested people: Jack and Mary Young, Ed and Alice Adams, Bill and Ann Jex, to begin planning for a congregation here. In the spring of 1961, the Unitarian Universalist Association recognised them as a congregation.

In the late 90s, the Southern Ontario Extension Committee, made up of the congregations in the GTA, helped establish a new congregation, this time in the Beaches.



(Sermon II, cont.)

Unitarians in Southern Ontario are fortunate to have a number of congregations, each with a different "personality", in relatively close proximity. It lets congregations share things like the Choral Extravaganza, when choirs from six or seven congregations got together to learn together and then to present a concert that exhilarated all attendees.

But our Unitarian web goes well beyond Southern Ontario. As members of the Canadian Unitarian Council (the CUC), we have a connection to each of the other congregations across Canada—fifty of them, some with memberships below fifty and others with over 500 members. Together we are able to do things that would be out of reach for single congregations.

We can share resources—

- Religious educators share programs and ways of working with children and youth. OWL—Our Whole Life—, Spirit Play, Coming of Age, and other programs enrich our congregations, and draw on the creativity of our staff and volunteers.
- The Northern Lights Chalice Lighters program enables congregations to undertake significant projects, with the support of fellow Unitarians from across Canada.
- The CUC staff and volunteers organise leadership training for groups of congregations. Two of our members attended Canadian UU Leadership School in 2011, and were inspired by the opportunity.
- This year the CUC, with the UU Ministers of Canada (UUMOC), organised a symposium focusing on spiritual leadership that lives the values expressed by our seven principles and explores how spiritual leadership helps us find meaning in our lives.

Coming together in focused programs or more general ones, we meet new people, exchange ideas, and get new inspiration for the work we are doing in our own congregations.



(Sermon II, cont.)

We can act to change the world—

- Starting with Unicamp and the Guelph congregation, Unitarians across Southern Ontario were mobilised to “Stop the Quarry” this past year, and our national body supported the action with the requisite “letter from the President”.
- The CUC was an Intervenor in the British Columbia Supreme Court case last December supporting assistance in dying for the terminally ill, and has been granted Intervenor status in the federal government appeal of the case.
- Elaine Harvey represented Unitarians and chaired the Faith Based Caucus at the United Nations during the debates leading to the adoption of a statute for the creation of an International Criminal Court, as part of our work with the UU United Nations Office (UU-UNO.)
- The UU-UNO is currently taking a leadership role in UN efforts for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender rights.

But our web doesn’t stop at our national borders. In February, eight Canadians attended the meeting of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) in the Philippines. (Ellen Campbell was among them.)

When ICUU was organised in 1995, occasional correspondence would come in to the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the British General Assembly, or, once in a great while, the CUC, from someone in a new place, looking for information about our faith. The emergence of an international body came at the same time as the Internet began to take hold, and it has led to the establishment of new groups in Africa, in Indonesia, and most recently in Hong Kong. What was mainly a North American and European group, with small representations from the Philippines and India, has become a much more diverse gathering.



(Sermon II, cont.)

Ellen describes this diversity:

"This was apparent in the morning and evening worship times, when representatives of different countries shared their own styles with us. Francisco Lagunes Gaitan, from Mexico, ended his service with a "chocolate communion." In the service planned by the two delegates from Kenya, we ended with all of us dancing in two circles, moving in opposite directions, greeting one another as we passed. And in the service many of us attended in a Manila barrio, we were touched as the children recited "the eight principles of Unitarian Universalism" in their own language. Their first principle is "There is only one God who is the God of love." (You can experience some of that service by visiting the website UU Without Borders, and clicking on 2012, "Inspired by the children of Manila.")

One particularly inspiring moment was when the Bishop of Transylvania, from the oldest Unitarian group in the world, welcomed into membership the Kenya Unitarian Universalist Council, the newest."

As we get to know one another around the world, we learn each others' stories. In the Philippines, the story begins with Toribio Quimada, raised in the Catholic faith, who later became active in a Protestant group where for the first time he read the Bible for himself. He became a leader in the church. By chance in 1951 he discovered references to Universalism, and wrote to a Universalist church in the United States, through which he made contact with the Universalist Service Committee. Through his correspondence with them, he developed a Universalist theology, and in 1954, he and the 14 congregations he was serving left the Protestant group and began developing the Universalist Church of the Philippines, later to become the UU Church of the Philippines. Later, his ministry took a new direction: social activism and land reform. This set him against wealthy landowners in the area and the government. On May 23, 1988, Rev. Quimada was shot and his house burned because of his



(Sermon II, cont.)

activism. The UU Church of the Philippines today is led by his daughter, Rev. Rebecca Siennes, a strong leader who spent several years at Meadville-Lombard Theological Seminary in Chicago, training for the ministry.

The web in which we live today is very different from the one 150 years ago. Indeed, those pioneers who established the Montreal and Toronto congregations more than 150 years ago would have a hard time recognising us today. And the web that is developing now will not look like our present one. Today most of the work of the CUC is done “on line”—using that other web that is so much a part of our modern life. Peter Morales, the president of the Unitarian Universalist Association in the United States, has suggested that we need to look beyond congregations as a way of working with people. He writes,

“ . . . I am realizing in a profound way that congregations cannot be the only way we connect with people. We have always seen ourselves as a faith, as part of an international religious movement . . . We have long defined ourselves as an association of congregations. We need to think of ourselves as a religious movement. The difference is potentially huge. . . The future relevance of our faith may well depend on whether we can create a religious movement beyond, as well as within, the parish.”

For all of us here, our local congregation is in the centre of our web. This is the place where our connections are closest, where we have watched our children grow up, lived through shared sorrows and joys, developed deep and lasting friendships. But we are also part of a wider web...You belong not only to the Peterborough Unitarian Fellowship, but you are also connected to the tiny UU congregation on Salt Spring Island and the large one in Ottawa. We have a connection to the children in the barrio in Manila, and to the Unitarians seeking our support in Uganda, where to be gay can be a death sentence, and to the Unitarians in Transylvania, who have been caring for our heritage of religious freedom for four hundred years.

We are a part of the interdependent web of all Unitarians.



OFFERING

The Morning's Offering ~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

Before: It is said, "The Lord loves a cheerful giver," yet we'll accept from a grinch as well. As the ushers prepare to take this morning's offering, may each of us look into not just our wallets or our cheque books to see how much we have with us. Let us look into our hearts, as well, and see what is available there—how much love, how much generosity, how much faith, how much gratitude, how much hope—and let us take our offering from that account.

[Explanation of how funds will be given/shared with the Sharing Our Faith fund.]

Sharing our Faith is...

[Sharing Our Faith](#) is a program of the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC). Its goal is to encourage greater associational awareness in our congregations and to foster a sense of community and interdependence among and between the member congregations.

During Sharing Our Faith services, the collection taken is in support of the Sharing Our Faith fund. This fund consists of monies collected by congregations at special Sharing Our Faith services during the year and contributions from a Foundation Fund administered by the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto. These funds are sent to the CUC to be allocated in the form of grants to congregations applying for projects they may otherwise not afford to undertake, but which enhance ministry, growth and/or outreach for that congregation and for the Unitarian and Universalist movement in Canada.

This morning's offering is dedicated to the Canadian Unitarian Council Sharing Our Faith fund. All of the monies collected from all across the country will be given back to Congregations and affiliated groups who are promoting Unitarian Universalism in Canada. In past years, some grants that have been awarded include:

- Elora and Fergus Unitarian Church (Ontario): \$2,000 to support a Religious Exploration Coordinator position
- UUEstrie - Unitarian Universalist Church of North Hatley (Quebec): \$2,246 for Communications Plan for Rites of Passage and Space Rentals
- Unitarian Church of Calgary (Alberta): \$3,130 to support a Youth Programs Coordinator position
- Lower Mainland Unitarian Universalist Congregations of Greater Vancouver: \$4,000 to support a publicity/awareness campaign



- Unitarian Church of Montreal: \$5,000 to expand the French UU Religious Education Program
- Unitarian Congregation of Mississauga: \$2,000 for new, permanent signage
- First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa: \$3,000 to expand evening services and second services on Sundays with a variety of musical guest artists

Let your giving this morning be a true expression of spiritual generosity.

After: For the gifts which we have received—and the gifts which we, ourselves, are—may we be truly grateful. Yet more than that, may we be committed to using these gifts to make a difference in the world: to increase love and justice; to decrease hatred and oppression; to expand beloved community; to share, and to keep sharing, as long as ever we can. Amen.

SELECTION OF CLOSING WORDS

To Blanket The World

~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

One snowflake is a marvel, a miracle;
Four snowflakes, five, and the kids begin to run around in the yard
One hundred and the cars start slowing down;
One thousand, two... you can see where this is going.

We are strengthened in coming together, joining with others, blending our efforts with those of the Unitarian Universalist [UU] congregation in the next town or the next province. Together we are more than we could ever be alone. One congregation, one UU, is a miracle, a marvel. As an association of congregations, we can help to create a wonderland—a world blanketed with love and justice, understanding and hope.

Closing Words

~ Rev. Charles Eddis, #70 in Side By Side (in English and French), Montreal QC, 2001

May the world that is one in its life,
a rich blue top spinning in the endless night of space,
a world that is one in its interdependence and its fragility,
be one in our hearts and minds and deeds also.



(Selection of Closing Words, cont.)

Closing Words

~ V. Emil Gudmundson, #693 in SLT (*Singing the Living Tradition*)

And now, may we have faith in life to do wise planting,
that the generations to come may reap even more abundantly than we.

May we be bold in bringing to fruition the golden dreams of human kinship and justice.

This we ask, that the fields of promise become fields of reality.

Thank you for holding a Sharing Our Faith Sunday,
and for contributing to the growth of our national community.
Please send funds in the form of a single cheque made out to
Canadian Unitarian Council and marked "*Sharing Our Faith.*"

For any members wishing a tax receipt,
please include their names and the amount donated.

Further information on the Sharing Our Faith program or application for
congregations or communities can be obtained by e-mailing sharing-our-faith@cuc.ca,
by referring to the [Sharing Our Faith](#) section of the [CUC website](#),
or by calling the CUC office at 1-888-568-5723.

ⁱ Rev. Walker Wikstrom's latest book, "Serving With Grace," is available by e-mailing info@cuc.ca or by calling the CUC office.