

# nouvelles



# news

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**November 2013 novembre**

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## Events this Month

All Sunday services start at 10:30 am unless otherwise specified.  
We have an active children's program during our Sunday service, at which all  
children are warmly welcome

### **November 3** **“All Souls Healing Service”**

This bilingual service is a completely participatory service honouring those loved ones who have departed this life in the past year or more. To allow for all who wish to participate, the service could likely be up to two hours long, followed by refreshments. All are welcome to bring a photo or memento, light a candle and share a memory or tribute.. We welcome our wider community of friends from l'Olivier, the groupe d'étude de la vie après la mort, from la société Anthroposophique, La Traversée, the community of the school les Enfants de la Terre, and others.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

Musicians: various

Coffee Convenor: Jane Gowman/Alex

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

### **November 10**

**Rev. Carole Martignacco**

### **“Waging Peace – Remembrance Day”**

How shall we honour those whose lives are sacrificed to preserve the freedoms of others? Fighting for peace, in the long history of humankind, seems rarely to have accomplished its task. Is a Department of Peace possible?

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Musician: Mike Matheson

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

### **Elizabeth Eastlake vs John Ruskin** **by Adele Ernstrom**

Due to technical difficulties, we are completing the topic begun at the Oct. 27 service, with an illustrated presentation and commentary at 12:30 -1:30 p.m. Bring a bag lunch if you wish' join us in Stoddard Hall.

### **November 17** **Prof. Robert MacGregor** **“The Golliwog As A Cultural Marker”**

Peebles is a small rural town in Southern Scotland. King David 1 granted it a Royal Burgh Charter in 1140. International attention was focused on the town and its annual Beltane Festival activities. Traditionally, a children's fancy dress parade was a part of the activities for over 100 years. In 1991 widespread protestations arose over a number of child participants who would be in “blackface” and dressed as golliwogs, a minstrel/samboesque image. Numerous social, racial, cultural dimensions that surrounded this incident will be presented.

Robert MacGregor is a retired professor of marketing from Bishop's University. His research has covered a number of instances of poor taste and racism in the advertising industry, which, interestingly and sadly, have become embedded in Western culture.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Service Leader: Adele Ernstrom

Coffee Convenor: The Mathesons

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

**November 24**

**Ms. Maggie Tuck**

**"Buddhism: The Religion that Promises Nothing and Delivers"**

The Dalai Lama said "My religion is kindness." But kindness is hard. Its nice to be nice to the nice, but to the not so nice not so much. How to do this? Why bother?

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

Coffee Convenor: Chantal Michaud

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

**December 1**

**Rev. Carole Martignacco**

**"Balancing Light and Dark"**

We are moving quickly toward the "tipping point" in the balance of light and darkness. As Earth's cycles change, how are we affected, mentally, physically, spiritually? Celebrate the Solstice and the beauty of the season with poetry, story and song.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Coffee Convenor: Reine Gangon

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

**STUDENT HOSPITALITY SUPPERS – A Shared Ministry of Area Churches**

**"A taste of home, away from home."**

UU Estrie has been invited to participate with area churches in providing weekly suppers for university and college students held alternately at St. George's Anglican and Lennoxville United Churches. In keeping with our vision to engage in more community and interfaith outreach, Rev. Carole has joined the planning team for these suppers. Our turn comes up to host the supper on Friday, 29 Nov. This is a totally non-denominational event, with emphasis on creating ties between the students and the larger community. The host team gathers about 4:00 to set-up, dinner is served at 5:30, and students help with the clean-up; all is completed by 7:30. Our menu for 29 Nov: Chili – meat and veg., cornbread, coleslaw, dessert bars or cookies. We have a team of volunteers to make and serve chili; help is invited to make cornbread or desserts. Call Rev. Carole if you are interested

in joining us – it's a totally feel-good experience for students and host churches.

**Denominational affairs**

If you are a member, you probably get the Canadian Unitarian newsletter by email. Current and past issues can be found on-line at <http://cuc.ca/the-canadian-unitarian/> You can also request a paper copy there.

As well, the monthly ENews is available at <http://cuc.ca/enews/>

**A SUPERB Sukkot in North Hatley with B'nai Or and friends!**

What a beautiful Sukkot service and yummy harvest potluck lunch at the Unitarian Church in North Hatley. Thank you to the 13 B'nai Or-niks who made the trek to the Eastern Townships to participate in this very special annual event, co-sponsored by the Unitarians, B'nai Or and the Jewish Community Centre of the Eastern Townships. Thank you to Isaac Romano for co-organizing, and to Terry Ysrael for the music. The sukkah was the sweetest I have ever seen, built with love by Reverend Carole Martignacco with able assistance from B'nai-Or-niks Jeannie and Natasha. Even the rain held out so we could shake our lulav in the sukkah! We learned, danced, sang, prayed and laughed together and we are already looking forward to next year's event!

Blessings,  
R' Sherril, [rabbi@bnai-or.org](mailto:rabbi@bnai-or.org)

We were most honoured to be part of a joyous Sukkot interfaith harvest celebration and enjoyed the lovely Sukkah (temporary hut) prepared by Reverend Carole Martignacco and the wonderful community at UU Estrie North Hatley, with assistance from B'nai-Or-niks from Montreal, Jeannie and Natasha, ...followed by a delicious potluck luncheon. This was a joyous, lovely event, with 40 plus community participants in attendance, with the story telling and dialogue that was so meaningful from our peace and bridge-building Rabbi Sherril Gilbert and Reverend Carole Martignacco. And many thanks for the fabulous music and inspiration that is Terry Ysrael.

*Isaac Romano*



### Minister's Reflection - Carole's Column

Like you, I've been closely following developments around the proposed Charte des valeurs québécoises. So on Sunday, October 20th after giving a service at

the Lakeshore UU in Lachine, in keeping with my passion for interfaith dialogue and collaboration, I participated in an open forum hosted by Temple Emanu-El Beth Shalom in Montreal. Religious leaders and scholars, along with members of the press and political leaders, came together there for a fascinating interfaith exchange in response to the Charte. Rabbi Lisa Grushcow and the Jewish community graciously welcomed people of all faiths - Sikhs, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Buddhists, Pagans, Atheists, Unitarians - for a rich and open sharing of diverse practices and religious values. What we held in common was a concern for protecting the integrity of religious freedom.

Interfaith panelists gave presentations, inviting open discussion from the floor, with inclusive and inspiring closing words given by Rev. Diane Rollert of Montreal Unitarian.

A brief sampling of issues raised: The Charte as proposed effectively forbids by law the wearing of religious symbols or clothing for those employed in public service. Apparently, if you can't see it, it doesn't exist. So much for the idea that religious values and traditions at the core of our being form and inform how we live our daily lives. We discussed the oft-cited support for this legislation, the concept of separation of church and state, clearly contested in the US with the "Religious Right", and not even included in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It does pose a logical dilemma: can the state, having no jurisdiction over religion, assume power to legislate the use of religious symbolism? The Sikh panelist told how wearing the turban was a personal spiritual practice integrated into his identity and daily life, which was compared to the wearing of the yarmulke or kippa for Jewish males. Among the Jewish community there were comparisons made with the Holocaust, which began

insidiously with the reverse of currently proposed legislation: the requirement that all Jews wear a religious symbol in order to be identified. If this becomes law, at what point could the law be reversed? One speaker addressed the concern that the Charte seemed particularly motivated by Islamophobia. We discussed the role fear of difference plays in encountering other cultures and belief systems, and the perceived need to control what we do not fully understand. One panelist, a Muslim woman, gave an impassioned statement about the presumption of others to "protect" what they see as abuses to Muslim women's freedoms, asking how a Charte forbidding wearing the veil was any improvement over Muslim males requiring it. Someone even posed the concern that the Charte was really a political ploy, using religion and fear of diversity to divide Quebecers to manipulate the outcome of the next election.

The Charte has succeeded in attracting world attention, as other countries watch how Quebec deals with a diversity issue that challenges an increasingly global civilization. In October Noam Chomsky, political philosopher, linguist and social activist, made an appearance at Montreal's UQAM. Cym Gomery, a UCM Unitarian and daughter of Sooki Dunton, posted this comment: *"When asked about the Charte des valeurs québécoises, Chomsky advised the audience to resist their government's attempts to impose cultural uniformity. Simple answer and so insightful. In one sentence, Chomsky showed how all the discussion around this issue is just smoke and mirrors."*

In the interest of print space, I'll leave you with a few questions that remain in my mind: How do we discern our own prejudices and presumptions in relation to other's religious traditions? What is the underlying issue or threat to which this Charte points? Are we evolving or de-evolving as a society in our understanding and appreciation of diversity, religious or any other kind? Will the 21st repeat the terrible history of the past century in human rights abuses, or can we somehow make the developmental leap required to live cohesively as a human family?

Just to let you know, I've signed in support a letter addressed to Madame Marois written by my colleague Rev. Diane Rollert, who is publicly expressing concern for the preservation of

religious freedoms and respect for diversity. I invite you to join me in finding ways to be involved in this fascinating drama unfolding before our eyes, speaking out as we can to make our hopes and dreams for a better world heard.

Blessings and love - Rev. Carole

### **Some limits of the notion of “choice”**

An article in *Le Devoir* of 9 October offers what struck me as pertinent reflections on the question of choice relative to women and the veil. Its author is Stéphanie Gaudet, Professor in Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Ottawa. My summary in English of her article follows:

In life one chooses very little, I tell my students. This comes as a shock in our merchandized society which commercializes choice, as in the battery of “personal choices” with which Apple promoted its first iPod. The observation also runs counter to the discourse of liberalism that assumes citizens’ access to economic and political choice.

Yet social reality places stringent limitations on individual freedom in this respect. Such pressures include ways of being inherited from our forebears, family and cultural traditions and often our own ill-understood impulses. What we experience as choice is at most a thoughtful positioning of ourselves within a complex context of social, cultural and economic constraints.

Women tear into one another around the notion of choice relative to the proposed Charter of values, some insisting on a right to display their beliefs while employed in the public service. The appeal to choice draws on feminist discourse that took shape notably in support of a right to abortion. In my opinion, this was not the best concept to use; women do not choose abortion, rather they react to an unwanted situation.

Wearing the veil may have several meanings: signalling the wearers’ beliefs or their purity; identification with a community or a culture; following customs; or affirming femininity. There may equally be a desire for recognition or a political option. I do not believe that women “choose” to wear the veil, instead they position themselves on a continuum of existing

significations. At a recent press conference, a Quebec imam said it was important to respect women’s choices and, on the same occasion, stated that wearing the veil was divinely prescribed. The untenable notion of choice in the matter could not be more clearly illustrated.

I think that the Charter has been maladroitly presented. The iconography of forbidden signs is grotesque and—let’s face it—makes us appear ridiculous as a society. At the same time, contention around a “choice” to wear the veil is a false debate. While women on both sides go before the media, a question arises: who is absent from the discussion? In my opinion, the significant absentees (apart from those echoing the current formula) are the men, the imams who exercise an important hold on the discourse and ways of life of their communities.

*Summary/translation by Adele Ernstrom*

### **Richard Wagamese - Canadian Ojibway Author**

*“I have stood up for the honor and the sanctity of this planet and been called a radical. I have stood up for the honor and the dignity of my people and been called a militant. I have stood up for the honor and the inclusion of the homeless and marginalized and been called a bleeding heart. I have stood up for a great number of causes and issues and been called a leftist. The names they fling have no importance because the important thing is to have stood up and declared. We stood up when we were infants to pursue our destiny and purpose - we stand up now for the same reasons.”*

From Living Ecological Justice, a publication of Citizens for Public Justice: “Our Aboriginal brothers and sisters have been particularly helpful in calling us to...a sense of deep integration of our ethical and ecological lives. Creation care involves not only a ‘deep ecology’ which accents our profound interconnection with all of creation, but also a ‘social ecology’ rooted in life-affirming cultural patterns and social justice. We are realizing that the so-called ecological crisis runs along the same fault lines of social, cultural, economic, political, racial and gendered oppression.”



### President's Report

A while ago, Jaime and I heard a speech by the Honourable Paul Martin, a man we admire for his dedication to our native people. He talked of Canada as a nation, of how far we as a nation have progressed and of how much we have to learn. One of his observations was that our generation is the luckiest ever and that we should do what we can to help others who have been less fortunate. His thought is especially poignant in relation to our recent sermons from Ena Greyeyes and Jonathan Ellison. It is only the luck of the draw that we weren't abused at a residential school or born in an impoverished country. We have so much to be thankful for. As in this past month of Thanksgiving, let us remember all our blessings and look at ways to improve the lives of those who have not been similarly blessed.

Special thanks to Joyce Booth for sending birthday cards to Ashton and Merrick who have moved away; we hope they are now in a good place. We thank Mary Lynn Ross for sorting all the tablecloths that needed sorting and for seeing to extra housekeeping chores as we do not have a paid housekeeper; we also thank all those who contributed to the pot luck and set up for our celebration of Sukkot, especially Rev. Carole and Gudrun Brand. We are grateful as well to all those service leaders and liaisons who organize and print the order of service in the absence of an administrator and to Keith Baxter for his gift of compost for our gardens along with his role as gardener in the vital task of raking at this time of year.

Sooky Dunton

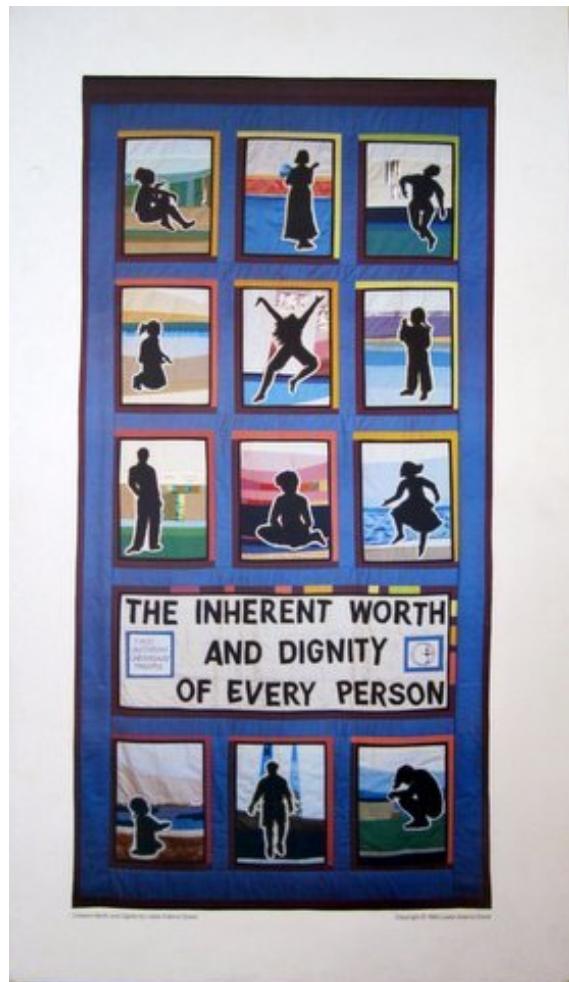
### Other notes:

We have decided not to move downstairs until after Christmas. .

Please support the **Grandmothers to Grandmothers'** fundraiser at the Christmas Market on November 16 and 23, 10:00 to 4:00 PM at the Community Centre in North Hatley.

### Special Thanks this Month

All the gifts of time, energy, talent and financial resources shared with others in the UU Estrie community are appreciated by us all. Please see Sook's column for other special thanks this month.



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**Anticipating Christmas Yule Events**

The Religious Exploration Programme is exploring ideas for designing a new and different twist to our Holiday celebration before the Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> Turkey Dinner. We will be joined by area carolers and choirs, a renowned Townships Teller will share a story about The Third Wiseman, instrumental music and congregational singing and various readings and poems for the season will be shared. We will trim the tree together and enjoy a festive meal. How would you like to be involved? Call Jane Gowman or Rev. Carole with your ideas.

**Calendar and Schedule**

SUN	3	10:30AM SERVICE: SAMHAIN
TUES	5	9:30AM PROGRAMME COMMITTEE 1:30PM BOARD MEETING
SUN	10	10:30AM SERVICE: WAGING PEACE
TUES	12	9:30AM GRANNIES WORKSHOP
SUN	17	10:30AM SERVICE: PF MACGREGOR
SUN	24	10:30AM SERVICE: BUDDHISM
MARDI	26	19H30 CERCLE GAULOIS
WED	27	7:00PM NO-NAME SMALL GROUP
THUR	28	10:00AM NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE
FRI	29	4:00PM STUDENT SUPPER

**Board of Trustees**

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

Sooky Dunton	President
Adele Ernstrom	Secretary
Rachel Garber	Vice-President
Heather Lewis	Member at large
Mary-Lynn Ross	Member at large
Carol McKinley	Member at large

**This is your newsletter !!!**

Next issue of Newsletter is December-January 2013-14

**Deadline: November 24.**

*Please send photos, or write your contribution on paper, parchment, or computer. Give to the newsletter committee in person or send by email to [newsletter@uuestrie.ca](mailto:newsletter@uuestrie.ca).*

**Minister's Office Hours**

Wednesday & Thursday, 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