



Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation

The Capital Letter

VICTORIA, BC

2017

Sunday Services in July and August

“No one leaves home unless
Home is the mouth of a shark
You only run for the border
When you see the whole city
Running as well.

You have to understand that
No one puts their children in
A boat unless the water is
Safer than the land

--- from Home (2015) by
Kenyan-born Somali poet
Warsan Shire, about the
Refugee crisis - from a
Facebook post by John
Pullyblank

July 2nd Amanda Tarling “Three weddings and a funeral. Why rites of passage are an important part of Unitarianism”

Capital’s Lay Chaplains spend most summer weekends officiating for weddings up and down the island. It’s wonderful and exciting work as well as being important outreach for Unitarianism. Come join us as Amanda delves into fascinating wedding customs from around the world, peppered with some of her most memorable weddings.

Children's Program



July 9th Arran Liddel “The Rainbow Connection”

Like any culture, queer culture changes over time. With these changes, we see ourselves and each other differently, both inside and outside of queer communities. We will share stories and reflections about how evolving queer identities offer a more nuanced understanding of love & inclusion... And, of course, some fabulous music! This service will be related to but separate from the pride service the Sunday before at First Victoria.

Children's Program



July 16th Oliver Belisle “Wisdom and the Human Condition”

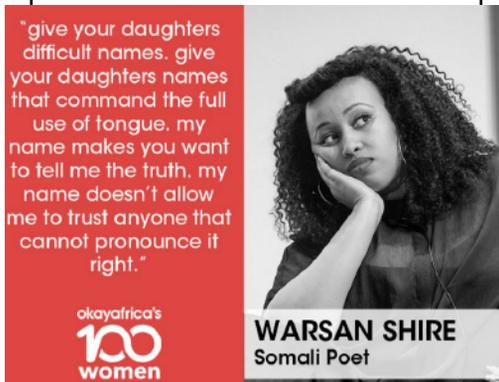
Homo sapiens sapiens--wisest of the wise ones. This is the name we’ve given our species, and on the surface it seems well-deserved; but observe yourself carefully, or the people around you, or read the news, and you may begin to question whether we’ve earned this name at all. What does it mean to be wise, and if we are not yet wise ourselves, how can we become so?

Children's Program



July 23rd Mary Louise Meadow “Speaking of Women in Religion” (see more about Mary on page 9)

(Service information continued on following page)



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 July and August

(Continued from page 1)

Anyone hoping to understand women's lives needs to attend to the extent to which religion has not only reflected basic cultural assumptions about gender but has also helped shape, alter and reinforce those assumptions. The study of women in religion gives us access to women's interior lives and how women have understood themselves, their social context and their world. Religious institutions historically have been a major sphere of women's activities, second perhaps only to the domestic sphere itself.

July 30th Elizabeth Atchison "Our inclusive community"

Finding our full potential sends many of us looking for social belonging. We often find this in a community. What is it about this community that makes it so important to you and me? Let us think about it together.

Children's Program



August 6th Peter Scales "Principles and Sources"

A look at the principles and sources of Unitarian Universalism.

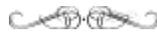
Children's Program



August 13th Michelle Brown "Religion as Survival Strategy"

Churches were language sanctuaries for Hungarians who came under Romanian authority in 1920. Even today, seminarians in Transylvania are charged with responsibility for the survival of the Hungarian people. Michelle Brown, recently returned from a three-month stay in a Unitarian seminary, offers a look at the 21st century reality facing this child of the Reformation.

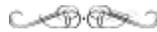
Children's Program



August 20th Nicola Li "The Spiritual Fallout of Trauma"

There is a myth that trauma results from a single experience. The potential sources of emotional trauma are numerous and can add up. What does the path of healing look like?

Children's Program



August 27th Joan Carolyn "Small is beautiful and mighty"

"Joan Carolyn, CUC Congregational Dev. staff welcomes you to join her for a service celebrating the role of small congregations within our UU family. Leaders within a variety of faith traditions see the small congregation as a growing trend and highly valuable. How do we tell our small congregation stories from a Strengths Based Perspective, which not only provides wisdom and inspiration for others but re-energizes our own involvement?"



Rustom

Rustom Patel (1915-2017).

People in Persia and later in Iran practiced the Zoroastrian religion for thousands of years, since 500 BCE. When Islam took hold in Persia, many of the Zoroastrians fled to India. Because the newcomers were from 'Pars' (a province in the Sasanian Empire, 224 to 651 CE), in India they are called 'Parsi', which can also be written as 'Parsee'.

Rustom Patel was a member of our UU congregation, and was also a life-long Parsi. There are 850 or 900 Parsi people in Vancouver, and only 20 or 30 in Victoria. When Rustom died recently, the small Parsi community organized funeral prayers and cremation for him.

From CUUC, Durga Periwai, Amanda Tarling, Marilyn Kan, Alan Dawson & Elizabeth Atchison, and Peter Scales attended the Parsi funeral prayers on May 26. Marya Nijland, an early member of Capital UU, was also there; Marya was friends with Rustom's wife Lien, in part because both women were Dutch.

Jamsheed, from Vancouver, conducted the 25-minute prayers. Jamsheed, who is Iranian-born and who worked as an engineer in Iran and Bombay before emigrating to Canada, is a Parsi 'moobed', which is like a Unitarian lay chaplain in that both conduct rites of passage. His father and grandfather were Zoroastrian priests in Iran. The language of the prayers is Avestan, closely related to Vedic Sanskrit; Avestan is used only in Zoroastrian/Parsi religious rites.

For the duration of the prayers, Mr Homi Italia, past President of the Zoroastrian Society of BC, tended a tiny fire using small sticks of sandalwood, in a chalice. Fire is the most important symbol in the Parsi religion.

Once the Parsi prayers were done, Peter led an 'open mic' time during which people shared memories of Rustom. One speaker was Queenie Patel, a distant niece of Rustom's, who credited Bapsy Dadachanji for her role as Rus-



Rustom's "daughter," taking care of him as he aged. Louise Dadachanji, whose husband was Parsi, told of helping Rustom prepare for his BC Driver's Licence renewal after he turned 95. Kavas Dadachanji spoke about the similarities in his family and Rustom's family: Kavas' dad was nine years older than Rustom, was also an electrical engineer and also worked at the Bombay Port Authority, and whilst Rustom had worked in Ottawa in the Supply and Services, Kavas worked in the same role but in Victoria. UVic professor of Economics, Merwan Engineer, spoke about coffee times with Rustom; Merwan's grandfather and Rustom's father had many parallel paths: both electrical engineers who couldn't get good jobs until the war, officers, life in Calcutta, and then Canada in the 1950s. Elizabeth talked about Rustom's wisdom and how it is difficult to say goodbye to him.

Finally, Bapsy and Queenie led the congregation in reciting basic Parsi prayers in Avesta language, "Yatha Ahu Vairyo" and "Ashem Vohu,"

<http://www.avesta.org/wzse/wzse26.pdf>

Capital UU Congregation will conduct a celebration of Rustom's life, at 11:30 a.m. on July 2nd at 234 Menzies St., James Bay.



News

The CUC's [June eNews](#) came out on June 4th. In case you missed it, or haven't had a chance to read it, here're some highlights FYI, and for inclusion in your congregational news:

- A [summary of the 2017 CUC AGM](#), including approved resolutions, grant announcements and the new CUC Board.
- A **brand new Spirituality Retreat to nurture leaders** - one in the [Eastern region](#) in July, and one in the [Western Region](#) in August. Register soon - deadline is June 15th! Eastern region info is [here](#), and Western info is [here](#). Susan Ruttan from Edmonton says, "The board of Unitarian Church of Edmonton has decided to pay to send four emerging leaders to the CUC leaders' retreat this summer. It's a fair cost -- \$1,600 for the four.... We are doing it as an investment in our future; we have picked people who are already stepping forward in various ways, and giving them this chance to grow. All four that we've picked are thrilled to be going." Download the poster [here](#).
- **Our Whole Lives training** in July, jointly organized by the CUC and Neighbourhood UU Congregation in Toronto. [Elementary OWL](#) is July 7-9, and [High School OWL](#) is July 14-16. Deadline for registration is June 30. Download the poster [here](#).
- [Reflections on CanUUdle](#), which was hosted by the Unitarian Church of Edmonton in conjunction with a Young Adult Retreat hosted by Westwood Unitarian Congregation.
- **Truth, Healing and Reconciliation:** read the update [here](#), and watch the video (on Facebook) [here](#).

- **Social Justice Connections:** join CUC staff at various times to have conversations on social justice. Do you have a success story from your congregation that you would like to share? Do you have ideas but are not quite sure how to move forward? Do you want to know if someone else is working towards a similar goal? To register for one or more dates please complete [this form](#) (more dates will be announced soon).

Do you have a story or article to share? Send to communications@cuc.ca. The deadline is the 15th of each month.

Vyda Ng
Executive Director
Canadian Unitarian Council |
Conseil unitarien du Canada



Capital's next PUUB* night -
Friday, July 21 at 6:00 pm
at the James Bay Inn Pub,
270 Government St.

*Playful Unitarian Universalist Bantering



Canadian Unitarian Council welcomes you to:

Serving with Spirit: Nurturing UU Leaders



Do you wish that you experienced your participation in your congregation as an expression of ministry, not primarily an obligation to do your part?

We invite you to a weekend to explore where you find the “springs” which fill your life’s well of energy, and how you can live out of that rich resource. There will be opportunities to connect with and be informed by other UUs; times to engage with others as we learn new and hone familiar strategies; and space to do deep reflection, identifying and strengthening the rich practice potential in your own life.

EASTERN

July 21 @ 1:00 pm – July 23 @ 1:00 pm EDT
University of Waterloo

web cuc.ca/serving-spirit-registration-east

WESTERN

August 18 @ 1:00 pm - August 20 @ 1:00 pm MDT
Providence Retreat Centre, Edmonton

web cuc.ca/event/serving-spirit-nurturing-uu-leaders-western

Registration: \$400

Congregations are encouraged to help fund the participation of their members.

More information on the CUC website under Events Calendar



Saturday Chat-in takes a summer holiday

Conversation is such fun and so stimulating. However the Saturday Chat-in Group will take a break in July and August, we hope you will join us in September when we resume at Vancity, Shelbourne at 1590 Cedar Hill Cross road. Elizabeth Atchison and Alan Dawson.



Garden Party at Alan and Elizabeth's

On August 12th. 2017 at 5 pm. our annual Potluck Garden, Deck and Living Room gathering will happen, conversation and music will probably break out!!

Please bring a dish of food and an instrument or a tongue for conversation and song. Please dress casually or you will be expelled. No chairs needed as we have many plastic chairs. It will be appreciated if you would please note on your dish if it is vegan, vegetarian or gluten free.

There is room for all but it would be nice to hear an RSVP:

"Yes, we are coming." phone 250-472-6262 or email kuusi@shaw.ca

Place: Alan Dawson & Elizabeth Atchison's house at 1814 Fairhurst Ave., in Gordon Head near to UVic. between Gordon Head road and Feltham Ave.

Remember: Aug. 12th 2017 at 5 pm.

Drop-In Community Singing: Three Toonies for Tunes Together!

Tuesdays in August (1, 8, 15, 22 and 29),
12:00–1:30pm

Thursdays in August (3, 17, 24 and 31),
7:30–9:30pm

The Church of Truth, 111 Superior St.

Cathy Baker and Dick Jackson will be leading drop-in singing sessions in August. We will draw from folk and popular music of the world, spirituals, African freedom songs, rounds and chants.

No music reading or choir experience is needed. Every voice is welcome!



Birthdays June through August

(My apologies to those with Birthdays in June - I forgot to include them last month! - Amanda)

June 10	Linda Marchand
Jun 20	Audrey Woodward
Jun 22	Peter Scales
Jun 24	Winnie Cooper

July 10	Nan Fairchild
July 25	Ray Travers
July 26	Brian MacDonald

Aug 2 nd	Lavana Kilborn
Aug 26	Lena Toneff



Board Report

Slightly tardy greetings for that most ancient of annual observances around the world, Summer Solstice. Yes, folks, summer has actually finally begun and looks like it 'though it's very confusing to consider how this can be when the Earth is at its farthest from the Sun. Anyone?

On that very day your Board got to work doing some summer planning which began with asking Mike Riess our Chair, to represent Capital at 'Serving with Spirit: nUurturing UU Leaders' in Edmonton August 18th-20th. Since joining us a few short years ago, Mike has gone from laid-back newbie to a congregational dynamo and will surely continue in this vein with this conference experience under his belt.

Sadly, this week we reluctantly accepted the resignation of another dynamo, Elizabeth Atchison as Volunteer Co-ordinator due to her recent vision problems. As Capital has so many volunteers, this position is rather critical so anyone willing to serve please see Jim Rogers or any Board member. Happily, this will in no way affect Elizabeth and Alan's annual garden party on August 12th. Watch the Order of Service for details.

Twice a year, our Treasurer Rita Wittman, gives us a short financial update. This time it will be held August 27th at 11:15 after the service. With Rita's expertise and the congregation's continued generosity, these updates are always good news.

Just a reminder that members and friends are always welcome to join us at Board meetings. Next one will be July 18th. See the July Orders of Service for details.

Safe and happy summer with nothing but good memories.

Frank Bowie for the Board

Capital's Semi-annual Financial report

Sunday August 27th - 11:15 - 11:30



Lots of typos driving you crazy in this newsletter - then I need your help! (please) Our wonderful and amazing Audrey has sadly moved, which leaves us without an editor for the newsletter, please speak to Amanda if you are interested in proof-reading Capital's Newsletter once a month

Thank you!.



Murray's Credo - Purpose

In an old Peanuts cartoon that appeared (on purpose) on our order of service last week, Lucy mused "*I'm intrigued by this view you have on the purpose of life, Charlie Brown... You say you were put here on earth to make others happy*", to which Charlie replied "*That's right*". Then Lucy asked the real question "*What are the others put here for?*" Hmm.

Both Lucy's question and Charlie's answer contained two very questionable assumptions: that we were put here; and that there was a purpose. I find it very difficult to accept either of those assumptions. I find it much more credible, and also more comforting, to think it was all a series of accidents.

The best evidence we have now supports our current creation myth, that our universe started off with a big bang, which let off a sudden burst of elemental particles (or vibrating strings?) that coalesced to make matter (*physical accident*). Bits of that matter combined to make stars and planets, and on at least one of planets (maybe a lot more?) some shavings of the matter on our planet clustered together to make molecules that floated around in a big soup until some of them joined together to make bigger molecules (*chemical accident*). These in turn accidentally combined to make some bigger still molecules, some of which made more copies of themselves, and joined together to make cells. Then the cells started to communicate with each other and form groups of cells that cooperated to make larger life forms, some of which reproduced and survived, while others disappeared (*evolution, natural selection*). Accidents. Not 'put here'. No purpose.

But we are here.

But perhaps my initial reaction was a semantic, rather than a substantial one. I interpreted the word '*put*' as a transitive verb (someone or something '*put*' us here), whereas it could be simply a description of position, (here on earth is where we are).

And the word '*purpose*' does not have to indicate intent, design, meaning, end, determination, or similar concepts, but rather theme, gist, idea, utility, benefit, value, or similar concepts.

Which gets me back to the quote I most often quote. '*There is no cure for birth or death, save to enjoy the interval*'. And *what we enjoy most is the mutual helping with others*.

"From you I receive, to you I give, together we share, and from this we live"

Murray and Eleanor Enkin
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Victoria BC, V8S 3H8
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Mary Louise Meadow - Our homilist July 23rd

Speaking of Women in Religion - by

Mary Louise Meadow - July 23



This Spring I presented a paper on feminists in Anglican Canada to the Canadian Society of Church History. It was based on my experience as a new Canadian in divinity studies Toronto 1980s. Some of you may recall this particular period for increasing media disclosures of child sexual abuse in Canadian religious institutions. At that time, I became aware that sexual misconduct, sexual and domestic abuse, and sexual harassment, subjects cloaked in institutional and social silence, came to public attention in no small measure due to the voices and actions of women, in formal and informal ways, by second wave feminism and advocacy for women noted in the Report on the Status of Women in Canada and SWC funding to grass roots women's organizations across the country.

In retirement, through a fellowship with the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria, I interviewed women of the Toronto Anglican community who collaborated in their respective leadership roles, to address sexual abuse in Anglican Toronto. I chose to write this as women's history rather than focus on the facts and findings that could sensationalize traumas and tragedies as well as demonize individuals and an institution. Ever since reading

Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* (1982) I have been interested in the stories of women who have made a difference in their communities, leaders not necessarily by rank or privilege, but persons who shaped communities, advocated for social change and justice, and gave voice to the vulnerable..

Constance Buchanan, founding director of Women's Studies in Religion at Harvard informs the perspective I will share with you on July 23. You will hear her voice in the stories I share. 1) *Anyone hoping to understand women's lives needs to attend to the extent to which religion has not only reflected basic cultural assumptions about gender but has also helped shape, alter and reinforce those assumptions.* 2) *The study of women in religion gives us access to women's interior lives and how women have understood themselves, their social context and their world.* 3) *Religious institutions historically have been a major sphere of women's activities, second perhaps only to the domestic sphere itself.*