

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg

The Communicator

April 2022

Sunday Services via [Zoom](#) at 10:30 am

The theme for April is Theological Reflection

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The deadline for the May 2022 issue is **Wednesday, April 20th, 2022**

April 3, 2022

Leveraging the Power of Song, Right Here, Right Now

*Leader: Rev. Wendy Luella Perkins
Coordinators: Kelvin Seifert,
Steve Lennon*

Join songwriter, song leader and UU community minister, the Rev. Wendy Luella Perkins for a morning of singing, silence and reflection, as we join in Soulful Singing (singing meditation for all). Along the way, Wendy Luella will share some of the songs, stories and insights that have emerged over the past two years of daily online singing. This service promises to be participatory, grounding and uplifting, whether or not you consider yourself a singer.

April 10, 2022

Working Toward Truth and Reconciliation

*Leaders: A UU Church of Winnipeg
Covenant Group*

Coordinators: Steve Lennon, Marian Siemens

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg is a signatory to the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, but

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Sunday Services continued

that is but one step toward truth and reconciliation. Please join members of the UU Church Covenant Group as they relate what truth and reconciliation means to them.

April 17, 2022

Easter Sunday

Witnesses Call for Peace in Ukraine

Leaders: UU Church Members

Coordinators: Steve Lennon, Dylan Fijal

Not fully over the Covid crisis, the world is now plunged into worry about the war in Ukraine. Come join Unitarian Universalists as they reflect their concerns about the safety of people in Ukraine, talk about their connections there, and hope and pray for peace on this Easter Sunday morning.

April 24, 2022

Earth Day

Speaker - Karen Ridd, Teaching Assistant Professor, Menno Simons College, University of Winnipeg

Sufficiency: Enough, for Everyone, Forever

We trust Gaia now to provide for us as she has for four billion years and we help her do so; but we no longer torment her for her riches. Her riches are safest when in safe keeping by her. The most admired among us is the one capable of the greatest happiness on the slenderest material means. We no longer ask our Elders the secret of a long life, or of how to procure affluence. We ask them: "How did it come to pass that you were so very happy and left so much love, but such a small mark on the world? Teach us how to be remembered."



Rev. Meghann Robern Away

First UU Church of Winnipeg is proud to meet the Fair Compensation Guidelines of the UUA. These guidelines ensure that we take good care of our professional staff and recognize the importance of adequate paid vacation time (four weeks per year), as well as study leave (four weeks per year) and sabbatical (one month for each year of service). Rev. Robern will be combining these three portions of her contract for the next six months to return July 2, 2022. We wish her rest and renewal during her absence.

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Board Notes

As the snow melts and the roadways and sidewalks clear, so too does the pathway to our church building. Here are three areas of church activity our congregation is undertaking.

Reopening

If the installation of the technical equipment goes as planned and the spread of the virus remains manageable, we will have the choice to meet in person or remain in our homes and participate in our community activities physically distanced – together. Thanks to a hand full of forward-thinking volunteers and a larger group of hardworking folks this choice may be a reality on May 1. Digital hardware is being installed, led by Jim Gardiner, and teams of volunteers are working in many areas to ensure we can open as safely as possible. As of the writing of this message, we are working through a discernment process to identify a volunteer coordinator of the entire reopening endeavour. Until we have a leader for this team, contact Marlene Schellenberg if you would like to be involved in this endeavour.

Handling Conflict Constructively Workshop Series

Over 20 congregants have been participating in this 6-workshop series with Janet Schmidt, specialist working in the field of conflict resolution and meditation for over 30 years. You can watch a

TED Talk Jan gave on [TEDx Winnipeg](#). Those attending are learning that when faced with conflict it's important to be aware of the narrative about others that we run in our heads. Being aware of the stories we tell ourselves about others gives us the opportunity to approach conflicts with curiosity before action. It allows us to introduce kindness and compassion – wise practice for everyone.

Stewardship

The Board has begun planning for our AGM and that means an intense period of work for the Finance Team to work on the budget. Committees have been invited to work on their Terms of Reference, submit their budget requests and reports. They are also considering how to approach the traditional Stewardship Campaign practices. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

As the dream of returning to our building and gathering in person seems real, I'd like to leave you with these final thoughts from Jan Schmidt:

Let's be courageous and lay down the foundation for open and honest relationships where we can let go of [our narratives] and see clearly. In so doing, we can release what is holding us back and unleash what is possible to achieve our dreams.

*In service and gratitude,
Marlene Schellenberg
on behalf of the Board of Directors*

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Volunteer Corner

by Sonya Watson
for Volunteer Resources Committee (VRC)

'Many hands make light work'

The proverb 'many hands make light work' was first recorded in English in the early 1300s in a knightly romance called 'Sir Bevis of Hampton'¹ Because of its quaint wording, I have traditional images in my mind of men tilling fields, and women baking bread. But let's not stop there. Over 800 years later, shared work still eases the load - at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg!

There is a keen desire throughout the congregation to reconnect in person, in our building.

There's lots to think about. Are we following the science regarding the safety or acceptable risk of gathering? How do we help protect all, especially our most vulnerable? What decisions need to be made and communicated to everyone? Do we sing? Offer refreshments? When will the technology and personnel be ready to offer hybrid Sunday services? Will we have a strong team to do the physical work required?

Bravo to the 21 UU volunteers who signed on to help the Board of Directors do research and/or assist with the building reopening process, after two years of meeting remotely via Zoom. Here are the ten subcommittees formed to work on reopening. There's still time to join a team, by contacting Marlene Schellenberg at president@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca.

- Choir
- Hosting/Kitchen
- Meet and Greet
- Tech
- Compliance/Opening Regulations
- Protocols/Covenant
- Religious Exploration (RE)
- Sunday Services
- Membership and Caring
- Communications

Thank you all.

¹ writingexplained.org

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Volunteers Helping with Re-Opening



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Money Talk

Submitted by Doug Wasyliv on behalf of the UU Endowment Fund Trustees

An estate plan is ever-changing and requires periodic reviews and updates. If there is a triggering event in the client's life (e.g., a remarriage, the birth of a child, a divorce, a disability, or a change in domicile), you must identify the event and recognize the need to update the plan. The effectiveness of many estate plans can be diminished due to a small oversight. For example, forgetting to update beneficiary designations after a triggering event can have a devastating effect on how the assets are eventually distributed. The client may inadvertently disinherit an heir or provide an unintentional benefit to a previous spouse. By continually reviewing the estate plan, you can add value to your client relationships and possibly save clients from making mistakes that will be reflected in their legacies.

Common Estate Planning Missteps

- **I love you wills.** Simplified provisions that leave everything to the surviving spouse may not address planning to minimize taxes or other planning goals. Would a trust be better suited for a potentially more complex plan?
- **Joint ownership of property by a married couple.** Property owned jointly by a married couple bypasses the terms of the will or revocable trust. If those documents have estate tax planning or other planning

objectives, be aware that the assets may not be available to accomplish those goals.

- **Joint ownership of property with children.** For the sake of convenience, adults often add children to bank accounts or real estate deeds without considering the consequences at death. Depending on the type of joint ownership, the child would take partial or total ownership of the assets upon the parents' death. This could circumvent any goals to transfer assets to multiple family members.
- **Overlooking life insurance for clients with estate tax planning needs.** - If owned by the insured, the full death benefit is included in the taxable estate. Consider transferring the policy to an irrevocable life insurance trust. If properly structured, the policy will be removed from the estate three years after the transfer. - If the owner, the insured, and the beneficiary are three different parties, the owner will be deemed to have gifted the full death benefit to the beneficiary at the death of the insured. - If the beneficiary of the policy is an employee's spouse, the death benefits may be taxed as compensation unless the employee recognizes income tax on the premiums during their life. While you are discussing how life insurance should be owned, consider a thorough review of existing policies. Life insurance is used to replace income for the family or provide liquidity to pay estate taxes.

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Money Talk cont'd

- Is there enough, too much, or the right type? Life insurance products have changed considerably in the past couple of decades, and a change in type may be beneficial to the estate plan.
- **Illiquid assets.** Forced sales of illiquid assets and family property to pay creditors, expenses, and taxes are common after death. Life insurance can provide the liquidity the family needs to retain the family property or business.
- **Creating a trust with no provision for a change of trustee.** Many trusts were written without a provision for changing the trustee. If the original trustee was a bank and that bank no longer exists, there may be a conflict between the interests of the successor bank and the needs of the beneficiaries. Your client may want to consider a trust company that does not manage money and that allows the family to use its independent financial advisor.
- **Lack of flexibility.** It is difficult to predict what will happen to the family dynamics decades after the client's death. By giving the trustee the discretion to increase or hold back distributions, the client's wealth and beneficiaries can be protected. Consider advising the client to name a trust protector who can step in and make necessary changes to the trustee or even to the trust's provisions.
- **Failure to start a gifting program.** No matter how wealthy, very few people feel secure enough to give away enough assets during their life to reduce taxes at their death. There are gifting concepts that will provide control, income, and tax benefits now while reducing the taxable estate later.
- **Treating the children equally.** Many estates are split equally among the children. But a good estate plan should take into account the individual needs of each heir. Splitting assets equally among all children may not be as fair as parents intend. One child may be more active in the family business; another may have disabilities or special needs; and another may be substantially wealthier than their siblings. Consider using life insurance to equalize inheritances.
- **Not coordinating the estate plan.** The most common estate plan mistake is failing to coordinate the estate plan—trusts are left unfunded, assets are paid out to the wrong person, or estate documents can't be located. Take time to review the estate plan before it has to be put into play.

from the "Financial Planning" website

Money talks ... but it does not sing and dance unless you donate to the church and the Endowment Fund!

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News From The Church Harvest Food Bank Committee

by Brian Klowak

Our church food bank has been operating weekly throughout the pandemic. We follow the policies and guidelines from Harvest Manitoba (previously called Winnipeg Harvest) which has regularly supplied clients and volunteers with masks, hand sanitizer, and antigen test kits.

We are very grateful for the volunteers, mostly church members and friends, who have dedicated their time during this very challenging situation. We went from having 15+ volunteers pre-pandemic to 7, and now 6. Some volunteers understandably bowed out because of pandemic health concerns. Recently a staff member from St. Mary's Academy has been helping when regular volunteers are away. Other church members are on stand-by as well.

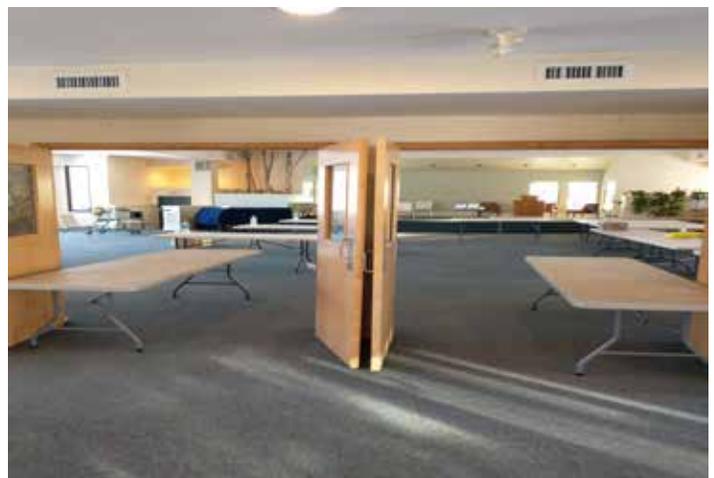
When the truck arrives volunteers and clients help unload. An 'outside' crew brings food items to the foyer, and an 'inside' crew takes food from



the foyer into the sanctuary. This procedure was implemented to reduce travel and to maintain some boundaries during the early stages of COVID19.

We continue wearing masks and are mindful of distances between people. Clients come to one of four

tables where volunteers bring their allotment of food based on family size. To reduce waiting time, we start serving individuals soon after we sort the food and calculate a formula for how many items each household will receive. Most of the food items come pre-packaged in boxes or bags, making distribution relatively easy.



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Harvest Committee cont'd

Things have evolved as we find more innovative and efficient methods. For example, we now have a flip chart indicating which client number is being served so that volunteers and clients alike know who is next. As volunteers we each have our individual roles which helps to make things run smoothly.

The number of clients attending has recently increased so there are a number of new faces. Based on the feedback we receive, clients are appreciative of their experience at our food bank.

Some of us hope things may get back to how they were pre-pandemic where clients had time to sit and socialize before going through the food line and choosing their food items. However, the current process is so efficient that some see it as a more desirable way of operating going forward. Time will tell as to what form this takes in the future.



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June Gislason - 1921 - 2014

First UU Church of Winnipeg Harvest Founder

by Gini Martin



June Gislason was the founder in 1991 and manager of the Harvest food bank at our church. The food bank started at our church at Sergeant and Banning. There

were questions about its continuation in the new neighbourhood after the move to the current church. She fought and sought support for the food bank to continue in the new building. It continued and clients come across the bridge to the church.

June's philosophy continues to inspire and direct the current volunteers. She was concerned about social justice and the rights of all but especially children. She worked to insure that all the families with children received milk and began the 'orange appeal' program. Annual donations from the church congregation allow for each family attending the Harvest Depot to receive boxes of oranges, based on their family size, at Christmas time. The program continues to this day. June actively participated in Harvest until she became too ill after her stroke in 2011. Her philosophy is still very much acknowledged in the running of the food bank, which is one of welcoming, mutual respect,

and involving individuals in the food bank operations.

Many members have volunteered for Harvest. The Mooibroiks both worked every Thursday morning for years. Margaret supervised the kitchen and mentored client helpers. She made coffee for everyone - clients and volunteers.

June born in 1921, lived on the family farm, and completed her education in Homewood, Manitoba. She moved to Winnipeg where she earned both her teacher's and principal's certificate. Her first teaching position was at Steep Rock in 1940.

She met her husband Thor at Steep Rock. Thor's family was Unitarian. The couple was married in 1943 by Rev. Phillip Petursson, the long time minister of the church. The family moved to several places in Manitoba. In 1954 with their four children they moved to Winnipeg.

June continued to teach and earned her bachelor's degree in 1975. She was 54 years old. She was a dedicated teacher and was recognized by the Canadian College of Teachers in 1981 as 'Teacher of the Year' in Manitoba. She developed and piloted a number of innovative programs which resulted in her being described as 'The teacher's measure of a teacher.'

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June Gislason cont'd

June was a long time member of our church. She contributed to the Religious Education Program (RE). In the mid eighties she was a teacher and chair of the RE committee. During an interim between appointments, she also served as Director of Religious Education.

She continued her association with Steep Rock and later many happy times with friends and family were spent at the family cottage there.

June was an active member of a book group and participated until her last year. She was devoted to Canadian literature and had strong views on her

favourite authors. She loved poetry. June especially appreciated poetry being read to her after her stroke. She was also devoted to her garden and flowers.

In 1998, June received the Unitarian Social Justice Award for her contributions. June set an example for all of us for her dedication to social justice principles and her example of living her beliefs. She is missed but the Harvest Depot at the church continues as her legacy.

The author thanks June's daughter, Beth Gislason Ritcher and Brian Klowak, current Harvest volunteer, for their help with this article.



Soon to be seen in person we hope!

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Hot Dog!

by Adult Programming Committee



Spring is in the air and visions of a wiener roast are about to come true. From 12:30 – 2:30 pm on Sunday, April 3rd, the Adult Programming Committee will be lighting up the new fire pit and you're invited!

All ages are welcome. Just bring a lawn chair, dress warm(ish) and drop by the church yard to see your beloved UU friends after two long years. Hot dogs (regular and vegan), chips and drinks will be provided as a gift to attendees.

The Province of Manitoba has shifted public health orders regarding COVID to public health recommendations. People are being encouraged to take individual responsibility to help keep themselves and others safe. Some may choose to wear masks at the wiener roast, while others may choose not to. Social distancing is encouraged. While the church building will remain closed, the main floor washroom is available if needed. Please wear a mask indoors out of consideration for others.

See you at the wiener roast!

Vespers Services

by Janine Reid



Too many tabs open? Join us for a weekly mind refresh on Tuesday at 6 pm CST on Zoom for our rejuvenated Vespers service. Consider building it into your flow as a weekly ritual, or dip in when you need a boost. You

will be offered a half hour of music and meditative readings to consider on your spiritual journey, followed by an optional half hour of conversation and connection with the group participants. The zoom link is listed on our website and will be the same every week.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/93643328083?pwd=eX-hiMU1OQ2Ztb1cybU81RndtU3V5dz09>

Meeting ID: 936 4332 8083

Passcode: 928082

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Celebrating our Members with the Memorial Legacy Binder

by Liz Redston

As we get ready to return to our church building we thought it timely to refresh your awareness of the new Memorial Legacy Binder that will be available for viewing in the Library. The UU Celebration Park project team have created a Memorial Legacy binder as part of their work on developing ways to honour and memorialize loved ones. This binder will hold legacy stories, obituaries or eulogy material for our members who have died. The binder begins with the obituaries for deceased members from 2020 onwards.

As you contemplate end of life reflections or planning is there a story you want to share about your connection with our faith community? Obituaries are often a lovely summary of a person's life but do not necessarily profile the depth of connection or contribution at church or to other significant groups or projects you may be involved with. Perhaps developing your legacy story for inclusion in our Memorial binder can be part of your end of life plan-

ning - which of course can be worked on at any age. What an interesting and life affirming activity - to create a one or two page story of your UU journey or connection to groups and causes important in your life. Look for future articles and website content where we will offer support materials for your legacy story efforts with some simple how-to guidelines and question prompts to help you begin your story.

If this is a project you might be interested in we are looking for someone to help ensure we keep up to date with the Legacy Binder. The job is easy and simply requires access to a computer and printer to format and print the obituary, eulogy or legacy story as the need arises. Please speak to any of the UU Celebration Park Committee members if you are interested or would like to learn more.

UU Celebration Park Committee:
Peter Miller, Esther Kathryn, Lois Whyte, Gini Martin, Shirley Kitchen, Liz Redston



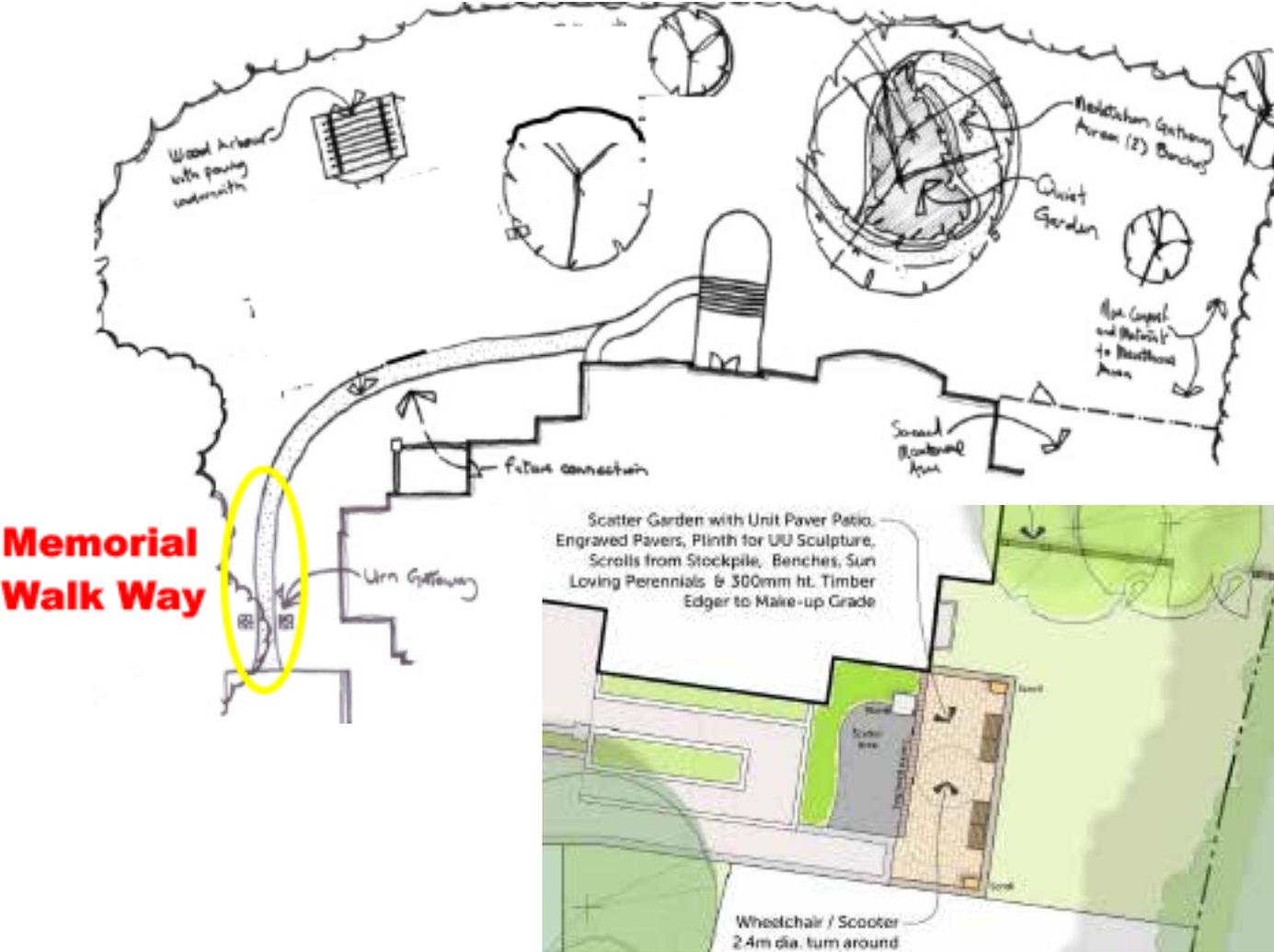
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UU CELEBRATION PARK PROJECT – getting ready for Congregational Vote at June AGM

by Liz Redston

We are getting ready to finalize our UU Celebration Park plans at the upcoming AGM in June. We want to take the next few issues of the Communicator to refresh your memories on what this project is all about. This undertaking began as a Legacy Memorial Garden project in 2016 as part of our 125th Anniversary and through plan-

ning discussions has morphed into the broader theme of a Celebration Park. In addition to offering ways to honour our members and loved ones who have died with a scatter garden, plaques, and memory book; we also want to offer a physical place of celebration, activity and special events for our congregation and community.



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Celebration Park cont'd

You may recall this time last year we hosted a number of congregational feedback sessions, conducted an online survey, and presented the plans at the June AGM in 2021. We now have the final report and content from our landscape architects, HTFC and we are ready to bring this project to the congregation to vote on approving the conceptual design as our plan for future development.

Thanks to everyone who has participated so far in the process. We value knowing your thoughts and feelings about this important project. We know projects like this need to also allow for ongoing input and be adaptable to ever evolving needs and values. To this end we want to acknowledge that our project is now also looking at how we can recognize and live into our values as Treaty One and home of the Metis peoples and our participation as members of the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord. We are planning to host further feedback sessions in May so we may once again gather feedback prior to the AGM in June.

As a quick recap – UU Celebration Park offers the following:

- Memorial Path Walk Way on the west side of the building – a place to honour loved ones with a memorial plaque on special wall/fence area as well as other types of commemorative markers like engraved paving stones

- Scatter garden for the cremated remains of loved ones at the front south east corner of the building with a sitting bench area
- Riverside Reflection sitting area with benches by the big tree in the back yard
- Gathering area for events with Pergola or structure to support services, social events, weddings, memorials and all sorts of gatherings for our church and community

The goal is to preserve the natural beauty and enhance our property in ways that allow us to use and enjoy the space supporting a wide variety of activities for people of all ages in our church and sharing with broader community via rentals and other special events. The idea of space for Healing Circles or other type of rituals and gatherings has been shared recently and we are confident UU Celebration Park is being designed to allow for all types of events and gatherings.

What is a Conceptual Design?

Based on criteria and guiding principles that we developed together, the conceptual design is our plan – our vision - our goal of what we want to work towards. We have invested significant time, energy and finances to the tune of \$5,000 for the professional fees to complete this stage of the project. When we vote to approve the conceptual plan we are agreeing to work towards the development of UU Celebration Park as presented on page 14

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Celebration Park cont'd

in the rough sketch. There is still a lot of room for final design decisions based on our resources of sweat equity and fund raising and our desire on how to complete the various elements of the project.

We know that this project must meet many needs...

- Helping us to actively live into our mission, principles and values
- Accessible
- Phased project approach – easy to do in stages
- Focused on natural beauty elements – light landscaping, natural plants and trees
- Designed to complement the beautiful architecture of our building and property

- Focused on planning for affordability and sweat equity
 - Must meet City Zoning requirements – no heavy construction, or piled posts into ground
 - Flexible use of space for many different types of events and activities
 - Enhance our rental revenue opportunities
 - Built for longevity with minimal ongoing cost or maintenance
 - Easy to manage or operationalize
- We look forward to sharing further updates with you and hosting additional feedback sessions in May. Meanwhile if you have any questions or thoughts to share please do not hesitate to reach out to any of the members of the UU Celebration Park committee: *Peter Miller, Esther Kathryn, Lois Whyte, Gini Martin, Shirley Kitchen, Liz Redston.*



Congregant waiting for the church Systto re-open. Photo thanks to Michael Thiessen

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FAB Sale is Back!

by Steve Lennon



FAB (Furniture, Art & Book) Sale is back for one final sale on **Saturday, April 16, 9 am to 3 pm** at the church at 603 Wellington Crescent. *Masks will be required to attend.*

At this time we are **accepting art donations only**, as our storage capacity for furniture is full, and there are already 80 boxes of books on the third floor, all priced and ready to go, so we cannot take any more. All these valuables are in place thanks to many members who have been donating goods over the past two years.

We will begin setting up on Thursday, April 14, noon until 9 pm, and then continue all day Friday 9 am to 9 pm. This will include heavy lifting for some (furniture and boxes of books), and minor lifting for others (laying out books on tables).

Apart from setting up Thursday and Friday, on the Saturday day of sale we will require someone to bag and box

purchases, 9 am to noon, and another from noon to 3 pm We will need a security person for both shifts, to sit or stand and watch.

Finally, at 3 pm we will need at least 8 people to box up the leftover books (minimal lifting) and/or move books and furniture to the alcove (heavy lifting) for pick up. At 4:30 pm we need to take down tables and stack chairs, and at 4:45 pm we need someone to vacuum the sanctuary and foyer.

This promises to be a fabulous FAB Sale fundraiser for our church and if you can help make it a success, that would also be fabulous. Give Steve a call. Thank you.

Please consider volunteering to assist, if you are able and available. Contact Steve at 204.781.6549 (sorry, no text) or at stevenjlennon@gmail.com.

The Communicator

Our Mission Statement was adopted at the June 2021 Annual General Meeting

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg Mission Statement

We are a diverse and caring community that is loving, inclusive, responsible, and encouraging.

We are a learning community open to evidence and varied insights that encourages reflection and exploration. We use what we learn to strengthen our relationships and our capacity.

We are a socially engaged community that works collaboratively, compassionately, and urgently for a just society and for our life-sustaining planet.

We are Caring, Learning and Socially Engaged.

Please submit materials to the editor Marjorie Doyle by email to: communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca
The **deadline** for the **May 2022** issue is: **Wednesday, April 20th, 2022**

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

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the Reverend Meghann Robern
minister@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

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Lay Chaplain

Darlene Payne

Board President

Marlene Schellenberg

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