

# First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg



## The Communicator

October 2020



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

## The theme for October is Grief

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

**October 4, 2020**

### *Healing from the Heart*

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern

Service Coordinator: Steve Lennon

Change is hard, and change has to come to all our lives in many different ways over the last several months. Come share a space with us this Sunday to grieve what has been lost during these difficult times, in order to heal for building our better future. We will also install our elected Board of Directors for this year, who have already been doing amazing leadership for us since the summer.

**Call for Photos:** We're looking for photos of your school - and/or work-from-home setups (may include you, your pets, your loved ones, etc., as you wish). Please send your children's spaces too, if applicable. These images will be featured during the service on October 4th. **Send your photo(s) to DLFD Andrea by September 29th, at [dlfd@uwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:dlfd@uwinnipeg.mb.ca).** Thank you!

**October 11, 2020**

### *Thanks, but No Thanks!*

Service Leader: Nicole McKay, Student Minister

Service Coordinator: Marian Siemens

Thanksgiving weekend is not a time of gratitude for all people. The dominant cultural expectation of joy and gratitude silences those experiencing grief - personal and

institutional. Let us create space for the fullness of our history and our humanity.

**October 18, 2020**

### *Creating Our Caring Community*

Service Leader: Rev. Meghann Robern

& our Pastoral Care Associates

Service Coordinator: Dylan Fijal

Connection takes effort and commitment even when we're not experiencing widespread disruption of our lives. Come join us for this Sunday when we will focus on caring for each other, and covenant with our Pastoral Care Associates for this coming year.

**October 25, 2020**

### *Leading Change in a Polarized World*

Service Speaker: Molly McCracken, Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Manitoba Office  
Service Leader: The Social Justice Team  
Service Coordinator: M.C. Ziegler

Grassroots movements like Black Lives Matter, Defund the Police and Climate Activists are calling for essential, transformative changes, but what is actually needed to make this happen? How do we get there? What would a progressive defunding of the police look like in Winnipeg? How can we possibly get a Green New Deal? We need to look in the mirror and let our values and ethics guide us. Education and courage

are needed to hold the important conversations, meaningfully involve more people, be a good ally, share power and lead necessary change. Join us at this Social Justice Team led service as speaker Molly McCracken of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives explores these questions and the role of spiritual communities in leading transformative change in a polarized world."

IN THIS

*Issue*

- 1 Sunday Services
- 2 From the Minister's Study  
Faith Development Notes
- 3 Living Our Faith
- 4 Faith Development Notes  
Board Notes  
Faith Development Programs
- 5 A Candle to Remember
- 6 - 7 RE FRigeration Pages
- 8 Our Endowment Fund  
Our Spiritual Home  
Fresh Coffee
- 9 Who's Who

The deadline for the **November 2020** Communicator is **Tuesday, October 20th, 2020**

## From the Minister's Study

by The Reverend Meghann Robern



"Loss is felt many times. First for what is now gone, second for what was before, and then end-

lessly for everything that might've been." -- Austin Walker

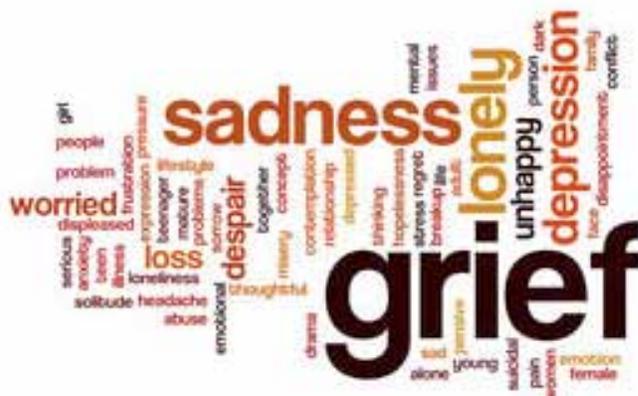
Our ministry theme for October is grief. Grief is uncomfortable, heart-wrenching, devastating... and inescapable. It's part of the human condition, and as the Rev. James Luther Adams told us, "Church is where we practice what it means to be human." Here, in this community that gathers by choice, is where we are called to help each other confront and move through our grief.

One of the most important things we must remember, in our physical and virtual spaces we create with each other, is that grief comes for many different things and manifests in many different ways. It follows its own timeline, has no patience for your convenience, and often comes

in waves that make us feel like we haven't healed even the tiniest bit. Moving through grief with each other is a way for us to live into our shared values of compassion, grace, and love.

One of Unitarian Universalism's biggest struggles, across congregations, regions, and countries, is that we don't spend enough time working on our emotional intelligence, especially around pain and suffering. You will be tempted, this month, to retreat into intellectualism and academic theory around grief in order to protect your heart. I would invite you to explore that resistance. In the words of my beloved colleague, the Rev. Jake Morrill, "I hope you'll do more than theorize. I hope you'll share stories. I hope you'll be in touch with the part of you now that's experiencing grief. Grief in your relationships, and grief applied in a broader context--for democracy and for our earth under assault. Find a way to connect with that grief, and you'll find a way this month to connect with love itself."

In gratitude and faith,  
The Rev. Meghann Robern



## Faith Development Notes

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

### October

- 1 Evening *Wellspring: Sources* with DLFD Andrea begins  
October RE Packets will arrive around now
- 3 *Creating Our Caring Community* (Saturday) - 10:00-2:30
- 4 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**  
Popcorn Theology for Youth begins, **3:00-6:00 pm** (1st Sundays)
- 5 Parents & Caregivers as Sexuality Educators begins, **7:00-8:30 pm**
- 6 Elders Reflections, **11:30 am - 1:30 pm** (1st Tuesdays)
- 8 *Afternoon Wellspring: Sources* with Rev. Meghann begins
- 10 2nd Saturdays Covenant Group begins
- 11 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**
- 13 2nd Tuesdays Covenant Group begins
- 14 2nd Wednesdays Covenant Group begins
- 15 **Deadline** to [register for New to First UU](#)
- 16 3rd Fridays Covenant Group begins
- 18 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**

continued on page 3

## Living Our Faith

by Andrea James, Director of Lifespan Faith Development



One year ago our congregation hosted a multi-day, multi-ministry *Dialogue on Death*, with workshops,

art installations, death cafes, worship services for all ages, a trade show, family night, and more, all with the goal of normalizing conversations about dying, death, and grieving. And so, I will speak plainly about grief here.

Last month marked 15 years since my mom died. My kids were ten and almost-five, and she was a wonderful mother and a great friend. Not long after she died, my partner Murray was laid off in a publishing industry that was shrinking.

My grief was multilayered. I grieved my own loss and my mom's loss of seeing her grandkids grow into the amazing young women they are now. I felt the loss on behalf of my kids who wouldn't have their grandma in their lives. I grieved for my dad's pain. I grieved for people who don't have a chance to say goodbye, as I did, and for those with much more complicated mother/child relationships than mine. My family felt grief related to the unknown and the loss of "normal" following the loss of a career and many months of searching for work.

A few years later we waded through grief again, as one of our daughters experienced serious mental illnesses. We felt the loss of the

child we'd known, as we struggled to care for the child she then was. We grieved again the unknown and the loss of "normal". This is a grief familiar to many - the kind that is invisible, often private, and sometimes connected to shame. Mental illness, chronic pain, caregivers, loved ones of those with dementia, alzheimer's, or other brain changes - all may come with grief that goes unspoken, or gets forgotten.

And now we all find ourselves in the midst of collective grief as we live through a pandemic, losing our sense of "normal", with plenty of unknown ahead. Many of us also grieve world events from climate disasters, to systemic racism, to

### Wading into, and out the other side of, grief.

increasing oppression of those with targeted identities. It's hard at times to even realize or comprehend the collective trauma, fear, anger, and grief. What can we do?

It helped me, last month, to read the words of Dr. Aisha Ahmad, a woman who has lived in disaster zones before, and who wrote a thread on Twitter about hitting a wall about six months in. She says, "the wall is real and normal. And frankly, it's not productive to try to ram your head through it. It will break naturally in about 4-6 weeks if you ride it out... Right now, if you can meet you[r] obligations and be kind to your loved ones, you get an A+." [Read the whole thread here](#), and take heart. Knowing I've waded into grief and then *out the other side*, means I will get through this one too.

In faith,  
Andrea  
[dlfd@uwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:dlfd@uwinnipeg.mb.ca)

## Faith Development Notes

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

### October continued

- 19 Parents & Caregivers as Sexuality Educators, **7:00 - 8:30 pm**
- 20 3rd Tuesdays Covenant Group begins
- 21 3rd Wednesdays Covenant Group begins
- 23 POP adults group, with Debby, 1:30-2:30 pm (4th Fridays)
- 23-25 Western Region Fall Youth Conference  
DLFD Andrea will be attending the LREDA Fall Conference
- 25 **RE** for registered school-aged children - **10:00-10:20 am**
- 26 4th Mondays Covenant Group begins  
Parents & Caregivers as Sexuality Educators **7:00 - 8:30 pm**
- 29 *New to First UU* begins

## Board Notes

by Lauren Bailey, President



Hello everyone,

Thank you to everyone who participated in the September 20 and 27 Visioning kickoff events. They were better

attended than we expected and we have a lot of food for thought for our next steps.

Our mission and vision informs what we do in our committees, as well as our direction for Sunday services and our work in the greater community. Examining it every few years lets us stay current to our values and confirm our choices for our work.

Thank you also to our volunteer group of administrators who have taken over the Office Administrator position after Pam retired in May. They have all agreed to continue on through the rest of the year.

Our volunteer administrators include:

- Marjorie Doyle - emails, phone, and general office administration
- Liz Redston and Darlene Payne - rentals
- Jenny Gerbasi - all-church email
- Laurie Marcella - church calendar
- Kristin Jimmy - filing/archives
- Larry Phillips and Anne Bigalow - accounting

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.

I want to hear from you. You can contact me at [president@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:president@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca).

## Faith Development Programs

by Andrea James, Director of Lifespan Faith Development

### Coming Up

*Are you new to this congregation?*

Look for [New to First UU](#) to learn about who we are and what we do. Register by **October 15th**.

### New!

[Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators](#) builds comfort in talking about sexuality-related topics and offers skill-building activities. The sessions focus on adults' needs as parents and caregivers. Participants are invited to engage deeply with their hopes and fears, their values and practices. This program emphasizes the adult's ongoing responsibility to share accurate, current information, as needed, with their child or youth. **Register by October 1st.**

### Popcorn Theology for Youth

Join with youth from Saskatchewan and Alberta to watch a movie online then explore how it connects to your values, oppression, resilience, truth, privilege, justice, and more.

Co-facilitated by Andrea James (Winnipeg) and Sheila MacMaster (Calgary)

Movies: *Zootopia*; *Hotel Rwanda*; *Moana*; *A Wrinkle in Time*; *The Hunger Games*; *GATTACA*; *Gandhi*; *Bruce Almighty*

Scroll down on our [Youth page](#) to register.

Please visit the church website [uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](http://uuwinnipeg.mb.ca) and look under the Learning tab for much more information about all of these programs and more, and to register.



## The Remarkable Laura Goodman Salverson

by Gini Martin

### A Candle to Remember

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

To support our Caring Community's thoughtful approach to knowing where we came from, we are excited to offer the first submission in our A Candle to Remember.



Laura Goodman Salverson,  
age 14

Laura Goodman Salverson, the award-winning author is self-identified as Unitarian in *Who's Who in Canada* in the 1940s and 1950s. She is also listed as one of the speakers almost 80 years ago when our church celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Laura was born in Winnipeg in 1890 to immigrant parents from Iceland. The family struggled economically and moved frequently. She left Winnipeg as a child but returned in the early 1940s and lived here for about 15 years. Self-educated, she published a number of books, over 150 short stories, and a volume of poetry. Laura was the first person of Icelandic heritage to win a Governor General (GG) award for her novel, *The Dark Weaver*, in 1937. Her autobiography *Confessions of an Immigrant's Daughter* won a second GG award, this time for non-fiction in 1939. All of her books are out of print now but many are available at used book stores and on the web. She was the founder and first editor of the Icelandic Canadian (now the Icelandic Connection), for which she wrote many articles. She also was president of the Winnipeg Chapter of PEN.

Ahead of her time, in the 1920s and 1930s she addressed women's social issues and struggles, especially those of immigrant women, in a compassionate and eloquent voice. The dedication in her 1925 novel, *When Sparrows Fall*, reads:

Dedicated  
To  
Nellie L. McClung  
Who has been a voice for the voiceless  
The humble women of her land

Her writing is compelling for many reasons but two stand out. The first is the story of her remarkable life. She overcame ill health, poverty, a need to earn a living, and limited education to fulfill her dream of becoming a writer. She worked as a maid, a seamstress, a retail clerk, a nurse's aid, and ran a boarding house – many of the jobs immigrant women hold today. She became a published award-winning writer in her second language, a rare accomplishment.

Second, her insight into illustrating women's issues is compelling in its eloquence. In the 1920s and 30s, she wrote of domestic abuse, the hypocrisy of organized religion, the exploitation of older sisters who were expected to look after their younger siblings while their brothers were not expected to help. She wrote of the difficulties of young working women who had to keep up appearances and would cut food to pay for laundry, of the status and working conditions of household help, of the difficulty of finding employment, of piece work in factories, of a loveless marriage entered into for economic reasons. Her description of working in her aunt's maternity hospital is especially provocative.

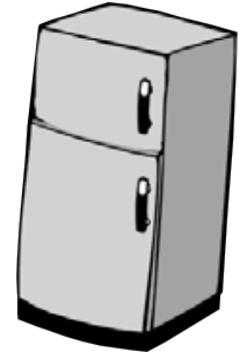
In a copy I owned of her autobiography, signed in 1939, she wrote, "Yours for Canadian Literature" above her name!

(Endnotes)

1 Library and Archives Canada, Laura Goodman Salverson Fonds, accession number 1971-03



# RE-Frigerator Page



## We Celebrate...

Our theme for this month is *Grief*. Which is not the most fun subject on the planet, but it does seem appropriate for the times. *Grief* is what we feel in response to loss, and all of us have lost something—and maybe many things. You might have lost the chance to be with friends, to play on a sports team, to go to school in person, to spend time with grandparents or other family members. Maybe you have been grieving the ability to go to a movie or have a sleepover

or eat in a restaurant or act in or watch a play. Any maybe your grief is even deeper if someone you love has gotten sick or died.

Of course, grief is nothing new. It's not as if we didn't have losses before COVID19 struck. Loss is a fact of life. Everyone who is born is also going to die, and in the midst of life we don't just learn and grow. Things also break. We lose relationships and favorite toys and ways of seeing the world. Sometimes we lose

abilities rather than gaining them. Lots of the time we look forward to things that don't happen, or don't come out the way we hoped.

Grief is an inevitable part of life. But it is something that becomes easier to bear when we have the caring support of others, and when we can offer our care and support to those who are grieving.

Family Quest  
of the Church of  
the Larger  
Fellowship

Oct. 2020



## We Honor...

Clara Barton's early life was marked by grief. Her family teased her because she was small and shy and had a lisp. Her mother suffered from mental illness and had fits of rage. Her older sister, who cared for her, had an emotional breakdown and her older brother was seriously injured at a construction site.

ing wounded soldiers in her sister's home, visiting the army camps, and was soon managing the delivery of supplies from numerous Ladies Aid societies. After a short time, she began working on the front lines, delivering supplies and tending to wounded soldiers.



Cross was founded, but the first few years of the organization's existence were difficult. Barton's own health was often damaged by overwork, and although she was a passionate advocate for the agency's relief work, her lack of administrative skills often caused problems. She persevered, however, and served as the President of the Red Cross until 1904, when she retired at the age of 83. She died eight years later in 1912.

Clara took care of her brother over the two years that it took him to recover. And she discovered that for her, the way out of grief was through helping people.

After the Civil War ended, Barton visited Europe and learned of the International Red Cross. She returned home determined to start an American chapter, struggling against the political mood of the time.

She was living in Washington, D.C. when the U.S. Civil War landed at her doorstep. She began nurs-

In 1881 the American Red

## Talk About It!

- ☺ What has been the biggest source of grief in your life?
- ☺ What are you grieving at the moment?
- ☺ What helps you when you feel sad?
- ☺ How do you offer help to friends or family who are grieving?
- ☺ What song lifts you up when you feel sad?

## Act...

It's not obvious what to do when someone you care about is grieving. It can be tempting to pull away and avoid someone who is hurting, whether because we don't want to intrude or we don't know what to say or simply because it is uncomfortable to be around someone in pain.

But people who are feeling grief need the support of their friends more than ever. So what can you do you help?

- Show up. Be around. Invite them to come over, or to do something together.

- Listen. Ask how they are doing. Pay attention to the answer, and ask questions that show you really want to know what they have to say.
- Affirm rather than trying to fix. You don't need to make anything better, unless something you have done is why they are sad. You can affirm that they have every reason to feel sad, that they are entitled to their feelings and that grief is a normal part of being human.
- Let them be the center. It's

tempting to turn very quickly from other people's stories to our own. If you've been in a similar situation and learned something from it, there's a place to share what is true for you. But make sure that the person who you want to offer comfort to has room to tell their own stories and know that you have heard them.

- It's OK to be quiet. Being with someone, offering a hug or a hand on their shoulder if you can be together in physical space, can be more comfort than a bunch of words.

## Nurturing the Spirit

We grieve when people we love die, and we miss them. But we also carry them with us in memory. One way to express how we hold those who have died in loving memory is to create an altar with items that remind us of the loved one who has died.

Your altar might have a collar and dish or favorite toy of a pet who you hold in loving memory. Or it might have pictures and a favorite kind of food or drink or a small special belonging of a grandparent or family friend who you miss.

In many cultures people keep family

altars to honor their ancestors—not only those people from your family who you remember and miss, but also those people who are part of your heritage and family story, who you might never have met.

If your heritage comes from a birth family, rather than your adoptive family, you might want to have an altar that honors people who you might or might not know in person, but who are part of who you are.

Loss is part of everyone's life, but we can continue to hold those who are physically gone close to our hearts.



## Practicing the Principles

Our 7th UU Principle is:

~~~~~  
Respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part  
~~~~~

That principle, that we are connected to all of life, is generally a source of joy, not grief. But being connected to all of life means that when something hurts the natural world, it hurts all of us.

And there's no denying that the world



as a whole is suffering. Wildlife habitats are being paved over or burned at an astounding rate. Species are

going extinct. Climate change threatens all of us with fire and flood and drought and hurricanes and rising sea levels.

The earth is hurting badly, and we grieve along with it.

As with any grief, it matters that we acknowledge our feelings, not try to hide from them or deny them. Our grief about how so many strands in our interdependent web are being cut can lead us to action to preserve what remains, and to build a world in which all our relations can thrive.

---

Learn more about Clara Barton: <https://uudb.org/articles/clarabarton.html>

Resources for kids on climate change: <https://www.climaterealityproject.org/blog/just-kids-what-climate-change-and-what-can-i-do>

## Our Endowment Fund

by Linda Henderson



As was reported in last month's Endowment Fund article, our dear friend

and Trustee, David Livingstone, died this summer. In spite of this tragic loss, the work of the Endowment Fund must proceed. The Board has appointed long time church member, **Doug Wasyliw** to fill the 3rd Trustee vacancy.

Doug "signed the book", and became a member of our congregation, in 1985. As well, he has previous experience with the Endowment Fund, serving as a former Trustee in the 1990's. In his own words, Doug tells us: **"My experience as a planner in the Financial Services industry may benefit Endowment Committee efforts. I look forward to working with Linda and James to further the goals of this committee"**.

During Doug's time as a member of our church community, his two daughters attended Religious Exploration, while he attended Sunday Services. They are now both grown, and Doug has attained grandfather status.

Over the years, Doug has joyfully lent his hand serving as a guest Shop Keeper in our UU Gift Shop, as well as helping out at JUMBO Yard Sales, and various other Fundraising events in the life of our congregation. More recently, now retired and residing in Winnipeg once again, Doug has joined our Elders Group, participated in sanctuary Scrabble Games, has signed up for a Covenant group, and regularly attends Sunday Services by Zoom.

Along with our Board, both James and I extend a warm welcome to our newest Trustee, as Doug rejoins us in the investment work of our Endowment Fund.

## Our Spiritual Home

Our spiritual home is so much more than a building and we do have a property that requires occasional touch ups. We can't do it without U!

Thanks to past Properties volunteers and caretaking staff we have a beautiful space. If you like to work with tools you are invited join the Properties crew to keep '603' ship shape for us and to attract renters. We even have tape measures to keep you working COVID safe. To get in touch with your inner hammer contact Michael at: [mikeproperties603@gmail.com](mailto:mikeproperties603@gmail.com)



Board Liaison, Heather, will loan her beloved flower power hammer to anyone who wants to nail it by volunteering.

## Fresh Coffee

by Steve Lennon

Just in: a fresh supply of Level Ground **Fair Trade coffee**, Colombian coffee that tastes great and also gives the farmers a fair price. I have been enjoying this coffee every morning for more than 20 years.

In the **300-gram** size (454g no longer available), we have **dark beans** and **dark ground**. This coffee is



full-bodied and has less caffeine than medium roast. Cost is **\$15 delivered** to your door, **or \$12 if you pick up** at Steve's home at 116 Oakwood Ave.

We also have **dark beans** and **dark ground** in the 2.27 kg (5 lb) box for **\$80 delivered**, or **\$75 pick up**. Cash, cheque or e-transfer to the church.

Contact Steve to order 204.781.6549 (sorry, no text) or [stevenjlennon@gmail.com](mailto:stevenjlennon@gmail.com)



## Who's Who

Minister

**the Reverend Meghann Robern**  
[minister@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:minister@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Student Minister

**Nicole McKay**  
[nmckay@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:nmckay@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Director of Lifespan Faith Development

**Andrea James**  
[dlfd@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:dlfd@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Lay Chaplain

**Barb Shearer**

Board President

**Lauren Bailey**  
[president@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:president@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Pastoral Care Coordinator

**Bonnie Thiessen**  
[pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:pastoralcare@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Music Director

**PJ Buchan**

Choir Accompanist

**Paul Rodermond**

Caretaker

**Ray Aikens**

Webmaster

**Karin Carlson**  
[webmaster@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:webmaster@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Rental Events Director

[rentals@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:rentals@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Newsletter Editor

**Marjorie Doyle**  
[communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Editorial Assistant

**Linda Henderson**

Office Administrator

[office@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:office@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)

Please submit materials to the editor Marjorie Doyle by email to: [communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](mailto:communicator@uuwinnipeg.mb.ca) or 204.663.2126

The **deadline** for the **November** issue is: **Tuesday, October 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.

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](http://www.uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)