



UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF NIAGARA

A church for people
with enquiring minds

February 2009

Sunday Services

Feb. 1 Annual General Meeting

Note: Soup and sandwiches will be served after the meeting. Please join us.

Feb. 8 Tony Turner – Seven Principles and the Folk Singer

S.L. M. Belliveau

Do we recognize the seven UU principles expressed in song? How do UU values shape the musical artist? These ideas will be explored through the original songs of a contemporary singer/songwriter.

Feb. 15 Brock Shaver – Nature is coming back to the city: A Vision of Our Future

S.L. S. Vuorinen

It is a time to create, and re-create, as life returns to the City. Do we dare to put our hearts into this impossible dream?

Feb. 22 Eryl Court, UU-UNO group – Achieving a World in One Peace

S.L. S. Vuorinen

How we U-Us can take our share in working for a livable World free from war – the means being through our superb Unitarian-Universalist United Nations Office and through participating in the Canadian Unitarian Council's peace discussion and monitoring groups.

Who Are We

John Berry spent his formative years in the Niagara region. He later attended York University studying English literature and history but he also has a strong interest in psychology and sociology. His MA was in English literature at McMaster University and he attended the Faculty of Education at the University of Toronto.

John was unable to get a teaching job so he worked as a teacher's aide and then applied to CUSO, which sent him to teach high school in Sierra Leone in 1977-80.

Once again he was unable to get a teaching job in Canada so he went to work in a very remote area in Papua New Guinea, where he was head of the English department and school librarian. John and his wife, whom he had met in Port Moresby, where he played the part of one of the murderers and his wife was the fencing advisor in a production of Macbeth. In New Ireland he became the head of Commerce at the provincial high school while his wife worked at an international elementary school. They both decided to return to Canada where John got a teaching job at a private boarding school for children with learning disabilities near Barrie. For the next fifteen years he worked as a tutor, supply teacher and took various short-term part-time jobs.

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**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:
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PAST PRESIDENT:
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Valerie Jaeger
Julianne Momirov

SECRETARY:
Anita Miecznikowski

TREASURER: Carl Beckett

MEMBER AT LARGE:
Sarah Nyman

PROGRAM:
Julianne Momirov

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:
Tba

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

UCN Book Club

All are welcome to attend and join the friendly discussion and camaraderie.

Tuesday, March 24th/09 @ 7:00 pm: Book is "The Lemon Table" by Julian Barnes. Location: TBA.

Tuesday, May 26th/09 @ 7:00 pm: Book is "Kingfisher Days" by Susan Coyne. Meeting to be held at the home of Penny & Roy Blake, 42 Maccomb Drive, Welland, (905-732-2097).



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Who Are We . . . John Berry

John then returned back to the Thorold-St. Catharines area. When asked why he has come to our Unitarian Congregation, he replied that he had been interested in atheist-humanist thought since his early teens. He discovered our church on one of his walks. He now attends regularly, where he enjoys singing and being part of the choir. In addition, he is delighted to find many like-minded people. We are so glad you found us, John.

Lay Chaplains: ucnlaychaplains@gmail.com
Valerie Jaeger: 905-262-1345
Julianne Momirov: 905-356-7726

Membership

1. Welcome to our new members **Hilde and Alan Wheeler, Erdwin Hueniken, Kevin Jacobi**. It is a pleasure to see these Friends of the Church joining our Congregation as members.

If anyone else is considering joining as members, please see me.

2. Please be sure the information in our directory is correct as printed, as the new directory will be coming out some time after the General Meeting so we can have the up-to-date Board Members listed. If any one has been attending fairly frequently, please give me your information and we can put you in the directory and fan out.

*Jim Glassford,
Membership Co-ordinator*

Interior Design Committee



Because the stain glass windows are a major feature of our decor, I believe we should pay some attention to saving them.

– Donna Bothen

Opportunity

The **Canadian Unitarian Council** is seeking applicants for the position of **Executive Director**.

The job description can be found at:

http://www.cuc.ca/whos_who/EDPositionDescription.pdf

Applicants, please submit a letter of application and current resume to the Executive Director Selection Committee at careers@cuc.ca by January 31, 2009.

Available at UCN

Binders from the Guardian Weekly: This highly regarded newspaper contains much information difficult to find elsewhere. It is particularly strong on third world issues. Other topics include environmental issues, politics, rainbow issues and culture.

Also available, a binder of articles by the great Canadian progressive writer Linda McQuaig from recent years.

The Bottom Line

– Carl Beckett, Treasurer UCN

I have decided to write an information column dealing with the congregation's finances in our monthly newsletter. In the months to come to I will outline any expenditures that the board

authorizes, detail our larger expenses and give a monthly read out of income vs. expenses of the prior month. I hope that this column will help our members and friends better understand the congregation's financial picture and workings. I am afraid I will not be able to publish January's figures until the March newsletter as it takes that long to receive and pay the monthly invoices. Please stay tuned.

How Homophobia Hurts Us All

At the same time the victims (or *targets*) of prejudice are oppressed, the perpetrators (or *agents*) and other members of the dominant group are hurt in some way as well. Although the effects of oppression differ for specific target and agent groups, in the end everyone loses.

1. Homophobia locks all people into rigid gender roles that inhibit creativity and self-expression.
2. Homophobia compromises the integrity of heterosexual people by pressuring them to treat others badly, actions that go against our basic humanity.
3. Homophobia limits our ability to form close, intimate relationships with members of one's own sex.
4. Homophobia generally limits communications with a significant

portion of the population and, more specifically, limits family relationships.

5. Homophobia prevents some lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people from developing an honest self-identity, and adds to the pressure to marry and/or have children, which places undue stress on themselves and their families.

6. Homophobia is one cause of premature sexual activity, which increases the chances of pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Young people, of all sexual identities, are often pressured to become heterosexually active to prove that they are "normal."

7. Homophobia results in the elimination of any discussion of the lives and sexuality of LGBT people in the curriculum, keeping important information from all students.

8. Homophobia can be used to stigmatize, silence, and, on occasion, target people who are perceived or defined by others as lesbian or gay, but who are, in actuality, heterosexual.

9. Homophobia prevents heterosexuals from accepting the benefits and gifts offered by LGBT people: theoretical insights, social and spiritual visions, contributions in the arts and culture, to religion, to family life, indeed, to all parts of society.
10. Homophobia (along with racism, sexism, classism, etc.)

inhibits a unified and effective governmental and societal response to AIDS.

11. Homophobia takes energy away from more positive activities.

12. Homophobia inhibits appreciation of other types of diversity, making it unsafe for everyone because each person has unique traits not considered mainstream or dominant. Therefore, we are all hurt when any one of us is disrespected.

By challenging homophobia, people are not only fighting the oppression of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, but are also striving for a society that accepts and celebrates the differences in all of us.

Adapted from Warren J. Blumenfeld, ed. Homophobia: How We All Pay the Price

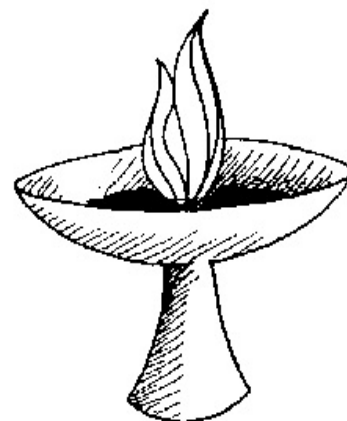


Midwinter Retreat

Ed Gilbert is going to the Midwinter Retreat, at Cedar Glen, in Bolton, Feb. 6, 7 & 8.

If anyone would like to go as well, he has room in his car for three.

You can reach Ed at edg73@sympatico.ca or 906-682-4323.



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