



The Signal

Unitarian Fellowship of Kelowna Newsletter
October 2009

Upcoming Services

October 4, 2009 - What my Unitarian Faith Means To Me

Led by Rick Hardman

Four Unitarians will speak to those core values their personal Unitarian faith nourish. Give some thought yourselves, as we will be passing the microphone into our assembled audience for you to share your spiritual insights and passions. Try to bring a friend to this service.

Our Community Sunday special offering will go to the Drop-in Centre to help offer some Thanksgiving cheer to their homeless clients. Do plan to stay for lunch and conversation after the service. Building Future's meeting to follow.

October 11, 2009 - Celebrating Ancestors, Breaking Bread, Giving Thanks

Led by Rev. Linda Weaver Horton & the Children's RE Program

Today we give thanks for the courage and sacrifice of ancestors who came to Canada from other lands, and share bread from the places of our roots. Our RE coordinator Lois and the children will tell us about food and hunger around the world, and Rev Linda will reflect briefly upon how simply our pioneer ancestors lived in a time before runaway consumerism (if you have a story about that, do be in touch with her). We encourage families to bring bread baked together using a recipe that comes from a country your ancestors knew as home, if possible.

October 18, 2009 - Climate Change - Crisis and Opportunity

Led by Catherine Wellner

Through poetry, music, stories and reports of recent research, Cathryn Wellner will lead an exploration of the challenge of climate change. From pine beetle-infested forests to melting glaciers, we are watching our planet respond to both natural cycles and human hubris. We can respond to both the crisis and the opportunity.

October 25, 2009 - Dreams and Dollars - A discussion on Vision Based Stewardship

Led by Mitch Stefanek

We will have a community discussion exploring the relationship between dreams and dollars in our fellowship. All are invited to attend the Dreams and Dollars workshop being held at the fellowship on October 24 from 1:30-5:30pm

October 31, 2009 - Celebrating Samhain

Led by Lindsay Atkinson-Smith

Pagan service begins at 7pm at the Fellowship. Pagans, non pagans and all those interested in learning or experiencing a simple ritual are encouraged to attend.

November 1, 2009 - Something Wicked This Way Comes

Led by Rev. Linda Weaver Horton

Details in the next issue of the Signal

Minister's Musings

Fall start-up is always a particularly busy time in a church community. This is one time of year I make no attempt to keep within 2/3 time hours! The Board has kindly agreed to comp time in January so I can be with my daughter when her baby is due.

Due to a variety of circumstances including speaker availability, holidays, a newly declared World Climate Change Day, and travel schedules, I am leading worship less often in October and more often in November this fall. The more reason those of you who are new to the community may wonder what I do with the rest of my work time! I am also hoping to manage some changes in emphasis this year, so I invite your support in doing so.

Other than worship (both leaving and in a supportive, coaching role with newer leaders), a minister's responsibilities include many things: education (all ages), pastoral care and counselling, administration, program support and generation, encouraging social action initiatives, being an Ex Officio member of the Board on most committees, being a voice for the larger picture and working to build spiritually healthy and engaging community (with the Hospitality and Membership - Ho/Me - team), being a UU historian and theologian and a promoter of UU Principles within the church and larger community. Ministers in our tradition are expected to be scholars (hence one month a year of 'study leave' in most of our covenants with congregations). I'm also, on occasion, a spokesperson within the larger community, i.e. with the monthly column I write for the Capital News.

Since I have been with this congregation, I have spent considerable time supporting religious exploration for children and youth (the Coming of Age program this past year). I've also been responsible for a good deal of administration, especially this past year without a paid office assistant. My thanks to Linda Sampson, who has volunteered for two years and would like to step down, Audrey Pekrul and Liz Earl for their willingness to engage in copying, phoning and other activities to facilitate smooth communication. The computer used to be a minor part of a minister's day, other than sermon-writing. Now, I can spend many hours in front of a computer screen. I miss having more face to face time with the people I minister with and to. This year, I would like to have more hours in the week for pastoral care and counselling, spiritual companionship and adult religious exploration groups, and simply enjoying getting to know more about you and your lives. Especially now, I would like to feel I know many of you well enough to keep your needs and hopes in mind as we envision our future together - in terms of programs and mission as well as facilities.

When I first conferred with the search Committee about coming to serve this congregation, we agreed that growing the children's program was a high priority. Among other training, I do have basic Renaissance Certification from the Unitarian Universalist Association, so I have more

background in this area than most UU ministers. In addition, both I and my children grew up in such programs. I will continue to have oversight responsibilities in that area. We have, however, grown from a high of 6 children on a Sunday morning my first year to 22 children on our in-gathering Sunday this September. Lois Beischer has been working with us for several years now, along with several experienced adult leaders. I would like to be able to step back from spending most of my 'free' Sundays leading the children's program, with the extensive preparation that it can involve. I am, in effect, a volunteer in the Sunday morning children's program, since my contract does not cover that time.

We need some additional support for the RE program and administration if I am to be able to shift my focus. If our Canvass goes well next month, perhaps we can hire an office assistant for 3 or more hours a week come January. In the meantime, if you have been wondering where you might offer a few volunteer hours, please do consider the children's program, office volunteering, and helping our Ho/Me team create an even more warm and supportive community.

I look forward to our next year together!

In Faith, Rev. Linda

Religious Exploration

Children's Program

Our children's RE program was off to a great start with a Dr. Seuss open house on September 12, attended by 22 children and youth and at least 16 adults. There were seven visiting children. Our first Sunday morning we also had 22 children and youth present, including 5 new children, 4 of whom were registered on the spot.

On September 20, we began our formal fall program. The orange/yellow group is exploring Dr. Seuss stories that connect to UU values, while the Groovin' Greens, through a new 'Toolbox of Faith' program, are looking at valuable character traits using tools as symbols (i.e. ruler for making commitments, magnifying glass for questioning, compass for integrity). Youth who are with us on Sunday mornings are helping out as aids to our adult leaders.

On September 27th, the Greens will be taking a break from being inside to take part in the AIDS Walk, under the supervision of Lloyd Horton and Andrea Hess. October 4th, all children and youth will be at the DKSCL recreation room (1 block south of our church) for the full hour and a bit and will be looking at hunger and consumerism and preparing for participation in the Thanksgiving Intergenerational service the following Sunday.

This is a change from our routine in past years. We are experimenting with multi-age 1st Sundays in a larger venue, with the theme of 'Caring for our World.' So, remember that on Community Sundays (1st Sunday of the month), children 3 1/2 to teen will meet at the church BEFORE service and be escorted to and from the KDSCL recreation room for their hour long Caring for the World group. They will be escorted back in time for lunch.

We still need volunteers, especially aides and family greeters for Sunday mornings. Being a Greeter is only a 15 minute commitment before the service of a Sunday, to welcome any new families, orient them, and get the information we should have even for a visiting child. Lois, our RE Coordinator, is generally tied up setting up for the program and needs support if we are to help new folk feel welcome. Rev. Linda has been continuing quite a bit of responsibility for RE activities, but needs to cut back in that area to adequately attend to other duties this year. Her personal gratitude to any new and returning volunteers!

Children's Program Review

A Review Committee consisting of Wayne Broughton (Board Liaison), Lori Simpson (Chair of the RE Advisory Committee) and Rev. Linda has concluded their review. In general, families and teachers are supportive of the program and the work of our RE Coordinator, Lois Beischer. They especially appreciate Lois' ability to relate to our children, and the dedication of our volunteers, many of whom have been assisting for several years now without a break. The following recommended goals for this coming year have been ratified by the Board.

Goals for the program

- 1 - More people (both children and volunteers, including those who are not parents) and more resources. We could run a more effectively age-appropriate program with 3 groups plus youth and nursery.
- 2 - Improve and diversify communications (i.e. an RE Greeter on Sunday mornings, communication assistance from a volunteer or paid office assistant)
- 3 - Clear job descriptions for volunteers, including small jobs and 'team' support, for easier volunteer commitments
- 4 - Opportunities for children and families to connect socially
- 5 - UU identity. How can we help kids to better answer the question 'What is a Unitarian?'

Goals for Lois

- 1 - Be able to delegate more communicatoins, supply purchasing, etc.
- 2 - Become more familiar with UUism (i.e. read 3 books and join the UU RE Association)
- 3 - Work with a sub comitee to choose social action projects for 1st Sundays, including local, UU and global.

Youth

All youth ages 13-20 and supportive adults interested in Social Justice are invited to 'Munchacon' at the North Shore Unitarian Church. See announcement section for details. We'd love to send a carload or two of several youth and one or two adults!

Adult

We are off to a bit of a slow start this year, but hope to have Phliosopher's Cafes up and running again soon. Meanwhile, contact Rev. Linda if you are interested in any of the following options (all would need minimum enrolment to proceed). Additional ideas are welcome for later in the year.

Women's Circle - will need one or two facilitators and at least five comitted participants

Alternate friday mornings at 1030 beginning October 9th. This group was well attended in the fall and winter last year, but faltered without a consistent facilitator in the spring.

Arts and Spirituality Circle - Led by Rev. Linda

Five alternate Wednesday nights at 7pm beginning October 7th. This group will use the adult version of 'You the Creator'.

Our UU Theological Stew - For both newcomers and longer term members

A 4 session overview of our theological diversity held October 15, 22, 29 and November 5. Time to be announced.

Dynamic Duos - Needs sufficient interest. Facilitated by Rev. Linda and Lloyd (co-facilitators welcome)

A monthly couple's support group. Time to be arranged. Likely on a Friday night.

Parenting Play Group - Needs sufficient interest.

For parents with pre-school children. Time to be arranged on a weekday morning.

President's Message

Already the months are speeding by and fall is upon us. I think, because I taught for so many years, that I still think of the first week in September as the start of a year. So, reflecting on what has happened this month, we had a great service on the first Sunday in September when people shared their poetry. And remember, Sterling thinks that our in-house poetry book -- Sheddings is better than the national one. Well done to all you poets out there.

Our new year started, as usual, with an ingathering. People recounted their holiday experiences and the places that they had been. It seemed to me that a lot of our congregation made tracks to Vancouver Island this year. The service included the symbolic pouring of water from the destination of those trips, plus many people (young and the not so young) brought souvenirs from their trips that they shared with us.

Your board has met twice already, this church year. So I will outline some of the highlights of our recent meeting.

Starting in October, we will be using some of KDSCL's space for the children's RE programme, this will be once a month.

The congregational meeting on October 4 was discussed and the agenda reviewed - we hope that you all will be able to attend.

We had an RE Open house on 12 September, and I will let Rev. Linda in her report highlight the happenings.

Unfortunately, we are losing Amanda Pope as our book keeper at the end of September. Amanda has been part of our office staff since I have been here, so we are going to miss her. I know that you will wish her good luck for her future endeavors. Currently, we are in the process of hiring a new bookkeeper.

Future activities for your calender will be the Dreams and Dollars workshop on 24 October led by Mitch Stefanek from Kamloops. Then on November 7 there will be the Goods and Services auction, and Louise McKenzie will be looking for goods that can be bid upon. This evening will also be our canvas dinner.

So as you can see, fall is looking to be a busy time for us all.

Namaste, Maggie Nixon

Committee on Ministry

~ A time-honoured way to show appreciation to our minister and church staff ~

Our Committee's mandate is to support a healthy shared ministry for this congregation. We are very aware that, given current financial conditions, last year's budget was very tight. We are hoping that next year's will accommodate adding back an office assistant for a few hours a week to assist our minister, staff and lay leaders do their work more effectively and with less stress. We do not expect, however, that the church will be able to make significant adjustments in compensation in the near future.

Due to tight budgets and increasing hours, we have been unable to make cost of living adjustments for staff or minister in recent years. You may be unaware that we have not

increased our minister's basic rate of compensation since she came to Kelowna (she is in her fifth year). One adjustment was made to bring our staff closer to Canadian Unitarian Council recommended compensation guidelines. We are unable to provide benefits that are part of the Guidelines, such as contributions to retirement, even for our minister. It has been necessary to adjust the remuneration for bookkeeping to something closer to the "market," but we are not in a position to make similar adjustments for RE and music positions at this time.

Knowing that our congregation may not be in a position to more closely meet compensation guidelines any time soon, our Committee came up with a suggestion -- a way to show our appreciation for the hard work and dedication of our minister and staff. It is a time-honoured tradition to offer ministers and church staff "contributions in kind" -- offerings from one's garden or one's skills, extra concert tickets, etc. Especially if you have been feeling financially constrained by the current economy, you might consider another kind of contribution -- whether to our staff and/or minister or to the congregation at large (these times have been difficult for many). We know some of you have been doing this already.

As we engage the challenges of a growing congregation in tight economic times, we need to be more than ever mindful of caring for one another. It is a good time to express our appreciation of all who contribute their time and talent to building our spiritual community, both lay and professional.

If you have ideas or suggestions about making our shared ministry more effective, feel free to contact one of us for a chat.

The Committee on Ministry: Judith Gunderson, Rod Torgerson, and Lindsay Atkinson-Smith

Green Sanctuary

Fall is the beginning of a "new year" at the UFK, and the beginning of our work in this third year of the three-year process to become a Green Sanctuary. It is a good time to remind ourselves why we are doing all this, to review what Green Sanctuary is all about, and to look at what we need to do this coming year. As confirmed in conversations with Robin Nelson of the UUA Ministry for Earth who facilitates the process of accreditation, this is how the Green Sanctuary process is intended. The vision and purpose of the Green Sanctuary Program is "We envision a world in which all people make reverence, gratitude and care for the Living Earth central to our lives". The "Living Earth" means all beings, including all people and the Earth as a whole. We are all connected, and what affects one species or habitat or person or element affects us all. The intention of the Green Sanctuary process is to change our consciousness, at the level of the individual member and at the congregational level, so that whatever actions we take, are considered through the filter/lens of this vision-become-consciousness. Rather than a list of things we must do to become accredited, the projects we have chosen are the tools we use to develop that consciousness. We will know that our consciousness is changing when we, as individuals, or as board members, or as committee members or as a congregation as a whole, consider our decisions and actions based on how it affects "the Living Earth" and the impact these have on the Living planet and on all beings.

The Green Sanctuary Committee has been chaired by Simonne and Gwen, who are only the facilitators of the process, not the agents of change responsible for making everything happen. Each of us, and the congregation as a whole is responsible for the creation of our Green Sanctuary.

Some examples of indicators that our consciousness is changing would be:

When RE programs are planned, we ask how will they teach about our interconnectedness and our responsibility to all life. When we buy supplies for the church, we look for Earth friendly products that were produced without harming other beings, because what affects other beings affects us, too. When we make repairs to the church, we look for energy efficient solutions because reducing greenhouse gases and protecting our water protects life on Earth.

When we plan worship services, we ask how they will enhance our spirituality of interconnectedness and reverence for all life. When we spend money we ask if what we buy is really necessary, was produced ethically and without harm to others. When we invest money we ask if the money is used in ways that enhance life and the Earth rather than deplete it. A specific example might be, if there is a question about whether to use bathroom tissue made from recycled paper, instead of the regular cheaper brands, rather than saying "Let's ask the Green Sanctuary committee if this meets Green Sanctuary requirements" one would be able to ask oneself "Is this Earth honouring?" (Earth honouring means honouring everything from the trees the paper was made from, to the workers making the paper, to the water being discharged as waste, etc.) If this is not what is happening, why is it not happening, and how can we facilitate that happening?

As is common in any process, we have had some challenges. We wonder if information is getting to the congregation, to other committees and to the board. We wonder if we can maintain our energy to complete the process this year. We wonder how we can have proper meetings when there is so much demand on people's time and on church space. We wonder how we can develop shared leadership.

The expectations for this third year are:

To define and implement an Earth Justice project in which we must establish an ongoing relationship with a disadvantaged community. To complete all our remaining projects. To assess our change in consciousness by doing a follow-up questionnaire. To prepare a summary report. To have a congregational vote on whether we want to apply for accreditation if the congregation votes to apply for accreditation, to prepare the application for accreditation (a process similar to the application for candidacy).

We have come a long way in the past two years, but like the runner nearing the end of a race, we need to muster all the commitment, energy, enthusiasm and mutual support we can to achieve our goal. Let's all summon that strength and be an example to our larger community of how a small but dedicated group of people can make a significant difference in caring for our home, the Earth.

For our first Green Sanctuary meeting, we plan to have a potluck supper and working gathering, date and location to be announced. Watch for listserv notices and Sunday announcements.

Treasurer's Report

AUGUST 2009

Budget	Current Period	Current Budget	Year to Date	Year to Date
TOTAL INCOME	4911.00	4727.00	68914.00	64593.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	5932.00	6252.00	70433.00	67645.00
EXCESS INCOME/ EXPENSES	-1021.00	-1525.00	-1519.00	-3052.00

Our income statement had nothing of note this month. The only thing remarkable was a bank balance under \$1,000. That is likely to be cleared up once we have regular services in September.

Thank you for your contributions. Liz Earl

Poetry Corner

Blank

By Casey Broughton

The page is blank.
The lines are sitting there, mocking me perhaps?
I could fill it with random words.
The pie.
Cheese cake.
No! I'm not stupid!
Just write.
W-R-I-T-E.
A 5-letter word.
Easier said than done.
It may read fast, but it writes slow.
Real slow.
3 sentences could take as long to write
as the whole text would take to read.
Wait! The text is this text!
And it's filled with monologue!
Boring sometimes is smart.

Announcements

Thank You & Memory Book for Helen Holyk

This thanksgiving, we want to offer our appreciation to Helen Holyk with a book of stories, photos, and words of appreciation for her contributions to this congregation and to many of you as individuals. Helen has been mostly bed bound as a result of a serious stroke last December. Looking at a memory book is one activity she can do and it will let her know she has been valued. If you have something to contribute, please bring it to church or email to Rev. Linda at revlwhorton@yahoo.ca or Linda Sampson (Caring Committee Chair) at gemspirit@ymail.com. There will also be paper for brief notes at the next two services. Let's let her know we care!!

Building Futures Meeting - Sunday October 4 12:45-2:15pm (following Community Lunch)

What are your hopes and fears? What are your dreams for our future?

All members and friends are invited to hear the findings of the Building Futures Team 2, to discuss with the Board several options for our building future, and to reflect in small groups about your own response and possible next steps. Please come out and update yourself and contribute your views on the future of our building/property.

New Signal Editor

Work in your jammies – become the next Signal editor! The Signal needs a new part-time editor to assemble the newsletter every second month, starting in January. It is not hard work, but does require familiarity with using a computer. Start-up training will be provided. Please contact Wayne B. if you are interested in this important role.

“The BC Heartwarming” – October 17

There will be not a Regional Fall Gathering this year, but in its place you are invited to attend this mini fall gathering at North Shore Unitarian Church (www.nsuc.ca) on Saturday, Oct. 17, 9:30-4:00. Connect with other UU's for worship and planning. Cost \$20 (\$25 at the door; includes lunch). Contact bheartwarming@gmail.com to register or for more information. We want our vision and our needs of support from the CUC to be heard!

Office Assistant

We need someone to help out in the church office with simple administrative tasks each week. Thank you to those who have volunteered in this vital capacity over the last few years, but now it is time for someone else to take this on. For just a few hours one or two days a week, this is a quiet but essential way to help the smooth functioning of our Fellowship. Does this sound like something you can do? Please contact Rev. Linda or Maggie N. if you are willing and able to help.

Canvass Dinner and Auction – November 7

Mark your calendars; it is that time of year again! On Saturday, Nov. 7th we will hold our annual Canvass Dinner to kick off our fall pledge campaign, and also hold the ever-popular Goods & Services Auction. This is a great opportunity for newcomers to become involved in social activities with members of the congregation, so start thinking of things to offer in the auction, and send them to Louise M.!

Dreams and Dollars Workshop – October 24

Everyone is invited to this exciting workshop at the Fellowship on Oct. 24th, 1:30-5:30pm. Facilitated by Mitch Stefanek (of the Kamloops fellowship, and regional Financial Stewardship Service Consultant), we will learn how to adopt Vision-Based Stewardship, and understand how our financial donations contribute to a dream and a vision. There is no registration fee, and snacks will be provided, but please register by October 20th. Contact Liz E., Rick H., or Wayne B.

UU Boo! - October 30th

You are invited to the UFK's Intergenerational "UU Boo Bash"

Friday October 30th 5:30pm-9pm

Costume Parade! Treats! Games, Food and Fun!

(...And maybe a trick or two...)

If you are interested in volunteering your talents for this fun event, please contact Carrie B. at brought4@telus.net

Help! After Service help needed!

Audrey Pehrul has been doing the beverage prep for after service coffee time with Rick Hardman since the beginning of 2005 and she thinks she has been selfish in hogging this fun time for herself -with Rick. Therefore she has retired from this and requests your help. Rick will continue on with help from a few others to share the tasks. Please volunteer to help him so our social time after service is enhanced with something liquid to drink. Please call or e mail Rick to volunteer!

UU Olympic Accomodation

Planning to attend the Winter Olympics of 2010? Beacon Unitarian Church in the Tri-Cities suburb of Vancouver, BC is offering in home bed and breakfast, January through March 2010.

For information go to

www.BeaconUnitarian.org or call registrar Joy Silver at 604-939-2213 or email odetojoy@telus.net

Unitarian Fellowship of Kelowna, 1310 Bertram Street, Kelowna, BC V1Y 2E8, (250) 763-7212, email: unitarian@silk.net

For more information about our congregation please visit our website: www.unitariancongregation.org/kelowna

Sunday Services begin at 10:30 am. Childcare and programs are available year round.

The Signal is distributed on the last Sunday of each month. Deadline for submissions is the Monday prior to distribution. Please send submissions to ufksignal@hotmail.com