



Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation

The Capital Letter

VICTORIA, BC

2014



We stand at the edge of summer.

The sun has at last warmed us enough that we begin to trust in its presence.

The last burst of spring blossoms, lavender and white and deep pink banks of rhododendron, are giving way to summer peonies and roses.

O source of the turning seasons,

Of earth, of life, of promise gradually becoming fulfillment,

May your people find a lightening of the burdens with the brightening of the sky.

-Helen Cohen

Sunday Services in July

July 6th Dr. Trevor Hancock **“Creating Healthy Communities”**
Just as it takes a whole village to raise a child, so too does it take a whole community to raise healthy people. So what is a healthy community, and how do we get one? I will discuss these issues and three key challenges facing communities: Equity, sustainability and governance.

Dr. Trevor Hancock is a Professor and Senior Scholar at the School of Public Health and Social Policy at the University of Victoria

Children's Program



July 13th Ben Dolf **“Gestalt – The Motor of the Human Potential Movement Is Still Relevant Today”**

Gestalt practice is a holistic approach to personal growth. It was at the heart of the human potential movement of the 60s. The concepts of Gestalt still form the underpinning of many of today's adult education, organizational and personal development models. Ben Dolf will talk about Gestalt tools we can use to become more aware, more self-directed, and deal with our fears.

Children's Program



July 20th Peter Scales **“Faith in Time of War”**

Children's Program



July 27th Rosemary Morrison **“Thomas Merton”**

Thomas Merton was a bohemian turned Trappist Monk who struggled to understand Zen, and said it's about the experience, not the theology. Come and learn a little about this intriguing mystic who embraced all the world religions.

Children's Program



All services are held Sundays at 10:00 a.m. at The James Bay New Horizons Centre, 234 Menzies Street, Victoria, BC. Child care is provided free of charge with our Children's program.



Services in August

August 3rd Amanda Tarling “**Labyrinths**” These ancient shapes are found throughout the globe in very different cultures featuring in cave carvings, ancient coins and Greek Myths. Come and join us as we explore how labyrinths are relevant to our spiritual journey.

Children's Program



August 10th Kristina Stevens “**The CUC: Unitarian Renaissance**”

Children's Program



August 17th Faron Anslow “**Climate Change in BC: our Past and our Future**” Join Paleo-climatologist Dr. Anslow to discover what climate change has already occurred in British Columbia and what is projected through to the year 2100. How does climate impact society and ecosystems? What is the critically important interplay between them? Some impacts already observed will be discussed and new impacts on British Columbians that may arise from climate change will be presented. How does this effect us as Unitarians living within the interdependent web of all existence?

Faron Anslow is a climatologist at the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium. His studies have taken him from analytical chemistry to glacier-climate interactions in the Rocky Mountains. Then onto tropical glaciation on Mauna Kea, Hawaii and the projected demise of glaciers in British Columbia in the next 100 years. His current work explores the climate of British Columbia over the past century.

Children's Program



August 24th Dr. Sara Comish “**Mindfulness**”

Sara Comish is a Psychologist who uses Mindfulness both in her work and in her personal life on a regular basis. She will talk about Mindfulness as a building block skill for coping with the world.

Children's Program



August 31st Dr. Susan Breiddel “**Dwelling in the Realm of Death: The Lived Experience of encountering mortality on a daily basis in the palliative care setting.**”

Susan Breiddel is a Counselor with Victoria Hospice. She works with a nurse, going into the community, responding to a crisis of a physical, mental, emotional, social or spiritual nature. Susan is a counsellor, writer and educator in the field of palliative care. She graduated from the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto, CA, and is presently a PhD Candidate at the University of Victoria in Education Curriculum and Instruction.



Membership News

Summer Birthdays

July 10	Nan Fairchild
Aug 18	Lynda Mazerolle
Aug 26	Lena Toneff
Aug 28	Ted Harrison
Aug 30	Shurly Mazerolle

If your Birthday is missing
Please tell Amanda
250 382-6828



Elsie's Birthday Cake

Thursday, Capital Coffee Cove at
James Bay Coffee and Books

Summer is here and some of us are still having fun, being together with visitors, friends and other Unitarians over a cup of ?? from 10 - to 11:20am. After a congenial check-in, we choose a topic and discuss that for the remaining time. If you find yourself with a free Thursday morning, please come in and have some conversation with us. All are welcome. Elizabeth Atchison, findlaygirlea@gmail.com or [250-472-6262](tel:250-472-6262)

COFFEE HOUSES,

How about a theme-based coffee house or at least a previously advertised topic so that people will have more of an idea of what the conversation will be. Please watch the Order of Service on Sunday and your emails to learn of upcoming Coffee Houses. OR volunteer to have people into your home. You can state the number of people you are able to accommodate and offer tea and coffee. Perhaps you would suggest the topic or I will. Then, those of us attending will bring dessert to share, so it is quite simple and very stimulating and pleasant.

Please volunteer by phoning me or emailing me, Elizabeth Atchison, 250-472-6262 or findlaygirlea@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP in OUR COMMUNITY,

You may be wondering why I would even ask YOU to become a member.

Decades ago, I wondered the same thing. However I had a wish to belong to a community of similar minded people who didn't necessarily think alike but were open enough to listen and then make a decision and to discuss all manner of things. I have not been disappointed.

Belonging to Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation in particular has allowed me to stretch my wings knowing and trusting that if I faltered, the loving, caring people at Capital would catch me and buoy me up as they have done many times.

If you want to know more PLEASE, just ask me on Sunday or phone me at 250-472-6262 or email me at findlaygirlea@gmail.com.

Sincerely, Elizabeth Atchison





On Board

At the June board meeting the five 'boardies' decided that John Pullybank will serve as chair, Rita Wittman will continue as Treasurer, Peter Scales will be Secretary, Jan Greenwood and Frank Bowie will serve as Members-at-Large.

Our congregation spends very little on advertising. We have a simple ad in the James Bay Beacon, we have a website that people can find if they are searching for 'Unitarian' and 'Victoria', and we have our sandwich board sign next to the sidewalk for 90 minutes each Sunday morning. Capital exists and has maintained 40-ish members almost entirely through word of mouth. Our lay chaplains perform rites of passage for non-Unitarians, and in that way we spread the message of Unitarian-Universalism. In early June one of Capital's lay chaplains performed the celebration of life for Hugh Curtis, who was mayor of Saanich and the provincial Minister of Finance. The large and distinguished audience heard the word 'Unitarian' several times, and we hope that if the people liked the service then they will remember at the very least that Unitarians perform moving ceremonies. At the board we have discussed whether we want to advertise more.

Too many people in our neighbourhood don't even know that there is a Unitarian-Universalist congregation in their midst. The 11,000 residents of James Bay should know that we are here as a community option. In August a handful of our congregation will hand-deliver a brochure to 1000 homes within walking distance of the James Bay New Horizons. The brochure will invite people to check us out, online and in person. The brochure is not 'proselytizing' (which too many UU's fear doing) and it will not set up unreasonable expectations of who we are at Capital. It's just a tiny effort to reach out to potential new friends and fellow spiritual seekers.

Capital Connects is a way that we demonstrate our commitment to the UU Principles by helping groups that are doing good work. Each month we send \$100 to a different local, national or international charity. If you have a charity that you respect and know well, please email or speak to any board member to get that charity on our list for an upcoming Capital Connects.

Finally today, a word about letter writing and activism. Every one of us is free to write letters to editors, politicians or corporations, and to include 'I am a Unitarian' or 'I attend Unitarian services' or similar. None of us may write that we represent 'all Unitarians' or even that we represent Capital UU Congregation. If you feel passionately about an issue – examples include Israel and Palestine, any of the pipelines, sewage treatment, education, and hospitals – don't wait for congregational or denominational consensus: act, write, gather allies, march, sing!

Sincerely, Peter Scales



Comish Pullyblank Dancers





CUC AGM Delegate's Report

Delegate's Report, Rosemary Morrison

It was my pleasure to serve as the delegate for Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation at the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Unitarian Council. This was my first experience at the annual gathering of the CUC and I was impressed with gathering generally, and very interested in the AGM specifically.

There was a financial report of course, and I was proud knowing Capital is one of the congregations that pay their full member contribution. The CUC would not operate without these funds, and I believe the CUC is very important, as a national organization such as ours could not exist without a governing body.

There were two resolutions brought to the AGM this year. One was regarding pervasive surveillance and the entire motion and amendments may be viewed here: http://cuc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/CUC_Urgent_PervasiveSurveillance_Approved.May2014.pdf

The point of interest for me was the young woman who requested an amendment and was treated with courtesy and respect. As well, a seasoned UU Minister helped her draft her amendment. It was discussed and passed. It was wonderful to see democracy in action.

There was some difficult discussion regarding the Palestine/Israel resolution. I could see there was not going to be a meeting of the minds during this meeting, and was informed afterward that the motion to postpone the motion indefinitely was done out of respect. It was not desired to have to vote on the motion directly as it may have been defeated. As it was carried out, it leaves the door open for this topic to be studied again in the future.

I have included in this report the statements by the Unitarian Minister Association (UUMOC) and Rev. Brian Kiely's published blog on the proceedings.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent Capital at the ACM. It was a very enriching experience for myself.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Morrison

To remind you, this was the resolution:

"Therefore it be resolved that: The CUC establish a Study Group – "Human Rights in Palestine and Israel" - to assemble information and resources to enable congregational study about the history of the conflict in Palestine and Israel, and the present conditions which prevail in the state of Israel including the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank. Member congregations will be encouraged to study during 2015 about the conditions in Palestine and Israel. The Study Group members shall include: Christine Johnston (First Victoria), Joy Johnston (Comox Valley), Anita MacLean (First Ottawa). Other members may be recruited to provide quality input to the process. shall be prepared to propose a motion on the subject for the 2016 AGM."

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CUC AGM Delegate's Report - cont'd

A motion to "Postpone the Resolution Indefinitely" was made and carried, and which means that the resolution was not brought to a vote.

The following are statements in response to this outcome:

The UU Ministers of Canada (UUMOC). Dear Canadian Unitarian Universalist Congregations and Communities, This week at our annual gathering, we reflected on the difficult conversation many of us engaged around the proposed resolution on Israel and Palestine at the CUC's Annual General Meeting in Montreal. We have heard confusion and disappointment expressed around the resolution process and the motion to "Postpone the Resolution Indefinitely" which was made and carried, and which meant that the resolution was not brought to a vote. We are mindful that many hearts are especially tender at this time; our hope is that we all may continue to heal and learn and grow from this experience. •Any discussion of the tensions between Israelis and Palestinians is complicated by the deep emotions that inform our hopes and fears. People of good will often hold differing opinions about how peace could best be achieved. This is certainly true of us. The members of UUMOC are not of one mind on these issues. We hold a very wide range of opinions. •We appreciate the passion and efforts of those who brought forward the resolution. We recognize that it was their hope to bring about a broader discussion. As this conversation unfolds towards deeper engagement, may we be guided by a generosity of spirit that enables us to listen and learn from one another.

In faith, •The UU Ministers of Canada (UUMOC), May 26th, 2014

Rev. Brian Kiely. "The surprise debate came over what is typically an easy vote. The CUC has a study process where a team of volunteers sends out information about an issue for study. From the feedback is developed a proposed justice resolution. Usually the creation of these study groups is a no brainer, a fait accompli, a near unanimous vote to go ahead. Not so this year!

The actual call for a study group was benign enough, but the supporting documents were seen by many to be heavily pro-Palestinian. The perceived imbalance was a cause for concern. The other issue that got raised had to do with a larger question of should we be expending limited volunteer resources on a question on which we have little chance of having an effect when there are so many significant social issues to address in Canada.

The debate was long and passionate. There were many who perceive a call to action on any injustice we see must be done. Others equally argued that this was likely to be divisive in many churches even as we discuss it.

In the end – in a nice procedural move -the motion was suspended without vote in hopes that a better approach be crafted. Why a nice move? It was clear that there was too much division and concern about the way the proposal was written. Few wanted to defeat it, but even fewer wanted to pass it. So it was suspended by an over 2/3 vote. This suggests it was the best solution. To make it better the 'leader of the opposition' rose to make a lovely short speech in tribute to the good hearts and good intentions behind the proposal. Loud applause ensued.

This is democracy in action. It's messy, passionate, heartfelt and even hurtful at times. But decisions get made given the best information at the time."
-Rev Brian Kiely



Medias Unitarian Church

For years CUUC's Robert Brooke Taylor, known in Hungarian as 'Robi', has been travelling to Romania & Hungary, meeting with Unitarians there, and helping them with fundraising. The following excerpts are from a letter Capital received this spring after the Medias/Medgyes Unitarian Church received money from Capital Connects.

Dear Robi and dear Congregation of Victoria,

After a successful but long year we finally had a short vacation to get to important matters. When we got the news of the material support we got from you, we were astounded: the financial help is always a big assistance but the human contact - well, that is the real value! When they heard about it our people were very happy and proud, proud mostly of their work because it seemed that it has been noticed.

The Presbytery/Board decided to spend the money on the children's Christmas gifts, so we used it to complete the amount that the parents were gathering for this occasion. The gifts held things like fruit, cookies, chocolate, and snacks, and were given to the kids on Christmas Eve in the church after performing the traditional Christmas piece. They performed a play called "Pass on the light!" which told people not to get down in misery and hopelessness because there are little lights all around them.

Twenty-five children were part of the Christmas production but in the church there were other kids, too. We have a tradition of giving presents to those who could not come to rehearsal or did not recite poetry. The gifts of course were handed out by Santa. Our women made 35 gifts for children. From the financial gift from you, plus the sum that the parents gathered, we managed to make another 20 packs for the old and ill members of the congregation. We managed to celebrate a really joyful Christmas. In the name of the whole Unitarian Congregation of Medgyes I would like to thank you for your support and thank you for thinking of us. THANK YOU!

With friendship and love, Zita and Hunor Markos and our board members





Sara and John's Potluck

