

nouvelles news

December-January 2011-12 décembre-janvier



Events this Month

All Sunday services start at 10:00 am unless otherwise specified.
We have an active children's program during our Sunday service, at which all children are warmly welcome

December 4

Ms. Paraskevi Mazarakiotis

“Conjugal Violence: Let's Break the Silence”

A reflection on violence against women, inspired by her best friend, Rachelle Wrathmall, who lost her life to conjugal violence. The purpose of this presentation is to build awareness in order to prevent other tragedies. Ms. Mazarakiotis is a language arts teacher in high school.

Service Leader: Adele Ernstrom

Musician: Jaime Dunton

Coffee Convenor: Gudrun Brand

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

December 11, 4:30 pm

“Dulce Domum – Home Sweet Home”

A pageant/play featuring children of UUEstrie, taken from Kenneth Grahame's classic *Wind In the Willows*. Rat and Mole are on a wintry journey to the River Bank, when Mole becomes nostalgic for his old home, and their Christmas plans are diverted. Followed by a Turkey potluck supper (turkey provided). All welcome. An annual tradition at UUEstrie. Animators: Lindsay-Jane Gowman, Rev. Carole, children and adults - a glowing cast of many!

December 18

Rev. Carole Martignacco

“A Winter Solstice”

The shortest day of the year marks the beginning of the return of the rising sun. An ancient celebration of rejoicing at Yuletide. Come celebrate with poetry, music, story and song the natural beauty of this season of light and darkness.

Coffee Convenor: Jane Pankovitch

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

December 25, 11 a.m.

Rev. Carole Martignacco

“Christmas Carols and Candlelight!”

A service of contemporary lessons and carols celebrating the Spirit of Christmas. Special music by Lindsay-Jane Gowman and Emily Fowler. We will sing familiar carols, share stories old and new, and end with a candlelight prayer for a world renewed by love, justice, peace and goodwill.

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

January 1, 2012

No Service at UU Estrie

According to our tradition, there will be no service at UUEstrie this Sunday. Enjoy your holiday celebrations.

January 8

Mr. Curtis Murphy

“Pour out the Spirit”

Without a doubt, we live in changing times. Our faith calls us to action, and yet it also calls us to be patient, to navigate among prophecy and hyperbole, urgency and anxiety. What does it mean to live responsibly amid demands of family, community and the web of life? How can we make space for joy?

Curtis Murphy is a member of the Unitarian Church of Montreal; he serves as Youth Program Coordinator. Currently a student at Montreal School of Theology, he also represents the Eastern Region on the CUC Board of Trustees.

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

January 15**Ms. Ann Rothfels and friends****“Stories, Stories, Stories”**

Another annual tradition at UUEstrie: a morning service devoted entirely to storytelling, an ancient medium providing nourishment and insight for the human spirit.

We shall feature tellers from the Townships Tellers, and a potluck lunch for all who would like to dine with the tellers, will follow the service.

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

January 29**“The Bucket List”**

What is on your 'Bucket List', that list of things you would set about doing before you 'kick the bucket'? Most of the time we don't think about them in this way, because we assume death is a long way off. But if you knew that you only had, say, six months to go, and were still fairly together physically and mentally, how do you think you would spend them?

This is intended to be a participatory service, with contributions from anyone in attendance.

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

Project Haiti 2011/2016: The Power of Education

The church was filled on October 31 to hear **Yannick Daoudi** tell us of his unique travel stories and subsequent humanitarian projects. He so inspired us with his plans to build a self-sustainable school in Haiti, that we collectively donated \$1028 to help him buy the land.

Excerpts from his email sent November 17:

“...This is an update for “Project Haiti 2011/2016: The Power of Education”, which you have generously supported.

Over the last 6-7 months, we have raised \$9,300 from donations as well as receiving donations of necessary school supplies, sporting equipment, backpacks and uniforms for the 50 children, along with an entire library of books for children (which I bring back one suitcase at a time with every trip!), so THANK YOU!!

... Working as a consultant in Haiti...and in concert with my local partner...One of the first

objectives consists of acquiring land on which to build the school in an underprivileged community in Croix-des-bouquets, on the outskirts of Port-Au-Prince.... The goal remains the same: to offer quality education to 50 children who don't actually have this opportunity and, within 5 years, to create a model for a low-cost, sustainable, autonomous school...

... You can imagine the complexity of such a task in a country with a government that's barely functional and where an important quantity of official documents (only available on paper) were reduced to dust in the January 12th 2010 earthquake. I can assure you that we have ... had to overcome a multitude of obstacles to finally find a legitimate piece of land which would suit our needs, as much as for its location in the targeted community as for its size.

The total cost of the land (\$17,500) is beyond our current means, however, we decided to not let such an opportunity pass by and I have the great pleasure of announcing that thanks to your donations and support, we have been able to deposit the down payment on the land (\$12,500) this morning!! ... The cost mentioned above does not however include the required construction (classrooms, latrines, playground, etc.) for which we should have an estimate in the coming months.

It is clear that we still have a lot of work ahead of us in order to raise the funds needed, however we recognize the importance of this project for these children and for the future of this community, and remain more optimistic and motivated than ever, as well as committed for the long haul. This is why we are in the process of creating a foundation based in Quebec, the InspirAction Foundation. Now that the corner stone of this project has been laid down in large part thanks to your support, we hope that the Foundation will help us collect larger amounts towards the successful continuation of this project.

We have until the month of March to raise the missing \$5,000 to complete the total payment for the land. I hope that we can continue to count on your support ... through raising awareness about the project with friends and family: www.postcardsfromtheedge.ca -- “Help build a school in Haiti”. The rules are still the same: 100% of your donations goes directly to implementing the project on the ground ... to

make a concrete difference in this community and to offer these kids and their parents that best gift they could ever hope for: the tools to build a better future for themselves.

Thank you. *Yannick Daoudi*

Religious & Spiritual Education Kids Program

To begin, I would like to express my gratitude for volunteers who bravely and lovingly stepped up to the plate while I was away in British Columbia. You know who you are, and for those of you who don't, swing by the kids room and you will see the names on the wall. Actually, while you're there you will also see the beautiful stained glass Tree of Life hanging in the window, which was donated by our friends in Ayers Cliff. What a great addition to the room!



As your Religious Education Coordinator, part of my responsibility is to continue my understanding of theology, my role and responsibility as a teacher, my son's religious

and spiritual development as well as my own. Returning home to BC this summer brought me back to a religious experience from the past. We spent our Sunday mornings at St. Marks Anglican church in Dawson Creek, B.C. Their children's program which also has a youth group, has 15-25 children but doesn't really operate in the summer unless the Sunday school teacher happens to be there. So what did Sebastien do on the days there was no Sunday teacher? Located at the back pew were 6 little cloth sacs which held paper, crayons, a book and a race car! This was shocking to me, can they be OK with my son racing his car up at down the pew? Oh yes, but can I.....?

There were no joys and concerns candles, but we had fabulous children's stories called Billy Stories told by Father Greg, a wonderful priest and a great dancer. We sat and listened to beautiful stories from the bible. We repented for sins & asked for forgiveness which often had me standing there wondering what constitutes a sin? Was it eating the berries we were supposed to collect for jam?

One Sunday I decided to stay home and sleep in, something a Sunday school teacher rarely ever does. Sebastien went to church with Grandmama, while I waited patiently for their arrival. Sebastien burst through the door, "Mama, mama, I drank wine and ate the body of Christ." Oh no! Maybe now is the time to talk to my mother about my comfort level? "Mom, Sebastien isn't baptized, neither am I, I'm not sure about this." I said. Her response was simple. Three years ago my mother flew out for Sebastien's child dedication ceremony where we blessed him and as far as my mother was concerned this was the equivalent to baptism. Wow! This signaled my parents' acceptance of my change of religion and my choice for Sebastien.

Although some of these religious practices I did not fully identify with, I was experiencing them with Sebastien who is creating his own ideas of it as well. We were welcomed as Unitarian Universalists. I have held closely the UU belief of acceptance of all religious and spiritual practices and am able to approach different practices with curiosity and respect.

Just like our little church here, there is a group of women who make amazing food, my mother included, talented musicians and small group ministries discussing issues such as same sex marriage. Emily and I had the privilege of putting on our first official classical concert, a brown bag lunch concert. It was a full house and we raised \$300.00 for the Children's Sunday school program at St. Marks. We were very touched, as most of our audience were farmers who turned off their tractors in the middle of haying to listen to us play. We also played at their pancake breakfast for Rodeo.

This summer, roaming the West with my son and my cello was life changing as well as enabling me to plan something even more meaningful for children in our Sunday school program. The basis for our program is our seven principles and our many diverse sources. Our curriculum is developed around this in various ways. An example of a typical Sunday morning after the children hear the story of all ages and "Go in peace:" we take time downstairs for our joys and concerns and discuss our seven principle and sources. We then join together for a theme-related activity which could range from baking muffins, reading a story, painting, gardening, picking up garbage on a nature walk, making candles, playing games and musical instruments to most recently mailing back a plastic laundry soap bag to a company who re-uses it. We were hoping the company would answer but so far have yet to hear back. We close our morning forming a circle, holding hands and repeating our closing words. " Be kind to yourself, be kind to others, do everything with love"

Upcoming is our annual Christmas Pageant which features Olivia as Ratty, Sebastien as Mole, Sam as an assistant and narrator in the Wind and the Willow. We have space for any other children who would like to participate and will be working away at this over the next couple of weeks. Keep your eyes open for the official date of our next Intergenerational Games Day. According to former United Nations Secretary- General, " A community that plays together stays together." If you weren't there last year we hope to see you this year. If anyone is interested in helping work in the RE room over Christmas please contact me to

coordinate a schedule! For any questions, concerns or ideas feel free to visit our little space. Finally, a big thanks to everyone who came to hear my presentation on Women's Empowerment & helped making our transition to our new house easier. - *Lindsay-Jane Gowman*

Denominational affairs

CUC has a monthly "e-news." You can go to cuc.ca/enews to read recent issues, or to subscribe to the CUC mailing list, which will send you the monthly "front page".

The CUC has recently announced the resignation of the **Executive Director**. A search is underway for a replacement, meanwhile the staff continues to function under the direction of the board.

CUC Statement on the Occupy Movement

WHAT BEGAN in the Wall Street financial district of New York City this September has sparked Occupy protests in Canada and around the world. Canadian Unitarians recognize that it is both a moral and religious imperative to speak out when we see social, environmental, or economic injustice — our principles demand we do this. We are seeing democracy in action!

Read more at
cuc.ca/enews/november2011/occupy.html

UU-UNO Envoy training:

Our congregation was delighted to have Bruce Knotts speak to us about the history and accomplishments of our office (UUUNO) at the United Nations. It would seem that most of the rights of marginalized society have been improved by their efforts. We are especially thankful to Rev. Diane Rollert and her mate for transporting Bruce and his mate to our service, where a collection was dedicated to the work of the UUUNO.

The UUUNO office is having an envoy training session on December 13th from 6pm to 7:30 EST by telephone conferencing. The outline of this training session will cover the history, envoy training program, blue ribbon congregations spring seminars and a discussion on community organizing. Rachel and Sooky have signed up and any one interested may do so by e mailing to Holly Sarkissian at hsarkissian@uua.org.

- Sooky



Minister's Reflection - Carole's Column

"Occupée, toujours! Du temps libre – jamais! Mais, quelque fois, je besoin des temps pour moi."

- from Rush Hour French, an interactive CD

course by Berlitz

Now that word is officially out, you may be wondering what it all means, this "sabbatical ministry" you've been hearing about. Change is in the air at UU Estrie – and it starts as the new year begins! During January, February and March, with our Board's blessing and approval, your minister will begin a "sabbatical ministry" leave to serve the Unitarian Congregation of Montreal while their minister, Reverend Diane Rollert, completes a "sabbatical ministry" with Unitarian churches in the Philippines. What an exciting opportunity for our two congregations to engage in a unique project and explore new territory together!

How will this all play out? - you may rightfully ask. Over recent months, I've had a series of planning meetings with the Committee on Ministry in Montreal, their minister Rev. Rollert, and with our own Board and my Committee on Ministry here, to smooth out details and set goals for mutual learning and enrichment. So many plans to put in place: finding housing in Montreal, arranging for off-street parking in the city, how to keep in touch with what's happening at home.

This mutual arrangement promises benefits for all concerned, a chance to learn and grow. Having served the Montreal congregation first as an intern, then as summer minister in 2000 and 2001, I look forward to connecting with "old" friends and new. I will engage fully with all levels of ministry, and study the structural dynamics of church life in a larger congregation, paying attention to such issues as policy and governance, worship arts, pastoral care and the work of committees. This new setting can provide a "view from the balcony" experience I spoke about in a recent sermon, i.e., an opportunity to step aside from our own context, to compare and contrast the inner workings in

this new setting, perhaps glean some fresh ways of looking at things, new "tricks of the trade."

Housing – my biggest concern - fell into place quite quickly with the help of a successful referral from friends at the Lakeshore UUC in Lachine. I will be housesitting for two "snowbirds" from the Montreal congregation who winter in Arizona for four months each year. My temporary home is a lovely townhome on the edge of Westmount, just 2 blocks and a mere 7.5 minute walk to the church on de Maisonneuve.

This temporary ministry post is funded entirely by the Montreal congregation. In beginning of April I will return home to UU Estrie to resume my ministry here. During my "sabbatical leave" I will spend three weekends in North Hatley, conducting one service each month and renewing pastoral connections. This will help me maintain continuity with issues as they evolve, whether organizational or pastoral.

A "sabbatical" can mean many things: rest, relaxation, re-training, renewal. In this case, it's definitely a "working sabbatical" for both the Montreal minister and myself – as in "*Occupée, toujours! Du temps libre, jamais!*" While Rev. Rollert offers her services to the Philippines communities and explores ministry in a very different cultural context, I am grateful for this chance to study and learn, with the primary goal to bring new insights back home to enrich my ministry with all of you. We will both return to our ministries enlarged and renewed in ways we can hardly predict.

Meanwhile, we have some very busy weeks coming up, with several takes on the December holidays. May you be blessed, and may all your celebrations be full of love and joy!

In faith - Rev. Carole

DULCE DOMUM – Home Sweet Home:

Merci en avance! Advance appreciation to the many members and friends engaged in designing sets, creating costumes, rehearsing with children, decorating the sanctuary, and providing music and special effects for our Annual Yuletide Pageant. Especially a warm thank you to Reine Gagnon for the Christmas Choir, who became humble as mice to share their voices in our production adapted from Kenneth Grahame's *Wind In the Willows*. Memories in the making!

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Minister's Office Hours
Tuesday & Wednesday, 2:30 – 4:30 pm
Please respect the Minister's sabbath, Sunday
afternoon and Monday.
For emergency pastoral care, phone:
1. Rev. Carole
2. Sooky Dunton
3. Joyce Booth



Calendar and Schedule

WED 30 7:00PM NO-NAME SMALL GROUP

DECEMBER

SUN 4 10:00AM SERVICE: MAZARAKIOTIS

TUES 6 9:30AM GRANNIES WORKSHOP

TUES 6 12:30PM BOARD MEETING

SUN 11 4:30PM PAGEANT & SUPPER

SUN 18 10:00AM SERVICE: SOLSTICE

SUN 25 10:00AM SERVICE: CHRISTMAS!

JANUARY

SUN 1 NO SERVICE

SUN 8 10:00AM SERVICE: CURTIS MURPHY

SUN 15 10:00AM SERVICE: STORYTELLING

SUN 29 10:00AM SERVICE: KEITH BAXTER

Board of Trustees

You have elected this board to take care of business, please discuss your hopes and concerns with any member:

Keith Baxter	President
Adele Ernstrom	Vice-President
Mary-Ann McCarron	Treasurer
Rachel Garber	Secretary
Howard Hale	Member at large
Lin Jensen	Member at large

This is your newsletter !!!

Next issue of Newsletter is February 2012

Deadline: ***January 20.***

Please send photos, or write your contribution on paper, parchment, or computer. Send to the newsletter committee in person or by email, send to newsletter@uuestrie.ca.

Dear Contributors to Newsletter:

The Newsletter Committee frequently receives texts forwarded wholesale from one or another worthy publication or website. As such, they are not useful. When members come across material of interest that they would like to share, they are cordially invited to digest the texts they find valuable, reframing them in succinct form. Websites or links can be cited for those seeking further information.

Your Newsletter Committee