

*Checking In —News from the Elders' Gathering  
January, 2021*

**Theme for February, "The Earth"**



**Elders Reflections**

**FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH,  
FROM 11:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M., ON  
ZOOM**

Bring your lunch, get comfortable, and join our Director of Lifespan Faith Development Andrea James on Zoom.

We'll gather online together —though we're apart — eat our lunches and move through a guided ritual based on the theme of the month involving readings, music, sharing, and movement.

We'll begin at 11:30 a.m. and end when we're done, or by 1:30 at the latest. Participants may have their cameras on or off, as they desire, and participate as much or as little as they'd like.

**Visit the Older Adults page under Learning on our church website [uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](http://uuwinnipeg.mb.ca) or watch for an email in Our Caring Community.**

**JOIN US Tuesday, March 2nd at 11:30**



**'Leaving a Legacy'**

We had the privilege of hearing four of our church elders speak about their desired legacies, on Monday February 8th, via Zoom. Kris Breckman, Shirley Kitchen, Virginia Martin and Peter Miller spoke about the legacies they wish to leave behind.

**Kris Breckman** sees his brief life fitting into the stream of life from the first humanoid, continuing to today and on into the future. "My perpetual optimism pushes me to believe that despite obstacles along the way that stream of humanity is moving toward a kinder, more compassionate, more rational, and more just world....I hope I will be remembered...as one who has tried to influence the path of human life and desires desperately that humankind will find the wisdom to enable our precious species, the species that produced civilization, to survive. Long term I think of my own life blending into the ongoing stream of humanity. There I like to think that I was on the right side of history and progress most of the time."

**Virginia Martin** highlighted three beliefs she has held through the many changes she has experienced during her lifetime. These are goals to which Gini has endeavored to live, not necessarily achievements.

First: Contribute to the well-being of others and to our society to the best of our abilities which includes being kind, thoughtful, considerate and respectful of others. Being kind does not mean never challenging the views of others.

Second: Accept responsibility to have accurate information and to make informed choices.

Third: In the search for knowledge, include self-knowledge – understanding our individual past as well as our collective past.

### More Legacy reflections on Page 3...

**What will be your legacy after you die?** How do you want the next generation to remember you? A legacy is a gift or bequest usually passed from one generation to the next. It is not limited to material assets. Consider family stories, drawings you've done, causes you are passionate about.

“Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.

~ Soren Kierkegaard



Leuba Franco passed away in hospital on January 28th. She held many leadership roles over many years as a UU. Her creativity, vitality and commitment to justice will be greatly missed in our congregation and community.



Bill Morris enjoys poetry and sent along this cheery little poem.

### Smile

Smiling is infectious,  
you catch it like the flu.

When someone smiled at me today,  
I started smiling too.

I passed around the corner and someone saw  
my grin.

When he smiled, I realized  
I'd passed it on to him!

I thought about that smile,  
Then I realized its worth.

A single smile just like mine,  
Could travel round the earth!

So, if you feel a smile begin,  
Don't leave it undetected.

Let's start an epidemic quick,  
And get the world infected!



Leuba on a bench she donated at Old Grace Housing Co-op

## Little Blue Box by Gracie Sweetstory

Valentines Day has a way of playing with one's mind especially during a pandemic. My friend Katherine started my lovefest by sending over a tin of heart shaped homemade cookies. Attending services at a church whose motto is "love is the spirit of this church," makes every day Valentine's for me. February is Reading Month in Manitoba so devouring romantic novels is a given. Having a Little Free Library on my front lawn means I can extend those good vibes to March and beyond. I wrapped books in brown paper and wrote "Blind Date with a Book" on each and sealed them with heart stickers.

I grew up surrounded by women who got very very excited by little blue boxes. Those signature ones from Birk's Jewellers usually meant somebody was getting diamonds. So imagine my sheer delight when a certain sweetheart entered the front door saying, "I have a surprise for you. Come see a little blue something I got you."

My heart did flips. My pulse raced. "I'll be right down," I crooned from upstairs while madly changing into something demurely romantic not made of flannel. If I had been really listening, I would have twigged that I did not hear "come see what's IN a little blue something."

When I made my grand entrance, I was greeted with a smiling sweetie holding a new blue City of Winnipeg recycling container. "It was free at the hardware store," he beamed, "and I know how you like these things." ...Pass the cookies



These amazing sculptures are made of cardboard boxes. Thanks to Linda Henderson, who sent the photos.



Peter on his electric bike

**Peter Miller's** reflection on legacy: "Like everyone, I'm leaving a legacy. Our actions have consequences and thus we build a legacy continuously. So, my focus is on how to live a good life. That means to create good and avoid, example, his focus on reducing his ecological footprint.

Finding ways for us all to protect nature's ecosystems and biodiversity while living sustainably has been a driving intention, leading Peter's work with community organizations, such as Green Action Centre and TREE (Time to Respect Earth's Ecosystems). In addition to the family, he and Carolyn have raised and the students he has mentored, Peter hopes he made a contribution to a cultural shift in understanding and practice in the direction of a just society that finds less destructive means to meet our needs and

**Peter's Legacy, cont.**

flourish while respecting the interconnected web of life.

The church is another legacy: "Living into our values, mission and plans will enhance the shared legacy of our church as an incubator for human good.

All things share the same breath – the beast, the tree, the man. The air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. ~ Chief Seattle

**Shirley Kitchen's** reflection on her legacy spoke of her work as a writer, researcher, television producer and also as a mother and grandmother. She served as a volunteer in many roles in our church and in the wider community. She was a leader of the Unitarian Women's organization and she researched and wrote about Feminine Theology". Shirley hopes to leave for her children and grandchildren a legacy of wisdom, integrity, strength, and reverence for nature from her life and her learning. "I want to celebrate the life that has been given to me and to show gratitude for it. I want to voice praises to the rising and setting sun, to the birds, squirrels and rabbits outside my window and to the first soft breezes of spring."



Folks at Old Grace Housing Co-op built a Raging Granny ice sculpture.



**Remembering: Jacqueline Brignall (Jacquie),** who passed away January 26, 2021.

She was a friendly, Welcoming volunteer on Sunday mornings. (And always joined her nephew, Rob, near the piano.) A friend of our congregation since 2000 and a member since 2007. We will miss her warm smile and gracious, gentle, caring presence.



A little smile, a word of cheer  
A bit of love from someone near  
A little gift from one held dear  
Best wishes for the coming year.

~ Poem by John Greenleaf Whittier



Fun at -35! Make a cloud...  
throw boiling water  
into the frosty air

## More Memories....



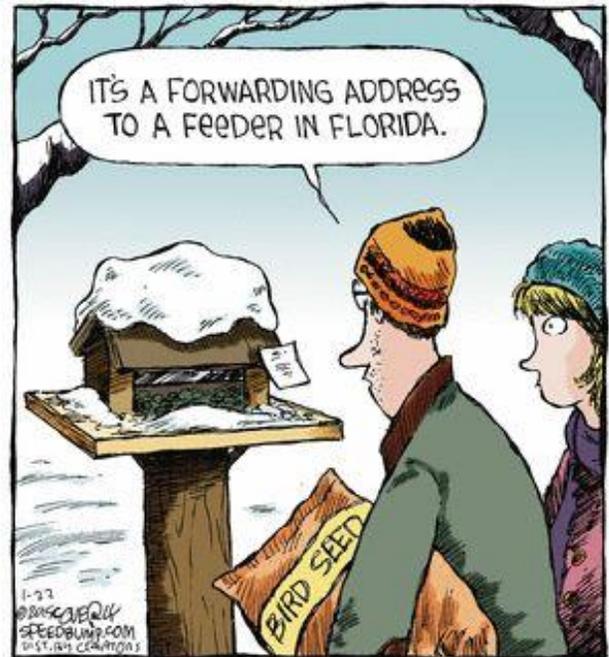
A few readers recognized last month's mystery chef - John Redston. Linda wrote "We did have some good events a long time ago.... They were all such fun!" I especially remember Walter, as a teenager, teaching and leading the "Macarena" from the stage at the Banning St. Church. The dance floor was full, and we laughed at ourselves all the way through it – gosh that was fun! Another event took us on a journey through Winnipeg when we held a Scavenger Hunt Car Rally. I attended with 3 friends from work. Those were the days!"

From the Archives:



Poetry by the lake at Bob & Margaret Ferguson's cottage, 1984

Weigh in! Send your comments, suggestions, stories, poetry, pictures by email to Lynn at [lyclark@mymts.net](mailto:lyclark@mymts.net)



*Checking In* is edited by Lynn Clark on behalf of the Pastoral Care Team.

Thanks to Kris, Shirley, Gini and Peter who shared their reflections on legacy. Thanks to Heather, Gini, Bill and Linda for their contributions to this edition of the Elders' Newsletter.