



The Greening of First Unitarian

Yellow Warbler, Dark Eyed Junco, Evening Grosbeak.... These are three of the over 40 varieties of birds that have been spotted in our congregation's garden. As we are stewards of a piece of land, as well as a community of faith, these birds are among those affected by our planning or lack thereof.

At the dawn of a new year, at a time when the picture of global warming's impact on our species is grim, I invite you to take comfort and hope in a modest success story.

First, some words about the grim picture. In July, 2007 Pope Benedict announced his intention to make the Vatican the world's first carbon neutral state. There was to be a Vatican Climate Forest planted in Hungary sized to offset the carbon emissions needed to keep the Vatican operating. Almost five years later, the Vatican has installed 2,400 solar panels, but no trees have been planted in Hungary, and the company that pledged to help the Vatican in that effort no longer exists.

Then last month our federal government withdrew from the Kyoto protocol that would have required us to lower carbon emissions in Canada. China

and India had sharp words for us (rightfully so in my opinion). The Harper government got some support from the Russians (politics and strange bedfellows!). Lloyd Axworthy weighed in that the withdrawal from Kyoto, while regrettable, should not signal the end to our Canada's work to lower carbon emissions, but the beginning of a new chapter.

Red Breasted Nuthatch, Ruby Throated Hummingbird, Ringed Turtle Dove.... Recent building projects in our area interrupted the flow of water to our garden. Folks in our congregation resolved to build a well—both to diminish costs of getting water from the city and ensure that we would not be a drain on our city's (sometimes scarce) supply of fresh drinking water.

Eastern Screech Owl, Blue

Jay, Cardinal.... As with the plan for lowering carbon emissions of nation states, there were complications in our plans for a well. We needed to dig further down than anticipated—resulting in the need for a larger pump, resulting in the need for more electricity to run the larger pump, resulting in cost overruns for the project.

Song Sparrow, Evening Grosbeak, American Goldfinch.... The last seven generations of Canadian song birds have suffered much more from the increase in the population of our pet cats than from our carbon emissions, and this is likely to be true of their next seven generations as well. However, these seven generations are roughly equivalent to one of ours—and the impact of carbon emissions and global warming on the next seven generations of humans is beyond calculation. Our seventh principle teaches us that what happens to the birds and what happens to our grandchildren is connected.

Sharp-shinned Hawk, Wild Turkey, Common Crow.... The folks here did not give up on the idea of getting our garden water out of

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Caring Committee Contacts for January

Ria Heynen: 613-828-8468

David Hudson: 613-728-2446

**We listen, we phone,
we bake, we drive**



HOSPITALITY HOUR

I want to thank everyone for volunteering with Hospitality Hour this past year. I especially want to single out Wendy Tomlinson, my HH assistant, who cheerfully agrees to help whenever needed. Also, Ria Heynen, Alastaire Henderson and Susan Bower and my 'dishwashing crew': Gary Campbell, Karl Nagelschmitz and Ian Gorman, who answer the call whenever I ask for help. I also want to thank Betty Campbell who takes charge of ordering and packing coffee and tea. A number of groups are regular volunteers: Global Justice, Caring Committee and the Youth Group to mention a few. And Katherine Gunn, my mentor. Everyone adds their special touch to the work involved.

My wish for 2012 is to see even more regular attendees of Hospitality Hour put their names on the sign-up sheets. Ask yourself: "can I spare an hour before or after the service every one every month or two weeks"? You won't miss out on the social aspect of the hour as you will be getting to know other Congregants in a more intimate setting. I look forward to working with new people as well as those who can assist occasionally. Think of one of two people whom you would like to work with in the kitchen and ask them to join you either preparing for hospitality hour, serving or doing the cleaning up.

I look forward to working with all of you in 2012.

Tarrel Armstrong
Co-ordinator - Hospitality Hour

The Parkway Spire

Contributors

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Submissions

The deadline for submissions to the February 2012 issue is Thursday, January 20. We welcome photographs or articles of 300 words or less that cover congregational events and activities. Contact publications@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

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the ground. Individuals were generous with their time, talent and treasure. A calendar was produced as a fundraiser. Individuals donated directly and volunteered their labor for the installation of the pump, pump house and (as a solution to the need for more electricity) solar panels. Shortly before Christmas, the first water started flowing.

Much appreciation goes to (in no particular order): Doris Jelly, Lori Snyder, Alastaire Henderson, Pat Cook, Ellen Kammermeyer, Dan Morrison, Richard (Rick) Day, Renée De Vry, Liz Benjamin, Colleen Glass, and Jan Andrews. In making such a list, inevitably some one or some people get left off. I especially want to thank anyone who thinks they might have been listed but is not—you know who you are.

Robin, Downy Woodpecker, Purple Finch.... I would love to announce that we have plans to make our campus carbon neutral. We don't. It is very likely that we won't have such plans until there are more efficient solar and wind options developed and more support from all levels of government. Yet, we should be joyful and proud of what we have accomplished—even as we work to move ourselves and our governments further along.

Mallard Duck, Great Blue Heron, Black Capped Chickadee....

See you in the garden,

John



Fellowship News

The new year is already shaping up to be an extraordinary year for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa!

We're developing a solid plan for acquiring a home of our own, and we expect to have this plan in motion before the end of the year. We're greatly encouraged and inspired by the members and friends of First Congregation who supported us so generously in our recent "Realizing The Dream" Campaign.

In addition, our Mission Statement is under development and moving forward. At our second congregational retreat on December 3, our very capable and talented workshop leader, Valerie Cousins, guided us along in articulating a meaningful and useful mission statement — no easy task, to be sure. Thanks again to Valerie for her expertise, her encouragement, and her unflinching sense of humour.

Our Sunday services continue to be a source of spiritual and intellectual nourishment for those who attend. As a lay-led fellowship, we draw upon the many resources available in our region, and we frequently welcome guest speakers from many walks of life. On January 15, our guest speaker will be Kevin Smith of the Centre for Inquiry, who represents the atheist point of view in the Citizen's "Ask The Experts" page. He will demonstrate that atheist views of spirituality are more nuanced and open than one would expect. All are invited to attend.

January Services

January 1, 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

"My Banjo is Broken"
- Joe Cleveland

Our guest this morning is a renowned folk musician who is preparing for the Unitarian Universalist ministry. His sermon stems from his discovery that (horrors!) the banjo is really not suitable for all occasions. But then, how is that different from anything or anyone else preparing for a new year.

January 1, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Minister's Levee hosted by John Marsh and Alison Patrick

All ages are invited to the downstairs of the church to enjoy coffee, tea, mulled cider, popcorn and other light refreshments. The labyrinth will be lit by electric candlelight with meditation music playing for those who would like to begin the New Year with a silent inner journey. This will also be a time to renew old acquaintances and make new friendships—and speak of hopes and dreams for the coming year(s).

January 8, 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

Occupy King Lear - John Marsh

One of the themes of Shakespeare's King Lear is the relationship between those who have wealth and those who do not and the obligations that because of these circumstances. Later this spring the National Arts Center will stage a production of Lear set in Canada in the year 1608 starring a cast of aboriginal actors.

January 15, 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

Snow - Jennifer Channin

Do your emotions sometimes mirror the weather outside? Do you feel more at home in certain landscapes? We often think of our "selves" as being contained by our bodies or even by our minds, but it may be useful to think of our selves as extending into our environment, or as an extension of our environment. Join us to explore the role of the environment in our spiritual wholeness.

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

- from November 23, 2011 Board Meeting

The Board approved a request from the Staff and Property Committee to move ahead with discussions with the Funeral Cooperative of Ottawa concerning long-term rentals.

Doherty Investments will be presenting to the Board on January 25, 2012. The Board will invite the Finance Committee and the Investment Review Group to join the Board for the review.

A letter was received by the Board requesting reconsideration of the current benediction. The Board determined that this is a matter for the Minister and requested Rev. John Marsh to follow up with the request.

The Board was approached by the Welcoming Congregation Working Group with a proposal that our Congregation approach the CUC to co-sponsor a LGBTQ refugee couple for entry into Canada. (The CUC is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder for immigration purposes). This would not be a financial obligation, since the other co-sponsor (Capital Rainbow Refuge) has already raised the necessary funds, and will sign a letter of intent that there will be no financial burden on the congregation.

Approved Motion:

To approve in principle that the Welcoming Congregation Working Group move forward with the sponsorship co-application with Rainbow Refuge pending verification of documentation, and necessary CUC approvals.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Communication in a Changing World

While visiting her family in Toronto this past week-end, my granddaughter, Kathryn, shared with me the Facebook pages of all my granddaughters. As we examined the various pages it occurred to me that this is a great illustration of the changing nature of inter personal communications in this age of ultra-fast technology and immediate response.

As I was reviewing the various entries made by my granddaughters and their friends we began to enumerate the many ways of communicating these days. Our list included: talking, video chat, phone, letters, texting, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, CD's, billboards, newsletters, web sites, and Skype.

Which of these do you use when talking to family, friends and even business associates? We can now talk to people around the world on a daily and instantaneous basis; a factor that carries with it the potential of making bonds stronger.

Of course I think we all know that the best way to communicate with people is face to face. It allows us to observe and react to their voice, eyes, face and body movements. We also know that when a person is angry it is best to talk to them directly. I am sure that many of us have we tried sorting out a tricky issue on line or over the phone and wished it could have been face to face.

On numerous occasions over the past few years the Board of our Congregation has discussed the question of how best to communicate with all of you. As you know we use many forms of communication, this column I am writing being one of them. If you, as a member of our Congregation, have a suggestion as to how we can improve on our communication with you please let me know.

On behalf of the Board I would like to wish all of you best wishes for the upcoming year.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy Yach".

Kathy Yach, President

The Nominating Committee Seeks Your Input

We would like your suggestions of candidates for the 2012-13 Board of Directors, to be elected in the spring. In his column in the December, 2010 issue of *The Parkway Spire*, Rev. John Marsh talked about change, demanding tasks, and the importance of volunteers. Do we have an opportunity for you!

The Nominating Committee will be working from early January to late February to find nominees to fill any vacancies on the Board of Directors for 2012-13. We are expecting 3-4 vacancies to fill this year, including one or two executive positions.

We are looking for people whose qualifications include some or all of the following characteristics:

- Board experience elsewhere, especially on a policy-governance Board
- Ability and willingness to move up to an executive position while serving on the Board
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively on a team
- Knowledge of the congregation
- Grounding in the Unitarian Universalist tradition

If you would like to be considered for any of these positions, wish to suggest someone else, or need more information, please send a message to Maury Prevost, Chair of the Nominating Committee, at mmprevost@sympatico.ca or leave a message at the church for Maury to call you. We need to know why you or the person you are suggesting would be an excellent choice.

First Unitarian Lay Chaplaincy Program

Canadian Unitarian Universalist Lay Chaplains help client couples and families in need of meaningful rites of passage ceremonies, at places chosen by them, by recognizing their personal beliefs and wishes, while being sensitive to the needs of others who attend the ceremony, and reflecting Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist values that afford respect and acceptance of those who follow different paths of faith (Lay Chaplaincy Mission statement).

Our congregation has three Lay Chaplains who serve the community at large by providing spiritual weddings, memorial services, and child dedication services. Lay Chaplains serve as an important part of this Congregation's outreach, as they represent our community. As one of our Lay Chaplains will be retiring next year, we are now soliciting applications for anyone who wishes to serve in this capacity. For detailed information on the Lay Chaplaincy program see: <http://cuc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/CongregationalLayChaplaincyManual2010Sep13.pdf>

Those interested in being considered are asked to submit the following material by March 15, 2012

- a curriculum vitae (resume) including your name and full contact information;
- a statement (around two pages in length) regarding your experience within the congregation and within the Unitarian denomination;
- your reasons for wanting to become a lay chaplain, and what you believe you would bring to the role;
- three names and contact information for references, at least two of whom must be members of the congregation.

This material should be addressed to: Rebecca Hogue, Lay Chaplains' Task force, c/o First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, 30 Cleary Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K2A 4A1, or uuoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca. The selection committee will review applications and will hold interviews with candidates in late March 2012.

In reviewing applications, the committee will be using the following criteria, which, other than the first one, are not presented in rank order.

The successful candidate will be someone who:

- is a committed and active member of the congregation
- is a good listener
- has good social skills and self-confidence
- is able to demonstrate sensitivity, but is also capable of being firm
- is flexible (must be comfortable with not being "in control")
- has a broad background of experience
- has a good understanding of Unitarianism
- is comfortable doing same-sex marriages
- is well-organized and punctual
- has experience and skill in public speaking.

For more information about a lay chaplain's role, please see the website above or contact one of the following:

- Rev. John Marsh, 613-725-1066, minister@firstunitarianottawa.ca
- Bob Armstrong, lay chaplain, 613-823-8751, bob@theArmstrongs.ca
- Caroline Elson, lay chaplain, 613-726-7199, caroline.elson@gmail.com
- Jan Glyde, lay chaplain, gjan@rogers.com, 613-680-0495
- Rebecca Hogue, Chaplains' Task Force, 613-454-5296, rhogue@pobox.com
- Donna Bowen-Willer, Chaplains' Task Force, 613-721-1205, bowen.willer@sympatico.ca

J a n u a r y S e r v i c e s

January 22, 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

**"I Once was Blind, but Now I See"
- John Marsh**

Further Reflections on King Lear and shared perceptions of a moral order in our universe.

January 29, 10:30 a.m.

Sharing our Stories: A Service for All Ages

"We have stories to tell, stories that provide wisdom about the journey of life. What more have we to give one another than our 'truth' about our human adventure as honestly and as openly as we know how?" - Rabbi Saul Rubin

We welcome all ages to join us for this multigenerational service in celebration of our sacred journey of learning as we share stories of religious exploration across the lifespan. Today the Children's Choirs take the stage!

January 29, 5:00 p.m.

Are we Chimps? Or are we Bonobos? - Bruce Hyer

Our special guest speaker, the honorable and irrepressible Bruce Hyer, Member of Parliament from Thunder Bay, will expound on the need for further human evolution. There will be pictures.

February 5, 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

Authority - Jennifer Channin

In preparation of this service there will be a discussion on this theme at 7:00 p.m. on January 17. All are invited. Also, if technology permits, those who attend the 5:00 p.m. service will be invited to join a real time discussion of the subject via twitter.

R.E. Events for January

January 1 ~ Attend "My Banjo is Broken," a family friendly service at 10:30 a.m. or 5:00 p.m. Space and activities in the Lounge for parents and children who need to stretch their legs.

January 8 ~ R.E. group sessions resume! Elementary OWL Information Meeting at 12:30 p.m. in Room 3 for parents of Spirit Play and Bibleodeon children.

January 15 & 22 ~ R.E. groups continue to explore their curriculum programs.

January 20/21 ~ Evening and morning worship "Creating a Community of Care" workshop for R.E. Leaders and Youth Advisors

January 29 ~ Sharing Our Stories: A Service for All Ages at 10:30 a.m.

Become A Worship Associate

Every Sunday you see them at the pulpit. They welcome you, help the service flow together, and behind the scenes they work with the service leaders to help the craft your worship experience. Being a worship associate is a powerful experience that allows you to give back to our community in an important and visible way.

In the New Year, we will be looking for more Worship Associates to fill out our team. Worship Associates are responsible for working with the service team on approximately one service a month, attending monthly meetings and facilitating our summer service program. We are looking for individuals who are passionate about our faith community, confident public speakers, and have a desire to engage in the spiritual work of our congregation. If you have any questions please contact:

Sean Barron, Worship Associate Convener, at
seanbarron@gmail.com

Religious Education

Sharing a Moment with Susan



Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing. A circle of friends. Someplace where we can be free. ~Starhawk

Welcome to a new year and to fresh opportunities to connect in community. Engaging with intention and awareness, with discernment and willingness to learn is a profound spiritual practice. Each of us must look inward to recognize our gifts and then determine the best avenue for sharing them as we journey along. Perhaps you've been drawn to volunteering in Religious Exploration, but have felt unable to make a significant commitment of time.

There is a way you can offer your gifts and maintain balance in the busy schedule of life! Please consider these wonderful once-a-month opportunities to join our circle of learning and growth in Religious Education.

Calling All Angels

Join a team of four R.E. Angels who commit to one Sunday a month, offering Jack and Jill of All Trades assistance as needed. You'll arrive downstairs at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday to receive your assignment for the morning. You may be asked to offer an extra pair of hands and eyes to help the leaders on duty in our large and small group activities, or help the R.E. Committee with the morning snack, or work on simple tasks preparing and organizing supplies. Please contact Susan at dll@firstunitarianottawa.ca with your interest.

Welcome to R.E.

Support the greeting team once a month in Worship Hall on Sunday mornings by acting as an R.E. Greeter, paying special attention to families with children and youth as they arrive. You'll offer details and direction on the morning's activities and extend a warm welcome to our community. Please contact Susan at dll@firstunitarianottawa.ca with your interest.

Book Lovers Unite

Come help out in our R.E. Library! Our Lifespan Learning Assistant, Marie Gabe, continues to support and develop our vision of this accessible, well organized, wisely and generously titled resource for R.E. programs, families, and the whole congregation. She invites interested folk to join a book-loving team who processes, shelves, tidies, and brings life and joy to our wonderful library! Please contact Marie at l1a@firstunitarianottawa.ca with your interest.

Blessings,

Susan

Timetable Fixed for Music Director Search

Plans have now been confirmed for seeking and hiring a new Music Director at First to fill the position held by Jane Perry for ten years and since September by our Interim Director, Sara Brooks.

As she had planned, Sara is leaving Ottawa this summer to pursue a doctorate in conducting at the University of Alberta. She will be very much missed, but the choirs are looking forward to the six months that remain under her direction.

The congregation's search committee has set a timetable aimed at choosing the new director by early April. The job posting and job description will be distributed widely and will be posted on the church website beginning in early January. The deadline for applications is Friday, February 24.

For further information and to make suggestions, please e-mail the search committee at:

MDsearch@firstunitarianottawa.ca or speak to one of its members: Jan Andrews, Joan Auden, Jenny Rae, Kate Kirkwood, or Mike Cassidy.



Standing Room Only

“Benny Goodman to the Beatles”
Friday, January 20, 2012
8:00 - 10:00 p.m.

A concert of big band music spanning four decades.
\$20 - at the door
Seniors & Students - \$15
or pay what you can

MUSICALIA - Interim Music Director Sara Brooks



Winter Lights – Thank You

Many thanks to all who made our choral celebration, “Winter Lights”, such a success! Thank you to our audience for supporting our music and we look forward to presenting new things in services throughout 2012!

The Chalice Choir wishes to send out a huge Thank You to Unitarian House. On Thursday, November 10, our regular rehearsal was held in the lovely Founders Room. We were so grateful for use of the space which allowed our regular meeting to take place! Many thanks!

New Youth Choir set to begin January 8!

Our Children's Music director, Shannon Linton, will be kicking off the New Year with a new Youth Choir, Ages 12+. Rehearsals will take place Sundays from 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. in the NOW Room, with the first rehearsal set for January 8, 2012. This exciting ensemble will participate in several evening services throughout the year, and will tackle a variety of musical styles, including gospel, African, folk, and classical. Don't miss out on this chance to join an exciting musical community! Sign up today! via email: childrensmusic@firstunitarianottawa.ca, or on the music bulletin board.

Bring a Friend to Choir Day

Sunday, January 22nd will be Bring a Friend to Choir Day for all children's and youth choirs! Any kids and youth ages 4+ are welcome to join us for a rehearsal, some games, snacks and lots of fun. The rehearsal times are as follows:

- Junior Choir (4-7 years old) - 9:45-10:15 a.m. in the NOW room
- Intermediate Choir (8-12 years old) - 12:00-12:30 p.m. in the NOW room
- Youth Choir (13+) - 12:30-1:30 p.m. in the NOW room

Even if you've never sung before, come on out and have some fun! And if you are already in a choir, bring a friend with you to enjoy the day.

Chalice Choir Special Event: Open Rehearsal!

Ever wonder what really goes on at a Thursday night choir rehearsal? Good fun, that's what! Often referred to as “Choir Night in Canada”, a large percentage of Church Choirs in Ottawa, rehearse Thursday evenings.

Stop wondering what it's all about, and come check us out!

Thursday, January 26, 2012 we open up our rehearsal space to visitors! Bring friends, family, work colleagues – refreshments and fellowship offered. No music or choral experience required – join in, or simply observe the fun!

Standing Room Only Big Band

Standing Room Only Big Band: Special event at First Unitarian! Mark your calendars for Friday, January 20, 2012 as we are joined by this fabulous 15-piece big band with members from the Almonte area and Ottawa. This group routinely presents Sunday afternoon Tea Dances during the winter months at the Almonte Old Town Hall, and performs at a variety of public and private functions such as the Friday evening dances of the Ottawa Swing Dance Society. For more information on this great group, check out: <http://www.sroteadances.org/srodrupal/content/video-gallery>

Although the band's repertoire is heavily rooted in the swing music of the Thirties and Forties (e.g. Benny Goodman, Glenn Millar, Tommy Dorsey), it also includes music from the Fifties and Sixties, including at least one Beatles song. Hence the concert's title “Benny Goodman to the Beatles.”

John Haysom (trumpet), Chris Thompson (drums) and Howard Tweddle (bass), who performed with the Glebop Jazz group that presented a very enjoyable concert at the Church last January are also members of Standing Room Only. Sandy Faux, who sang with Glebop at that concert. is the regular vocalist with Standing Room Only. Videos of the Glebop concert are posted on Youtube; search under Glebop.

This is a benefit concert for First Unitarian.

Other dates to watch for:

January Evening Music Rehearsals:
Sundays, 5:00 p.m.
January 8 – Felix Wong, Piano

January 15 – Chamber Choir
January 22 – Evening Vocal Ensemble
January 29 – Tony Turner, Folk Artist

Notes from Nepal



Yadab Children

These three siblings are enjoying ice cream for the first time in their lives. Ice cream is a rare and expensive treat in Nepal.

Ten-year-old Shyam, 6-year-old Romita, and 4-year-old Meena were brought to the Child Haven home over a year ago, after their father was shot by police for smuggling. The eldest child in the family had already died from complications of malnutrition, leaving five younger children. The youngest, only a toddler, was left with the destitute mother, while Shyam's older brother refused to live at Child Haven. He would not go to school or cooperate, so he was taken back to his mother, where he now runs on the street.

Shyam, Romita, and Meena have worked hard to learn Nepali and English, and they are making good progress at school. They are intelligent and affectionate children. You can see from the picture how instinctively protective Shyam is of his younger sisters.

All of the children living at Child Haven Nepal have similar stories. Many have been saved from a life of utter destitution and are doing quite well now. I often think of the courageous mothers who have given up their children so that they can have food, education, and opportunities that their parents never enjoyed.

Susan Bowers

Susan Bowers, from First Unitarian, has recently taken on the challenge of working as a volunteer at Child Haven in Nepal. She has kindly agreed to send us periodic news of her experiences.

Realizing The Dream Campaign Thrilled With Outcome

The Realizing a Dream Campaign to raise funds to help the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa (UUFO) acquire its first church home wound up at the end of November with total contributions of \$168,434, including the offer of a low-interest loan of \$10,000. The campaign team, and members of the Fellowship, are thrilled at this outcome and grateful for this wonderful support from members and friends of First Congregation.

In fact, the total of contributions from First Congregation to the UUFO Building Fund now exceeds \$218,000 when gifts made prior to the Realizing a Dream Campaign are included. The campaign team extends heart-felt thanks for the cooperation of the Rev. John Marsh, President Kathy Yach and members of the



Board, and to all who have supported the dream with their donations and encouragement. Thank you, and may the holiday season and the new year bless you with health, peace and love.

Members of the Realizing a Dream Capital Campaign team: seated (left to right): Marina Jones, Ann Cross, Ruth Milne; standing: Maury Prevost, Bill Van Iterson, Rev. Fred Cappuccino, Bob Armstrong, Helmut Kuhn.

THANK YOU, MERCI, GRACIAS

by Maury Prevost

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

- Margot Clark for the lovely flowering plants that have beautified the office of late.
- Maury Prevost for doing this wonderful column every month.
- Bobbee Engel and Sam Wilmott for having the West Lobby bench recovered. It is absolutely beautiful.
- The 20 plus members and friends assisting our three refugee families (Mia, Rai and Rahman) in their ongoing journeys of becoming settled Canadians. Assistance includes ESL tutoring, academic tutoring for the children, chauffeuring for appointments and services, donations of household furnishings and subscriptions, etc. This group of benefactors includes David Chernushenko, Sue Wheeler, Trish and Michael Carson, Kay Walker, Chuck Shields, Karl Nagelschmitz, Katherine Gunn, Ian Gorman, Jan Heynen and Rosalie Reynolds.
- For cheerful help in packing Christmas boxes for women we have assisted this year in moving from the Aboriginal Women's Shelter: Marg Lee, Marnie Johnstone, Diane Ziegler, Marlene Campbell, Tarrel Armstrong, Margot Clarke, Eunice Ellison and Ellen Kammermayer.
- All those who participated in the Campus Planning Workshop, especially Jane Lindsay, Charles Lanktree, and Bill van Iterson.
- Fred Brown and his Klezmer group for their wonderful music at the 5:00 p.m. service on November 27.
- Everyone who keeps our congregation operating - both paid staff and volunteers.

Maury Prevost is the editor of this column. You can submit items by sending an email to mmprevost@sympatico.ca or by calling 613-231-7391 at least 48 hours before the Parkway Spire deadline.

Reading for Growth

There are three active Reading For Growth Groups which explore and learn about relevant issues through the reading of thought-provoking books.

One group meets every second Monday afternoon of the month. On January 9, it will be discussing *More Than Good Intentions: How A New Economics is Helping to Solve Global Poverty* by Dean Karlan and Jacob Appel from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Lounge

The other group meets on the last Friday afternoon of the month.

The RFG Fiction Group will hold its next meeting on January 3 at 1:00 p.m. in the Church Lounge. We will be discussing *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery. This was originally planned for December but due to illness it had to be postponed. Anyone who would like to join us is welcome.

If you are interested in joining one of these groups or would like to attend as a visitor, please contact Katharine Elliott at 613-270-8308 or e-mail katharine.elliott@opera.ncf.ca.

Friday Reading Group for Grow

Friday Reading For Growth group will meet in the Lounge at 1:00 p.m. on January 27 to discuss *The Armageddon Factor: the Rise of Christian Nationalism in Canada* by Marci McDonald. New members welcome. Contact Margot Clarke at 613-820-6596 or mmclarke@magma.ca.

Yoga for Seniors and Everyone Else

Would you like to try Yoga? Improve your flexibility, balance, strength and peace of mind? We have a wonderful teacher, Linda Percy, and a congenial group. Everyone is welcome. Drop by on Friday morning to try it out! Date: Friday mornings, January 13 to March 30 (except February 24) 10:15-11:15 a.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall

Cost: \$105 for 11 weeks or \$10 drop-in.

Contact: Linda Percy, 613-729-8913, or Margot Clarke, 613-820-6596 or adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Women's Spirituality

The Women's Spirituality Group: Tuesday, January 10 in Fellowship Hall. Gathering time: 7:00 p.m. Ritual starts at 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$3. "While the Snow Falls" - A winter ceremony to honor mothering, the mothering of self, of children, elders and sisters. All Women, mothers and daughters (aged 10 and up), grandmothers, sisters, aunts and friends, are welcomed. Bring a blanket or shawl that brings you comfort and a plate of your own comfort food to share. We will explore our tales of good self-care, giving and receiving, and grieving as women in a world of change. Song, simple sacred dance, meditations. Together, as maidens, mother and crones we will share in this ceremony to re-energize in self-care and comforts for the winter season of transition.

Facilitator: Karen Keskinen

For further information contact:

Laurie: 613-728-1916, e-mail: fosterm@bell.net.

Integral Life Practice

Can one be both spiritual and rational? The Integral Life Practice group investigates spirituality in the rational world, though the writings of authors such as Ken Wilber, and in lively discussions of a range of topics.

Some of the subjects which have engaged us (look into them on the Internet for some background) are Spiral Dynamics, the Enneagram of Personality, the shadow in personal development, and evolution in both science and spirituality. We find influences on our individual world views, learn about our own psyches, and discover new spiritual horizons. Newcomers are very welcome – try us out!

When: Alternate Saturdays, from January 7, 2012, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Where: Please check the notice board at the lower entrance

Contact: Dale Wilson, h.dale.wilson@gmail.com, or Katherine Gunn, 613-729-0504, or adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

Introduction to Buddhism

Mihaela Andronic will offer a historical perspective in the first session and will discuss the Buddha's teaching: the Four Noble Truths in the second.

When: Wednesday, January 11, 18, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Instruction on Mindfulness Meditation

Lise-Andree Payette will give practical instructions on how to meditate using the Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program as taught by Jon Kabat-Zinn. No previous experience is necessary. All are welcome.

When: Wednesday, January 25, February 5, 7:00-9:00p.m.

If there is an interest in developing this practice, Mindfulness Meditation sessions will be continued.

Where: Room 2, downstairs

Contact: Wendy Doyle at adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Events in January

Sunday January 8, 12:30 p.m.
Mental Illness Working Group

Sunday January 15, 12:30 p.m.
Environmental Working Group

Sunday January 15, 11:45 a.m.
Fair Trade and Granny Squares Sales

Thursday January 19, 4:00 p.m.
Unitarian GoGos Working Group

Sunday January 22, 12:30 p.m.
Global Justice Working Group

Mental Illness Working Group

The Mental Illness Working Group (MIWG) is meeting on Sunday, January 8 at 12:30 p.m. in Room 14. We will be discussing our winter projects that are in support of people with mental illness.

Ancoura opened a new home this past fall that is providing housing for three female residents. Besides financial support, it is also looking for volunteers to help the residents on a casual basis.

If you are interested in volunteering please talk to a member of the MIWG for further information. Or contact Katharine Elliott at

613-270-8308 or e-mail me at Katharine.elliott@opera.ncf.ca.

Any who are interested in helping people living with mental interest are welcome to attend our January 8 meeting.

Unitarian GoGos Working Group

Are you thinking of joining the Unitarian GoGos? We raise funds, awareness and advocacy for grandmothers and orphans in sub-Saharan Africa through the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign. Everyone is welcome.

When: Thursday, January 19, 4:00-5:30 p.m. (Third Thursday each month)

Where: Room 5, downstairs.

Contact: unitariangogos@gmail.com, or Wendy Doyle, 613-824-7462.

Unitarian GoGos African Dinner

Don't hesitate! Make up a table of your friends to share a memorable evening, and RSVP as soon as possible - last year we sold out.. Enjoy African food, wine, live music and a silent auction.

When: Saturday, February 4, 2012, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall.

Cost: Donation to the Stephen Lewis Foundation Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

RSVP: unitariangogos@gmail.com or Wendy Doyle, 613-824-7462

Fair Trade Sales

The Environmental and Global Justice Working Groups bring you Fair Trade, organic chocolate products and coffee, as well as Zatoun Xtra Virgin Olive oil, soaps and spices. Through these sales we support environmental and justice organizations.

When: Sunday January 15, 11:45 a.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall.

C-10 - The Omnibus Crime Bill Letter-Writing Campaign

Congregants were invited to write letters in December to the government and MPs decrying the punitive elements of the proposed Omnibus Crime Bill (C-10). About 70 letters, more than on any recent issue, went to Parliament Hill, urging prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration. Watch for another chance to add your effort to this campaign soon.



The letter writing campaign: from left - Susan Carlton, Mike Wheeler, Katrin Nagelschmitz, Debra Mair.

Protest March

The Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice banner was prominent in the late November demonstration and march to the steps of the Supreme Court, organized by Occupy Ottawa.



Holding the banner: from left - Debra Mair, John Turnbull, Katherine Gunn

LGBT Welcoming Group

The LGBT Welcoming Congregation Working Group will meet soon to discuss activities for the spring and summer, including Pride 2012. All Congregants, both LGBT members and their allies, are welcome. Watch for date and details in the weekly Communiqué and on the Congregation's online calendar. For information and/or to join the LGBT Group's mailing list to learn more about our activities and social events, please write to Heidi Wright, wrightheidi9@gmail.com.



Choir Thursday

Christmas Boxes

The Aboriginal Women's Shelter project of the Poverty Awareness Working Group packed Christmas decorations, gifts and even some trees for women whom we have assisted in moving on from the shelter in 2011. We wish to thank the provincial One Change program (<http://www.onechange.org/>) for the handsome bags we used to deliver the colourful donations from the Congregation.



Meditation Garden Photo Challenge

Time to get those creative picture taking juices flowing! Following the wonderful success of the 2012 garden calendar, the Friends of the Meditation Gardens are looking for photos taken in our gardens to be included in the 2013 calendar. Take lots of pictures and submit them all! Dig through albums for great shots from the past.

Eligible photos must be:

1. In focus, and three mega pixels or the equivalent in resolution. At least 280 dpi resolution.
2. Taken in the gardens any season past or present.
3. A close-up or vista shot.
4. Contain no people, domestic animals or cars.

Please submit photos anytime before Sept. 15, 2012 at congregation.garden@gmail.com or deposit, on disc or hard copy, in the Property mail slot at church. Please include your full name for photo credit purposes. Winners will be contacted by October 15, 2012. Dust off those cameras and get snapping! Winners will receive a free calendar.



Liz B. making a sale

ANNOUNCEMENTS

UU Round Table Lunch

Open to all UUs and guests. Lively discussions take place among members of the group, who have diverse interests and experiences. Our meeting location changes every three months. For January
When: Friday, January 20th at 1:00 p.m.

Where: Mongolian Village Restaurant
150 Robertson Road Bells Corners,
613-596-4366

RSVP: Tudy McLaine, 613-745-8074, mclaine2d@hotmail.com), or Marjorie Daechsel, 613-596-1471 by Thursday, January 19.

Unitarian Seniors' Program

Elisabeth Morrison and two friends will present a musical concert. Intern Minister, Jennifer Channin, will conduct the worship service. Lunch will be a "brown bag" and attendees are asked to bring their own sandwiches. Beverages and cookies will be provided. An open invitation is extended to one and all to attend the concert at 1:00 p.m. in Worship Hall.

When: Wednesday, January 25

Service: 11:30 a.m. Lunch (bring your own): 12:00 p.m., Program: 1:00 p.m.

Where: Worship/Fellowship Hall

RSVP: (only if you are not on the phone list and will attend the "brown bag" lunch): Maureen Sly at 613-728-7610 or mmsly@rogers.com by Monday, January 23.



Fabric and Yarn Sale and Mini Flea Market

Save the date! Sale of sewing items including fabric and yarn, plus a Mini Flea Market for the Aboriginal Women's Shelter project. Please let your friends and fellow sewers know of the event.

When: Saturday February 18, 2012.

Donations: accepted in box in Volunteer Centre.

Volunteers: needed to sort and price in the prior week and to sell at the sale.

Contact: Margaret Linton, 613-728-2446 or mlinton@trytel.com or Katherine Gunn 613-729-0504 or klgunn@magma.ca

ARTSPACE EXHIBIT SCHEDULE:

January: To be announced. Artspace is in the Lounge. New artists who are interested in exhibiting can please contact Laurie Foster-MacLeod: 613-728-1916

Celebrating the anniversary of the United Nations.

From left to right:

Rev. John Marsh,

Diana Rivington (the guest speaker),

Marjorie Harris (the oldest) and

Katrin Nagelschmitz,

Chair of the First Unitarian

UN Working Group at church..

Glebe/Centretown/ Ottawa South

Neighbourhood Group

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, February 5, 2012 – note that this date is an exception to our usual last Sunday of the month. Please bring a small dessert to share.

Topic: "Music and Spirituality in our Lives"

Speakers: Liz Benjamin and Helen Spenser

When: Sunday, February 5, 2012, at 7:30 p.m.

Where: Home of Trudy Kassner,
108 Belmont Ave.

Contact: Trudy Kassner
613-730-2823

Empower Dance

Start your New Year Right – Try Empower Dance, stretch, move and meditate to all kinds of music. "We enjoy having new participants and new music" Everyone welcome! Drop in and try it out.

When: Wednesdays from 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall

Cost: Suggested gift of \$3/evening to the Congregation

Contact: Janet Clayton,
613-733-9566

