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Deadline for next Spire
submissions:
April 15, 2016



In Memoriam

Linda E. Rheume – Died January 30

Prue Craib, spouse of Pat Hill – Died February 13

Jean Bassett, wife of the late Douglas Alexander Bassett (1985) –
Died February 13

Caring Contacts

March

Margot Clarke
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Sherri Watson
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President's Corner

~Maury Prevost

Some personal reflections

During this first weekend of February, I'm having some difficulty believing that this is my last column, because my current two-year term as President of the Congregation ends in late April. With two and a half months still to go, I'll save my final reflections on the "business" side of my role for the Annual General Meeting on April 24, and use this column for some personal reflections.

My reflections focus on some of the many people who have helped and encouraged me during my two years as President, which have been stressful at times. One person on my mind as I write this column is Linda Rheame, because I attended her memorial service today (February 7). Many of you may not have known Linda and I don't claim to have known her well, but one interest we had in common and discussed several times during the last two years was good volunteer management practices.

In particular Linda felt we, as a congregation, should do more to recognize and thank our volunteers. She especially liked a promotion that Volunteer Canada did for National Volunteer Week, I think it was in April 2014, called "Volunteers Rock", which included giving little rocks to volunteers that reflect each one's uniqueness and beauty.

Linda intended to give me a proposal for what we could do in our congregation. When I last saw her at a service, I think it was around October, she mentioned that she hadn't forgotten about the proposal. Unfortunately health issues intervened and prevented her from completing it. Linda, I won't forget you, our good conversations and your good intentions.

Our congregation is blessed with many able and willing volunteers. We each have our own "heroes" among this group. Two of mine are Margot Clarke and Brian Cowan, both of whom have been around longer than I and continue to work ably, dependably, and largely behind the scenes for the greater good of the congregation. Thank you Margot, Brian, and all the rest of you! I could name more, but any list would be incomplete.

As President, and as Vice-President, I have been privileged to work with a fine group of fellow Directors and Officers. I have also been well supported by our Minister, the Rev. John Marsh, and both our program and administrative staff. And I have greatly appreciated the encouraging words that many of you have shared with me.

In closing, I offer special thanks to my wife Marilyn. Without her love and support, both moral and practical, I could not have served as President. I didn't think I took this support for granted, but her injury and hospitalization late last year made it a lot clearer how much her support has enabled my work for the congregation.

~Maury Prevost



March Worship Services – Theme: Community



March 6 *The Three Jewels of Unitarian Universalism*

Guest speaker: The Rev. Carol Strecker
 The ideals at the heart of Buddhism are known as "The Three Jewels": The Buddha, the one who shows us the way in this life (including our own Buddha nature); the Dharma, the teachings or the path to understanding; and the Sangha, the community that supports our practice. This morning we'll take a look at the "jewels" at the heart of Unitarian Universalism, especially the role of community in supporting our practice.

THREE JEWELS OVERLAP
 BUDDHA - DHARMA - SANGHA



March 13 *Turning the Beat Around and other Drumming Experiences*

Speakers: A.J. Galazen and Deirdre Kellerman
 Some approach the spiritual life as an exercise in silence. Others are there to make noise.



March 20 *Palm Sunday: Wants and Needs*

Speaker: John Marsh
 Leonard Cohen sings: "You are locked into your suffering and your pleasures are the seal." I, for one, sometimes feel that my little pleasures help me make it through the day. But what if they are what prevents me from gaining the richer community I desire?

Friday, March 25, 7 p.m. *Good Friday Tenebrae Service*

Speakers: John Marsh and others
 Join us for a stark, solemn, and sombre group of reflections as we consider how needless suffering permeates our communities.

Sunday, March 27 *Easter: Joy Shall Come in the Morning*

Speakers: John Marsh and others
 With poetry and song, we shall declare that simply being alive in community is miracle enough for all eternity.



Three Rivers Choir at Unitarian GoGo's event



Denominational Affairs

Denominational Affairs Town Hall
Sunday, March 6, 12:15 to 2:00 p.m.



Northern Lights

Are you a Northern Lights Chalice Lighter, or would you like to support innovative growth projects for Unitarianism in Canada? The Northern Lights process has been modified. Instead of sending everyone a letter, they are inviting you to visit a crowdfunding site www.northernlightsuu.ca/, where there are five growth projects to choose from. The latest call has been awarded to the First Nations Curriculum project so that we can pay people to prepare a true lifespan curriculum with guides appropriate to each age range. If you go to the site, you can contribute to this project, and there are other worthwhile projects you can still support until the middle of March.

And mark your calendar for these important events coming up in 2016 in the wider denomination:



UU-United Nations Office (UNO)

Spring Seminar: *The Colours of Inequality: Costs and Consequences*

April 7-9, New York City

Visit New York and attend panel discussions in the United Nations Building. Meet Unitarians from across North America who are involved in peace work and in promoting the United Nations as a vehicle for peace. Listen to a wide range of

experts from many voices and perspectives and share with our youth this dynamic educational experience. Talk with Tudy McLaine to find out more about the UU-UNO.



Canadian Unitarian Council Annual Conference & Meeting-- *Bolder Ways of Being*

May 20-22, Vancouver

Come to Vancouver to participate in setting the future directions for our Unitarian movement in Canada. Meet dynamic leaders from congregations across the country. Celebrate worship. Engage in great learning experiences. Come away appreciating the rich potential of our Unitarian and Universalist faith to feed people spiritually and work toward more love and justice in the world. Please speak to Frances Deverell if you would like more information **or if you would like to represent our congregation as a delegate.**

International Council of Unitarians and Universalists: *Bi-Annual Conference*

July 17-21, Elspeet, Holland

Meet people from many countries, cultures and languages, all of whom have fought to build a Unitarian presence, often in contexts with a lack of religious freedom and situations of great poverty. What we share is an open approach to liberal interpretations of holy texts and a commitment to religious freedom and social justice. Have a dynamic cross-cultural experience and meet courageous and dedicated people. Hear their stories of courage and struggle. Explore how Unitarianism contributes to the wider world. For information speak to Frances Deverell, Elizabeth Bowen, or Margaret Linton.

Everyone is Welcome to join a Discovery Circle!

Want to get to know more people at church? In Discovery Circles, participants get to know each other and connect with others in the community you might not cross paths with otherwise. The circles foster a secure, supportive environment to help draw people out and encourage them to say what they really think and feel.



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

They help us learn to:

- Show respect for others
- Speak for yourself but also share speaking time with others
- Listen carefully
- Suspend judgment
- Communicate your needs

Discovery Circle discussions are aligned to our themed-based ministry topics. In this way, the topics can become general topics of discussion throughout our community. There is no homework for participants; there is no need to prepare in advance to

attend a circle. We are not debating the subject, we are sharing our thoughts and feelings about a subject within a circle of trusting community members. You arrive and a topic is put on the table for discussion and sharing. The spontaneity is a way of avoiding an overly intellectual approach to the topic because the purpose of Discovery Circles is to draw each other out, and discover more about ourselves and the others in our circle,

We do three six-week sessions a year. You are asked to commit to one entire session but you may not be able to attend all three sessions in a year. We have three sessions intentionally so we can be welcoming throughout the year by making it possible to enter a group at one of the three entry points. We do fall, winter and spring sessions.

Our **winter session started February 15** and attendance is once a week for 6 weeks, until the end of March.

Monday: 7-9 p.m.

Tuesday: 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday: 9-11 a.m.

If you have any questions please email Jill at

jill.whitford123@gmail.com.

Tulipathon 2016

The Multifaith Housing Initiative's (MHI) annual "Tulipathon" is on Sunday, May 1. This has become a well-known charity walk-a-thon through the Dow's Lake area, just when the tulips bloom. MHI's strength lies in the support of faith groups across Ottawa for this fundraiser to raise awareness for affordable housing.

<http://www.multifaithhousing.ca/>

Registration is at 2.30 p.m., and the walk begins at 3 p.m.

Everybody is welcome. Young and old can enjoy the walk, which is about 3 kilometres; it is family-friendly with activities and refreshments. Meet and share with people from various faith communities. You will find registration papers and details at the Social Responsibility table in Fellowship Hall, the last 3 Sundays in April. Not walking? Come see us anyway and make a pledge. Members of our congregation have always been very generous donors toward this cause. Let's keep it up!

The Social Responsibility Council (SRC) supports MHI in a special way: for every dollar in pledges the SRC donates a further 10 cents. In addition, SRC contributes \$25 for every member who walks in the Tulipathon.

We usually have some great guests joining us, like Mayor Jim Watson, city councillors and faith leaders from all over Ottawa. Please come out and join in this festive fundraiser.

~Ria Heynen, Poverty Awareness Working Group



2016 Time and Talent Auction

The annual T&T Silent Auction is coming up in April. One of our congregation's major fundraisers, it is also a great and fun opportunity for members to interact with one another on a more personal level and at the same time contribute to our community. This is a silent auction of goods and services donated and bid on by YOU, members and friends of the congregation.

During March, we look forward to receiving donations from members and friends of the congregation—anything from food and non-food items to hosted activities, and a multitude of services. We welcome your suggestions and thinking “outside the box” for services and items that are new. Guess what! You most likely have a service or talent you have not considered, but that would be valued by someone else. Think about it. We have added a list of ideas which is by no means all-inclusive.

Bidding sheets will be prepared and laid out at church on **Sundays, April 3, 10 and 17**, outlining details on each item offered.

Written bids are accepted, and after bidding closes on the 17th, the highest bidders will be notified and money collected over the next few weeks for services and items won.

All ideas are welcome – if you're not sure, contact Pat MacDonald, plmacott@sympatico.ca, 613-725-9474

~Pat MacDonald



Some donation ideas...

Home-made food items

- Preserves, baked items, candy
- Lunches or dinners to go



Hosted activities

- Bike tours
- Dinners in your home or you host at a restaurant (dinners are VERY popular with bidders)
- Movie/games nights
- Skating or skiing parties
- Coffee or tea parties
- Day of sailing
- Cottage lunches or get-away weekends
- Story-telling parties
- Brunches & lunches
- Tours of your workplace, Rounds of golf
- Bridge parties
- Summer BBQ
- Birding walks
- Other tours



Services

- Bike tune-ups
- Computer or letter-writing help
- Lessons (voice, Pilates, dance, etc.)
- Garden advice
- Family tree research
- Dog sitting
- Handyman services, Spring-cleaning
- Coaching, fitness, massage
- Reiki or tarot card reading sessions



Other past donations

- Use of a Smart car for a day
- A week's accommodation in Barbados
- Summer camp session
- Reserved parking space for a year



The House Next Door: Updates and Happenings



Unitarian House of Ottawa

We call it home

Maison unitarienne d'Ottawa

C'est notre chez-nous

“Retirement Floor” Waiting List is open:

When you drive down Richmond Road, you will find Unitarian House tucked away in a unique location. We have the best of both worlds, beautiful scenery in a quiet country setting and proximity to all the amenities.

Building on our solid reputation as a retirement home that cares, we pride ourselves on being able to offer our community a continuum of care, up to twenty-four hour registered nursing care, on the Retirement Living floor. We also provide nutritious meals, an in-house physiotherapy program and a variety of activities in an affordable, home-like setting.

The Retirement Floor waiting list is open, so if you are no longer interested in cooking, cleaning or doing laundry and you would like to be a part of this community, give Jessica a call at 613-722-6690 or email us at retire@unitarianhouse.ca



The Board of Governors of Unitarian House cordially invite you to our Annual Fund Raising Dinner:

Date: Tuesday, May 3

Place: Unitarian House, 20 Cleary Avenue

Time: 6:00 p.m. Reception, 7:00 p.m. Dinner

Speaker: Mary Cook. Born and raised in the Ottawa Valley, a broadcast journalist with CBC for 48 years. Mary continues to write many newspaper articles and has many stories to share with us.

Ticket price: \$130.00 (Donation receipt for \$100)

Business Attire.

Order tickets: 613-722-6690 or retire@unitarianhouse.ca by April 20.



Harvest Moon Family Variety Show Benefit for Unitarian House

Date: October 16

Place: First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

Time: 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Entertainment: Tony Turner in concert
There will be tea, coffee, fruit drinks and a variety of squares and cookies

Cost of Ticket: adults: \$20.00, children: \$10.00

Order tickets: at 613-722-6690 or retire@unitarianhouse.ca

~RPCC Board Member

Thank you Merci Meegwitch

~ compiled by Alastair Henderson

Here are some people and activities to appreciate, recognize, and celebrate

- ♥ Thank you to **Jen Brennan** for making the beautiful cover and helping us set up the contents for the Lifespan Learning Guide, Winter/Spring edition.
- ♥ Let's thank **Jane Lindsay** and **Trish Paul-Carson** and all of the volunteers and organizers who are pulling together our refugee effort. They have made an amazing effort and, as a result, are helping our community get to know us.
- ♥ To **Katrin Nagelschmidt** for her excellent service to the congregation in her role as chair of the UU UNO working group for the last 5 years. We appreciated her passion for the job and her good leadership.
- ♥ Thanks so much to **Marlene Koehler** for coordinating our submission to the federal government asking for a National Housing Policy and ongoing funding for housing supports for low income people. Great job Marlene!
- ♥ Thanks to **all who pledged to the 2016 Operating fund** of the congregation.
- ♥ And **kudos to the Pledge Campaign team**: the core team of Rev. John Marsh, Terry Kimmel, Larry Jones, Maury Prevost, Elizabeth Bowen, Maggie Sharp, Brent Nicolle, Eva Berringer, Chris Hughes, and Chuck Triemstra; the office staff for administrative support; Deirdre Kellerman and Liz Roper for their roles in the November 21 celebration potluck; and other helpers, including Jan Glyde, Sarah Dewar, Guy Belleperche, Cynthia Rowland, Doug McDonald, Jill Whitford, Isabel Burrows, and Ron Wilson.

You can submit items by sending an email to Alastair at hendersalas@gmail.com or by calling 613-562-2253 at least 48 hours before the Parkway Spire deadline.

Social Responsibility Council Calendar

Sunday March 6, 12:30 pm - UN Working Group

Tuesday March 15, 9 am - Poverty Awareness Working Group (off-site; please enquire)

Thursday March 17, 1:30 - 3:30 pm - Unitarian GoGos
- 3:30 - 5:00 pm - GoGo Grannies

Friday March 18, 9:30 am - Social Responsibility Steering Committee

Sunday, March 20, 10:00 am, 11:45 am - Fair Trade Sales

Sunday April 3, 12:30 pm - UN Working Group

Tuesday April 5, 7:00 pm - "Staking the Claim: Dreams, Democracy, and Canadian Inuit"

Wednesday, April 13 -SRC Spire Deadline

Friday April 15, 9:30 am - Social Responsibility Steering Committee

Sunday, April 17, 10:00 am, 11:45 am.. - Fair Trade Sales

Thursday April 21, 3:30 pm - GoGo Grannies

Saturday April 23, 10:00 am - UU Spring Sale by Poverty Awareness Working Group

Saturday April 30 - Nepali Gala, 5:00pm-9:00pm



Social Responsibility Council

Documentary film: “Staking the Claim: Dreams, Democracy, and Canadian Inuit”

Murray Angus will present this 90-minute film, which traces the impact of Europeans’ arrival in the North on Inuit society and tells the story of how the people have fought back over the last generation to regain control over their lives and land—as viewed and explored through the eyes of four graduates of a “silattuqsarvik”, a hub for experiential learning and sharing knowledge. The Nunavut Sivuniksavut college program for Inuit youth, affiliated with Algonquin College, was founded in 1985 by Murray Angus.

<http://www.nunavutsivuniksavut.ca/about.php>

When: Tuesday April 5, at 7:30 p.m.

Where: in Fellowship Hall, followed by a Q & A and small-group discussion. The event is open to the public.

Info:

adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca



Aboriginal Issues Focus

Recent Developments

On January 14, 2016, the UN Council Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination called on the Holy See to engage in meaningful dialogue with designated representatives of Indigenous peoples in order to address their concerns regarding the Inter Caetara of 1493 and its related papal bulls, known collectively as the Doctrine of Discovery.

The active efforts of the Apache-Ndee-Nnee Working Group, which submitted a comprehensive report detailing the ongoing effects of the Doctrine, were instrumental in bringing about UN recognition.



See:

<https://vimeo.com/71915411> for an explanation of the Doctrine of Discovery and why it should be repudiated, produced by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Suggested reading

On the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: <https://ricochet.media/en/842/reconciliation-means-ending-denial>. “It is a gaping wound that has been allowed to fester and now has been opened.”



On the Doctrine of Discovery:

<https://romeroinstitute.wordpress.com/2016/01/21/un-condemns-doctrine-of-discovery/>. The Doctrine of Discovery and its severe, lasting consequences for Indigenous Peoples across the world continues to spark debate at the highest levels of international diplomacy.



For paper copies, contact Katherine Gunn, KLgunn@ncf.ca, 613-729-0504.

~Katherine Gunn

SRC: Our first Syrian family has arrived!

On Thursday, February 18th, at 11:00 am about 30 volunteers and FUCO congregants greeted Zuhir, Sabah and their five children at the Ottawa airport. It was a joyous occasion with much excitement and applause... someone remarked that the anticipation was so great that it was like being in a waiting room while your partner gives birth. We finally gave birth! For more information about our work, please contact: syrianrefugees@firstunitarianottawa.ca

“I would like to express on behalf of the family how appreciative they are of you all... They are grateful to be here and to have had all of you who took the time to come greet them at the airport...they feel very lucky to have been chosen by you and are very excited to meet you... The kids are overjoyed and in heaven, they have not seen a toy in five years. You can only imagine what it was like for them to open presents.... they consider us their new family.”

~Leila, interpreter



“Tonight when I dropped off dinner... they said they were sitting at the table with all their children thanking god for the blessing that your organization has given them...They both had tears in their eyes that this blessing has come to them and that you all are helping build a better and brighter future for their children that back home would never have been possible.”

~Leila, interpreter



I was really moved... to see what a masterful welcome you and your team of volunteers organized for this family... Every detail had been thought of - the loot bags for the kids, the helium balloons, etc...These little details were, I think critical for these tired little kids. The whole family got the reception of a rock star...What a team!!!!

~Guillaume, photographer

Nepali Gala Team Plans Milestone Event

Preparations for the 10th Annual Nepali Gala are underway and we are organizing another delightful evening; one which will mark a decade of successful fundraising. The Gala is scheduled for **Saturday, April 30 from 5:00 to 9:00** at Cleary Avenue. We are mindful that it was close to this date last year (April 27, 2015) that Nepal suffered the first of two devastating earthquakes.

Proceeds from the Gala, sponsored by the Social Responsibility Council at First Unitarian, support the operation of the Women's Foundation of Nepal (WFN). Founded by a group of Nepali women in 1988, WFN's mission was to provide immediate shelter, medical, legal and psychological assistance to women and their children escaping situations of domestic abuse in Nepal. Since that time WFN

programs have grown across Nepal to support the empowerment of women through: lifelong education and skills development; small business development including access to microcredit; leadership and gender equality training; advocacy for women's rights; education and daycare for their children; a weaving program and cooperative; and much more - all in addition to running the shelter home in Kathmandu. And it was at this facility, in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake last April that the WFN staff acted vigorously to meet the needs of the local community.

The dye vats used in WFN scarf production were converted to huge improvised cooking vessels where WFN food supplies sustained the local citizenry until other aid agencies were able to mobilize their operations. This narrative

illustrates the flexibility of an organic, grass-roots organization such as WFN and reassures donors that resources are used to their maximum effectiveness as warranted.

Thank you to everyone who has generously supported previous Galas and we hope that you will join us again at First Unitarian on April 30 to enjoy a delicious dinner of Nepali cuisine and be treated to Nepali traditional folk dancing. There will be sales of WFN hand-woven scarves, jewelry, saris and a silent auction of unique goods and services. Please help us with our event coordination by making an early advance booking to the April 30th Gala. Contact either Susan at 613 820-8270 or ottawanepaligala@gmail.com for your reservation.

~members of Nepali Gala Team



Announcements

Glebe/Centretown/Old Ottawa South Neighbourhood Group



March

Topic: Deidre Kellerman will talk about 'Music at First Unitarian, Present and Future'.

When: Sunday, March 20 at 7:30 pm.

Where: #106 – 7 Kippewa Dr, Ottawa

Contact: Rosemary Bonyun 613-563-0594 or rosemary_bonyun@sympatico.ca

All are welcome. Bring a small dessert (finger food) to share.

April

Topic: Bill Van Iterson will talk about 'Our Congregation's Long Term Capital Plan'.

Date: Sunday, April 24 at 7:30 pm. *Where:* #5 – 405 Laurier Ave E., Ottawa

Contact: Marilyn or Maury at 613-231-7391 or mmprevost@sympatico.ca

All are welcome. Bring a small dessert (finger food) to share.

Whether you live in the neighbourhood or not, contact Ann Denis at adenis@uottawa.ca if you would like to be added to the e-mail list to receive notices of activities. All are welcome. The group usually meets the fourth Sunday of the month (barring holidays on that date).

The Spirituality & Philosophy Discussion Group

is beginning a new book in mid-March: "Spiritual Evolution: How We Are Wired for Faith, Hope, and Love," by George Vaillant.

In recent years, terrorist acts have made passionate faith seem a present danger. Writers like Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens have been happy to throw the baby out with the bathwater and declare that the danger is in religion itself. In *Spiritual Evolution*, however, Vaillant lays out a brilliant defence not of organized religion but of man's inherent spirituality. For him, spirituality resides in our uniquely human brain design and our innate capacity for emotions like love, hope, joy, forgiveness, and compassion, which are selected for by evolution and located in a different part of the brain from dogmatic religious belief.

Dr. Vaillant makes the scientific case for spirituality as a positive force in human evolution. He traces this force in three kinds of "evolution": natural selection of genes; cultural evolution within recorded history of ideas about the value of human life; and the development of spirituality within an individual's lifetime.

Vaillant directed Harvard's famous 35-year study of adult development, which followed hundreds of men over

decades. The study yielded important insights into human spirituality, on which he draws, as well as other psychological research, behavioural studies, and neuroscience. He also includes history, anecdote, and quotation in a book which is both a work of scientific argument and a meditation on what it means to be human.

When: Saturday mornings biweekly: March 19, April 2, 16, 30, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Room 6 unless otherwise stated.

Info: Alastaire, hendersalas@gmail.com, 613-562-2253.

Community Shared Agriculture

Our congregational Community-Shared Agriculture (CSA) is returning this spring. Almonte CSA farmer Gord McGregor will again be delivering baskets of same-day picked organic produce to our campus parking lot for pick-up, and has changed his delivery date and time to Thursdays, 4-6 p.m. If you're interested in a share this year, visit Gord's website for more information:

www.saffirefarms.ca



Announcements cont...

UU Round Table Lunch

Open to all Unitarian Universalists and guests. Lively discussions take place among members of the group, who have diverse interests and experiences. Our meeting location changes every three months. See the Sunday Communique or The Parkway Spire for details
When: Third Friday of the month: March 18 at 1:00 p.m.

Location: Ho Ho 875 Richmond Road

Contact: Tudy McLaine, 613-745-8074 or Marjorie Daechsel, 613-596-1471 by Thursday evening to reserve a place

Please Note: 1:00 p.m. start time has been restored.

The **Friday Reading for Growth group** will meet in the Lounge at 1:30 p.m. on March 25 to discuss “Enlightenment 2.1: Restoring Sanity to our Politics, Our Economy and Our Lives” by Joseph Heath. Newcomers are welcome. For more information contact Margot Clarke at 613-820-6596 or mmclarke80@gmail.com



Communications and Outreach ad Hoc Committee



The Committee is working toward an Action Plan that addresses our congregation’s internal communication and outreach needs.

The Action Plan will:

1. Identify measures to counter declining attendance and revenues by:
 - Strengthening internal communications and retaining existing members
 - Developing external outreach and marketing capacity to attract new members
2. Establish priorities for what we will be doing better or differently in 3-5 years, in

consultation with congregants through focus groups, with target audiences, goals, strategies, leaders, measurables and timeline.

On January 30th, a lively focus group spent a morning answering three questions designed to elicit ideas on how to proceed. The Committee has received the focus group facilitator’s report on the outcomes and is working to draft the Action Plan in time for the next Board meeting in mid-March, for its review. This plan will also be circulated in draft form to key members of the congregation for feedback. If all goes well, the Plan will go to the April 25 AGM for congregational approval. For more information contact:

terry.kimmel@sympatico.ca





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