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Sunday Service 11 a.m.

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## Sunday Services

Child care is available and all are welcome.

**January 31** Joan Brewer and Sheila Moore on "*Thoughts following a workshop on "Covenants and Commitments" in religious communities*". Joan Brewer and Sheila Moore attended the Stream on Covenant and Commitments at the Atlantic Cluster Gathering last October. At this Service, they will share some of what they learned about how our Fellowship can move forward in creating our own Covenant.

The 2016 Budget meeting will follow the service. Please get a coffee and join us to make important decisions about our plans for this year.

February: Our theme is Faith

**February 7** *Theme Sunday: Faith*. We will explore some of the basic foundations of our Unitarian Universalist faith. You know about our seven principles and our six sources. Did you know about the five challenges articulated by the CUC? We are challenged to be: Deeply Connected, Boldly Inclusive, Actively Engaged, Theologically Alive and Spiritually Grounded. In small groups, we'll look at how

people in our congregation respond to these challenges individually and together.

The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors will begin at 12:45 on February 7. Board meetings are open and all may attend.

**February 14** *Eleven Years Out of the Closet*. Tony Fitzgerald came out as a transvestite to the congregation on the eve of Valentine's Day in 2005 and, over the next few years, to the community as a whole. Tony will share some observations on the journey.

**February 21** In recognition of UN Mother Tongue Language Day (Feb. 21), Carlos Elder-Gomes will talk about the importance of preserving the language, beliefs and heritage of Indigenous peoples around the world.

**February 28** *Sharing Our Faith service*. Heather Lunergan will lead this service, which is part of a CUC program to encourage greater associational awareness in our congregations, the fostering of relationships, and a sense of community and connection among and between our member congregations and communities. Each year, the CUC encourages all congregations to hold a Sharing Our Faith service, and to take up a special collection, if possible during the month of February for CUC Month. The collection is administered by the CUC and given directly back in the form of grants to congregations applying for projects they may otherwise not afford to undertake, and which enhance ministry, growth and/or outreach for that congregation and for the Unitarian and Universalist movement. The theme for Sharing Our Faith this year is Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation.

March: Our theme is Self-Awareness

**March 6** *Women's Day*. Jo-Anne and Anneke will share the work of the Canadian UU Women's Association in developing learning and worship materials for International Women's Day (March 8).

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## You're invited!

Our YaYAS-Be (Youth and Young Adult Spiritual Beings) Group is hosting a Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday, February 27, 2016. First serving is at 5 pm. There will be spaghetti with meat and vegan sauce, cheese and vegan cheese substitute, bread, and sherbet. We are asking \$10 per person to a maximum of \$25 for a family, and it is going to a great cause: helping our youth go to CanUUdle, the national gathering for Canadian UU youth, in Vancouver. All the youth who are attending are contributing their own money to the trip, and need your support to help pay for travel. We will be holding fundraisers (lunches and suppers, bake sales, and T-shirts) during the next few months. We hope you can attend our Spaghetti Dinner and enjoy the food we prepare and our great company! Donation of Aeroplan points, air miles, or cheques to the Youth Fund would also be appreciated.



Thanks!  
Anneke and Orianna  
co-leaders of YaYAS-Be

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## Women's Pot Luck

The next Unitarian Fellowship women's pot luck will be held Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016. We gather at 6 PM and eat at 6:30 PM. Information will be circulated when it is known where we will meet and the topic for discussion. For further information contact Joan Brewer at [jebrewer@rogers.com](mailto:jebrewer@rogers.com)

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## CUC Month is Coming Up!

February is the month we set aside each year to look beyond our local congregation to the national Unitarian Universalist movement that we share. This is the time when we ask each congregation to think ahead to the Annual General Meeting, and plan to discuss any business items coming up. We are fortunate this year not to have any new motions for resolutions, but we will be taking the time to discuss two significant items coming from the CUC Board: Visioning for our movement, and the annual program contribution (APC).

Plus, this year's Sharing Our Faith Packet is now available, from Rev. Samaya Oakley, Rev. Meg Roberts, and the

Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Task Force. This year's Sharing Our Faith theme is Truth and Reconciliation, and the packet brings together readings, songs, sermons, and multimedia links to help each congregation across Canada engage with this theme. We encourage you to hold your Sharing Our Faith service in support of congregational initiatives to enhance ministry, promote outreach, and foster the UU movement in Canada, before the end of March.

CUC Month is also the time to celebrate our national faith community through fun and games, inspiration, and trivia about the famous UUs who have come before us. Did you know that Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web, joined the Unitarian Universalist Church in adulthood? That's right, we wouldn't have the internet without Unitarian pioneers! Stay tuned for more fun facts, trivia about CUC staff, and inspirational quotes, next month!

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## Movie Night at the Fellowship

Film Night at the Fellowship – Thursday, Feb. 18th at 7 pm. Title will be sent out by e-mail.

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## Caring Committee

Please let us know if you can help out in any way on the caring committee:

- Visiting
- Sending Flowers
- Sending Cards
- Helping plan for Joyous celebrations (graduation etc.)
- Being a member of the committee
- Keeping in touch with a shut-in by phone
- Making food
- Driving

The caring committee is a very rewarding committee. It provides a wonderful opportunity to get to know people better and to help in times of celebration or crisis. Send to Janet Crawford [janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca) 454-0441.

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## Reflections on Faith

Our theme for February is Faith. This is a tricky one for a lot of us, because faith is sometimes associated with an unquestioning belief in divinity, in things which don't really exist, are not proven or experienced, or which contradict a rational and logical perspective. Some of our

members don't really think of the Fellowship as a faith community, let alone a religious one. But as a community bound together by a set of principles we affirm and try to live by, we are indeed keeping faith, holding our convictions and our covenants to each other. We have faith that our principles and values give meaning to our lives, that our mindful actions—individual and collective—are important and necessary for the planet and its inhabitants, and that a more just and more compassionate world is possible. Here are some reflections on faith by UUs and other thinkers. Since many of them are excerpts from longer articles, I have included the links.

“We UUs feel more comfortable talking about reason and experience than faith, but I want to point out that faith doesn't have to be contrary to reason and experience. It can be an extension of what we know is so. I think of reason and experience as shining a light on our path. We walk as far as our logic, common sense and past lessons take us, and then we take a step of faith into the darkness. “I am suggesting that faith involves our will and imagination more than our minds. It's imagining a future that's different from the past and then living as if that future is possible. By living in the possibilities, faith enables that future to come true. Faith is not believing the unbelievable; it's trying the untried. I think this understanding of faith accords with the Biblical definition of faith as “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” From Rev. Neal Jones, “The Faith of the Trapeze Artist.” <http://www.questformeaning.org/quest-article/the-faith-of-a-trapeze-artist/>

“Faith is not necessarily, or not soon a resting place. Faith puts you out on a wide river, in a boat, in the fog, in the dark. Even a man of faith knows that we've all got to go through enough to kill us.” Wendell Berry <http://blueboat.blogs.uua.org/2015/10/19/through-the-spirits-others-to-faith/#sthash.ftm1liwy.dpuf>

“To keep faith with the source of life, knowing that we are not our own and that Earth made us; to keep faith with the community of resistance, never forgetting that life can be saved from that which threatens it by even small bands of people choosing to put into practice an alternative way of life; and to seek an even deeper awareness of that which springs up inwardly in us. Even when our hearts are broken by our own failure or the failure of others, 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.” From Rebecca Parker, *Blessing the World: What Can Save Us Now* <http://www.questformeaning.org/quest-blog/keep-the-faith-2/>

“We don't flower in faith because we are perfect or accomplished. We grow faithfully through our struggles, our imperfections, our practices, our misses, our failures, and our trying again. We grow faithfully transcending what holds us back and twists us away from mercy, forgive-

ness, love, and generosity. Humility requires transcending vanity, while still having a strong sense of self-worth. Generosity requires transcending fear and growing in trust and good-will. Forgiveness requires transcending vengeance, while holding still to loving accountability and radical acceptance. Every human trait that is considered spiritually positive demands our living practice every day. The way to transcendence is right through the muck and mire, trampling over carefully created schedules and being ready to give a whole-hearted “yes!” when asked.” Reverend Naomi King, “Getting Out of our Own Way Faithfully.” <http://www.questformeaning.org/spiritual-themes/living-with-purpose/getting-out-of-our-own-way-faithfully/>

“Unitarian Universalism is a fierce belief in the way of freedom and reverence for the sacred dignity of each individual. With Jefferson we “have sworn eternal hostility against every tyranny over the mind.” Unitarian Universalism is cooperation with a universe that created us. It is a celebration of life. It is being in love with goodness and justice. It is a sense of humour about absolutes. Unitarian Universalism is faith in people, hope for tomorrow's child, confidence in a continuity that spans all time. It looks not to a perfect heaven, but toward a good earth. It is respectful of the past, but not limited to it. It is trust in growing and conspiracy with change. It is spiritual responsibility for a moral tomorrow.” Rev. David Pyle, blog: <http://celestiallands.org/wayside/?p=496>

“There are some things we can do to bolster our faith while moving from the old to the new. One is to nudge ourselves to take reasonable risks. Life is not a smoothly paved, well-marked interstate. It is a winding trail with many curves, potholes, and roadblocks. “To successfully navigate life's journey you have to be willing to take detours off the familiar, well-worn path and try a new way. Whenever you do anything new, from learning to ride a bicycle to having a baby, it's disorienting and scary. You will not have a map or an owner's manual. You will not know exactly where you're going or what you're doing. There are no guaranteed outcomes. You will not have all the answers. You will not feel good for a while. You will feel vulnerable and lost and anxious before you feel better. You have to be willing to put yourself in that suspended state before you grab the next trapeze bar. It is an unavoidable part of change. “Another thing we can do to bolster our faith between the bars is to keep before us a dream, a vision of where we're going, a promise of what can be.” From Rev. Neal Jones, “The Faith of the Trapeze Artist.” <http://www.questformeaning.org/quest-article/the-faith-of-a-trapeze-artist/>

“When we actively choose to wait, surrendering to the reality that some things take more time than we'd like, we cannot always know how it will turn out. But in those moments when we choose stillness and patience over frustration, anger, and impatience, there is no doubt in my mind that we are engaging in a counter-cultural act which, I be-

lieve, is also a spiritual act. “Standing there in silence with all the rush of our lives swirling around us, waiting and actively doing nothing, we may find ourselves overwhelmed by the chatter within. Or we might just, over time, hear the voice of our soul coming through like a whisper. Parker Palmer describes the soul as something like a wild animal. Shy and easily frightened, the soul can only be heard when we cease stomping around the woods with our flashlights and instead sit quietly at the base of a tree, waiting for it to appear. “The waiting can be awfully uncomfortable, though. Our muscles start to ache; we get cold, and tired of being still. We begin to think that if we just moved to the next tree then the thing we hope for will appear. I agree with the French philosopher, Max Picard, who noted that “Silence is the central place of faith.” It is in silence, often, that we are most uncomfortable, and it is in silence that trust, faith, and our sometimes shy and whispering inner voice might emerge.” Reverend Jen Crow, “Waiting as an Act of Faith.” <http://www.questformeaning.org/questionnaire/waiting-as-an-act-of-faith/>

That all people have inherent worth and dignity is not just a principle... it is an article of faith. That the arc of the universe bends towards justice is not just an assumption... it is an article of faith. That human capacity can have a positive effect on the cultures, lives, and world we share is not a provable concept... it is an article of faith. That Love, Compassion, and Generosity build a better human community more in tune with our spirits and souls is not something we can empirically show... it is an article of faith. That all people have the capacity for good within them is an article of faith. Rev. David Pyle, blog: <http://celestiallands.org/wayside/?p=496>

Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes  
for the Sunday Service committee



## NEW U PROGRAM

The membership committee is planning a New U program. The tentative dates are 7-9 in the evening March 9, 16, 23 and 30<sup>th</sup>. These could be changed depending on the times available for the participants. In this 4 week program you will be get to know one another and explore your faith journey, be introduced to the history of Unitarian Universalism, hear about the history of The Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton and explore your own values and what you believe.

In the past these sessions have been valuable learning experiences and they also provide an opportunity to meet new people who are exploring their spiritual journey and people who have been members of TUFF for many years.

For more information, Janet Crawford 454-0441  
[janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca)



## KNITTING CIRCLE

Our supply of slippers is running low. If you would like to get together to do some knitting, please let me know and I will try to organize a time and place, Janet Crawford: [janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca) 454-0441



## SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

For more information Janet Crawford [janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca)

For a number of years, TUFF has provided small group ministry (SGM) sessions for members and friends. We have been calling our sessions “Circle Conversation.” Each session is about 1½ hours long. It starts with a chalice lighting and opening words. Each person does a check in. We then do some readings around a topic that the group chooses and each person has a chance to talk about the topic – or pass. We finish up with a short discussion and closing words. Small group ministry helps build community and provides opportunities for deeper relationships according to the UUA website, and also provides an opportunity for deeper spiritual growth.

We have started a new group and our second meeting is Feb 11 (Thursday) from 7:30 – 9:00. We have 8 members but have room for a couple of more members. Another group could be started if there is enough interest. Some topics we have used in SGM are: Growth and Aging, Courage, Friendship, Kindness, Memory, Music and Siblings. Many sessions are available on line and we have also devised our own sessions. Here is a meditative reading from our last session.

### A Yom Kippur Prayer

Birth is a beginning, and Death a destination;  
From childhood to maturity and youth to age,  
From innocence to awareness and ignorance to knowing.  
From foolishness to discretion and then, perhaps,  
to wisdom.  
From weakness to strength or strength to weakness,  
and back again.  
From health to sickness and back, we pray,  
to health again.  
From offense to forgiveness, from loneliness to love.  
From joy to gratitude, from pain to compassion.  
From grief to understanding, from fear to faith.  
From defeat to defeat  
Until looking backward or ahead, we see that  
Victory lies not at some high place along the way,  
But in having made the Journey, stage by stage.



## Notes from the president

As I sat down at the head of the boardroom table, getting ready to chair my first meeting of the new board, I thought to myself, “I am going to have to act like a grownup now.”

Have you been wondering what’s up with the new board of directors? Well it’s time we gave you a bit of a briefing.

To recap, in June the vote on a new board was evenly split, 15 to 15. According to our procedures that meant the vote was lost. A new nominating committee was put together and over the summer they drew up a new slate of board members. On Sept. 13 six new members were appointed. We got together right away and had our first meeting the following Saturday.

I have never been on the board before and never the president of anything. But I have been well supported by my fellow board members and things are moving along quite well, in my humble opinion.

### Quorum of Six

One problem we faced immediately was that our bylaws call for a quorum of six members. With winter storms, illness, just life in general, it would be difficult to have a quorum at every meeting. We decided we needed a larger board.

We put out feelers and managed to nab two more, Najat Abdou-McFarland came on board, which was fortunate because Najat had been helping with the finances on the previous finance committee, put together after the death, last February, of George DeMille. George, of course, had been treasurer and bookkeeper for many years. The second person was Sheila Thompson who joined as past president.

I feel we have a very nicely balanced board with five people, Sheila Thompson, Sheila Moore, Gail Moore and secretary Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes, all with a wealth of experience on past boards. Then we have the four newbie’s, Myron Hedderson, treasurer, Alyssa Sankey, Najat and myself. None of us have served on the fellowship board before, but all of us bring a broad range of experiences to the tasks at hand. It is also great to have two younger members serving, bringing a kind of freshness and energy to the board.

Right off the bat we had to prepare to host the Atlantic Gathering of Eastern Region Unitarians and Universalists. Jo-Anne had been spearheading this and, along with staff and officials of the Canadian Unitarian Council, had events well in hand. It was held Oct. 16 to 18 and went off very well.

We need to encourage youth participation in the fellowship and we agreed to establish a youth fund. One plan is to send some to the CUC national conference in Vancouver in

May. Feel free to drop a few extra bucks in the collection plate on Sundays, marking an envelope with “youth fund”.

### Children’s Program

One of my personal goals is to see our children’s religious education program well maintained. These children are our future. I requested the board move into committee of the whole so we could broadly and freely discuss that program, both past and present.

We are fortunate to have Jo-Anne and Haifa Miller co-chairing the RE committee. One of our initiatives is to ensure facilitators, committee members, anyone in direct contact with the children on a regular basis, undergo a background security check. Those checks have been carried out for this year.

Just as an aside, Naomi Frooman is our facilitator this year and by all reports she is doing a super job.

Picking up on a recommendation from the previous board a bylaw review committee was established, chaired by Gail Moore. You will be invited soon to see what changes are proposed and to vote on those changes.

### Money, money, money

In November we swung into action, getting out the annual appeal for pledges. We are expecting, because of a loss of members, to be in a tight financial situation this year. In our pledge letter we asked people to dig a little deeper this year and many of you responded to the call. We got \$10,800 in pledges, close to what was pledged last year.

You will learn more about this topic when we hold the annual budget meeting on Jan 31.

### Syrian Refugees

We agreed to support the Halifax Unitarian Universalist church in their project to bring a Syrian family here and have set up a fund for that purpose. We also urge members to support the local efforts here in Fredericton, spearheaded by the Multicultural Association.

Committee chairs have begun to send their monthly reports to Jo-Anne, as secretary, to be distributed to board members. In the past reports went to the various vice-presidents. However previous boards dispensed with the VPs and members without a specific title serve as members at large. This current board opted to continue with that structure.

One note of concern from the lay chaplaincy committee was that we continue to have only one lay chaplain, Tony Fitzgerald, and no one has come forward to fill the vacancy of second chaplain. Tony’s seven-year term ends in 2017.

Myron and Najat have been busy with the daunting task of preparing the 2016 budget. The board had a first look at it on Jan 17 and in a subsequent meeting. We have been hacking here and there to bring the budget down to

a minimal deficit. The congregation should have received the draft budget by now and will vote on it Jan. 31. (the Touchstone deadline prevents me from reporting on the outcome.)

That's it for now. Be happy to receive any feedback. Contact information for myself, board members and committee chair's is listed on the web site, [www.uff.ca](http://www.uff.ca)

Blessèd be.



## To the Editor

Dear Editor,

The federal Liberal party promised to undo some of the harmful actions of the Harper government and I have to applaud one they undid last week. Perhaps a lot of people are unaware of a special program launched by the Canada Revenue Agency, reviewing the "political" activities of registered charities. When you look at the list of which charities were targeted it seems obvious the program was at the direction of the Harper administration.

Audits were conducted on organizations that tended to hold progressive views, opposite to the reigning Conservatives. Some well known environmental organizations, PEN Canada, Dying with Dignity, the left-leaning think tank, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives were targeted, along with one organization of great concern to me, the Canadian Unitarian Council (the CUC). The CUC is the national organization of Canadian Unitarian and Universalist churches. I am a member of the Fredericton Unitarian congregation.

If you look at the principles Unitarians strive to live by; justice, equity and compassion in human relations, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning (that would mean not muzzling highly qualified scientists), the right of conscience and a goal of world community, it is not hard to see how they might come under the surveillance of a government like the one Stephen Harper commanded.

The threat was of course that charities could lose their charitable status and therefore a right to issue tax receipts to donors, an essential tool in raising funds. Dying with Dignity did lose its charitable status. That threat had the effect of creating the equivalent of a libel chill. Unitarian and Universalist churches, including my own, were fearful of including something in their Sunday services, church newsletters and web sites that the CRA might decide was too "political". Our social responsibility committee now had to consider if taking part in a rally down at the Legislature was far too risky.

Last Wednesday the Liberals announced they were shutting down the CRA special program, acknowledging charities play an important role in public policy debate in

Canada.

Indeed Unitarians have been at the forefront of political debate in North America going back to the movements to abolish slavery and to give women the right to vote.

This threat to the CUC was nothing less than an attack on religious freedom and on freedom of speech. While I am grateful for the initiative taken by the new Liberal government they need to take it a step further and review the CRA policies and just what constitutes political activity. If a church is not entitled to stand up for the poor, the downtrodden, the mentally ill, aging and poor seniors, Aboriginal rights, women's rights, the environment, then I wonder who is.

Glenna Hanley



## A Book That May Interest You

Rabbi Harold Kushner's *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* asks some questions we have all asked. Inspired by his own son's death of premature aging just before his 14th birthday, he says it made him a better and more sympathetic pastor, but he'd give that back to have his son again. He asks the big question: why do the righteous suffer? He concludes it's not because of something they have done, nor because God has reasons for them to suffer, nor because it's part of God's great tapestry or as a test from God. As for rewards after death for earthly sufferings, he says we do not know.

God does not cause the suffering and hates it as much as we do, so God is ready to help us cope if we get beyond the guilt and anger. God does not cause it because when he creates, he makes order out of chaos, not something out of nothing, so maybe creation is still going on and part of the making of a better world is up to us. Only humans can find meaning in their pain as a sign something is wrong and sometimes reach a goal to transcend it.

So why did God create a world in which there is sickness and suffering? He suggests we have to get beyond that question and ask "What do I do now?" God gives strength and courage, appreciation of self and of the life around us till the end. As friends of the suffering we are the voice of God when we give this.

However Kushner also suggests some answers. Man is part animal part God and every part of our lives involves moral values animals do not face. If we are free to make choices, there must be a good choice and a bad choice. God gives us moral freedom. God also helps those who help themselves by getting rid of guilt, anger, jealousy and self-imposed loneliness. So we should not pray for the impossible or the unnatural. Prayer puts us in touch with other people

and lets us know we are part of a greater reality so we do not face problems alone. God makes people become doctors and nurses and help to solve problems. Prayer and religion give us knowledge of good and evil, of how to be human and not animal.

This leaves some questions open for me including how did Kushner think the chaos was created if creation means bringing order? Why call the source of the support God, not a spirit of goodness? But no book is going to provide all the answers and no review can do justice to the full contents of a book. So, if you have not already read it, you may well find it worth a look.. Sorry I can't put my copy in the library as I promised it to my sister.

Sheila Andrew



## The Dunbarton Occasional

Volume II, issue 1, January 7, 2016

Written by allison calvern

### Can you pronounce this word: Shawnejeagamik?

Shawnejeagamik means House of Compassion in the Algonquin language. This is the name given to an aboriginal drop-in centre for First Nations, Inuit, and Metis people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The house is at 510 Rideau. Shabby and old, it runs on scant funding, provides breakfast and lunch, and a place in from the weather to sit and/or connect.

The front hall is crowded, a table for brochures and the sign-in sheet, coats hanging off the corners of the open doors. The floor collects winter boots, wet gloves, and donations from well-meaning Ottawans, somebody always stopping by with a bag of something.

Run by aboriginals, Shawnejeagamik taps into local resources, encourages its patrons to fit in to urban life. Some have come from the far north because of illness—diabetes, heart disease, tuberculosis—and some have simply drifted here, the capital city net strong enough to catch and hold them in their loneliness.

One Friday just before thanksgiving, i went there, and was given the volunteer job of wiping down the tables, putting out milk and sugar, tidying up the dishes. I wondered, though, what would a young man from Inukjuak on Hudson Bay, gain from being waited on by a succession of white, wrinkled, earnest church people, when he could carry his own bowl of soup to the table? I did not go back until just before Christmas, when i had a proposal for Carrie Diabo, who manages the drop-in centre with intelligent flexibility.

I want to set up a writing group, to give people the chance to write memoirs, stories, letters, i told her. I am a publisher, and maybe people would want to collect their work

in a chapbook.

Carrie was hesitant, not sure of me and very protective of her patrons. Also, she sort of liked the idea. I listened to her, felt i could address all of her concerns, and she agreed that i could 'try it out.' We picked the second Thursday in January.

I got there just before 10 o'clock, maybe ten people in the common room, some eating breakfast, the radio on, two people playing cards, no advance preparation that there would be a workshop.

The space is basically living-room size, a doorway at the back into the kitchen, old square tables and rickety chairs filling the floor with very little space to move between them. If worn and should-be-thrown-out are colours, then those are the colours of that room. Some attendees are alcoholics; some have no regular place to sleep; some cannot read or write.

I am aware that i am stepping into their home, aware that i stand for 'other.' Aware that there is power in the very privilege that i enjoy—education, health, middle class. I have options they can see but not touch.

I thanked them for their attention, and did not waste time. I introduced myself and the project, told them i would come every Thursday morning, and they could write or not write, that i would simply provide them with the space to think about their stories and help them if they wanted to write them down.

"We are all perfection," said Sally (not her real name) when i mentioned perfect writing. I looked around the room, thrilled to see they were paying attention, and had to agree with her. We are all perfection, and we all have a story.

I handed out pencils and yellow legal-pads—but they would only take one page, not the whole pad. Five people put their name on the sign-up sheet, and began to write.

When they finished, they wanted me to read their words; i felt like the school teacher. The paper from Sally was perfection, telling of her mother and grandmother, of how she came to Ottawa from Iqualuit. One paper held a lovely, moving poem. One man, Nakasuk, asked that i read his text back to him, out loud, a story of loneliness, of sleeping in dumpsters, of trying to commit suicide, of wanting to see his family. His family. He may be twenty years old.

When i was ready to leave, i took the papers up to Carrie. She was, well, astonished.

A new year, 2016, and i wish you all 12 months of health, sprinkled with delight. I must say i take delight in the openness and felicity of our new, ethnically varied parliamentarians. While Mr. Harper 'governed' Canada, it seems to me that Mr. Trudeau 'leads' Canada, into our better selves. The drop-in centre is hoping some of its funding, withdrawn in 2013, will be re-installed in 2016.

Thank you to those who sent me Christmas cards; how i loved receiving them. Makes me feel like a crumb for sending so few over the years, and i suspect i may send out more in the future.

Take care,  
allison calvern



## CUC National Conference 2016

Vancouver will host 2016 CUC National Conference

The Canadian Unitarian Council's 2016 national conference will take place in beautiful British Columbia, on the UBC campus. The conference will be hosted by the four Lower Mainland BC congregations: Beacon Unitarian Church, North Shore Unitarian Church, South Fraser Unitarian Congregation, and the Unitarian Church of Vancouver.

Building on themes and Confluence Lectures from the last few years, Conference 2016 will focus on better connections among UUs, greater public awareness, and deepening spirituality—on Bolder Ways of Being—Être et vivre avec plus d'audace.

Over the weekend of May 20–22, 2016, Unitarians will explore sharing, the risk (and rewards) of telling our stories, and connections.

Here are some of the highlights of the weekend:

An Opening Ceremony will showcase congregations across Canada in words, pictures, and music. We're asking every congregation to send in 3-6 photos: your building, your activities, your people. Please send them [conference@cuc.ca](mailto:conference@cuc.ca) so we can share them with participants. In addition, we want to know about how you are welcoming refugees in your community. Send us your stories and photos.

The Confluence Lecture takes place this year on Friday evening, after the Opening Ceremony. The lecture will be given by Reverend Melora Lyngood.

There are special programs for children, youth and young adults throughout the weekend, and everybody comes together on Sunday.

Childcare, Young Fun and Junior Youth programs are available on Saturday and Sunday. Children up to 14 years of age (flexible) will be involved in active play and learning programs which includes multi-age activities and field trips.

CanUudle XXVI (14-20 years) starts on Friday, with registration and ice-breakers in the afternoon, and continues until Monday morning at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver.

Young Adults (18-35 years) meet for a two-part mini-con (Part I, Friday afternoon, Part II: Monday morning) for creative, educational, and social action activities, and in

between for a social event and a dinner with bridging youth.

Join youth and young adults who are organizing a Bridging Ceremony and a Worship at UCV. (Buses will be available.)

Saturday Streams (10-12 and 1:30-4:30) include:

Building Bridges Through Understanding the Village: Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation, organized by the CUC Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Task Force. Participants will be taken through an exploration of the personal role in supporting the revival of the values that worked so beautifully in Indigenous villages for thousands of years.

No Borders: Climate Justice and First Nations. Led by Reverend Deborah Cruz of Bellingham, Washington, and Karl Perrin, with the participation of First Nations & Indigenous guests, this workshop will look at threats to environment in Settler and Indigenous communities on both sides of the Canada/US border.

Being Bold for Climate Justice: A Search for the Truth and Meaning of Solidarity and Direct Action. Aly Tharp and Asha Philar, from the UU Young Adults for Climate Justice Network, will explore direct action campaigns and relationship-building.

Justice-Seeking People: Ministering in Prisons and Restoring Justice. Reverend Kathy Sage and Reverend Amanda Aikman will introduce participants to guest speakers working in the areas of prison chaplaincy, prison reform, and restorative justice. Participants will receive suggestions of how to reintegrate people into their communities and to work for change in the criminal justice system.

Leadership Development and Dialogue. Rev. Linda Thomson and Joan Carolyn will provide an expanded version of the popular Congregational Networking session. Learn from others about how to meet congregational challenges and foster vitality. Listen to others share stories about the ways in which their congregation has been bold. Radical Shared Ministry. Liz James and Gary Groot will provide a lively, story-filled workshop on finding our ministry and living our religion every day with enthusiasm and passion.

Sunday Worship will be a beautiful and inspiring event organized by Reverend Debra Thorne and her team. It will take place in the impressive Chan Centre.

Sunday is Multigenerational Day! After Worship, participants of all ages will share a meal, conversations, and activities to get to know each other at the Multigenerational Lunch. The youth will be playing a big part in organizing this event, and based on last year's experience we know it will be amazing.

There are workshops on Sunday afternoon for our little ones, CanUudlers and adults to sing, chat, and learn: Music and Story-telling for all ages

"Guns and Butter": a game and discussion connecting UU and UNO approaches

Diversity Dive, a dynamic session organized by the Diver-



sity Monitoring Group  
a workshop led by Young Adults about bridging between  
life stages  
Human Board Games  
a workshop on the Seven Principles

New features this year include a multigenerational art project (look for more information in your Sharing Our Faith package) and a multigenerational Social Action on Saturday afternoon.

For a change of pace over the weekend, there's a 3Rs Room to Relax, Reflect and Recharge, and a Minister's Room for private pastoral conversations.

The Sunday Banquet is included in full registration packages. After we have a meal together on Sunday evening,

we recognize some of the milestones in the Canadian UU community at our Closing Ceremony. Find out more about our 2018 Conference, and our plans for the AGM and other events in 2017.

Networking opportunities range from informal small groups to a Dialogue with the CUC Board to the meals. This year we are doing meals a bit differently. You will have a chance to choose between a buffet meal or several restaurants, cafés and snack bars open to you at The Nest, the new student union building where many of our sessions will be held.

For more information about the conference, write to [conference@cuc.ca](mailto:conference@cuc.ca). (That address will reach Jo-Anne.)

# CUC National Conference

hosted by Beacon Unitarian Church,  
North Shore Unitarian Church,  
South Fraser Unitarian Congregation,  
and the Unitarian Church of Vancouver

**May 20-22, 2016**

at the  
University  
of British Columbia

# **BOLDER** *ways of being*

Être et vivre avec plus d'audace



UBC's new Student Union Building, "The Nest"

Building on themes and Confluence Lectures from the last few years, Conference 2016 will focus on bringing UUs together from across the country, creating greater public awareness, and deepening spirituality – on **Bolder Ways of Being**. We will explore sharing, the risk (and rewards) of telling our stories, and connections.

Registration and additional information at:

**<http://cuc.ca/conference-2016/>**