



Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation

The Capital Letter

VICTORIA, BC

2016



More Than Enough
By Marge Piercy

The first lily of June opens its red mouth.
All over the sand road where we walk
multiflora rose climbs trees cascading white or pink blossoms, simple, intense the scene drifting like colored mist.

The arrowhead is spreading its creamy clumps of flower and the blackberries are blooming in the thickets.
Season of joy for the bee.

The green will never again be so green, so purely and lushly new, grass lifting its wheaty seedheads into the wind.

Rich fresh wine of June, we stagger into you smeared with pollen, overcome as the turtle laying her eggs in roadside sand.

Sunday Services in July

July 3rd Rosemary Morrison “**Learning to Pray?**” In this service Rosemary will share with us some of the ups and downs of her experience at Vancouver General Hospital. She is there completing a unit of C.P.E. (Clinical Pastoral Education). In this service Rosemary will talk about some of the challenges and rewards of being a spiritual care provider in a hospital setting. Learning to pray? Definitely one of the challenges!

Children's Program



July 10th Dar Gareau Levy “**A Message of Love.**” In a world where those who are different are still bullied, still made to feel less than the rest, where many transgender youth still feel that suicide is the only option they have to escape that hurt and ridicule, we of the Unitarian-Universalist faith continue to stand on the side of love and confirm the inherent worth and dignity of all. In the shadow of the Orlando shootings, and as Victoria wraps up it's Pride Week, please join us as we take a closer look at what it's like to be queer, and celebrate how our UU message of love and radical acceptance can change the world.

Dar is a member at First Unitarian Church of Victoria. Today is Pride Sunday!

Children's Program



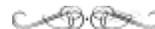
July 17th Peter Scales “**Music and Spirituality**” If you have no music in your soul then you are not to be trusted. So wrote Shakespeare in The Merchant of Venice. Music is an important element of worship in UU and other religious services. Why is that? What do we get from making music together?

Children's Program



July 24th Rev. Samaya Oakley “**Living into Interdependence with Love and Justice**” On May 20th Canadian Unitarians approved a new vision. Join Rev. Samaya Oakley as we explore the possibilities to bring this new vision to life.

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 July & August

July 31st Amanda Tarling “**Ceremonies: Marking the moments that matter**” and **Peter’s Lay Chaplain Retirement Ceremony.**

How do we make every day celebrations meaningful again? Our culture has seemingly forgotten the necessity of honouring transitions through all stages of our lives. Come and hear how we can create ceremonies that resonate be it for a birthday or retirement, baby shower or coming of age. Please also come to acknowledge the 8 years of work that Peter has done for Capital in his role of Lay Chaplain.

Children's Program



August 7th Murray Enkin & Peter Scales “**Are you: Religious? Spiritual? Neither? Both?**”

Children's Program



August 14th Ben Dolf “**The time has come; so let us plant an apple tree.**”

That is the translated title of a wonderful book by the German scientist, writer and TV personality Hoimar von Ditfurth. He wrote a number of much discussed books on science, ecology and peace. Oddly, his most influential book has not been translated into English. It talks about our place on this earth, our seeming inability to take care of it and about coming to terms with its destruction, without falling prey to inaction and fatalism. Ben will talk about the subtle messages of this author and the role this book has played in his attempt to come to terms with a world that is not behaving as it should.

Children's Program



August 21st Lindsay Hindle “**Affirming Life With Rituals**”

Rituals are a part of life, from daily routine habits like making coffee to life milestones that inspire us to celebrate. This talk will illuminate how we have an opportunity to harness the power of consciously designed rituals to affirm any aspect of our life, including self growth, transition and manifesting desired dreams our outcomes.

Children's Program



August 28th Alan Dawson “**The Songlines**” "The Songlines" is inspired by a book of the same title by Bruce Chatwin. He ventures into the desolate land of Outback Australia to learn the meaning of the Aboriginal's ancient "Dreaming-tracks." Along these timeless paths, among the fortune hunters and redneck Australians, racist policemen and Aboriginal holy men, Bruce discovers a wondrous vision of our place in the world. In the book Bruce muses upon war, peace, wandering and many other issues. My Homily will hopefully interest each one of us to ask the question, "What is my "Songline" or "Dreaming track" just what is it that guides us through the labyrinth of our lives.

Children's Program





Summer Board Report

Your all-volunteer board of directors thinks every day about how & why Capital has been gradually shrinking during the past few years. Is the shrinkage because of something we are doing or not doing, or because BC society no longer values attendance/membership?

At UVic recently Marna and I attended a lecture by sociologist Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme, D.Phil. (Oxford), on “The Religious Nones in BC.” ‘Nones’ are people who, when asked what religion they identify with, answer ‘none’. Sarah’s ad blurb said, “Ever wonder how big the religious nones group is in BC? How many of these individuals are bona fide atheists, and how many practice personal spiritualities? What value orientations and issue positions we find prevalent among the unaffiliated?” She showed statistics which reveal that the percentage of ‘nones’ in BC has levelled off in BC at about 38%. Younger people tend to be ‘none’ more than older people. Significant in BC is that immigrants from China are ‘nones’, whereas in Ontario the immigrants tend to come from more religious countries with fewer nones. Also significant is that many BC residents, including nones, report that matters of the spirit are important to them; they simply don’t see why they should belong to a religion. This talk inspired me to follow-up on some of the things she said and the people she quoted, and to consider their applicability to Capital UU.

Reginald Bibby is a sociologist at the University of Lethbridge. Last year in the Vancouver Sun, in an essay by Douglas Todd, Bibby suggested that in order to reverse the slide in numbers, liberal congregations (like CUUC, I would say) should: “Move beyond academia. A key principle of liberal religion is: “Don’t leave your brain at the sanctuary door.” As a result, liberal religion has developed mostly in theology schools and religious studies departments, where it has taken difficult questions, and doubts, seriously. Many liberals... became so engaged in intellectual trends, including forms of post-colonial, feminist, liberation, post-modernist and deconstructionist theory, that they stopped supporting the development of the church. They need to get back to engaging with congregations and society.” Also, congregations should “Rediscover the passion, embrace the spirit. Even though liberals believe evangelicals can be too strict, the paradox is that theologically conservative worship services are often emotional and ecstatic. Can liberal religious people, who lean more toward the rationalistic, find their own spiritual aliveness?” In a July 2015 interview in Faith Today, Bibby said, “People aren’t in a market for churches, they are in a market for ministry. If all a group can say is, “We have the top church in town,” that’s not what people want. They want to know that their involvement is worthwhile, that it’s having an impact on their life and their family’s lives. Significance is a huge topic.” Dr Wilkins-Laflamme told us at UVic that Bibby “believes that people have a religious hole in their lives.”

Calgary-based sociologist (and active member of a church) Joel Thiessen, PhD, has just written “The Meaning of Sunday: The Practice of Belief in a Secular Age,” and launched the Flourishing Congregations Institute at Ambrose University in Calgary. In a Faith Today interview, Thiessen said, “Congregations that are thriving have an active presence within the community, in terms of both evangelism and social justice. They are making a difference.” And he writes, “The number one reason someone joins is that someone they know in the group has asked them.” Thiessen also said that “equipping and empowering leaders from within the group contributes to a flourishing congregation.” Dr Wilkins-Laflamme told us at UVic that Thiessen believes that the ‘church product’ is weak in most places, and that’s why people stay away on Sunday mornings.

Steve Bruce, sociologist at the University of Aberdeen, is perhaps the most prominent living proponent of secularisation theory. “The attitude of most believers has shifted: from being loyal followers to being selective consumers.” “At the societal level, the long-term result [of state acceptance of diverse religious groups] is a shift to evermore liberal and tolerant forms of religion and eventually to benign indifference.

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Summer Board Report - continued

(Continued from page 3)

When all faiths are in some sense equally valid, parents lack an incentive to indoctrinate their children, and the environment proves stony ground for such seeds of faith as are planted.” Bruce questions whether there is a demand for New Age spirituality among people who would formerly have been mainstream religious adherents, and he notes that New Age spirituality (which I feel includes some of how we do worship at Capital UU) lacks much of the good that mainstream religions had when they were dominant.

At CUUC we co-create our religious practices each week. In the marketplace of ideas and ideologies, we believe that we have a good thing going... but most people don't know about us or about Unitarian-Universalism. I believe that sociologists Wilkins-Laflamme, Thiessen and Bruce – as well as scholars of religion like UU Paul Bramadat at UVic – could help us to understand what is going on in society, and how we can keep up. Your board of directors is thinking of ways to bring some of this wisdom into Capital.

See you on Sunday!

For the board... Peter Scales

The Pride Parade is Sunday July 10th - starting at 12 noon. From noon onward Amanda will be staffing a table at the Pride celebrations at Fisherman's wharf. Amanda will be telling people about the work of Capital's Lay Chaplains and would LOVE some help. If you have an hour or two to spare she would be very grateful for some assistance. You would be chatting about about our Welcoming congregation and about the services we offer the LGBTQ2 community. The Pride Celebrations are an incredible event, full of laughter and great enthusiasm. Come join the celebration!



CUUC CARE AND CONCERN COMMITTEE

The Care and Concern Committee members are the CUUC volunteers who send Birthday, Get Well, Best Wishes and special event cards to the congregants. We also send flowers occasionally. We are also available to make personal telephone calls and home visits if requested. On a limited basis, we have begun to try to fill special requests.

If you are aware of anyone who requires our services or wishes to make their personal requests known while they are sick at home, in hospital or otherwise unavailable please call:

Eileen Crawford 250-480-7206

Dyanne Lineger 250-380-3722



The UVic Unitarian Club

By Peter Scales

University life can be bewildering... away from home, responsible for one's own care and feeding, meeting new people, trying new things... even aside from the coursework and classes! The University of Victoria has about 100 clubs which give students and community members chances to meet new people and try interesting non-scholastic activities. There are about 15 religious clubs, and for the past decade this list has included the UVic Unitarian Club. The club was started in 2005 and is led by Peter Scales, who is a member of Capital UU Congregation and First Unitarian Church of Victoria.

Capital Letter: What does the UVic Unitarian Club do?

Peter: During the UVic school year the club meets every Monday afternoon for a 90-minute discussion meeting, in small group ministry format. We light a chalice, introduce ourselves, a topic is proposed, and the discussion ensues. When time is up we extinguish the chalice. Some students go for supper together afterward.

CL: Who participates in the UVic Unitarian Club?

P: Although all UVic clubs are open to students as well as community members, the Unitarian Club is regularly attended by undergraduate and graduate students. There are no membership fees, so it really is open to all. Two kinds of student are attracted to the club: students who are already Unitarian-Universalist, and students who are interested in UU-ism after meeting one or two campus UU's. The already-UU students seek to extend the community that they felt at home; the new-to-UU students are looking for connection and dialogue in a welcoming and non-judgemental group.

CL: How do students find the UVic Unitarian Club?

P: The UVic Students' Society organizes 'Clubs Days' in September and January, at which all clubs can have a table of information and recruiters. Club members and I staff the table, answering questions and inviting people to check out the club discussions. Already-UU students often sign up without a lot of chit-chat; students who have never heard of UU sometimes need coaxing.

CL: Does that mean that you are evangelizing or proselytizing to impressionable students?

P: Neither. Unitarians do not aim to convert anyone to their religion. I am informing intelligent young adults about a club and a religion in which they will be open to ethical discussions of important topics, be free to question dogma, and be in community with similar folks.

CL: What kind of 'ethical discussions of important topics' happen at the Unitarian Club?

P: Here are some examples:

"Some UUs have an unofficial trinity: reason, acceptance and freedom. What do those words mean to you?"

"Jews, Christians and Muslims have central mythologies. Do Unitarians have a central mythology? Do you?"

"Many 'believers' feel that non-Christians (or whatever) are necessarily immoral because they lack God's guidance or the moral force of a god's wrath. Some theorists suggest that human moral development takes place entirely before age 16; what do you think? Where do we learn morals? Who taught you to be a good person? Who is teaching you now? (Continued on page 6)



The UVic Unitarian Club - continued

(Continued from page 5)

Is that enough? How important is consistency in values and morals, for you, your friends and partners?”

“The 6th principle says that UU’s affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. Who is ‘all’ in “peace, liberty, and justice for all”? Does it matter what happens to people in other countries? If such a thing exists, where do you fit into the world community?”

CL: Was the Unitarian Club already going or did you start it?

P: When I lived near Queen’s University there were three or four UU students who attended Sunday services at Kingston Unitarian Fellowship (KUF). One day the students noticed that a religious club was lobbying for the closure of the sexual health clinic on campus. The UU’s were told that if they wanted to fight back they first had to form a club. With the blessing of the Rev. Kathy Sage, four of us drew up a constitution and submitted the paperwork for the UU Club of Queen’s. We didn’t do a lot of activism but as the club grew I saw the many benefits of such a campus ministry group: community building, moral development, safety for GLBTQ students, and outreach with the downtown congregation.

When I moved to Victoria in 2004 to attend UVic, ministerial student Antonia Won had just created a young adult group at the Unitarian church on West Saanich Road. Half of the attendees were taking classes at UVic. When Antonia’s study term ended, the group almost dissolved. In September 2005 therefore I created the UVic Unitarian Club, based on the Queen’s University model. I happily led the club until May 2016, when I decided to take a break.

CL: Will you restart the Unitarian Club in September 2016?

P: I’m not sure.

CL: What are some highlights of the first decade of the UVic Unitarian Club?

P: Several come to mind! At least one undergrad has found the club a safe place to come out of the closet as gay. At least one marriage started at the club. One 1st-year student was being bullied in her dorm, and UU students helped her move into a better place and get support from campus services; when she returned for 2nd year she told me that the Unitarian Club was one of the main reasons for continuing at UVic. I have written several reference letters for job-seeking UU students, and one Rhodes Scholarship reference! But mostly I was regularly touched by how thoughtful the students were as they engaged in important dialogue, and when they thanked me for setting up the unique structure.



University of Victoria



UUIN Men's Retreat

The UU Men's Retreat

Please join an amazing group of men for the 27th Annual UU Men's Retreat from Friday, Sept 30 to Sunday Oct 2, 2016 at the Sasamat Outdoor Centre this fall. Surrounded by the forest bordering beautiful Lake Sasamat (about 30 minutes from Vancouver, BC), this event is a rare opportunity to reflect on your quality of life, work with and learn from other men, discover more of yourself, and build relationships both new and old. More importantly, this is a chance to relax and have FUN in the company of strong, gentle, witty and wise men – all in a serene, inspiring, natural environment.

Since 1990 this (mostly) annual event has been organized by and for (mostly) Unitarian men who celebrate and welcome all traditions, backgrounds, orientations and faiths. There is no membership or belief required other than respect for yourself and others.

Much of our time is spent in both structured and informal discussion and conversation, but there is also plenty of opportunity to visit the private beach, walk the trail around the lake, or take on the local biking trails. We'll also enjoy campfires, opportunities for artistic and musical expression, story-telling and humour, as well as informative workshops celebrating our inherent expertise.

The spacious lodge where we meet daily (which also houses washrooms and showers) has covered porches with indoor and outdoor fireplaces; five meals and snacks are included. We sleep in simple, shared, heated cabins in the forest (bring your own towels, soap, sleeping bag and pillow). It's a camp – no hotel, but not roughing it. No one else lives around the lake. This is a wonderful, quiet, inspiring place for this event. The facilities can accommodate over 80 people but we limit our group to between 40 and 60 men to support connection and cohesion. Don't miss out!

We gather at 5:00 pm, and start at 7:00 pm on Friday and end after lunch on Sunday. If cost is a barrier, we may have support available – please ask.

To register or for more information go to heyuu.ca and follow the links.

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UUIN Men's Retreat - continued

The UU Men's Retreat - continued from page 7

Ticket prices are based on sharing the costs of about \$5400 among 40 men (that's \$135 each), so we encourage those who are able to choose a higher level of support so that all men can afford to attend.

On the web site, as you register, when you are asked to pay you will have 4 options as to the amount of your payment. The first 3 are based on your assessment of what you can afford and the last one is for first timers. We have about 50 people registered so, if you want to join us please register soon. There are men from Comox and Nanaimo registered so car pooling from the Island will happen. There is no deadline for registration other than that once we fill up we can sadly take no more men.

Tier 1 - \$130

Tier 2 - \$160

Tier 3 - \$180

Newcomers - \$115

Get ready for a wonderful weekend in the woods!





Is your stole getting dusty - webinar by Amanda

“Is your stole getting dusty” was the tag line that I used to advertise the inaugural webinar presented by the CUC in February, aimed at helping Lay Chaplains find more business and get better known in their communities.

Twenty Lay Chaplains, that is nearly one quarter of all of the Canadian Lay Chaplains, from Vancouver Island to Prince Edward Island came together for five evenings in January to talk about outreach strategies. Lay Chaplains from every single province were represented, easily demonstrating the power of a webinar to bring groups of people together over vast distances.

The webinar covered our online presence (both personally and that of our home congregations), social media, our competition, business cards, brochures, wedding fairs, and the vast number of other Rites of Passage that often get overlooked. These include ceremonies for Pets, for loss such as miscarriage, dyingways; for those in Palliative care, and birthingways for expectant Mothers. We discussed diverse topics ranging from Search Engine Optimization to piggybacking on the advertising our home congregations already had in place. My goal was to provide useful information to Lay Chaplains that was accessible, no matter the level of computer or social media comfort. We even talked about generating QR codes and making YouTube movies of ourselves to upload to our congregations` websites.

One of my favourite exercises is to encourage each Lay Chaplain to write a warm bio to appear on their congregation`s website. This is a list of words that our amazing Lay Chaplains nationwide use to describe the work they do:

Craft, meaningful, community, inclusive, interfaith, create, co-create, personal, unique, respectful, encompassing, welcoming, liberal, support, spiritual, honouring, perfect, celebration, flexible, resourceful, conscientious, elegant, traditions, inspiring, romantic, beloved, weaving, sensitive, caring, professional, trained, hope, joy, vision, opportunity, design,



Is your stole getting dusty - by Amanda

passionate, ritual, transformative, beauty, mystery, in-depth, milestones, responsible, strive, privilege, blessing, commitment, convictions, vibrant, fluid, build, seek, express, contemporary, innovative, imaginative, calm, reassuring, cultivate and intimate.

Who wouldn't want us to craft a ritual that encompassed all of those evocative sentiments.

As the presenter I learned an interesting webinar lesson when I started the first session by inviting participants to join me in song:

Tell ev'ry one I know – I am a Lay Chaplain, (3x)

Am a Chaplain, am a Chaplain, am a Chaplain.

(To the tune of "This little light of mine")

I discovered that 20 microphones across the country connected via internet are good for discussions but not so much to sing together! However the main message from the webinar was highlighted in lyrics of the song. One of the most successful ways to network is to literally tell everyone you know what you do. Most people will need a ceremony at some point in their lives.

We discovered many similarities across the country. Marriage Commissioners have stepped up their game and now it is hard to see the difference between what they offer (for \$78 for the first hour and \$25 per hour thereafter in B.C.) and what we offer (about \$300). Unitarian Lay Chaplains used to offer a completely unique service; we were renowned and sought out for personally crafted, co-created ceremonies that were inclusive of all faiths, religious traditions, genders, sexual orientations, cultures, ages, or races. Now it seems Marriage Commissioners offer these same services.

Much of the webinar's focus was on weddings as they are by far the most popular rite of passage. In Canada the average age to get married is 28. This is a demographic that is internet savvy and active on social media. Thus there was much emphasis on these platforms for Lay Chaplains.



Summer Camp- Shawnigan Lake - Aug 19-21



Unitarian Universalist 2016
Summer Camp
"A Voyage of Discovery"

Register early to save
Welcome families, elders, singles - YOU!
Online: viuc.unitariancongregation.org
Phone: 250 888 5146



Shawnigan Lake, BC
Easter Seals Camp
Aug 19-21, 2016

I am on a voyage of discovery. I search for those of you who will go on a great adventure...if you are one of those audacious few willing to dare and then to share...then come with me.

-William H. Danforth, Body, Mind, Spirit



Unitarian “Dear Abby”

Dick kindly forwarded this to me and I thought you would enjoy it...

[Note: These days, Dear Abby is written by the original Abby's daughter]

Dear Abby: I was raised in the Christian faith by my pastor parents. As I reached my early teens, I realized that those beliefs didn't really fit, and I gradually stopped attending church. I stayed away all through college. My time away only solidified that, in terms of belief, Christianity wasn't for me. After I graduated this year, I realized I missed the community and ritual of the faith and the church. There are a number of churches in my area, but I feel guilty attending one when I don't believe in the same things as the other members. My family always taught me to be considerate of the beliefs of the people around me, and it seems dishonest to go to a service and listen to prayers my heart doesn't embrace. I'd still like to attend church. Have you any suggestions for what might be a good course of action? Should I go to church or stay home?

Unorthodox in Ohio

Dear Unorthodox: You don't have to stay home. Instead, explore a denomination that has no dogma or creed. One in particular, Unitarian Universalism, has been mentioned before in this column. Unitarian Universalists believe in the dignity and worth of every human being, and encourage and support others in following their personal spiritual paths. If you would like more information, visit www.uua.org.
<http://www.sfgate.com/entertainment/article/Dear-Abby-My-friend-wants-to-be-transgender-and-6775356.php>

Summer Birthdays

July 10	Nan Fairchild
July 26	Brian MacDonald
Aug 18	Lynda Mazerolle
Aug 26	Lena Toneff
Aug 31	Adrienne Poirier

If your Birthday is missing please let Amanda know 250 418-0887

