

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg



The Communicator

November 2020



Religious Exploration begins at 10:00 am for children and Sunday Services 10:30 am for church service

The theme for November is Possibilities

All services are streamed via Zoom; please check our website for the link/dial-in information: uwinnipeg.mb.ca

November 1, 2020

All Souls' Day

Service Leaders: Rev. Meghann Robern, Andrea James, Nicole McKay
Service Coordinator: Marian Siemens

All Souls' Day is a Universalist holiday when we remember all those whom we have loved and lost. By intentionally remembering, we allow them to continue to shape and guide our lives with their love and inspiration.

During this time when we are exclusively gathering via Zoom, please email photos of loved ones who have died -- pets as well as humans -- for our altar of remembrance to Nicole McKay at nmckay@uwinnipeg.mb.ca before October 29.

November 8, 2020

You Will Be Found

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern
Service Coordinator: Dylan Fijal

Restorative justice can lead to transformation of people, relationships and communities. It's the path most in alignment with our Unitarian Universalist values, and yet is often the hardest path to affirm and promote in our lives and communities. In this service we will use the tragedy of Ben Solo to explore what it means to choose healing and reconciliation within healthy boundaries over endless punishment and death.

(This service will contain spoilers for Star Wars, especially *The Rise of Skywalker*.)

Wednesday, November 11, 2020

10:30am

Annual Remembrance Day Service

Service Leaders: Nicole McKay and Rev. Meghann Robern
Service Coordinator: Steve Lennon

November 15, 2020, 12 pm

Sustaining Our Light -- National CUC Service

Service Leaders: Rev. Debra Thorne (Nanaimo), Rev. Debra Faulk (Calgary), Rev. Wayne Walder (Toronto), Rev. Diane Rollert (Montréal)

This national service focuses on "Sustaining Our Light" during these unusual and troubling times. Filled with music and reflections, and with participation from Unitarian Universalists across Canada, the service explores why we need each other and offers opportunities for us to connect and create community together.

Join via Zoom at <http://bit.ly/UUService> or watch live on [CUC's YouTube channel](#).

November 22, 2020

Learning Forward

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern
Service Coordinator: M.C. Ziegler

One of the most important things we must remember as we grow older and wiser is that people of all ages have to figure out how to keep their minds and hearts open to new understandings about science, relationships, identity, and everything else about the human experience.

What we knew to be true yesterday may be different today; how do we help and hold each other through new learning? How do we remind each other that it is not a failure to be corrected or taught something new? This service will also include our child dedication ritual.

November 29, 2020

Unearthing Possibilities

Service Leader: Nicole McKay
Service Coordinator: Dylan Fijal

Like a time capsule we never knew existed, there are buried treasures in the world and within ourselves that can serve as gateways to new possibilities. Let us dig in together and bring forth new hope in this first week of the Advent Season.

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The deadline for the **December 2020** Communicator is **Friday, November 20th, 2020**

From the Minister's Study

by The Reverend Meghann Robern



Our theme for November is "possibilities." We'll be engaging with it in our services -- both Sunday

mornings and Wednesday evenings -- and in our Covenant Groups as well. While this theme topic was chosen months ago, before the pandemic began, it feels to me now like a difficult, deep spiritual practice to think about possibilities when we're all caught in an isolation trap. That I'm writing this as the first big snowfall has descended upon us here in Winnipeg, marking the beginning of more isolation for many and seasonal depression for even more, makes "possibilities" as our theme almost cynically ironic.

And then I read the leader letter included with our theme materials for November, and I felt my heart stir with warmth again:

"The world changes because people commit to the gradual, exhausting, and inspiring work of making dang sure it will change. And that means, first and foremost, having a sense--a vision, a picture--of the horizon toward which we will apply our efforts. And that, friends, is where possibility comes in. It's important to exercise our possibility

muscle. To start to dream dreams. To get clear on our vision. To imagine a world and a life that could be." -- Rev. Jake Morrill

Most of you have not had the chance to know Rev. Jake in person, but to me he is a dear friend and colleague. For me, these words come with the relationship attached to them, like a hug across the kilometres. And so it reinforced my opinion that now, more than ever, we should be focusing on our relationships with each other, and investing our time and effort in reaching out and staying connected. Yes, that means Zoom, but it also means telephones, texting, and handwritten letters and cards. Each of us has ways that we are comfortable communicating when we can't be in person.

I, for one, am reminded every day of how people's lives, and what they share with me, is a gift. Learning about people's lives, their stories, is one of my favourite parts of being a minister. So, beloveds... call me. Text me. Yes, email works for sharing basic information, but I want to spend our time this year in **conversations** with you. My phone number, for calls or texts, is 204.809.3656. I would love to chat with you.

Possibilities, for me, are seeded in soil that is tended by love, compassion, and caring. Let's do this thing **together**.

In gratitude and faith,
Rev. Meghann

Faith Development Programs

by Andrea James, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

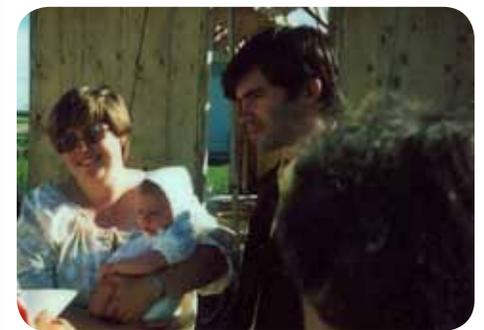
Coming Up: Child Dedication

November 22, during the service

In Unitarian Universalist tradition, when we dedicate children we celebrate their life, 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. Those who've been dedicated elsewhere and children who have new names and/or would like to be rededicated with their correct gender are welcome.

We have two Child Dedications planned this year: November 22, 2020 and April 11, 2021. Please [complete this form](#) to take part in either service.



Margo Gerrard 1978



Buck Doyle (formerly Ken Gerrard) 1980

Living Our Faith

by Andrea James, Director of Lifespan Faith Development



In 1996 - 25 years ago! - we completed a process of education and engagement, and voted to

“affirm that [we] welcome the membership and active participation of the LGBTQ community”. Unitarian Universalists call this being a Welcoming Congregation. We were early adopters of this program, but I’m happy to say that almost all [Canadian congregations](#) are Welcoming.

A lot has changed since then, including some civil rights victories and the number of letters in that

acronym. Language and concepts evolve at a pace that is sometimes hard to keep up with, but I know that it’s important to us that we do so.

This is an area of church life where our younger UUs generally lead the rest of us. *Our Whole Lives* sexuality education helps, of course. Youth group commitment to social justice and anti-oppression work means that they began being intentional about pronouns and moving away from gendered spaces at youth cons, many years ago. UU Religious Exploration spaces embrace gender creative, gender curious, and Trans children and youth and, for some, may be the only place a young UU can be their whole, authentic selves.

When I say that Unitarian Universalism saves lives, this is what I mean. There may be other reasons, but

those that I’m familiar with revolve around young UUs being whole and holy.

We know that our congregation has welcomed at least two queer ministers: our last interim minister Rev. Noline Guerrier and our settled minister, Rev. Meghann. Our Board President is genderqueer and queer (and, if you didn’t know, uses they/ them/theirs pronouns). This is part of the important work we’ve done since 1996, envisioning our congregation as a welcoming, healthy place for 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

All of this *matters*, in terms of visibility, education, and representation.

However, the experiences of 2SLGBTQIA+ people have not always been positive

in our community. We can and must continue to learn and grow, in order to expand our welcome.

To help us move forward individually and collectively, I hope you’ll join me, Rev. Mykal Slack and Zr. Alex Kapitan for [Transgender Inclusion in Congregations](#). Over eight sessions we’ll deeply explore the intersection of trans identity, spirituality, and faith community, and gain the grounding, context, and skills to transform ourselves and our congregation. I took this course when I was on sabbatical, and highly recommend it. Click the link above or visit our website, under the Learning tab to learn more and to register.

In faith,
Andrea
dldf@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Envisioning our congregation as a welcoming, healthy place for 2SLGBTQIA+ people

Faith Development Notes

At All Times: [register children for Religious Exploration \(RE\)](#)

November

- 1 November RE Packet will arrive by email around now
Youth: *Popcorn Theology*, 3:00-6:00 pm (1st Sundays)
- 2 *Parents & Caregivers as Sexuality Educators*, every Monday in November, 7:00-8:00 pm
- 3 *Elders Reflections*, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm (1st Tuesdays)
- 5 Youth: *Cosmic Connections*, 8:00 pm
- 7 Covenant Group Facilitators’ Group begins, 10:00-12:00 (1st Saturdays)
- 8 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**
Youth: *A Chorus of Faiths* (2nd Sundays), 3:00 pm
- 12 Youth: *Cosmic Connections*, 8:00 pm
- 15 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**
Our service today will be a national service hosted by five ministers from across the country, at noon our time. “Sustaining Our Light” will be available on the CUC’s YouTube channel.
Youth: *Super Group*, 5:00 pm begins (3rd Sundays)
- 19 Youth: *Cosmic Connections*, 8:00 pm
- 22 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**
Child Dedication during the service
Youth: *Religions*, 3:00 pm (4th Sundays)
- 26 Youth: *Cosmic Connections*, 8:00 pm
- 27 POP adults group, with Debby - 1:30-2:30 pm (4th Fridays)
- 29 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**

Board Notes

by Lauren Bailey, President



Hello everyone,
Your Board of Directors will be hosting the Autumn Financial Meeting on **Sunday, November 22**, at 1:30 pm, via

Zoom, where we will review the 2019 financial statements with the congregation. Look for more information via the weekly email and the website shortly.

In addition to the financial statements, we will be presenting the ongoing work of the Mission and Vision working group, as well as debuting a new email policy for committees and teams. Again, more information will be available during the build up to the meeting, and I am more than willing to answer any questions you may have in addition.

We want to feature the good work of our committees and working groups both on Sunday mornings and in our all-church emails. Sharing this work helps us stay connected as a congregation. Committee Chairs - email me at the address below with a short summary and some pictures (if applicable), and we will help you shout our good deeds for everyone to hear!

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

We Heard You - and We Want to Hear More!

Coming shortly to the church website, a Mission and Vision page will have information from our September discussion sessions.

The Mission Vision team is going through the information, and we are still open to feedback. We are especially looking for input from our **youth and their parents**.

Want to join us? We invite church members or friends join our team and help draft our mission and vision.

Please send comments or questions to vision@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca.

Faith Development Programs

by Andrea James, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

Sharing the Light - A Build Your Own Chalice workshop

Saturday November 28, 2020
1:00-3:00 pm

When we gather together on Zoom, we are often invited to light our own chalice at home. But what if you don't have one? Don't worry, we've got you covered! Come to our "build your own chalice" workshop, where we'll learn about our Unitarian Universalist symbol and then break into small groups to create a chalice. We provide you with different styles to choose from and a shopping list, and we've included a "use what you have" version for a no- to low-cost option. Visit our [Local Zoom Connections page](#) for more information and to RSVP by November 19.

Transgender Inclusion in Congregations

2nd and 4th Thursdays, choose between 2:00-4:00 pm or 6:00-8:00 pm
February 11 to May 27, 2021

1st hour: video lecture
2nd hour: discussion
Facilitator Andrea James, with Rev. Mykal Slack and Zr. Alex Kapitan on video. For more information and to register, [visit our website under the Learning tab](#).

Please visit the church website and look under the Learning tab for much more information about all of these programs and more, and to register. All programs and events will be held on the Zoom platform.

Cec Muldrew

by Gini Martin

A Candle to Remember

The more we know of history, the more liberated we are. ~ *Maya Angelo*

This month's Candle to Remember is Cecil Drummond Muldrew (June 30, 1923 – September 6, 2004)



"I want to share with you why I am a pacifist." These words spoken by Cec Drummond Muldrew to our attentive children during the RE story hour are still vivid memories for some. During his lifetime, Cec had a significant impact on everyone in our church and made us aware of his commitment to work for peace and the importance of issues. He was an active member of our congregation. Cec also served for 25 years as the 'financial secretary' and a Board member of Unitarians for Social Justice.

Memorable Manitobans describes him as a "noted peace activist... [who] earned science and education degree" and "had a 34-year career in Education." He reviewed his experiences as a bomber pilot during the war which led to his commitment to peace and participation in international organizations.

After graduating from Normal School in 1941, Cec joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and served in the India-Burma area. He was a teacher, vice principal and principal in a number of Winnipeg schools. On leaves from teaching he worked in the Provincial Department of Education developing a new science curriculum and teaching in the Faculty of Education.

His community contributions both in the church and beyond were numerous. He served on the University of Winnipeg Board of Regents, and was a founder of the Manitoba Science Fairs. Cec also contributed as Secretary of the Winnipeg Teachers' Association and president of both Science Teachers' Association and Outdoor Education Association. He was a founder and president of Veterans against Nuclear Arms, (VANA) and editor of their national newsletter for twenty years. He also was active in the Humanist Association, The Canadian Red Cross, the Council of Canadians and was on the founding board of the Low Income Intermediary Project. He promoted the United Nations and Unicef in schools and was teacher representative for the United Way. As president of the World Federalist Movement, Cec hosted a TV program titled *For a Better World*.

His obituary in the Free Press said, "His strong environmental beliefs, his love of the outdoors and his love for Victoria beach prompted him, through his participation with the Manitoba Model Forest, to plant and care for an orchard on the old Victoria Beach Railway."

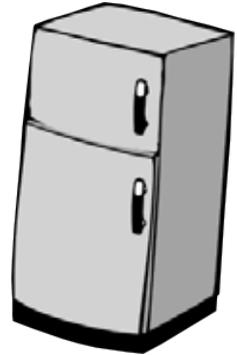
On a personal note, I worked with Cec when he was a principal. He was a visible and supportive presence in the halls and playground. I recall, too, attending a bridge party he hosted as part of the Services Auction in our church.

Among his many awards were the 1994 Pioneer Award for 50 years of Volunteer service for the NDP, the 1995 Global Citizenship award on the 50th anniversary of the United Nations founding, and in 1999 the YMCA's Peacemaker of the Year.

His memorial service was held at the church. Cec Muldrew's many contributions demonstrate he lived his beliefs and is indeed a Memorable Manitoban. As companion Unitarian Universalists, we can best remember him by contributing as he did, to our church and community.



RE-Frigerator Page



We Celebrate...

Our theme for November is Possibilities. We live in a time with a lot of uncertainty, which can definitely make for a lot of anxiety. But living with uncertainty also means living with a wide range of possibilities. The more up in the air things are in any situation, the greater the chance that something new and different will come out of it.



But with COVID in the picture school looks really different for people in different places or across time. Maybe school means a classroom with fewer students, or fewer days a week. Maybe school is something you do from

home, or with a small "pod" of other people. Maybe the school year starts one way, and goes through several different options by the time the year is out.

And here's the thing about possibilities. They could be great. They could be terrible. They might open up whole new worlds you have never considered before or take away things you'd always counted on. But the wider the possibilities, the bigger the adventure.

Most years, school goes along in a fairly predictable way...classrooms, teachers, students at desks or tables.

Family Quest of the Church of the Larger Fellowship

Nov. 2020



Talk About It!

- ☺ What possibilities are you excited about?
- ☺ What possibilities are you worried about?
- ☺ What do you wish was possible?

We Honor...

More than anything, Maria Mitchell loved to look at the stars. Her father was an amateur astronomer, and her greatest joy was in helping him with his observations and calculations. She longed to become a professional astronomer—to spend her life learning and teaching about the science of the heavens.

But Maria (pronounced ma-RYE-ah) was born in 1818, at a time when women were not expected to be scientists, or even go to college. A career in science seemed impossible.

But there is a big difference between unlikely and impossible. And Maria dedicated herself to the possibilities. Maria learned, and

became a teacher, and then a librarian. And she continued to study the skies with her father.

In 1947 she noticed a fuzzy area of light where no star should be. She had discovered a comet! Her discovery earned her a gold medal prize from the King of Denmark, who offered it to the first person to discover a comet using a telescope.

Maria's discovery brought her considerable fame, and introduced women around the world to the possibility of becoming scientists themselves. And when Matthew Vassar founded a college for women in 1865, he asked Maria to come be a professor of astronomy, using the powerful new

observatory he had built.

How, Maria wondered, is it possible for me to be a professor when I never went to college myself? But she embraced the possibilities, and taught, and observed the skies, until 1888, just a year before she died. Her students didn't have to wonder whether it was possible to become scientists—they were already busy conducting experiments under her leadership.



- ☺ What is a possibility you have turned into a reality?

Act...

One way to think about justice is to think about possibilities. No two people's lives are going to turn out the same way, and no two people are going to make the same choices. But justice means that everyone gets access to possibilities, to the opportunity to make those choices.

For instance, if you are a person who uses a wheelchair, and the only way to get into a building is up a set of stairs, then you don't have the choice about going into that building that people who can walk up the stairs have. Your possibilities get cut off.

If you are deaf and your doctor or

your college lecturer or the comedy club you want to go to does not provide a sign language interpreter then you get cut off from important choices and possibilities.

Attitudes and assumptions can also cut people off from their possibilities.

If an employer or a teacher or a classmate assumes that because someone's legs don't work that they are somehow not as smart or capable



or funny as someone who walks, then possibilities get closed off. If people assume that because someone uses adaptive technology to be able to speak that they have less to contribute to the conversation, everyone loses out on the possibilities that might come from that conversation.

What assumptions do you make that might limit someone's possibilities? What assumptions might people make about you that limit yours?

We can question both our own assumptions and the assumptions and limitations that we notice around us to make room for more possibilities for everyone.

Nurturing the Spirit

When we think about the future we think about possibilities. Everything that hasn't happened yet is a possibility.

But a lot of the time, people focus on their worries about what might happen. And it's easy to spiral into anxiety when your brain is rehearsing all the negative possibilities that are out there.

Sometimes we get stuck in a vicious loop, worrying about the future, circling over and over to bad things that might happen. And when you're in that loop it's really hard to just jump out

and tell yourself not to worry.

What can help is to push your brain to imagine as broad a range of things that might happen as you can. *Maybe when we move to the new city I will have no friends. But maybe there will be someone I really like on my same block. Maybe I'll do something really embarrassing on the first day of school. But maybe there will be a chess club and I'll make new friends and become an amazing chess player.*

If your brain keeps asking *What if this bad thing happens?* it can also help to answer the question by making

a plan. Maybe it's a family plan for what to do if there's a fire or an earthquake. Maybe it's a personal plan so that if someone makes fun of you, you have something funny to say in return.

The possibilities for the future are pretty much infinite, running the full range from wonderful to terrible. But we can teach our brains to meet those possibilities with a feeling of strength and optimism.

Going to the Sources

The 2nd source of our living tradition is:

~~~~~  
Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.  
~~~~~

In other words, one of the things that makes us who we are as Unitarian Universalists is the model set for us by people across the ages who have

believed in and worked for the very best possibilities. People who have seen the ways that society can be cruel and unfair, and have



held onto a different vision of how we

could be together as human beings.

We get strength and inspiration from all the people who have gone before us, and all the people around us, who hold to the possibility that love can lead us into a world of justice and compassion for all people.

Of course, we don't know when and how that day will arrive—it's a possibility, not a reality. But we are people who have faith in that possibility of love and justice, and we are willing to walk in the footsteps of those who have gone before us pointing the way.

Read more about Maria Mitchell at: <https://uudb.org/articles/mariamitchell.html>

Strategies for helping children deal with worries: <https://www.counselorkeri.com/2019/04/29/reframe-worries/>

Rain Barrels and Corn

by Debby Lake

How do you raise funds for a good cause, have fun with generous friends, promote environmental sustainability, and enjoy the outdoors? Sell rain barrels and corn!

On May 29 and 30, Friends of Refuge and other church volunteers wrangled more than 250 rain barrels and scads of accessories delivered by truckload from RainBarrel.ca. A few customers picked up their barrels from the parking lot of Shaarey Zedek (our parking lot was inaccessible at the time). Most barrels were delivered by four wonderful delivery teams who found their way to each customer's home in one of five regions of our city. Many thanks to the multitude of volunteers who unloaded the truck, delivered goods, managed the pick-up site, fed the truck driver and his family, and kept track of our money and inventory. After expenses, we netted \$4639.

For the second year in a row, Dale Alderson generously donated time, labor and seed to raise sweet "Corn for a Cause" on his land near Anola. Despite some setbacks, a reasonable crop of peaches and cream

corn matured by the end of August. Thanks to all who harvested, packed and sold corn on one of six days from August 29 and September 10.

On September 5th we partnered with [Peaceful Village](http://PeacefulVillage) who provided volunteers for harvesting, and we shared our proceeds for that day with their organization. Unsold corn was donated to our church food bank, to Siloam Mission, and to a mutual aid society called "Serve the People." Our total net proceeds from "Corn for a Cause" was \$2387.

Friends of Refuge acknowledge the contribution of our church staff and volunteers to our fundraising work. We have donated 10% of our proceeds back to the church, amounting to \$703 this summer.

A big virtual hug and thank you to all of you who supported our fundraisers by buying rain barrels and/or corn and by telling your friends and family about our projects. These funds will help support our sponsored refugees for their first year in Canada.



Social Justice Event



Skeptical about calls to defund the police, or curious what that might look like in Winnipeg? Join the Social Justice Team on Sunday, November 8, 3 - 4:30pm to explore a proposal put forth by the Police Accountability Coalition. We'll be meeting via zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/93141534971?pwd=Y1NzY0RweVh0bWc3QVk0NGVtSk95dz09>

You are encouraged to read the following documents ahead of time, and come prepared to share your

thoughts. All points of view are welcome!

- Call for Police Accountability and the Reallocation of Resources: <https://bit.ly/3o2WFAx>
- More details on Justice reform (optional): <https://bit.ly/3m3sdV3>
- More details on Police Services reform (optional): <https://bit.ly/35b0CdW>

Email socialjustice@uwinnipeg.mb.ca if you have questions or are interested in attending. Pre-registration is not required, but helps us estimate numbers.

Please submit materials to the editor Marjorie Doyle by email to: communicator@uwinnipeg.mb.ca or 204.663.2126
The **deadline** for the **December** issue is:
Friday, November 20th, 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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