



UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF NIAGARA

A church for people
with enquiring minds

September 2007

Sunday Services

September 2007

Sept 2 Being a UU and what it means to Us
Join this sharing service that will help
to prepare us for the upcoming year of
formal services.

Sept 9 Join us for our Ingathering Breakfast
at 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Water Communion – *John Mayer*

As usual, our opening service will include our "water ceremony". We are asking that each of you bring some water, whether actually from the place you have been to, or symbolically representing that water, so we can share the congregational summer experience. Of course, for those who stayed at home, some local water will give you the opportunity of sharing your summer experience. Looking forward to the new church year, with an interesting program assembled by the program committee. Also, bring a friend, if you wish!

Sept 16 George Addison – *Topic to be advised*

Sept 23 Matt Habermehl – *A Pagan at a Thai Buddhist Temple*

Sept 30 June Gilbertson – *Death and Life*

President's Message

Greetings and best wishes for a new Church season. After a long and warm summer, it will be great to welcome our wonderful fall weather once again.

Your Board has been working over the summer and there are a number of projects that are being initiated. You will probably read about some of these things in this issue of the newsletter. We hope that we can count on you volunteers to once again help in our endeavors. One that comes to mind is the CUC Chaplain Training session which we have been asked to host and which is slated to take place in February 2008. We will need some hosts who will provide "board & lodging" for them for 2 nights. I believe that this will be explained further in this newsletter. We hope that we can count on your help!

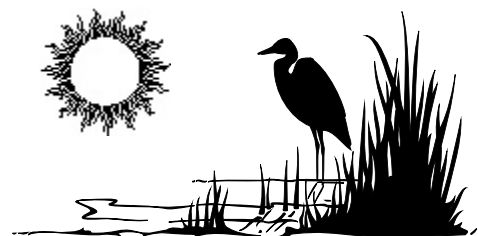
Our summer meetings seem to have been well attended, although I have been away a great deal on family problems. I would like to thank Julianne for her work on scheduling all these events.

I would also like to welcome Carl Beckett who has become our new Treasurer, and is just now "learning the ropes" of this position.

See you in Church!

– Fred B.

Unitarian Congregation of Niagara
www.unitarian-stcatharines.org





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of Niagara**
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2007/2008

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PASTORAL CARE:
Jennie Leach

Rosemarie Lein

February 24, 1916 – August 18, 2007

Rosemarie Lein, a member of our congregation since 1982, died peacefully in her sleep early on Saturday morning, August 18th, at Linhaven. In the past couple of months, Rosemarie suffered several strokes which left her completely incapacitated.

Rosemarie was born in Angermunde, Germany, a city near Berlin of which her father was mayor for 24 years until the Nazis took power. She is survived by her sister Senta Vacicek and predeceased by her parents and brother Joachim. She married Helmut Lein in 1946 and came to Montreal in the early 1950's where she worked for Avon for 25 years as a correspondent/secretary. Her fluency in four languages, German, English, Spanish and Portuguese was a great asset when she worked for the Ibero American Institute from 1934 in cultural exchanges with South America. She had a business school diploma and started at Ibero as a librarian. After the war, Rosemarie worked for the American occupation forces before emigrating to Canada.

She was a capable Treasurer of our church for several years, helped to deliver Meals-on-Wheels, was involved with the Glenridge Lawn Bowling Club and the Dunlop Drive Senior Citizens Association. At Dunlop Drive Seniors Rosemarie practically ran the center, did the newsletter, organized the filming of its activities for a special occasion.

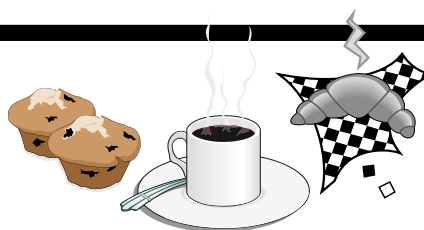
After moving to Linhaven in 1996, she was twice elected Queen, an honour which greatly pleased her. The staff there were very fond of her, appreciating her sweet nature and contagious smile.

A Service of Remembrance in celebration of Rosemarie's life will take place in September at Hulse & English Funeral Chapel. Memorial donations in her memory may be made to the Endowment Fund of the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara.

Ingathering Breakfast!!

Join us for our **Ingathering Breakfast** on Sunday, **September 9th**
at 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Renew contact with friends after the summer
over muffins, danish, breads, fruit, juice, tea and coffee!

Social Chair – Joan Rothman



A Big Thank You

to the Unitarian-Universalist
Church of Niagara Falls, New
York.

The Niagara Falls, New York
Church invited members of our
congregation to join them in their
church picnic in August at Bond
Lake. Seven of us enjoyed their
hospitality, and in spite of a slow
border crossing, had a lovely time.
We appreciate their thoughtfulness.

Report on CUC AGM

John Stahl and I attended the
Vancouver event, (May 18 - 21)
which next year will be held in
Ottawa, which makes it more feasible
for more UUs to attend. Firstly, the
pleasure of meeting people under
relaxing circumstances, without the
distractions of trying to align one's
goals with others of one's own
congregation. At the AGM are found
the following:

1. Food and fellowship, where one
can discover ideas and resources.
2. Chapters within the UU
constellation, of organizations outside
of it e.g. the United Nations, which
has an active chapter in Toronto First
Unitarian. They held a Pub Night in
UBC's Student Union Building.
3. The spread of diversity within
UUs e.g. Paganism, which held a
Beltane ritual.
4. Multi-session seminars on
specific topics e.g. lay chaplaincy,
which described how the chaplaincy
functions, and the challenges and
resources for the individual
chaplain/prospective chaplain.
5. Single-session seminars on
specific topics. Some of these arise

out of the keynote speech and theme
of the conference, which this year
was Diversity in Community.

6. Keynote speech, this year given
by Bill Phipps, former moderator of
the United Church of Canada. His
theme was on humility— the virtue
and necessity of it, in an
individual's interactions with others,
and with today's world.
7. Exhibits in a concourse area.
Offerings of books, literature,
photographs and artistic creations.
8. Youth groups have a variety of
activities, some linking with the
adults, some not.
9. Tours or visits to other city sites.

— Peter Skelton

*All Things Bright
and Beautiful*



2nd Annual Craft Fair
Saturday, October 13th

** We will need some volunteers
to help us out that day.
** Calling all bakers! We need
some of your delightful treats for
sale at the fair.



Central America . . .

The Central America Community
Development program is once again
extending an invitation to all
Unitarians to work side by side with
Honduran farmers building schools

for their children and homeowners in
Agua Escondida, Guatemala,
rebuilding their homes after the
devastation of Hurricane Stan in
2005. These projects in the past
have helped build relationships
between Canadian Unitarians while
supporting the people of Central
America in achieving their goals.

See the brochures pinned to the
bulletin board and the World Accord
poster for further information about
learning more about the projects of
the past and the present. In addition,
Joan Wiley has been involved in one
of the projects in Honduras.

“The world in which you were born
is just one model of reality. Other
cultures are not failed attempts at
being you. They are unique
manifestations of the human spirit.”
— Wade Davis



Rainbow flag is a powerful Pride symbol

By Joan Wiley

San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker
popularized the Rainbow flag as the
symbol of gay pride and diversity in
1978. His flag consisted of eight
stripes; currently it consists of six
coloured stripes, all with a particular
meaning.

As with any flag, there is protocol
surrounding the flying of the flag.
The red stripe goes on top or to the
left, followed by orange, yellow,
green, blue and violet — the same
order in which the colours appear in
a natural rainbow.

The original Gay Pride flag was
hand-dyed by Baker. It flew in the
San Francisco Gay Freedom Day
Parade on June 25, 1978, just

months before the assassination of openly gay San Francisco City Supervisor Harvey Milk on Nov. 27, 1978. After Milk's death, there was heightened demand for the Rainbow flag.

Baker assigned specific meaning to each of the colours as follows:

- hot pink: sexuality
- red: life
- orange: healing
- yellow: sunlight
- green: nature
- turquoise : magic
- blue: serenity
- violet : spirit

The two discontinued colours were hot pink and turquoise because of the unavailability of fabric in those hues. The Unitarian Church of Calgary gained national recognition with The Pride Rainbow Project that was started in fall 2003 by five youth members. The flag, five feet wide and 500 feet long, was originally designed to show support for the same-sex marriage legislation in Canada. It is split into four sections for use at rallies and other events, and to be rented to private functions.

In June 2005, St. Catharines City Hall raised the Rainbow flag for the first time in its history in order to honour Pride festivities in Niagara. In June 2007, Niagara Falls raised the flag for the first time — it was stolen within hours.

Controversy has often dogged the raising of the Rainbow flag. That was true in early August this year when the town council in Truro, N.S., rejected a request from the Truro Pride group to raise the flag to support gay pride activities. The council said the request came in late and there was no time for debate.

According to the CBC website, Mayor Bill Mills stood by the vote, saying that as a Christian he simply could not support the request.

"God says 'I'm not in favour of that' and I have to look at it and say, I guess I'm not either," Mills said.

He said raising the flag might open the doors to other groups, such as pedophiles, to make the same request.

"I don't want to lump them in with homosexuals, but that's the point, the issues, and that's my feeling."

Welcoming Congregation

Volunteers needed for Welcoming Congregation process

Earlier this year, the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara agreed overwhelmingly to begin the Welcoming Congregation process.

Unitarians at the local, national and international levels have been in the vanguard for many years to support and promote LGBTQ individuals and issues. The Welcoming Congregation process formalizes and recognizes a Unitarian congregation's contribution and commitment to advancing, supporting and promoting the issues and individuals of the gender- and sexual-diverse community. While our church is well regarded in the Niagara community, this process will move us from the "auditing the program" stage to "earning the degree" status.

The board is now looking for volunteers to create a committee that will facilitate the process, including leading workshops. To date, Joan Wiley, Philip Curtis and Marie Belliveau have volunteered to sit on the committee.

In order to receive the status of Welcoming Congregation, some of the workshops are mandatory, others are considered the heart of the program, and others are specific areas of interest. Some of the workshop titles, as outlined in the handbook provided by the CUC, include introductions and expectations; what we know and how we learned it; the common elements of oppression; gender socialization and homophobia; racism and homophobia/heterosexism; HIV/AIDS; the radical right; religion and homosexuality; experiences of bisexual, gay, lesbian and/or transgender people; bisexuality and biphobia; transgender identity and what it means; how homophobia hurts us all; and what now.

It is hoped that we will begin the formal process sometime in September or October, with completion by the Canadian Unitarian Council's meeting in May. The timeline varies for each church, but many churches do as many as two workshops a month, and some do a weekend "blitz" as well.

The CUC's vision statement is: "That all Canadian Unitarian Universalist congregations and organizations concretely reach out to and support communities who may be experiencing oppression based on their gender and/or sexual identities."

For more details about the Welcoming Congregation process, please go to:

<http://www.cuc.ca/queer/index.htm>

This is Not My Canada!

As one of the 14 people from N-CAST (Niagara Coalition Against SPP & TILMA) attending the protest rallies in Ottawa and Montebello. Que., I have a sad, but invigorating story to tell you.

August 19th was the day of the protest rally and march to begin at Capitol Hill with speeches from Maude Barlow of Council of Canadians, a heart-breaking and rousing speech sent by William Commanda, a 90+ year old Algonquin Elder of course not able to attend. These can all be heard on YouTube. This speech brought me to tears and I was not the only one!

Contrary to the reports in the press, there were approximately 8,000 people attending this march/rally in Ottawa and all was peaceful despite the police surrounding us at every move, all dressed in full riot gear. This was the family-friendly rally/march that was planned despite what you might have read in the press, with all races, all ages, disabilities represented, to show their growing fear of what those 30 business heads have in store for you and me. This is not MY CANADA anymore!

After the march ended at Capitol Hill we all marched over to Ottawa University's Marion Hall for a debate of sorts with Maude Barlow, Mr. Iruegas (rep. of Mexico's actual elected government not Calderon's), Mike Byers, Prof. and author, and Michelle Asslin, Federation des Femmes du Quebec and notably absent Ann Wright, a retired U.S. Army Colonel, anti-war activist. It was announced at the end of the debate that Ann Wright had been detained at the airport, arrested and put on a "Bond" that if she attended this forum or marched she would be

arrested and deported to the U.S. and then again arrested. THIS IS NOT MY CANADA!

Presidents from the unions of CEP Canada, International Pres. of United Steel Workers and the Sec.-Treas. of the CEP of Canada read an agreement from Labour of Canada and the U.S. to oppose SPP and to demand an open and free discussion of their negotiations. (Their agreement contained much more than I am able to put here).

A political panel with NDP Peter Julian, MP; Bloc Serge Cardin, MP; Lib., Bonnie Brown, MP; and Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party and the only Party Leader to show up at this event! Conservatives were invited but declined. This was an interesting panel with Peter Julian and Elizabeth May taking over but it was May who aroused the crowd with a call for parliament to demand a vote of non-confidence immediately upon return to work in September! People were on their feet and roaring with agreement to this suggestions by May.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada provided us with a safe, clean room to billet (albeit on the floor) there were security guards and clean washrooms and we all slept well because of their amazing coordination and help throughout this event. PSAC was the main coordinator along with the PGA in bringing in buses, water and lawyers, health help and instructing all on how to stay safe. A big cheer of thanks to all of their volunteers.

The 20th was the long police escorted ride to Montebello Que. The police arrived at the PSAC building early that morning, filming all who took part as we boarded the buses, we were warned they may board and ask for searches and told how not to resist but not to give

permission. Our bus leaders were informed and smart. We were then escorted by motor-cycled police (20 out of Ottawa, no stopping for lights and they stopped traffic too, we were so important or was it dangerous and then left with one ahead and one behind, just to be sure not one escaped the planned route THEY had for us. They forced us to drive far below the speed limit, just to show us that they had and planned to keep control.

The POLICE plan was to herd us all into 2 "fenced pens" they had assembled for the rowdy protesters just to keep us under control. Sounds more like concentration camps to me. However, our organizers told them we refuse to comply and would not go into these pens and would proceed to the town, they could not stop us.

By the way, there were approximately 2000 people there not a few hundred as the press would have you believe and the violence only started when the police began nudging the women at the front of the line, who by the way were just sitting down singing songs and chanting "Peaceful Protest". The so-called violent hundred were in truth about 40 black-clad youth, who did throw stones, had sticks and were there to incite but their numbers were small.

If you visit YouTube you will see the riot gear clad police with pepper spray canisters ready to use, rubber-bullet guns, and canisters of tear gas pellets attached to their belts. THIS IS NOT MY CANADA!

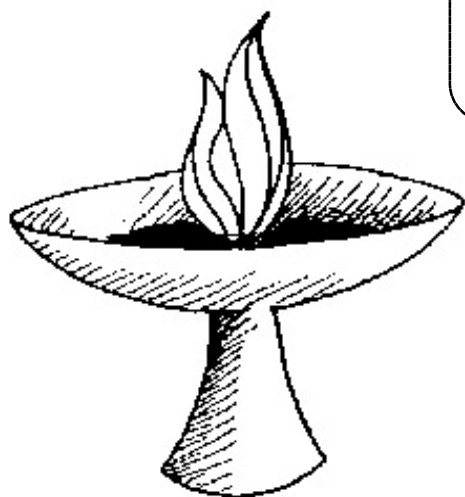
Our buses were scheduled to leave at 4:00 pm for Ottawa but the police stopped this from occurring, they kept us there as long as possible but the bus drivers resisted because they were on the clock and wanted to get home. We now know that the police felt keeping us there would make us more unruly and cause confrontations. Proof of their wish to

have this kind of confrontation is the YouTube video that catches the police provocateurs in action and their boots give them away. If you watch this look at the yellow oval on the boots of police and the same on the men being tackled, they all wear police issued boots! THIS IS NOT MY CANADA!

Our buses finally arrived about 5:00 pm and we were allowed to leave but forced to take an alternate route home that added an extra hour to our trip.

This weekend took me and I am sure all the other attendees through almost all the human emotions possible. I cried, laughed, was more angry that I think I have ever been, was immensely sad when looking at the police on Canadian soil against their own people looking so Gestapo like, the fencing us in, the police provocations, the lies of Harper, the lies of the press and the non-reporting of what is actually happening. I was so invigorated by the diversity of people, all races, all ages and many people with disabilities were there to voice their anger and fear of where Harper is taking our country.

THIS IS NOT MY CANADA, IS IT REALLY YOURS???



Church Rentals 2007 - 2008

The Church has been rented for the following dates and times:

Yoga Unlimited: Mon. 9:30 am – noon & 5:30 – 8:00 pm, Wed. 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Thurs. 4:00 – 6:30 pm, from Sept. 10th to Nov. 19th given by Burt Peeters 905-945-5650.

School of Niagara Dance Company: Thursdays 6:30 – 9 pm from Sept. 6th to Dec. 13th. A professional group led by Mary Jo Mullins, 905-562-9372.

Niagara Action for Animals: meets the first Friday of each month 6 – 9 pm, Sept. – June Contact Dan Wilson 905-262-0633.

Council of Canadians, Niagara Branch:

meets monthly 10 – 12:30 pm on the 2nd or 3rd Sat. from Sept. to June. Contact Susan Corcoran 905-684-7519 or Peter Skelton 905-685-9019.

We also have short term rentals or use agreements which are posted on the calendar on the notice board. To avoid interrupting renters, please do not enter the Church when a group is using the Church. For enquiries please contact the rental agent John Northover at 905-934-7487.

Thank you

For Cat Lovers Who Want to be Green:

As a cat lover with two furry declawed family members, all of us living on the 8th floor of an apartment building, it has bothered my environmentally-inclined conscience for a long while that I am responsible for bags and bags (plastic) of clay kitty litter and waste. I understand that clay is not biodegradable and does not dissolve into the earth. I have finally found a green alternative that I wanted to share with other cat lovers. "Swheat Scoop" is the brand name of a kitty litter that is made from wheat -- not the kind we eat -- but organic cereal grain at any rate. It is completely biodegradable and has been tested and certified by a U.S. agency that it can be flushed without clogging up your septic or sewer systems.

I have tried flushing it and it doesn't seem to hurt anything. It is virtually dust-free, clumping (therefore, scoopable) and absorbs most of the unpleasant odor. My cats, even the more sensitive of the two, took to the change in litter quite readily. I bought the stuff (more expensive, of course, as are all green products, I've noticed) in my local pet store, PaulMac or whatever it's called these days, and a large 18 kilogram sack cost around \$30.00.

I noticed that there were litters made of newspaper pellets and corn as well but I decided that Swheat Scoop was for me. If you're interested in learning more about this product, there is a website. Just type the name into a search engine, like Google, and you should have no trouble bringing it up.

– Julianne

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