Love & Justice

The theme for February is Love and Justice. We, as Canadian Unitarian Universalists, envision *a world in which our interdependence calls us to love and justice.* This vision for Canadian Unitarian Universalism was affirmed at the CUC Annual General Meeting in May 2016. Arising from the foundational theology of our seventh principle, "respect for the interdependent web of all existence", this vision asks us to live this principle through actions of love and justice.



The Social Contract envisioned by Rousseau in 1762 stated that it was only 'the people' who had the power to govern—not monarchs. He might say the same today. Yet any social contract requires each person's buy-in, which requires us making choices, every day. What happens when my justice is not your justice? How do we keep our hearts open when our world vision differs? When does love require us to walk in another's shoes?



Mohamad has been a volunteer translator for the Settlement Team since last summer, after serendipitously meeting Susan Millar at a poetry reading in which he was presenting.



Mohamad, a native of Syria, will be speaking about the Syrian conflict and sharing some of his original writing. Mohamad Kebbewar was born and raised in Aleppo, Syria, and educated in Canada. His writing is about the struggle of the ordinary citizen in a war that grinds an entire population into nothingness, and what remains after the rubble has settled.

Our Interdependence Calls

Rev. Debra Thorne
Listen. We are not alone. Breathe.
We are connected to every person
and every plant and every star.
There is a humming rising from this
connection, it is a song of joy and a
song of love. It is a truth more powerful than a bushel of doubts, more

real than your own hand. Smile.

This is *Sharing Our Faith* Sunday when a special collection will be taken to aid ministry, projects and outreach for congregations throughout the Canadian Unitarian movement.

Joy and Justice in Climate Action

If we don't have a pretty firm idea of where we are going, how are we going to get there? Guy Dauncey, eco-futurist and author of 101 Solutions to Global Warming; Cancer: 101 Solutions to a Preventable Epidemic and Journey to the Future, will speak of joy and justice in climate action. Guy's positive vision of a sustainable and congenial future, will lead us to see the possibility of practical and enjoyable action.

Minister's Message



Rev. Debra Thorne

One of the tap roots of Unitarianism is the belief in the goodness of the human being, the inherent worth and dignity of each and every person, and the

responsibility to defend, promote, and protect that belief.

Have you heard of the Unitarian Service Committee, or Lotta Hitchmanova? If you were in Canada in the middle of the last century and neither newly born nor senile, you would remember a Czechoslovakian woman in a military style uniform smiling at you from the television telling you about the needs of refugee children around the world. Fifty-six Sparks Street, Ottawa was the address you were to send your donations to.

Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova was a writer and journalist in Europe when the Nazi's began to invade. She had to keep moving as the Nazi's took on more power and her anti-Nazi writing made life unsafe for her. She escaped Belgium when the Nazi's invaded, and fled to France where she worked for an immigration service assisting refugees. One day, according to her biographer, Clyde Sanger, while queuing in Marseille's market over lunch hour, she fainted from fatigue and hunger. After regaining consciousness, Hitschman-

ova made her way to a medical clinic run by the Boston-based Unitarian Service Committee. This was her first contact with the organization. Lotta sailed to America in 1942, reported in at the Unitarian Service Committee in Boston and then headed up to Canada. She was under a hundred pounds, exhausted, and alone in the world, but managed to get a secretarial job within three days and begin to settle into her new home.

She became a member of the Ottawa Unitarian congregation and helped establish the Unitarian Service Committee in Canada in 1945. It was her experience helping refugees in Europe, and then being a refugee herself that inspired the philosophy and the direction of the Unitarian Service Committee in Canada.

With her experience in journalism she knew that being able to tell the stories of the plight of refugees in Europe could bring the critical situation alive and inspire people to action. She went on long speaking tours across Canada to raise awareness of the need for clothing and food for the refugees in Europe.

Rev. Philip Hewett describes the Vancouver experience:

"When I first arrived in Vancouver in 1956 the USC work was a big feature in the life of the church. Lotta used to make an annual visit and spoke at the church as well as making endless contacts in the wider community. The church basement in our old building was so crammed with cartons of used clothing shipped in from all over the province that teams of volunteers, nearly all members of the congregation, toiled almost every day to pack and clear the consignments before the next ones arrived. Needless to add, there was a great sense of camaraderie among the workers, and it was a great way of integrating newcomers into the life of the congregation. This continued year after year, and when we designed our new building in 1963, it included a large basement space for the USC packing with a driveway on which trucks could back up to the entrance. When eventually the packing of used clothing and other supplies was discontinued in favour of financial support, this space was redesigned and designated Hitschmanova Hall."

Today the core program of the Unitarian Service Committee is called *Seeds of Survival* in which they work in partnerships with farming communities in 12 countries around the world preserving the agricultural biodiversity necessary for a growing changing world: http://usc-canada.org/.

The Unitarian Service Committee was and is one of the ways that Unitarians merge joy and justice and put their faith into action.

With respect, Rev. Debra Thorne



info@beaconunitarian.org

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Deadline for the March issue of *The Beacon*: February 15, 2017

Board Bitz



Audrey Taylor

s the Board enters our last quarter of this term of office, we are already thinking about the AGM in April. Please mark April 23rd in your calendars! The Nominating Committee of Helen McVey, Marylke Nieuwenhuis, Peggy Lunderville and Rebecca Burns will be busy recruiting up to 4 people to join the Board. If this is an experi-

ence you would like to add to your life, please talk to one of them.

Meanwhile, Debra, John and Audrey continue to work on policy development and the Beacon constitution and bylaws. This may sound like dull, boring work but I can assure you that the conversations we are having with each other about how our policies and by-laws must reflect our spiritual practice and enhance our community are far from boring or dull!

Dan and Rob have taken on the awesome task of emptying the two Beacon filing cabinets in the Lunderville basement and digitizing the important documents. David continues to record our minutes and to keep our meetings on track, as well as ensuring our communication with Vic and SOAP stays current and positive.

Carol and our new bookkeeper, Eric Mah, will be preparing and sending out the 2016 tax receipts by the end of the month. If you have not received a tax receipt by February 28, please contact Carol.

We have gotten feedback from our staff about their work and their contracts and also feedback from the people who work most closely with them. We are so fortunate to have staff and volunteers who understand and model our Unitarian principles in their work. It is this common thread of honoring each other and the Beacon community that keeps us healthy and strong. Thank you!

-Audrey Taylor, President

"We can either emphasize those aspects of our traditions, religious or secular, that speak of hatred, exclusion, and suspicion *OR* work with those that stress the interdependence and equality of all human beings. The choice is yours."

—Karen Armstrong, Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life "We are called to *embody* interdependence, to give our principles substance through our actions and the physical world in which we act."

-Keith Wilkinson, CUC Board of Trustees

Religious Exploration Program



Ashley Cole

elcome to February! We made it through January and are now one month closer to spring! I hope that in this in between time, in the heart of winter, you are all able to participate in activities that are life giving and sustaining... like **Mystery Buddies!** For the month of February folks of all ages

(5 and up) will be participating in Mystery Buddies, a fun and educational program in which participants will be matched with one of the many wonderful children in the Religious Exploration (R.E.) program and over the month of February exchange letters, jokes, puzzles, book/ movie recommendations or whatever you can imagine—things that help you to get to know each other with the added twist of not actually knowing each others identities until a big reveal at the end of the month.

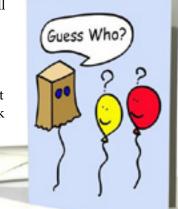
In other news, classes in the Religious Exploration program are in full swing. Both the *Children's Community* and the *Seekers* have been continuing with their respective programs, *Faithful Journeys* and *Sing to the Power*. The younger children have been learning to explore and the older children have been learning the power of listening (it's fun I promise!). On

January 22nd, we were able to fill backpacks for youths in need.

There are still a few months open for volunteer teachers in late spring. If you are interested or just curious about what might be involved please come and talk to me.

Looking forward to more exploring and listening in the month to come!

> — Ashley Cole, Director of R.E



Take part in the Mystery Buddies Program!



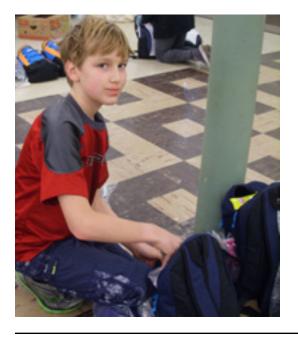
Youth Group Social Action Project

Squid Squad Backpack Project
Thank you everyone for your support of the Squid Squad backpack
project—this would not have been
possible without YOU!!!

On January 21st, the youth group (Squid Squad) and Beacon children filled 50 backpacks for the homeless youths in our community.









Refugee Settlement: Phase Two



re you wanting to help with bringing two more members of the Al Rbaai family, a young couple, to New Westminster?

Peggy Lunderville

Family relationships are emerging as a big issue for all refugees. They find it difficult to focus on their new country due to worries

about the family left behind. The family functions as a unit, which is broken by the move to Canada.

The original Settlement Task Force and Committee are "up to their ears in alligators" and not able to do the planning necessary to bring the young couple to Canada at this time. However they would cheer us on if we can start up a second Settlement Task Force.

I invite anyone to contact me if they would like to commit their good wishes, time, organizational skills, or other contributions, toward formulating a plan and carrying it out. There are five people already interested but it will take at least five more. This invitation is open



to Beacon members and to members of the community in general.

Please contact Peggy Lunderville at 604-522-3001, email: prlunder@gmail.com.

Climate Change Covenant Group starting in March



about climate change that you need a safe, respectful place to share with others who are also concerned? Covenant groups are "mostly listening" and this one has been designed as a place to listen to each other around this important issue. While it will culminate in a group project, it is

Do you have thoughts and feelings

more about hearing each other, and ourselves, than it is about doing. (Last year's Covenant Group created the 'I talk about Climate Change' buttons and had an info table at the May CUC conference at UBC.)

The Covenant Group will meet from 6:30–8 pm at Waves Coffee Shop (715 Columbia, close to the New West Skytrain Station) on the first Thursdays of March, April, May & June.

Contact Teresa Morton, Social Action Coordinator, teresa.a.morton@gmail.com for further information or to RSVP.

Tips from the Beacon Speakers' Workshop

On January 22nd, Sita Sahasrabudhe, TED talk graduate, shared speaking tips from the extensive tutoring TED talk speakers are given. Here are some tips she shared with us:

- Take your place in the spotlight and ground yourself.
- Look at your audience: left, right, to the centre and back.
- Speak clearly and carefully. During practice, try giving your speech while holding a pen between your lips to encourage adequate enunciation.
- After each part of your speech, take the time to pause and breathe. This lets the listeners consolidate the information, and gives you a moment to prepare for the next point.
- Transform filler words like "so" and "um" into quiet pauses.
- Don't ask "Do you know what I mean?" You are the expert.
- Don't rock while you talk (especially for video).
- Practise, practise in advance, 5–10 times.
- Record yourself and listen to hear any changes in delivery you might want to make.

—Marilyn Méden and Laura Redmond

Beacon Events

We invite you to explore these great ways to connect to the Beacon community and yourself!

Soul Matters Groups delve into the monthly sermon themes—"Love & Justice" for February. Part personal sharing, part spiritual deepening, the groups meet monthly either at 1 pm or 7 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Contact Rev. Debra Thorne: minister@beaconunitarian.org.

Humanist Discussion Group meets the last Sunday of the month at 7:30 pm at The Astoria Retirement Home (2245 Kelly Avenue, Port Coquitlam) to discuss a wide range of current topics. Sunday, January 29: John Slattery will lead a discussion on Unitarianism. As a religion (if it is one) what is its role, and what is the role of other religions in the modern, more science oriented world? What is their future? Sunday, February 26: John Hagen will lead the discussion on the question: Is Humanism at the root of most religious thought? Contact Marilyn Medén for more information: m.j.meden@telus.net or 604-469-6797.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Rehearsals are every Tuesday at 7:30 pm at Miller Park School in Coquitlam (but not March 14). Contact Charlene Dubrule, choir director, at 604-464-3992 or char4myc@shaw.ca.

Lunch Bunch meets every Thursday at noon, year-round. Bring your own lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact John Hagen 604-521-1335.

Book Club meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm. For book information and location details contact John Hagen ajhagen@ telus.net.

Beacon Writers' Group meets the third Saturday of the month, and shares what is meaningful for us, on the theme of the month, which for February is Love and Justice, or on a topic which is on our mind. Newcomers are welcome. Bring writing to share. You are also invited to bring writing prompts for our March theme—Simplicity. And, we have a special opportunity for April's theme—Compassion—writing and presenting at a Beacon service! Contact Marilyn Medén or Janet Pivnick for more details: m.j.meden@telus. net or 604-469-6797, or janpivnick@ gmail.com.

Attend a Circle Dinner and connect with other Beaconites in a relaxed setting. The next Circle Dinner is planned for Saturday, February 18th. For more information contact Joan Morris, joanmorris@telus.net.

Food Bank Sunday will be February 5.

Soup Lunch Sunday on February 5.

Peggy Lunderville and Bette Goode will appreciate your contributions of soup, buns, veggies, and sweets.



Attend a 'Getting to Know U' session to meet other newcomers and deepen your knowledge of how Beacon functions and what Unitarianism is. Please contact Joan Morris (joanmorris@telus.net) or Rev. Debra (minister@beaconunitarian.org) if you are interested in attending the

Youth Group: The youth group (ages 13–18 yrs) is open to new members! Contact Lisa Girardi at lisa.m.girardi@gmail.com.

next meeting (date TBA).

Help out on Sunday mornings as a Coffee Host (contact Glenn Wootton, woottongg@gmail.com), or sign-up as a Sunday Morning Greeter (contact Susan Tarras: starras@telus.net).

Circle Dinners

Save the Date: Saturday Feb 18

Keep this date for the next Beacon dinner gathering—join us for a Circle Dinner on February 18th. If you would like to host a dinner in your own home, let Donna Hamilton know. The rest of us will join with you for another evening of good food, conversation and good times. Contact: Donna Hamilton (donna-h@telus.net) or Joan Morris (joanmorris@telus.net).



Share Your Story: A Sermon Writing Workshop

When: Monday, March 20, 2017, 9:30 am-3:30 pm

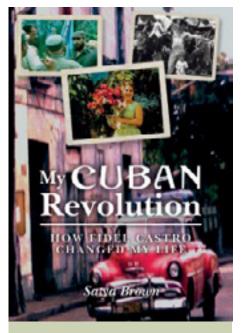
Where: First Unitarian Church of Victoria, 5575 West Saanich Rd, Victoria

Is there something you would like to share in your congregation's Sunday service but have never written a sermon before? Or perhaps you have experience and want to develop your skills and comfort? Rev. Meg Roberts will show you a process to support your creative expression, share various resources with you, and provide tips on effective public speaking—speaking that touches the head and the heart.

To help integrate your learning, two 1-hour online group coaching sessions will follow the workshop on Sat. April 8 at 1:30 pm and Fri. May 12 at 10 am. These will encourage you to work on your homily, offer support for any roadblocks you hit, and provide feedback to polish your creation.

- Cost: Early bird special to Jan. 31 is \$40 (Feb. 1–15 is \$50)
- Includes lunch & two online group coaching sessions.
- Maximum 24 participants so register early. Registration deadline Feb. 15.
- For more information or to sign up contact registrar Anna Isaacs (isaacs.anna@gmail.com or 250-472-0117, texts welcome)
- Invite others at facebook.com/events/364169043938033
- Out of town participants welcome! Limited home hospitality is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Islands Network.

Meg has been a Unitarian minister for the past 14 years. She has served congregations in Edmonton, Montreal, Calgary, and now is in her fifth year as the quarter-time consulting minister with Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship. Meg lives in Vancouver where she does a community ministry—Spirit Arts—using our creativity in spiritual exploration.



MY CUBAN REVOLUTION: How Fidel Castro changed my Life

Satya Brown (Doerksen)'s memoirs of her seventeen years (1962 until 1979) living in Cuba, is now on the market. Her book, *My Cuban Revolution*, is available on Amazon, or Kindle, or you could call Satya at 604-584-6895 or speak to her on a Sunday.



Unitarian Family Camp June 2–4, 2017

Set in the natural splendor of Port Moody's Belcarra Regional Park, the camp offers swimming, boating, hiking, climbing, children and youth programs, a choral workshop for youth/adults, campfires and other fun communal events.

Heated cabins with electricity. Meals provided. Note: You do not need children to attend Family Camp!

Early bird registration deadline: Sun. March 19

Early bird rates: Adults: \$145*; Children/Youth: \$133*. Register early, save, and help out the planning committee!

Download a brochure/registration form at http://beaconunitarian.org/index.php/camp/

To see a fun video created by Ross & Gaby Harvey of Jazzfly Productions of our 2016 camp, go to Youtube and search for "Camp Sasamat hosted by Beacon Unitarian".

*Rates to be confirmed

News from the Canadian Unitarian Council

Submissions Wanted

he Canadian Unitarian is inviting open-topic submissions for the upcoming spring issue, due out mid-March, and for future issues.

This is a call for proposals for feature articles on any topic relating to Unitarian Universalism and Canadian UUs. (This is not a call for congregational news, which will be sought at a later date.)

We also encourage Frenchlanguage readers and writers to submit under this open call. We know you're out there—we want to hear from you too.

We are seeking articles of about 600 words. Illustrative photos (with permissions) are very welcome.

The deadline for completed articles is February 15. Please contact us with your proposal prior to this date, since we are now in the process of content planning and booking. Please reply to: raquel@ sitedish.com or canu@cuc.ca The Canadian Unitarian welcomes submissions from members of the UU community, and those who are not; please feel free to pass this call on to knowledgable, potential contributors. As a national newsletter, reaching over 5,000 socially-engaged readers across Canada and beyond, The CanU offers a byline, with a brief bio and/or contact if desired. (The Canadian Unitarian is unable to pay for articles, unfortunately.)

We're Looking for Two Special People

he Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) is holding it's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on May 13th this year, in Toronto. Beacon is allowed two voting delegates to the AGM.

This year, for the VERY FIRST TIME, our delegates can attend via ZOOM. This means, if you have a computer, you can attend the CUC AGM from the comfort of your own home. Would you be interested in being a delegate?

WHAT'S INVOLVED in being a delegate? Well, first of all, you would receive some training in how to attend and participate in a ZOOM meeting. You would receive an agenda for the meeting from the CUC, and information and discussion on the resolutions that will be voted on. You would talk with our congregation about those resolutions and get the Beacon congregation's direction on how to vote on each of the resolutions. Delegates at Beacon can be appointed for either a 1-year term or a 2-year term and it is expected they would remain in contact with the CUC between AGM's and keep Beacon informed of CUC news.

Here's some of what the CUC has to say about delegate terms, selection and process:

Delegate Selection: Congregations are encouraged to select their delegates early, and to hold discussion and information sharing sessions with their delegates and congregational



members so that all are aware of matters going to the CUC AGM.

What Congregational Leaders and Delegates Need to Know:

- Delegates need to be registered by April 1st.
- Training on the Zoom technology available at various times in March and April.
- Delegates who are participating inperson in Toronto need to bring the Delegate Certification Form to the AGM site in order to receive their voting cards.
- Delegates need to sign up for the delegates' email group to stay informed and discuss upcoming resolutions with other delegates and congregational leaders.
- Familiarity with the rules will help with the smooth running of and participation in the AGM. The CUC uses *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

Being a delegate is a great way to become involved and aware of the national work of the CUC, to meet Unitarians from across the country and to learn how other congregations operate. If this opportunity interests you, please talk to Rev. Debra or Audrey Taylor. For more information look here: http://cuc.ca/2017-cuc-annual-general-meeting-information-presidents-leaders-delegates

2017 Hungary Choir Tour and Unitarian Pilgrimage

In 2010, twenty-five Unitarians (including 16 singers and choir director Alison Nixon from the North Shore Unitarian church) enjoyed a truly life-affirming trip to Hungary and Transylvania, the birthplace of Unitarianism. It's time for another trip! The dates for the next tour are Friday, May 26 to Monday, June 5, 2017. The itinerary includes Debrecen, Eger, Kolosvar (Cluj), Torocko (Rimetea), Hodmezovasarhely, and Deva. Costs are not yet finalized but expect to be in the range of **US** \$1,300 to \$1,500 for the basic tour with all transportation, accommodation and most meals included on arrival in Budapest. Return airfare from Vancouver is additional. Please contact Brian Welwood (604-988-1135) or Alison Nixon (604-947-0120) about this tour.



Let It Be a Dance: Dancing the Living Tradition A circle dance choreography workshop with Corinne Chepil

February 12, 2017 2-5pm -- Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 949 West 49th Avenue

This workshop will involve choosing requested songs, learning a simple 'music charting' method, improvising to find movement ideas and using a 'Circle Dance vocabulary' chart handout as a reference. Our goal will be to collectively create choreography for a handful or so of some of our favourite Unitarian hymns. You'll have 'take home' skills to create more dances on your own or with your group.



Corinne enjoys sharing the gifts of Circle Dance such as community, joy and peace. She started facilitating in Vancouver in 2003 and has helped mentor a few of the Lower Mainland teachers. Corinne has a B.A. in Dance/Psychology, a Dance Teacher Diploma and a Sacred Dance Teacher Certificate from the Findhorn Foundation as well as over 30 years experience facilitating dance and movement to people age 3 -100. She has danced with many of the prominent Circle Dance teachers, her main mentor being June Watts and has enjoyed dance travel journeys in Western Canada, England, Peru and Barbardos.

In the past she has choreographed dances for ballet, tap, jazz, modern and creative dance students and periodically gets inspired to choreograph circle dances. 'Let It Be A Dance' was one of her first choreographies and she's happy to know that another one of her dances 'Healing Power of the Green' is now part of the repertoire in Toronto, Barbados and Kent, England.

Her teaching highlights include Women's Spirituality Celebrations, New Year's celebrations at St. Paul's Labyrinth and the 2006 World Peace Forum at UBC. Presently she facilitates Circle Dance at the Unitarian Church, Empower Health, and at care facilities for seniors and would love to share with other communities.

See more information about circle dance around BC at www.circledancebc.ca

Mary Bennett's Sacred Circle Dance blog: sacredcircledance.wordpress.com (includes listings of Unitarian songs that have circle dance steps already.)

All are welcome. By donation. RSVP https://choreography-workshop.eventbrite.ca

*Please send your music and/or song title of hymn you are interested in having choreographed to Mary at circle-dance@vancouverunitarians.ca in advance.

Sponsored by the **Unitarian Church of Vancouver** 949 West 49^{th} Avenue at Oak, Vancouver BC 604-261-7204

www.vancouverunitarians.ca

Regular monthly circle dances: 1st Tuesday and 2nd Monday 7-9pm; 3rd Thursday 11am-1pm

Note: Calendar entries are truncated—view the complete entries on the Beacon web site calendar page. Beacon Calendar: February 2017

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Feb 2017 (Pac	Feb 2017 (Pacific Time - Vancouver) Fri
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	7:30pm - Choir practice	9:30am - Worship	12pm - Lunch Bunch	2	
7 pm - Spirit of Life	10am - Music Committee 7:30pm - Choir practice	σ.	12pm - Lunch Bunch	10	-
Family Day	7:30pm - Choir practice	1pm - Soul Matters 7pm - Soul Matters Evening	12pm - Lunch Bunch 1pm - Connecting and	17	1pm - Beacon Writer's 6:30pm - Circle Dinners
50	7:30pm - Choir practice	252	12pm - Lunch Bunch	24	
27	7:30pm - Choir practice	9:30am - Worship	12pm - Lunch Bunch	o o	