

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg

The Communicator

November 2021

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

The theme for November is Non-Violence

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The deadline for the December 2021 issue is **Monday, November 22nd, 2021**

November 7: Where the Deer and the Antelope Play

Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern

Coordinator: Steve Lennon

Our November theme is non-violence. While the term is often used in social justice contexts, during this service will we explore how we might apply non-violence to our ecological justice as well. Our jumping off point will be Nick Offerman's new book about contemplating our relationships with nature and conservation.

Thursday, November 11: Annual Remembrance Day Service

Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern

Participants will have an opportunity to share their personal stories of loved ones who have served.

November 14: Holy Disruption

Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern

Coordinator: Marian Siemens

This is our second year of offering Wellsprings, and one of the key elements to come out of it is teaching about holy disruptors. The Wellsprings program offers that "It is an important skill for people of dominant cultures to be holy disruptors, rather than

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Sunday Services continued

expecting the person or group on the receiving end of a behavior to speak out.” We’ll explore how this is different from destructive disruption, and how holy disruption is often an essential part of non-violence approaches to systemic change.

November 21: Environmental Non-Violence

Leader: Cate Ziegler

Coordinator: Steve Lennon

Thich Nhat Hanh said in his book titled the same: “Peace is every step”. “But where do our steps take us? How far in our lives do we go when we embrace a non-violent existence?” Join us on November 21st as we explore the pursuit of living sustainably and environmental non-violence.

November 28: National Canadian Unitarian Council Service

10 am PT | 11 am MT | **12 pm CT** | 1 pm ET | 2 pm AT

Led by youth and young adults, this service recognizes and celebrates our 60-year history, and calls on us to fulfill the possibilities of our future together.

[Join us on Zoom! https://bit.ly/CUC_NationalService21](https://bit.ly/CUC_NationalService21)

Call-in toll-free: 1 855 703 8985

Properties Report

by Michael Thiessen, Chair

As summer fades and outside Properties work moves indoors, we can look back at projects completed to meet insurance renewal requirements and to improve aesthetics for rental purposes as well as for our own enjoyment. Here’s a tour working our way inside from the repaired back deck, past newly painted house windows and regouted stonework.

Flower beds are being cleared for winter. The City of Winnipeg will remove three trees with Dutch Elm disease from the parking lot.

As we journey inside, we can see dry-wall being installed on exposed joists and getting readied for painting.

Work needed in the next fiscal year includes repairs to the foyer and sanctuary ceilings so keep those pledges coming!



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From the Minister's Study

by *The Reverend Meghann Robern*

Greetings, beloveds. It's time for us to talk about sabbatical.

The sabbatical leave is a tradition for Unitarian Universalist clergy, as it is for the university. It offers an extended time for study, reflection, rest, and renewal—all ingredients for effective ministry. A sabbatical leave is also part of our congregation's letter of agreement with me as your minister. From March through June of 2022, I will be on sabbatical. This program year so far, I've also deferred taking periodic vacation and study leave because the congregation has needed me to be fully present as we have worked to transition two staff positions, and the pandemic has continued to put stress on our community. This means that my remaining vacation and study leave will begin on Christmas Day.

So what will happen in the congregation during this time?

Our Sunday services team is already working hard to make sure our services are covered. Thanks to modern technology, we can invite speakers not just from our own congregation and community, but also the entire world. Our reopening teams are currently experimenting with how we can continue to provide that multi-platform experience

even once we can have services in the building again -- making sure we live into our commitment to be accessible to all.

While we have an excellent team of pastoral care associates, even when I am present, a caring community requires all to participate in mutual support and love. This is even more true when the minister is on sabbatical. And, many of us stop ourselves before reaching out when someone is in distress for fear of saying or doing the wrong thing. If you are interested in learning more about how to support our caring community while I'm away, please sign up for the Creating Our Caring Community workshop on November 20th. This workshop is for all who wish to deepen their skills of listening and engaging with others in meaningful ways — creating the web of the community that keeps us in covenant with each other.

Registration is here: <https://uuwinipeg.mb.ca/learning-overview/adults/congregational-life-series/creating-our-caring-community/>

We know there are other areas that you may have questions about, and the Shared Ministry Team (which becomes the Sabbatical Committee per their terms of reference) will be working with leadership and will share information as it is confirmed.

In gratitude,
Rev. Meghann

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Message from the President

by Jim Gardiner, President

Hello everyone,
Well, here we are in November.

It has been a while now since releasing the Shared Ministry Team

(SMT) Report. Most of this report shows the amount of work this community needs to do to create better communication in general and healthy processing with regards to conflict. The Board will form committees and teams to develop healthier systems and will be relying, to a large extent, on the skills and energy of those of you in our community. The report also showed some of the findings from a conflict that happened in March of 2020 and was allowed to evolve unhealthily until now. That was unfair to the community and specifically to those involved. I apologize for the role I played in both length of time and in not enough communication. Conflicts within communities will happen from time to time. That is part of being together, having different perspectives and observing things that don't sit well with you. The damage from this conflict was in the conflict itself, certainly, and it was amplified by the way it was handled inadequately and the communication that happened (or didn't happen). The SMT recognized that this was a conflict-handling and communication issue and worked very hard to highlight the work that is needed to stop this from happening again. There is a lot of

hurt and injury, specifically with both parties involved and now within the community. Like it being easy to love in loving environments... it's a lot easier to ground ourselves to our Principles in good times. This is a difficult time. We need to hold fast to our UU Principles and respectfully deal with this.

I have wondered why, in my role as a City of Winnipeg Fire Officer, I am able to handle the commander position of a large emergency scene, yet, I have had a difficult time working as president in dealing with the actions and reactions surrounding the conflict. It is partly because of how I feel about conflict but mostly, I believe, it's the closeness I feel with all of you. I would not be as good a commander in dealing with my own house on fire or my own family being extricated from a vehicle.... because I care too much. My mind has difficulty in separating my feelings for the people from the job I need to do... it's my objectivity vs ownership. It's the "own" in ownership. And I have a lot of ownership with this community. Since June, the Board has needed to dig deep into this work, and my communication with you suffered. Both in me giving you updates as well as welcoming your thoughts. That weighs heavily on me. Now that the Board is not working as much with confidential-feeling issues, it is easier to open up fully to what we are doing. I ask for your understanding. I also ask for your continued feedback.

board@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca

Jim Gardiner, BoD President

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Interim DLFD Position

Our search for an Interim DLFD continues and with the departure of Andrea James, we will enter into a period of uncertainty. But, as the pandemic is teaching us, we can view this time as an opportunity to reimagine our way forward.

Currently, the Search Team is focusing on three areas that require support. Two of them relate to programs we offer: **Religious Explorations** for our children and youth, and our **Life-span** programs for adults that include the Covenant Groups and Wellsprings. The third area we are exploring relates to the **Interim** work of a DLFD to support the congregation through grief and change and help us open to something and someone new. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, supporting the congregation in the following areas:

- **History:** Be aware of the LFD Program History
- **Mission:** Align Faith Development programs for all ages with the congregation's new Mission and Vision
- **Leadership:** Address leadership changes during the interim period
- **Connection:** Maintain associational and community linkages
- **Future:** Commit to the future of the LFD program's vitality and move toward a new model of RE delivery for children and youth

Our CUC Congregational Life Staff, Rev. Linda Thomson, is supporting our search. Also, the Search Team is holding conversations with a member of the

Guild of Interim Religious Educators to explore creative options that open us to many possibilities.

We are in a liminal time – a time in between what was and what is to come. It can be a little scary, but also exciting if we use this time to imagine moving our congregation into new ways of living into our Principles, Aspirations, and Mission. Please contact me with your thoughts, suggestions, comments, or questions at marjoy508@gmail.com and I'll share them with the Search Team.

*With gratitude, Marlene Schellenberg
for The Search Team*



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Message from the Board

Since the formation of this Board in June, there have been many transitions as well as a broad spectrum of tasks and challenges to work with and through. I think it's important to take a moment to acknowledge that for the human beings involved, there has been times where we have individually or collectively found the volume of attention needed overwhelming. Six out of the eight members of the Board ... not new to board culture, but new to this board. We have had to get to know each other and learn to collaborate well with each other while working through adversity and challenges. Many of the outputs are still in progress, however we are now able to put more energy in forward facing actions both within our own congregation and with the greater UU community. There are many opportunities and needs for your input and help.

Opening of the church to in-person services

We are not alone in the continued closure of the church building to in-person Sunday service. The majority of UU churches in Canada are also in this position. As we prepare for the decision to open our doors, we also recognize that in-person will only be one aspect of future delivery. The plan is to develop a "multi-platform" service so we can deliver and have congregation in-person while continuing to offer the virtual access that has evolved over the past year and a half (on Zoom). We are assessing what is needed and testing each Sunday, ever increasing delivery

from the sanctuary. We have applied for multiple grants towards our technology system and have received a go-ahead for one so far. We have convened a working group with members from key church committees and teams to plan our re-opening and in-person services.

We still require a "quarterback" for this. Someone with skills to work with multiple groups, build consensus, create an action plan, and deliver it to the Board. The Board, along with this working group will then bring messages to the congregation and make plans for reopening to in-person services. All of this will be guided by science and public health orders and stay within best practices while looking at the implications for all ages and abilities. We very much appreciate your feedback and participation. Please know that the Board of Directors will keep this decision at the top of mind, in consultation with the Minister and the staff.

A/V team

If you have time, energy and interest in sound, video, tech, logistics and/or event production, we are looking for willing individuals who are able to help with planning, set-up and running of the Audio/Visual/Multi-platform system.

Read on as we showcase a few of the actions we have going on. The headings below are the cluster groups (for example, "Ministry") then the Liaison from the Board (Marlene Schellenberg).

We are excited to be now ready to invite you to work with us to continue to build our community!

Jim

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Ministry: Marlene Schellenberg, Liaison

Committee Chairs

Sunday Services - Rotating Chairs

Choir - none

Pastoral Care - Co-Chairs: Bonnie Thiessen; Esmat Elhami

Lay Chaplaincy - Barb Shearer (Darlene Payne)

Religious Exploration Committee - Rob Malo

Sunday Services

Steve Lennon submitted the following:

Presently on the Team, we have Rev. Meghann, Andrea James, DLFD until end of October, Paul Rodermond for Music, and Service Coordinators Marian Siemens, Steve Lennon and Odell Havsdotter, who is also a Tech whiz. We are currently in search of more Team members, and expect to increase our numbers soon.

The Tech Team that supports the Zoom services has been expanded, thanks mostly to Odell, so that there are more than 14 members on that Team. This fall we are experimenting with producing multi-platform services, with good results thus far. With these Zoom services, we not only are reaching several of our members who could not physically come to the church, but also others who find us through electronic media from various parts of Canada, as well as the United States.

We are learning, always learning, to be inclusive, both in terms of physical ability, but also in cognitive ability and other forms of diversity. These are

common messages in many of our services. We are really striving to be truly a welcoming congregation.

Pastoral Care

Each meeting, PCT sets a goal to do brief training. They are currently working from the book *The Art of Being a Healing Presence* by James E Millar.

The Team is aware of the church's need for a Disruptive Behaviour Policy and Rev. Meghann offered strategies for addressing that.

The Team has offered the following programs/services/supports to the congregation:

- Our Caring Community Email Group
- Candles of Caring
- Sermons in Print
- Grief Circle
- Greeting Cards
- Telephone Connections - discontinued
- Elders Support

The Team currently has four Associates delivering all these supports. **It needs more volunteers**, especially to continue offering the Candles of Caring and maintaining the Our Caring Community Email Group.

Religious Education

Fall Packets were sent off to 50 or so children that included a farewell note from Andrea last week.

- We had a successful RE service on the 3rd.
- Carolyn had to resign from the RE committee to help take care of her sister in Toronto. Pat Lane had given her a designated time to resign (Sept 2021) from the RE committee a month ago.

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- The RE committee will not really exist as Rob is now the only member.
- Rob will represent the RE in the DLFD Hiring Committee and in the new In-person Service Committee.
- Rob and Debby are committed to organizing another set of packets in January if we are not meeting in person at the church.
- Rob is committed to figuring out the needs of in-person services that include unvaccinated children in the case that a new DLFD that could advise on how to move forward is not hired soon.
- Rob will recruit more RE volunteers to create a new RE committee (hopefully with the guidance of a new DLFD) once the needs for RE become clearer once all these changes have passed.

Interim DLFD Search Team

- Rob Malo (replacing Carolyn Hill-Carroll)
- Marlene Schellenberg
- Ryan Spies
- Bonnie Thiessen

Finance: Peter Miller, Liaison

Technology grant submissions
Fall Financial Statements Review meeting - Sunday, November 21st, 2021.

Grant Submissions:

We have applied for three technology grants. Ones that will help us to create amazing in-person and online experiences. We will build a system to bring the online and in-person participants closer

together, improve our audio/visual systems and create better recordings for people wishing to access previous services. We have a team that is working on this. If you have any skills or desires to help with the sound/video system, this may be for you.

Justice: Janine Reid, Liaison *Friends of Refuge Team*

Awaiting news from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) regarding our 8 applications for refugee sponsorship. We have not received any indication of any other progress on these files, perhaps slow due to the pandemic.

Social Justice Team

The Share the Plate working group under the **Social Justice team is looking for more members to decide on and then help coordinate with Share the Plate recipients.**

Our group along with other groups are starting a reconciliation working group to continue the conversation that Elder Harry Bone started. We are hoping to tie this into various aspects of church education and get a land acknowledgment onto the church website. The reconciliation group is still looking for a leader or co-leaders to get a collective movement on the ideas that the group discussed. There has been no movement on a suggested retreat to connect with other interested congregants.

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We are in the early stages of considering a merger with the Green Action Committee.

The A team

Presented to the board Sept 21st. The information shared moved forward our goal of being involved with policy etc and the job description for lifespan learning was modified. Our ongoing ask is to be involved to ensure inclusion.

Further to making us more inclusive as a church and congregation, we request that all board members attend the CUC Mental Health Matters Workshop Nov 6th ComUUnities & Mental Health Matters - Canadian Unitarian Council Conseil unitarien du Canada (cuc.ca) The A Team will have a forum after zoom church on Nov 14 to work on how to integrate information learned at the workshop into making our church more inclusive.

Green Action Committee (GAC)

We met last April to restart

Activities: provided feedback to Liz Redston on proposed changes to church grounds to create Celebration Park, garden and flower beds maintenance, organized church grounds clean-up, called attention to events like the EV day at Ikea.

We are looking for successors to organize GAC.

The Social Justice Team has offered to let someone from Green Action co-chair the group with Lara Hunter. Action-oriented subgroups and projects will continue as before, but the combined SJT would presumably be responsible for leading the congregation in the third imperative of our new mission.

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

Properties: Tanya Brothers, Liaison

Work done for Insurance company request includes:

- Brickwork on house fully repointed
- Sanding and painting of window frames and trim around windows of house
- Insulation, drywall and painting in basement mostly finished
- Working on safety plans, purchasing Automatic Defibrillator, and testing of fire alarm system (all needed by law for public buildings within Manitoba)
- Working with Audio/Video and technology to update our in house and online delivery

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Remembering our Ministers

by Gini Martin

Philip Markus Petursson 1902-1988

*The more you know of your history,
the more liberated you are. ~ Maya
Angelou*



"Minister and politician, educator and social activist, Philip M. Petursson was a beacon of progressive thought and ... an icon among Unitarians, Icelanders, and residents of Winnipeg's

West End. At the time of his death he was the longest serving Unitarian Minister...in Canada..." wrote Rev. Stefan Jonasson in *Guarding Sacred Embers. Reflections on Canadian Unitarian and Universalist History*.

Although born in the U.S., Petursson's parents moved to Saskatchewan during his childhood and then to Winnipeg. He attended Normal School and spent a year at the University of Manitoba before teaching for three years. He studied at Meadville to become a minister.

Petursson was called to All Souls' Church in Winnipeg in 1929. The English Unitarian church was founded in 1904. In 1934 Petursson became minister of the first Federated Church

(Icelandic) which had been established through a merger of the First Icelandic Unitarian Society and the Winnipeg Tabernacle. All Souls had moved from its own building and was sharing space with the Federated Church on Sargent and Banning.

Petursson spent a year in Iceland improving his command of the language. From 1935 until his retirement he preached in English in the morning service and in Icelandic in the evening. In 1944 the two churches joined.

In 1943, Petursson was named Regional Director for Western Canada by the American Unitarian Association. He was instrumental in establishing new congregations in Thunder Bay, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Calgary. He continued as Regional Director until 1966 while still serving as minister.

He was President of the Icelandic National League of North America and helped to establish an Icelandic department at the University of Manitoba, as well as amalgamating Winnipeg's two Icelandic newspapers into *Lögberg-Heimskringla*. He also served with the Welfare Council, Family Bureau, and the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Petursson opened his pulpit to progressive guests such as [J. S. Woodsworth](#), [Joe Zuken](#) and [Stanley Knowles](#). He supported controversial causes such as opposing public funding for private and parochial schools in the 1950s. He was a leader in the establishment of the Funeral Planning and Memorial Society of Manitoba.

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Remembering our Ministers continued

In addition to his contributions to the denomination, church, and the Icelandic community, Petursson held political offices: Labour Member of the Winnipeg School Board from 1942 until 1951; then he was appointed to the Winnipeg Municipal Hospital Commission.

He was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in 1966 after his retirement from the active ministry. When the New Democratic Party formed the government three years later, he joined the cabinet as Minister of Cultural Affairs from 1969 until 1971. During his tenure, he oversaw the arrangements for the celebration of Manitoba's centennial in 1970. He retired as MLA in 1977.

He remained active following his second retirement, conducting rites of passage, guest preaching, mentoring ministerial students and enjoying summers at his lakeside retreat.

In 1952, he received the Knight Cross of the Order of the Falcon, the highest honour given by the Icelandic Government, and received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from his alma mater, Meadville Theological School. In 1977, he received a [Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal](#).

Share the Plate



Pulford Community Living Services Inc., a not-for-profit community based organization, was established in November 1986 in response to the closing of a guest home that threatened to leave several people homeless. On December 1, 1986, three people moved from the guest home into their own home on Fleet Avenue, assisted by Pulford.

Since 1986, Pulford has continuously provided housing and supports to persons with a developmental disability. The supports provided by P.C.L.S. Inc. and its employees are intended to encourage and facilitate, to the greatest possible extent, the individual's ability to live and grow in ways that the individual sees fit.

Vision Statement – "An Equal and Inclusive World."

Mission Statement – "To Bring Community Together to Promote and Empower People to Live a Full Life."

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Adult Programming News

by Sonya Watson

Netflix Movie "Stuck Together"
'When Paris goes into lockdown during the pandemic, the quirky residents of an apartment building must adjust to a new life – and one another.'

Let's briefly put aside the stress of covid times, and spend an evening with some pandemic levity. First, watch the movie 'Stuck Together' on Netflix at your convenience at home. Then we'll gather on Zoom at 7 pm on Wed. Nov. 10 to discuss the movie.

What stereotypical pandemic behaviours did you notice?

Did you catch a 'glimpse' of yourself or someone you know in the movie?

What messages does the movie leave us with?

No registration is required. Just show up for the discussion using the Zoom link provided in the November 3 all-church email.

Questions? Contact Sonya at swatsonwpg@gmail.com

Is Meditation for You?

Meditation can help increase our self-awareness and be emotionally calming. The UU Meditation Group generally meets the first and third Monday of each month, from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. It is a self-directed group, with participants sharing the facilitation. Themes this fall have included:

Welcoming the autumn, letting go with the falling leaves, and looking forward to self-renewal

Being playful and creative as an adult
Finding unexpected joy

Newcomers are encouraged to try out the group. No previous meditation experience is necessary. Mark your calendars for Nov. 1 & 15, Dec. 6 & 20. Zoom links will be provided in the Wed. all-church email before each session.

Zoom Info for "Stuck Together"

Sophia Room First UU Winnipeg is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Adult Programming - Stuck Together

Time: November 10, 2021 07:00 pm
Winnipeg

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91881073846?pwd=Z01UZFPROWFYdkVCdFFvN2k0U-HZGdz09>

Meeting ID: 918 8107 3846

Passcode: 577974

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

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+1 647 558 0588 Canada

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

+1 204 272 7920 Canada

+1 438 809 7799 Canada

Meeting ID: 918 8107 3846

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/a1F7STBCj>

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Please submit materials to the editor Marjorie Doyle by email to: communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca
The **deadline** for the **December** issue is:
Wednesday, November 22nd

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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