



# Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation

## The Capital Letter

VICTORIA, BC

2015



John Pullyblank

If there is to be peace in the world,

There must be peace in the nations.

If there is to be peace in the nations,

There must be peace in the cities.

If there is to be peace between cities,

There must be peace between neighbours.

If there is to be peace between neighbours,

There must be peace in the home.

If there is to be peace in the home,

There must be peace in the heart.

-LAO-TSE

### Sunday Services in November

November 1st Peter Scales “**The Morality of Self-Delivery.**”

Where is the line that separates the biblical injunction against suicide from respecting a person's integrity and rational choice? Discussions of capital punishment and physician-assisted suicide rarely mention the decision to self-deliver when life becomes unbearable. Award-winning documentary "How to Die in Oregon" (available at the public library) deals directly with euthanasia. In today's homily, speaker Peter Scales hopes to illuminate the morality and legality of self-delivery.

Children's Program



November 8th Alan Dawson “**Tolerance and Acceptance**”

We will look at Tolerance and Acceptance as they relate to our Unitarian and world history. How do these concepts look in today's world and what do you think about them?

Children's Program



November 15th Rev. Shana Lynngood “**Living Whole**”

Someone recently told me that after reading the work of poet David Whyte they were convinced that rather than seeking balance in life, the goal should be to live in a way that feels whole. What are our lives committed to? To whom to give our time and energies? How can we have a full sense of who we are show up in every facet of our lives?

Children's Program



Nov 22nd Michelle Brown “**Embarrassed to be religious?**”

There are valid reasons to avoid talking about religion. And times when the silence is uncomfortable. A look at uneasiness about admitting to religion.

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 November continued & Board Notes***

November 29th Rosemary Morrison **“The Donkey Rider”**

Join with Rosemary as she explores the humour and wisdom of Sufis. Some are more liberal than others, but they have one thing in common: They laugh a lot. Over the centuries, from this sustained laughter has emerged the mythical Mulla Nasruddin. What are these hilarious stories and mysteries embedded in the Mulla? The Mulla is described as a village idiot and sage rolled into one. Come and find out what the Mulla has to say!

Children's Program



John Pullyblank

### November Board Report

Our lovely fall rains have returned as the earth prepares for its winter rest. It's time to cozy around the fire chatting with our friendly UU folks.

On Saturday, October 31, the Capital Board will meet with the Board from FUCV to discuss our common issues and ways we can support one another and the wider community. We are so fortunate to live in a city that has two UU churches. We'll keep you posted of the results of this meeting.

October was Canvass month and the Board will soon be developing our budget for the new year. If you have any suggestions, please approach any Board member. Thank you to all those who have pledged. If you would still like to pledge your contribution for 2016, please ask any Board member for a pledge form.

Would you like to help out? We need someone to coordinate the kitchen crew and we could use a few more counters.



## Compassionate Foes

A story for Armistice Month

My mother's brother, Captain Donald Jackson, was killed in action during the Siege of Tobruk in 1941. A second brother, Frederick Jackson, was a merchant seaman aboard the RMS Rangitane when she was attacked by German raiders in 1940.

The German raider, Orion, a 7000 ton vessel, arrived in New Zealand waters with 128 mines to be laid. The mines' first victim was the RMS Niagara, 13,415 tons, bound from Auckland to Suva and Vancouver. The Niagara struck and exploded two mines and sank in seventy fathoms 15 miles East of Bream Head. There was no loss of life; rescue efforts succeeded in taking off all 340 passengers and crew. It is likely that Frederick Jackson was a member of Niagara's crew.

The **RMS Rangitane** was a passenger liner owned by the New Zealand Shipping Company. She was one of three sister ships (the other sisters were *Rangitata* and *Rangitiki*) delivered to the company in 1929 for the All-Red Route between Britain and New Zealand. *Rangitane* was built by John Brown & Company and launched on 27 May 1929.

The three ships each displaced 16,700 tons, 530 feet in length and nearly 70 feet in the beam. They could carry nearly 600 passengers in 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes, 200 crew members and substantial cargo. In wartime, they carried token armament.

Frederick Jackson's name, along with his correct date of birth, was entered into Rangitane's passenger list on the ship's last voyage along with the cryptic entry: Baltannic. Several other passengers were entered as Baltannic but I have been unable to obtain the derivation or significance of that word. In any case, it appears that many of the Rangitane's passengers had survived Niagara's sinking.

### Sinking

On her final voyage, which had been delayed by labour disputes, Rangitane carried 14,000 tons of cargo, including foodstuffs and silver bullion, valued at over £2 million at 1940 prices. She carried 111 passengers, including CORB (Children Overseas Reception Board) nurses, Polish sailors, servicemen and Radar technicians. The Captain was Lionel Upton, a naval reservist who had been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his "services in action with enemy submarines" during his command of auxiliary boats based at Scapa Flow during World War I

*Rangitane* left Auckland harbour in the early afternoon of Sunday 24 November 1940, en route to Britain via the Panama Canal. She was intercepted early on the morning of 27 November, 300 miles east of New Zealand, by the German surface raiders *Komet* and *Orion* and their support ship *Kulmerland*. Another ship, the SS *Holmwood*, had been stopped and sunk by the German raiders on 24 November, but warning of the danger had not been passed on to the *Rangitane*. This was later held to have been a factor in her sinking.

The Germans signalled *Rangitane* to stop and not to transmit anything. Following standard Admiralty instructions, however, Captain Upton ordered "QQQ" ('suspicious vessel') to be broadcast, which prompted signals jamming and shelling by the Germans. The main transmitter was quickly disabled and the emergency set was used to send



## Compassionate Foes - (Cont'd)

"RRR" ('raider attack'), which was received and relayed. There followed a brief period of confusion. One German raider, suffering steering problems, sailed directly at *Rangitane*, which in turn, with steering damaged by the shelling, also steered directly at a German ship before circling. The helmsman reported loss of steering.

The interception had been made in the dark and the German ships were unsure of what they had found, believing that it was probably a cruiser-sized warship. Their attack was made on the basis it was the tactic most likely to allow their own escape.

Once he knew that the distress signals had been received in New Zealand, Upton ordered the ship's surrender. The shelling had caused widespread fires and some casualties, and, with her steering damaged, the *Rangitane's* escape would be unlikely. Once hove to, sensitive documents such as code books were destroyed, and the crew instructed to destroy key engine components, to prevent *Rangitane* being taken as a prize. Despite the surrender, shelling continued and the furious Upton ordered full speed and return fire from the ship's guns, but this was prevented by destruction of telephones. The German shelling ceased and Upton gave the order to abandon ship.

Sixteen people, eight passengers and eight crew, died as a result of the action, including those who died later of their injuries. Elizabeth Plumb, a 59-year-old stewardess, ship's cook William Francis and deck mechanic John Walker were awarded British Empire Medals for their selflessness in rescuing and caring for survivors. Prize crews took control of *Rangitane* at dawn and supervised an orderly and rapid evacuation. The survivors, 296 passengers and crew, were taken across to the German ships by lifeboats or German boats and sent below.

The *Rangitane's* broadcast warnings required that the Germans clear the area quickly, before allied aircraft arrived. Although she was clearly afire and sinking, *Komet* fired a single torpedo and *Rangitane* listed quickly to port and sank at 6:30 am. The Short Empire class flying boat *Aotearoa*, civil registration *ZK-AMA*, was the first Allied aircraft on the scene at about 2:30 pm, but found only an oil slick and debris. A subsequent air search missed the raiders, although they themselves saw one of the search aircraft.

German treatment of their prisoners was humane and as good as could be expected in the crowded conditions, and those who died were given proper funerals. The number of prisoners aboard the German ships caused concern to the German commanders and they decided to release most of them. After an intended release at Nauru had been thwarted by poor weather, and further actions had led to the capture of more prisoners, the survivors – including Frederick Jackson -- were released on the tiny island of Emirau, off New Guinea. The remainder, mostly of military age, were transported back to German-occupied Bordeaux and eventually to prisoner-of-war camps in Germany.

On January 2, 1941, New Zealand's Prime Minister announced that enemy raiders had landed the passengers and crew of seven ships on Emirau. These were the *Rangitane*, *Holmwood*, *Triona*, *Vinni*, *Triadic*, *Komata* and *Triaster*. It was believed that survivors from three other ships, the *Turakina*, *Notou*, and *Ringwood* were still aboard the German raiders.



## Compassionate Foes

Frederick survived Emirau. I have a very vivid memory of being taken up to his bedroom in my grandmother's house in Fleetwood, Lancashire, the day after he came home. He was asleep. The contrast between the white sheets Frederick was sleeping on and his deeply suntanned face and arms was very marked. Like many soldiers and sailors, Frederick never spoke about his wartime experiences. We will probably never know exactly how and why Frederick came to be aboard the Rangitane, because like many soldiers, sailors and merchant seamen he never spoke about his wartime life. After recovering from his experiences, Frederick resumed his seafaring career until he retired to Lowestoft, England, where he ended his days. If the German raiders' had abandoned the Rangitane's passengers and crew instead of taking them aboard their own ships, Frederick's story would have ended much differently.

*Rangitane* was one of the largest passenger liners to be sunk during World War II.



British survivors on Emirau

Submitted by Stanley Evans.

Stanley Evans' next book, *Cemetery Road*, will be published in 2016. He is the author of the award-winning *Silas Seaweed* books, and the *Sergeant Decker* books.

### FORUM ROSTER

First Sunday of each month - Michael Riess Phone, [250-217-6069](tel:250-217-6069)  
 Second Sun. of each mon. - Jan Greenwood, Ph: [250-896-3813](tel:250-896-3813)  
 Third Sunday of each mon. - Forbes Leslie, Ph: [778-977-1288](tel:778-977-1288)  
 Fourth Sun. of each mon. - Alan Dawson, Ph: [250-472-6262](tel:250-472-6262)  
 Fifth Sun. of each month - Eliz. Atchison Ph: [250-472-6262](tel:250-472-6262)

### Birthdays in November

Nov 4<sup>th</sup> Eileen Crawford  
 Nov 25<sup>th</sup> Dana Seaborn

Is your Birthday missing, please let  
 Amanda know on 250 382-6828



## UU Island Network News

### UUIN News

The Unitarian Universalist Islands Network enjoyed the luxury of a face to face meeting with representatives from all over our region following the BC Regional Fall Gathering held in Nanaimo in Oct. One of the things we discussed was our intention to foster connections between members of our congregations through social justice work.

Here are two opportunities to bring Islanders together to live out our Principles:

1. Social justice work of compassionate action is central to living out our Unitarian Principles. Recent changes to the federal CRA rules regarding charities are making it more difficult for many Unitarians to do the political advocacy work they wish to do through their home congregations. Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) is a national organization founded to actively promote Unitarian values through social action. It is not a registered charity, nor is it affiliated with the CUC or any Unitarian congregation. This allows the CUSJ the freedom to act - demonstrate, write, protest, organize - without constraint. Consideration is being given to form a Vancouver islands chapter of the CUSJ. This is not a complex procedure and would allow local islands' Unitarians a venue for action without having to work within congregation/fellowship charity guidelines. The organisers in Victoria, would like to know if there is any interest in creating an islands chapter. We could work together on common issues and also promote and support each other's local projects. For more information, please contact Leslie Gillett at [leslieucv@gmail.com](mailto:leslieucv@gmail.com).

2. First Victoria is studying ways to best act around the refugee crisis. We are gathering info before a congregational meeting of Nov 22 when we will be asking the congregation whether or not they would like to sponsor a refugee family. We are asking about whether or not any congregation would like to possibly co-sponsor a refugee family with First Victoria. Could you also please let us know what you are considering doing so we can get the fullest picture possible. Thank you. Leslie Gillett, [leslieucv@gmail.com](mailto:leslieucv@gmail.com).



John Pullyblank



## Counters & Impressions of the sermon by Rabbi Harry

### Counters for November

November 1 Jenelle Yorkman and Jim Rogers

November 8 John Pullyblank and Dyanne Linegar

November 15 Kimiko Hymans

November 22 Frank Bowie and Mike Riess

November 29 Rita Wittman and Jim Rogers

Thanks to these great folks for taking care of our money! If you would like to donate a half hour of your time once a month, please join our counting team! You'll make new friends and improve your math skills. Please talk to Rita or email her at [wittmanr@gmail.com](mailto:wittmanr@gmail.com)

The topic for Rabbi Harry's talk on Oct 25th, at First Unitarian Church of Victoria, was "Listening to Jewish Experience". When I arrived, the parking lot was already beyond full, and so was the street parking in all directions. People wanted to listen to the Jewish experience. This in itself carries a spark.

A large and attentive crowd gathered in the sanctuary, a vast and simple space with light pouring through a tall stained glass window depicting one earth, and over a tapestry that clearly, to me, symbolized oneness. Maybe the Shema is for all of us. Maybe the "Uni" in "Universalist Unitarian" is an invitation for us to see what unites us, unifies us, if we will take the time to listen to each other.

Rabbi Harry's first job at the service was to tell a story for the group of children gathered crosslegged at the front. Reverend Melora Lynngood prepared the children by reminding them of five ways of listening, the most important of these being to listen with our hearts. And Rabbi Harry got right down to the children's eye level, and almost whispered, though the excellent miking let us grownup children hear him perfectly. His story had them laughing and participating, and learning about values, real values. The story began with a traveling prince who wanted to find something of value to bring back to his father. In a place where diamonds were everywhere, diamonds were of no value at all. I couldn't help thinking of our Canadian kids and the value of "Peace". In the Israeli school where I worked, "Shalom" was a palpable, physically longed for, thing of value. As was "Salam". The children at this morning's service listened to an entertaining story, and ended by calling out what they value, family, health, money, pork (yes, and Harry played on that sweetly throughout the morning). The children then proceeded from the sanctuary, under the arches of outstretched hands across the aisles, to the hymn;

"We hold you in our love as you go, as you go.

May your heart be at peace as you go.

To nurture the spark of your precious life

We hold you in our love as you go".

(Cont'd)



## Summary of the sermon by Rabbi Harry (Cont'd)

What followed was the Unitarian equivalent of a Mi Sheberach, where people who sought solace or healing came up and silently placed a candle to float over water, to meditative melodies. Silent meditation to gentle music was a nurturing part of this service. "We Need Each Other" was the next song, sung in harmonies to the gentle beat of a dombek drum.

And then Rabbi Harry spoke. He spoke of how new it is, this privilege of being both Canadian and Jewish, in contrast to earlier times when people were Jews living in Poland or Turkey, but never part of the nationality of the place. He was frank about Canada's less than welcoming stand regarding Jewish refugees before, during and after the Second World War, in the "None is Too Many" period. He described how easily Jews, or any group, can be inadvertently made to feel marginalized, for example when a teacher promises that Santa Claus will come to the houses of good little children. He spoke of our role in dialogues about Israel. Our role is not to judge a right and a wrong side on each issue. Our role is to meet and to listen to each other. To dialogue. Our kids at college should not be burdened with the notion that they need to defend Israel at every step. We need to listen to each other. There was so much more. I'm feeling that we should invite Rabbi Harry to share the notes he wrote in preparation, as well as the thoughts that occurred to him as he spoke, passionately and from the heart, to this congregation who really seemed to be listening. From the heart. His ending words reminded us that our encounters must, must begin with lovingkindness. Chesed first. Only then discernment, factfinding, defending. First lovingkindness, openness, listening. We are all brothers and sisters.

There was a good turnout from the Jew - nitarian community, those who are Jewish and go to the Unitarian services, whose mission is:

"Strengthened in spiritual growth,  
Supported in community  
Energized by diversity,  
We strive to transform  
Ourselves and our world  
Through compassionate action"

There was an excellent turnout from the Jewish community, such that in the discussion time, each table was a mix of Jewish and non-Jewish participants. The guideline in the discussion was to listen to each person's words, and take a few moments of silence to fully take in that person's thoughts, before responding. Maybe we need more of this in our dialogues. Maybe we need to let go of the imperative to take firm sides on each issue that is discussed. Maybe we need to come in first with lovingkindness and hearts that listen. Maybe we need to be brave enough, as the Reverend Melora Lynngood suggested, to enter these discussions, be awkward in them because we are not reciting a tried and true side, but truly, truly, listening to each other.

By Nomi Kaston (Daughter of Murray and Eleanor Enkin)

