



Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation

The Capital Letter

VICTORIA, BC

2016



Sunday Services in September

September 4th Susan Layng "Canadian Justice: Is there Hope after Prison?"

Our 1st principal states we believe in the worth and dignity of every human being. Can this include convicted felons? Susan will take us on an exploration of what it was like to work with Federal incarcerated inmates, our parole system and life after prison. Her message encourages us to open ourselves to the possibility of Healing and Hope in an otherwise lost and forgotten segment of our society.

Children's Program



Sept 11th Dr. Dana L. Seaborn "Water Communion"

Due to the EGM, the "Homecoming" service planned for Sept 11 will be postponed to October 30. In its place, Dana Lynn Seaborn will present a service on UU Water Communion. DLS spent over a decade living on the water, and has more recently taken up surfing. Even as a child, she was known in her family for being the one who, at every summer park visit, always managed to fall into the duck pond! Share her enthusiasm for water! Come & explore with her the origin and meaning of our UU Water Communion.

Children's Program



Sept 18th Anna Isaacs "By Heart"

Unitarian head and Universalist heart is a common shorthand for describing these two streams of our history. For just over a year I've worn a chalice necklace. What have I learned about how I live my faith with my head and my heart during this time?

Children's Program



Sept 25th Peter Scales "Truth and Meaning: It's up to you"

Our 4th principle affirms and promotes a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. When we say that the search is free and responsible, UUs have a duty to learn and apply reason.

Children's Program



Again the wind
flakes gold leaf from the trees
and the painting darkens -
as if a thousand penitents
kissed an icon
till it thinned
back to bare wood,
without diminishment

Jane Hirshfield

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.



Board Notes

For many Unitarian Universalists, as well as for the Orthodox Christians, September First is the start of the 'church' year. Summer is over and harvest will soon begin. The equinox is coming on Sep 20-21. Some of our Muslim neighbours leave for the Hajj, and locals celebrate Eid al-Adha, Sep 11. School starts for learners of all ages, Sep 7. Men in Victoria find their trousers and make a space for storing their shorts; women in Victoria consider wearing closed-toe shoes.

At Capital UU Congregation there will be at least five highlights to the month of September: Susan Layng will speak on Sep 4 about justice for released prisoners; Dana Seaborn will lead us in thoughts about ageing and dying on Sep 11; Anna Isaacs returns to our pulpit on Sep 18; Peter Scales will discuss one of the Unitarian principles on Sep 25; and we will have an Extra General Meeting (EGM) after the service on Sep 11 to discuss three important items.

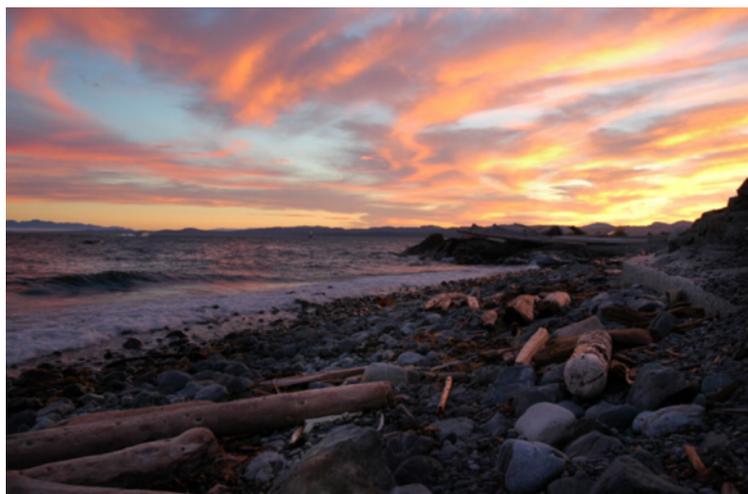
The three important items at the EGM are a financial update, a change to our Bylaws regarding what happens if CUUC ever dissolves, and the creation of a 'Life Member' category of membership. We hope that all voting members (defined as persons who have signed the Membership Register not less than 60 days ago and who have made a financial contribution of record to Capital during the current fiscal year, or have made a bona fide pledge to do so within the current fiscal year) come and hear what the Board is proposing. Our aim is to find consensus on each of the items.

If you are a member of Capital and you wish to bring other business before the congregation at the EGM, please contact the secretary of the Board, Peter, at scalesp@telus.net, for inclusion on the agenda.

As I was composing this report I tried to make a connection between Capital's pebbles of joy & concern, and the pebbles that Abraham threw at Satan as the fallen angel tried to stop Abraham from carrying out his god's request (celebrated at Eid). Maybe on Sun., Sep 11 someone can come up with something meaningful and witty that joins the two pebble stories, befitting Capital UU Congregation's reputation for meaning and wit.

See you at Capital!

Peter Scales





From Elizabeth

Community is exploring with your arms wide open. You may bump into something or someone. You may be repelled with a belly bounce or be embraced.

One of the topics we recently talked about at the Saturday Chat-In was, Community. We mentioned advantages and disadvantages of being part of it. While a community can be inclusive or exclusive. I am quite sure most of us find Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation, inclusive. We are always keen to be welcoming.

In community, we can choose to develop closer relationships. Those of us who wish to be anonymous and even secretive probably won't seek out such a group in the first place. As far as we know, most humans have chosen to live in some form of community since the beginning of humanity. Yet, we recognize to do so isn't always easy. However, there are many rewards for doing so.

What are some of the benefits of participating in a community? A group may make a real effort to collaborate on decisions and even if this slows the decision process, chances are they will be wiser choices in the end. It takes courage for an individual in any group, to hold an opinion which is politically unpopular or some may say incorrect. Through open discussion in respectful tones, all people can be part of the same community and still affirm our seven, carefully developed principles. This is achieved by a gradient voting system in our general meetings. Is this a more democratic way?

Knowledge can be freely circulated amongst the group through conversation and regular committee meetings which are open to all adherents of Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Do you have a wish or even a need to express your thoughts out loud? How great it can be to have appreciative feed-back or learn how your idea can be improved upon. Conversation is an activity which is improved by sharing, especially when we can listen with an open heart. Then we have a win-win relationship where we all benefit and thrive. Even hermits need a community to give some practical support and care for their survival.

When we come together, this may require more effort. However if the task is shared it can be accomplished joyfully and the adage, "many hands make light work" is still true in my eyes. Does that ring true for you?

Elizabeth Atchison, just one of the caring group at Capital.



News

Birthdays in September

Sept 17 Susanne Garmsen
Sept 24 Maureen Zahir & Don Hume
Sept 29 Forbes Leslie

If your Birthday is missing
Please tell Amanda - tarling@shaw.ca
250 382-6828 or text 250 418-0887



Book Launch for "Wisdom Tales - Ancient Stories for Modern Times"

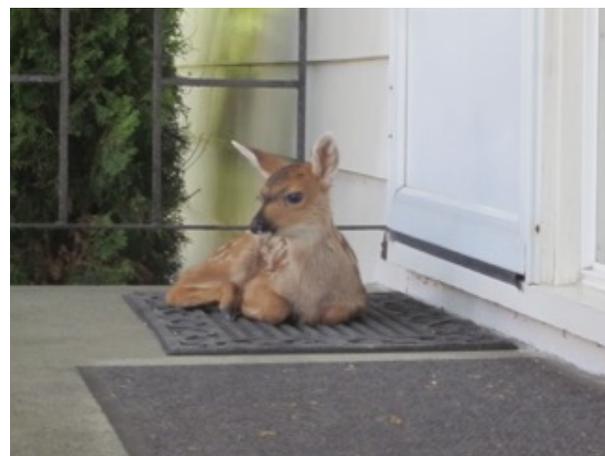
Friday September 30 Doors open 7 pm, begins 7:30 Free admission and Refreshments Come and celebrate with Faye Mogensen, Director of Spiritual Exploration and Learning for Children and Youth at First Unitarian Church of Victoria.

In sharing her story of writing the book, Faye will tell a selection of the folktales that are included in it. Musical interludes by Kristina Stevens, on her many flutes. Copies of the book will be available for purchase. A portion of the proceeds will go towards our nature playground project.

(Event takes place at
FUCV 5575 West Saanich Road.)



Stan had a visitor this summer - he writes; "This little fawn arrived on our doorstep. She spent eight hours with us before running away down Monterey Avenue at eight o'clock the same night."





In Memoriam - Bruce Partridge

In memoriam – Bruce Partridge

Contributed by Peter Scales

Bruce J. Partridge's connections to Victoria, BC, are two-fold: he was President of the University of Victoria from 1969 to 1972; and, he was a leader 1992-95 in the Unitarian Church of Victoria (renamed in 1999 as First Unitarian Church of Victoria), and was one of the founders in 1996 of Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

Bruce was raised in upstate New York and educated in Physics at Oberlin College in Ohio. (He began his contact with Unitarians in the Oberlin Fellowship during his undergrad degree.) After an initial stint as researcher at American Gas, Bruce went into educational administration, taking on ever greater responsibilities in each position. Finally, he spent four years as Vice President of Administration and Treasurer of Johns Hopkins University in Maryland before accepting a job in Canada.

With his wife Jerre, Bruce came to Vancouver Island in the fall of 1969 to serve as President of the University of Victoria. The late 1960s were tumultuous times on many North American campuses, and after three years at UVic Bruce resigned. Building on the law degree he'd done earlier in the US, he went to UBC and completed a Canadian law degree in 1975. Eventually, he became VP and General Counsel at Cominco (Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada), working at company headquarters in Vancouver.

Bruce and Jerre joined the Unitarian Church of Vancouver in 1979. May had already joined in 1977, and Bruce met her during a spring retreat when she became Chair of Worship Services and Bruce had taken on a role in Finance. This was the first of many occasions when Bruce and May shared in the leadership of a Unitarian congregation. May also came to know Jerre through their attendance together of one of the first Building Your Own Theology courses offered in Vancouver. However, Jerre's health declined and in 1986 she died, leaving Bruce with four adult children, their spouses and a growing group of grandchildren.

When the Rev. Suzanne R. Spencer arrived as Associate Minister at UCV in 1987, Bruce and May were among those she selected for her Ministerial Relations Committee. It was then that May and Bruce began a deeper relationship based on their shared sense of humour and appreciation of mutual values.



In Memoriam - Bruce Partridge - Continued

Thus, the summer of 1988 was marked by two momentous events: first, Bruce married May on June 28. Second, Bruce joined the law offices of Baker & McKenzie as managing director in Hong Kong. Baker & McKenzie was at that time the largest international law firm in the world and did extensive business in China. For her part, May had started new graduate work in Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University; when the newly-weds moved she was able to transfer to the University of Hong Kong to complete her Ph. D. in Sociology.

In 1992 Bruce and May Partridge moved from Hong Kong back to Victoria. Bruce began attending services at the Unitarian Church on Superior Street; May was busy as a sessional instructor in Sociology at UVic. Bruce initially worked with Eric, his eldest son, but then moved to Camosun College to teach Business Law and International Business for between 8 and 9 years. During that time he published a textbook, *Business Management in Canada*. When Bruce finished work at Camosun, May also finished her work at UVic. Bruce then started other kinds of writing, did independent contracts with a variety of organizations, and worked on becoming a parliamentarian. He eventually belonged to several parliamentary organizations, and was most involved with the Parliamentary Association of B.C.

During this time he continued active membership in the Unitarian Church of Victoria. As Victoria Unitarian historian Shirley d'Estrube writes, in 1993 the decision was made to sell the under-sized building on Superior Street and buy a building on West Saanich Road. "We got \$460,000 for Superior St., and paid \$875,000 for West Saanich." Bruce got involved in planning the move of the congregation, and in June 1995 May Partridge and Diane Brown organized a symbolic walk to carry the flame from Superior Street, through Victoria, and up to the new, rural location. In late 1995 the Partridges left the Unitarian church, and with others, began to re-establish a congregation in downtown Victoria. At first they met on Sundays in peoples' homes, but the group kept out-growing available living rooms. The founding members were Evelyn and Frank Buell, Dave and Jackie Spearman, Harald and Konnae Harresson, and May and Bruce Partridge. In March 1996 with fifty members, Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation was officially proclaimed.

Of Bruce's strengths, one that helped Capital to start on a firm grounding was his commitment to clear policies, proper agendas and minutes, and Roberts Rules of Order. Michelle (Poirier) Brown, who was a member of Capital in the early years, remembers, "I benefitted from Bruce's explanations of positive ways that Robert's Rules enhance orderly discussions.



In Memoriam - Bruce Partridge - Continued

Although he was initially suspicious of consensus decision-making, he eventually saw the benefits of structured consensus-building. Bruce strove for correct procedure in discussion, so that the dignity of people was protected.”

Continuing in this vein, Bruce started a three-year hitch as CUC Parliamentarian in May 2004. Peter Scales, a member of Capital UU and a then-member of the CUC Board, recalls Bruce’s steady hand and good humour during rocky meetings that included motions, amendments to motions, and amendments to the amendments.

Eli Mina was a parliamentarian colleague of Bruce’s. Eli wrote, “Bruce and I shared a passion for parliamentary procedure, for effective meetings, and for strong democracies. Bruce cared deeply about the Canadian Unitarian Council and wanted it to succeed and provide excellent value and leadership to its members across Canada. I will always remember Bruce for his great wit and sense of humour and abundance of interesting stories about Board governance issues. I will greatly miss Bruce as my respected colleague on the Parliamentarians Association of British Columbia.”

In 2008, May and Bruce Partridge moved to Cedar, just outside Nanaimo, and established what May cheerfully calls “the farm.” Bruce wrote, continued helping various organizations to accomplish their projects, and anchored his extended family. (Incidentally, Bruce’s son the Reverend Eric Partridge will soon take up his position as incumbent at St. Andrew’s Anglican Church, Sidney BC, effective Sep 18, 2016.)

Just before he died, Bruce finished writing *Effective Meetings - A Practical Guide*. It is being finalized, in soft cover and e-book, by Friesen Press and will be available this fall. Directed to the variety of organizations he felt were the heart and soul of community life, this book shows board chairs and others how to develop meeting cultures that are both efficient and effective – but most of all, treat people well.

Bruce Partridge left a legacy of determination and deep concern for UU principles, especially for the inherent worth and dignity of all persons, Unitarian and non-Unitarian.

He leaves his wife of 28 years, May Partridge, his daughter Heather, sons Eric and Brian, and daughter Bonnie; 9 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren; plus step-daughters Sheila Archer and Laurel Archer.

On Saturday, October 8, 2016, at 2 p.m. a celebration of the life of Bruce Partridge will be held in the chapel at the Bethlehem Retreat Centre on Westwood Lake in Nanaimo, B.C. Barbara Densmore will officiate.