



The Bulletin

Unitarian Church of Vancouver

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JULY – AUGUST 2009

Sunday Services in July and August

All services begin at 11 A.M.

July 5

Engaging Faith

Debra Thorne

American Buddhist teacher Sharon Saltzberg says “faith is what we give our hearts to, because it is the deepest truth we have come to experience.” Yet despair and hopelessness can override that knowing.

How, then, do we find our way back to faith? Sometimes it is in the darkest places that faith is rediscovered, renewed and recovered.

Three candles for three minutes. Refugee committee serves lunch.

July 12

Darwin Revisited:

Anniversary Reflections on This Wonderful Life

Rev. Dr. David Johnson

This year marks the 200th birthday of Charles Darwin and the 150th anniversary of his book *On the Origin of Species* by *Natural Selection*.

We'll consider the implications of Darwin's pioneering work: Why is there such fear and hostility toward evolution? What are the implications for understanding the human condition, and responsibly addressing compelling life issues?

July 19

Jung as Theologian

Fritz Muntean

Writing near the end of his lifelong struggle to come to terms with the Judeo-Christian deity's apparent “dark side,” Jung proposes that Jahweh's encounter with Job resulted in the evolutionary development of God's relationship with humanity—the incarnated God-as-sacrifice being an early stage, now succeeded by the promise of an immanent God-within.

July 26

Pride Worship Service:

Educate/Liberate/Celebrate

Mary Bennett & Victoria Stuart

On this Sunday before Pride, we celebrate our Unitarian participation in affirming and promoting inherent worth and dignity.

Mary Bennett gives history and context of UU's support for pride. Victoria Stuart (www.victoriasjourney.com) describes her journey to “reconcile my physical, psychological and spiritual being with the feminine that is the essence of my identity.” A forum follows.

August 2

UCV Arts & Letters:

A Century of Expression

Keith Wilkinson

From its beginnings in 1909, members of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver have understood literate and artistic expression as powerful avenues for exploring the spiritual and advancing the ethical. We examine some of these threads from the past and their current equivalents—some deeply serious, many elegant, some humorous.

Volunteer opportunity

Randall MacKinnon, who has coordinated our **Sunday Forums** for the past couple of years, is stepping down from the job.

Forum is an important element of church life. A number of groups have established Forum weeks between September and June, and we need someone to insure that events are not double-booked and to sort out scheduling conflicts.

If you're interested in this volunteer position, please contact Randall: unitarity@yahoo.ca

August 9

Searchings: If you can't find it in yourself, where will you look for it?

Dorothy Goresky

Where do we look for the answers to questions such as “What is the meaning of life?”, “Why are we here?”, and “Who are we?” Dorothy's early searchings began with an Anglican upbringing, and have continued with the Unitarian Church. Later, she shared writings of teachers such as Eknath Easwaran and Deepak Chopra, and explorations with friends.

Three candles for three minutes. Refugee Committee serves lunch.

August 16

Twisted Sisters: Unravelling Anxiety & Depression

Phil Campbell

All emotions are natural. We have them because they have survival value. This includes so-called negative emotions like anger, fear, anxiety and depression. But in modern life, the human species lives well outside the biological design-specs for humans.

Sometimes normal, functional emotions get twisted. Anxiety and depression often come together and interactions between them maintain their existence long past the point of functionality, causing great pain. When they get intertwined like this, they become *the Twisted Sisters*.

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The Bulletin is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver. **Submissions** due by the 14th day of the month preceding the month of issue. Guidelines available at church office.

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August 23

Quaker Service:

'Tis a Gift to be Simple

David Embry & Shoshanna Wiley

*Live simply, so that others
may simply live. – M. K. Gandhi*

What does it mean to live simply? Who will answer? A lone voice may give us insight and clarity. This service gives our congregation the opportunity to speak from the wisdom of silence, hearing the “still, small voice” within and sharing our reflections with all. If possible, we will meet in Hewett Hall and sit “in the round.”

August 30

Building a New Way

Samaya Oakley

First United Mission stands at the corner of Hastings and Gore in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. This church is exploring a new way to “do church” and is the location of Samaya Oakley's Vancouver School of Theology Master of Divinity field placement. Join her as she offers her reflections on a new way to live church.



Steven Epperson is on summer leave and will return in our September issue.

Religious Education update

Caroline Farley

Director, Lifespan Religious Education
(caroline@vancouverunitarians.ca)



Happy summer! I'm thrilled that the weather is finally pleasant and that I can wear my sandals every day (if I want). I won't see you over the summer as I am on holidays in July and not at church in August. Our family will be sticking pretty close to home (on the beautiful Sunshine Coast) for the most part. Whatever awaits you and yours this summer, I hope that you find relaxation, rejuvenation and a whole lot of fun!

The leaders of the Spirit Play program held a forum on May 31 which was a huge success in our books. About 25 people listened to stories and participated in the work of spirit play. It was wonderful to see so many come out and get into the activities. Thanks to Nan Gregory and Corina Bye for making it happen.

A fine group of young people graduated from high school this spring: Casey Stainsby, Keegan Graham, Marc Dainow, Matt Madewan, Owen Marmorek and Claire McCormick will be heading out into the world as young adults to a variety of school, travel and life experiences. I wish them the best of luck and all that life has to offer them. I also want to thank them for all of their energy and enthusiasm and for their contributions to the life of this church community during their time with us. I want to remind them that we are here for them as their community whenever they need a taste of home.

We also look forward to having those of you who are *not* going far away continue with us next year. We also welcome Tommy Fielding, Kevin Graham and Olivia Hall into our youth group.

A huge thank-you goes out to Caralyn Tansey, Nancy Woodham and Sheldon Reddekopp who have led this group this year. Your contributions have been greatly valued and appreciated.

We will be including our fall Adult Religious Exploration brochure with our September *Bulletin*, so look for an exciting array of programs to warm your hearts and souls this fall. If you have an idea for a program you would like to lead, please email a proposal to me. See you in September!



President's message

Elisabeth Geller

Another year lies ahead for this faith community, and it is fitting that we take the time to look back. Six months into our 100th year in Vancouver, we can be proud of our many accomplishments in 2009.

Our Refugee Committee is welcoming a Karen (Burmese) family to Vancouver, and continues with its commitments to our existing sponsored families. Our Social Justice Committee has been especially active around affordable housing and the Food Bank this year.

Our Worship Services Committee continues to provide strong leadership for outstanding Sunday services that draw members in for thoughtful reflection, discussion, and worship. The quality of our music program, including our own Chalice Choir, continues to be outstanding.

Our Religious Exploration programs continue to attract our own members, as well as members of the public, in record numbers.

Our Future Development Plans Committee has recruited members and a chair and will begin its consultations with UCV members to explore our future as a community. Our Communications Committee has completed its member survey and will use that information to enhance member communications in the new fiscal year.

The Memorial Garden was dedicated in June and will become a place for members and others to remember those gone from us. Our Buildings and Grounds subcommittees have been active in ensuring a beautiful, safe and welcoming physical space for us.

Our year-end deficit (which, as I write, looks to be about \$35,000) is the lowest it has been for a number of years—thanks, in large measure, to the work of our staff and volunteers in keeping expenses to a minimum, and to our Canvass Committee's hard work this year.

The danger of listing accomplishments is the risk of forgetting some key ones, so I hope you will forgive me for that. Thank you to all our staff and volunteers who continue to make UCV a vibrant and relevant community 100 years after its inception.

Environment Committee

Truth Force

Karl Perrin

(604-872-7326, perrink@shaw.ca)

On October 24, thousands of Climate Change rallies will connect around the world. They will be sad events, not angry—because we know what to do, and can't. As isolated cogs in the machine, we are weak. When we step out of line, we get yanked back. And so, on October 24, we will collectively pull the whole line forward.

The huge task before us—saving us from ourselves, from the manipulations of our tribalism—often makes one want to fold up in a corner. Buddhism to the rescue! In her book *Mindfully Green*, Stephanie Kaza uses the

word “mindfulness”. What is mindfulness? I think it is confident, clear perception. Before there can be *satyagraha* (truth force), you gotta have some *satya* (truth).

A few years ago our interim minister told us, “You're already enlightened.” True, many of us have flashes of awe and insight. But to stay “awake” takes discipline. If I could remember to stay “awake” I'd be so generous. Sometimes I see my grace reflected in your face.

On Saturday, October 24, let's “walk ‘n’ roll” in a car-free Vancouver. Care-free right here! Enlightening each other till we float!

Kudos to Patti Turner and the Grounds crew for planting those CO₂-sucking dwarf apple trees. Negative carbon footprint! We are lighter.

Refugee Committee

Karen family finally arrives

Virginia Crabill

(604-731-1730)

Our young Karen (Burma/Myanmar) family has finally arrived! Their pictures are on our bulletin board in Hewett Centre. They are staying with a family in East Vancouver and have most of what they need for now, but the little girl is four and will need clothing as she grows.

We are now turning our efforts to help a young Palestinian family. They are in a camp in Syria in conditions beyond desperate and must be out of this camp by the end of summer. Unlike the arrangement with the Karens, the Canadian government will not be assisting in any way. We hope to combine efforts with other faith groups, such as the Quakers, to help bring the family here and get them set up. This family has an 18-month-old infant.



Our fundraising efforts will continue through the summer. We'll have a couple of lunches. We'll be selling our recipe books all summer, with recipes from UCV members and our refugee families. We need to sell 125 books to break even.

For more information about the Refugee Committee, please contact my co-chair Fiona Graham or me. To assist the Committee financially, please write “Sheilah Thompson Refugee Fund” on your cheque, put it in an envelope, and leave it in the collection plate or at the UCV office. We are very grateful for your generosity.

The Environment Committee adjourns until the fall. Our next meeting will be on September 13, at 12:30, in the Meditation Room. Meanwhile, our planning for October 24 may occur on July 12 and August 9 (both Sundays) at 12:30 in the Boardroom. All are welcome.

What's new in the Library?

Barbara Taylor

At Hewett Centre, long-time member Pat Duffy Hutcheon recently launched her autobiography, *Lonely Trail: the Life Journey of a Freethinker*, published by Aurora Humanist Books in Ottawa. Pat's book is for sale at People's Co-op Bookstore, 1391 Commercial Drive. A copy is also available for loan in our library.

The latest additions to our library include CDs of Dr. David Suzuki's UCV Centenary Outreach Lecture, *The Challenge of the 21st Century: Setting the Real Bottom Line*, and *Original Zinn: Conversations on History and Politics* between Howard Zinn (author of *A People's History of the United States*) and radio host David Barsamian. We also have a lovely new copy of Joseph Campbell's *The Flight of the Wild Gander: Explorations in the Mythological Dimension, Selected Essays 1944-1968*.

Our fiction for your summer reading includes *Rockbound*, Frank Parker Day's tale of South Shore Nova Scotia, originally published to much controversy in 1928 and recently reissued and chosen for the Canada Reads selection. Of more recent note, we have *On Chesil Beach*, the latest novel from Ian McEwan, author of *Atonement* and *Saturday*. Thanks to Franci Louann, we also now have two collections of short stories by Vancouver's own Ivan E. Coyote: *Loose End* and *The Slow Fix*.

For an extensive report of this year's acquisitions, check the list on the bulletin board outside the Library—and be sure to come in and browse.

We'll be joining the summer Thrift Sale in the Hitchmanova Room downstairs, starting on August 9. We welcome your sale donations in the Library, but please note that we will not be accepting magazines, encyclopedias, text books, computer books, Reader's Digest books, library discs, or any books that are musty, moldy, abused or in general disrepair.



Karen McPhee and Rhondda Skipper clip stamps for the Unitarian Services Committee, circa 1960

Sunday lunches for the summer

July 5: Refugee Committee (fundraising for Farahnaz)

Aug. 9: Refugee Committee (fundraising for Farahnaz)

Sept. 6: Refugee Committee (fundraising for Farahnaz)

Sept. 13: Refugee Committee

If your group would like to serve a lunch, please contact Doris Lowe at 604-435-6183.



Fostering Community

Ann Foster

(afos72@vcn.bc.ca)

We'll start with the bad news. **Paul Wright** suffered a stroke in early May while he and **Karen** were on holiday in New York. At this writing (early June), Paul has been moved to Holy Family Hospital for rehab. He and

Karen are both hopeful for further improvement. He is now able to scoot around on a wheelchair and can speak clearly. He'd enjoy hearing from friends at 778-822-1232.

Perhaps you recall from the news that **Hugh Stansfield**, Chief Judge of the B.C. Court, passed away from cancer on May 7 at the untimely age of 56. But did you know that Hugh was **Marg Fletcher's** brother, and **Samantha Taylor's** and **Jessica Fletcher's** uncle? Marg remembers her brother as someone who lived his life fully to the end. He loved good conversation and spending time with his family, and had a keen interest in other people's ideas—in short, he was an all-around good guy. Our thoughts are with you, **Marg, Samantha, Jeff** and **Jessica**.

Now to better news: Isn't it nice to see **Pam Rickey** back in town? She enjoyed her studies in Peterborough while **Bob** stayed here to renovate and prepare their Fairview Slopes townhouse for sale. But the market dropped, so they've decided to stay and enjoy life here. While in Peterborough, Pam got involved in their "fellowship" (really a church) whose minister is a friend of our **Laura Friedman**. Bob and Pam are reextending their open invitation to join them most Friday evenings until Labour Day at their weekly Kits Point barbecue. Please contact them to be on their BBQ e-list.

Betty Bronson, David Marmorek and sons **Simon** and **Owen** are enjoying July in France. Their travels include Paris, visiting friends in Dijon, and hiking the French Alps. They're improving their French as they travel. Finally they'll board a train for a "Chunnel" ride and a few days in England. Bon voyage et bonne chance!

A small ad in our May bulletin piqued my curiosity, so I followed up on it: A green condo and townhouse development at 51st and Granville is being proposed. I also learned that a similar development is in the works at 33rd and Sophia. If green living interests you, contact me—or better, contact **Virginia Bird** at vbird@pottingerandassociates.com.

Please contact me anyway with your summer news so we can *Foster Community* together.

UCV Food Bank Update

Leslie Kemp

The UCV Food Bank is unique among food banks. It provides not only the basic necessities for those we serve weekly, but a rich array of programs, including:

- Childcare
- A clothing swap
- A Mother Goose program for mothers and babies, by staff from Marpole Family Place
- A Kidsport Canada program to increase physical activity among women
- A community health program
- Assistance with income tax preparation

Other agencies in our community hold our Food Bank in high regard, and our participants appreciate it.



The UCV board has agreed in principle to move the UCV Food Bank towards the status of a separate agency, under UCV auspices, rather than continuing its operation as a satellite of the Vancouver Food Bank. We want to keep the unique features our Food Bank's participants value so highly.

The UCV Board has approved Terms of Reference for a Food Bank Advisory Committee. A number of UCV congregants have offered to serve on the committee, and its membership will soon be finalized.

We appreciate those who responded to the call for volunteers by our Parish Minister at a service earlier this year, and in articles in the Bulletin and Orders of Service. A number of UCV members now volunteer weekly at the Food Bank.

Annual budget, use of gaming funds approved

Kathryn Aberle

Vice President, Board of Trustees

At an extraordinary general meeting on June 14, the congregation of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver approved a balanced budget for 2009/2010 that included revenue from direct-access gaming. The decision was a departure from past practice in two ways:

- It was the first time in many years that the congregation was presented with, and approved, a balanced budget.
- Although the subject had been discussed in the past, it was the first time the congregation agreed to submit an application for a grant from gaming revenue.

Elisabeth Geller, president of the Board of Trustees, set the scene for a lengthy, emotional, and respectful discussion of the pros and cons of applying for and accepting gaming funds. She gave some historical perspective on the church's budgetary challenges. Elisabeth pointed out that while there had been remarkable growth in pledging coupled with significant cuts to administrative costs, the church would face yet another deficit budget without an infusion of about \$35,000, or cuts of that amount.

The motion was spoken to by 22 of the 89 members present, and two members sent written statements. Many spoke passionately against the motion, citing concerns about societal harm from gambling addictions and the perceived endorsement of gambling that could come with accepting gaming funds. Others encouraged the congregation to dig deeper or think more creatively to find other ways to bridge the gap between revenue and expense if the church did not take gaming funds.

Many members who spoke in favour of the motion indicated they were conflicted by the issue, but on balance felt it was the only choice. A number of people felt that the church would be able to do good work with this money. Others offered the view that UCV had become addicted to dipping into its reserves to fund annual deficits, and that the church needed to either live within its means or increase revenue—which could include seeking a gaming grant.

After nearly two hours of discussion, the question was called. 106 of the 110 eligible votes were cast, with 74 in favor, 26 opposed, and 6 abstaining.

Following the resignation of long-time coordinator Elizabeth Campbell several months ago, Patience Towler has served as the Food Bank's interim coordinator.

The Food Bank Advisory Group (Patience Towler, Michael Clague, David Steele and Leslie Kemp) has recommended to the Board that we recruit a paid Coordinator. We are fortunate to have a designated Food Bank fund that would allow us to do so. However, we would prefer this position be filled by a volunteer, if we can find someone who is qualified and able to commit to an estimated 10 hours of duties per week.

The Food Bank Coordinator is responsible for coordinating weekly volunteers, programs, and activities; reporting to the Food Bank Advisory Committee; and liaising with the Vancouver Food Bank and other agencies. We hope to fill this role by early August with either a volunteer or paid Coordinator.

We are delighted with the UCV community's involvement in this very special Food Bank. We invite others to come forward as weekly volunteers, or to take on the Coordinator role. For more information, please contact Patience Towler (604-325-9902) or Leslie Kemp (604-877-1720).

Judy Villett: Open to spirit, heart and passion

Mary Bennett

You've probably seen Judy Villett's quilts on display. If you're new to UCV, you've met Judy at the Welcoming Table in the lobby of the Sanctuary.

Judy first discovered Unitarianism in 2003 when she lived in Edmonton. She noticed a "little white church" and set off to meet her neighbours. The church was Westwood Unitarian. "They gave me a nametag," she beamed. She felt "relief and revelation," and knew right away, "This is where I belong. I can breathe and think at the same time."

When Judy lived in Hawaii for a year, she attended the UU church in Honolulu. "In that church, every visitor is greeted with a lei and a hug." In Hawaii, the aloha spirit is everywhere, and the church took that on.

At UCV, Judy and husband Michael consider it their mission to make every visitor and newcomer comfortable coming in the door. "It's a confusing building. We point and make sure they see where things are."

Did you know our temporary name badges are a different colour each month? Judy, who teaches colour theory, designed the system, and found our rainbow strings as well.



Judy loves it when someone comes to the Welcoming Table to return their temporary name badge, proudly saying, "You may want to re-use this—I have a permanent one now."

I asked Judy if being a Unitarian had affected her art. "Definitely," she said. "My work has become more of a meditation. I've also been producing more and in a stronger, very positive way. Rather than trying one little thing, I'm following

these strong themes. I've always worked from a heart connection, but I'm even more open to spirit, heart and passion because of connecting with kindred spirits at the church."

It Couldn't Be Done

Somebody said
That it couldn't be done
But he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't"
But he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried
So he buckled right in
With the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried, he hid it
And he started to sing
As he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done—and he did it.

Thousands will tell you
It cannot be done
And thousands will prophesy failure
While thousands will point out
To you one by one
The dangers that wait to assail you
But just buckle in
With a bit of a grin
Just take off your coat and go to it
And you may even sing
As you tackle the thing
That "cannot be done"—and you'll do it.

— Edgar A. Guest

July Events

Daytimers

Thurs., July 2, 11 A.M.–2 P.M., Fireside Rm. (topic TBA)

Meet the Artist (Arts Committee)

Sun., July 19, 12–2 P.M., Alcove



Rev. Phillip Hewett in front of UCV, circa 1980