

First Unitarian Church of Victoria Pocket Guide



5th edition

First Unitarian Church of Victoria

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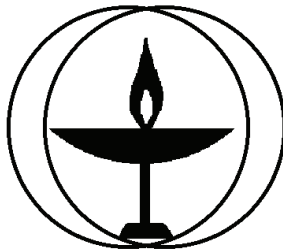
Email: churchoffice@victoriaunitarian.ca

Website: www.victoriaunitarian.ca

*We welcome you,
whoever you are, whatever
tradition, gender, race,
sexual orientation,
or age you represent.*

*In our presence may you walk the ways of
truthfulness, service and reverence for life.*

*And as well, may you
experience the warmth,
support and challenge of this
liberal religious community.*



**In the spirit of gratitude we
acknowledge the hospitality of the
Saanich First Nations
who have welcomed us to their
historic homeland.**

The Pocket Guide is produced by the Newcomers Committee
First Unitarian Church of Victoria. Fifth edition October 2008

Searching.....

for just the place to hold your

~conference?

~wedding?

~baby dedications?

~CD recording?

~workshop?

~concert?

~retreat?

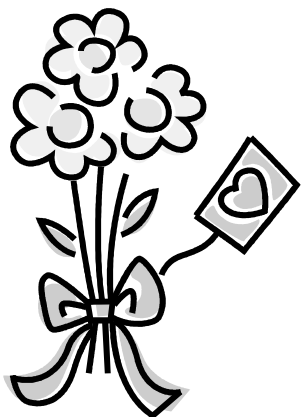
We offer:

- A delightful country setting with plenty of green space and a place to stroll*
- A main building of graceful modern architecture, light-filled space, hardwood floors, and grand piano*
- A choice of rooms (our largest seats up to 225)*
- Parking for 100 cars*
- Two fully equipped kitchens*
- Outdoor balcony space for coffee and conversation*
- Twenty minutes from downtown Victoria and the same distance from traffic noise and exhaust fumes*
- Reasonable rates*

To see our facilities or to enquire about our rates, phone the church office : 744-2665 or email bookings@victoriaunitarian.ca

New Member Ceremony

This is an opportunity for us to formally welcome our new members, and for our new members to affirm their choice to belong to our congregation. After this service a lunch is held for our new members—an opportunity to celebrate! An outline of this service is included in the membership package, available at the information kiosk or church office.



We welcome you in two places

Victoria is blessed with two Unitarian Universalist congregations - the other one is the Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

Formed in March 1996 in James Bay, "Capital" is a small, funky, lay-led congregation that meets at 10 a.m. every Sunday in rented space at 234 Menzies Street. For this ethnically and theologically diverse UU congregation, the homily topics cover a broad range and are not always directly Unitarian. Sunday services include chalice lighting, singing, a story for the children, spoken joys and concerns, a homily, and coffee time. The "Forum" discussion after coffee is a favorite time for feedback and deeper discussion of the homily topic.

Capital and First Unitarian cooperate on such issues as lay chaplaincy and social responsibility, and members of the two congregations connect for social events and combined work.

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Become a Friend of FUCV

Adult Friend status is available to those who are:

- 16 years of age or over
- supportive of the aims and objectives of Unitarianism as expressed in the Unitarian Statement of Principles
- willing to support the Church's Constitution and By-laws
- willing to make an identified financial contribution according to his or her means
- willing to participate in the life of the Church, as able

Friends receive the following benefits:

- may participate in all aspects of church life, including membership on committees and task forces, but not as Chairperson
- a subscription to FUCV's monthly newsletter *The Victoria Unitarian*, and our weekly email, *The E-weekly*.
- a copy of our Church Community phone directory
- inclusion in a neighbourhood group

When the time comes that you feel comfortable exploring the idea of joining our community please ask for a membership package from the information table.

Student Membership is available to members of the UVIC Unitarian Club and full time students at the University of Victoria, Camosun College, Royal Roads University, or University of Canada West. Student Members will have access to pastoral care, our library, neighbourhood groups, chalice circles and other church activities but are not required to make a financial contribution to the church. We encourage and welcome student members to participate in the life of the congregation. More student member information can be obtained from the UVIC Unitarian club or by contacting the church office.

Joining Our Community

There are three ways to join our congregation.

Become a Member of FUCV

Adult membership is available to those who are:

- 16 years of age or over
- supportive of the aims and objectives of Unitarianism as expressed in the Unitarian Statement of Principles
- willing to support the Church's Constitution and By-laws
- willing to make an identified financial contribution according to their means
- willing to participate in the life of the Church, as able

Members receive the following benefits:

- pastoral care from the Minister
- performance of rites of passage free of charge
- voice and vote at General Meetings of the congregation
- may participate in all aspects of church life, including membership on committees and task forces
- may be elected or appointed to Church office
- may serve as delegate at denominational meetings such as the Canadian Unitarian Council and the British Columbia Regional Council, and may serve on denominational committees and task forces
- a subscription to FUCV's monthly newsletter *The Victoria Unitarian*, our weekly email, *The E-weekly* and the CUC newsletter, *The Canadian Unitarian*
- registration with the CUC
- a copy of our Church Community phone directory
- inclusion in a neighbourhood group

Welcome to the First Unitarian Church of Victoria

We are a community that welcomes your spiritual and ethical quest for a meaningful life. We welcome diversity in thought, outlook and orientation. We come from a wide variety of religious and secular backgrounds and from all walks of life. We encourage each and all to think, question and explore. Here you will find accepting friends and a home for your spiritual and community needs. The First Unitarian Church of Victoria (FUCV) offers a non-dogmatic, and open faith. You and your family can build your own theology and find a lively community that enjoys the arts, music and learning.

Services of interest to newcomers:

The Newcomers Committee

We are here to welcome you warmly and to answer any questions you may have. Contact us directly at explore@victoriaunitarian.ca.

The Information Kiosk

The information kiosk is located in the main foyer of the church. On it you will find a large amount of information about our church and the Canadian Unitarian Council. Please feel free to take away as much information as you need.

The E-weekly

Every Thursday an E-weekly is sent out. This email outlines the weeks upcoming events and other communications from the church. You can sign up to receive the E-weekly by contacting the church office or the Newcomers Committee. This is a great way to hear about upcoming events and ways to get involved.

The Victoria Unitarian Newsletter

We publish a monthly newsletter.

There are four ways to get a copy.

1. We can send you a PDF copy- send an email to the church office to request this.
2. You can request a paper copy for three months free of charge.
3. you can access the newsletter on line at: <http://www.victoriaunitarian.ca/programs/newsletter/index.php>.
The passwords you will need are *guest* and *revelation*.
4. You can pick up a copy at the information kiosk.

Transportation

Members, friends or visitors needing occasional transportation to a First Unitarian Church Sunday service should email rides@victoriaunitarian.ca or phone Gloria Turner at (250) 389-1789 before 8:00 p.m. on the Friday prior to the service to be attended. For visitors who phone the church office ((250) 744-2665) before 4:00pm on Friday, the message will be forwarded to Gloria. Please leave your name, address and phone number. We can't guarantee a ride, but we'll do our very best. Those who need transportation to attend services on a regular basis are encouraged to contact their Neighbourhood Group to arrange carpooling. Go green - carpool.

Parking

Our church is located in a rural area in Saanich, about 20 minutes from the urban centre of Victoria. We have several parking areas around the church buildings, providing 100 stalls with stalls designated to handicapped parking. In case the number of cars exceeds the available places, parallel parking can be used along the north side of Matterhorn Drive. To stay on good terms with our neighbours further up the road, we urge you to use the north side only. Parking on West Saanich Road is not allowed. Mindful of our commitment to our environment we strongly recommend carpooling.

First Unitarian Church of Victoria Foundation

Run by a separate society made up of our Members, this fund will provide money to support services or program needs in the areas that are important to our members. The Foundation will do this, for example, by funding activities related to spiritual growth and development in :

- art and music
- environmental protection
- programs to relieve poverty and discrimination
- campus ministry
- fellowship and retreats
- religious education

This fund accepts applications from all Unitarian fellowships on Vancouver Island and Powell River.

Food Bank Fund

This fund is to provide for donations to area food banks through the FUCV.



The Lifeline List

This project allows our church to respond to urgent needs we hear about among local low-income families. Sometimes the need is for help with the groceries or in paying a daycare bill, perhaps help with part of the rent; sometimes it's for special food or to pay a phone bill so an important service can remain available to a family. Sometimes it relates to a child's special needs.

1. Sponsors who volunteer their names for our church's Lifeline List will only be called upon in a specific, pressing situation. They will be given what details can be shared while maintaining confidentiality.
2. They will never be asked for more than \$200 and they will get a tax receipt.
3. They will not be called upon more than once a year.

Special Funds

FUCV has a wide variety of funds that they use to fund specific purposes. People who wish to support specific projects may be interested in these funds. Listed here are only a few of these funds. All contributions are tax deductible. For further information contact the Church Office.

The Endowment Fund

The interest from The Endowment Fund capital is available to help maintain our basic family home. It will finance modest capital needs such as replacing furniture, upgrading kitchen equipment or replacing the hot water tank. The Endowment Fund may also be used to assist in services or programs such as paying expenses for a member to attend a church conference, workshop or training program.

Mortgage Retirement Fund

This fund raises extra money to pay down the mortgage. One way money is raised for this fund is by offering pieces of 'mortgage cake' for donation after services during coffee time.

Buildings, Equipment and Grounds Fund (BEG)

This fund has been set up to cover special repairs and maintenance for our buildings, equipment and grounds. Each year a specific amount of the annual campaign fund is set aside to cover this. Individual donations can also be made.

Andy Wynn Social Responsibility Fund

This fund is used to promote the principles of Unitarianism through social action in the larger community beyond FUCV. Also, to provide for projects directed to specific needs of children, youth and adults not normally financed through the church budget.

Church Orientation

Join us for a bowl of soup and great conversation after church service for one hour. We will talk about our church - how our congregation is run; responsibility of membership; opportunities to share and grow; and answer any questions you may have. Orientation is open to all and it is a good idea to attend an orientation before formally joining our community. Child care will be provided upon request. Church orientation will be held in October, January, March and April. Watch the newsletter for exact dates.

Church Tours

Want to know what is down the long hallway? Just where do all the children disappear to? Where is the green room, the Boardroom or Memorial Wall? To find out book a church tour! This 30 minute walking tour will take you to the many parts of our church and show you all the wonderful spaces we have. Contact the Newcomers committee at: explore@victoriaunitarian.ca

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of people come to FUCV?

You'll find a wide variety of people at FUCV. We talk about diversity a lot, and strive to welcome it. Many of our members are people who have attended another church and found the community valuable but weren't able to accept the beliefs. We have a reasonably strong Wiccan and Buddhist presence, and many members who do not believe in a God at all. There is a much stronger GLBT presence here than you will find in most congregations--same sex couples generally feel very comfortable in our community. Acceptance is very important to our membership.

What do Unitarian Universalists believe?

Unitarian Universalists believe a wide variety of things. You will find UU Buddhists, Taoists, Christians, Agnostics, Atheists, as well as people who have trouble classifying their beliefs. What we have in common are our seven principles and the desire for a community where we can be accepted regardless of what we believe.

How do you worship together if you don't all believe the same thing?

There are two strategies we use--flexibility and "taking turns". Flexibility for us means choosing things that can mean different things to different people. A minute of silence can mean prayer, meditation, or reflection. Lighting a candle can be spiritual or social. We also have a wide variety in our services--some are more tailored to people with a stronger spiritual side, and some are more academic. This is worth remembering the first few times you come--what is said from the pulpit often reflects simply the beliefs of that speaker and may be quite different the following Sunday.

What should I wear? What should my children wear?

You should wear whatever you are most comfortable in. Most people dress casually (jeans are fine), but some people dress up. Your children should wear something they can play in.

Is there childcare and/or Sunday School? What is taught?

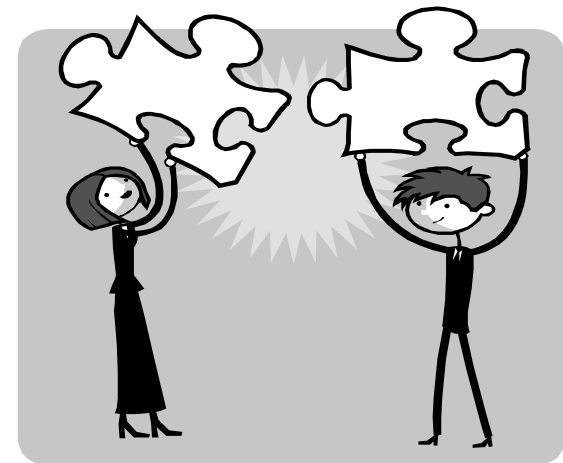
We have a program for all ages--from our nursery to our youth group. We hire a part time Director of Religious Education, who oversees our children's program. See page 18 for more details.

What provisions do you have for people with disabilities?

Our main floor is wheelchair accessible, and our Sanctuary is equipped with a hearing aid loop.

energy to ensure that the 'business' of the church is taken care of responsibly.

We have significant assets as a congregation, in excess of \$1.4 million, including buildings and land valued at \$1.19 million, and an endowment fund of \$173,000. Our annual operating budget is \$344,000, which pays for all the programs and services which we provide. In addition, church members and friends contribute nearly \$50,000 annually to social justice projects and other worthy causes. We are a generous congregation and we count on each other to contribute what we can to sustain this religious community.



Annual Canvass

Each Unitarian Universalist congregation in Canada is financially autonomous, which means we must raise our own operating funds. Once a year, during the annual fall canvass campaign, all members and friends are given the opportunity to pledge money to support the First Unitarian Church of Victoria for the following year. Many of our members pay their pledges through automatic monthly bank withdrawals.

Pledges and contributions from members and friends make up 75% of the operating revenue each year, with the other 25% coming from fund-raising and rentals. Given our current membership base of about 275 people, we count on an average of \$1200 per member or family in annual contributions to sustain our operating budget. People in modest circumstances are able to contribute less and those in a more prosperous position contribute substantially more. Whatever the level of the pledge, we hope our members feel good about their ability to support our liberal religious community.

The First Unitarian Church of Victoria operates as a charitable organization and is led by an elected Board of Trustees, who have responsibility for prudent financial management and oversight. All of us who are part of the financial management and leadership of the Church are committed to being responsive, proactive and transparent in our approach, and we spend significant time and

What holds Unitarians together?

Seven Principles.

Unitarians covenant to affirm and promote:

- the inherent worth and dignity of every person.
- justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
- acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
- a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
- the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
- the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.
- respect for the inter-dependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition we share draws from many sources:

- direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.
- words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transcending power of love.
- wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbours as ourselves.
- humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- spiritual teaching of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Mission Statement

As celebrants in the life and work of our Unitarian Church, we are committed to maintaining a liberal religious community on Vancouver Island.



Vision Statement

It is our vision that the First Unitarian Church of Victoria be a dynamic, purposeful, tolerant, social and spiritual community. In celebrating our faith, we commit ourselves and commend to others: harmonious acceptance of our inherent diversity; nurturance of freedom of thought and action; and democratic decision-making within our congregation and throughout the world.

Outreach Council

Denominational Affairs	Webmaster
Partner Church	Newsletter
Publicity and Advertising	
Welcoming/Celebrating	

Property Management Council

Art and Aesthetics	Accessibility
Building Use	Health and Safety
Gardens and Grounds	Memorial Garden Advisory Group
Housekeeping	
Maintenance	

Relations Council

Human Resources	Conflict Management and Sexual Misconduct
Recognition and Awards Committee on Ministry	
DRE Relations	
Lay Chaplaincy	

Social Responsibility Council

Poverty	International Affairs
Social Justice	Governance
Environment	First Nations

Worship and Celebration Council

Worship	Audiovisual Team
Music	Flowers/holiday decor
Usher Coordinator	

Opportunities to Share

Sharing is a big part of U*U life. We share ideas, care, concern, talents, time and money.

Committees

For the church to run effectively and offer the programs, activities and special events that we do, many volunteers, on many committees, are needed. The opportunities to share your special skills and be involved are numerous. From social justice to gardening, from fundraising to music—people are needed in all areas to create the dynamic community we are. The Church governance consists of a Board of twelve Trustees and eight Councils with the following committees or coordinating groups.

Congregational Life Council

Care and Concern	Circle Dinners
Newcomers Committee	Fun and Fellowship
Neighbourhood Groups	Solos
Newsletter	Greeters Coordinator
Transportation	Women's /Men's groups

Finance Council

Financial Planning	Computer Advisory
Capital Investment	Insurance
Operational Financial Management	Fundraising Events
	Financial Canvass

Lifespan Learning Council

Children and Youth RE	Archives and History
Adult RE	Library
Young Adults Program	Spirituality Group
Chalice Circles	Young Adults Group

Our Church's History



The Unitarian presence in the Victoria area can be traced back to 1909 but it was not until 1911 that a minister was in place. Between 1911 and 1919 there were several ministers but from then until 1927, the church was without a minister. Services continued with the assistance of visiting English and American ministers. There was a small church school for the children. The final service of this small group was held June 26, 1927.

In 1950, a new Unitarian fellowship began with monthly meetings in members' homes. The group remained small, numbering fewer than 20 members.

The church community grew between 1958 and 1963 and a new church school was established. On October 12, 1958, there was a charter member registration with 38 new members. The fellowship continued to grow and arrangements were made to secure the services of a minister-at-large to help the fellowship achieve church status. When this was done, the church was able, in 1977, to buy an older building at 106 Superior Street. This remained the church's home until it was sold in 1993. The church then purchased its present property in 1994. The newly built sanctuary opened to great fanfare on April 4th, 1999. More Church history can be found in our library, especially in the book, *Unitarians In Victoria 1871 to 2000* by Shirley Wright d'Estrube.

Meet our Minister Reverend Jane Bramadat

Jane Bramadat was born in Dauphin, Manitoba, and grew up in Winnipeg.

Among her childhood memories:

- *going out to a farm in rural Manitoba and helping relatives with a variety of farm chores- bringing the cows in for milking; picking off potato bugs; preparing meals for those working in the fields.
- *learning how to play the piano and violin and being part of a school orchestra that toured the province.
- *singing and playing the violin in several Gilbert and Sullivan operettas.

She earned a Master of Educational Psychology at the University of Manitoba and for five years was a counselor at an inner city school.

Jane was active in the Winnipeg Unitarian church and later served on the CUC Board and attended/taught at five Leadership Schools.

She took a Master of Arts in Religious Studies at the University of Winnipeg to fulfill the requirements for the U*U ministry and then was ordained at the Winnipeg Unitarian Church in 1983 and subsequently served Unitarian churches in Edmonton, Thunder Bay and London, Ontario.

In 2000, she took the training required to be an accredited interim minister and, in 2001 she became the interim minister in Anchorage, Alaska.

labyrinth in their spiritual practice. Its imagery inspires a meandering but purposeful path, representing a journey to our own center and back again, re-emerging into the world.

Walk of Remembrance and Memorial Wall

These clearly identified yet discreet areas are dedicated to memorializing church members and their families, and may be used independently or together by scattering ashes along the Path of Remembrance and by placing plaques on the Memorial Wall. Those interested in using these facilities are encouraged to contact the church office for more information.

Artful Celebration

In addition to special event Art Shows, each month the Sanctuary features the visual art of one of First Unitarian's congregants. This is another way of acknowledging and celebrating our individuality.

Special events

We host a number of special events through out the year including:

- *Christmas luncheon and boutique
- *Christmas concert
- *GLBT art show
- *winter and summer solstice celebration
- *plant sale
- *spring concert
- *Ingathering Sunday
- *flower communion
- *Ingathering water communion
- *service auction
- *Robbie Burns night
- *animal blessing

For more information on any of these programs, groups or activities please contact the church office at 744-2665.

The Property Management Council

The mandate of this Council is to sustain and develop our property and buildings to optimally support the programs of the Church in ways that honour and protect the environment. Within the long range plan, we are moving to a 'three pillar approach' where donations to the church from people and groups using the space are used to fulfill the Council mandate. If you are interested in this work, please contact the church office and/or the Property Management Council Chair to discuss your thoughts and involvement.

The Farmhouse

The Church Office, Minister and Music offices are located on the main level of the Farmhouse with the upper portion occupied by resident maintenance technician.

Sanctuary

The largest building space is used for gatherings up to 250 people, has a dedicated kitchen, removable chairs and tables, plus re-configurable stage.

Fellowship Hall

This space enjoys multiple French doors leading to a large balcony, and can be serviced by its dedicated kitchen.

Religious Exploration Space

The Southern church buildings are available to a variety of uses and consist of multiple rooms ranging in size from 150 – 300 square feet to 300.

Labyrinth

Behind the Farmhouse, a Cretan labyrinth has been created and is available daily for prayer, contemplation and meditation. The labyrinth is an ancient symbol relating to wholeness and many include walking the

Plans to travel the world in this ministry were altered by the failing health of her husband, Angus. He was a school principal, active through his adult life in promoting multicultural relations in Canada and much engaged in Unitarian issues. Here at First Unitarian he was an active part of the choir and a Chalice Circle. He died in 2004. Their children are Paul, Karen and Kimberly live in Victoria.

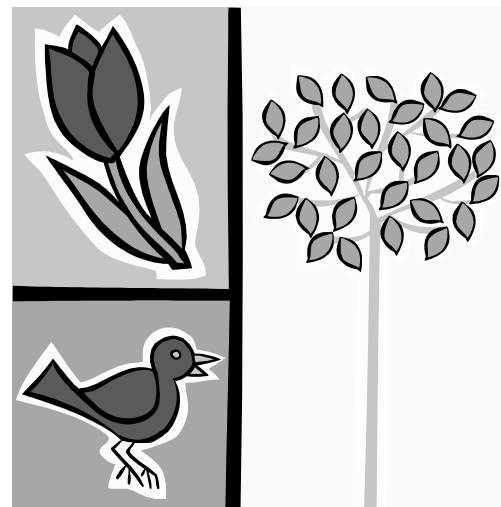
She is committed to denominational affairs ("growing the institution") especially within Canada, is a strong supporter of Lifespan religious education and an ardent advocate for social justice.

Jane considers music to be an essential part of life and thus essential in church life. She insists on the leaven of laughter being present in most of life's activities

Want to read an interview with Jane?

Visit our website

www.victoriaunitarian.ca



Lay Chaplains

Our lay chaplains are **Fran Pardee**, **Joyce Murphy** and **Liz Graham** (Spring 2009) are lay people, not ordained ministers. They are trained to plan and perform rites of passage, including marriages, namings, celebrations of life and funerals. These services are available for everyone. Our Minister officiates at rites of passage for FUCV members.

Weddings

Take the concern and the uncertainty out of planning your wedding service.

We are licensed to marry you by the Province of British Columbia and will work with you to create a ceremony that fits your needs and dreams.

We provide you with many choices of items for your ceremony, including spiritual, religious and cultural elements. Our goal is to co-create a ceremony that expresses your deepest intentions as individuals and as a couple.

We are very happy to perform weddings for any two people who wish to dedicate themselves to each other - this includes same-gender couples.

Child or Baby-Naming

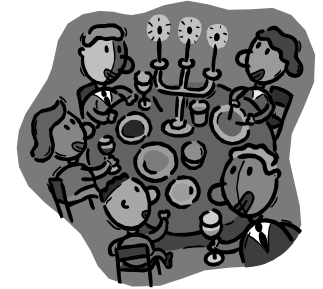
Share the miracle of your child's life in a meaningful ceremony.

We work with you to create a service that speaks to the commitment of the significant people in your child's life.

We encourage the inclusion of your extended family and your community, if that is your choice. We are familiar with a number of ceremonies that may enrich the experience for your family; including Earth-centered,

Circle Dinners

Circle dinners are a pleasing way to get to know other church members. These relaxed and friendly potluck dinners are held on the last Friday of the month. Six to eight people attend, with the host organizing who brings what dish. Contact Margot Lods at mlods@shaw.ca for more information.



The Social Responsibility Council

SRC seeks to raise awareness and promote action among church members on major social, environmental and economic issues in our society. We offer information and an opportunity to respond on these issues, sometimes in concert with others and always in a manner consistent with the seven principles of the Unitarian Universalist movement.

Each month, the SRC identifies a particular issue and proposes an "action of the month." An article on the subject appears in the church newsletter, *The Victoria Unitarian*. Each Sunday during the month, fuller details on the issue are displayed in the foyer of the church. We are organized at present into five focus groups, endeavouring to concentrate on issues of the environment, democracy and international affairs, poverty, social justice and First Nations. But you may have a better idea. We're listening. We need people with ideas, with energy, with insights, with convictions, with compassion, willing to contribute in whatever way they can.

Small Groups

Small groups are based on the premise that no one comes to a religious community merely to join a committee or to participate in corporate worship. Rather, people want to deepen connections and be with others who are exploring the mysteries, dreams and ideas of the human heart, mind and soul. Small groups help meet the needs of two essential aspects of life: intimacy and ultimacy.

Chalice Circles are small groups of up to 10 people. Participation in one of these Circles will provide you with a place to meet others for friendship and to expand your intellectual and spiritual journey. These small groups are open to members and friends of the FUCV and to anyone who is comfortable with the Unitarian Universalist way of being in the world. These small groups usually meet monthly in the homes of a participant or the participants may decide to meet at the church or elsewhere. The meetings follow a simple format and are guided, not led, by a facilitator. Topics come to each facilitator from the Minister or others involved in preparing topics; each group decides for itself who will lead each meeting. Topics can also be created by the group itself. We do ask you to make a six-month commitment to the Circle you join. Once a year, each group is asked to contribute some "service" to the church, for example: help with a special event, or some garden and grounds work, preparing a Sunday service, helping with a RE program, cleaning up after a Church event, food bank help . . . a service to the church or community chosen by the group.

The Spirituality Group

The spirituality group is composed of U*Us who acknowledge the existence of a higher spiritual presence in the universe and who wish to bring their lives into harmony with that presence. They meet one Sunday evening a month for a potluck supper and a time of meditation and sharing. Visitors, friends and new members are most welcome. For more information contact Nancy Dobbs at 250 652 5438.

cultural and religious elements.

We encourage the active inclusion of siblings and any other children who are an important part of your child's life.

Memorials

Honour your loved one in a service that is true to your beliefs.

We offer compassionate support and experience in planning a memorial service that is meaningful for the participants.

We support the celebration of a life that has ended, while allowing space for grieving. We meet with you, and those you wish to include, to co-create a service that reflects the personality and character of the person who has died.

We have many resources, literary, cultural and spiritual, for you to choose from. We honour the importance of religious roots and encourage the inclusion of religious readings and prayers or meditations, if they would give comfort to those present.

We are pleased to create services that are delivered in places that are meaningful for you.

Other Rites of Passage

Create ceremonies recognizing significant life passages.

We are pleased to work with individuals and families to create a memorable service for events such as reaffirming vows, dissolution of a relationship, coming of age, loss of a pet, graduation or retirement.

We will respond quickly to requests for any of the above services. Please call the church office at 744-2665 or email laychaplains@victoriaunitarian.ca



Programs, Activities and Facilities

Our faith community includes almost 300 members and friends, lively and committed people with a multitude of perspectives, talents and interests. The programs and activities described here will give you more details about what we are doing together. If you are a visitor interested in finding out a little more about our inclusive religious movement, please be assured that you are genuinely welcome to join us. Come just to watch and listen or participate as much as you like.

For more information on any of these programs or activities please contact the church office at 744-2665 or explore@victoriaunitarian.ca

Sunday Service

Start times : 10:30 am September through June
10:00 am July and August

The service lasts approximately 60 minutes.
Child minding is usually available.

Upon entering the Church you will be welcomed by our greeters. If you would like a name tag (most of us wear them) you can make a temporary name tag at their table.

Fill in a *Welcome Form* located in the order of service, at the greeters table or at the information kiosk to receive our monthly newsletter, *The Victoria Unitarian* and/or be put on the *E-weekly* mailing list. On the *Welcome Form* you can also request more information about areas that interest you.

As you enter the Sanctuary an usher will give you an *Order of Service*. This is your program for the service. It also includes a wealth of information about church events held other than on Sunday.

Library

The church has a well-stocked library of about two thousand books on a variety of subjects of interest to Unitarians. All aspects of religion, including world religions, are covered as well as philosophy, psychology, the environment, social justice issues, literature, biographies and history. There is a good reference section. Videos and several periodicals are available.

The library, open one-half hour before and after Sunday services, is located in the Religious Education area of the church. A book cart of current titles can be found close to the coffee drinkers following the service. Loan period is one month for books, videos, tapes and magazines.

Welcoming/Celebrating Diversity Committee

The Welcoming Congregation Committee was established to assist First UCV in becoming certified as a Welcoming Congregation, affirming the openness of the congregation to all persons regardless of sexual orientation; sponsoring an annual GLBT art show, and participation in Pride Week.

The Committee has now become the Welcoming/Celebrating Diversity Committee, adding to its mandate the church becoming certified as a Celebrating Diversity Congregation, welcoming those of diverse faith and ethnic backgrounds, and encouraging relations with other faith and ethnic groups in the community.
New members are welcome.



Spaghetti Night is an opportunity to meet new people or catch up with friends over a casual, fun, delicious meal. This is a family friendly event - everyone is welcome! Join us at 6pm on the second Friday of the month (except July and August) in the Sanctuary. Dinner is by donation. Please bring a salad, dessert or beverage to share. Often after dinner there will be an event - watch the E-weekly and Newsletter for details. Want more information? Contact Susan Lean at threetaps@shaw.ca



Neighbourhood Groups

Members and Friends of First Unitarian Church of Victoria are divided into Neighbourhood groups based on their addresses. The Neighbourhood Groups have two functions. One is to provide rapid and accurate communication within itself, and from the church leadership through a telephone tree or email, as well as to address certain tasks or issues of general interest. The other function is to provide smaller, more intimate groups, a sort of “home town” within which communication and meaningful relationships may be more easily achieved. At the present time, there are 13 groups. Each group has a convener, a telephone tree contact, a care and concern contact and a transportation contact. The groups operate autonomously. Some groups have monthly social events in a member’s home. Other groups meet for social events three or four times a year.



During the service an offering is taken to help operate the Church. This is completely voluntary. If you would like to receive a tax receipt for your donation please obtain a white envelope from the usher and be sure to provide your name and full address, for income tax purposes. Most of our members and friends contribute monthly through direct payment.

You are invited to have coffee/tea with us in the Fellowship Hall after the service. Please use an orange or red mug so we can welcome you as a newcomer. If you have any questions, anyone wearing a big “?” button is there to help or you can visit the information kiosk.

We are a very diverse group of people so our expressions of worship can be quite diverse. The first time you visit you might encounter an earth-centered solstice ritual; the next time it might be a sermon on a social justice issue or what is reverence or tolerance. We encourage visitors to come several times to get a sense of that diversity which stretches and challenges us all.

Sacred Circle Worship

Celebrating the sacred in dance on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 7pm - 9pm.

Sacred/Circle Dances have been growing in popularity since their introduction at Findhorn in the late 70’s. Dance events are facilitated experiences and the circle is created and released with reverence and intention. The dances are like a moving meditation around a centrepiece and after each dance, while holding hands, dancers pause to absorb its energy. The centre of the circle symbolizes the inner centre, and when we connect to this still point we can experience ourselves as part of the Centre of Life, the Source, the All That Is, the Oneness.

Sacred/Circle Dance is not connected with, nor does it spring from or represent, any religion or set of beliefs; it does express universal themes and aspirations and is spiritual in the widest sense. The purpose of the Dance is to join with something greater than ourselves, to bring a healing alignment of body, mind and spirit through movement, to feel the spirit of each dance and in so doing experience the oneness that comes from moving rhythmically in a circle ~ the oldest, non

Children's Religious Education Program (CRE)

Our program is offered to children from ages five to thirteen. Childcare is available for those under age five.

Our program is part of a life-long continuum of religious education offered at our church. We seek to nurture the spirit of everyone through exploration, not indoctrination. We celebrate diversity in all its forms — in beliefs, in customs, in race and culture. We offer a liberal religious education within a safe and supportive environment.

We offer our program within an atmosphere of fun, creativity and adventure. There are at least five different aspects to our philosophy:

1. social - our children need to relax with their peers and do fun things together;
2. social action - making a difference in our local and global community, striving to right some of the social wrongs in our world;
3. worship - we stop and reflect on whatever we hold sacred; for some of us, this is a deity; for others, the mystery of life;
4. self-esteem and leadership - skills to help our young people become independent adults; and

Music Program

Music is an integral facet of congregational life in our church. It is part of the glue that binds people to one another and is one of the most effective ways to deepen community. Music allows us to express what words so often cannot express. Although there are musical presentations at our church, music within the context of worship is not about performance. It is about allowing people to express their innermost yearnings, their joy and sorrow, their creative energy and spirit. Our congregation loves to sing and there are many ways to share in this uplifting activity.



Our main adult choir rehearses every Thursday evening, September to June, and sings at Sunday worship twice a month. We also have the 'Do Drop In Choir' that meets once a month to rehearse for an hour before the Sunday service. It is frequently joined by the children's choir.

The children's choir rehearses from 9:30 to 10:15am every Sunday from late September to May and is comprised mainly of children aged 6 to 12.

The JAMMERS (Joyful Association of Music Makers) is an ensemble dedicated to taking music to rest homes and senior care facilities. This service-oriented group usually has one or two gigs a month.

Throughout the year, there are presentations by the choir, an all-women's ensemble called The Pick-Up Sticks, and various other duos, trios, instrumentalists and soloists. There are many volunteers that make up our music program; the music committee, sound technicians, personal musical gifts all of this helps to enrich and make the music offerings so special and wonderful for all. Music in the church is truly a community effort. We are truly blessed with rich and varied opportunities to participate in the wonderful gift of music. For more information contact music@victoriaunitarian.ca

OWL

Our Whole Lives - A Sexuality and Faith-Based Program

The First Unitarian Church of Victoria offers the O.W.L. program on a regular basis. Our Whole Lives is a sexuality education program for five age groups. At times we will be offering the program for grade K-1, grade 4-6, grade 7-9 and the adult level.



The program offers:

- Up-to-date information and honest, age-appropriate answers to all participants' questions
- Activities to help participants clarify values and improve decision-making skills
- Effective group-building to create a safe and supportive peer group
- Education about sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment
- Opportunities to critique media messages about gender and sexuality
- Acceptance of diversity
- Encouragement to act for justice
- A well-designed, teacher-friendly leaders' guide and professional training for leaders
- Parent orientation programs that affirm parents as the primary sexuality educators of their children

5. formal teaching - we use various curricula to provide learning experiences for our children.

We offer our Children's Program because we believe that our values need to be carried into the future through our children. Living our seven principles is a process, a dynamic growing experience, not a statement of belief. Our children know that they are valued as individuals and that they belong to a caring community. From this base, they are free to explore some of life's puzzling questions and to develop their own faith. They are encouraged to keep on learning, to discover what is sacred to them and to develop their own religious views.

We provide a place to belong, to form supportive friendships and to grow spiritually, developing inner peace and strength. Children learn about the world around us and the importance of being good stewards of our resources. They are given opportunities to participate in social action to make a difference in the world.

Our CRE Vision Statement and Philosophy

Religious growth and learning is a life-long exploration of the individual within a supporting and nurturing community. Our aim is to support the development of ethical principles; acceptance of religious diversity; love and respect for self and others; and awareness of the interconnectedness of all existence while nurturing a sense of awe and wonder.

In an inviting, safe, stimulating environment, our Children's Religious Education Program explores: our Unitarian Universalist values, history and traditions; our Judeo-Christian heritage; world religions; personal growth and spirituality, and social justice issues and opportunities to contribute to our church and community.

Youth (ages 13 to 20)

The purposes of Young Religious Unitarian Universalist (YRUU) programming are to provide and manifest a greater understanding of Unitarian Universalism and to encourage the flow of communication between youth and adult. In so doing it nurtures the freedom and the integrity of the questioning mind and embraces all persons of diverse backgrounds. It encourages the development of a spirit of independence and responsibility.

We are committed to empowering our youth to become lifelong Unitarian Universalists by finding ways to allow them to take leadership and make decisions while being supported by adults.

The youth program involves six components: community building (socializing), social action, worship, learning, leadership and youth/adult partnership.

Our youth group meets weekly concurrent to the Sunday service. They meet in the Youth room located in the Farmhouse. Several social events are planned throughout the year as well.

Young Adult (ages 19 to 35)

Young Adults or YA for short is the term generally applied to folks between 19 and 35 years of age. Besides being 19-35ish, YAs are often people who were raised Unitarian and have bridged out of youth group or are just discovering Unitarianism for the first time as an adult - either way, anyone is welcome. Currently, the young adult group, the Unitarian Club, meets at the University of Victoria. Contact Peter Scales at scalesp@uvic.ca or 477-6989

Adult Religious Education (ARE)

We offer an extensive educational program for adults including

1. Interpersonal relationships
2. Religious topics
3. Social and political issues
4. Spirituality
5. Developing Creativity and others

Look for our pamphlet at the information kiosk. There is also information in the church newsletter and through the office

Solos

Solos is a group of people who are living on their own. They meet on the first and third Saturdays of each month at James Bay United Church, Menzies at Michigan, at 6 pm for a potluck supper at 6:45 pm. Everyone is invited to hear the speaker at 7:45 pm. Suggested donation for hall rental is \$3. Those who attend the lecture only are asked to donate \$1. The lecturer is often a member of the congregation speaking on a trip, topic of interest to the Solos, or someone with interesting experiences to relate. We welcome members of our Congregation, the Capital U*U congregation and guests.

WELCOME