

April 2015 avril



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

March 29

Rev. Carole Martignacco
“Holy Fools”

We inherit from the ancient Romans annual customs of celebrating the silly, the madcap and ridiculous, overturning the usual order of things, in a spirit of mayhem and merry-making as the year turns. Join us for some holy madness, as we look at traditions of sacred humour across the world and celebrate what makes us laugh.

Musician: Frances Alvo
Coffee Convenor: Joey

April 2, Thursday at 5:30 p.m.
“Pledge Dinner”

The board of trustees warmly invites you to our Pledge Dinner on Thursday April 2 at 5:30 p.m. We pledge to give you good food and good fun. For food, we'll have chicken casseroles & vegetables, rice, vegetarian chilli, crudités, and dessert. For entertainment, we'll have a “preview/audition” of Universalist Ghosts of North Hatley. For information, we have a short PowerPoint report on our investments, fundraising and parsonage research, and invite discussion. Do come and join the fun!
Your board members: *Keith Baxter, Debra Fougere, Rachel Garber, Heather Lewis, Joey Marosi, Mary Lynn Ross, and Rev. Carole Martignacco*

April 5

Phyllis Baxter

“A Unitarian Universalist Passover”

Around a large table we shall experience the joy of liberation in the ritual celebration of the seder. Spring is a welcome season, a season of joy and rebirth, freedom, community, and gratitude, in all faith calendars. "All men are brothers."

Downstairs, in Stoddard Hall

Service Leader: Phyllis Baxter

April 10, Friday at 11:00 a.m.

Dr. Jack Eby

“Autumn Genius: The genius of Giuseppe Verdi”

Another in a series of programmes consisting of a talk (in English this time) and mini concert focused on composer/musicians who flourished in their later years. Dr. Eby's talk will be accompanied by excerpts from Verdi's opera *Otello*, on DVD. Followed by a light lunch. Free for seniors over 60; a small charge for others. Series produced by Pauline Farrugia.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Service Leader: Pauline Farrugia

April 12

Ms. Phyllis Baxter
“Kumaré”

An 80-minute film documenting an ordinary guy born in the USA of Indian parents who starts out exploring the phenomenon of 'fake' gurus and in the process turns himself into an effective guru and healer named Kumaré. We shall watch the film together and save some time for discussion afterward.

Downstairs, in Stoddard Hall

Service Leader: Phyllis Baxter

April 18, Saturday 9 to 4 pm

“Spring Cleanup Day #1”

All who can make it are invited to join us for a couple hours any time after 9 am for the annual spring cleanup of our building and grounds. A list of jobs, and cleaning materials, will be available in the downstairs kitchen.

April 19

Rev. Carole Martignacco

"Spring Awakenings - Ancient and New"

Many customs we celebrate in spring derive from early cultural understandings of our Earth and humanity's place in relation to nature and the cycles of life.

Out of our contemporary wisdom of Earth as a fragile system, profoundly inter-related in a vast cosmic web of life, what new customs and legends might tell the relevant Spring story of our time?

There will also be a letter table. Bring any letters of environmental concern to share.

April 26

Mr. Robin Cappuccino

"Keeping Up With Octogenarians"

Robin Cappuccino travels twice a year to visit 1,300 formerly destitute children now cared for in Child Haven International's Children's Homes in India Nepal Tibet and Bangladesh with his mother, Bonnie, Child Haven's International Director. Meanwhile his father, Fred, oversees Child Haven's office attached to Bonnie and Fred's home in Maxville, Ontario. Bonnie is 81 and Fred is 89. Robin will share some of the stories, challenges and inspirations he has encountered while trying to keep up with their antics.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

May 1, Friday at 11:00 am

Louise Thibault & Jon Gearey

"Autumn Genius: The genius of Shirley Horn"

Another in a series of programmes consisting of a talk (in English this time) and mini concert focused on composer/musicians who flourished in their later years. Followed by a light lunch. Free for seniors over 60; a small charge for others. Series produced by Pauline Farrugia.

Service Leader: Pauline Farrugia

Musician: Thibault and Gearey

Gabriella Brand writes--

After visiting mosques, Hindu temples, Sikh kitchens, Jain temples, Baha'i groups, I am now in the Unitarian settlements.

Kumno....that's a greeting in the Khasi language. Like "namaste" in Hindi...except you don't put your hands together when you say it. That's just one of the things I've learned on this amazing journey.

Honestly, I don't know where to begin. More things happen here in five minutes than in any other place I have ever travelled!

Shall I tell you about the peacocks, the paratha (delicious), the potties, or the people? Around every corner there is a new sight, smell, taste or sound.

Thousands of human faces parade before my eyes every day. Even out in the boondocks....and yes, more than 65% of Indians live in the countryside. Given that there are a BILLION people.... The movement never stops. And the surprises.

No, so far, I haven't seen any snakes, except a very lethargic cobra in a snake charmer's basket in a tourist street. He (or she) looked less intimidating than a super-sized garden hose.

Yes, I have ridden on an elephant, seen the Taj Mahal, and lots of other postcard stuff. I have visited mosques, Hindu temples, Baha'i groups, Sikh kitchens, Akbar's tomb, forts of the Mughals, and glorious bazaars.

But my heart has been forever touched and moved by my visits to the children of the Khasi Hills in the North East.

Can you imagine walking into an orphanage and being kissed warmly on both cheeks by 21 unknown children, one after the other? Ranging in age from 6 to 14.... boys and girls, shy ones and mischievous ones, bright eyed or soulful.

And their voices!! The Khasi tribe is extremely musical. Each school sings for visitors. Usually in the Khasi language. Sometimes I pick out the words "you" or "thanks" and imagine the rest.

Today they sang "We Are The World" in English. It sounded like "we are de whirl", and my eyes link with theirs. And what a whirl we are!

If I had come to India as a single young woman, perhaps I would have had the courage and conviction to become the head of an orphanage school in these Unitarian settlements.

Or is that just a retroactive, self-aggrandizing pipe-dream....the way some people imagine themselves as rugged cowboys or daring astronauts? I don't know.

The Unitarian villages in the Khasi Hills are more numerous than I expected. Forty-one settlements in all. This is North East India where folks here resemble Cambodians more than Indians...in dress, ethnicity and language. When you look on a map, you understand why.

North East India is neighbors with Bhutan and Nepal and Bangladesh. I can actually see Bangladesh from here. And not just in a Sarah Palin kind of way. Bangladesh's border was only a few kilometers away from the last village I visited...but the clouds were thick and I could see nothing.

But somehow I felt as if I were seeing everything. I hold you all tight in my heart.

Love, Gabriella



Minister's Message Carole's Column

"We need a celebration that speaks the Spring-inspired word about life and death, about us as we live and die...Through all the cycling of the seasons, days and years."

- Max A Coots, #627 in

Singing the Living Tradition

For some communities of faith, the Spring-inspired word is Resurrection. Christians are heading into their busiest season theologically, with solemn liturgies rehearsing the Passion narrative of Holy Week and culminating in a joyous celebration of life reclaimed from death at Easter. For our Jewish friends, the theme of Passover is Freedom. It revolves around a retelling of the ancient story of their release from slavery long ago in Egypt at the symbolic Seder meal, with prayers for a world released from all manner of contemporary slavery, oppression and injustice.

Awakening is the word of the month in our theme-based ministry cycle here at UU Estrie. And I invite you to take the whole transitional month to ponder its many meanings. After the

long winter of waiting, it may take awhile for the reality of Spring to sink in - to the frozen ground and our spirits as well.

Every year we sing the joyful hymn, "Lo, the Earth Awakes Again" and end with repeated Alleluias. We do this, despite the weather. This year Easter comes early on the calendar and may yet herald another blizzard. The date, of course having little to do with calendar or weather, is calculated according to some grand cosmic formula to follow the Spring Equinox which occurred on March 20th. Today, looking out the window at a landscape knee-deep in snow, I experience a bit of a jet lag between the actual signs of spring and the symbolic celebration of its coming. Here in this northeastern corner of the Western hemisphere, we make an act of faith, which has sometimes been defined as a belief in things unseen. Imagining new life, grass greening, crocus and daffodils rising up out of the dark soil, the very idea loosens and gladdens my spirit with the lengthening days.

Are you really ready for Spring? I mean the deeper kind, that echoes the changing season. The quote above from Max Coots continues with encouragement to celebrate an internal awakening: "...Unless we move the seasons of the self, and Spring can come for us, the Winter will go on and on. And Easter will remain a myth, and life will never come again, despite the fact of Spring."

Earth will awaken according to its own schedule. The question Coots asks is, will we? Quickly now, before the moment passes and we forget in the riotous warmth and colours of Spring our longing for renewal, let's ask ourselves: To what elemental joy, rebirth, renewal or new dawn might we ourselves need to awaken? What if the grand cycle of the seasons is a school for our spirits? Spring is a perfect time to focus on spiritual awakening. What coldness might we find in ourselves giving way to lighter days? What heaviness that enfolds us might we discard, or prisons of our own or others' making might we release ourselves to claim our freedom? So that we might say, with the ancient poet Basho: "In my new robe this spring morning - someone else."

May your Spring be joyous and spirit-deep with many levels of awakening! - Rev. Carole

What is shared ministry?

"Remember that the minister does not work for you. We are concerned when you're frustrated with the institution of the church, we are pleased when you are inspired by it, but we do not work for you and your satisfaction. The congregation calls us and the Board helps us to be more effective, but ultimately we work for something much larger than you."

Rev. Scott Prinster

I am sometimes asked to define shared ministry. The above quote was recently posted on a Facebook page for UU Ministers' exchanging sermon-writing ideas, themes, and strategies. Though at first it may sound a harsh note, the reference to "something much larger than you" is not intended as a put down.

Ministers I know agree that we work for something much larger than ourselves, as well. We stake our lives, our professional careers and years of education and training on a sense of call and the privilege to serve in collaboration with others that "something much larger." Call it the source of all goodness, what connects us all, the future of liberal faith, God, Spirit of Life, or (fill in the blank).

Choosing the path of parish ministry, we ministers imagine ourselves in service with other dedicated people to something beyond us we all value in common. Reminding ourselves and each other of that something larger can lift us out of our everyday human foibles, disappointments, or conflicts.

People are called to leadership roles within the church for various reasons. Some find it a venue for using skills they already have, and they learn to transfer their professional or vocational skills to the congregational environment. Others may seek to develop leadership skills and lack opportunities to do so in their personal or professional lives. For many, the church offers a supportive community for accomplishing positive change in the world.

In his book on leading with spirit, *Serving With Grace*, Erik Walker Wickstrom writes about shared ministry as an ideal that presents us with continual challenges. We come into the church expecting the dynamics to match the ideals - expecting peace, love and harmony. Instead, our human nature gets played out in a

drama that looks a lot like real life - with all its ups and downs, failures and successes, collusions and collisions. Unresolved issues of power and powerlessness, personality, and family systems dynamics, all contribute to what Wickstrom calls the real work of the church - fine-tuning HOW we work together and using our tasks, agendas, and projects as vehicles for living out our values.

Shared ministry is a three-fold proposition: between ministry, lay leaders, and whatever larger purpose they have covenanted to serve. Is it a power struggle? Only if we are not in agreement about what that larger purpose is. Only if we perceive ourselves to be at cross-purposes or our roles as being in opposition.

As a minister, I see my role as encouraging, supporting, counseling, and aiding you in accomplishing the mission of this congregation, working in service to its vision. Each member may have different expectations of the minister; we know it is not possible to please all of the people all of the time. For in our diverse communities, at any time pleasing one may risk equally disappointing another. To be prophetic, to call people to some kind of growth or change - individually or collectively - our real mandate may be to ruffle a few feathers, stir up a healthy controversy. Being both pastoral and prophetic involves, as the cliché goes, comforting the afflicted on the one hand while on the other, afflicting the too-comfortable. With a goal always to do so in the spirit of justice and love.

Shared ministry is many things, but at its best it is a partnership. It is ever a work in progress, and depends upon the goodwill efforts of all involved. What it is not, or should never be, is a power struggle between ordained and lay leadership. Hence we might evaluate our shared ministry by basing our inquiry on how well we support each other and work together toward our shared vision, how well we practice together and model for the world the UU principles we proclaim.

And while I do not work *FOR* you, I have chosen to work *WITH* you in service to the larger good.

In gratitude for our ministry together,

~ Reverend Carole Martignacco



President's Message

Although spring is a bit shy to show its face this year, we do have one sure sign of spring that is coming up at a fair clip.

The annual meetings of two bodies we're a part of. First, the Vermont-Quebec Convention Universalist Unitarian Convention is on May 9 in Hartland 4 Corners, Vermont.

Then comes the annual conference and business meeting of the Canadian Unitarian Council. It's in Ottawa this year, May 15 to 17. The theme is "Seeking Justice in a Changing Land – À la recherche de la justice sur une terre changeante."

The event promises to be rich. Workshops, spiritual practice sessions, plenary sessions on social responsibility and business, worship services, social gatherings, and more. And March 31 is the deadline for early bird registration. It is also the deadline to apply for financial support from the CUC's special fund for this purpose. For more information, visit cuc.ca, or talk to me, Mary Lynn Ross or Rev. Carole Martignacco. We all three plan to go. You can too!

After the CUC conference is our series of "Happy Endings" workshops about end-of-life issues. They're Monday mornings at 9:45 to 11:30 a.m., at the Uplands Cultural Centre in Lennoxville.

It's an enticing menu. We'll see the prize-winning documentary, *How to Die in Oregon*. We'll learn about legal issues such as wills and living wills, with Notary Tim Leonard. We'll find out about green burials and family-centred funerals from Jacques Laberge of the Cass Funeral Homes. We'll discover the secrets of bequests – how to give to a charity AND leave all your money to your children – from Alain Levesque of the DeVimy Group. And we'll hear some Last Words – how to plan your own memorial or celebration of life, from our very own Rev. Carole Martignacco.

The series is free of charge. Make room now in your agenda for Monday mornings, May 25 to June 22.

Just to let you know, I will be going to Cuba for a little vacation April 7 to 27. I'll be back in good time, rested and ready for all the meetings.

Love is the Spirit,
Rachel

Fundraising brainstorming

The Fundraising Brainstorming Group had so many great ideas, it was hard to decide which ones to focus on. So we're asking you to help choose.

These were the criteria we had in mind (in alphabetical order):

- a. Different from what others are already doing.
- b. Fun for us, and interesting for tourists and others outside our congregation.
- c. In keeping with our values, and contributing to cultural life in the area.
- d. Money-making.
- e. Somebody volunteers to do it!

So here is the list of our favourite ideas. But each event depends on someone volunteering to do it. If we don't obtain volunteers for certain events, that will make the list shorter. For certain events, we also need a better estimate of how much we could hope to raise, and how much work would be involved. If you'd like to help pin down such details about one of these events, please let me know. Your brainpower would be welcome!

(Detailed chart available)

Solstice Supper & Silent Auction, June 19

Canada Day in Hatley (food stand)

Sponsoring a Piggery show, July ***

Blueberry/Blues Social, Near Aug 1

Ghost tour in church & Historic High Tea, August

Coffee House 1: Music, Halloween, Near Oct 30

Coffee House 2: Play Reading, Nov 2015

Christmas Supper

Coffee House 3: Poetry Reading, January 2016

Coffee House 4: Works in Progress, Valentine

***Spitfire Dance: A play about remembrance: In a world of aviation dominated by men... women had other ideas.

Respectfully submitted by your brainstormers:
Phyllis Baxter, Debra Fougere, Rachel Garber, Kevin Jensen, Joey Marosi, Carol McKinley, and Rev. Carole Martignacco.

Blue Ribbon

Do you know how long the United Nations flag has hung in the back of the church sanctuary? Have you noticed it there?

I've been reading old minutes of the Board of Trustees of the First Universalist Church of North Hatley. (That's UUEstrie's previous name.) On September 14, 1965, the board of trustees decided to remove the Canadian and Quebec flags that hung in the church sanctuary. "Remarks had been made about the old flags," said the minutes. They decided to replace them with the United Nations flag! This flag still hangs in the back of our sanctuary.

That's not the only way UUEstrie supports the work of the United Nations and our own Unitarian Universalist – United Nations Office (UU-UNO). We have an envoy to the UU-UNO – it used to be Sooky Dunton, now it's me. We have an annual UN Sunday service – the last one was October 26, 2014. At least 5% of our congregation's members have donated \$50 each to the UU-UNO (that's two of us). And we give the UU-UNO an annual collection plate – the last one was \$130 from the UN Sunday collection.

We've been doing this for some time now, but it's nice to have one's efforts noticed. And this is our Blue Ribbon year – the UU-UNO has confirmed that we qualify for Blue Ribbon status, for all the reasons just mentioned. That means UUEstrie will receive a blue ribbon at the CUC annual conference and meeting in Ottawa. We will receive formal recognition on the UU-UNO website. And we will receive a plaque to be displayed at our congregation.

For news about how the UU-UNO works for human rights around the world, visit <http://www.uua.org/international/un>. There, you will see that the UU-UNO is extremely active among the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working to influence UN policy. The UU-UNO's director, Bruce Knotts, chairs three UN NGO committees: the one on Human Rights, the Ethics Network for the International Criminal Court, and the one on Disarmament, Peace and Security. He is also on the governing board of the Committee on Sustainable Development. The UU-UNO is also part of the

Committee on Migration, and the Commission on the Status of Women.

On September 20, the UU-UNO helped to organize and co-sponsored "The Climate Crisis: Which Way Out?" in New York City. On Sept. 21, the office members and interns participated in the inspirational "People's Climate March" with over 400,000 marchers from around the world. And they're currently busy organizing the 2015 Intergenerational Spring Seminar. It's on International Criminal Justice: From Punitive to Restorative. The seminar will take place in New York on April 9-11.

Let us recognize the vital and effective work the UU-UNO is doing on the world's stage, and let us be proud to be a small part of it.

Your UU-UNO Envoy, Rachel Garber

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/>

Special Thanks this Month

The Programme Committee does it again! They've successfully and with inspiration carried us through the winter months - including Rev. Carole's month-long leave serving UCM in Montreal - with a roster of unique services and speakers. Let's hear a round of applause for: Keith Baxter, Joey Marosi, Kevin Jensen, Gudrun Brand and Rev. Carole. (They welcome your ideas for themes and speakers)

Thanks to those working on special committees, Investments and Parsonage Research, and preparing for our Pledge Campaign this month.

Extra special thanks to our President, Rachel Garber, for organizing and participating in these committees, as well as the board, and steering our ship through the stormy seas of uncertainty, avoiding the shoals of ego and despair.

Thanks especially to Mary Lynn Ross for her faithful stewardship managing our church and the groups that use it.

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Minister's Office Hours
Wednesday , 2:30 – 4:30 pm
& Friday 10:30 – 12:30
Please respect the Minister's sabbath, Sunday
afternoon and Monday.
For emergency pastoral care, phone:
1. Rev. Carole
2. Mary Lynn Ross

Calendar and Schedule

SUN 29 10:30AM SERVICE: HOLY FOOLS
 SUN 5 10:30AM SERVICE: UU PASSOVER
 FRI 10 11:00AM GIUSEPPE VERDI
 SUN 12 10:30AM SERVICE: TBA
 SAT 18 9:00AM SPRING CLEANUP DAY
 SUN 19 10:30AM SERVICE:
 SPRING AWAKENINGS
 MON 20 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
 SUN 26 10:30AM SERVICE: OCTOGENARIANS

Board of Trustees

You have elected this board to take care of business. The Board generally meets on the **third Tuesday** of each month at 1:30pm, but check for changes. Please discuss your hopes and concerns with any member:

Rachel Garber	President
Heather Lewis	Vice-President
Joey Marosi	Secretary
Keith Baxter	Treasurer
Mary-Lynn Ross	Member at large
Debra Foug�ere	Member at large

This is your newsletter !!!

Next issue of Newsletter is May 2015

Deadline: **April 20.**

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.



Kevin,

I sent other people photos of cows and horses and camels, but you deserve a goat! This one was sitting on a ledge minding its own business and thinking sacred goat thoughts by the Ganges.

Gabriella

(← see picture on left, letter on page 2)