

CANADIAN  
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## Remembering Maiken (Dani) Cooper

August 15, 2023

Last November, Maiken (Dani) Cooper was shot by the RCMP, resulting in an investigation by the Independent Investigations Office (IIO) of British Columbia. In its recently released [report](#) (August 3, 2023), the IIO announced that it found no wrongdoing by the RCMP officer involved in the shooting. Maiken was a nonbinary poet and social justice activist and was 27 years old at the time of their death. They were active in Unitarian Universalist young adult communities across Canada and the United States and were connected to the North Shore Unitarians.

In the wake of this announcement, we bear witness to the ongoing pain and sorrow of Maiken's community, friends, and family. We join with the family in calling for "greater transparency in shootings by officers and better de-escalation training for officers, especially when dealing with mental-health crises. The Pivot Legal Aid Society is calling for 'a continuum of response to mental health, addictions and other complex social issues with a focus on prevention and community-led responses.'"

"We are with you in your grief and sorrow," says Rev. Samaya Oakley, President of Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada. "We are with you in your anger and in your sadness. Maiken was someone who I watched grow up in our faith tradition and their presence and light is missed. We light a chalice as a sign that Maiken will neither be forgotten nor ignored. May our chalice be a symbol of the Universal Love that surrounds us even when our hearts are broken."

May you find comfort in these words from Rebecca Anne Parker.

### ***Even when our hearts are broken***

*Even when our hearts are broken  
by our own failure  
or the failure of others  
cutting into our lives,  
even when we have done all we can  
and life is still broken,  
there is a Universal Love  
that has never broken faith with us  
and never will.*

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Loving Justice is a grassroots UU group formed following Maiken's death to promote and advance critical conversations about the role of police in our society, including conversations about abolishing the police. Loving Justice challenges the intersecting forms of oppression Maiken faced during their life, with attention to the experiences of the trans+ (transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary) community, criminalized drug users, those living in poverty, and those living with mental illness.

In May 2023, Loving Justice created a [list of resources](#) specifically curated for Canadian Unitarian Universalists. Its next project is to create a packet of worship resources to help congregations mark the Transgender Day of Remembrance.

The Canadian Unitarian Council is empathetic to the work of Loving Justice but does not speak for the group. If you would like to learn more about their work, please contact them directly at [lovingjusticeuu@protonmail.com](mailto:lovingjusticeuu@protonmail.com)

*~ From the CUC's National Voice Team: UU Ministers of Canada President, Rev. Samaya Oakley; CUC Board President, Kiersten Moore, and Executive Director, Vyda Ng.*

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