

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg



The Communicator

April 2020



Sunday Services and Religious Exploration begin at 10:30 am (via Zoom)

The theme for April is Renewal

April 5, 2020 via Zoom

An Explosion of Hidden Strength

Service Leader: Rev. Stefan Jonasson

Service Coordinator: Odell Havsdotter

"We don't even know how strong we are until we are forced to bring that hidden strength forward," wrote Isabel Allende in her memoir, *My Invented Country*. "In times of tragedy, of war, of necessity, people do amazing things. The human capacity for survival and renewal is awesome."

In the springtime, we customarily think of renewal as the bursting forth of new life, but in the seasons of human life there's sometimes a fine line between survival and renewal. As the world struggles to survive a global pandemic, renewal might look like a simple restoration of normality.

However, if survival and renewal are grounded in some hidden strength, perhaps we might hope to "explode from within," as Émile Durkheim put it, and witness a renewal that is greater than we hoped.

Hymns: 59 Almond Trees, Renewed in Bloom; 1020 Woyaya; 194 Faith Is a Forest; 102 We the Heirs of Many Ages

April 12, 2020 via Zoom

Hope in a Time of Despair

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern

Service Coordinator: Dylan Fijal

One of the quips often made about Unitarian Universalists around Easter is that our Unitarian history means we're the folks who believe that Jesus didn't get back up again. How can we use the story of Easter in these times of illness and despair to remind of the hope and joy we can kindle in ourselves and each other in our community? We will also celebrate our child dedications during this online service.

Hymns: 59 Almond Trees, Renewed in Bloom; 266 Now the Green Blade Riseth; 107 Now Sing We of the Brave of Old

April 19, 2020 via Zoom

Lake Winnipeg: Challenges and Solutions

Service Leaders: Green Action Team with Speaker Marlo Campbell

Service Coordinator: M.C. Ziegler

Change happens when citizens join together to take action. Lake Winnipeg Foundation Communications Director Marlo Campbell will provide an overview of the current threats to Lake Winnipeg's health and share information about how LWF is translating science into solutions to protect our shared waters—and how you can get involved.

Hymns: 59 Almond Trees, Renewed in Bloom; 1064 Blue Boat Home; TBD

April 26, 2020 via Zoom

Barking to the Choir

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern

Service Coordinator: Steve Lennon

We will explore what Father Gregory Boyle, of Homeboy Industries, means by "the power of radical kinship" and how it can serve us as we reimagine what our futures might be and how we can continue to work for our dreams.

Hymns: 59 Almond Trees, Renewed in Bloom; 1013 Open My Heart; 1017 Building A New Way

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The deadline for the **May 2020** Communicator is **Monday, April 20th, 2020**

From the Minister's Study

by The Reverend Meghann Robern



I write to you this month as we are in the midst of a global pandemic. We here in Manitoba

are doing everything we can to flatten the curve, and it appears to be working to give those who do get sick the best access to health care. The response of this congregation, across the board from leadership teams to our individual members and friends, has been focused on keeping each other safe, staying connected to each other in isolation, and making sure we are still serving our larger community however we can despite the need for physical distancing. Not every congregation has responded with such love and strength, and I am heartened every day by all of you.

Sometimes, I use this space to share with you works that I have found powerful. This meditation

by my colleague and dear friend, Rev. Theresa Soto, has become a regular touchstone for me in getting through each day. I hope it may offer you something as well.

In gratitude and faith,
Rev. Meghann

We Hold Hope Close by Rev. Theresa Soto

In this community, we hold hope close. We don't always know what comes next, but that cannot dissuade us. We don't always know just what to do, but that will not mean that we are lost in the wilderness. We rely on the certainty beneath, the foundation of our values and ethics. We are the people who return to love like a North Star and to the truth that we are greater together than we are alone. Our hope does not live in some glimmer of an indistinct future. Rather, we know the way to the world of which we dream, and by covenant and the movement forward of one right action and the next, we know that one day we will arrive at home."

Fundraising Event Changes

by Steven Lennon for Fundraising

It is good to know that Unitarian Universalists are reaching out to each other during this Coronavirus precaution, mostly due to the blessing of electronic communications. We cannot yet attend services but we can connect through Zoom services and meetings.

Unfortunately, the physical isolation is having a detrimental effect on fundraising activities, and will affect half the profits from Fundraising that were forecast for this fiscal year. Some events have been cancelled, while others have been postponed until the fall.

March 28, the Ron Paley Jazz Cabaret has been **cancelled**. Refund cheques will be issued for those who have purchased tickets.

The **Services Sale**, slated to start **April 4** and continue throughout the month, has been **postponed** until the fall (dates to be announced).

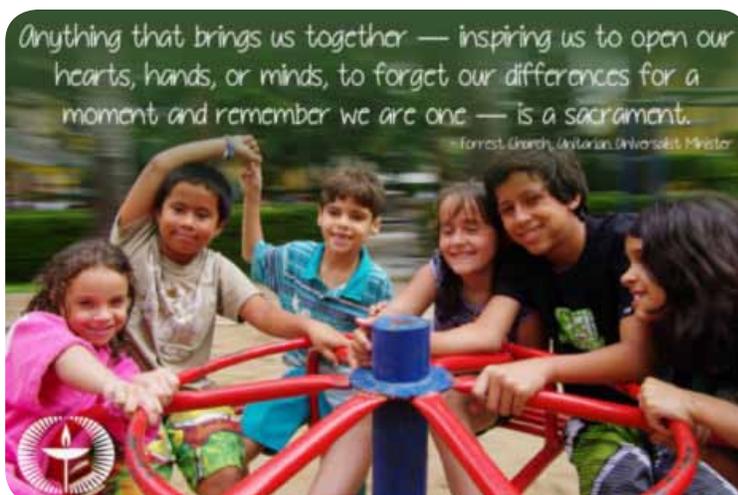
The **Jumbo Yard Sale** was to take place on **April 11**. It has been **postponed** until the fall also (date to be determined).

Workshops and information sessions on the future of second-hand sales at the church, have been **postponed** until early next year.

There were 38 bricks of **Bothwell cheese** in the fridge at the church, awaiting sales. Sixteen bricks have been donated to the West Broadway Community Kitchen to make sandwiches for homeless people and at-risk families, and 22 will go to Winnipeg Harvest families coming to the church.

During these difficult times it becomes very important for members to ensure they have made their pledge, and if possible, to send **something extra** to the church to help tide it over until fundraising, rentals and Sunday collections can get back to normal again.

We will carry on doing what we can do, we will remain connected, and we will get through this – together!



UU Craftivism Club

by Liz Redston



Please hand in the 25 Million Stitch work.

And a new

project idea - UU art in stitch for a Collaborative Quilt.

Working on stitched hand work is a great way to keep calm and focus your attention on a peaceful activity.

In January we started working on the cotton pieces for the 25 Million Stitches project. It is now time to hand in the work and we will mail it off to be a part of the large art installation. **Deadline** to hand it in is **April 6th**.

If you have a piece completed, please drop off at church in the external mail box. Put your project in an envelope and mark 25 Million Stitches/Liz Redston.

Or if it is easier, you can drop off it at 872 Lyon Street in the mail box.

If you perhaps have a bit of free time and want to start a piece now, the details can be found at the website listed below. You simply need a 15 X 17 inch piece of plain cotton muslin. Create an image of your choice in an easy running stitch and make them bold, to stand out.

25 Million Stitches is a global initiative where we all stitch a small piece of cotton in support of the refugee issues as part of a large installation art initiative: <https://www.25millionstitches.com/>.

And we have one more new idea to bring us together as a community in this difficult time of global change and isolation.

Let's make a collaborative **Art Quilt!** Let's work on a project together, right now, and keep connected.

Once the pieces are done we will put them together and have a beautiful wall hanging reflecting our collective creative spirit in a time of challenge.

If you like to stitch or quilt or do any kind of sewing, this is a project you and your family can participate in easily.

WHAT TO DO: Create a fabric square or rectangle no bigger than 12 X 12 inches with any image of UU art or image reflective of what our UU Church community means to you and your family.

HOW TO: embroidery, cross stitch, quilted piece work, paint on fabric or transfer images.

IDEA: images and symbols could be anything that means something to you and relates to how you feel about your UU church community. Turn a child's drawing into a stitched image, copy something you like, or create something new.

No deadline as of yet - let's just see what we create over the next couple of weeks and months.

Send pictures to Liz Redston, of work in progress, and we can put them into the weekly email.

Drop off finished pieces at church in the exterior mail box and label attention Liz Redston.

Go Green & Save on Water Bills

by Debby Lake

Order rain barrels today!

Order online at: Rainbarrel.ca/UUWinnipeg

- 6 colour options
- Made from repurposed food-grade plastic
- Downspout diverters and other accessories
- As low as \$60

Truckload delivery May 29, 2020

All proceeds will be used by the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg to support new refugee sponsorships

Questions? E-mail FriendsofRefuge@gmail.com



Come Build Our Caring Community

by Bonnie Thiessen



Our Caring Community Email Group is guided by Our Covenant of Right Relations and seeks to support our members by reaching out to one another

in practical, caring, and supportive ways. "Caring" is our goal! To promote that goal, we have adopted the following guidelines.

You may:

- "Light a candle" for any joy, sadness, milestone or other personal concern you may have
- Ask for personal help or support and offer practical help to others
- Simply email your message to the group at ourcaring-community@googlegroups.com.
- Adjust how frequently you get messages.
- Reply to the whole group.
- Reply directly and privately to any message.

To Join simply email: our-caring-community+owner@google-groups.com with "subscribe" in the subject line or just email pastoral-care@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

This email group is open to all members and friends of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg over the age of 18.

Look for our New Pamphlet
in the church vestibule!

Board Notes

by Lauren Bailey, President



Hello everyone

Are we all having fun at Cyber Church?

A huge thank you to Sunday Services and Reverend Meghann for making our

Zoom-only church services available and engaging. I look forward to what we can do with the technology as we move forward.

The Pledge Drive has been extended through the end of April! There is still time to get your pledges in and counted, and we need your support more than ever.

There is never a good time to have to impose physical distancing, especially in a community as connected and active as ours. We are, as you can tell, moving forward in exciting new ways.

However, we still have a building to maintain and programs to run and staff to employ. Our rentals have stopped, and the only group using our building is Winnipeg Harvest, in a very limited capacity. Fundraising sales have stopped. The only reliable income the church is collecting is from our

pledges. Before this worldwide change in operations, 80% of our operating budgets came from pledging; this year, that number may be even higher.

We will have some folks who cannot raise their pledge, and some folks who may have to make some difficult choices in the coming weeks and months. If you are able to make the choice to raise yours, our community appreciates it and I thank you on behalf of everyone.

Even if you cannot raise your pledge, or your personal financial situation dictates you have to lower it, please fill in the website form at www.uuwinnipeg.mb.ca so we know we have your support. For those of you who have set up direct deposit in the past, if your pledge this year is unchanged, it will continue as it was last year, but we do appreciate you filling out the form as confirmation.

Your board meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 18:30 in the Dining Room. Are you interested in attending? The meetings are open to all church members. Exceptions for some topics will occur for confidentiality reasons.

I want to hear from you. You can contact me at president@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca.



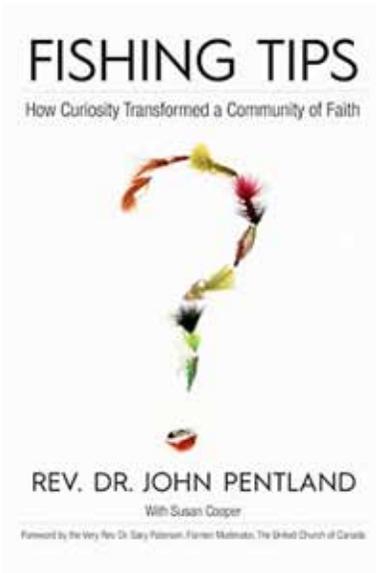
In our tradition, when we dedicate children, we celebrate their life and their place in their family and in the congregation. As a community, we covenant to support the family, and to share our wisdom, counsel, and love as the child grows as one of us.

Children may be dedicated at any age. Children who've been dedicated elsewhere and children who have new names and/or would like to be rededicated with their correct gender are welcome.

Our next Child Dedication will be **April 12, 2020 on-line**. Please [click here to complete a form](#) for each child to be dedicated, by April 7, 2020. Rev. Meghann will be in touch prior to the online service.

Adult Programming

by Sonya Watson

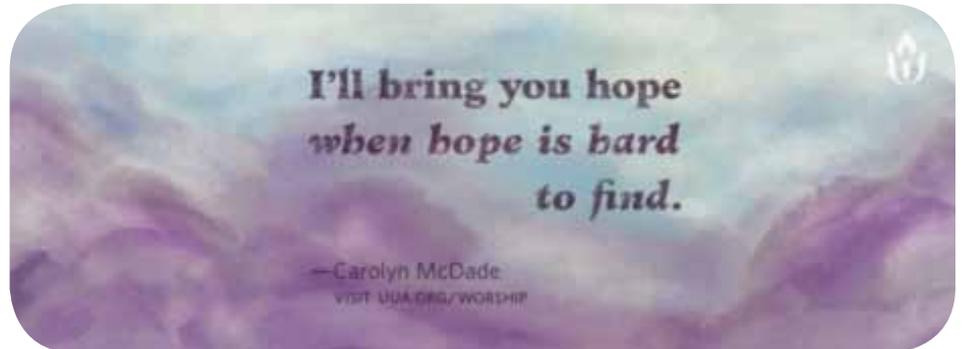


Book Study:
Rev. Dr. John Pentland, 'Fishing Tips: How Curiosity Transformed a Community of Faith.'

This Book Study has been postponed. We'll let you know when and where later.

Pastoral Care is Here – for You!

by Bonnie Thiessen, Pastoral Care Coordinator



Your Pastoral Care Team is here to support you in these challenging times.

Needing a Listening Ear – If you want to speak with one of our Pastoral Care Associates, please email pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca or call 204.390.3299.

Connecting with Others – Wanting to be socially connected in this time of personal distancing? Check out Our Caring Community Email Group. It is a private, monitored and secure group. Everyone, 18 and over, who views First UU Church of Winnipeg as their faith community, is welcome! It's easy to join – send an email to: our-caring-community+owner@googlegroups.com with "subscribe" in the subject line, or simply email pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Candles of Caring – If you wish to submit a Candle of Caring to our virtual Sunday Service, please submit your thoughts in writing to pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca before 9:15 Sunday morning or, if you prefer, phone your thoughts in before Sunday by calling 204.390.3299. (Please indicate if you do not wish to have your candle shared with Our Caring Community Email Group.)

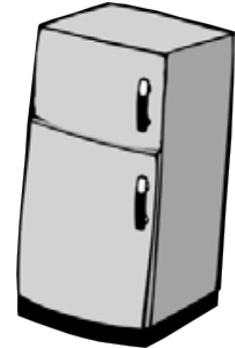
Phone Connections – We are forming a "Phone Tree" to support those of us who like to stay connected by phone. It's a great way to keep in touch with others – it's especially great for those of us who live on our own or don't have ready access to a computer. We are thinking of a once a week check-in to share church news and to have a wee visit. It's another great way to support each other! Once again, to participate just send an email to pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Elders Gatherings – Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we have had to suspend our monthly gatherings. This is a big loss for many of our Elders who eagerly look forward to this once a month opportunity to get together with friends. "Phone Connections" will certainly help and our monthly Elders Newsletter will continue to be distributed mid-month as usual, either by email, or by regular post.

Greeting Cards – During this time, when we cannot host the Greeting Card Table, we encourage our caring community to reach out on their own. Folks really appreciate the effort! Cards, notes, and phone calls help folks feel supported and connected. So during this time of physical distancing, when many may feel isolated or lonely, grab your phone or pick up a pen and stay socially connected!



RE-Frigerator Page



We Celebrate...

Our theme for April is Renewal. For those of us who live in the Northern Hemisphere, renewal is all around us as plants flower or turn green after their winter sleep.

April brings us the holiday of Passover, in which Jews renew their connection to an ancient story of liberation. It also brings us Easter, the Christian celebration of resurrection of

Christ—a pretty dramatic form of renewal.

But, of course, renewal mostly happens in much more subtle ways than people (or plants) coming back to life. We pause long enough to take a couple of deep breaths or a drink of water, and we feel a bit restored.

We give up on a project that seems too hard, but then we come back to it

with renewed energy and commitment.

We go to bed frustrated or angry, but in the morning, with some rest and time, we have a renewed perspective and a different take on how to change the situation.

Renewal—and the need to find renewal—is all around us if we care to look.

Family Quest
of the Church of
the Larger
Fellowship

Apr. 2020



We Honor...

Everybody has a variety of personal re-births, moments of renewal when we come to a new understanding of the world, and leave something old behind.

Hosea Ballou was born in 1771, and grew up in a Baptist family who believed that people were sinful, and should live in fear of a punishing God.

But when he was a teenager, Hosea started questioning the beliefs he was raised with. If God loves us, why would God want to punish us? If God is like a father to us, what father would want his children to be punished for all eternity?

All those questions came to a head for Hosea at the



moment of his baptism. Baptism is a Christian ritual that symbolizes being reborn in faith. But what happened to Hosea at his baptism was that he realized that he didn't feel the same overwhelming fear of God that the other people who were being baptized with him felt. In fact, he realized that, unlike the people

around him, he didn't believe in a harsh, vengeful God who selected some people to be saved and some people to suffer agony in Hell.

Hosea kept thinking about his beliefs, and was "born again" as a Universalist. He became a minister and traveled around the United States preaching about how God was really all about love, not about punishment, and that what God really wanted was for all people to be not only good and kind, but also happy.

Hosea Ballou became one of the most important founders of Universalism because he was born again to a new belief about the relationship between people and God.

Talk About It!

- ☺ What is something in your life that feels in need of renewal?
- ☺ What is a practice that helps you to feel energized and renewed?
- ☺ What helps when you feel stuck?
- ☺ What in the natural world where you live do you see renewing itself?
- ☺ What old thing has found new meaning for you?

Act...

The earth has an amazing ability to renew itself. After fires or floods, plants grow and animals return to their native habitats.

But we humans have done so much damage to the earth that it sure could use our help in restoration and renewal. April brings us both Earth Day and Arbor Day, and both holidays bring opportunities to do things to renew the natural world around us.

If you go to www.earthday.org you can search for activities that are happening in

your area that you can join in. Similarly, you can go to celebratearborday.com to find Arbor Day events to plant and care for trees.

But, of course, any day is a good day to take action to care for the earth, and any day is a good day to celebrate and care for trees. Even if you can't make it to an official event in your area, there are lots of things you can do to help our planet renew itself.

For instance, you can walk or bike rather than asking for a ride. You can turn off

lights when you're not using them.

You can plant native plants that feed butterflies and the bugs that other animals eat.

And you can go outside and renew yourself by listening to birds and breathing fresh air and getting your hands into the dirt.



Nurturing the Spirit

Baisakhi is another April holiday. It is celebrated by Hindus, Muslims and, especially, Sikhs, who comes from the Indian state of Punjab.

Bhangra dance is often performed as part of the celebration of Baisakhi. But you don't need to know how to do traditional Punjabi dancing, or even celebrate Baisakhi, to appreciate dancing as a spiritual practice. Dancing is a spiritual practice in many religions. Sufis, for instance, do a special whirling dance.



But you can dance any way that feels good to your body and spirit. Put on some music that you love and just move, feeling your body and spirit connected to the earth that holds us all up and the air that surrounds us all.

You just might find that dancing is a great way to renew your spirit as well as lifting your energy and your mood.

Draw something in the process of renewal

Going to the Sources

The first of the Sources of our living tradition actually has the word "renewal" in it. Our First Source is:

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*Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to the renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces that create and uphold life.*  
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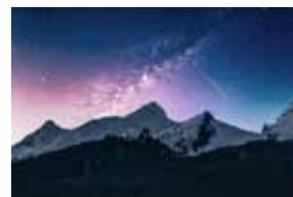
As Unitarian Universalists we try to

stay open to experiences of mystery and wonder—times that we feel connected to the web of life, times we recognize how small we are in comparison to All that Is, times that we feel our hearts expand with the beauty that is around us.

Those experiences renew us. They bring us back to wholeness within ourselves and into right relationship with the world around us.

Sometimes experiences of mystery

and wonder feel like they come out of the blue, as a complete surprise. But we can also practice opening ourselves to mystery and wonder, deliberately seeking out activities and places and people that help us connect to "the forces that create and uphold life."



Read more about Hosea Ballou at: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/movesus/workshop3/282532.shtml>
Watch Bhangra dance at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjSThHJWR-0>

CUC Corner

The **AGM** to be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia **has been rescheduled to 2021.**

The **2020 AGM** will still be held, online, and is planned for **May 15, 2020.**



Connect and Deepen

Connect and Deepen are online gatherings for forging connections across the country, especially important now in this time of physical distancing. CUC staff host the groups, and welcome you to this online opportunity to gather with other kindred spirits in small groups to discuss matters of personal, spiritual, theological and lifestyle significance.

Extra dates have been added, and

Connect and Deepen is happening on:

March 29, April 12 & 26, May 10 & 24, June 14, July 12, August 9, September 13, October 11, November 8

Time: 5 p.m. AT, 4 p.m. ET, 3 p.m. CT, 2 p.m. MT, 1 p.m. PT (90 minutes)

Register Now at: <https://cuc.ca/events/connect-and-deepen/1585497600/1585503000/#registration>

Upcoming Events - April

ONLINE: Gathered Here: Young Adult Check-In, April 2 - 9 p.m. April 6 - 8 p.m., April 16 - 9 p.m., April 20 - 2 p.m., April 30 - 9 p.m. Gathered Here is a monthly online check-in and gathering for Canadian Unitarian Universalist young adults. Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/6792849010>)

CUC COVID-19 Updates, Session 3: April 4- 1:00 p.m. ET Join the CUC's weekly update on the COVID-19 virus. Congregational leaders are invited to share resources and information about planning for and coping with the impacts of COVID-19 on their congregations. Zoom information listed on each linked event page.

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

or 204.663.2126

The **deadline** for the **May 2020** issue is:

Monday, April 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.

Who's Who

Minister

the Reverend Meghann Robern

minister@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Andrea James

dofd@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Lifespan Faith Development Assistant

Carol Lindsey

lfda@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Lay Chaplain

Barb Shearer

Board President

Lauren Bailey

president@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Pastoral Care Coordinator

Bonnie Thiessen

pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Music Director

PJ Buchan

Choir Accompanist

Rob Lindsey

Child Care Providers

Harrison Hnatiuk, Brittany Klatt,

Donna-Jean Krahn, Rae Towse,

and Lily Zhou

Caretaker

Ray Aikens

Webmaster

Karin Carlson

webmaster@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Rental Events Director

Lauren Lischka

rentals@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Newsletter Editor

Marjorie Doyle

communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Editorial Assistant

Linda Henderson

Office Administrator

Pamela Johnson

office@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

The 1st Unitarian Universalist

Church of Winnipeg

603 Wellington Crescent

Winnipeg, MB R3M 0A7

Telephone: 204.474.1261

Fax: 204.284.2639

Office Hours:

Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

www.uuwinnipeg.mb.ca