

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg



The Communicator

February 2020

Sunday Services and Religious Exploration begin at 10:30 am



The theme for February is Courage

February 2, 2020

Return Again

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern
Service Coordinator: Marian Siemens

The turning of the seasons of year offers us lessons about how we can choose to live our best lives. Join us for this confluence of the neo-pagan holy day of Imbolc and our congregation's own birthday celebration.
Hymns: 34 *Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire*; 1011 *Return Again*; 91 *Mother of All*; *We Would Be One*

February 9, 2020

A Bundle of Sticks

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern
Service Coordinator: Odell Havsdotter

Aesop's fable about the bundle of sticks teaches us that we are stronger together than alone. But moving past our differences takes both commitment and courage. How can we stay the course?

Hymns: 34 *Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire*; 317 *We Are Not Our Own*; 145 *As Tranquil Streams*

February 16, 2020

A Sojourner's Reflection from the Mekong Delta to the Red River Valley

Service Leader: Social Justice Team with Vinh Huynh as speaker
Service Coordinator: MC Ziegler

2019 marks the 40th year that Vinh Huynh and his family have been in Canada after leaving Vietnam in 1979. Vinh Huynh, Principal of Gordon Bell High School, will share about his spiritual journey through these intervening years and how they inform his work and service as a teacher and school leader the past 27 years in Winnipeg's inner city.

February 23, 2020

I Have All I Need

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern
Service Coordinator: Steve Lennon

Healing is not the same as a cure. In this service we will explore the power of both community and individual resilience to help keep hope alive through all our days.

Hymns: 34 *Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire*; 1023 *Building Bridges*; 123 *Spirit of Life*; 323 *Break Not the Circle*

A Little Bit of History

by Gini Martin

Ladies' Aid

In 1904 the Women's Society of the church was founded. The suffragist, Margaret Benedictsson was the first president. The bylaws stated "...members pledged themselves to work for the rights of women to share equally in the vote." Minutes of their meetings are in our archives. When the society disbanded, the money in the treasury was donated to the Winnipeg Foundation to establish the Margaret Benedictsson Unitarian Church Fund. The interest on the endowment comes to the church every year. With subsequent donations, the balance of the fund is about \$56,000.

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The deadline for the **March 2020** Communicator is **Thursday, February 20th, 2020**

From the Minister's Study

by The Reverend Meghann Robern



One of the questions from the Question Box service that I didn't get to address specifically

was my perspective on UU ministry as a learned ministry -- that is, the expectation of a certain amount of learning and study not just to be credentialed as a UU minister, but also the continuing education as one serves throughout their career.

The process for our credentialing includes not just a Master of Divinity degree, but also an extensive reading list, a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education in a hospital, hospice, or prison, a year-long full-time internship, and proof of education and study in multiple areas, such as world religions, religious history, and anti-racism/anti-oppression/multiculturalism.

Once you are welcomed into "ministerial fellowship", to maintain your status you are now also expected to complete a certain amount of continuing education units on a regular basis, with a percentage dedicated to anti-racism/anti-oppression/multiculturalism exploration and best practices. I meet these requirements by engaging in workshops and seminars, conferences, and self-study with materials chosen in conversation with our Board, our committees/teams, listening circles hosted by the Shared Ministry Team, and one-on-one conversations with you.

A learned ministry also expects spiritual and creative devel-

opment in addition to academic. When I was doing my clinical pastoral education unit, my supervisors taught us that pastoral work is very different from a more typical job. While our dominant culture teaches us that a job is constant busy work from logging on to logging off, a sustainable pastoral ministry must be intentionally divided into three parts. While my expectation upon starting the chaplaincy was that I would be visiting patients from the start of my shift to the end, the instructions were quite the opposite: we were expected to spend only one-third of time visiting patients. One-third was to be spent on charting our visits, study, and research. The last third we were expected to debrief our patient visits with each other as colleagues, allowing for (1) the release of intense emotions in a professional capacity; (2) building relationships among the team; (3) helping everyone stay aware of our role in the greater hospital system.

My point about all this is that yes, we are still very much a learned ministry. Our definition of "learned" has expanded from just academia to include learning about emotional intelligence and self-care (especially for ministers!), which amplify our long-held commitments to science and reason, the promise of discovery, and the health of integrating best practices.

In gratitude and faith,
Rev. Meghann

Adult Drop-In Discussion Group

by Odell Havsdotter



"Adult Drop-In Discussion Group meets on the second Saturday of each month in the living room of the house area from **10 am to 11:30 am** to discuss the monthly theme. This month it will be held on **February 8th**. Please ring the bell and we will open the door on the house for you.

This month the theme is Courage; our format will provide many opportunities to discuss this theme and how it relates to a Unitarian Universalist context.

There will be water and possibly some light refreshments. Childcare will be provided.

You do not need to have attended this discussion group in the past; all are welcome

“Welcome to Our Caring Community”

by Bonnie Thiessen, Pastoral Care Coordinator



Our email group already has 100 wonderful, caring members! We are guided by Our Covenant of Right Relations and seek to support our members as they reach out to one another in practical, caring, and supportive ways. “Caring” is our goal! And, to promote that goal, we have adopted the following guidelines.

- You are invited to “light a candle” for any joy, sadness, milestone or other personal concern you may have.
- You may ask for personal help or support and offer practical help to others.
- Simply send your message to the group by email to our-caring-community@googlegroups.com.
- You can reply to the whole group.
- You can also reply directly and privately to any message.

Please remember:

- If you wish to share your joy, sadness or concern about something that involves a friend, neighbour or colleague, and want to share identifying information, please get their permission first.
- If you do not have their permission, you can still share your joy, sadness or concern but be sure not to use their name or any other identifying information.
- You may wish to refer to them simply as a friend, neighbour or colleague.
- Not everyone wants their information shared.

We expect members to use their own judgment when asking for, accepting, or offering help. Messages are not church sponsored or endorsed. We moderate our group in order to promote a safe and caring space for all.

Although good and important, not all messages reflect the mandate of our group. For instance, the following types of messages are not approved:

- Forwards
- Fund Raising messages
- Commercial postings
- Political messages
- Theological discussions
- Messages that contain 3rd party information (unless permission has been granted by the person affected)
- Messages that lack clarity or key information

Come Build our Caring Community with Us ...

- Membership is open to all friends and members of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg over the age of 18.
- To join ... just send an email to our-caring-community+owner@googlegroups.com with the “subscribe” in the subject line.
- Or contact the Pastoral Care Coordinator at pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

May our Covenant of Right Relations be our guide ...

We seek to make our church a safe space for everyone. We acknowledge that we are different from each other. Although we are enriched by our diversity, our differences may sometimes be a source of conflict. We acknowledge that we are all responsible for our own words and actions.

In this light, we covenant to:

- Nurture a safe and welcoming community.
- Honour each other’s inherent worth.
- Assume good will on the part of each other.
- Listen to each other with care.
- Speak to and about each other with respect.
- Be honest with each other.
- Talk directly to each other even when differences exist.
- Ask for help when conflict is too difficult to handle alone.

Technology Safety

with thanks to CUC eNews

One of the CUC's google groups received a spam message that purported to come from one of the group's members. Here are some reminders about taking steps to keep our emails and accounts safe (from an article that originally appeared in the CUC's November 12, 2019 eNews):

- All your devices should have virus protection (**Malwarebytes** <https://www.malwarebytes.com/> is a good free one). If you suspect that you have already been hacked, clean all your devices first.
- Passwords should be complicated and hard to guess, so use a combination of upper and lower case, numbers, and symbols. Don't use the same password for everything, or birth dates, favourite movies, names of pets – especially if you've shared these on social media. Google offers to save your passwords for you – it's up to you if you decide to do this, but make sure you've protected your Google accounts if you do.
- Don't share your passwords, or if you do, make sure it's someone you trust.
- Use two-factor verification. Some sites offer this, where you sign in with your email, and an additional piece of information is requested. You can set this up for your Google accounts here (<https://www.google.com/landing/2step/>).
- Set up recovery options – a phone number and a different email address (i.e. for your Google account, use another email like Yahoo or other provider) if you should happen to lose access to your accounts.
- Phishers will impersonate a trusted platform like banks, Canada Revenue Agency, Amazon, PayPal, and others. If you receive a suspicious email, always check directly with the source, rather than replying to that email. Phishing emails usually ask for something, whether it's cash or purchasing gift cards, or to be in touch.
- CUC Board and staff will not send emails asking for money, except for fundraising emails which will always direct you to the CUC website (<https://cuc.ca/>).
- Look at all originating emails carefully, e.g. ones that purport to come from someone you know asking for funds may show the correct name but use a fake address.
- If you use Facebook, set your security settings at the highest level:
 1. On your account in the top right corner, click on the little down arrow
 2. Click 'Settings – Security and Log In' to set your options there
 3. Click 'Privacy Settings and Tools' to configure your options. If you make it possible for everyone to find you, the chances are higher that your account can be hacked.
- Many organizations and businesses have their own email provider – the group's information is only as secure as its weakest link. Make sure that everyone who uses the group email has followed steps to protect privacy and security.



Choose From:

**Thursdays: March 5-26, 2020
5:45-7:15 pm in the Sanctuary**

Make-up session, if required, is the Saturday April 18 session

or

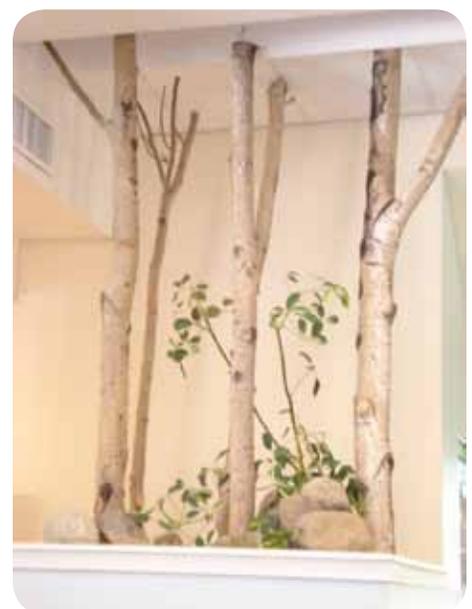
Saturday April 18, 2020
10:00 am - 2:30 pm

Facilitator: Rev. Meghann Robern

What are the various elements of our worship services, and why are they meaningful? How do we strive to speak to the needs of all gathered? How can we creatively weave these varied threads together?

[Click here to register](#) by **February 25, 2020**

Worship Arts & Design is part of our Congregational Life Series





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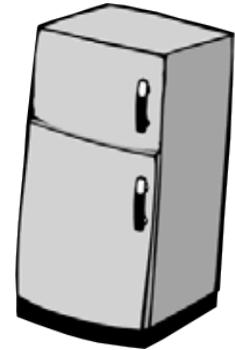
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RE-Frigerator Page



We Celebrate...

Our theme for February is *Courage*. There are lots of kinds of courage, and lots of kinds of situations that call on us to be brave.

You could be courageous by doing things that are physically challenging, like climbing to the top of a high tree.

You could do things that are mentally courageous, like listening to someone you disagree with, and being open to changing your mind if they have more or better information than you have.

You could do things that are emotionally courageous, like reaching out to make a new friend if you are shy.

And, more than anything, UUism challenges us to be morally courageous—to do the right thing even when it is hard. Maybe that means speaking up when you hear someone say something cruel. Maybe it means stepping out of your comfort zone to create change. Moral courage isn't easy or simple, but it's how we build a better world!

Family Quest
of the Church of
the Larger
Fellowship

Feb. 2020



We Honor...

There have been plenty of Unitarians, Universalists and UUs who have shown courage, but perhaps the most obvious example of amazing moral courage would be Waitstill and Martha Sharp.



In 1939 Rev. Waitstill Sharp got a call from the vice president of the American Unitarian Association, asking them "to undertake the first intervention against evil by the denomination, to be started immediately overseas."

In spite of the extreme danger, Waitstill and Martha left behind their chil-

dren and their comfortable life to go to Czechoslovakia just before the Nazis took over that country.

In the months and years to come, in both Czechoslovakia and France, they operated as undercover agents getting people whose lives were in imme-

diate danger out of Nazi-occupied Europe.

Working with various aid networks, the Sharps rescued an estimated 125 people — Jews, political activists, writers, children and others under threat as fascist armies spread

across Europe. They also helped get food and other assistance to hundreds more in urgent need.

With incredible determination and bravery, literally risking their own lives, the Sharps chose to do everything in their power to resist a terrible evil of their time.

Talk About It!

- ☺ What is something you've done lately that felt courageous?
- ☺ Who is someone you admire for their courage?
- ☺ What is something you would do if you felt more courageous?
- ☺ What helps you to move forward when you are feeling anxious or intimidated?
- ☺ What courageous act would you like to be remembered for?

Act...

Bullying is pretty much the opposite of courage. Bullies make up for their own insecurities by taking them out on other people—people who they feel are not going to be able to fight back. But standing up to bullies is a courageous act that can make a big difference. You don't have to physically fight a bully to take a courageous stand.

If you see someone being bullied you can call them over to you and invite



them to join you in an activity somewhere else.

You can use humor (but not making fun of anyone) to change the mood of a situation.

You can tell an adult you trust about

what is going on.

You can refuse to join in a group of people that is saying mean things or spreading rumors.

You can make people less vulnerable to bullying by sitting with them at lunch or offering friendship in other ways.

Bullying depends on the bully keeping power, so any time you show your own courage and power to be kind you can make a real difference.

Nurturing the Spirit

One way to build courage is to find ways to reduce anxiety. After all, courage is what we do when we move through our fear or anxiety. There are lots of techniques for calming anxiety, but here is the 54321 practice that helps ground your spirit in your body:

Take a deep belly breath to begin.

5 - LOOK: Look around for 5 things that you can see, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I see the computer, I see the cup, I see the picture frame.

4 - FEEL: Pay attention to your body and think of 4 things that you can feel, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I feel my feet warm in my socks, I feel the hair on the back of my neck, or I feel the pillow I am sitting on.

3 - LISTEN: Listen for 3 sounds. It could be the sound of traffic outside, the sound of typing or the sound of your tummy rumbling. Say the three things out loud.

2 - SMELL: Say two things you can smell. If you're allowed to, it's

okay to move to another spot and sniff something. If you can't smell anything at the moment or you can't move, then name your 2 favorite smells.

1 - TASTE: Say one thing you can taste. It may be the toothpaste from brushing your teeth, or a mint from after lunch. If you can't taste anything, then say your favorite thing to taste.

Take another deep belly breath to end.

Practicing the Principles

A person could certainly use courage in practicing any of our seven principles. But one important kind of courage that society often ignores (or discourages) is our fourth principle:

~~~~~  
*A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.*  
~~~~~

It's a lot easier to just accept the beliefs and values of the people and

society around you than to engage in an active search for truth, and for how to best live out your values. It takes courage to ask yourself and others "How do you know that that is true? On what basis do you believe that?"

But moral courage demands that we risk finding out that we are wrong, as well as risking disagreeing with others if we can't believe what they are telling us.

Draw yourself doing something courageous.

Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War is an excellent documentary by Ken Burns that is available on Netflix.

Find resources on addressing bullying at bullying.gov

The 54321 practice above is taken from copingskillsforkids.com/calming-anxiety, which has many useful techniques.

CUC Corner

February Young Adults

Online – Gathered Here: Young Adult Check-In, February 10, March 9, April 13, June 8, July 13, August 10 - 8 p.m. ET

Gathered Here is a monthly online check-in and gathering for Canadian Unitarian Universalist young adults.

Join in on Zoom at (<https://zoom.us/j/6792849010>)

[What's In a Name, February 22, 1:00 - 2:30 pm ET](#), Online

A recent discussion on the CUC Leaders list focused on the language we use to describe our Unitarian Universalist communities. A summary of the conversation was compiled and distributed. This Roundtable is an opportunity for us to consider the summary, to review some additional materials and then to share our questions about when renaming would be appropriate and to then learn a bit about what the renaming process

might entail. Registration deadline: February 13.

[31st Annual UU Midwinter Retreat – 20/20 Visions](#), February 7 - 9, 2020 YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre, Schomberg, ON near Bolton and Nobleton. There will be workshops and more - try nature walks, high rope climbs, snowshoeing, tobogganing and other fun outdoor activities with the on-site staff! Key-note speaker: Rev. Peter C. Boullata.

March

[Mission Statements: Who Are We? What Do We Do?](#), Saturday, March 21, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. ET, Online webinar via Zoom - Free!

Most congregations have a mission statement. Ideally, a mission statement provides us with a touchstone, helping us to identify congregational priorities and enhancing our understanding of who we are. This webinar will provide some background on mission statements and will also give us an opportunity to practice using one as a decision-making tool. Registration deadline: March 12.

Please submit materials to the editor Marjorie Doyle by email to: communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca or 204.663.2126

The **deadline** for the **March 2020** issue is: **Thursday, February 20, 2020**

The opinions of the authors are their own and do not necessarily represent those of the Board of Directors, the editorial board, the newsletter editor, or the church minister.

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