



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

Contents for November 2005

Upcoming Services	1
Women's Pot Luck	1
tUFF Scarves	1
Guatemalan School Fundraiser Dinner	1
CUC ACM 2006	1
Wanna book the Fellowship?	2
Liberal Language	2
Vision, Mission and Covenant Stuff	4
Children's Religious Education	5
Magnolia Chalice	5
Correspondence from Linda	6
Subscription Renewal Form	8
Fall Operational Campaign	9
Minutes of September Board Meeting	9

Upcoming Services

Briefly, here are the plans for upcoming Sunday Services: November 6: Pat Daley presenting on the history of marriage. November 13: Paul LeBlanc, presenting on exuberance, and the beauty of a life lived fully. November 20: Lorna Drew and Leo Ferrari, presenting on their recently launched book, Different Minds: Living with Alzheimer Disease. Lorna plans to share with us her current, post-book thoughts and writings. November 27: Heather Lunergan will be leading the service which will include the investiture of Anne Leslie and Dave Warman as lay chaplains. Ray Drennan, recently retired minister to the Montreal Unitarian congregation and now living in New Brunswick, will be presenting. (We may get a real sermon, in true Unitarian tradition). December 4: Mary Scott on China. December 11: Al Sharp on China. (More details to follow; check your eMail for service reminders !! It is an exciting lineup, made more so by your presence at the service. TUFF rocks !!)

In fellowship
allison calvern

Women's Pot Luck

The next women's pot luck will be November 25th. at 6pm. The location and "show and tell" topic undecided at this time. More information to following in Sunday's bulletin. Come and enjoy an evening of good food and good conversation. For more information contact Joan Brewer at 455-5169 or jrjeb@nb.sympatico.ca

tUFF Scarves

Please knit a scarf for an international student at UNB or STU. The donated yarn is in a big wicker basket in the library. Please help yourself to yarn and please knit a scarf. The scarves will be present late in November. For information please call Patricia 454 6019 or contact her by email - himmys@nbnet.nb.ca

In fellowship
Patricia des Champs

Guatemalan School Fundraiser Dinner

Saturday, November 12, 5:50pm, at 874 York. Live entertainment by George Melendez on acoustic guitar, and a chance to eat from an authentic Guatemalan menu. The food will be prepared under the auspices of Jeremias Tecu, an Achi Mayan Frederictonian !! Buy your tickets early - allison calvern has them, as well as True Food Organics and Kelly's Cafe. Invite a friend! Adults \$15, children \$5 - a deal for the evening. We hope to make \$250, enough to send one Guatemalan child to school. Contact: allison: acalvern@nbnet.nb.ca / 459-1436.

*Guatemalan Dinner resource team needs your help. Volunteers are being signed up for: Set up and Take down committee; Cooking committee; and Serving committee.

Jump in now! ! You'll be glad you did.

In fellowship
allison calvern



Canadian Unitarian Council
Annual Conference and Meeting
Saint John New Brunswick
May 19 to 22, 2006.
Plan Now and Be There!

Hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Saint John

Visit the conference website at:

<http://www.cuc.ca/conference/2006/index.htm>

The local organizers in Saint John have asked that members of the Fredericton congregation assist by organizing the Empty Bowls supper on Sunday evening, May 21. If you are interested in helping with this project please contact George DeMille at 459-1436 or demille@unb.ca.

In fellowship
George DeMille



Wanna book the Fellowship?

We're changing the way people request access to the building. From now on if you need to book the building or a room in the building, you need to send a request to the Fellowship email account. That address is tuff@nbnet.nb.ca. If you don't have access to email, give Don Flatt a call at 470-3321 or 454-7634. Once the booking is confirmed, he'll let you know and post it at our new online calendar. Here's the link to that:

<http://calendar.msn.com/unitarianfellowship@hotmail.com>

For people who don't have email access, the Fellowship calendar will be printed and posted weekly in the foyer next to the garage.

In fellowship
Don Flatt

Mission/Covenant: The First Parish in Bedford is a community of individuals and families, adults and children, committed to independent spiritual paths and a shared religious journey. We recognize that growth occurs by listening and quiet reflection, through dialogue and action. Among our values are love, honesty, humility, individual responsibility, and respect for mystery. These values are essential to our understanding, appreciating, and changing our lives.

We want every aspect of congregational life to express our values. Therefore we seek to harmonize our practices with our values in the conduct of worship, in religious education, in meetings and socializing, and in our corporate life. We encourage democratic participation in all aspects of parish life, and we seek a diversity of ages, abilities and energies. We regard both work and play as ways to foster mutuality, acceptance, and companionship. Together we face the challenges of existence within a context of belonging.



Liberal Language

In an article entitled "Why Liberals Should Read the Bible," John Buehrens, former President of the UUA and author of *Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and Religious Liberals*, proposes a three-part answer to his question. Unitarian * Universalists have a political reason to read the Bible: "If you can't or won't understand the Bible, others surely will interpret it for you" – and in the current political climate that can leave the interpretation in the hands of a powerful minority with a very different agenda than ours. They have a cultural one: the importance of the Bible to the poetic and imaginary life of our country (which we share, of course, with Northrop Frye) means that people who haven't read these texts cannot grasp some of the foundational patterns and the rich references in all areas of the arts or in the intellectual history of human civilization: "Within this culture you can't be fully literate or creative, artistically or rhetorically, without an acquaintance with the Bible."

The third reason is the most personal one: "You also can't be spiritually mature or wise by simply rejecting the Bible as oppressive. The oppressive uses of the Bible are real, but unless you learn to understand that there are other readings possible, the Bible will, indeed, simply continue to be a source of oppression for you, and not a source of inspiration, liberation, creation, and even exultation as you understand it anew for yourself, at a deeper and less literal level."

The last reason that Buehrens gives for reading the Bible

is relevant, also, to the way you look at language. Just as some U*Us shudder at the prospect of Bible study, there are many words that we know longer want to carry in our cultural baggage: church, faith, hymn, salvation... the list can (and, in a workshop I attended at CU*UL School did) fill whole pages of flip chart sheets. As a result of avoidance of these words that we hold in fear or disdain, we are held by their absence. UUA President William Sinkford said, recently: "UUs have no language that allows us to capture the possibility of reverence, to name that which is holy, and to talk about human agency in theological terms." As a long-time religious educator and a longer-time mother, I'm lucky enough to have been able to use the G-word in many conversations with children, and to share in their far-reaching explorations of what the word might mean. I feel this is more worthwhile than avoiding either the word or the concept, of continuing to let other people define and use the word. A woman I care deeply about told me, "If I didn't feel I could define God in a way that was meaningful for me, I couldn't be a Christian. But I feel that the language we use in our childhood stays imprinted in us, and can be even more deeply meaningful than words we use to avoid speaking that language."

Children learn about this joyful power by claiming the right to experiment with words. There's something about the way they combine reverence and pleasure, gravity and air-lightness in their use of words that is inspiring. Naomi has noticed the importance I place on words like "prayer" and "grace." She likes these words. She uses the nouns as verbs: "I grace that..." means she's thankful for something. The words do grace the circle of our family table (which is, nonetheless, square). Influenced by the work of process theologian Alfred North Whitehead, Northrop Frye speculated that God might be a verb, "implying a process accomplishing itself." Buckminster Fuller who was a Unitarian, was more affirmative: "God is a verb." What would it mean to our lives if we decided to "truth" or to "good" or if our lives were "godded"? Does not using the big words that weigh so heavy in our emotional suitcases keep us from exploring these possibilities?

Just like Buehrens's caution about the oppressive power that which we reject or avoid wield over us, a refusal to use certain words allows other people to define them for us, to use them against us, to keep us out of the conversation. Most importantly, it keeps us from experiencing the "inspiration, liberation, creation, exultation" of "understand[ing] anew." It is not only the potential of language we limit, but also the possibilities of our universes and our selves. Although it is certainly true that we have thoughts that are difficult to put into words, Benjamin Lee Whorf writes about how language shapes and directs our thoughts and even determines what we think about. We cannot fully think about something until or unless we can articulate it. When we say to our children, "You are angry with me," and they feel understood and validated, it is because naming something brings us to a deeper understanding of it.

In order to see beyond our immediate experience of the real, we need to speak the other dimensions of our lives. We need to go farther, deeper, more fully into language and experience in order to move beyond the words and the understanding we have.

As I get older and more conversant with what and how words mean, I am more than ever in awe of their power and their beauty. Writing in the language of worship (using words like wholeness, compassion, service) has exactly the same effect on me as learning a foreign language. With each new language, my universe is transformed. I see the world around me with new eyes. There are different shades of blue. The moon and the goddess are connected by the feminine in French but not in German. God does not sound like good in French. A child in French Immersion asked me a few weeks ago if God counted as an imaginary friend. She said 'God' in English, the language she uses to speak to this companion. When she went to write her sentence, she asked, "Est-ce qu'il y a un mot francais pour 'God'?" I thought about what it might mean to her if I had answered no: would French-speaking children her age have no one to talk to? Would God only speak English? Or would God simply have this one name, easily pronounced by English-speaking children but never be part of the languages others speak everyday?

The connections are different, the meanings are different, the world is different. With each language you learn, all the various meanings in the different languages layer themselves, one on the other, to add dimensions to objects or thoughts. Whitehead writes: "The source of reverence lies in this perception. That the present holds within itself the complete sum of existence, forwards and backwards. That great amplitude of time which is eternity." The great words-out-of-time quality of the King James version of the Bible, of sacred texts from religions that travel around the world and across generations, the language of reverence can help us access those areas of human existence that are far beyond or deep within the everyday. But it can't do this – we don't let ourselves do this – until we reclaim the words that speak that experience, until we let ourselves read, hear, and interpret the words, and then speak them anew in our own language. We are all called to be creative, to be writers as well as our readers of the meanings of our lives. Then we can "create new heavens and a new earth." (Isaiah 65:17)

In faith
Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes





What We Believe: Great teachers of many faiths throughout the ages have stressed the need for ethical social behavior and the worth of the human spirit. These are our spiritual forerunners. Believing that the wonders of the universe outspill every category into which we try to fit them and that the ultimate meaning of our lives can never be permanently reduced to a brief written statement, Unitarian Universalists choose not to organize our church around a creed. We have a set of purposes and principles and a mission statement, but there are no beliefs which serve as a test of membership in our church.

Mission: The Mission of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco is to be a sanctuary for individual religious growth and learning, to celebrate life and worship in diverse fellowship, to bear witness to suffering and joy, and to work for peace and justice in our world.

Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco



Vision, Mission and Covenant Stuff

October 27, 2005 When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.

Audre Lorde

Dear TUFF members and friends:

This letter is about the process of creating our vision, mission and covenant statements. Vision: A carefully defined picture of where the congregation wants to be in five years. The vision is the dream of what TUFF can become.

Mission: A concise statement of what the congregation wants to be known for, or known as, within the wider world. What does TUFF want to mean to the community?

Covenant: A statement of how members of the congregation will be with, and will behave toward, one another, as well as what is promised or vowed to one another and to the congregation as a whole.

We can all read the sign on the lawn at 874 York: Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton. But what does the sign mean about who we are? Who is at our table now? And for whom do we have a chair waiting? What is of most importance to us? Why are we here? What voices are being heard? Which ones are not audible? What would our children draw if they were to draw the best of TUFF?

As we find our place among Unitarian Universalist congregations in Canada; as we discover and use the resources of our national body, the CUC; we realize that it is time to declare who we are—to ourselves, and to the community surrounding us. Helen Keller said, “The most pathetic

person in the world is someone who has sight, but has no vision.” Well, TUFF is far from pathetic, but neither do we have a vision. Yet. More accurately, perhaps, we do have a vision, somewhere inside each of us, but we need to articulate it, together.

We have an ad hoc committee that is already working out the details. As it turns out, this exercise of creating our Vision, Mission and Covenant Statements, will not be a long one. Thanks to Jo-Anne’s leadership—projects, retreats, con-cons—we are used to being led through the process of discovering ourselves. And, we are good at it.

We want three thoughtful, creative, explanatory statements that call us to be all we can be. Think of a Saturday, with muffins, coffee, flip charts, thoughtful comments, reflections, lunch, more flip charts, lots of markers, good purpose—and, voilB: TUFF Vision, Mission and Covenant Statements. It will be fun!

The committee has discovered excellent materials, and numerous examples of other faith community statements. We need only apply our abundance of goodwill, wit, and patience to the process. When the committee figures out how and when to meet, the job of members and friends will be, simply, to show up—with enthusiasm!

We are proud to be Unitarian Universalists; both Fredericton and New Brunswick are better places because we are here. We have a history and a presence; we have a chalice and a flame; it is time to declare what they stand for—what they stand for here, at The Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton.

Get ready for the ride—worthy, dignified, just, equitable, compassionate, humane, accepting, encouraging, spiritual, free, responsible, searching, truthful, meaningful, right, conscientious, democratic, peaceful, liberating, respectful and interdependent—How Unitarian Universalist is that?

Sincerely, allison calvern Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Vision, Mission and Covenant

Various faith communities undertake this exercise in different ways, but all seek to answer, more or less, the questions: Who do we want to be in the future? What do we do to get there? How shall we behave with one another on this journey? Throughout this issue of Touchstone, you will see some examples of Vision, Mission, Covenant and Other Statements.

In fellowship
allison calvern





Mission and Covenant: We gather in safe and compassionate community, seeking our spiritual truths. We affirm our interdependence, celebrate our differences, and create a thoughtful and harmonious voice for liberal religion. Through the practice of the principles of our faith, we promote social, economic and environmental justice and continue our legacy of respect and acceptance. We covenant together in a spirit of love and freedom.

First UU Nashville



Children's Religious Education

Happy Samhain members and friends! Did you know that this is the time of year when many folks who celebrate earth based religions recognize a new year? This is the time of death for many green things in our part of the world and so it is as well, a time of birth as the circle of life goes round. Neat eh? The practice of trick-or-treating and carving pumpkins also comes from the pagan folks who used to (and still do in many circles) light candles in harvested vegetables to signal to their ancestors that they are here and leave out food as ancestral offerings. This past month in our kids "Worship", the TUFF children have been examining our 7 principles and what they mean to them as kids. This next month, we will be looking at the season and celebrating the wheel of life as it turns with craft, song, dance and poetry. Please feel free to join us at any time. Your participation in our program is always welcome! We have a new childcare provider, Anne Pendelton. She is an enthusiastic lady who has cared for children for years in her home on Deer Island and now in Fredericton where she has been living for a half year now. If anyone is looking for childcare during the week or for church gatherings, please feel free to give her a call or email. She can be reached at 474-1358 or annependelton@hotmail.com. We do not as yet have a replacement for Anne if she becomes ill or goes on a trip. So...please, if you know of anyone who might be interested to fill in on the odd occasion, give me an email and I will contact them. Finally, here is one of the readings that we shared this month in our children's "Worship"...

I Am Not... I Am

by *Lunar Pixie*

*I am not the singer**

I am not the song

I am the Inspiration that makes your heart sing.

I am not the dancer

I am not the dance

I am the electricity that moves you- body and soul.

I am not the one you hear
I am not the one you see
I am the one you must feel...

I am Spirit
Feel me in your heart and soul
Let me move you...

I AM the Singer, I AM the Song
and I am the Inspiration that your Heart sings out.

I AM the Dancer, I AM the Dance
and I am the Electric Movement.

I am not JUST the one you hear,
I am not JUST the one you see
I am the one you must also FEEL.

I AM SPIRIT!

Let me touch you, Heart and Soul...

Feel me in your Heart and Soul...

I can move you, Heart and Soul.

Together we Sing

Together we Dance

Together, we ARE.*

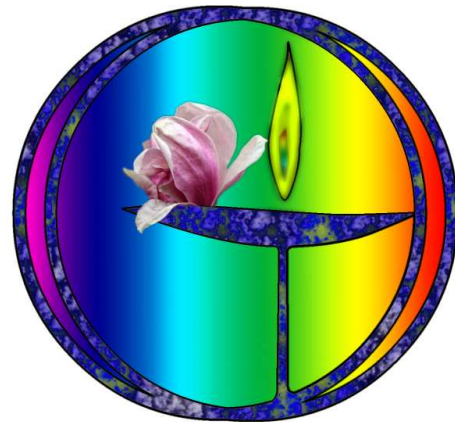
In faith

Sharon Flatt



Magnolia Chalice

*The Unitarian Fellowship
of Fredericton*



A Welcoming Congregation

Your Communications and Outreach Committee has 'put together' an unofficial logo for TUFF.

The CUC chalice is used along with an actual photograph of a magnolia blossom. The photo was crafted by our own and very talented Janet Crawford and taken when our own magnolia is in bloom each spring. The rainbow behind

the chalice celebrates the 'Welcoming Congregation'. The wider blue line also represents the Saint John river. This new logo is personalized especially for TUFF.

Comments on this design by Don Flatt are invited.

In fellowship
Patricia des Champs



Correspondence from Linda

CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL - CONSEIL UNITARIEN DU CANADA

Growing Vital Religious Communities in Canada

www.cuc.ca

WHOLE CHURCH- WHAT IS IT AND WHY DO I CARE?

If you read newsletters from many of our congregations you know what I am talking about. The columns have names like, 'View from Above' or 'News from Downstairs'. In them, the staff or volunteers who do wonderful work and provide excellent programs for the children of the congregation report on the current month's programs for youth and children. Often they include a call for volunteers; 'more teachers are needed', they say. These columns describe good work by good people on behalf of our children. Our congregations need quality programs for children if we are to attract and keep families, but we at the CUC are beginning to ask questions about the model we are familiar with. Is there a different way to approach all-ages programming? How can we engage children, as members of the congregational community, rather than teach them to be 'church consumers' who expect other members to provide program for them? We at the CUC and many of our congregations are wondering about new approaches to programming for children and youth.

What would happen if we decided that there was no upstairs or downstairs congregation? What if there was only one congregation whose members were sometimes upstairs and sometimes downstairs? There are models to help us consider this kind of congregation and there are resources available (more on page 2), but before any congregation seriously begins to explore the possibilities for a Whole Church approach there are some things the members need to think about.

"People worship in a variety of ways. The church of today and tomorrow can no longer put "new wine in old wineskins." Old patterns are no longer relevant. Fewer persons seek the sanctuary or the stimulation of church attendance on Sunday mornings. Children are bored, and understandably so, by the traditional Sunday School structure. Church membership is dropping, and church attendance is far below that of only a few years ago. At the same

time, we have a higher population than at any time in our history. Is the church obsolete? Does it no longer have a place in our secular, technologically oriented society? Congregations considering a move towards Whole Church programming do so, not just because it promises to more effectively engage children and youth, but because it also has the potential to help us bring to life the communities we dream of.

What a powerful message we can send about the principle, "acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations", if instead of age segregated congregations we program to support learning and teaching between the generations. Instead of thinking that the role of adults in children's programming is only to care for and teach children, what would it look like if we thought instead, "Together, children and adults can ponder, pray, learn and participate in religious community?" The school model we use in congregations would, at the least, be modified.

In many congregations there is an expectation that the people with children will, to a large degree, be those who volunteer and participate in leading children's programming. Effectively, this means the parents are unable to participate in activities without their children, and their children miss out on the opportunity to meet new adults, some with and some without children. What does this say about our congregational commitment to these families and their children? What message would we send if we said to new families, 'We're so glad you are here. We have opportunities for you to participate in a variety of activities and worship opportunities here. During some of them you may participate together, during others you may choose to participate as individuals. In all cases, you'll find 'screened', supervised and supported facilitators. We'd love to have you involved and will, before too long, want to talk to you about where you can provide support for this vital congregational community."

Building Intentional Multigenerational community

In theory at least, many people in our congregations understand the value of whole church programming. Yet, as is usually the case, good intentions are not acted on, primarily it seems because people don't know how to start. Many like the concept but don't have any sense of 'what it would look like'. And as is often the case in our congregations, there is no 'one way' to build a whole church culture.

Here are just a few ideas:

Multi-generational Small Group Ministry

The basic Small Group ministry format, can with minimal modification suit a wide variety of ages. You might consider intentionally putting a 'All ages' group into the same time slot as an "Adult only" group and as a child friendly activity. That way a family could participate in activities without necessarily having to be in the same group.

The facilitator needs to use language that all participants can understand. Encourage participants to share as “equals” and be alert to adults who give the impression that they have “the answers” and adults who tend to dominate dialogue time.

Small Group Ministry that includes different generations, especially children, needs to consider additional or concurrent activities for younger participants. For example, during the dialogue time on the Session’s topic, have some paper and crayons or markers, clay or active games available for children.

<http://www.uua.org/families/resources/2003smallgroupministry2.html>

Multi-generational Sunday morning programming

Instead of Sunday School and worship (two solitudes of congregational life) imagine a Sunday morning where the activities included: formal worship, meditation, a workshop on recycling as a spiritual practice, a chanting program and a craft a home chalice activity. Now imagine that members of all ages participate in these activities.

It is possible, and more of our congregations are setting aside some time every year where they deliberately program in this way. One of the benefits is that new mixes of people are created. Those who are unlikely to teach Sunday School often realize they have other skills and interests they can share with children.

In Bethesda Maryland they asked themselves; Could we eliminate the usual religious education “classes” and have a variety of groups, each with a different focus, open to all ages? Could we become a community within which we worshipped talked, sang, created played, and worked together?’ We thought we could!

The more we talked and shared ideas for possible implementation the more excitement we engendered.

http://www.uua.org/families/intergenerational/spring_b.html

Multi-generational Social Justice Programming

If your congregation has a commitment to a certain issue or program you’ll find this is a way to engage many of your members. Painting signs for the Pride Parade, picking up litter and putting together care packages for the local women’s shelter are activities that all ages can participate in together. If work time is framed with opening words, meditation, a conversation about faith and action and closing words, it provides a powerful opportunity to connect faith and action.

Sylvia Bass West, the CUC’s Director of Lifespan Learning said, “Our shared commitment and ministry invites more whole congregation engagement rather than perpetuating a limiting “traditional” concept of our children’s parents being the only folks recruited to be ‘RE teachers’. Within a lifespan learning community, we are all teachers and learners and our programs offer so much more than just a classroom model of ‘learning’.”

http://www.cuc.ca/canue/CANUE_Summer_2005.pdf

These are just some ways in which we can move beyond the segregated congregational life towards a model that engages youth, children and adults as partners in ministry- both within the congregation and with the larger community.

Conversational Prompts and Questions- Building Intentional Multigenerational community

What can your congregation do to develop programs that the needs of a variety of ages.

Asking yourselves some of the following questions may help you determine the next steps you might take in developing a Whole Church approach.

Do we send the message that children are to be seen and not heard? Or do we welcome their presence in our congregation ?

Some people are challenged by the presence of children. It may be important for you to ensure there are opportunities for age specific programs.

Do we have difficulty finding people to teach Sunday School?

There are people who enjoy being with children who do not feel comfortable in the teacher role. These people can often participate in other ways. Sometimes facilitating or sharing an activity or skill. Someone who isn’t a teacher but is a craftsman may enjoy sharing their craft and reflecting with others on how it relates to their spiritual and religious life.

Does the idea of ‘real church’ and the ‘other stuff’ dominate the thinking of many of your members?

It is important when developing a Whole Church approach to engage many members in the goal. It may be useful for you to have those who have experienced the benefits of the approach to do presentations to your Board and to your membership. Making Whole Church and explicit goal is a useful way to help ensure people understand what you are doing.

A Personal Reflection

I love participating in Children’s Chapel. The experience of helping to lead worship, with a child as my worship partner has taught me a great deal about flexibility and courage. Before I participated I was interested in the ‘idea’ of story telling, but now I’ve had the experience of crafting a story, exploring its meaning in my life and considering what parts of the story are personal and which are universal. It has been an enriching experience that has taught me a great deal about myself and that has challenged my spiritual understanding of myself. On other Sunday’s I’ve enjoyed the experience of group drumming-for me a meditative and mindful experience. I never dreamed I’d learn so much by participating in something besides the ‘real

worship'. Now I know that real worship comes in different forms.

AROUND THE REGION

Fredericton members are sharing wool and knitting needles and are knitting scarves for the international students at the two Universities in the city.

Kingston The Unitarian Universalist Club at Queen's ran a successful sidewalk sale where they identified 20 prospective members. About half of the students who signed up were from a UU background, and the other half were unfamiliar with UUism, but were attracted to our liberal religious principles.

Lakeshore UU Congregation in Beaconsfield will ordain Heather Fraser Fawcett on Saturday Oct. 29. Congratulations Heather!

Saint John has begun the Welcoming Congregation program and has involvement, though the Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice with Safe Spaces: Fundy Region, a program that has as its goal, ensuring GLBT youth are connected, empowered and safe in the Saint John area.

Ottawa Fellowship

The children in the congregation pass a sharing stone when they meet together and share what is important to them. This drawing of the stone by member Ingrid Weinhold also serves as the visual symbol of the congregation's annual pledge campaign.

DATES OF NOTE- MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Eastern Regional Fall Gathering

Montreal, Nov. 4-6

Join with other U*Us from the Eastern Region. The program will include:

- Children's & Youth
- Appreciative Inquiry
- En-Francais
- Worship
- Social Responsibility
- Soulful In-Gathering Worship

Visit http://www.cuc.ca/CUC_calendar.html for more information and registration

Lay-Chaplaincy Training

Designing and Leading Rites of Passage ("the basics")

First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, April 28-30, 2006

See: http://www.cuc.ca/lay_chaplaincy/index.htm for more information about the Lay-Chaplaincy program and other training events.

CU*UL School

The 2006 CU*UL School program will be held in the Ottawa area from July 13-16. Plan now to support leaders from your congregation

Annual Conference & Meeting

Saint John, New Brunswick, May 19-22, 2006

Warm regards,

Linda Thomson
Director of Regional Services - East
linda@cuc.ca
905-332-3851
905-332-1736 (fax)



Vision: By the year 2010, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg will be a positive, visible presence, active in our community. Members will be bonded to the church through experiences of spiritual development, social action, and caring community. We will offer diverse programming which ministers to all ages. We will be staffed for growth, and the staff will be competitively compensated, including appropriate space, resources, and support. We will have broad-based leadership, resulting from integrating members talents in the mission of the church. We will have a strong sense of ourselves as Unitarian Universalists.

Mission: The Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg is a liberal religious congregation. Celebrating our diversity, we covenant with one another to search, to serve, to grow, and to love. By living these ideals, we are changed, empower our children, and transform the world. We invite all seekers to explore our compassionate and vital faith.



Subscription Renewal Form

In an attempt to contain costs and simplify the task of getting out the newsletter, the September board meeting suggested that we should consider some changes in the logistics of distributing the newsletter, especially considering that the newsletter is available from the web-site. The editor pointed out to the board that he had received a couple of requests from people who found the electronic copy from the web more flexible in that they could adjust the size of fonts to their preference or that they preferred not having the Fellowship incur the cost of printing and mailing.

We will continue to produce printed copies for people who do not have access to the web, however, the printed copies will be in black and white. The copy put up on the web will be in full colour. The issues of Touchstone through December will be mailed to everyone who has been getting a copy to date and each issue will have this form. If you want to continue being mailed a copy of the newsletter after the December 2005 issue, please fill in the form and return it to me.

Beginning with the January 2006 issue we will be making printed copies available at the Fellowship for pick up and will attempt to hand deliver the newsletter to people who wish mailed copies. Copies that we can not hand deliver will be mailed. I may move to a smaller font on the mailed edition to keep the letter to under 30 gms if necessary.

Name _____

I wish to continue receiving _____ YES _____ NO
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Fall Operational Campaign

Our major fund raising campaign is the fall canvass for operational funds. Everyone should have received a campaign letter and response form. Some spouses do respond separately, so if you need an additional response form, please see me. The operational campaign pays for the basic expenses of running the Fellowship: electric power, water, snow clearing, lawn care and much more. Most of these costs rise yearly. Please be generous.

In fellowship
Tony Fitzgerald



Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

September 21, 2005

Present: Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes, Allison Calvern, George DeMille, Patricia desChamps, Tony Fitzgerald, Don Flatt, Ed Leslie and Betty Ponder.

1. Opening: President Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes lit the chalice, read an opening selection and then . . .
2. Call to order: . . . called the meeting to order at 7:25 pm.
3. Check-in: Those present were invited to check in.
4. Approval of agenda:

MOVED (George & Allison) that the agenda, as circulated, be adopted. CARRIED

5. Minutes of meeting of August 10:

MOVED (George & Ed) that the minutes of the previous meeting be adopted. CARRIED

It was noted that we were not involved with the universities' student night.

6. Section and Financial reports:

(i) Financial report: Prior to the meeting George had distributed a report (attached to minutes) showing a to-date operating surplus of \$800. This figure includes full cost of exterior painting (although the final cheque to the painter has not yet been written). The balances in our Building Fund and Theatre accounts have been transferred to our Mortgage Line of Credit.

MOVED (George & Ed) that the report be accepted. CARRIED

(ii) Programs & Ministry: Allison will be holding a meeting of section chairs shortly. There is still no hospitality chair. Janet Crawford has agreed to look after hospitality until the end of October.

MOVED (Don & Tony) that the report be accepted. CARRIED

(iii) Communications & Outreach: Don reported that the section chairs have met. An appeal for committee members will be made. There was some discussion about complaints handling procedures. Don will act as a communications person but will not be involved with any matters involving interpersonal relations. He is also reorganizing voice and e-mail for the fellowship.

Patricia said that the TUFF scarves project is underway. Weekly ads are going in the Gleaner as well as special ads for children's RE. An article and ad have appeared in the Brunswickan and ads are going to the weekly Here publication. A magnolia logo is being designed and a special magnolia service is planned for May.

Tony is making the Touchstone available on-line (in .pdf form) so that printing and mailing costs may be reduced. Those who so wish will still receive a printed (and mailed if necessary) copy.

MOVED (Allison & Don) that the report be accepted. CARRIED

(iv) Finance & Facilities: Ed has received a request for the loan of 40 chairs for an off-site wedding at which Anne Leslie will be officiating. It was agreed that we offer the use of the folding chairs stored in the basement.

MOVED (Patricia & Allison) that the report be accepted. CARRIED

7. Ad hoc committees:

(i) Covenant, Mission & Vision: Allison will be calling a meeting in the near future. Jo-Anne, Patricia, Ed all asked to be on the committee. Allison will circulate an e-mail

seeking others interested in being on the committee.

(ii) By-Laws, Ministry, Facilities planning: There has been no further progress on these committees.

8. Congregational Planning:

(i) Congregational Conversations: There will not be a con-con at the end of September as Jo-Anne will be out of town.

(ii) CUC activities and resources: As a follow-up to the CUC workshops last spring we might plan a retreat for November, with a possible young adult emphasis. Glory Resler is no longer a CUC consultant. Possible alternatives are Sherrill Gilbert or Elizabeth Bailey.

(iii) Information sharing: The Eastern Region CUC gathering is being held in Montreal over the November 4 - 6 weekend.

9. Other business: Rather than having the Social Responsibility committee leading the Welcoming Congregation process, Najat Abdou-McFarland, wants a separate Welcoming Congregation committee. Possibly Dave Warman would be interested in chairing it.

10. Closing words and adjournment: Following a brief reading by the president the meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

George DeMille
Secretary Treasurer



Vision: Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Church is a diverse consensus-based spiritual community in northwest Austin. Together, we create a non-judgmental, nurturing environment where people of all ages can develop spiritually and personally as we demonstrate our shared values, perspectives and concerns with the larger community.

Mission: We offer a place where worship and religious education converge: We provide a variety of worship experiences that meet the diverse needs of our church community. We offer enriching lifespan religious education. We express our Unitarian Universalist values through action in the larger community and work cooperatively with other faith communities to address social issues. We govern ourselves by consensus, thereby involving the entire church community in our decision-making.

Covenant: We covenant together in friendship to listen to, support and encourage each other in personal growth; to respect our differences; to create and sustain bonds of love, compassion and belonging; to share our lives' joys and sorrows; and to have fun together.

Live Oak, Austin, Texas

