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Sunday Services

Mar 31 Heather Lunergan *The Office of Religious Freedom*

Apr 7 Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes *Go into the Inner Chamber of Your Soul: The Legacy of May Sarton* To celebrate National Poetry Month, we will be talking about the life and work of one of UU’s most beloved poets, May Sarton. Over the six decades of her writing career she wrote over fifty books: poetry collections, novels, and non-fictional works including memoirs and journals, which describe how her Unitarian Universalist upbringing shaped her life.

Apr 14 TBA
 The Unitarian Chamber Readers will be performing *All I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* in Houlton this Sunday.

Apr 21 John Larmer *Miracles* The talk will take the form of an examination of philosophical objections to belief in miracles and replies to such objections, rather than any detailed defense of actual miracles.

Apr 28 The Reverend Kitsy Winthrop *Everything*

May 05 TBA



No Women’s Pot Luck

The women’s pot luck will not be held in April as we

have a very busy month at the Fellowship with the Arts and Crafts event April 19th. and 20th. and Rev. K. Winthrop’s visit the following weekend. Perhaps we will have two gatherings in May. Information about the next pot luck will be included in the Touchstone for May. For further information contact Joan Brewer at 455-5169 or jebrewer@rogers.com



Men’s Discussion

Just to remind everyone that we have agreed, for now, to meet on the third Thursday of each month, that makes April 18th at 7pm at 874 York Street for this months assembly. No set discussion topic to allow our intellects to roam freely. Coffee if anyone feels the need and cares to do something about it. Tea, ditto. All men welcome.



Thefts at Fellowship

It has been reported again that cars outside the Fellowship have been broken into during evening meetings and items taken. Two cars recently had windows smashed and a purse and gym bag removed. The bags were found on the front lawn but cash was missing from the purse.

Apparently the automatic light over the garage door was not working and the buildings and grounds committee has been advised, however, city police report that such break ins have been happening all over including in well lit parking lots at rinks.

We have suggested in the past that city police might be advised when there are evening meetings, however, the best defense is not to leave items in vehicles.



Lots of Help Needed

Our big annual Spring Fling Art and Craft sale is coming soon April 19 and 20th.

You can help by: Donations of used items in very good condition. Bring to the fellowship or call Haifa Miller 472-7150 hmillier@nbnet.nb.ca Glenna Hanley 472-

8431 ghanley@nb.sympatico.ca There are sign up sheets in the kitchen for baked goods, foods for the vendors and volunteering in the kitchen. To help advertise, call Janet Crawford janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca 454-0441



The Reverend Kitsy Winthrop Visit

Rev. Kitsy Winthrop (UU minister) will visit with us April 26th to April 29th. It is expected that she will conduct a workshop while she is here and lead the service on Sunday morning. Kitsy will also be available for one-on-one conversations. By the beginning of April we should know the workshop times and be able to set up appointment times for those people who want to meet with her. I have agreed to be the contact person for those meetings. Please let me know by email or phone if you wish to be on what Kitsy calls her "dance card." Joan Brewer 455-5169 jebrewer@rogers.com



Cuba Trip

Purpose of trip An interactive Educational Relationship on a PersonalBasis sponsored by Wilmot United Church Cuba is an enigma for North Americans. Many of us think of Cuba and Cubans in stereotypes. . North Americans think in terms of beaches, poverty and politics (i.e. Communism vs U.S. Embargo)

Wilmot United Church sponsored an interactive educational tour of Christian churches in Cuba in late January. This trip opened up a window to the real people of Cuba, their character, their hardships, and their hopes for the future. . For those participants open to examining a way of life different to our own, the trip guided us to insights that caused us to reflect on our own way of living.

Educational Tourism

We learned more from the Cubans than they probably learned from us.

Foremost of the insights gained,was the ecumenical nature of the Protestant churches in Cuba.

Most, if not all, practice a religious philosophy called "Liberation Theology," which comes from a movement that took root in the Catholic churches in Latin America in the sixties and seventies. This theology puts care of the poor and the disadvantaged, and the correction of social injustices, ahead of any doctrine, liturgy oredicts of a particularchurch. Christian faith is turned on its end by the participating churches as they return to the original teachings of Jesus, rather than insisting on the filtered dictates from the head of any particular denomination. It is a, "from the bottom up," congregational approach.

The Seminary in Matanzas is the only ecumenical semi-

nary in Cuba, embraced by the 13 denominations making up the Cuban council of evangelical Churches. Internationally the seminary is supported by the world council of churches. The Rector is Presbyterian; a senior administrator comes from a Seventh Day Adventist background, and the Seminary has a close relationship with the Baptist churches in Matanzas, Ciego de Avila and the town of Bolivia. The Episcopal Church in Los Arabolos and Cuatros Esquinas (Four Corners) is also closely associated with the Seminary and has received developmental encouragement from Wilmot. The Seminary was created in 1946 under the auspices of the Episcopal, Quaker, Presbyterian, Methodist denominations, and the Fraternity of Baptist Churches in Cuba.

In essence, Cuba has evolved from a 450 year old Catholic state to an Atheist state after the Revolution in 1959; and, has now become a secular state with the resurgence of Protestantism since the mid 80's under the guidance of "Liberation Theology." Pastors are trained at the Seminary to give pastoral care to the families of the elderly, the poor, the imprisoned, the deaf and blind and the intellectually challenged.

Powerful Anecdotal Experiences

We all had experiences that moved us to tears, laughter and mutual exchange with the Cubans. These are some memories that will remain with me for some time.

1. When describing her view of faith at the welcoming lecture, the 76 year old former Seminary Director, a Presbyterian minister, said, "When I am asked to talk at a church, I don't talk about God. I ask the people what is going on in their lives and I ask them about their needs. And then, we talk about how we might work together to resolve those needs. When I am sick, I don't ask them to pray for me. They say they are thinking of me, and they bring me things like food and medicines to help me get better. To say, 'We are thinking of you,' is better than to say, 'We are are praying for you.' Thinking and acting on a problem is prayer in action."
2. We met with the Rector of the Seminary, whose father had been the Rector before him. His father, Sergio Arce, is well known for one of his quotes in a sermon given after the Revolution. "We have exited from Egypt, the land of the Pharaohs, and we are now in the desert. We have not yet reached the Promised Land; but, it is in the desert where we meet God." Egypt and the Pharaohs in this metaphor refers to the influence of the U.S.A. and the Capitalists, the desert refers to post-Revolution Cuba and the Promised Land refers to the time when Cubans will be fully in control of their own destiny.

3. After an 11 hour ride in the school bus, with stops in at the churches in Ciego de Avila, Los Arabos and Cuartos Esquinos, we turned left off the main highway onto a dirt road to the town of Bolivia, our stop for the next two days. The road was straight as an arrow for five kilometers and the full moon began its rise over the horizon directly above the road in front of us. The moon was as large in diameter as the road was wide. If ever there was truth in the expression, "I have seen the light", this was it. We were about to arrive in the Promised Land at the Canaan Baptist Church, with a full meal and the congregation to welcome us.

Conclusion

"When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist."

This quote by Helder Camara, seems appropriate for what we experienced on this trip. The Cubans do not expect or want handouts, but they appreciate help with the tools they need to develop their standard of living. They are proud of their country but humble of themselves. Most Cubans would not want to revert to a life dominated by the U.S.A., but they are anxious for their government to speed up the creeping rate of private enterprise that is being tested out today. Personally, Sharon and I thank Wilmot's Cuban Committee for allowing us to participate in this trip. We are especially appreciative of Norman and Meca Laverty and Greg Black for their organizing skills.

I will finish this article with these words, written by an unknown author.

*Our first task in approaching
Another people, another culture, another religion
Is to take off our shoes
For the place is holy
Else we may find ourselves treading
On people's dreams.
More serious still
We may forget that God
Was there before us.*



CUSJ Maritimes Representative Sought

The Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) is looking for representation from the Maritimes. Job descriptions follow below. If you are interested, you can contact Bob Stevenson: Tel: 613-729-3765 stevbob@sympatico.ca

CUSJ Board – Job Descriptions

By-laws:

8.2 The President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership Chair and 13 Directors at Large shall be elected at the annual meeting.

8.2.1 If the Editor of Justnews is not also an officer or Director at large, s/he will be entitled to attend and vote at Executive and Board meetings, but shall not count as part of the quorum.

8.2.2 One additional "director at large" between the ages of 18 and 35, inclusive, may be elected to the Board at an annual meeting should no sitting or nominated Board Member nor the Justnews Editor fall within this age bracket.

8.3 To ensure a degree of regional representation, four Directors shall be from Ontario, four from British Columbia, and two each from the following three regions, Prairie Provinces, Quebec, and the Maritimes and Newfoundland-Labrador; the region where the steering committee is located shall have an additional four directors to help share the work load.

8.5 Length of Directors' Terms

8.5.1 To provide for continuity, one-half of the individuals on the first elected Board shall serve two year terms and one-half shall serve one year terms. After that all will be elected for two year terms. Adjustments may be made as required when a Board member is unable to serve a full term.

Tasks and Time Commitment

- The main commitment is to attend a 2-hour board meeting by teleconference. Currently the meetings are held the 2nd Monday of every month at 7pm Eastern.
- If there is time, the board member could check around with the congregations in their area and find out what different groups are doing in the area of social justice. In practice, most board members report only on their own congregation.
- The board reviews the social issues of the day. Ideally board members are on the e-discussion list, or the facebook page, and are aware of membership thinking. It sets priorities and develops vision on how an active Unitarian network can make a difference.
- Any board member may take the lead in writing the first draft of a letter or suggesting an action, and running it by the rest of the board. All board members are expected to respond to drafts of letters with comments for improvement. We keep each other honest.
- Board members may serve on project task forces: to design and plan the annual general meeting is an example, or to design a national action.
- The board sets policy on the structure and practices of the organization, who can be a member and how the membership process is conducted, etc.

- Board members could be asked to represent CUSJ in congregations in their area and could even give a service on behalf of CUSJ. They can encourage CUSJ chapter development.

Officers of the Board

President

- The president convenes the meetings and sets the agenda
- The president chairs the meetings
- The president signs all the letters going out on behalf of CUSJ
- This president has been recruiting people to do specialized jobs such as the nominating committee and the web team.
- The president calls for input into the annual report and writes a regular presidents report.
- The president chairs the annual meeting.

Vice President

- Fills in for the president in the presidents absence
- May take on particular assignments as they come up.

Secretary

- Takes the minutes of the board meeting
- Takes the minutes of the annual meeting
- Keeps the files.
- May prepare finalized letters for mailing.

Treasurer

- Receives all memberships and contributions from congregations and deposits them in the bank.
- Prepares cheques for payment and arranges for two signatures.
- Keeps the books and prepares monthly statements for the board meeting.
- Prepares a budget once a year for the annual meeting, with support from the Board.
- Prepares annual statements for the annual meeting
- Arranges for an auditor

Other positions not described for this time:

JUSTnews editor (currently Philip Symons.)

Webmaster – Ellen Pappenburg is paid a stipend to be our technical support person. Frances Deverell does the content on the website. Gert Montgomery provides editing advice.

Communications Director – a dream position. Weve never had one.



From your President

At last spring is actually here, and hopefully our hearts and souls will soon be filled with the lightness that the season brings. Whatever snow falls now, at least won't last, and the birds will find their way to our bird-friendly garden.

There is little to report from the Board at this time. The Board is navigating through some uncharted waters and is receiving beacons of guidance from professionals with expertise. Because we didn't have a quorum at our February meeting, business begun then will have to be dealt with at the next Board meeting, in early April (because of Easter). We will have a large number of items on the Agenda, including such things as development of policies and procedures, striking the nominating committee, activities for Kitsy Winthrop's upcoming visit, and getting delegates for external conferences and CUC committees. We are fortunate that George DeMille stepped in as interim treasurer, as Daniel Ruiz and Rhonda Connell were unable to continue due to their work demands. A great big thank-you to George for stepping up to the plate!

On other things-

Thanks to Pat Mason for stepping in for Glenna Hanley while she's away, to take calls that come into the Fellowship telephone number. (Aside- if anyone has seen a silver serving spoon with engraving on it, Pat is looking for hers that seems to have disappeared following the Women's pot luck held at her place –hopefully it will turn up and not have gone into the garbage!)

Rev. Kitsy Winthrop will be visiting our congregation the last weekend in April. People are welcome to book one-on-one time with Kitsy over that weekend. Joan Brewer has offered to co-ordinate the timings, so you can let Joan know if you'd like some time with an ordained minister. Kitsy calls it her dance card. I haven't met Kitsy yet, but I understand she's lovely.

Some of you may have noticed our new little table-top to cover the stove elements in the kitchen. Thanks to Buz Barsby for designing and building this portable table-top. It should help to extend our surface area for those much-appreciated Sunday refreshments organized by our fantabulous Hospitality committee, and for the Spring Fling which is coming up quickly. Allison is co-ordinating sales of raffle tickets for a beautiful watercolour donated by Betty Ponder.

A parcel has arrived from Hawaii from our globetrotting Josephine Savarese, who is spending sabbatical time undertaking studies and volunteering at the zoo. The Easter parcel has some special Hawaiian coffee, a neat tea-towel, and some chocolate-coated macadamia nuts for sharing. She's also sent a great little book to the children, or keiki,

of the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton called Wherever can he be? A game of hide and seek by Wren. I'm looking after Josephine's house while she's away, and unfortunately she had flood damage in the basement apartment from that last deluge of rain, which is necessitating a lot of renovation work. Hopefully we'll be able to get things back to normal before too long.

Please be vigilant about leaving things visible in your vehicle when parking at the Fellowship (and other public places in the city). Janet Crawford told me about her and other's vehicle(s) being broken into and things stolen during a week-evening event, which the police say was part of a spate of vehicle break-ins throughout the city.

Don't forget that this is the last Sunday of the month so we'll be accepting donations to our chosen cause – the Fredericton Food Bank. The baskets are just inside the front hallway by the table. If you would prefer to donate funds that the Food Bank can use to buy wisely, then we

can provide a receipt.

Respectfully submitted
Sheila Thompson
President, Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton
Tel: 455-3665
Email: sheilamariet@hotmail.com



Late Breaking

I thought I had put this issue to bed last evening just before I did the same to myself. A late submission allows me to resurrect the issue from its bed and add this small item.

I encountered Mary Tingley at the farmers' market this morning and she informed me that she has been called to serve at a liberal congregation in Ontario and will be leaving this week. May we all wish her well.

**Spring Fling
874 York St**

The Unitarian
Fellowship of
Fredericton

**ART AND
CRAFT SALE**

Friday, April 19

12:00 - 7:00

Saturday, April 20

10:00 - 4:00



**Jewellery, Photography, Paintings,
Quilting, Neckwear, Pottery, International Crafts,
Hooked items, Baskets, Leather, Home Baking
Pickles, and much more**

Coffee and Muffins

Relax and Browse

Also A Selection of Quality Used Items

More Information: Janet Crawford, janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca 454-0441