

nouvelles news

September 2014 septembre



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

September 7

“Hike and Picnic + Water Communion”

We shall close our summer season with our traditional hike and outdoor worship and picnic lunch at the Jensen farm, 16 Bowen Rd. in Hatley. All welcome. No service in North Hatley-- just come directly to the farm for 10:30 am. Bring your picnic lunch or something to share. Reverend Carole will lead a brief service on the lawn after the hike. Options for hike: a leisurely stroll in the lane, or a longer or shorter jaunt to the maple woods on the ridge – all beautiful views.

Away from UU Estrie

Hosts and Coffee Convenors: The Jensens

UUEstrie will have a booth at **Townshippers' Day** on **Saturday, September 13**, from approx. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. in Coaticook. If you'd like to participate by helping staff the table for a timeslot of two hours during the day, that would be wonderful! Just contact Rachel at [819-300-2374](tel:819-300-2374) or rachel@uuestrie.ca, as soon as possible.

Taproot V book launch at 11:15!

September 14

Rev. Carole Martignacco

“One Wild and Precious Life”

To get a good table in the dining room, we may need reservations. But playing full out requires courageously dealing with whatever holds us back. What does it mean to live fully engaged, as if this is the only life there is?

Musician: Frances Alvo

Coffee Convenor: Phyllis Baxter

September 14 – Noon to Evening

Corn Roast & Fly-In at Weller's in Stanstead

Bring potluck, arrive on foot, by car or plane.

September 21

Prof. Christina Reimer

“The Dangers of Fundamentalism: Seeking Uncertainty as a Spiritual Pursuit”

Christina Reimer is a professor of religion at Bishop's University, with a particular interest in the phenomenon of Christian fundamentalism and its tendency to augment violence in the world.

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

Coffee Convenor: Gudrun Brand

September 28

Rev. Carole Martignacco

“Step By Step”

At recent UU Estrie Town Hall Meetings a longing has been expressed for finding some common cause for justice. What if, beyond our concern for the nation and the world, we might find our galvanizing project right under our own feet? Bring your good hearts and ideas; let's explore options for engagement here and now.

October 5

Blondine Maurice

“The Need for Simplicity Parenting”

The speed and stress and fear and over-stimulation of contemporary society takes its toll, especially on children.

Service Leader: Keith Baxter

October 12

Rev. Carole Martignacco

“Thanksgiving Sukkot in Huntingville”



Minister's Message

"Being spiritual has nothing to do with what you believe and everything to do with your state of consciousness. Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if

you had chosen it....Life is now. There was never a time that was not now, nor will there ever be."

- Eckhart Tolle, on engaging the present moment

Way back in July - which feels like ages ago, but is only weeks of hopefully for you also a refreshing summer - I introduced our new theme-based ministry with "The ABCs of Spiritual Literacy." (If you missed it, you can access the audio file of that talk on our website at www.uuestrie.ca) So we begin our year of exploring dimensions of the human spirit through a series of meaningful and spirited words. Monthly themes this year are chosen in synchrony with our sister UU church in Montreal, and include: September - Engagement, October - Awe (émerveillement), November - Courage, December - Hope (espoir), January - Story (histoire), February - Love (amour), March - Surrender (abandon), April - Awakening (éveil), May - Character (personnalité), June - Beauty (beauté).

Our beginning word calls us to passionate living. What does it mean to live a life fully engaged? Investing one's personal life energy in meaningful relationships and pursuits that invite us to share our unique gifts and passions. Engagement is a critical issue in today's culture, and I don't mean simply as a precursor to marriage or committed partnerships. It's the choice between being present for life, or checking out and looking elsewhere. No matter where you stand in relation to the use of technology, an unmistakable trend in our culture encourages indirect interactions. What's the spiritual awakening waiting to happen here? A recognition of the virtue of real living beyond a merely virtual existence.

Look Up and Live! is a YouTube video gone viral in the last several weeks. The young technology producer poses a question: What are we missing when we don't look up? From screens and hand-held devices that promise connection but actually encourage our missing each other, and all the moments of shared experience that true meeting might lead to. We are shown two scenarios. First he's lost and asks directions of a young woman on the sidewalk; they walk off in the same direction, decide to have coffee and end up creating a life together. They marry, buy a house, have children, see their young ones off to school and later college, weather illnesses and loss, and share their golden years together. In the second take, he's busy consulting the GPS app on his cell phone when she walks by, and never looks up to even see his potential life partner passing before him.

Whatever your level of engagement with technology, with all life's distractions, worries and demands, what's seems to be missing for many in our culture is what Joseph Campbell speaks of as a real experience of being alive. Authentic live engagement with real people in whose miraculous presence we find ourselves for the moment, whenever and wherever we are. Spiritual teachers Eckhart Tolle and Thich Nhat Hahn agree that key to meaningful existence is a present moment mindfulness, being engaged is being wholly present and paying attention.

To go back to the marriage or partnership image: remember how it felt to be wholly absorbed in relating to another? What if, as lovers of life itself, we were fully engaged? These are questions we'll explore in various ways throughout the coming month. Our weekly column in the Sherbrooke Record, written by four interfaith clergy in L'Estrie, has as its opening September theme four perspectives on the word "engagement". We end the column inviting you to add your voice. Our work in community at UU Estrie asks the same. What calls to your spirit? Where in life do you engage fully, no holds barred? What holds you back? Send your thoughts to revcarole@uuestrie.ca.

Beyond all words, I invite you to be fully engaged in this life of the spirit we share here with each other! And while we're at it, let's wholly enjoy these end of summer days ahead.

Blessings and love - Rev. Carole



President's Report
Who Owns UU Estrie?

Who are our stockholders? Who do we answer to?

People belong to a congregation, but do they own it? This is an intriguing question that Dan Hotchkiss answered like this.

“Who plays the role of the stockholders in a business? Not the members. Not the board. Not the clergy or the bishop or the staff. All these are fiduciaries whose duty is to serve the owner. Symbolically, we might say God or the divine is the owner, and that might be the correct interpretation. But this concept is too big to guide decision making helpfully.

“The ‘owner’ that the board must serve is the congregation’s mission, the covenant the congregation has set its heart to and the piece of the Divine Spirit that belongs to it. Or to put it differently, the congregation’s job is to find the mission it belongs to, the real owner for whose benefit the leaders hold and deploy resources.

“Any effort to improve the governance of a congregation begins by recognizing that its primary measure of success is not the balance in the bank, the shortness of board meetings, or the happiness of congregants. A congregation’s ‘bottom line’ is the degree to which its mission is achieved. The mission, like stockholders in a business, has the moral right both to control the congregation’s actions and to benefit from them. Because the match between a congregation’s mission and a corporation’s stockholders is so close, it seems to me helpful to say that the owner of a congregation is its mission.”



At the Healthy Congregations workshop that three of us attended in July, Linda Thomson shared this thought-provoking gem with us. It was a good introduction to taking a careful look at our own mission.

We have a vision statement that suggests a rather broad mission: “UU Estrie is a dynamic, multigenerational, spiritual community in the Eastern Townships committed to enhancing the reach of loving care in the world.”

How are we doing this? How could we do this better? Your comments are welcome.

In the spirit of Love,
 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/cuc-enews/>

Special Thanks this Month



Thanks to Pauline Farrugia of the NH Village Council, for partnering with UU Estrie as rain venue for this summer's Lac Massawippi Sunday concert in the park series. Three concerts were held in our sanctuary, all well-attended, and rumour has it that Rev. Carole may even have prayed for rain. Thanks also to Mary Lynn Ross for coordinating use of our space and acoustics, and Keith Baxter and others for help in set up.

To our hard-working Programme Cmte., who have served up a summer's worth of outstanding

services drawing guest speakers from the larger community. Special, special thanks to Joey Marosi for her talents as service leader and liaison for three notable themes and services.

To our sister church, UCM-Montreal, and their minister, Rev. Diane Rollert, for sharing materials from their Theme-based Ministry packet on September word, Engagement.

Rev. Carole wishes you to join her in thanking the Sherbrooke Record and editor John Edwards, for support in launching our weekly Opening to the Spirit column, as well as her interfaith colleagues and co-authors, Revs. Mead Baldwin, W. Lynn Dillabout, and Lee Ann Hogle. This unprecedented project owes its existence to the open minds, hearts and spirits of these friends in faith.

Questions about Bees

On Earth Day in 2013 I brought to church two letters I'd written on environmental issues and invited the support of those in agreement. Several of you signed; the letters then went to Stephen Harper and thence to relevant departments. Construction of a luxury hotel in a national park was questioned in one letter. It received no answer. The other looked at the effect of corn and soybean seeds that are killing honeybees and wild pollinators. This letter was received by Minister of the Environment Leona Aglukkaq and by Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri Food.

Gerry Ritz's more informative response went as follows: Beekeeping is an important industry and, despite challenges including toxins, the number of healthy hives in Canada has grown. Health Canada's Pest Management Agency has proposed use of dust-reducing lubricants in corn and soybean production and updated information supporting the continued need for neonicotinoid treatments on 100% of corn seeds and 50% of soybean seeds. Unmentioned was whether the proposal had been put into effect, nor was "continued need" for these toxins justified. Minister Ritz then referred to initiatives of the Department of Agriculture to promote habitat for wild pollinators and use of non-toxic means to control pests.

On September 3, the Globe and Mail reported that Canadian beekeepers have launched a class action suit in Ontario Superior Court against Bayer and Syngenta, makers of crop pesticides, alleging their use as causing the death of bee colonies. The suit claims \$400 million.

Kevin Jensen (*edited for space*)



Abigail Stockman playing the harp at the "ABC's of Spiritual Literacy service in the summer. She also played the piano.

Annual Picnic



The Brands hosted our picnic in July, with many visitors from away. A gathering of generations, beautiful weather and good conversations.



Complete with sandbox.



On Being Spiritual But Not Religious

Daniel Strain of the Spiritual Naturalist network, writes: `The root of spirituality comes from the Latin *spiritus* which meant wind or breath – the essence of something,` Equating it with Western religions, dogmas or creeds, he says, is `like calling all tissue Kleenex or referring to all soft drinks as Coke. The supernatural religions are simply the dominant brand.`

Our Vision and Its History

Text from The Unitarian Universalist Church of North Hatley – a Memoir (page 19/20)

The last functioning, independent Universalist Church in the Province of Quebec was in danger of disappearing into history...Divided opinion rocked the Church and, as is usual in such controversies, people left. Universalists are no more immune than other groups to temporary fits of intolerance. On June 21, 1958, the Board of Trustees issued a statement. Excerpts follow: “What then does the Universalist Church offer that no other church in this region can provide? What makes (it) unique? Certainly it does not offer a simple formula for salvation, or a colorful ancient ritual, or the power and prestige of a large organization. Instead it serves to bring people together who are searching for ways to affirm the truths of religion without denying the truths of science and common sense, who are searching for ways to be reverent without superstition, serious but not stuffy, skeptical but not cynical, and to uphold moral principles without hypocrisy in the world of today. No one supposes that these things are easy, but we think they are important....This church is important not for the number of people it involves, but for the distinctive interpretation of religion it presents. It does not appeal to all, but it is the spiritual home of some, and stands open to welcome any who cannot find in other churches the full freedom of thought they crave.”

*“New occasions teach new duties;
Time makes ancient good uncouth.
They must upward still and onward,
Who would keep abreast of truth.”
- Poet James Russell Lowell*

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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. Joyce Booth
 3. Mary Lynn Ross

Calendar and Schedule

SUN 7 10:30AM PICNIC AND HIKE
 SAT 13 ALL DAY TOWNSHIPERS' DAY
 SUN 14 10:30AM SERVICE:
 ONE WILD AND PRECIOUS LIFE
AFTERNOON CORN ROAST/BOIL
 THURS 18 10:00AM BOARD MEETING
 SUN 21 10:30AM SERVICE: FUNDAMENTALISM
 SUN 28 10:30AM SERVICE: STEP BY STEP

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
Heather Lewis	Vice-President
Joey Marosi	Secretary
Keith Baxter	Treasurer
Mary-Lynn Ross	Member at large
Debra Fougère	Member at large

This is your newsletter !!!
 Next issue of Newsletter is October 2014

Deadline: ***September 23.***

*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.***