



The Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton

874 York Street, Fredericton, N.B., E3B 3R8 (506) 451-0919

Sunday Service 11 a.m.

Web Site: <http://www.uff.ca>

Email: tuff@nbnet.nb.ca

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Sunday Services

September 6 Sylvia Hale "Water Service"

September 13 The Reverend Mac Campbell "*The Empire Strikes Back ... Again*" We live somewhere between the Roman Wars and Star Wars. Both of those times revolved around the actions of the empire of their day. Has anything changed in our time? Join Rev. Mac Campbell as he explores life under empire, then and now.

September 20 Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes.



Women's Pot Luck

The monthly women's pot luck dinner for September will be held Friday, September 25th. at 6 PM. (we'll eat at about 6:30). Sharon van Abbema will host the gathering at her home, 130 Cortland Street, New Maryland. The discussion topic for the evening will be circulated by email. For more information contact Joan at jbrewer@rogers.com or 455-5169



Our new Lay Chaplain at her first wedding



What are Circle Conversations?



Conversation is a natural human activity. We yearn to have deep meaningful conversations with others as a way of connecting with them.

Conversations that take place in circles have many names and functions: the elders council, leadership circle, campfire circle, roundtable, and many more. They create a familiar form: people gather in a circle and speak with one another creating focus, equality and connection. We are given an opportunity to slow down our thinking to enable our collective mind to connect.

The power of this kind of communication comes from the sharing of ideas and thinking together in a safe environment that nurtures innovation, curiosity, and exploration. Things are viewed through a curiosity lens and reflective thinking is the result. Some would say this is where learning takes place. These kinds of conversations are not about debating or taking sides. They are about engaging people, as equals, where they are in their lives without judgment.

Our Fellowship has been holding Circle Conversations for a number of years as part of the Small Group Ministry Program. The goals of Small Group Ministry are to build community; explore spirituality; share with others; practise our principles and right relations, and to nurture shared leadership.

As has become our custom with the Small Group Ministry program (SGM), twice a year, all the members of the congregation are invited to join a Circle Conversation group. Current Circle Conversation group members may leave, change their group or renew their commitment to the group they have been attending.

Circle Conversations are held twice a month, and participants are asked to make a commitment to attend them regularly and for a specific period of time. At the first or second meeting, the groups agree how to be with each other with a covenant. Groups are made up of six to eight people, and led by facilitators who are members of the Fellowship and are selected by a Small Group Ministry Team. Meeting topics are selected from outlines available from other UU churches and fellowships or are suggested by people involved in the program. Meetings usually last two hours. The general format of a meeting includes: an opening reading; a personal check-in; a focus topic chosen in advance; a closing check-out and a closing reading.

If you are interested in joining a Circle Conversation group, please contact Anne Leslie at “aleslie at nb dot sympatico dot ca” or 363-5412. One group meets in the evenings and another during the day.



Message from the Board President

Henry Ford once said, “Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success”. We start off a new season with our In-gathering Service on September 6th and we have a number of initiatives planned for the Fellowship.

For the first time ever, we have been invited to serve on the Spiritual and Religious Committee at the DECH, (formerly, the Pastoral Committee). Anne Leslie has kindly volunteered to be our representative on that committee. Twice, in the last ten months, I have personally experienced the kindness and warmth from the dedicated work of our own Caring Committee members and I am very

pleased that we have been recognized by, and asked to participate formally on this hospital committee.

Many of you know that Mac Campbell has experienced some health problems this summer. We have had great concern for his well-being and whether he would be able to continue with us. I am pleased to let you know that he has committed himself to one service a month for the next four months. The first service will be on September 13th, and we will be trying something new after each of his fall presentations. As a way of offering more time to talk about the ideas and questions raised during his presentations, Mac will be sharing a long lunch hour at 874 York with any who would care to drop in. He will be there from 11:30 to 1:30 on the Tuesday following his presentations. This Fall, those Tuesdays will be September 15, October 20, November 17, and December 15. Conversation can touch on the presentation of the previous Sunday, or any other area those present would like to explore. Bring your curiosity and a brown bag lunch and join the conversation. We are greatly looking forward to his return and his words of wisdom. Stay healthy, Mac!

At the annual meeting, I mentioned that Doreen Boorman had agreed to be Margaret Fitzgerald’s backup at the piano on Sundays. Doreen will play the piano at service once a month for the next four months. I know Doreen has been practising our favourite songs and we look forward to her participation in the Sunday services. Another follow-up from the AGM is that Betty Ponder has accepted to take over Sue Steen’s responsibilities as V-P of Communications and Outreach. We are very pleased to have Betty on the Board and look forward to the benefits of her experience and input.

Jo-Ann Elder-Gomes has most of the new pamphlets ready for review. These local pamphlets, plus those ordered this summer from the Canadian Unitarian Council, will be available for handouts and promotions as we start our new season. Anne Leslie and Allison Calvern have volunteered to help finalize and print the pamphlets.

On the financial side, our expenses are running slightly ahead of our income due to a couple of unforeseen expenses. We have been running a deficit for a couple of months now and, although it gives some cause for concern, we are hopeful there may be some additional donations coming in this fall.

One example of an additional expense is the cost of the hardwood flooring which was purchased to replace the carpet in the sanctuary. A number of people had requested we replace the carpet for environmental reasons, ie. Dust and allergens. We have bought the hardwood at an excellent price, but we haven’t the funds at this time to have it installed. If any family or person would like to commemorate the memory of an individual or would like to help us out with an additional donation, we would be most appreciative. All donations, whether for a specific purpose such as the flooring, or for general purposes, would be tax

deductible.

On the subject of donations, I would specifically like to thank Sheila Thompson for the generous donation in memory of her mother, Margaret Warren, a founding member of our Fellowship. Her donation is for the refurbishment of the children’s Religious Education piano. The piano refurbishment will take place off-site over the next four to five weeks. Such gifts are a tremendous help to us and we are grateful for the generosity of our members.

From another culture, a Chinese Proverb states that, “The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying small stones”. Thank you for coming together, staying together and working together for the benefit of our spiritual community. The small pebbles of responsibility that each of you will carry for us this year will move that mountain we call “Success”.

John van Abbema



Rosh Hoshanah occurs on the first and second days of Tishri, it is the start of the ten days of penitence which is the Jewish New Year, this year from sunset September 18th to nightfall on the 20th and marks the beginning of the year 5770.

The common greeting at this time is L’shanah tovah (“for a good year”). This is a shortening of “L’shanah tovah tikatev v’taihatem” (or to women, “L’shanah tovah tikatevi v’taihatemi”), which means “May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.”

The days of penitence end with Yom Kippur, this year beginning at sunset on the 27th of September and is probably the most important holiday of the Jewish year. The name means “Day of Atonement” and is essentially the last chance to make amends before G-d’s judgement on us is entered into the books and sealed.



Social Responsibility Committee

The Social Responsibility Committee will have its first meeting Sunday, September 6. The Social Responsibility Committee takes on causes it deems as appropriate and

finds ways to support them through out the year.

As your social responsibility chair, I, Najat Abdou-McFarland, will facilitate orientation to find out what it is that we would most like to be doing for the year. Our first meeting will be to talk about potential themes and causes we would like to pursue this year and means to go about doing so. Upon our first meeting, I have a short survey that I would like you to fill out to help get your mind flowing on this topic. If you have any ideas or suggestions do not hesitate to contact me at najatam@alumni.yorku.ca.

Najat



Volunteers Sought to Lead Activities

In order to develop strong Adult Programs for our congregation, the most significant requirement is to have volunteers who are committed to facilitating the programs. The following are some programming ideas that might need people to help.

Are you interested in playing Bridge? A new facilitator is needed along with more players.

Questioning Texts: do you read a lot of books that have spiritual , theological or philosophical themes? Would you like to discuss them with other UFF members? Would you be interested in leading this kind of book discussion group?

Do you love music? Would you like to be part of a group that puts on musical evenings, or teaches the congregation new hymns or sponsors musical workshops?

Are you known for your culinary talents? Would you like to teach interested congregation members how to make Chinese dumplings, Japanese sushi, or other ethnic or cultural dishes?

As a new parent would you be interested in having a program at the fellowship that teaches mothers and their children songs, rhymes, and chants?

Are you enthusiastic about a particular issue or topic and would be interested in starting a discussion group?

Would you like to learn more about a particular subject and would like to have a workshop about it?

Call Anne Leslie, 363-5412, if you are interested in discussing any of the above ideas or to suggest a new activity.



New Knee

My new knee is in place since August 14. Since then I

have been showered with attention and kindnesses from many people at TUFF. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

‘Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass. It is about learning to dance in the rain.’ ...an old saying, trite but true.

The storm is on and I am dancing as well as I can. I must especially acknowledge husband John, my caregiver, cook, cleaner upper, and therapy coach. Together we are pulling through this latest challenge. His patience and love are seeing me through some difficult days. ...and nights.

Your phone calls and visits make me feel good as I make my way to recovery, just down the road.

Thank you one and all
with love and appreciation,
Sharon



Turkey Notebook: The Women of Turkey

This past April, I had the privilege and pleasure of visiting the Republic of Turkey. I became a member of a tour group of Unitarians from across Canada and the U.S. The tour’s itinerary was developed by Beverly Carr of Neighbourhood UU in Toronto in conjunction with Quest International. The group spent many hours on a tour bus, travelling from city to city, and to attractions such as museums, ruins, archaeological dig sites, and natural wonders. During those hours on the bus, our Turkish tour guide Filiz Korkut from Talisman Tours, told us many interesting things about Turkey. The following is a collection of items that I jotted in my notebook and followed up with some research that I would like to share with members of the congregation.—Anne Leslie

Women hold 9.1% of the seats in parliament. It is low compared to Canada’s rate of 22.1% ,and that of the United States House of Congress which stands at 17%. The representation of women in local government is below 1%.

Lack of government and private jobs has influenced Turkish women to start their own businesses. A total of 12.5 per cent of entrepreneurs in Turkey are women. Only 0.9 Per cent of women in the labour force are entrepreneurs.

The government of Turkey is encouraging women to work from their homes making carpets. The government-run carpet co-operatives supply training, materials, and patterns. The carpet cooperative I visited has contracted 1,200 women this way and I was told that the women made \$400 to \$1,000 Turkish Lira per carpet depending on the complexity of design and materials used. (more about this in another installment of the Turkey Notebook) The average per capita annual income of Turks is approximately

\$3,000 TL

The gender pay gap in Turkey is 22%. In Canada, the gap is approximately 11% and in New Brunswick , 17% Women’s participation in workforce: administrative positions: 6%; professional and technical areas: 30%.

The overall literacy rate of Turkish women is 81.1% One fifth of the women cannot read and write. There is still reluctance in rural areas to send daughters to school. Obstacles: cultural norms, patriarchal traditions, “Come On Girls Let’s Go to School” is a program of UNICEF which has been working closely with the Ministry of National Education on the campaign, launched in 2003. It has helped an additional 222,800 girls enroll in school.

Snowdrops is a joint educational project developed and managed by the Association in Support of Contemporary Living and Turkcell, Turkey’s leading cellular operator. Starting with the scholarship of five thousand female students in year 2000, the Snowdrops program now provides social, financial and mentoring support to 12,300 young Turkish women.

The “Daddy, send me to school” campaign that began with a donation of 1 million Turkish Lira by Milliyet Newspaper. Aside from the construction of 20 girls dormitories -of which 13 are still being built, 3 652 students have been given scholarships as part of the campaign. The campaign’s goal for the second year, is to increase the number of scholarships given to students to 7,000 children.

The Controversial Head-scarf



An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada document entitled Turkey: Situation of women who wear head-scarves reports that with a policy of official secularism, the Turkish government has traditionally banned women who wear head-scarves from working in the public sector . The ban applies to teachers, lawyers, parliamentarians and others working on state premises. In 2006, the ban was expanded to cover non-state institutions.

Authorities began to enforce the head-scarf ban among mothers accompanying their children to school events or public swimming pools, while female lawyers and journalists who refused to comply with the ban were expelled from public buildings such as courtrooms and universities. On 9 February 2008, Turkey’s parliament approved a constitutional amendment that lifted the ban on Islamic head-scarves in universities Prior to this date, the public ban on head-scarves officially extended to students on university campuses throughout Turkey. Some faculty members permitted students to wear head coverings in class. On 5 June

2008, Turkey's Constitutional Court annulled the parliament's proposed amendment intended to lift the head-scarf ban, ruling that removing the ban would run counter to official secularism. While the highest court's decision to uphold the head-scarf ban cannot be appealed, the government has indicated that it is considering adopting measures to weaken the court's authority. In April 2008 a scholar working with the Istanbul-based Organization for Women's Rights of Non-Discrimination (AKDER) estimated that between 2000 and 2007, approximately 270,000 of the 677,000 students expelled from post-secondary institutions were "victims of the ban" .

A March 2008 survey carried out among approximately 1,500 students in 26 Turkish universities found that 52 percent of respondents were against the head-scarf ban but 35 percent of students believed that lifting the ban would increase social pressure against students who do not wear a head-scarf. According to the Christian Science Monitor, many young women who wear head-scarves, including the daughters of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, have moved abroad in order to complete their university studies. Others choose to wear a wig covering their head-scarves so that they can attend university classes.

Since it came to power in 2002, Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party has reportedly "been under intense pressure from its conservative supporters to lift the ban. In January 2008, a planned amendment met with protests from anti-headscarf activists, 100,000 of whom attended a rally in Ankara in early February 2008. Many secular Turks - who have a significant influence in the army, judiciary and university administration - reportedly fear that women who are allowed to wear head-scarves in universities will graduate and press for a wider lifting of the ban in the civil service, "transforming the Turkish state from secular to religious" .

On 9 February 2008, the constitutional reform needed to remove the headscarf ban from Turkish universities was approved by parliament with well over the required two-thirds majority. Since the lifting of the ban, some universities, especially those in rural areas, have welcomed students wearing head-scarves, while others have decided to defy the amendment despite threats by the Council of Higher Education to take legal action against non-compliant institutions. In April 2008, the European Stability Initiative (ESI), a non-profit research institute with an office in Istanbul, reported that some 100 out of Turkey's 116 universities continue to enforce the headscarf ban and will continue to enforce the headscarf ban until the government clearly outlines the specific types of allowable head coverings.

According to Country Reports 2007, women who wore head-scarves and their supporters "were disciplined or lost their jobs in the public sector". Human Rights Watch (HRW) reports that in late 2005, the Administrative Supreme Court ruled that a teacher was not eligible

for a promotion in her school because she wore a head-scarf outside of work. An immigration counsellor at the Embassy of Canada in Ankara stated in 27 April 2005 correspondence with the Research Directorate that public servants are not permitted to wear a headscarf while on duty, but head-scarfed women may be employed in the private sector. In 12 April 2005 correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, a professor of political science specializing in women's issues in Turkey at Bogazici University in Istanbul indicated that women who wear a headscarf "could possibly be denied employment in private or government sectors." Conversely, some municipalities with a more traditional constituency might attempt to hire specifically those women who wear a headscarf The professor did add, however, that headscarfed women generally experience difficulty in obtaining positions as teachers, judges, lawyers, or doctors in the public service. The London-based Sunday Times reports that while the ban is officially in place only in the public sphere, many private firms similarly avoid hiring women who wear head-scarves.

According to the Sunday Times, head-scarves are banned inside Turkish hospitals, and doctors may not don a head-scarf on the job. Doctors who wear head-scarves have been employed in some public hospitals.

The Professor of political science at Bogazici University in Turkey stated that, in addition to never having come across any cases where women wearing head-scarves had been denied access to medical care in private or public medical centres, he felt it would be unlikely that this would occur.

According to the Istanbul-based Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, roughly two-thirds of Turkish women wear a headscarf . A 19 February 2008 article published in The New York Times links societal tensions over the headscarf to class differences between a traditionally secular urban elite and an increasingly urbanized and educated religious middle class with roots in the countryside. Those who support the ban fear that religious Turks will impose an Islamic ideology if restrictions are lifted.

In the spring of 2007, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan nominated Abdullah Gul, whose wife wears a head-scarf, as President of the Republic. In response, over one million people took to the streets of Istanbul to protest what they saw as a first step toward the fall of the secular state. In contrast, Turks opposed to the headscarf ban have reportedly created non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to advocate on behalf of headscarfed women. It is believed that between 60 and 70 percent of Turks support lifting the headscarf ban altogether. The debate rages on.

Honour Killings

So-called "honour killings" of women in Turkey continue. According to government figures, there are more than 200 a year - half of all the murders committed in the country. Now, in a sinister twist, comes the emergence of "honour

suicides". The growing phenomenon has been linked to reforms to Turkey's penal code in 2005. That introduced mandatory life sentences for honour killers, whereas in the past, killers could receive a reduced sentence claiming provocation. Soon after the law was passed, the numbers of female suicides started to rise as family members told those women who had dishonoured their families to commit suicide so that family members who might be charged with the crime would not have to face the mandatory life sentence. The Turkish National Assembly has recently published an extensive report on violence against women and children in general and the case of honour crimes in particular. This report is important in that it includes the first official statistical data regarding honour crimes. According to the report, 1091 honour crimes have been committed in Turkey between the years 2000 and 2005. According to police records, 29% of these events are due to issues of honour, 29% due to disagreements within the family, 15% due to extra-marital affairs, 10% due to blood feuds, 9% due to sexual harassment, 3% due to rape, 3% due to disagreement in marriage arrangements and 2% due to other reasons. Unfortunately, it is impossible to accurately determine the number of honour crimes. Suicides should also be considered within the framework of honour killings. Because in most of the cases the woman in question is forced to kill herself or she may kill herself knowing what awaits her. The whole question of shame and threats within the community ensures that no one is willing to be a witness and the deaths are usually explained and registered as either accidental or as suicide. There is a consensus over the fact that crimes of honour emanate from cultural and not religious roots and that they can be found worldwide, mainly in patriarchal societies or communities. However it's also an established fact that they mostly take place within Muslim communities. The paradox is that crimes against women committed in the name of family honour are not sanctioned by Islam and many Islamic leaders have condemned this practice on the grounds that it has no religious basis. In the case of Turkey, it can generally be said that crimes of honour are more common in Eastern Anatolia, within communities where tribal/feudal ties and relations continue to exist. Honour killings have also taken place in western Turkey cities.

As a result of the process of EU membership, important steps were taken. Turkey signed international agreements including CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) for the protection of the rights of women. Also, there were improvements in the legal framework. There were changes and amendments in the Constitution, the criminal code, the civil code and the laws regarding the family.

"It is clear that the problem of honour killings in particular and violence against women in general cannot be solved by legal measures alone although legal measures are absolutely necessary, especially in countries like Turkey

where laws have for long remained insufficient in protecting women's rights. The state should adopt appropriate legislative, legal and financial measures in order to prevent and punish honour killings and to assist the victims. However, much more importantly, what is needed is a change in consciousness and it can only be achieved through education on the one hand and economic development on the other," said Zulfi Livaneli, a member of Turkish National Assembly in a talk in New York City in 2006.

With research from Zulfi Livaneli's talk, articles from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, and Kamer, a Turkish women's organization that works to improve the status of women in Turkey by empowering women at the local level, building the grassroots that serves as a watchdog for women's human rights, and lobbying and advocating at the state level for better policies and enforcement of positive legal reforms.



Eid al-Fitr



Marks the end of Ramadan. It starts the day after Ramadan ends, the first day of the Islamic calendar's month of Shawwal. Its significance is to celebrate the achievement of enhanced piety. A day of forgiveness, fellowship and unity, a time of giving and sharing. This year, in the Gregorian calendar, Eid al-Fitr begins at sundown on the 19'th of September.

Muslims are commanded by the Qur'an to complete their fast on the last day of Ramadan and then recite the Takbir all throughout the period of Eid which last for three days.

Literally, "Eid" is the Arabic word for "festivity" and "Fitr" means "to break the fast."



Take A Stand

The First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto, in partnership with World Accord, invites you to help build schools in the mountains of Honduras. This is a hands-on opportunity to make a difference in the lives of subsistence

farmers and their families. Please join a two-week trip: beginning November 7, 2009, January 16, February 13 or March 13 2010. Construction and Spanish language skills are not required but would be welcomed. For more information contact Richard Kirsh (416-767-5837 or richardkirsh@sympatico.ca).



Western Regional Gathering

Anyone planning to be near Regina, Saskatchewan, in October may be interested in the Western Regional Gathering whose theme is "Unitarianism: An Evolution of Faith", Oct 2nd through 4th. I have a brochure I can send electronically if anyone is interested.

Tony Fitzgerald



Fourth Annual CUC Poetry Chapbook

The editorial board of the CUC Poetry Chapbook 2010 project is seeking submissions of poetry (a maximum of five poems per submission, each poem should be 45 lines or less including title and blank lines), from Canadian Unitarians or Unitarian residents of Canada, who are either

- CUC congregation members
- CUC members-at-large or
- self-identified Unitarians

on the theme HOW SHALL WE LIVE to be considered for publication in our fourth professionally published chapbook, to be launched at the next CUC ACM (May, 2010) Please submit unpublished material to:

Jo-Anne Elder at eldergomes@yahoo.com

or mail to Jo-Anne Elder, 180 Liverpool Street, Frederic-

ton, NB E3B 4V5. Attention: CUC Chapbook, by November 30, 2009.

Please also include a 50 word bio.

Include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you are submitting via land mail and wish to receive a reply. All work will receive notification of acceptance by March 21, 2010.

The editors also seek submissions of art work for the cover or a complete cover design including text - please send your own created colour images to Janet Vickers at tojan@smartt.com with name, address and bio.

Thank-you for your time and creative contributions.

best regards

Janet Vickers

CUC Chapbook Editorial Committee
tojan@smartt.com



Make a UU statement



an idea for UUs everywhere Flaming Chalice Lapel Pins available as Double Circles or Ovals ranging in price from \$5 to \$29. In materials of Sterling Silver, Pewter, Gold Plated or Enamel and sizes of 1, 3/4 and 7/8 inches.

To purchase lapel pins, and other UU jewelry, go to www.clfuu.org Click on "CLF Shop" or call 617-948-6150



Proceeds support CLF's work to bring Unitarian Universalism to isolated religious liberals throughout the world.

Learn more about the CLF at www.clfuu.org.

Beth Murray

Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF)
617-948-6150

The Church of the Larger Fellowship's mission is to provide a ministry to isolated religious liberals, promote the understanding and growth of Unitarian Universalism and institute programs to that end.

This space wants your material!