

nouvelles esirie news

April 2014 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

Saturday, April 5, 9:00am

Mary Lynn Ross

“Clean-up Day # 1”

Spring Cleanup time! All members and friends are invited for a work party cleaning up our lower level. It's from 9 a.m. to noon. Come any time after 9 am and stay for an hour or two or as long as you like. Mary Lynn will have a list of jobs that need doing. Coffee and juice will be provided. Muffins are welcome!

If you're not free to come on this day, no worries; there will be another clean-up day on April 19!

Downstairs, in Stoddard Hall

April 6

Mr. Robin Cappuccino

“Reflections on Home and Family”

Robin Cappuccino of Child Haven. The first born and third eldest of Bonnie and Fred's 21 children will share stories and reflect on family - both immediate and universal, including recollections of being a “PK” or preacher's kid at the Lakeshore UU Congregation in Pointe Claire QC. Child Haven now provides homes for 3000 formerly destitute children.

Downstairs, in Stoddard Hall

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

Musician: Pat Bird

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

Saturday, April 12, 10 a.m. - 3:30 pm.

Rev. Linda Thomson

“Right Relationships”

Linda Thomson is a resource person for congregational development at the Canadian Unitarian Council. Her workshop is from 10 a.m. to

3:30 p.m. It is free of charge and open to all members and friends. **Lunch: A simple meal of soup and sandwich makings will be provided.** Gluten-free people should bring their own bread.

Linda says, "The way we do things in congregations; make decisions, deal with diverse opinions, and manage relationships are key expressions of our values. They communicate, both internally and to others, who we really are. Therefore it is important that the members of congregations consider these matters before they find themselves managing significant decisions and the challenges that accompany them. In the workshop we'll work to develop some guidelines for decision making and for relationships, so that we understand our aspirations and so that we can help one another to meet them."

Downstairs, upstairs? To be announced.

April 13

Rev. Linda Thomson

“Covenant”

Many of us experience Unitarian Universalism, when we first find it, as ‘coming home’. But consider this: We can have Unitarian Universalist understandings, but we're not really UU until we are in relationship with others. In the absence of a creed, all we have, at the core of each of our congregations is a covenant. Today we'll pick up on yesterday's workshop on Right Relations and consider the powerful beating heart of our tradition and this community.

Downstairs, in Stoddard Hall

Service Leader: Rev. Carole Martignacco

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

Tuesday, April 15, 6 pm

Mr. Robin Cappuccino

“Child Haven International Fundraising Dinner”

Sponsored by UUEstrie and Child Haven International. Reserved tickets in advance: \$50 with a \$25 tax receipt. Larger donations are welcome (tickets suggest a sliding scale of \$50 to \$75). The Indian dinner will be at Restaurant Shalimar, 263 Queen, Lennoxville, at 6pm, April 15, 2014, and will feature a presentation by Robin Cappuccino. Speak to Keith Baxter, 819-346-8273, or visit www.childhaven.ca and click on Lennoxville.Apr15 for tickets and information.

Child Haven operates Homes for over 1300 formerly destitute children in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Tibet. The Homes provide food, education, healthcare, shelter, clothing and loving care. Child Haven is a registered Canadian charity (1985) founded by Bonnie and Fred Cappuccino, recipients of the Order of Canada and the United Nations Humanitarian Service Award.

Away from UU Estrie

Saturday, April 19

Mary Lynn Ross

“Clean-up Day # 2”

Another day designated for volunteers among our members and friends to come out and put in a couple of hours polishing the upstairs of our church building, prior to our Easter Sunday worship service in our sanctuary, and the beginning of our "upstairs" season. Come anytime after 9 am.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

April 20

Rev. Carole Martignacco

“Earth Easter”

Climate change "by its nature" includes and supersedes all other pressing issues of our day, even - though it's hard to admit - Quebec Election outcomes. Since the first Earth Day in 1970 marked an emerging awareness of environmental concerns, faith communities throughout the world have developed diverse responses to this escalating crisis of our time.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Coffee Convenor: Yanan Wang

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

Tuesday, April 22, 11 am.

Rev. Carole Martignacco

“400 Bells”

Why are the bells ringing from North Hatley to Waterville, in Ayer's Cliff and Lennoxville? To call us to attention! On this **Earth Day** we bear witness, along with other religious congregations in the area, to the fact that CO₂ in our atmosphere has reached 400ppm, a level unmatched in millions of years, calling us humans to change.

Upstairs, in the Sanctuary

Invitation: It takes about 6 min. to ring our bell 400 times. If you'd like to show up for a turn, call Rev. Carole at 819.842.1387 or email: revcarole@uuestrie.ca

April 27

TBA

Flower Convenor: Sooky Dunton

APRIL QUOTES

"People are waking up. They are waking up to the possibility of living a spiritual life of reverence, openness, justice and love, and such a life is worth leaving "religion" behind, if religion stands in the way -- especially if it stands in the way of a spirit of openness. There is a great awakening of a liberal spirit already going on. But it will sputter out if liberal religions institutions, like UU congregations, for example, do not provide fresh inspiration for the liberal spirit, in the form communities of challenge and consolation for the seekers.

"A great awakening of the liberal spirit, particularly here in New England, is a bold vision. If it is to happen, liberal religions must reclaim the boldness of its past. Like bulbs, that boldness has been buried in the cold earth, but is now re-emerging to bloom again." - Tom Schade, UU Minister and "Opinionator at Large"



Minister's Reflection - Carole's Column

"We Unitarian
Universalists have been
seeing ourselves as
enacting the story of a
small and ambitious faith's
survival, through our
desperate efforts to heal
ourselves of whatever is

wrong with us... As a result, the story we have been telling ourselves has been anxious and brittle and defensive and most of all, sectarian. We make ourselves the heroes of our own story – we have trouble seeing ourselves now in this new era." - UU minister Tom Schade, in The Lively Tradition

CALL TO MEETING: We at UU Estrie are greeting Spring mid-month with a renewal, an all-hands-on deck event to help determine how we'll work together, truly envision and own a future for UU Estrie. In the past several months, we've embarked on an innovative outreach plan as a result of the generosity of a CUC Northern Lights grant, expanding our influence and engagement with the community beyond our doors. Yet when it comes to changing how we function, growth of any kind in persons or congregations is usually accompanied by "growing pains". It's natural to wonder: "how much can we change, and still retain our identity?" or "We've never done this before - this isn't who we are!" Change can feel overwhelming: "We're so small, we can barely keep up our building and regular programs; how can we possibly do more?"

True change is often not a matter of doing more, but learning to do *differently*. We are impacted by huge cultural changes in communication and engagement. Yet the demands to protect religious freedoms are very real (the proposed Quebec Charter), and human rights and justice are more than ever at risk. Our Program Cmte. spins its wheels trying to give people what we think they want - weekly speakers year round to draw visitors who will perhaps may stay – all the while those in the church-going mode are ageing, and few young families today are drawn to Sunday church attendance, not just in Quebec but continent-wide. How do we engage the "spiritual but not

religious" seekers of meaning beyond the steeple-based pattern of belonging? One way is outreach; instead of enticing them to step "out of their comfort zone" and come to us, we move out beyond our doors and meet them where they are. We do justice *with* as well as *for* those who need our care, form coalitions with other faiths to promote common cause. What does that look like? It looks like student hospitality suppers, educational events that support, for example, English-speaking caregivers), or an Interfois Clergy meeting to plan with area churches a "400 Bells" Earth Day call to environmental justice. I am excited about this work, but I do it on your behalf, representing your vision.

From time to time as your minister, I try to step back, see the larger picture. I see UU Estrie poised on a brink, ready to "come of age" in an age when everything about being church and being religious is in transition, in a setting and culture that has already changed significantly in language and population demographics as well as religious affiliation. Finances while significant should not be the only concern that drives the huge decisions before us; creativity and vision should play their part. We are a tiny surviving fragment of pioneer Universalists who have inherited this jewel of a church and inhabited North Hatley's corner of the Eastern Townships for nearly a century and a half, an outpost of religious liberalism. To quote again Tom Schade in *The Lively Tradition*: "The overriding question is 'What time is it?' What time is it in our story? How does this story we are a part of end?" We - all of those who consider themselves UU Estrie - get to choose: an identity based on who we've been or who we wish to become. How we ask these questions, as well as our answers, will determine our future. Is UU Estrie a church - and if so, is it the building or the spiritual community? Is it time (again) to decide between a building or a minister? How long can we maintain a 125 year-old building, given its age and the demographic limits of our present location? Do we find a location more conducive to growth, or stay but offer satellite programs? Is there something beyond the book-signing membership model - layers of engagement - that better reflects the nature of belonging in today's terms? Whether or not we return to our previous mode of lay-leadership - how do we promote

more ownership and participation in keeping with our UU covenantal principles?

We are being called, not just to this meeting but to change who we are and how we are together. To paraphrase a wise old saying: Whosoever would keep this life will lose it; and whosoever would lose this live will endure." Tom Schade again: "I believe we are at the beginning of a new third period of UU history -- one in which Unitarian Universalist congregations and churches are nodal points in a vast network of networks coming together to move our culture in a more compassionate, just and inclusive direction. It is a hopeful story, a joyous adventure, a story that might be the best years of our lives."

A commitment to safely practice their religion of choice drew forth early Universalists with the courage to immigrate and erect a church here as their spiritual refuge. A small band has ever kept that alive. Today, in the midst of a multiculturalism few of them could have imagined, our task is to match their courage, inspired by our history to reinvent new ways to meet today's challenges.

Our first step will be to strengthen ourselves as a spiritual community, and the Rev. Linda Thomson, CUC congregational services staff, has years of experience, wisdom and skill to guide us. By creating new ways to work together, thoughtfully and lovingly honing our patterns of leadership, processes of decision-making, and self-governance. Freeing ourselves from internal divisiveness or dissention, we can then move together toward claiming a future of relevance for UU Estrie and our liberal faith. Don't miss this chance - April 12, from 10 - 3:30 in Stoddard Hall - to be shapers of UU Estrie's ongoing story.

President's Report -- Transformative?



Decisions about the future face our little group. We have launched into an outreach project, with funding from several sources – chiefly Northern Lights. It is going well! But at the same time, decisions are needed about our financial situation down the road.

What about our membership? In the last 10 years, the number of Unitarian Universalists in Canada has gone down 13%. A similar trend is evident in the United and Anglican churches in Canada, over the past 50 years. That information is from a recent discussion paper from the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC).

On the home front, we have a minor miracle. In fact, although having many losses over the past 10 years, the number of UUEstrie members has remained steady.

I recall seeing the UUEstrie membership roll of about 100 years ago. To my surprise, it said we had 32 members – just about the same as today. Since then, there have been highs and lows. There have been huge demographic changes. Many Anglophones – who traditionally formed the bulk of the congregation – left the province in the 1980s. Despite that, we're still here.

But even if we gain new members, would that be enough to keep our community solvent, growing and vital in the future? Younger generations, statistics show, have fewer resources – including financial – than do baby boomers. We depend too much on too few and on elderly members for maintenance work, outreach work, caring work, financial work - all kinds of work.

Several members have expressed concern for the future. What about our minister, our church building, and the congregation itself? How can we best meet these decisions?

And behind these nuts-and-bolts questions lurks an even bigger one – the reason for our existence. "What would it mean for us to be not merely relevant, but a truly transformative religion for the times in which we live?" How can we "create a better and sustainable world – a world of justice and peace, held together in love"?

Those are Rev. Shawn Newton's questions. He asked them during his Confluence Lecture at the CUC's annual meeting last year.

Your board of directors usually meets monthly, but we also had a study session in February, and two board meetings in March. We discussed these questions very seriously.

We think being transformative in the world begins at home. We think how we approach our

decision-making process is even more important than the final decisions themselves. We want to strengthen fair, transparent and democratic decision-making in our congregation so that our processes are truly in keeping with our UU principles.

That is why we have invited Rev. Linda Thomson to come to UUEstrie. She is the congregational development resource person from the Canadian Unitarian Council for our region. We have asked her to lead a workshop about “right relationships” and then speak at the Sunday service the next morning.

The workshop will be on Saturday, April 12, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and the Sunday service will be on April 13, at 10:30 a.m. Please look for the details in this newsletter. We hope you will be able to join us!

Rachel Garber,
President

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/>

CUC meeting -- Be it resolved...?

Two UU work groups are proposing resolutions for possible adoption at the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) AGM in Montreal in May.

Peace in Israel-Palestine.

The first resolution concerns the tangled conflict in Israel-Palestine. It asks that CUC member congregations study the history of the conflict, and the present conditions in Israel. It asks that the CUC provide resource materials and persons to help in this process. And it asks that, at the 2015 AGM, member congregations be prepared to decide if Social Justice action on this matter is needed.

We already began this study with two recent services. The most recent was on March 23, when Jerzy Przytyk presented a video by an Israeli soldier entitled “Soldier’s Diary.” Jerzy suggested the best way to intervene is to support Israeli and Palestinian groups who are working for peace. The discussion has just begun!

For more information, visit <http://cuc.ca/acm-2014/annual-meeting/>

Pervasive Surveillance.

The second resolution is new and urgent. It responds to information that became public in January – that the Canadian government believes that it has the right to engage in wholesale collection of “metadata” about telephone and Internet communications of Canadians. The promoters of the resolution say this is an attack on our basic freedoms, and one which should be challenged by UUs.

The resolution asks CUC member congregations to call on the government of Canada (1) to report on all pervasive surveillance programs that have been carried out by government agencies over the past five years; (2) to assign the authority to oversee surveillance activities undertaken by the government to an agency that is responsible directly to Parliament, not to the Cabinet; (3) to make it unlawful for the government to engage in pervasive surveillance, including the routine mass collection or storage of its citizens’ communications, movements, or metadata; (4) and to recommend that the individual members of CUC member congregations write their elected representatives to express concern about pervasive surveillance and their support for the changes outlined above.

Any members of CUC congregations who support the resolution are invited to formally join the group of “proposers.” To do this, contact Jack Dodds by email brmdamon@hushmail.com or telephone 905-727-4097. For more information, visit

<http://firstunitariantoronto.org/component/content/article/97-social-justice/514-pervasive-surveillance-resolution> .

New CUC Mission and Vision Statements.

The CUC board of directors also sent us a discussion paper about the CUC’s new vision and mission. Many religious denominations have seen declining numbers. This includes Unitarian Universalists, although the decline is not as sharp as for some other groups. The question is this: What would it mean for us to be a truly transformative religion for the times in which we live? For more information, visit www.cuc.ca .

CUC Board Nominations – Congratulations, Jaime!

The CUC Nominating Committee has proposed three nominees for the Board of Trustees of the CUC. For the Eastern region, our very own Jaime Dunton. For the Central region, Lorna Weigand of Don Heights. For British Columbia, Kristina Stevens of Victoria (second term). They join five other board members whose 3-year terms are in progress.

Further nominations (by April 16), questions and comments may be directed to the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Bunty Albert, at nominations@cuc.ca. Details are on the Governance page of www.cuc.ca.

Special Thanks this Month

The “Unsung Hero” award goes this month without question to Mary Lynn Ross for her prompt managing of the Stoddard Hall flood (details appear elsewhere in this newsletter). Huge thanks, Mary Lynn for keeping all our heads above water this time.

Deep appreciation to Rachel Garber for many mentions of our UU Estrie community in the local news, and for her wise leadership in organizing Rev. Linda Thomson's April 12/13 workshop and service.

Kevin Jensen, for her outstanding contributions to our Pledge Dinner, first as innovative script-writer for our “Lucky to Be Here!” skit, and also – amazingly – managing the dinner food service itself. Kevin, what do you do for an encore?

All who participated in a successful and fun, friend-raising Pledge Dinner: the actors – Keith Baxter, Joyce Booth, Jaime Dunton, Reine Gagnon and Rev. Carole, and all in attendance!

why i feed the birds

by Richard Vargas

once
i saw my grandmother hold out
her hand cupping a small offering
of seed to one of the wild sparrows
that frequented the bird bath she
filled with fresh water every day

she stood still
maybe stopped breathing
while the sparrow looked
at her, then the seed
then back as if he was
judging her character

he jumped into her hand
began to eat
she smiled

a woman holding
a small god

- from Guernica. 2014.



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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. Sooky Dunton
3. Joyce Booth

"Our congregations are continually in search of new ways of helping people discover their own religious paths. And, some "beyond" experiments, like The Spiritual Growth Center of the Unitarian Church of Marlborough and Hudson MA that attracts 1,500 participants to its programs annually even though it has only a 60 member congregation, hold great promise." - Stephen M. Schick, in *Congregations and Beyond*

Calendar and Schedule

SAT 5 9:00AM CLEAN-UP DAY
 SUN 6 10:30AM SERV: ROBIN CAPPUCCINO
 SUN 13 10:30AM SERV: LINDA THOMPSON
 TUES 15 6:00PM CHILD HAVEN DINNER
 SAT 19 9:00AM CLEAN-UP DAY
 SUN 20 10:30AM SERVICE: EARTH EASTER
 TUES 22 11:00AM 400 BELLS
 SUN 27 10:30AM SERVICE: TBA

Board of Trustees

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

Rachel Garber	President
Adele Ernstrom	Secretary
	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 May 2014

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.

S. V. P., NOTE **CHANGE IN OFFICE HOURS:**

Due to increased outreach activities, Minister's office hours at the church have changed. They are officially Wednesday afternoons at 2:30-4:30 and Friday mornings from 10:30 – 12:30. At times, a meeting may need to be scheduled that conflicts with these hours, and a sign will be posted at the church of such a change. To schedule a consult outside these times, please call Rev. Carole's home #819.842.1387 or cell, 819.212.7150.