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Sunday Service 11 a.m.

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Upcoming Services

Hello everybody, allison here, chair of the adult program committee.

OK, there are no two ways about it. TUFF rocks. This past year we have had some wonderful Sunday services—informative, inspirational, unforgettable—thanks to TUFF members and their connections. And there are more in store. From our midst comes wisdom, talent, and great beauty—and the smarts to recognize these qualities in the larger community surrounding us. Join us at Sunday service in this new year as we continue to listen to ourselves and our connections. Following are brief descriptions of some of our upcoming services:

January 8 The Shapes of Families Today —While traditional familial configuration abounds—mother, father, child/children in single family dwellings—current expectations and responsibilities allow also for other useful family groupings. Through the wisdom, pragmatism, and generosity of our presenters, this service will explore the range and beauty of family configurations. Presenters: Sheila Moore, Ed Leslie, Bruce Allen Lynch

January 15 A Dream Come True: Journey to the Top of Mount Kilimanjaro. —Ernest Hemingway wrote: “and there, ahead, all he could see, as wide as all

the world, great, high, and unbelievably white in the sun, was the square top of Kilimanjaro.” Mount Kilimanjaro is a giant stratovolcano reaching an elevation of 19,335 ft. Called Kilima Dscharo, and Kilima Njaro—meaning shining mountain in Swahili—it has three cones. The highest and youngest is named Kibo, from which sulphur and steam are still emitted. Shira is the western cone, and Mawenzi is the eastern one. Shira is called by the Masai, Ngaje Ngai, the House of God. Join us for this over-the top Sunday service, led by Linda Sprague, and enthusiastically presented by Adam Harris. (p.s. Tanzanians use three types of bananas: one for cooking, one as a fruit, and one for making pombe. Perhaps Adam Harris can tell us all what pombe is.)

January 22 Eldon Hay, retired United Church minister, has written a sermon in which he has tried to make religious sense of his ministry with the GLBTQI community. This sermon, while basically Christian, is unwelcome in Christian churches because of its unorthodoxy. Gladly we U*Us welcome him and his commentary to our Sunday service. Join us for a smoothly delivered unorthodoxy, presented by a pro whose commitment to justice and integrity has profoundly affected life for all New Brunswickers.

January 29 Memoirs of a Sensei: My Time in Japan — This service, presented and led by Molly Demma, will reveal the insight and wisdom gained from spending three years teaching English to the Japanese. Inspired by the recent presentations of Mary Scott and Al Sharp on China, Molly would like to share her experience in a far eastern culture. Lucky us.

February 5 Imbolc is a fire festival halfway between the winter solstice and the vernal equinox, a ritual that rekindles the spiritual fires within for the year ahead. This holiday is also known as Solmonath and Candlemass, and to the ancient Druids, it was Oimeag (pronounced /im-mo(l)g/). Debi Skidmore, Angela Day and Bridget Phillips will present on the magnitude of paganism, giving us a brief overview, and revealing different paths.

The rest of the year, while patiently waiting to be filled in completely, already has some really good services planned. Linda Sprague and Tony Fitzgerald will be leading us in a service of poetry and music on April 16. Anne Treadwell, U*U minister, arrives from Nova Scotia on April 23. Stephen Atkinson, beloved member of TUFF and now interning as U*U minister in Houston, Texas, will be in the pulpit on Mother's Day, May 14, the weekend before the ACM in Saint John. A very special Sunday in July involves Freeman Patterson, the brilliant scholar and photographer. The TUFF congregation is invited to his garden at Champers Bluff on the Kingston Peninsula, on July 16 (rain date July 15), to spend the afternoon with Freeman Patterson, enjoying the beauty of the bluff, and sharing a pot luck picnic lunch. This outing is limited to thirty people. Please let me (allison calvern) know if you are interested ! A sign-up sheet will be posted at some point, but you may want to reserve your spot before it appears.

Thanks to all who participate, either by contributing to the service or by simply attending it. We are a community defined and held together by that knot of a Sunday service. Come sing with us, reflect with us, and work through your faith with us. We all need one another, and we need the service to be there, even when we are not.

The adult program committee is growing in number and in expertise; here is a bit of housekeeping in this regard. If you have talked to me with a suggestion for a service, or with an offer to present, and i have not gotten back to you in a timely fashion, please remind me. I might have misplaced the notation, or (blessed be) simply forgotten your suggestion. Also, if you would like to join the committee—please do ! I can be reached by phone or eMail: 459-1436 / acalvern@nbnet.nb.ca. Now is a really good time to begin working on things; you will be ready and raring to go come September! (; It really is a remarkable committee to be a part of—as rewarding as it is challenging ! Remember, U*Us are rarely dull, and this committee provides a great place from which to gain a better understanding of U*Uism.

In faith
allison calvern



Children's Religious Education


Happy New Year to all of our TUFF families and friends! This year, we will continue to celebrate our liberal faith tradition through children's music and worship services. We have had a lot of fun upstairs this fall and have no doubt that this winter will be no different. We are still hoping that more of our members and friends will join us upstairs as Don and I will not always be available and others will need to facilitate the children's program. It is a fun

and easy program that I have found fulfills my "grown-up" needs to get some "church". Please don't hesitate to speak with me about auditing our Children's service-no strings attached! You might like it! We are also still searching for another childcare worker. Anne is available most of the time but sometimes she isn't and it would be great to have some other numbers to call. Finally, I'd like to share a poem that was written by a child-not unlike our own-with wishes not unlike our own. I know this because every week we do "prayers". In our prayers we say our thanks and wishes, and say what we want to improve and what we feel sorry about. I have heard a lot of wishes much like this child's'..

The New Beginning *by Zainab Zaheen*

Is this how the New Year is going to be?
Now we live in a world where we don't know
when will disaster strikes us.
With new technology more disastrous weapons
of mass destruction are made.
With advancing armies preparing for war.
I wish the world leaders would make Peace
with each other.
And hope they use that money to feed the
poor
and the places where there is famine.
I wish that all the troubles and pains of the
people would go away.
The people who are homeless would have de-
cent homes to live in.
I hope all the people would have their rights
and dignity back.

In faith
Sharon



Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

The CUSJ has been very busy this past year locally and nationally. We have recently formed a New Brunswick chapter which has members in the Fredericton and Saint John congregation. You will no doubt notice our presence at the May ACM in Saint John. There, the CUSJ will be holding a concurrent AGM on the Friday with an excellent speaker and workshop. They will also co-sponsor a workshop during the CUC ACM as well as help organise some of the youth programming. Sharon Flatt is proud to be chairing the new CUSJ-NB chapter. She is currently acting as President for the Fundy Safe Spaces Group as a CUSJ-NB rep. This group provides a fun, friendly and welcoming environment for youth of all gender identities and sexual orientations. Safe Spaces Fundy Region is committed to

ending discrimination around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. We connect and work with youth to reduce isolation, promote acceptance, and provide information, resources, and support. As well, Sharon represented the CUSJ-NB at the federal Smart Regulations consultations in Moncton. You can find more about the not-so-Smart regulations by checking out the next CUSJ publication or by going to the Canadian Environmental law association's website which is cela.ca. Finally, you are invited to check out the CUSJ.org website to find out more about the CUSJ. If you are moved by the good work of the CUSJ, please join us! Just print out the form from the CUSJ.org website and give it to Sharon Flatt or mail it to the address on the site.

In faith
Sharon



Birth Announcement

Daniel and Patricia Kucerovsky are pleased to announce the birth of their twins, Johan Daniel and Jamieson Tomas on Dec 12 at DECH



Long-lost prodigal seminarian

Hello, one and all at TUFF! Here is a copy of my annual letter to try to bring you more up-to-date with what I've been doing this year. Whether it seems that way or not, you all are frequently on my mind; you were a great introduction to me of Unitarianism, and I began learning so much there.

I look forward to coming home in May, in particular to preaching there on Mother's Day and to joining most of you at the CUC meeting in Saint John - my first ever CUC!

I hope as many of you as possible are well and thriving in community.

In faith, Stephen Atkinson PS. Congratulations to Tony and Margaret!

CHRISTMAS, 2005

Hello! I'm starting this just before American Thanksgiving, during a ministers' study conference in Pere Marquette Park in western Illinois on the Mississippi north of St. Louis. They call it "peer" Marquette; I'm surprised they don't say "mark-wet"! It's beautiful, a bit like the Saint John River valley at home. This group has about 40 members who come together to discuss academic papers on one topic they choose yearly. I get to come because my supervisor this year has been a member for 24 years!

I'm near the mid-point of my ministerial internship, serving at First Unitarian Church of Dallas, a large, vital congregation I've fallen in love with. I began in July and finish at the end of May; then I'll return to Chicago for my last year of M. Div. studies. It's exciting to be testing out what I've been learning and using previous skills and just being my best-possible-that-day self in this new role; I really need the break from academics! There's much I enjoy about it: leading worship and doing some 'perform-ing'; working with truly interesting and engaged people; counseling from a pastoral angle; officiating at weddings - 3 so far! The hardest part is the multi-tasking, planning different events at one time - say, a ! wedding, a meeting, an organizational event for young adults, a "Hanging of the Greens" program and several worship services! That is really not my preferred style (remember: one patient-one file-one hour!), but it goes with the work. At some point, I have to set aside serious time to prepare for my Ministerial Fellowship Committee interview in late March; they give me the go-ahead to start looking for a church to serve once I'm nearing the end of my degree - or not. A number of my classmates decided to see them and get it over with. Right now I think that was an insane idea, but in my past I've done a lot more insane things than this!

I drove here last June from Chicago, seeing a big swath of the Midwest on my way. I miss Chicago. I developed more relatedness to the city there, which has more sense of place. My 'Dallas' is mainly my congregation and the corridor that takes me between home, church, and the shopping areas/cinemas that I most go to. I've been as far north as Oklahoma for last a UU Summer Institute, as west as Fort Worth for the annual General Assembly of the UUA, as south as Austin and as east as Lufkin, TX (near Louisiana); I guest-preached in both places. I do the Christmas Day service here, and then go to Corpus Christi for a week off, and guest-preaching there on New Year's Day! Believe me, my head is spinning, but it almost all is fun.

I've not been getting out much; I've one friend outside the church and a number of acquaintances. Enough that when I went to the Turtle Creek Chorale concert last night (the gay chorus here, which is -wonderfully- good), I actually ran into 2 people I knew besides several from the church! It was good to get out and be among a lot of gay men for a change! It's lonely, but busy; I have to wait till I'm more settled before I try to find a relationship. By then, I'll need someone to push a wheelchair!

Again, I send out a general apology for being so poorly in touch. You're often in my thoughts, even if I'm not in much contact. I so appreciate your tolerance during this long shifting period in my life. I hope you have a terrific Season of Many Holidays and a satisfying and rich life in 2006.

The ministry is where you've got to talk about

God,
and you get to talk about God;
where you've got to love and serve people,
and you get to love and serve people.
- Martin Marty

Warmest greetings
Stephen Atkinson



Budget General Meeting

Thursday, the 26th of January, 2006, has been set by the board as the date of the budget general meeting. This is an important meeting which allows you to see and question the details of planned spending for the coming year. It is critical that a quorum be reached so that the budget be passed. Please make every effort to attend.

Because of the success of the potluck supper that preceded the fall canvass wrap up gala dinner, we thought that we would plan for a similar event to encourage more people to come out. It was felt that in a spirit of sharing the work, we would try to form an ad-hoc committee to prepare for this event that consists mostly of men rather than women. We'll give it a try and see what happens.

In fellowship
Tony Fitzgerald



UU Ewes and the Fellowsheep



Patricia and I were talking ... somehow my 10 months of living as a shepherd some years ago came up. Lots of stories, I bet, said Patricia. Oh yes, and I told her a few. Like the one of the ewe clearly in labour for hours and no baby yet. So I went and read up on all the lamb mid-wifery I could find; then scrubbed my arms up to the armpits all the while praying that when I got back to the ewe her lamb would be there. And so he was. I called him Goliath, he was huge.

We chatted a little more and then, next thing I knew, I'm

up for talking on 18 Dec, about sheep, and my friend Lorna and others will be singing 4 sheep to the wind. So here I am, it's a bit scary; it's been work preparing this, thinking about what happened and how best to express it. My time with the sheep was very special. Lorna asked, "how did the experience change you? Did it?" My first reaction was a clear NO - but since then I've thought about this. And perhaps it did. Perhaps I wouldn't be standing here now, trying to tell you about it.

I'm not a farmer, nor had much experience with animals other than dogs, cats, rabbits and hamsters. But I love gardening and most critters. I have always liked sheep, and barns, and chickens, and often thought I'd like to take one of those farm vacations. And I have friends who had a little farm, with some 28 ewes and a ram. I often spent time there, helping with some of the chores. So when my friends were planning an extended absence, and looking for someone to live there and tend sheep, and barn and house, I volunteered. My marriage had ended round about then, that was a radical - though not sudden - change, and a year in the country, with totally different responsibilities, seemed a great idea.

All was agreed; I had some training in setting up birthing pens by tying gates together, I learned how to catch a sheep to give it an injection (they can run fast and are hard to hold), how to inject a lamb, how to put the nasty little elastic on its tail which made the tail fall off in a few days (this is for hygienic purposes), stuff like that. My friends themselves had started with very little farming knowledge - but, of course, they started with 3 ewes and here I would be with 28. Most of them would be pregnant and then there'd be many many births, often twins!

Some of my friends told me I was crazy, others thought I was very brave. I felt neither crazy nor brave (I feel more brave standing here now). I was scared, of course, - it was a big responsibility, but I also knew I was extremely lucky to have this opportunity.

And it was wonderful. I moved out in September. One of the first things I did was to build a little chicken coop in a corner of the barn, with three laying boxes and a little ramp. I love chickens and eggs. Then I got three young hens from a friend, and three not so young ones a little later from a farmer. The first little pullet egg was miraculous! And delicious! I loved, I still love, finding a fresh egg - if it's still warm, what a treat - and holding its wonderfully reassuring delicate oval roundness.

My dog loved the chickens too, and one of them would play with her. The vet, at one visit, said I should video-tape this because he had never seen a chicken & a dog playing. Katie, my yellow lab, was a special kind of beast! And wonderful company that year and for the fourteen in total that we lived together.

However, it's sheep I'm supposed to talk about. 28 eyes, 27 Lancashires not much good for meat, but excellent for

wool, a lot of them black - well, grey, brown and beige. Black sheep go grey at a very early age - and one Suffolk and her child a Suffolk/Lancashire cross. Only the Suffolks would chase my dog, they are more forward, all the other ewes kept a careful distance. Except when the lambs came - then Katie was an excellent midwife's assistant. She would lick them clean, especially when it was a twin birth and the mama was busily either nursing or licking the other lamb. And by lambing time (Feb/Mar) the dog had been around so much that the sheep were used to her smell and accepted her.

There was lots of work. The sheep were still outside during the day in fall. That meant water had to be carried out to them. In the evening they'd drink from the bathtub in the barn. Hay had to be chucked down from the loft and distributed in the feeding troughs. They were also fed grain, and I had to close the barn doors while putting it into the grain troughs, otherwise I'd be trampled! One ewe got what's called bloating, the vet came - I do not remember what he did - she then had to be kept separate from the others and fed some special stuff - molasses was part of the mix - and when she died I was heartbroken. All that special attention had bonded me to her. She'd gotten more beautiful, her eyes - sheep have the most amazing rectangular pupils - so expressive and sad! I did the best I could, perhaps a more experienced hand could have saved her! But I had been told not to worry. That some loss was expected. My friends said that they had lost many more lambs in their early farming days, and I should expect to lose some also. And I did. Sometimes perhaps I got there a little late - when lambing began in earnest I would go to the barn every four hours at night to check on things - and I did get better and better at spotting a ewe in labour. Then this mama would have to be brought into one of the lambing pens, and then she could be watched more carefully. The first lamb was a single birth, a girl, and I named her Hope.

There was quite a number of twin births. I only had to help once with the delivery. The first lamb had arrived, but the ewe was clearly still in labour, yet nothing was happening. I don't remember how long I waited, but finally put my fingers in - hooked the little feet and brought them forward and out - the whole baby following. I sat there and bawled, looking at 'my' two beautiful black lambs, Romus and Remulus. I named them all - criminal in a way - since they, especially the boys, would become meat before they grew up completely.

The barn was such a warm and cozy space, especially at night with fairly dim light, those comforting chewing sounds, the rustle of hay, and I'll never forget the little clicking sounds each ewe would make for her baby/babies, and those babies would bah in return. Invariably each mama would know her babies, and all of the lambs would recognize the clicks of their mothers. The ewes only make this sound while they have lambs. Lambs, of course, are

the very cutest things on earth, black or white - and another lovely thing about them is the wild tail wagging that starts as soon as they've latched on to mama and start drinking.

The ram was left out of this activity, of course, and kept in a separate pen. I have two special memories of him. One was when he was starting to seduce a ewe. It was a very gentle approach, he scratched the ground lightly with one hoof - no bull-like stamping the ground - and made some low sounds, sniffed her rear end, and also scratched her back with a hoof. I was impressed with this tender beginning.

The other time was when I came out into the pasture one rainy morning with an open umbrella. All the sheep were upset, they began wheeling in a circle, the lambs in the middle, and the ram approached me in a very serious manner, head down, ready to charge and defend his women. I quickly folded up my umbrella and everyone relaxed again. I assume it was my completely altered shape that upset them. I must have become a giant-headed monster.

Christmas on the farm was wonderful. I remember the starry winter sky, so much brighter in the country, and the beautifully bright moon. Coming home, the long driveway would sparkle with newly fallen snow. It was good, going to the barn last thing before bed, crunching snow underfoot, bright stars above or snow falling. Doing the shepherd thing, especially that year, brought solace and hope.

I know many friends came to visit during that time, my children were there for the holidays, I worked in town several days a week, I went swimming, walking, it's a beautiful part of the world - but the sheep are the strongest memory; I can still evoke the feeling I had when entering the barn, smelling their warmth, the manure, the hay, checking my ladies - I got kind of possessive about them all - recognizing quite a few of them. I felt responsible in a serious way, I also felt competent and fulfilled, there was a connectedness to the land and the animals, and I looked at personal worries from a different perspective. Then I was all set to buy a house in the country, get myself a couple of chickens and ewes - I never wanted to live in town again. However, I left the farm and went back to town and my life became more what it had been. Still, there are times now when I go to the barn - in my head - and find a kind of comfort that I can find nowhere else.

With fellowsheep
Sabine Campbell



Web Site

As the editor of both the newsletter and the web site, I want to make both informative and useful. The preceding

article was the text of Sabine Campbell's talk about her time house sitting a sheep farm. I had a request to include the text, Sabine was agreeable and the talk was not too long for the newsletter.

I have also put the text up on the web site. If you go to our web presence, the "Upcoming Services" tab presents a "Selected Talks" sub-tab. Sabine's talk has also been placed here and, I would suggest, this is a better place to put talks that the presenter is agreeable to make available.

From time to time, I do suggest that presenters make their texts available for a wider audience, however, so far I seem to be the only person who regularly takes me up on the offer.

If you think this is a good idea, please add your voices to mine in suggesting that presenters send an electronic copy of their talk to me and I will try to get it up on the website for people to peruse at their leisure.

In fellowship
Tony Fitzgerald



Communications and Outreach

Sheila and I are working on new visitor cards that may (or may not) end up in pockets at the back of each hymnal. We hope to sort that out in the coming months. Patricia has ordered some fabulous "business cards" to help promote our Fellowship and the work we do. Look for those...they should be arriving soon! Patricia also looks forward to presenting our Tuff Scarves to international students at the university in the coming weeks. With any luck (and Patricia's excellent press release writing skills) this will generate some positive publicity around the Fellowship. Speaking of publicity, three members of our sister congregation in Saint John made it into the CBC's "Finding Faith" series. Beryl Smith was on the radio participating in a parents panel about how to choose a religion for your child. The other two (Carol Lee Elliot and Neil MacLean) submitted essays to the CBC.CA website. You can find the essays here:

<http://www.cbc.ca/nb/features/finding-faith/essays.html>

Congrats to all of you for doing a bang up job of representing our faith to the wider community!

In other news, are you missing summer and the inevitable sunburn? Just think of all the fun you'll have stripping off wallpaper...it's just like peeling off dead skin after a sunburn!! The room at the top of the stairs (across the hall from the Children's R.E. Room) needs some kind person to volunteer to strip off all the old wallpaper and paint the walls. There's a bucket in the room, some strippers (little metal and plastic wedges...not the other kind), and some new paint. I can bring in a plastic sheet from home when we make it to the painting stage. I've made some efforts to get this project started but the room's in a bit of a state

right now. !! Janet Crawford and Mary Scott have already offered to help as much as they can....any other offers are gratefully accepted!

Finally, in the wishlist department....Do you have an old broken videocamera sitting around in your basement? As long as there's a picture coming out of it (the taping mechanism does not have to work) then we can use it to replace the current videocamera in the Children's R.E. Room that sadly produced its last clear image months ago. Why is there a camera in the Children's R.E. Room anyway, you ask? In our preliminary attempts to comply with new Safe and Sound policies (a project that is still in progress), a camera in the room gives the R.E. teacher the confidence to know that, even if their assistant has to leave for a moment, they are never truly alone with the children. As well, new parents or parents with little ones can monitor their kids from the hall without disrupting the class. So if you have an old videocamera (even a black and white one would be good) then please let me know!

And finally, if you wish to book the Fellowship for any event, or have booked it with someone other than me, please contact me to confirm your booking. To check if the building is available and/or to confirm your booking ONLINE, go to our ONLINE FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE. There's a link to it on the main Fellowship webpage. Point your browser to www.uff.ca and look to the bottom left. Click on the link entitled "FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE".

As always you can reach me by email at donflatt@nb.sympatico.ca or on my cell phone, 470-3321.

All the best for the New Year!

In fellowship
Don Flatt



Message from Mary Bennett

'Tis the Season to Celebrate the Interconnected Web of all U*U's

As the days darken and December hits (I write this on December Eve, November 30), most of us move into the "holiday season". This year, as well as my valued connections with friends and family, my global citizenship is particularly on my mind, having recently met Unitarians and UU's from around the world. Along with Brian Kiely, President of the CUC, I was one of CUC's two delegates to the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists meeting in Spain this month. There were 85 people present, about half of whom were delegates of their member organization. I am still digesting this wonderful experience, but here are a few points that are part of my recollections: CUC through John Slattery, previously CUC president, and my predecessor, Ellen Campbell, has been involved from the beginning of ICUU. And we

are well appreciated and respected because of this. The curriculum The Garden of Unitarian-Universalism is on www.icuu.net, and while there are more chapters coming, there are educational and small group worship guidelines that are ready to go. Rev. Meg Roberts of UCCalgary has been involved in this project and was present to lead a workshop on it. Fulgence Ndagijimana, a representative from Burundi (a country where more speak French than English) made a special effort to contact both Brian and me. We were pleased to give him a copy of Side by Side, our bilingual worship resource book. I recalled then that our South Peel congregation is sponsoring a refugee family from Burundi. The EEU (European Unitarian Universalists) is a group of mainly "ex-pats" who organize two retreats a year with about 100 -120 participants of all ages. Canadians would be more than welcome-I'll send out dates as soon as I get them to anyone who's interested. Lillian Burlando lives in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, where the Centre for Harmony and Peace is attached to her house. She proudly shows the flaming chalice on publications, but in South America, as in some other countries, "Unitarian" is the name of a political group, so she uses it verbally but not in print. Lillian is planning on coming to our ACM in Saint John, as her travels take her to Eastern US in May in any event. Cliff Reed has written a book published by the ICUU about Michael Servetus. Joy Silver and I participated on a panel on lay chaplaincy, along with Alan Ruston, a lay minister from Britain. Derrick Parriat from the Khasi Hills in Northeast India is interested in talking with us further about our program. The Unitarians in Christchurch, New Zealand, do an annual "All Heretics Day" on the Sunday closest to April Fool's Day. Many groups celebrate the "Wheel of the Year", but in the summer hemisphere they tire of having "rebirth and renewal" materials around March 21 when they're about to enter winter. The British General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches has about 6000 members-a few more than our 5400; and 137 ministers-about 3 times as many as us. So for now, my week at the conference is still a mosaic of meetings, ideas, information, and mainly people. Want to learn more about our global connections? Just drop me a line with questions or comments.

Take care of yourselves and each other,

Mary

Mary Bennett,

Executive Director

2006 CANADIAN UNITARIAN COUNCIL-ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND MEETING

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK - May 19-22, 2006

We will have about 40 to 50 total events ranging from 45 minutes to full-day pre-conference sessions. Send an email to cuc-conference-update-subscribe@yahoo.com if you want regular updates.

A preliminary listing of events will be sent by mid-December.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS: NEW ICUU FULL MEMBER SOCIEDAD UNITARIA UNIVERSALISTA DE ESPAÑA

It was a timely vote and celebration that at the meeting of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, meeting in Spain, the delegates voted for the Spanish group as a full member. On Sunday, we visited Michael Servetus' birth place Villanueva de Sigena. Organized by Jaime de Marcos, a member of the Barcelona congregation, we were treated to a full day of food for the mind, body and spirit! During our time at Servetus' birth house, the society unveiled a plaque to commemorate our visit, on the 10th Anniversary of the ICUU. For more about the birth house, see

<http://www.miguelservet.org/servetus/birthhouse.htm>

Here is some information about the SUUE from the www.icuu.net website: Sociedad Unitaria Universalista de España Unitarian Universalist Society of Spain Members: About 55 living in Spain, and several members and supporters living abroad Two congregations, in Madrid and in Barcelona; and a "National Congregation" that gathers individuals from the rest of country. Prospective new groups in Canarias and Seville. Notes: Miguel Servet (Michael Servetus), a Spaniard, was the first Anti-Trinitarian in modern times. His books De Trinitatis Erroribus (On the Errors About the Trinity) and Christianismi Restitutio (Restoration of Christianity) cost him religious persecution from Catholics and Protestants alike, and he was finally burned in John Calvin's Geneva in 1553. After general Franco's death in 1975, there was a flourishing of new groups and trends in the now-regained freedom. The Spanish UU Society was founded in 2000 and it was accepted as a Provisional Member of ICUU in May 2001.

Contact: Jaime de Marcos

Email: info@suue.org

Website: <http://www.suue.org>

UU Congregation of Cuba

Did you know that there are Unitarian Universalists in Cuba? And that a number of Canadians have visited and/or offered support? And that you can get involved by joining the email list canada-cuba-uu@yahoo.com (Just send blank email to canada-cuba-uu-subscribe@yahoo.com) Here is the email group's description: Our objective is to find ways for Canadian individuals and congregations to provide physical and moral support to the new UU groups that are developing in Cuba. UUs who visit Cuba or who speak Spanish are especially invited to participate. However all U*Us who are interested in seeing our religion flourish in Cuba are welcome to join. There is a lot of interest in supporting two of their members in coming to our CUC Annual Conference and Meeting in May. If you would like to know more, you can contact John Hopewell at hopewell@telus.net.

GLOBAL CHALICE LIGHTING FOR DECEMBER

We light this flame that represents the light of Truth, the warmth of Love, and the energy of Action. Encendemos esta llama que representa la Luz de la Verdad, el Calor del Amor, y la Energia de la Acción. -Lillian Burlando, Peace and Harmony Center, Argentina

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENTS

The following letters were sent in the past month

THE RIGHT OF INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE CHOICES FOR THEMSELVES AND OF THE LARGER COMMUNITY TO RESPECT THOSE CHOICES

November 29, 2005

The Rt. Hon. Paul Martin
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister,

“Therefore be it resolved that the Canadian Unitarian Council adopt a policy that advocates the legalization of the rights of mentally competent, terminally or irreversibly ill persons to determine the manner of their dying...” – Quote from a Social Responsibility Resolution of the 1993 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Unitarian Council, Ottawa. The Canadian Unitarian Council is a religious organization of congregations across Canada. On both a local and national level our Churches and Council are organized democratically. We have a strong history of involvement in social justice issues on which a clear majority or consensus position has been achieved. The principles of the Unitarian religion strongly support the right of individuals to make choices for themselves and of the need for the larger community to respect those choices. Our principles also lift up the inherent worth and dignity of human beings, which we consistently interpret as a call to improve and preserve the quality of life, which includes palliative care and pain management at the end of life. A large majority of Unitarians hold that these principles also guide us to a position of supporting the legalization in Canada, with appropriate safeguards, of compassionate assistance in dying. The Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) urges you to support the intent of Bill C-407 to legalize such assistance. As President of the CUC, I would be pleased to testify concerning end of life issues, and the safeguards needed for the implementation of such an Act.

Rev. Brian Kiely
President, Canadian Unitarian Council

This is an edited abstract from “Brief to the Special Senate Committee on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide from the Canadian Unitarian Council” 1994. based on a Social Responsibility Resolution passed in 1993.

ASYLUM FOR U.S. WAR OBJECTORS IN CANADA
CUC-WITH SUPPORT FROM OUR PEACE MONITORING GROUP-SPEAKS OUT

December 1, 2005

November 25, 2005

The Rt. Hon. Paul Martin
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister,

In the excitement and turmoil of an upcoming election, the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) wishes to call to your attention, as leaders of our national parties, a matter which might be overlooked. Unitarians have historically supported the right of conscientious objection in general, and selective objection to wars judged to be unjust in particular. The current war in Iraq failed to receive the support of the Security Council of the United Nations, and has been stated by many (including the Secretary-General of the United Nations) to be illegal. Absent without leave of the US military in Canada, who are refusing to participate in that war, take the position that their contracts to serve in the US military have been broken by the US government, in terms of promised benefits, length of service, nature of duties, and in some cases, place of service. Aware of Nuremberg, they do not consider a contract valid which requires them to perform actions they see as unethical and unjust. In the event that they are returned to the United States, those in the military who refuse to be complicit in what is happening in Iraq and elsewhere at the behest of the current U.S. administration, face incarceration at least. Canada should not facilitate the persecution of American war objectors by returning them to the United States. In keeping with Unitarian statements and resolutions concerning peace, and a Canadian policy of acceptance as implemented under Trudeau during the Vietnam conflict, the CUC urges that asylum be granted US war objectors. It deplores the decision of refugee judges (now being challenged in Federal court) that the illegality of the war in Iraq is irrelevant. The CUC is aware (through membership in its congregations of Vietnam era war objectors) of the great value Canada has received from the welcoming of war objectors to our population. The current war objectors often have trade skills badly needed in Canada, as well as the ability to make ethical judgments which would be of benefit to any society. We hope that granting church sanctuary to war objectors will not become a necessary action on the part of peace denominations.

Sincerely,
Rev. Brian Kiely, President, Canadian Unitarian Council

PLEASE PASS IT ALONG! You are encouraged either as an individual Unitarian or Unitarian Universalist or, if your congregation has a position on these issues, to quote from and/or forward to your local media or government officials. While we appreciate knowing, you do not need any specific permission. We

are pleased if you want to let others know our position. For tips on how to write a news release, see:

<http://www.cuc.ca/programs/communications.htm>
There you will also find other helpful information for your congregation's communications including: Some suggestions for how we can help promote your congregational events CUC logos including our Welcoming Congregation logo-for your use And how to find contact information for Members of Parliament

HAVE YOU (AND YOUR CONGREGATION) SIGNED THE EARTH CHARTER?

Our CUC Environment Monitoring Group urges you to sign the Earth Charter. See: www.earthcharter.org and consider planning now for an Earth Day worship service in April focused on this important document. CUC signed on in October, 2003... see: http://www.cuc.ca/social_responsibility/environment/earth_charter.htm



wUUrld's 2006 WhaleCoast Alaska



Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite other UUs to our eco-cultural programs in June, July and August 2006. See the REAL Alaska! Alaskan UU's provide B&B accommodations in their homes in Anchorage, Seward, Fairbanks, Juneau and Sitka, lead tours and hikes and host parties. Visit with Tlingit, Inupiat and other Native Alaskans. See whales, sea otters, sea lions, seals, bears, moose, caribou, wolves, puffins, eagles and other birds in the wild from the Arctic Ocean to the Inside Passage in the south, and visit Denali and other national parks. Rev. Dick&Mary Weston-Jones, leaders. Visit website www.wuurld.org, e-mail dick@wuurld.org, or phone toll-free 1-888-998-8753 for a brochure. Taking reservations now.



Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting

November 16, 2005

Present: allison calvern, George DeMille, Patricia desChamps, Tony Fitzgerald, Don Flatt, Ed Leslie.

1. Opening: While the chalice was lit George read an

opening selection and then . . .

2. Call to order: . . . called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm.

3. Check-in: Those present were invited to check in.

4. Selection of chairperson: Ed was persuaded to chair the meeting.

5. Approval of agenda: It was agreed that the agenda, as circulated, be adopted.

6. Minutes of meeting of October 26:

MOVED (Tony & Patricia) that the minutes of the previous meeting be adopted. CARRIED

7. 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 \$3100. He is projecting that we will finish the year with a possible small surplus.

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

MOVED (George & Don) that the signing officers for the fellowship be any two of George DeMille (Secretary-treasurer), Tony Fitzgerald (Past president and Finance Committee chair) and Ed Leslie (Vice-president - Finance & Facilities). CARRIED

Tony reported on the results to date of the current financial campaign. Pledges have been received from 15 persons totaling \$16,650 (report attached to minutes). The campaign will end with a gala spaghetti dinner on November 30. Allison will call Janet Crawford to see if the pot-luck committee is still active and prepared to organize the dinner. As in recent years, Heather Lunergan is offering a pair of tickets to a Playhouse event as a door prize at the dinner.

(ii) Programs & Ministry: Allison reported that the committee chairs in her section have not met since the last board meeting. The Adult Program Committee now consists of allison, Patricia desChamps, Don and Sharon Flatt. Presenters being lined up for after Christmas include (retired United Church minister) Eldon Hay for January 22, (Unitarian ministers) Stephen Atkinson and Anne Treadwell for separate Sundays in May, and noted photographer Freeman Patterson for July 16, at his Shampers Bluff, NB, residence.

There are those who feel the need for the fellowship to have access to the services of a minister to provide pastoral care, etc. One possibility for this might be to seek the services of Ray Drennan on, say, a one-quarter time basis for an October through May period. As chair of the ad hoc Ministry committee Anne Leslie would be an appropriate person sound out Ray Drennan.

Some of our members experience difficulty hearing the

speaker at services. There is a need to get the sound system working again. Don is working on this.

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

(iii) Communications & Outreach: Don reported on the success of the Guatemalan dinner held at the fellowship November 12. More than half of those attending were from outside our membership. A cheque for \$800 has been written for the Rabinal School scholarship fund. (The initial objective had been \$250.)

We had been contacted by the CBC about participating in program series on personal faith experiences but, as other denominations appear to have moved more quickly than us our involvement is no longer needed.

Patricia is ordering a supply of wallet-sized business cards to be used for publicity purposes. She also arranges for publicity in the Gleaner through either paid ads or brief summaries of our service topics in the religion column, or both.

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

(iv) Finance & Facilities: Ed has still not received a report from Danny Mathias on the results of the building inspection. Some of the upstairs windows need to be made more draft tight. There is a need to install a ramp at the outside door near the kitchen to provide wheel chair access. The new budget should include funds for this.

MOVED (George & Patricia) that the report be accepted.

CARRIED

8. Ad hoc committees:

(i) Covenant, Mission & Vision: The CUC is arranging for a consultant to facilitate a workshop to develop covenant, mission and vision statements. Sherrill Gilbert has apparently been approached to do this.

(ii) By-Laws, Ministry, Facilities planning: Anne Leslie has agreed to chair the ad hoc committee on Ministry.

9. Board vacancy: After some discussion of filling the vacant presidency it was,

MOVED (Tony & Don) that Ed Leslie be appointed to be fellowship President until June 30, 2006. CARRIED

It was agreed that Tracy be asked to assume the role of Vice-president (Finance & Facilities) and that Rita van Groenewoud be asked to be AVP (Finance & Facilities)

10. Other business - Safe Steps policy: There is a need to get a Safe Steps committee in place in order to move forward in our Safe and Sound policy. Allison will send out an e-mail appeal for committee members.

11. Closing words and adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

George DeMille

Secretary-Treasurer

George DeMille
Secretary Treasurer

This space wants your material!