



JUNE SERVICE THEME: **Community!**

**JUN
3**

When Questions are the Answer

Rev. Debra Thorne

Have you got a question that you'd like Rev. Debra to answer? That was the invitation to the community. The questions flowed in—from the theological and eschatological to the environmental and historical. Rev. Debra will attempt to answer them all.

- Today is the last Food Bank Sunday until September. Please bring your non-perishables and cheques to support the local Food Bank.

Children & Youth: The children will celebrate the completion of the *Circle of Trees* curriculum while the youth will be asking their final question of the Riddle & Mystery program: "How can I know what to believe?"

**JUN
10**

There will be two communities meeting this Sunday—one at Sapperton Hall, and the other at Sasamat Family Camp.

Sapperton: Beacon's Sapperton doors will be open but there will be no

formal service. Michael Scales is your host and Sue Sparlin will lead singing. There is no child care, nor nursery, as we hope you will make your way to Sasamat Family Camp to enjoy the service under the trees by the lake.

Camp Sasamat: (3302 Senkler Rd, Belcarra, BC V3H 4S3)

Community among the Trees

Laura Redmond, Patti Powell

"The interdependent web of all existence" is composed of thousands of communities. What is the meaning of community for you? Do trees have community? Do trees and people share a community? We will have a chance to deepen in our relationship with nature and with each other.

**JUN
17**

Connect – Inspire – Transform

Rev. Debra Thorne

This year the Beacon community committed to making the world a better place in five significant areas: the Settlement 2 Team has been preparing to sponsor more members of the Al Raabi family; Beacon has been

educating ourselves about reconciliation and Indigenous history; members have committed to reduce our use of single-use plastic over the coming year; and, many of us committed to not staying silent any longer when we experience or know of others experiencing sexual harassment and abuse. This Sunday, we will also welcome Sarah Stewart of Aunt Leah's so that Beacon can present the Sharing-the-Plate donation. We are fulfilling our mission statement to 'connect-inspire-transform' in real and significant ways, and now it's time to celebrate!

- After the service is the **Whole Church Summer Picnic**. Please bring food or drink to share. Hot-dogs (meat and veggie) will be provided. It will take place at Sapperton Park. There is a water feature and playground, and big trees for shade. If it rains we'll stay at Sapperton.

Children & Youth: Final service of the year will include an extended time for all ages followed by a church picnic at Sapperton Park.

Minister's Message



Rev. Debra Thorne

It's been a month now since we made the pledge to use less single-use plastic in our everyday life. How are you doing? I would love to hear stories of

how you are changing your plastic using habits. I invite you to send me examples of what you are doing and the successes you have had, so that I can share your stories with others and so inspire us all to keep going.

I have seen a small change in my buying habits. I bring my large grocery bags with me when I shop, and I don't take extra small bags for fruits and vegetables. I just plop my apples and carrots and onions on the cashier's scale—no one has made any comments on it.

Just this morning I bought a package of smoked salmon at the airport as a present for my brother in Toronto and the sales clerk praised me when I declined a plastic bag. He said, "That's really great, there's way too much plastic in the oceans!" I had to agree with him! Then I showed him my reusable coffee cup and water bottle and said, "We have to protect the environment for our children's children." He countered with, "We have to take care of the environment right now. We have to keep it beautiful!" I admit to you that my heart was singing a song of joy. The over use of single-use plastic in our lives is no longer a hidden problem, that only a few environment enthusiasts care about. This is a problem that almost everyone is now aware of and beginning to take responsibility for.

Here are the top six single-use plastics that you can reduce or eliminate from your life.

- 1. Coffee Cups** – bring your own! Disposable coffee cups have an oil-based polyethylene plastic lining that is difficult to separate from the paper shell in the recycling process. Most recycling plants are not equipped to deal with them, which means they go to landfill. Four billion disposable Starbucks coffee cups **are thrown away every year** – and that's just one coffee chain. In Metro Vancouver we go through one million disposable coffee cups a day! If the plastic lids are dark in colour, those also have to go in the trash.
- 2. Shopping bags** – carry two cloth bags at all time! Victoria, BC's recent decision to ban plastic bags from stores and grocery chains has reignited the debate in Canada about our bag problem. According to the Greener Footprints Society, a not-for-profit environmental advocacy group in BC, Canadians use between 9 and 15 billion plastic bags a year – enough to circle the globe 55 times (US citizens use about **100 billion a year**). They are

among the most common sources of marine debris found during beach cleanups.

- 3. Drinking Straws** – ask to not have them in your drinks, bring your own. In Canada, the estimate is **57 million straws a day** and most of our major cities do not accept them in municipal recycling
- 4. Plastic water bottles** – bring your own. In Ontario, approximately **one billion plastic bottles per year** do not make it to recycling centres.
- 5. Fruit and vegetable bags** – bring reusable ones, like the kinds that the Beacon Youth have been selling on Sunday mornings.
- 6. Disposable cutlery** – **carry your own!** France has implemented a ban on all single-use plastic cutlery (along with cups, plates and plastic bags) to come into effect in 2020.

This information was sourced from waterdocs.ca.

Remember, I'd really like to hear your stories of success. Send them to minister@beaconunitarian.org

Warmly, Rev. Debra

Sing for Joy! Group Singing with Patti Powell

Saturday, June 9th, 10–11:30 am, 1:30–3:30 pm

Singing together is SO. MUCH. FUN! If you've never tried it, it's time. If you're a seasoned singer, you will love the lively, interactive and joyful atmosphere for learning great songs for group singing. From gospel to rounds, to fun interlocking song mash-ups, Patti will get you steeped in the world of playful connection that singing together provides! Patti Powell is a community choir leader in the Ubuntu Choir Network. Ubuntu choirs aim to be inclusive, community-focused, non-auditioned and socially-engaged. Patti leads four community choirs and is an apprentice conductor with Brian Tate and the City Soul Choir (www.citysoulchoir.com). Patti welcomes ANY and ALL voices to raise up their voice together.

Come and sing for joy!

Saturday workshop with lunch: \$67 (includes option to canoe/kayak after the workshop, 3:30–5 pm)

Register at <http://beaconunitarian.org/index.php/camp/> or email sasamat@beaconunitarian.org for more information.



**Registration
deadline:
May 31st**

Board Bitz



David Kristjanson



Donna Hamilton

The board is busy winding down this church year and getting things ready for the new year in September. The personnel committee is busy doing year end reviews and contract renewals, and our two newest board members are off to a quick start, with Audrey Taylor registering Beacon's new constitution and bylaws with the government, and Elizabeth Campbell planning a committee fair for the fall to get everyone excited about what's happening at Beacon and how we can all get involved.

The new Beacon Board of Trustees had its first meeting on May 6th at John Hagen's home. First thing up

for discussion was Sasamat Camp, with guests Laura Redmond, Peggy Lunderville and Richard Kwan from the North Shore Church. After 9 years of organising Sasamat Camp, Laura Redmond has decided that it is time to pass the torch. Thank you, Laura, for all your hard work and dedication. You have truly made this event a great success year after year. There is still ongoing discussion and planning being done to have a new person in place for 2019. Updates coming soon.

In an effort to maintain the family friendly environment at Beacon, Gail Thomson and Carol Woodworth presented a report to the board outlining some solutions to the ongoing problem of staffing the nursery. We have been relying on a few dedicated volunteers and it has been getting more and more difficult to have someone there every Sunday. After hearing their report, the board has voted to create two new paid positions for the nursery, one adult and one youth, to be paid out of Beacon's growth fund.

Many thanks to those who have volunteered over the years and a very special thank you to Peggy Lunderville who created the nursery and has been running it since its inception. Peggy has decided that she must step down from that role at this time in order to spend more time with her family.

Another big thank you goes to Jean Donaldson who is leaving the Connection and Membership committee. Jean has been the driving force behind that committee for many years, making sure that all newcomers were contacted and made to feel welcome. She will be leaving big shoes to fill.

Don't forget the calendaring meeting on Saturday, June 2, 10:00 at Lundervilles! There is the option of a potluck lunch afterwards, and possibility of staying for another meeting in the afternoon, to brainstorm possible ideas for next year's themes of each month, (or come just for lunch and the afternoon meeting).

— David Kristjanson and
Donna Hamilton, Co-Presidents

Making a Difference

RAVEN – how to make a donation.

At the AGM I was asked to let people know how to make a donation to RAVEN, Respecting Aboriginal Values & Environmental Needs. RAVEN provides funds to indigenous groups who are challenging resource development projects. You might want to donate to RAVEN, for example, to support local aboriginal groups in their battle against the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion. Go to the RAVEN website, www.raventrust.com and then click on the 'Donate' button on the upper right. You can pay for the donation with a credit card (one time or monthly) and you will receive a receipt for tax purposes.

Imagine: What if plastic was as rare as diamond?

What if plastics were as expensive and as sought after as diamonds? Diamonds last forever and plastics last for almost-ever... How would we treat our single-use plastic items? Perhaps make sure they are used over and over. Figure out how to substitute plant-based 'plastics'? Change our relationship with plastic, utilizing it where it REALLY makes a difference? Have plastic-trading events? Pass down plastic items to our children, the way diamonds are family heirlooms?

Are these ridiculous questions? You tell me! Send your comments to teresa.a.morton@gmail.com.

Courageous venture into Kinder Morgan country

Did you hear about the remarkable developments at the Kinder Morgan Annual General Meeting in Houston Texas? Coast Salish leaders submitted a shareholders' initiative asking for more transparency in social & environmental aspects of Kinder Morgan operations. Contrary to usual response to shareholder initiatives, shareholders voted more than 50% in favour of the proposal!

Kinder Morgan pointed out that the vote is non-binding, however, such strong support for the proposal is bound to have influence on their decision making.

—Teresa Morton

Thank you from Aunt Leah's Place

Aunt Leah's Place helps prevent children in foster care from becoming homeless, and mothers in need from losing custody of their children. To support them on their journey to self-sufficiency, we provide supported housing, job training and coaching on essential life skills.

Aunt Leah's continued to grow this past year, which has allowed us to expand our supportive housing and outreach supports. We believe that young people connected to the foster care system, and moms in need, should have a continuum of care that is not disrupted by age or lack of housing. A key way we ensure that this continuum of care is provided is by having drop-in supports connected to food, housing, health, education, parenting and emotional well-being. Young people and families know that they can come to Aunt Leah's New Westminster Hub and have a healthy meal, connect with friends and/or staff and know there's a place where they are always welcome.

Our growth last year included moving into our new Vancouver space, through which we will strive to replicate the services offered out of our New Westminster Hub. The Hub has provided Aunt Leah's with a solid foundation for our continuum of care that is based on a family model approach.

Aunt Leah's Thresholds Program, which is a supportive housing program for moms in need, saw the opening of a second house. Thanks to BC Housing and Aunt Leah's Foundation, we were able to move into the house and provide housing and care for an additional five moms and their children in the spring of 2017. This program builds on our passion to provide a continuum of care by increasing our ability to provide safe and supportive housing for moms over the age of 19.

Aunt Leah's family model of support is innovative in that its programs and staff are interrelated parts, each impacting the other and contributing to the growth of the young people and

families we work with. Aunt Leah's has continued to adjust, change, self-organize and adapt based on the needs of the young people it serves, and the outside environment. We pause and reflect to see how and what children from parented homes are receiving as support, and work to replicate that support for the young people in foster care.

Thank you to all the members of Beacon Unitarian Church for supporting Aunt Leah's Place with your "Sharing the Plate" program. Our past year has been busy with increased numbers of young people and families seeking support, as well as expanding our physical sites to meet this increased need. Having the support of our neighbours such as yourselves not only provides financial support but highlights that this work is seen as important and valuable by our community and neighbours. Thank you.

—Sarah Stewart, Executive Director



Getting the word out...

There are four ways to get information to the Beacon community.

1. Beacon Newsletter

Articles, events, happenings need to be received by Laura Redmond on the 15th of the month for inclusion in the following month's newsletter.

2. Beacon This Week

Announcements can be emailed to Debra (minister@beaconunitarian.org) by Tuesday evening for putting in Beacon This Week which is emailed out every Wednesday morning.

3. Order of Service

Announcements for Beacon Groups (i.e. Lunch Bunch, Humanist Group, Book Club) their meeting times and contact information can be sent to Debra by Thursday evening for inclusion in the Order of Service.

4. Announcements Sunday Morning

Announcements not already in any of the above, or that have changed some necessary piece of information, or a timely important reminder for Beacon events, groups, and happenings are sent to Debra by Saturday morning. They need to be not more than three lines. Last

minute changes can be brought to the church and written on the Announcement sheet at the Welcoming Table at the front entrance. This will be collected by the designated Board Member and read at the beginning of the Worship Service.

The Board member may edit the announcement if it is too long, or not Beacon related.

Thank you for helping to keep the information flowing!

—Rev. Debra,
minister@beaconunitarian.org

Lets Connect: Getting to Know U

This month the Connections and Membership committee held a Getting To Know U gathering at the home of Helen McVey. Four new folk who have been attending Beacon for a bit joined in to share stories and learn something about Unitarianism. Rev. Debra led the discussions which began with a wonderful sharing of

each person's story of how they arrived at Beacon and Unitarianism.

Anne McLeod, Tyler Ewasiuk and host Helen told their Unitarian histories as well as a little of Beacon's early years in the Tri-Cities and New West area. Marj and Jim Kope and Barb and Yves Barillec attended the gathering and would love to have you say hello when you see them at church.

Let's Connect: A Letter of Appreciation



Dear Jean,

We already miss your warm, stalwart presence as our chair of the Connections and Membership committee. Your wisdom and many years of experience with the committee kept us on track for all the work of this important committee that connects our membership in so many ways. We have all appreciated your thorough, thoughtful and caring leadership.

You were always so aware of what was happening with members in the congregation, sharing your

observations at our monthly meetings. And you made sure we kept in mind the big picture work of the committee to ensure that newcomers and members were connected through engaging greeters, regular Getting To Know U gatherings for newcomers, membership joining ceremonies and up to date directories.

One of your many gifts was your warmhearted, genial welcome on Sunday mornings as you greeted visitors, engaging them in conversation. You always watched to make sure they were connected with others at our after church coffee hour and always had treats for our canine visitors.

We will miss your wise leadership and guiding light at our meetings, but will continue to look forward to connecting with you on Sunday mornings.

With great appreciation,

—your Connections and Membership Committee
Joan Morris, Phil Campbell, Joyce Gudaitis,
Susan Tarras and Rev. Debra Thorne

Religious Explorations



Ashley Cole

That's a wrap! What a year we've had in RE. We've participated in community projects like the Walk for Reconciliation, fundraising for Syrain family

sponsorship and Aunt Leah's. We also had some phenomenal *Spirit Jam* sessions ranging from puppet making to composting/gardening to singing and song writing. June 3rd will be our last Sunday of regular programming. June 10th there will not be any RE program, however you are welcome to join us at Camp Sasamat for an intergenerational Sunday morning service. June 17th will be our final service of the year followed by our annual church picnic. We will provide the hot dogs—plan to bring your own dishes and cutlery, and a side to share.

Hope you are all enjoying this beautiful weather!

—Ashley Cole, Director of
Religious Explorations
sundayschool@beaconunitarian.org



Beacon Programs

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—part personal sharing and part spiritual deepening. Group 1 meets Wednesday, May 30th at 1 pm, and Group 2 meets Thursday, May 31st at 7 pm. These will be the last meetings before the summer break. Email minister@beaconunitarian.org for more information.

The Humanist Discussion Group meets the last Sunday of the month at *The Astoria Retirement Home* (2245 Kelly Avenue, Port Coquitlam) to discuss a wide range of current topics. **Sunday, May 27th, 7 pm:** John Slattery will present on “the inherent worth and dignity of every person”, our first Unitarian Principle. What exactly does it mean? And is it as absolute as it suggests? John has written a short essay on this subject which suggests that a careful analysis of these words may take us in some surprising and not always comfortable directions. Let’s see if you agree. Please contact Marilyn Medén, 604-469-6797 m.j.meden@telus.net for more details.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Choir rehearsals are on Tuesday evenings, at 7:30 pm, at Miller Park School and will resume in September. Contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org. Basses urgently needed!

Book Club meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month

at 7 pm. For meeting location details contact John Hagen, ajhagen@telus.net.

June: *Ru* by Kim Thuy

Youth Group: Contact Ashley Cole, sundayschool@beaconunitarian.org, for more information.

Lunch Bunch meets every Thursday at noon, year-round. Bring your own lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact Anne MacLeod at 604-524-2434.

Settlement 2: The Settlement 2 task force is organizing the sponsorship of four further members of the Al Rbaai family. Please contact Peggy Lunderville for meeting times and dates: prlunder@gmail.com. All are welcome.

Attend a Circle Dinner and connect with other Beaconites in a relaxed setting. For more information contact Donna Hamilton (donna-h@telus.net) or Joan Morris (joanmorris@telus.net). The next circle dinner will be in the fall, but feel free to socialize with other Beaconites over the summer.

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 Rev. Debra (minister@beaconunitarian.org) if you are interested in attending the next meeting.

Help out on Sunday mornings as a Coffee Host (contact Joan Morris, joanmorris@telus.net), **or sign-up as a Sunday Morning Greeter** (contact Susan Tarras, starras@telus.net).

Beacon Writers’ Group: Contact Satya at sbrown@realifepress.com or 604-584-6895.

Report from the Business Meeting at the Canadian Unitarian Council



The general meeting of the Canadian Unitarian Council took place on Friday, May 18th from 1–4 pm. It was an exciting affair for a business meeting. The actual business flowed along smoothly as the CUC Board and staff were well organized and the delegates had been well prepared. The books are balanced in the black, and the APC has seen a slight raise of 1.6% to account for the cost of living increase. The new Board President is Jane Ebborn from Calgary and the Vice President is Margaret Walin from Thunder Bay.

The Canadian Unitarian staff is headed up by Vyda Ng who has managed an almost impossible job of holding 45 congregations together across Canada. Vyda oversees a staff of three fulltime people, and a number of contract folks, from a tiny hole-in-the-wall office. (Most staff work remotely and are on the road a lot). This past year she shepherded in a new website and I invite you to take a tour around it. It is still a work in progress but looks smart and runs quickly. <https://cuc.ca/>

The Congregational Life Team serve mostly smaller congregations and in many cases, congregations with no minister. Both Linda Thompson (Eastern) and Joan Carolyn (Western) deal with damaged and damaging relationships in congregations; nurture new communities; and organize retreats, trainings, webinars and roundtables to support leadership skills.

The big news was the announcement of the newest Canadian Unitarian congregation—Nelson Unitarian Spiritual Center. Beacon’s mentoring of the Nelson community was highlighted and there was a round of applause for Beacon’s work to support this new congregation.

More reporting on the conference to come in the summer edition of *The Beacon*.

—Rev. Debra Thorne

On behalf of the Vancouver Quaker and Unitarian communities, we would like to invite you to join us for a Blanket Exercise on **Saturday June 9th, 2018**. The event will be held at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver on W 49th avenue at 9:45 am and will be followed by a potluck lunch. All are welcome! We are asking for a suggested donation of \$10–20 to help cover costs, for those who can afford this.

Due to the dimensions of our space, we have room for 60 participants. We are asking people to reserve their ticket at <https://june9quakerunitariankbe.eventbrite.ca> by June 4th so we can plan well for the size and needs of the group. This is a family friendly event, (recommended for ages 10 and up, though at the discretion of families). We will happily provide childcare if children are too young to participate. Note: If your child(ren) require(s) care, please select the KBE Child ticket so we can accurately gauge numbers.

The 'Blanket Exercise' is a teaching tool developed by KAIROS "to share the historic and contemporary relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada" with settlers through embodied learning. As their website explains, the Exercise was "developed in response to the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples—which recommended education on Canadian-Indigenous history as one of the key steps to reconciliation... [and] covers over 500 years of history" in a participatory 90 minute workshop. (<https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/>)

As participants step onto the Blankets, they step into the roles of Indigenous peoples in Canada, literally walking through pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance eras across Turtle Island. Facilitators,

representing narrators and European colonizers, guide the journey. Participants embody the experience by reading scrolls and carrying cards that ultimately determine their fate. By engaging mind, body and spirit, the experience builds empathy and understanding of the heavy truths of colonization that continue to impact Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous-settler relations across this land.

Our lead facilitator will be Melaney Gleeson-Lyall from Musqueam Nation, who will also connect this activity to local Indigenous history

and her own story. After the exercise, she will also lead a debriefing session in the form of a talking circle so participants have an opportunity to process the experience as a group.

Following the event, participants are encouraged to stay for a potluck lunch and enjoy each others' company. Please bring an item to share.

For further information, questions, or childcare support, contact: Rachel Yordy at r.a.yordy@gmail.com, 226-789-5996 or Leslie Kemp at lkemp@telus.net, 604-818-5869. We look forward to seeing you soon!

You're Invited to a KAIROS Blanket Exercise

Saturday June 9, 2018, 9:45am-1:15pm, including potluck lunch
Unitarian Church of Vancouver: 949 W 49th Ave, Vancouver, BC



Hosted by the Vancouver Quakers and the Unitarian Church of Vancouver
Facilitated by Musqueam storyteller and artist Melaney Gleeson-Lyall

Space is limited to 60 - Reserve your spot by **June 4th** at:
<https://june9quakerunitariankbe.eventbrite.ca>



Suggested Donation \$10-20, but all are welcome! Please bring a potluck item. This is a family friendly event - if your children will attend, please specify.

For more info, contact: Rachel Yordy r.a.yordy@gmail.com / 226-789-5996
or Leslie Kemp lkemp@telus.net / 604-818-5869



Our Canadian Champion

Longtime Beacon member Laura Ramsay has played squash all over the world. In 1997, Laura was the Canadian champion in the over-45 age group, and she just keeps on going. I can't name all the honours she has accumulated, but one award that stands out is that in 2013, Laura won gold in the over-60 division at the World Masters Games in Torino, Italy.

Most recently, just this May, she travelled to Calgary to take part in the 2018 Canadian Squash Championships. At this prestigious event she became the 2018 Canadian champion in the over-60 age group.

This spring, Laura was awarded the Ernie Rogers Bowl, a Squash BC award given to the member of Squash BC who has the best record in national and international competitions. Here is an excerpt from the BC squash newsletter ("fastest thinking game on two feet"):

Laura has competed in numerous singles, doubles and team championships over the past years. On record, she has won seven age category National Championships in singles and she won the 60+ Women's Doubles National Championships in 2016. In 2013 she helped British Columbia win silver in the Masters Team Championships and in 2017, for the same competition, the bronze medal ... Laura is also an avid cyclist and stays in excellent, competition-ready shape by cycling to and from the North Shore either to play or to teach squash. In approving the award nomination, the Squash BC Board of Directors stated: "Laura embodies the spirit of what the Ernie Rogers Bowl is all about".

—Submitted by Jane Shoemaker



Laura Ramsay awarded the Ernie Rogers Memorial Trophy in April.

Wilderness Campers

Are you ready for another dose of that soothing Kootenay Lake camp feeling? It's only one short month to camping season. Now is the time to tell friends about camp... promote it to anyone who might enjoy it. Be sure to tell everyone about the website: Kootenaywildernesscamping.org/

We also want to tell you about an urgent issue. There is a campaign now to protect the mountainside, lakeshore to mountaintop, from Argenta to Johnson's Landing from logging and industrial development. As you can see this is the last piece in the puzzle of the Purcell Wilderness. The Wilderness Society Board has voted to support the campaign, and is making a donation. You can too. Did you know we were instrumental in lobbying to create the Purcell Wilderness in the 70s?

Looking forward to another unspoiled summer on Kootenay Lake.

Keith Wiley,
Board Secretary, for the Board
of the Northwest Wilderness Society.



UUMOC Call to Action on Racial Justice Released April 2018



We, Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada, committed to a world where our interdependence calls us to love and justice, call upon Canadian Unitarian Universalists to act for racial justice in our organizations, our communities, and also in our hearts, so that ALL people, regardless of racialized identities may know their sacred worth and dignity.

We recognize that as a people of faith we are just beginning to engage with the multiple ways in which structural racism and the Eurocentric origins of our movement impact who we are and how we live and interact.

We believe each of us brings a life experience that is essential to understanding the whole. We also affirm that each of us is at a different point along this journey of undoing white supremacy through action. Each of us has things to learn. Not all of our voices have been heard, nor has each played an equal role in the evolving story of our movement in Canada.

Honouring these differences among us, we call upon all Canadian Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist congregations to pledge as member societies to initiate intentional actions of conscience around racial justice issues. Recognizing the range of demographics and resources represented across our various congregations, and the differing priorities in racial justice issues in our Canadian communities, this Call to Action on Racial Justice invites each congregation into discernment of their own unique Action. We encourage each congregation to seal their commitment by seeking endorsement or affirmation of an Action on Racial Justice at their society's Annual General Meeting or other business meeting of their membership.

As a way to deepen and further your own commitment, and those of your congregations, here are **10 Actions for Racial Justice**.

These examples are in random order. We invite you to engage some of these and/or to develop your own activity or initiative. Please tell us about your activities so that we can curate them into a resource list made available for all Canadian Unitarian Universalist congregations.

1. Create safer spaces. Ensure that people of colour/indigenous participants within your congregation have opportunities to explore their experiences within Unitarian Universalism together, by setting a regular time and space for people from historically marginalized communities to meet. For more: <https://mcgill.ca/edu4all/edu4all-themes/making-safer-spaces-takes-all-kinds-work>

2. Learn your land history. Settler communities often ignore the history of the land that sustains their congregations or homes. Learn the history of the land you live on, and let this be an entry point into individual or congregational reconciliation work. To go further, explore the CUC's *Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guide*: <https://sites.google.com/view/thrrg-introductiontoallguides/welcome>

3. Don't wait for organized teach-ins to continue learning. Offer a racial justice workshop in your congregation and open it to your community, either by partnering with a local facilitator or by sending a group to an online workshop, such as this one: <http://www.37days.com/racism/>. Host a film series focused on racial justice in Canada: the THRRG's *Young Adult Guide* has a wonderful list of films. Have a small group discussion series

using podcasts – Red Man Laughing, Season 5 (on reconciliation) is a great place to begin. www.redmanlaughing.com Develop congregational skills through revisiting the principles developed in the CUC's *Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guide* (see above), or by learning about Bystander Training, intersectionality, and linked oppressions. <https://uucs.org/unit-6-get-intersectional/> Consider establishing a dedicated congregational team whose role is to explore and help teach strategies for learning and change.

4. Include more voices ... with integrity! Ideally, the words, music, and visual images featured in worship and congregational web-based communications will champion the wisdom of people from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Also, becoming intentional about including people from diverse backgrounds on your worship, welcoming, and leadership teams is a step in the right direction toward reflecting the diversity – and vitality – of the wider world.

At the same time, there's a fine line between striving for diversity and using the faces and words of historically marginalized people as window dressing, or exploiting these resources for our own ends. Learn more from these resources: <https://uua.org/worship/words/decentering-whiteness-worship-webinar> as well as the Church of the Larger Fellowship's podcast The VUU, #196: UU's, Music and Appropriation: <https://quest-formeaning.org/vuu/vuu-podcast/page/2/>

5. Look within. Despite our movement's stated embrace of diversity, our congregations do not reflect the actual cultural and racial diversity within Canadian society. One way to

Our Wider Community

begin looking at barriers to change is to screen *Radical Inclusion*, Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison Reed's keynote address from the CUC's 2013 Annual Conference and Meeting, followed by a conversation or study group in your congregation: <http://cuc.ca/video-from-2013-acm>

6. Launch a 'Common Read'. Invite all members of your congregation to commit to reading—then discussing—a book that will deepen understanding of racial justice issues here in Canada. Purchasing several copies for your church library, and ensuring digital versions are available from your municipal library will ensure the book is accessible to all.

7. Put it into practice. Develop spiritual practices that help you centre and enact a commitment to racial justice. Here are two examples from American sources: <https://uucs.org/study-guide/spiritual-practice-and-social-justice/>, <https://uuworld.org/articles/reconciliation-as-spiritual-discipline> And, if you would like to help devel-

op a uniquely Canadian bank of UU spiritual practice resources relating to racial justice, contact us at nguerrier@uuma.org.

8. Situate yourselves. Host all-ages experiential activities like the *Privilege Walk* <https://peacelearner.org/2016/03/14/privilege-walk-lesson-plan> or the *KAIROS Blanket Exercise* <https://kairosblanketexercise.org> to help participants explore the varying dimensions of their identities and social location. Understanding social location is a tool for better being able to recognize how power and privilege are distributed unequally.

9. Become good allies ... a challenge that can be easier said than done. For more: http://www.becominganally.ca/Becoming_an_Ally/Home.html Partner with local racial justice organizations. Begin by attending their events and building relationships. Learn where your allyship is needed, and then step up in support. Support Indigenous businesses (The UUMOC

Racial Justice Task Force maintains a resource list of recommended Indigenous owned businesses in Canada offering a variety of goods and services, such as—clothing, art, accessories, book subscriptions, cosmetics, herbs, wine, drums, etc. Please inquire.)

10. Bravely share your stories. Seek out opportunities to increase congregational story telling, in a way that still honours, yet de-centers the stories of those who occupy privileged spaces. Pairing stories of “falling down” with others on the theme of “how we tried to raise ourselves up” helps model that not all our experiences revolve around success. And finally, share your congregation's stories of learning with the wider Canadian UU community, by sending regular updates to the Canadian Unitarian, so that we can all learn from and be inspired by one another!

(Article from the Canadian Unitarian Council eNews May 2018)

Snapshots



Above: Nader greets Otto (or is it Gus?) at the Middle Eastern Feast fundraiser in March.

Right: Beacon members sing for John Hagen's March 11 service – Singing, Shouting & Celebration: 250 Years of Universalism.

