



UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF NIAGARA

A church for people
with enquiring minds

April 2008

Sunday Services

April 2008

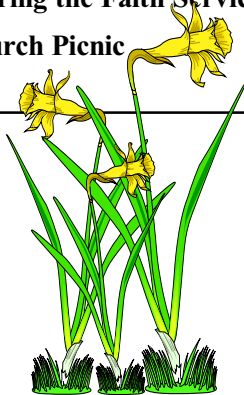
- Apr 6** **Jim Glassford** – *Searching for the Great Truths*
- Apr 13** **Vivianne LaRiviere** – *Topic TBA*
S.L. – *John Mayer*
- Apr 20** **Frank Fohr** – *Canadian Mining Companies in the Third World*
S.L. – *M. Belliveau*
- Apr 27** **Fiona McMurran and Marie Belliveau** – *SPP and TILMA*
S.L. – *M. Belliveau*

May 2008

- May 4** **Celebration of Retirement Service of John Mayer and Doreen Peever from Lay Chaplaincy**
- May 11** **Felicia Urbanski** – *What Does It Mean To Have Faith?*
S.L. – *J. Momirov*
- May 18** **Brock Shaver** – *Was Jesus Gay?*
S.L. – *T. Dajka*
- May 25** **Vivianne LaRiviere** – *Topic TBA*
S.L. – *T. Dajka*

June 2008

- June 1** **Sharing the Faith Service**
- June 8** **Church Picnic**



Unitarian Congregation of Niagara
www.unitarian-stcatharines.org

*** A Basics Weekend *** (Friday, Saturday & Sunday)

Our congregation will be hosting the CUC Designing and Leading Rites of Passage Weekend from April 18 - 20 at our church. We call the weekend-- the "Basics" because it is the recommended basic training program for new and prospective Lay Chaplains. Our lay chaplains in training, Valerie Jaeger and Julianne Momirov will be attending from our congregation as well as Ed Gilbert, Tara Dajka, and Bruce Russell.

Pamela Wilson and Hilde Wheeler

** Note: Sunday service will begin as usual at 11:00 a.m.

Book Club

The Book Club will meet at Jim Glassford's house, 6 Costen Blvd., St. Catharines, on Tuesday, April 1 at 7:30 p.m. Costen Blvd. is off of North Vine Street, the sixth street on the right (East) heading toward the lake past Linwell Road. Parking is on the street or in Prince Philip School Parking lot which is 5 houses north of Costen Blvd. on Vine Street, just before the flashing red light at Parnell Road (a short walk).

6 Costen is the 3rd house on the right on Costen, a red brick bungalow with 2 cars in the driveway, a black and a red one.

The book club will be discussing the book "The Ghost Hunters. William James and the Search for Scientific Proof of Life After Death".



**Unitarian Congregation
of Niagara**

223 Church St.
St. Catharines, ON L2R 3E8
Tel: 905-687-8433
www.unitarian-stcatharines.org

2008/2009

PRESIDENT: Michael Petrocci

**VICE PRESIDENT:
Jon Stahl**

**PAST PRESIDENT:
Fred Bolton**

LAY CHAPLAINS:
J. Mayer & D. M. Peever,
V. Jaeger & J. Momirov
(In training)

**SECRETARY:
Anita Miecznikowski**

TREASURER: Carl Beckett

**MEMBER AT LARGE:
Sarah Nyman**

PROGRAM:
Julianne Momirov
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:
Tara Dajka

MEMBERSHIP:
Jim Glassford

PROPERTY:
Peter Skelton

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS:
Ed Gilbert

NEWSLETTER:
Sofia Vuorinen

COMMUNICATION:
Luke Kwiatkowski

SOCIAL JUSTICE:
Adolf Miecznikowski

SOCIAL: Hilde Wheeler

EVENTS: Penny Blake

WEBSITE: Bruce Millar

LAY CHAPLAINCY:
Pamela Spear-Wilson

TRUSTEES:
Andrea Gravelle, Don Herne
James Wilson

RENTAL: John Northover

PASTORAL CARE:
Jenny Leach & John Berry

PHONE: John Inglis

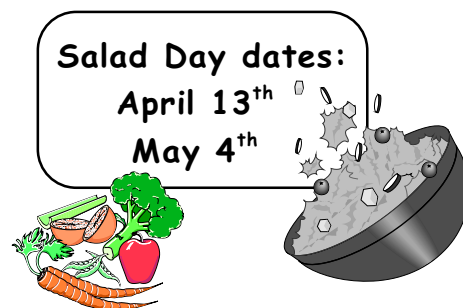
Who are we?

People's names always fascinate me as to their origins. As a matter of fact, if I had been liberated at the age of 25, I would have kept my single Finnish name of Kangas which was Anglicized from Kankaanpaa. Now I have the joy of spelling my name many times and asked how to pronounce Vuorinen. Actually, the Finnish language has a variety of sounds in its alphabet that we don't have in English.

So where does a name like Dajka come from I asked Glen when I interviewed him. Apparently, his grandparents came from Hungary and settled in Saskatchewan for 10 years before coming to Port Colborne. The Hungarian and Finnish languages are supposed to be related; however I have not found any words to be the same but both languages are derived from the same roots. When I was in Turkey a couple of years ago, they informed us that Turkish is related to Finnish, Hungarian and Japanese. I found it very easy to read Turkish but the meanings of the words escaped me.

Now to get onto finding out about Glen Dajka. He grew up in Fonthill and from there he went on to become a highly skilled tool and cutter grinder through an apprenticeship program. He worked at Stelco for a short time and now is employed at GM. He was an atheist until the age of 25 when he began to think there is more to life than meets the eye. He studied Christianity, Buddhism, and the Hindu religions.

He likes the Unitarian Congregation because we are very community oriented and open minded. He is a spiritual seeker and wants their daughter, Anandi to be exposed to a spirit world that is always truth-seeking. We know quite a bit about Tara, his wife, who has written many articles for our newsletter. When Tara went to a yoga retreat in California she met a person called Anandi which means bliss. Hence we see our 4-year old, Anandi, regularly at church.



Calling All Unitarians: Come
for Inspiration
2008 CUC Conference / ACM
will be in Ottawa this year,
May 16-19

"The Web of Life - In Our Hands"
Please let the Board know if you
would like to attend; some
financial assistance will be
available for conference attendees.

Fair Trade Products for Sale

April 27th

Membership News

Walter Jutting celebrated his 90th birthday on March 12th. Several members of the congregation visited him with flowers and Dutch cake. Walter says that he is the first member of his family to reach 90 years of age. Congratulations, Walter!

Several people have become new members recently:

Bruce Millar was welcomed on March 16th. His wife, **Beverly Russell**, was out of the country that day, but will be signing the membership book very soon. Bruce volunteered to take over the job of managing and updating the website, a very important task that has been neglected. Thank you, Bruce.

Bruce has been a Unitarian for some time before moving to this area and finding our congregation.

Glen and Tara Dajka are also planning to officially become members in April. They have been regular attendees with their daughter, **Anandi**, for about a year. Tara has become involved with the RE program.

We welcome both these families and their skills to our congregation.

Directory

1. Please add the following new members to your directory:

Beverly Russell and Bruce Millar, 905- 228-0641, calpal@aol.com

2. New email addresses:

John Storm - johnstorm24@cogeco.ca

Marie Belliveau - mbelliveau2@cogeco.ca

Ed Gilbert - edg73@sympatico.ca

3. Delete the following as members:

Jim Matthews

Shari Virtue

– *Jim Glassford, Membership*

Now the real work begins

By Joan Wiley

Co-facilitator

Welcoming Congregation process

On Feb. 16, 2008, those in attendance at the final Welcoming Congregation (WC) workshop were asked what measures could be taken as individuals, as a congregation and in the broader community to celebrate and support the gender- and sexual-diverse community.

The following suggestions were advanced:

As individuals

- Speak out when people make discriminatory comments or jokes
- Write letters to the editor to support Pride issues and/or members in the Pride community
- Drop into Brock Pride at Brock University
- Help others to understand
- Continue to learn and grow
- Hugs, hugs, hugs
- Continue to include LGBTQ folks in my social sphere
- Believe in justice for all

As a congregation (see also in the community)

- Reach out and support the Brock community
- Publicize in The Standard and other media any Welcoming Congregation events/workshops
- Develop a media strategy, including new social media like Facebook, to advance WC mission
- Send letter to Brock Pride indicating the congregation's support

- See what we can do to help combat bullying and discrimination in the school system
- Inform other local churches about our WC initiatives
- Follow up with more workshops
- Change the bylaws to reflect our acceptance and celebration of the LGBTQ community
- Hold an annual Pride conference at the church
- Review the WC policy annually
- Ask the CUC about creating a formal structure where a WC point person is chosen for each congregation in Canada
- Attend the Toronto Pride Parade in force
- Designate a board member to Welcoming Congregation efforts
- Explore what various supportive Toronto churches are doing (MCC, Unitarian)
- Create a database of friends to keep them apprised of WC initiatives

In the community (see also as a congregation)

- Display our church banner at Pride events, such as the raising of the rainbow flag at St. Catharines city hall
- Fly the rainbow flag at our church
- Open our church to more community events, such as a Pride film night, gay men's choir, etc.
- Be pro-active, support anti-bullying efforts
- Look into a drop-in program for older gay men
- Write letters to the editor from the board, rather than as individuals

April

*April is a rainbow month,
Of sudden springtime showers.
Bright with golden daffodils
and lots of pretty flowers.*



CHOIR

A lot of people have expressed an interest in forming a choir - Great!

Now it's time to make it happen - I am working on making a meeting possible after services – to sing, discuss, and solidify our plans sometime towards the end of April, or in May.

Please sign up if you are interested! It would be so exciting to have a group committed to bringing new music to our services!

Contact: Penny Blake at jpblake@cogeco.ca

The Joy of English!

Charles McLaren thought that French was a hard language to learn and then someone sent this to him. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger, noir pine or apple in pineapple. Boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig. If the plural of tooth is teeth, then why isn't a booth beeth, one goose isn't two geese, one moose, two meese, and if teachers taught, then why don't preachers praught? How do we have noses that run and feet that smell? Your house burns up as it burns down. An alarm goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers and it reflects the creativity of the human race, which is not a race at all. That is why when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible. In conclusion, sometimes I think all the English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane.

I taught grade one for thirteen years. In Canada, this is the age when children are taught to read and also it is compulsory to learn phonics at the same time. I looked at the list of words introduced in their first pre-primer, which is the compulsory book in which they first learn to read. After feeling very frustrated I had to tell the children that this word is not phonetic. I then made a list of words that they must learn to read from this book and there are more words that are an exception phonetically than words that follow the rule. Take these words "the" and "what" that are very commonly used. No wonder that people learning English find it a difficult language to learn. In Charles's article, the person comes up with the unique lunacy of language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill-in a form by filling it out, and an alarm goes off by going on.

– *Sofia*

Gifts

A gift of insight has been granted to me recently. It is a big gift. And a tender one ... like a vulnerable new-bloomed rosebud. I now see a pattern I have had when I enter into something new.

I get myself all enthusiastic. I fantasize about how wonderful it could be. I excitedly want to share myself with all involved. I want them to get to know me ... and if I share of myself I hope that will open doors for them to share with me, so I can get to know them how I'd like to, too. It's a way of searching for connection ... not any kind of connection – connection with those who are like-hearted. What has tended to happen is that some people appreciate that

and some do not. When I have received positive feedback, I have basked. When I was misunderstood, negatively judged or criticized (versus given constructive feedback), I would buy into it with thinking I must have done something wrong and I would give myself feelings of hurt and pain; or, I would lose my passion and become withdrawn and unmotivated. My deepening insight shows me how I took those things personally, instead of listening to my own inner guidance and believing in myself.

I consider myself proactive, energetically so - a valuable asset. I came into this church and observed it. I saw some things I would like to be different (e.g., low energy gatherings, larger focus on intellect vs. heart/spirit, minimal mention of the Principles except in general reference (and except when Vivianne speaks), a show-up-on-Sunday-but-don't-interfere with/take time from-my-life seeming kind of attitude in some, dispirited singing, no children –thankfully, a couple do come once in a while!, no youth, minimal social and extracurricular activities, cool and reserved welcomes, fairly uninviting space ...) I decided that, since I choose to be a vehicle of change and instigation in this lifetime, I would start acting upon them. I like to go after what I want. I want a church that gives me what I am looking for.

That's all fine and good. I give myself appreciative credit for my heart being in the right place for wanting to contribute to creating a community like I yearn for. My typical modus operandi does seem to be to go into something and notice what I think could use some livening up. And I notice that I can pretty easily become afflicted with a good case of tunnel vision.

I want to tread very carefully, here. I will not make myself wrong somehow. I have reread my previous writings for this newsletter and I know that I write with good and respectful, open and honest intentions. I do not want to undermine nor discount the gifts and gems available in what I share, no matter that there are self-serving elements, too.

I know that I can come on strongly and seem presumptuous to some. I am not for everybody ... I have no expectations that everyone will like me, my choices and my ways – let alone that everyone will agree with me!

I do strongly believe in having a voice and powerfully using it as my wisdom and intuition dictate. Some believe that it doesn't do much to use one's voice. That's okay ... that's what's true for them. It's different to what I believe in and that's a wonderful thing. I am thankful for the gifts of hearing from anyone who shares with me - I value **your** voices, too, whether we are in agreement or not!

What I envision and proactively seek in this world is a beautiful and worthwhile path that I know I am not by any means alone in pursuing. What I am further opening myself up to right now are the yet unexplored possibilities for mine being in harmonious conjunction with others which come from differing visions. Part of what I seek is something that I highly value - community ... community that provides ways for all to grow, especially in their abilities to give and receive love. I find that this church and the people within have excellent intentions for such kind of a community. I want to be a source of loving, helpful energy for this church community. Whatever I write, say, cry, do ... is done in the

spirit of making what I hope is a constructive contribution.

My fantasy is that what I bring to you – through sharing myself and my processes and through volunteering with the Religious Education Committee – will somehow enhance the experience of being a UU, of being a part of this Niagara congregation, or of being alive in this incredible world filled with all imaginable sorts of wondrous possibilities! I would love to bring energy of celebration with me wherever I go, as best as I am able!

So, with this newer gift of insight I mentioned at the beginning, this insight about how I go into new things ... I set my intention to not let my light dim in my experiences with this congregation and instead to give myself the gift of ongoing inspiration and enjoyment however I can!

Blessings to you all,
Tara Kriyachanda-Dajka

Your help is requested!

Here is a sweet and gentle urging of and beckoning to you ...

PLEASE complete and return **FEEDBACK FORMS** for Adult Enrichment Possibilities!

What you want is important and you may only get it if you make it known! If you've misplaced your copy from the last newsletter – no problem!

There are blank copies on the stage at the front of the church ... right beside the basket (labeled Enrichment Feedback Forms) that you can return the completed forms to.

Alternatively, you can give them directly to me. Thank you.
Tara Kriyachanda-Dajka of the RE Committee

Enriching the Service Experience

In the week following a service, the webmaster will try to post information and links related to the service on the church web site. The enrichment material is presented in the Supplemental Links section of the Useful Links web page. The objective is to stimulate reflection on the material presented in the service and to act as a springboard for further investigation.

People leading the service or presenting a sermon can facilitate the process by e-mailing speaker biographies, special quotes, useful links, the written version of the sermon or any other material they deem relevant to the web master.

Church Website offers church email service

The website master has a new tool to help with e-mail pollution and keeping track of church related correspondence. We now have the ability to create special e-mail addresses for church business.

In the past church e-mails have been scattered amongst your personal e-mails. The church website (unitarian-stcatharines.org) are offering dedicated e-mails for church business. Mailing addresses such as layChaplains@unitarian-stcatharines.org or socialJustice@unitarian-stcatharines.org or rentals@unitarian-stcatharines.org are now available for people to use. With these addresses you can ask someone to fill in for you while you are away without having to give them complete access to all your business and personal

correspondence. For more information please contact Bruce, the website administrator at website@unitarian-stcatharines.org or 905-228-0641.

New Web Pages

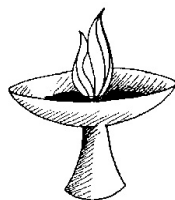
The website is expanding. By the end of April the web will have three new sections. The first web page, Rites, comes to us from First Toronto Unitarian's web master. He has allowed us to use the material he developed to help people plan wedding vows.

The second web page, Social Action, will highlight how we take care of our members (Pastoral Care) and how we take care of and contribute to the communities around us (Social Justice).

The third web page, Eco-Action, will look at how we contribute to our ecological web. It will describe our facilities and how we are responsible through Bullfrog Power and other initiatives. While promoting our space as an ecological responsible venue for potential clients, this page will also provide a means for identifying ecological issues in the Niagara region. If anyone is interested in championing Green issues in our web page could they please email Bruce at website@unitarian-stcatharines.org.

Unicamp Update April

Unicamp has witnessed a dramatic decline in the number of "Penny" toads that used to frequent our island, forest and trails. We would welcome pictures, encounters and accounts of sightings as we go in search of the lost penny toads.



Please send submissions to scumbost@uoguelph.ca.

Feature Program: The CIT program this summer will run as three separate intensive one-week training sessions. This is both an effort to accommodate the growing number of potential CITs, as well as to focus on the training aspect; with hands-on workshops, added responsibility and other practical experience that will help to better prepare potential future staff members.

Does God Exist ?

A debate between **Dan Barker**, co-president of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, upon special invitation from Madison, Wisconsin, and **Rev. Peter Youngren** of the Niagara Celebration Church, 310 Scott St., St. Catharines, and moderated by **Grant Lafleche**. Organized by Niagara Secular Humanists (hklaus@sympatico.ca).

Ticket price \$6 per person
Wednesday April 9 at 7:00 p.m.
doors open at 6:00 pm.
at the
C.A.W. (Local 199) Hall,
124 Bunting Road,
St. Catharines

Visit our bulletin board
or access the web for information on . . .

- UCN Board Minutes Feb. 26/08
- Installation for Peterborough Fellowship's Rev. Julie Stoneberg
- Annual Conference and Meeting (ACM) of the Canadian Unitarian Council
 - Visit the ACM website at <http://cuc.ca/conference/2008/> for details about the Conference and to register on-line.
- The Latest from CUC info@usc-canada.org
 - Hot Potatoe
 - Seed Map: Food, Farmers & Climate Chaos



Annual picnic
at
Queenston Heights.

We have **Pavilion 2**
on **June 8th** at
noon.

Potluck, but people should provide their own drinks.

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Tel: 905-687-8433 www.unitarian-stcatharines.org

Editor: Sofia Vuorinen

905-563-8615
sofia.vuorinen@3web.net

Deadline for Next Issue:

April 20, 2008