



The Victoria Unitarian
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA
Growing in Spirit, Living with Compassion, Inspired to Serve

SERVICES IN DECEMBER 2020

SUNDAY SERVICES BEGIN AT 10:30 am



Sunday, December 6, 10:30am
Rev. Shana Lynngood, homilist

Simplify Simplicity
Casey Stainsby, Worship Associate

For many years now I have found the idea of simplicity alluring but impossible. The bumper sticker admonition to, “Live simply so that others may simply live,” has seemed both wise and unattainable. What does simplicity mean in 2020? How do we embrace simplicity not only in terms of material goods and objects but in other life choices? How might stillness be part of the equation?

Sunday, December 13, 10:30am
Rev. Shana Lynngood, homilist

The Advent of a Changed World
David Tietz, Worship Associate

The Christian liturgical season of Advent invites us to be intentional and deliberate in preparation for the change that the arrival of the radical ministry of Jesus brought and might yet bring to our world. In a year that has been transformed by the Covid-19 pandemic, how do we prepare our hearts for more change? How have we already been transformed? What practices help us till the soil of our hearts to make room for both the changes we want and expect, as well as those we didn’t ask for?



Continued next page...

Livestream begins each Sunday by 10:25 am. To view [please click on this link](#). To view past worship services (as of Jan. 27) [click on this link](#).

Services continued from previous page

Sunday, December 20, **7:00pm

*(**This Sunday's service will NOT be in the morning!! It is at 7 in the evening!)*

Winter Solstice: Honouring the Dark

Rev. Melora Lynngood and Arran Liddel

Emily Tietz, Worship Associate

Join us for a special evening service on the longest night of the year. We invite you to join us in candlelight/ reduced light as we explore how darkness can nourish us and help us find stillness in challenging times. Please send us video or pictures of you/your family lighting a candle - see page 5 for details.

Thursday, December 24, 4:30pm

Christmas Eve

Rev. Shana Lynngood and Arran Liddel , homilists

Emily Tietz, Worship Associate

Join us for a virtual Christmas Eve service for all ages.

Sunday, December 27, 10:30am

A Time for Stillness

David Tietz, David Vest and Lynne Bonner, homilists

Lynne Bonner, Worship Associate

This month we have been exploring "Stillness." Solstice and Christmas are behind us and we look forward to a New Year. For some of us, 2020 has felt like a Year of Stillness! With so many events, festivities and gatherings postponed or reduced, it seems like there has been too much time for reflection, worry and boredom. And yet -- is inactivity the same as stillness? For others, demands of work and caring for family seem relentless and 2020 has felt like a year without stillness. How can the practice of stillness help us let go and lean into a New Year? Join Worship Associates Lynne Bonner, David Vest, and David Tietz as they reflect on stillness in this time of endings and new beginnings.

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

Talk to us. Do you have a concern about our church that you would like the ministers to know? One purpose of the Committee on Ministry (CoM) is centered on developing a strong, healthy relationship between the Minister(s) and the Congregation. Members of the CoM are:

Andy Lee, Chair, Lorna Anthony, Jeri Dause, Bill Glassman, Jan Thomson, Shelley Motz.

MINISTERS' SABBATICALS

The ministers accumulate one month of sabbatical for each year of ministry. In order to avoid a long absence during their next sabbatical, they are experimenting with shorter sabbaticals taken more frequently. The Board recently approved the following: a two-month sabbatical in May/June of 2021 and a three-month sabbatical in February/March and June of 2023. The ministers are planning an exciting roster of speakers for the weeks they will be away, so be sure to tune in!

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From Ruth Miller

'Long time member and Raging Granny, Ruth Miller, would like members to know just how much she has appreciated all the cards, letters and phone calls of love & support she's received from so many. She fell in mid February, resulting in multiple fractures, and has been in recovery at Aberdeen Hospital since. She has made a special donation to First Unitarian as an acknowledgement of her deep gratitude.'



© Happy Holidays ©



December's theme, as with many of the Soul Matters themes on which we focus for a month of worship is deceptively simple. At first glance one thinks, of course, stillness is a major part of what spiritual practices encourage in us. We

meditate or pray or journal and when we do we are still so we can drill down. This is true, of course, stillness allows us to reacquaint ourselves with our own being—who am I and what is going on for me right now? What matters to me? Stillness helps us renew our relationship with ourselves. Less obvious, though no less true is that stillness is also often what helps us get in touch with our sense of purpose. It is when I am still that I can then remember what it is that I wish to do to make a positive difference in the world. It is stillness that allows me to hear my conscience more clearly. It is getting in touch with my sense of center that reminds me who I want to be in the world and how I want to treat others.

Our focus on stillness coincides with the winter holidays that invite stillness and reflection. What do solstice and Christmas and Hanukkah have to teach us this year? What does sitting still and gazing at light in the midst of darkness offer us each year, and this year in particular? Since our holidays may be less full of family visits and travel—can we invite more stillness? What do we find within us when we do? Here are the questions from our Soul Matters community for you to ponder throughout the month of December. Find one that speaks to you and spend some time with it—perhaps write it on a piece of paper and post it somewhere you will see it regularly. (A bathroom mirror for when you are brushing your teeth can be a good option.)

What do you know now about stillness that you didn't when you were younger?

When were you saved by finding a "still space" in the midst of chaos?

What if the doorway into spiritual stillness is learning to look at your present life and say "This is enough?"

What childhood moment of "winter stillness" has never left you?

Is your identity rooted in busyness or stillness? And which one do you want it to be rooted in?

Is busyness your way of running and hiding from stillness?

Has stillness ever "spoken" to you? Are you hungry for it to speak to you again?

Is it possible that stillness is inviting you to finally sit with your sadness?

Have you ever been "stunned to stillness by beauty"?

See you in the moments of stillness we create together,

Rev. Shana

Please Send Photo or Video of You Lighting a Candle (by Dec. 9)



For our Winter Solstice Sunday Service, we would like to include photos and video clips of congregants lighting candles. Can you help?

From church members, Brenda and Bernhard:

We would like to celebrate and honour the beautiful community of connection, especially during this particular winter time.

We would love it if congregants could send a photo (landscape/horizontal if possible) or a short video clip of themselves lighting a candle or tea light (preferably in a glass jar outside but totally not necessary). We appreciate it is a very busy time with a lot of unknowns so if you have a few minutes, this would be greatly appreciated. Photos or short video clips can be sent to our email address bspalteholz@gmail.com. Bernhard and Brenda are also happy to help with any technical difficulties that arise.

Sample video clip can be seen here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iBqBOPqQxHPnBN9omQqli3a1r1OXC3Nj/view?usp=sharing>

If possible, end video clip by placing votive on ground, like in sample.

But again, not necessary -- do whatever works!

If emailing video clip is difficult, try www.wetransfer.com which you can use for free and without signing up for an account.

In sum, for both **photos** and **video** clips:

Landscape (horizontal) format please

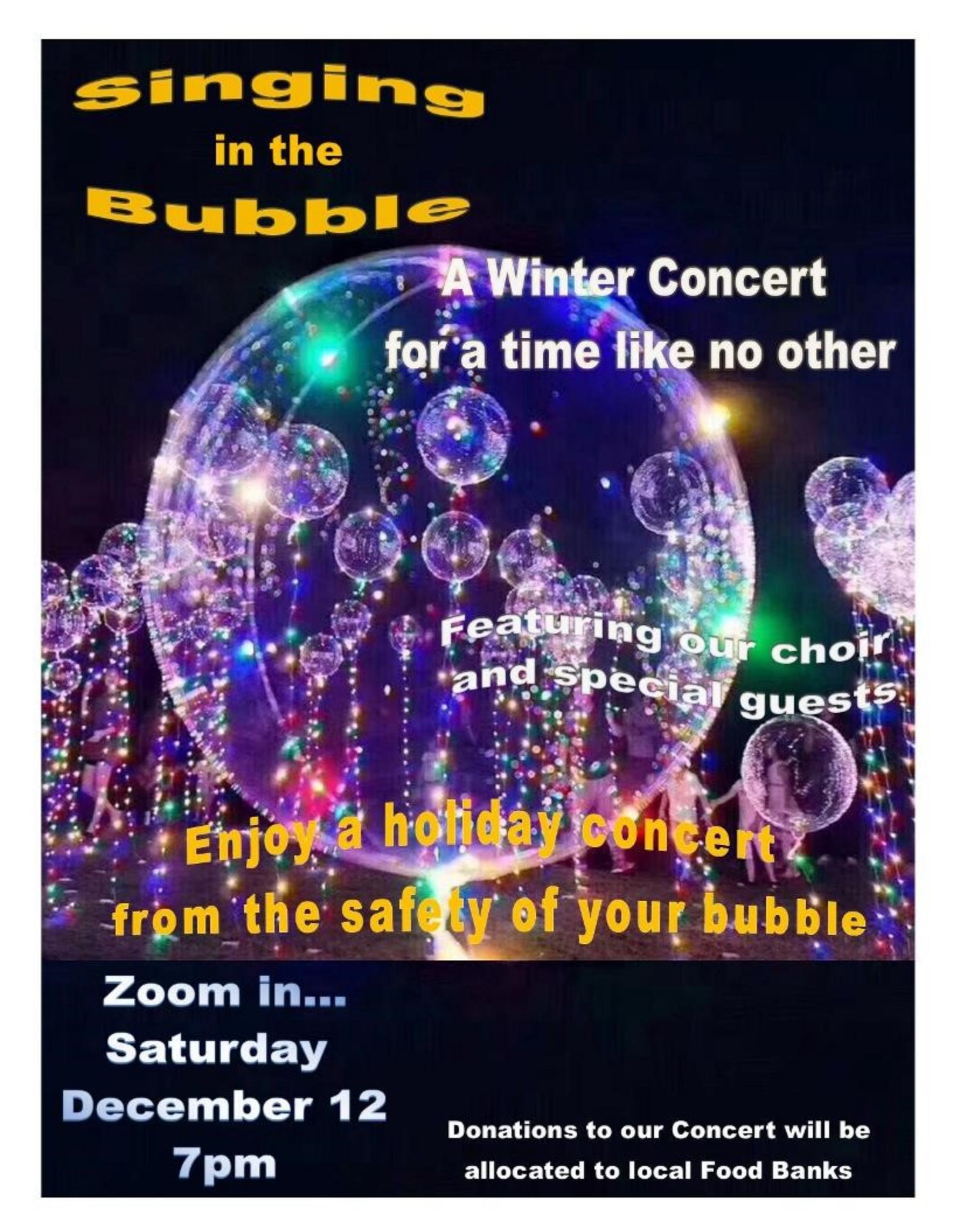
In relative darkness, with the glow of the candle illuminating your face

If possible (but *not at all* necessary): tea light in glass jar, outside

Send photos or video clips to bspalteholz@gmail.com

By Wednesday, Dec 9, please

Thank you!!

The background of the poster is a dark night sky filled with numerous large, glowing bubbles. Each bubble is illuminated from within, creating a shimmering effect with colors ranging from deep purple and blue to bright green and yellow. Inside the bubbles, silhouettes of people can be seen, suggesting a concert performance. The overall atmosphere is festive and magical.

singing
in the
Bubble

**A Winter Concert
for a time like no other**

**Featuring our choir
and special guests**

**Enjoy a holiday concert
from the safety of your bubble**

**Zoom in...
Saturday
December 12
7pm**

**Donations to our Concert will be
allocated to local Food Banks**



SHARE THE PLATE — DECEMBER

CHRISTINE JOHNSTON

Share the Plate is back and two well-known local organizations, both registered Canadian charities, will share the open plate offerings of our faith community in December.

BRIDGES FOR WOMEN is a gutsy, innovative community agency inspiring women impacted by violence or abuse to reclaim their lives and build economic stability. It includes self-identified women and members of the LGBTQ community. Bridges draws on its extensive knowledge of the

impacts of abuse on employability to provide education, training and consulting to community agencies, employers and government. Its aim is to see all of the women who come to it enter the workforce as financially independent, self-sufficient members of the labour market, free from the impacts of trauma and abuse that previously held them back.

The VICTORIA DANDELION SOCIETY supports the street ministry of Reverend Al Tysick. Known as “Rev Al” by Victoria’s street community, he has been committed to the streets – where his heart and “family” are – for over 40 years. Every morning, “the Rev” hits the streets at 5:30 am, with coffee, muffins, and whatever warm supplies he has. When those who sleep outside are awakened by the sounds of an awakening city, Al is there to make sure everyone has a safe and welcoming start to their day. He spends the rest of his day going from hospitals to jails to residences, helping those he visits in whatever way they need. Wherever he is, Al reminds people that they matter. He treats marginalized persons with dignity and respect by offering them the best of his compassion, hope and care.

TURN YOUR COMPASSION INTO ACTION

JOIN THE SHARE THE PLATE TEAM

There is an opportunity to be of service to the congregation and to interact with a team of friendly and dedicated volunteers. While we stopped collections due to the pandemic, we now feel that it is important to restart because of the numerous charities needing our help. We organize monthly congregational giving to charities where we split the collection plate donations between the church and the charity. Members suggest charities, the share the plate team approves and schedules them, and provides support for the proposer to implement the appeal. It is yet another way to turn compassion into action. Are you interested in being a member of the team? If so, please contact Jim Willis at

jimwillis568@gmail.com.



“GETTING ON BOARD WITH BREEZE”



Marion Pape and Shannon Oatway

What are the benefits of Breeze? It is so much more than just an online directory. This database is an incredibly valuable tool for our church members and friends. The ABC Team is planning on using Breeze during the 2021 campaign and it would be very beneficial to the team if you have your profile all set up and ready to go. We are assuming that you have activated your Breeze account. If you have not activated it, please contact Shannon at communications@victoriaunitarian.ca

Here are detailed instructions on how to search Breeze:

Open your Internet browser to login to Breeze <https://fucv.breezechms.com> with your username (email address) and password. If you have forgotten your password, click on “**forgot password**”, which is located below the Sign In Button and follow the prompts. This ‘Sign in’ will bring you to the Breeze Dashboard page.

When you log onto your account, click on the “My Profile” Star icon to get to your individual profile page. You can search for other members from this page as well, at the top right, in the search field. Or you can go to the navigation menu, running horizontally along the top of the page: “**Breeze Dashboard People Events My Profile Give Now**” and click on **People** to search for members. On the left where it says “Filter by Name”, type in the name of the person you want to search and the member’s name and photo will come up on the page, then simply click on the name.

Your Profile page is where you add or update any personal information such as your contact details including your cellphone number and Emergency Contact information and much more, this is a good place to explore. Your photo may already be on this page. If not, to add or change a photo, click on the photo box and follow the prompts. Each Section Head (ie **Main, Family, Communications**) is on a grey coloured rectangular bar, hover over the bar with your mouse to expose the “**Click to Edit Section**”, to the right of the section name and do what it says, **click on it**, and edit the info you wish to change or add, be sure to click SAVE once you are done.

On this page you can locate the following information:

Key Contacts FUCV Leadership: The key contacts list may answer most of the questions you might have about FUCV and it is there at your fingertips. Info is conveniently located on your own profile page, under “Our Church Community” bottom right of your profile page, then click.

Search for other members and friends for their contact info by putting their name in the Search People box in the upper right corner of your profile page.

Explore the online calendar: Once you get into your profile; to get to the online church calendar on Breeze, click on the Events icon at the top of your profile page and it will take you to the calendar.

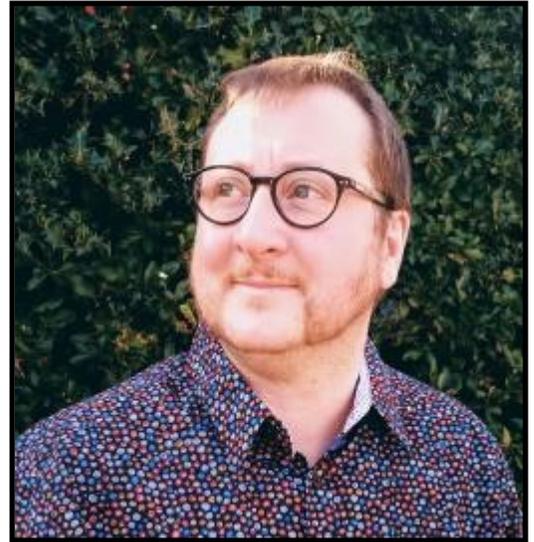
Delve into your Giving History including your history of pledging (Only you can see this info):

This is directly relevant to our 2021 ABC to look up your record of contributions. From your profile page, click on the **Giving Button** on the left side of the page in a list under “Details”. Once into your Giving information where you can see your current giving info, you can search your pledge history by clicking on the box labeled ‘Pledge’ in the center of the page.

So, let’s get activated, my friends. And thank you for using this amazing Breeze database.

Journey to Ministry

Our Director of Spiritual Exploration and Learning, Arran Liddel, in addition to his work with our congregation, is also a Candidate for Unitarian Universalist Ministry. What does that mean? Long time member of First Unitarian Church of Victoria and Family Ministry Team Co-Chair Anna Isaacs sat down with Arran to find out.



What led you to study for ministry?

It's a bit of a non linear journey. I think, in retrospect, a lot of the work that I've done and a lot of my life experiences have led towards this, though it didn't feel like it at the time.

I grew up in Scotland, as some people know, and lived in Ireland for 10 years. When I was in Ireland, I really started getting involved in community work. When I came to Canada, I ended up doing a graphic design program and doing communications work for many not for profit organizations. A lot of the work that I've done in community organizations has been around creating change and social justice in various different ways. That has included sexual health, sexual orientation, gender identity in Ireland and in BC. In Toronto, my work focused on LGBTQ communities, people of colour, immigrants and refugees.

Around 2010, I had a little bit of a 'crisis of faith' in the not for profit industry and its ability to achieve the change I was working for. I ended up going to York University to do a Master's of Environmental Studies with a concentration in 'Love as Praxis'. In it I explored community building from a love-based perspective. Although it wasn't my plan when I started the program, spirituality became a bigger and bigger part of my focus and ended up being a significant component in my work.

While I was in the Master's program there was only one other student who had a focus on spirituality and he was a UU. When he learned about my work he told me I needed to go to UU. By the end of our conversation I was curious, but I was studying full-time, working, and fostering a youth at the time and I didn't get around to it! After I finished my degree and had a little more time and space to contemplate what was next in my life, I remembered our conversation and I ended up going to Neighborhood Congregation in Toronto.

At Neighbourhood, that first service totally changed my perspective. It felt like a space I could bring my whole self to, which is rare for me. It was a pretty diverse and supportive community. I love that it was very community-led, that really appealed to me a lot. I ended up going there every week until I left Toronto. It was at Neighbourhood I got my 'call' to ministry... Which I was very resistant to at first. I had particular ideas of what a minister was, and I didn't see myself in that image. Though I tried to ignore it, the 'call' persisted and only got louder! I ended up applying to Cherry Hill Seminary, a small school focused on Earth-based spirituality/Paganism, and began studying part-time towards a Master's of Divinity in 2016.

Continued next page

How is your study for ministry enriched by your current work?

My current job is awesome for my studies. Because it is a ministry! It is a form of ministry that's often undervalued. There's been a really positive feedback loop between what I'm learning in the church with the families and kids and then bringing that to my studies, and then bringing what I'm learning in my studies to the program at church. So it's been very beneficial in both ways. It's also given me a sense of ministry. I'm not a minister in this congregation, but there are parts of ministry that I get to explore in this position like leading all ages services and providing pastoral care to parents or families when they need it. Those pieces give me building blocks that will be very useful in my journey and have provided some confirmation that I'm on the right path. My job has given me access to UU on an institutional level as well. Participating in Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly and LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association) conferences has given me a sense of what's happening across the continent. This has been really helpful to ground me in the broader UU movement, which is really exciting.

When I started this position Rev. Melora encouraged me to explore the credentialing program for religious educators which I completed this spring. The program is assessed through a portfolio of your work - mine was over 100 pages! It was great to have this time to reflect on my job in a 'big picture' way, to identify my passions, my strengths and stretches, as well as where I need to focus my work. Though it is less intense, it is a similar process to how new ministers are assessed, so it was good practice!

What are your hopes for the future of Unitarian Universalism?

Well, that's a big question! I think it's a really exciting time to be in Unitarian Universalism. How we are accessing spirituality and religion is changing a lot culturally. I definitely appreciate the centering of racial, environmental, and other social justice issues as spiritual concerns. I hope that really continues to grow in the larger UU movement, as well as in our congregation.

I'm also really excited to figure out new ways of connecting with people. Going to church on Sunday morning is not a cultural value in the ways that it was decades ago. Yet people have the need for spirituality and spiritual nurturance. How are we going to meet that need in the future? What are the ways to do that? I don't think there will be one clear answer. I think it'll be a tapestry of different responses. I'm excited to explore what some of those might be.

What stages have you completed so far, and what is left for you to do to become a minister?

There are three main stages. The first is to become an **Aspirant**. This is essentially saying you are seriously planning to become a minister. You need to have been accepted into a Master's of Divinity program and the support of a congregation, as well as various references, criminal background checks etc. The next stage is **Candidate**. To gain this status you need to have completed at least one year (full-time equivalent) of theological education, a field experience or Clinical Pastoral education program, and an intensive career assessment. I gained Candidate status in November 2019.

In the Candidate stage, you need to complete at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), an internship (one year full-time, or two years part-time), and have an interview with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC). I completed my CPE unit in June this year and I have yet to do an internship and go before the MFC. To attend the MFC, you need to compile an extensive portfolio documenting your training, education, and life experiences as it relates to your ministry which they will assess.

When you pass the MFC interview, you move to the third stage which is the **Preliminary Fellowship**. In this stage you are recognized as a new minister (perhaps a little like driving with an 'N' plate!) and can be ordained. You are expected to work as a minister and continue your learning for a period (often around three years) before meeting with the MFC again and (ideally) being granted **Full Fellowship**.

As you can see it is a long process and I have quite a few years left to go!



MINISTERS' SABBATICALS by the Committee on Ministry

Did you know that the ministers accumulate one month of sabbatical for each year of ministry? In order to avoid a long absence during their next sabbatical, they are experimenting with shorter sabbaticals taken more often. The Board approved a two-month sabbatical in May and June of 2021 and a three-month sabbatical in February, March and June of 2023. The ministers are planning a fine roster of speakers for the weeks they will be away, so be sure to tune in! More details will follow. Questions? Contact Andy Lee, andrew.lee@firley.ca or 250-858-5155.

Mindful Moments

December is a time that is loaded with expectations and heightened emotions. It is a difficult month for many people. This year we will be having the holiday season in 'pandemic mode'. Many of the things we like to do, or the people we like to see, or the places we like to visit, won't be available to us this year. For example my partner Gen and I often travel to Montreal for the holidays and spend time with her extended family...Not this year! What will we do instead? TBD! One thing we *will be* doing is more mindfulness - to help us process this exceptional year and navigate this unusual holiday season.

Mindfulness can help us be calmer and stay focused on what is happening now (rather than what we might prefer was happening) and help us appreciate our time together. To help us with 'Mindful Moments' this month I am delighted to share a song and a video by Lea Morris about stillness. Lea and her kids demonstrate some body movements you can do as you learn to sing the song. There are also some good discussion questions that come up in the video that you might want to reflect on with your family too.

Before you begin your Mindful Moment it can be helpful to centre first:

Sit comfortably in your chair, on the floor or lie down.

Put your hands on your lap, on your knees, or on your belly.

Focus your eyes in front of you or you can close them if that feels better for you.

Find your breath moving in your body by taking in one breath through your nose and then slowly breathing out through your mouth.

When you feel ready begin the song.



If you prefer, you can jump straight to the music track and use it in a meditation anytime you feel stress or worry creeping in. Download the video, song or lyrics here: <https://victoriaunitarian.ca/children-youth/parents/resources/> Use password: SELCY

We hope you will come to our **Winter Solstice Service at 7 pm on December 20** (see service descriptions at the beginning of the newsletter for details) and sing it with us - body movements optional but highly encouraged!

Warmly, Arran Liddel

Director of Spiritual Exploration and Learning

ABC: Holding Together While Staying Apart

December 2020 Newsletter

Written by Nancy Dobbs and Marion Pape, Co-Chairs, ABC



One of the biggest things we accomplished with the Annual Budget Campaign

(ABC) was making calls to connect with every person in the congregation who had pledged. From the very beginning of the 2021 ABC, we set the intention that this canvas was about showing our love to everyone in the congregation by taking time out to make these personal calls. Everyone needs this personal attention and we can all play a role in continuing to connect; especially in COVID times.

We trained over 50 volunteer canvassers who in turn made a connection with the people who they called. People appreciate these connections anytime and especially at times other than when we are seeking their pledge. We encourage you to keep in touch throughout the year with the people you called.

A special gift that Suellen Gunther has given to us all was to write a summary report on the comments from people we canvassed. Suellen's fascinating report follows.

Pledge Results as of Nov 15, 2020: From the 184 pledge forms signed and sent to the Treasurer, we have a total pledged amount of \$300,493. If you have forgotten whether you submitted a pledge, you can check your profile page on Breeze and search Giving. Each person can check their own giving results and all 2021 pledges have been input. There are still many pledges that have not come in and we encourage you to get them in by the end of November. The board will be approving its 2021 budget at a special December Board Meeting.

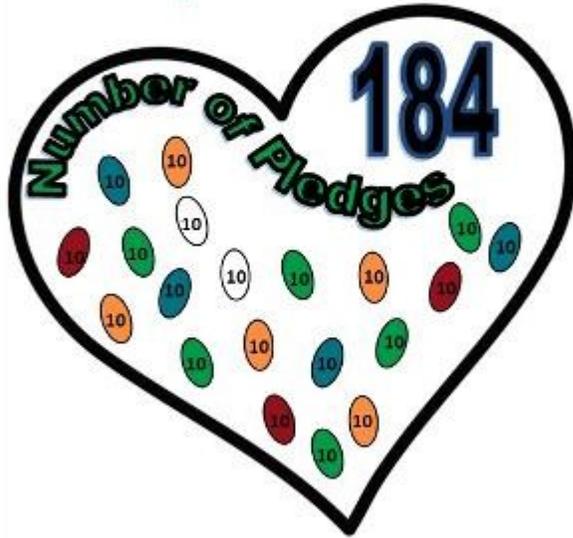
99 people or 53% have increased their pledge this year, 26 pledgers have decreased their pledges and 59 pledgers plan to contribute the same amount as last year. It takes a village to accomplish these results. Because there were many volunteer canvassers, every caller had only 3-4 people to call. This allowed for a deeper connection when a call was made.

Thanks also goes out to the entire 2021 ABC Team that were mentioned in the November Newsletter.

We are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. We still have calls to make that necessary connection. Nancy thinks we are on target to achieve our goal of \$310,000 by December. A Final Report will be the last act of the 2021 pledge campaign.

Continued next page

ABC 2021



GOAL: \$310,000

\$300,493



\$310000
\$290000
\$260000
\$230000
\$190000
\$160000
\$130000
\$90000
\$60000

This article presents some information about solar power systems to allow you to decide whether this may be an option at this time. Solar power systems have been around for many years, but there have been significant advances in recent years in regards to power output and reduction in price. A typical solar system consists of the solar panels typically installed on your roof, and inverters which convert the electricity generated by the panels to the correct voltage so that it can be used in the house. With the current Net Metering system that BC Hydro supports, any excess electricity is sent back to the BC Hydro and a credit is applied to your account, which can be used at a later time when the solar panels are not generating as much power.

In order for a solar installation to work most effectively, you ideally need a relatively obstacle free roof surface facing generally south or west, with as little shading as possible. The price of installing a solar system has decreased significantly in the past few years. The installed price of a typical solar system is currently about \$2.20/Watt, which is almost half the price it was a few years ago. A solar system is expected to last 25-30+ years, and the cost savings in electricity will pay for the cost of the system in about 11 years. Over the life of the system, this results in an equivalent return on investment of approximately 8+%.

There are also some carbon emission reductions to be achieved from installing solar power. The electricity generation in BC is mostly from hydro-electric sources (96.3% as per the BC Hydro [Annual Report](#) summarized [here](#)), with the remainder imported from our provincial neighbours or the USA where more coal and natural gas is used for generation. That said, by installing solar locally you can be sure that the electricity you are using is from a clean source and reduce the need for other types of generation to be installed elsewhere. Any electricity added to the grid from clean sources such as solar will also mean that there will be more hydro electricity available to offset dirtier generation in neighbouring regions.

The most common types of solar systems installed currently do not provide backup power during a power outage. This feature would require the addition of a battery backup system, which is still a significant expense at this time (~\$18 thousand) and would only typically be feasible where power outages are common and lengthy.

Of course, many factors affect these rough estimates. For a detailed estimate specific to your scenario, you can either use the free online estimating tool at opensolar.org, or contact one of the numerous installers which all generally provide free estimates. If you have any questions or would like a recommendation of installers I would be happy to discuss, just email me at bspalteholz@gmail.com.

The church is currently exploring funding options for the installation of a solar system on the church roof to offset future electricity costs. If you have ideas or are interested in discussing this feel free to reach out to any member of the Environmental Action Team, including myself.

Gloria Turner

I moved from Hamilton, Ontario to Victoria in the spring of 1975. This was the beginning of a new stage of life after the recent dissolution of my marriage and early retirement from a career in public library administration. While going through a difficult divorce, my search for emotional support led me to the Unitarian Church of Hamilton where my atheist views were tolerated. When I made the decision to return to the west coast of BC where I had been born, access to a Unitarian Church became high on my list of priorities. I wanted to continue my spiritual development in the non-judgmental environment I had found in that church.

Within a week of my arrival, I located the First Unitarian Church of Victoria. The church had recently moved from downtown Victoria to a new location on West Saanich Road, Van Knight was the minister and two Sunday morning services were held in what is now the Lion Hall. I did the paperwork to become a member very quickly and joined various committees, motivated by a desire to make meaningful connections with other members and to use my talents in service to others. I eventually found a permanent niche on the Membership Committee. Although I am no longer serving on any committees, I continue to contribute my time by co-ordinating the production of name tags and serving as a greeter, both of which help me connect to visitors who may become our newest members.

Although my spiritual life is still a work-in-progress, I have found that each minister who has served the congregation during the past 25 years has offered new and different spiritual insights that has helped to open my heart a little wider.



FIREWOOD FOR SALE AGAIN THIS YEAR

Due to limited supply one truck load per order, please.

\$115 delivered.

Call 250- 658-2239 or email Mike at mfrogbog@gmail.com

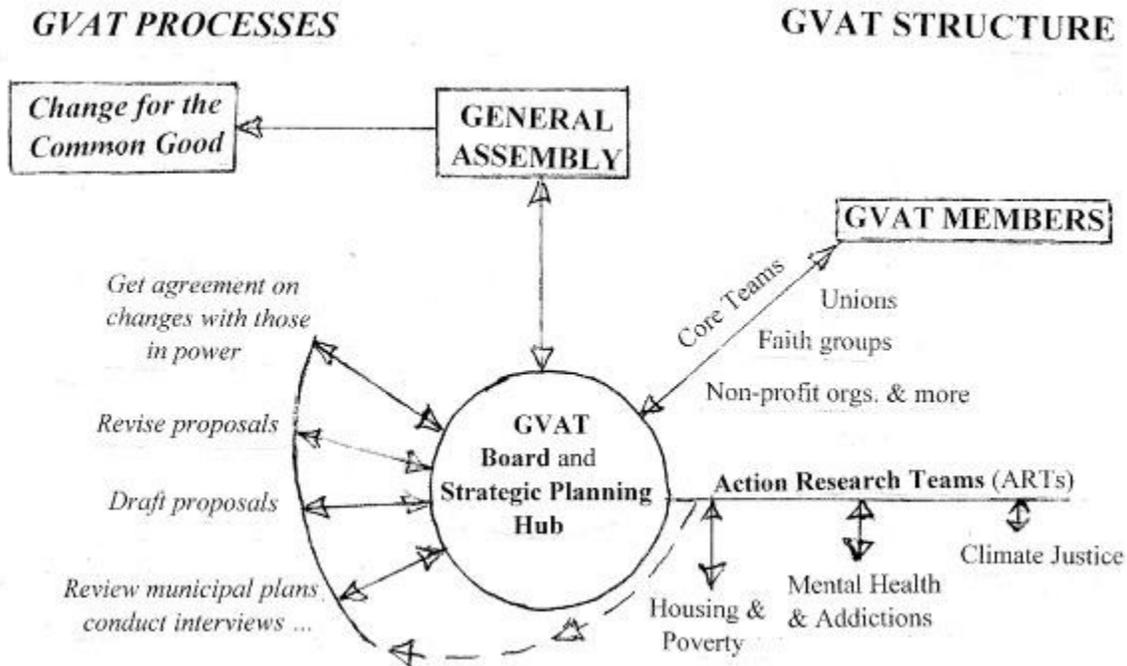


NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH? (when it opens again, of course...)

Check "Ridesharing" <https://victoriaunitarian.ca/directions/>



Greater Victoria Acting Together is a large democratic organization. The diagram below gives a general idea of the structure and processes by which GVAT will eventually obtain changes for the common good.



GVAT’s Board and Strategic Planning Hub organize Assemblies and the Action Research Teams (ARTs)

General Assembly is where all 31 member organizations vote on issues for GVAT to study (Housing, Mental Health & Addictions, and Climate Justice). A special assembly brings people from all member organizations together to witness those with power promise to make the changes for the common good that they and GVAT have agreed to.

Action Research Teams (ARTs): these consist ideally of 1-3 representatives from each member organization. Each ART studies a specific issue and proposes changes that they and authorities in power agree will improve the common good. Arrows indicate flow of instructions and information.

Core Teams: each member organization has a core team that relays information and results of votes both from and to its organization and GVAT. Your Core Team at our church consists of Susan Layng (chair), Lynn Beak, Marion Pape, Hanny Pannekoek, Philip Symons, Jim Willis (Board liaison), and Rev. Melora Lynngood, ex-officio.

A coffee story.

Once upon a time people in our church gathered together for coffee and tea after the Sunday service. Then covid-19 hit and that social in-person connecting time was no more.....

One day, Hugo, who used to organize the hospitality team, wondered aloud to his team mate Hanny how much coffee would still be stored in the Lion Hall (the place where people used to enjoy coffee and tea): they found 2 - 5 pound sealed containers of coffee.

The church board gave them permission to find good use for it.

Earlier our church had sponsored a free mask project for the unhoused, initiated by Hanny and an other member Kym. This led to the Red Cedar Cafe and LLEOHN, who, together with other community centres are providing warm, nutritious meals for people in isolation, the unhoused and those who suffer loss of income because of covid-19.

The coffee was received with gratitude.

And so, the loss for one group of people ended up as a gift to others.

With warm thanks to all our church members,
hanny



Cat Sitter Needed

I have lived in Deep Cove, close to the Swartz Bay ferry terminal since 1986. Last year in springtime, I adopted this gorgeous longhaired Pixie Bob cat.

I go away in the winter, usually 4 months, to do big published open ocean long distance swims for marine sanctuaries, www.costaricamermaid.net but because of the coronavirus, it will be much shorter this time. I'm still hoping to be able to leave in early December or so, and would be gone possibly up to 3 months.

I wonder if anybody who is reading this, might be interested in looking after my beloved cat named Silvan? If you have room for this lovely cat in your home, and he's perfectly content to have a dog there also that likes cats, or another cat, I would provide all the food and litter box etc of course.. When I come back home, you have to return him to me, - which will be the hardest part because he is so incredibly loving!

Renate Herberger, MA
"swimming for marine sanctuaries"

www.costaricamermaid.net
cell 250-858-6511

home 250-656-1312

Neighbourhood Groups and Care & Concern People



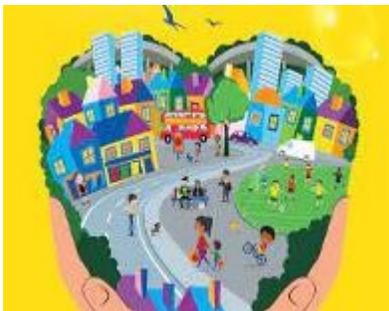
Contacts and Supports

Neighbourhood groups (NG) are often a first line of contact in our congregation for members new and old, friends, and newcomers. Most NG's have their own Care and Concern (C&C) person.

To bolster that outreach, a very comprehensive C&C structure is in place. Our Care and Concern Team of 4 liaisons (see listed below) facilitates information flow to our ministers and supports our C&C people in their NG's to ensure that anyone who is struggling in any way is supported. A "Caring Corner" shout out identifies people, with their permission, who might be in need of the support of our congregation.

The NG conveners are:

Oak Bay: John "Tiff" Tiffany 778-432-0881
James Bay: Convener Lynn Hunter 250-220-2240
Gordon Head: Convener Mary Cramer 250-477-1615
Western: Convener Susan Lean 250 478-5261
Nearby: Convener Nancy Dobbs 250-652-5438
Cadboro Bay: Convener Val Roberts 250-477-7192
Royal Oak West: Convener Martha McDougall 250-744-1541
Royal Oak East: Convener Hanny Pannekoek & Hugo Sutmoller 385-2299
Grand Central: Convener Jane Wilson 250-598-4348
Fairfield: Convener Lynn Beak 250-598-3584
Far Out (Sidney/North Saanich): Convener Phyllis Aherne 250-655-7149
Esquimalt: Convener Maureen Sherlock 250-384-6492



Care and Concern person for NG's:

Oak Bay: Louise de Lugt (778) 679-0456 / Lies Weijs (250) 595-6990
James Bay: Carol Smith (250) 891-8751
Gordon Head: Mary Cramer (250) 477-1615
Western: Sarah-Mae Adam (250) 896-5991 / Christine Petronis (250) 642-6624
Nearby: interim, Nancy Dobbs (250) 652-5438
Cadboro Bay: Fran Hancock (250) 477-1310
Royal Oak West: Dolores Appleton (250) 419-4220
Royal Oak East: Elaine Dakin (250) 744-1357
Grand Central: Would anyone like to do this?
Fairfield: Andra Forney andrafroney@gmail.com
Far Out: Margaret McKelvie (778) 351-3458
Esquimalt: Barbara Boyle 250 381-0264

C&C Liaisons for NG's:

Far Out, Nearby and Royal Oak West: Maggie Nixon (250) 656-5922 maggien5390@gmail.com
Gordon Head, Cadboro Bay and Royal Oak East: Stephanie Ippen (250) 652-6177 stephanielppen@gmail.com
Grand Central, Oak Bay and Fairfield: Mary-Ellen Nicol 250-590-4107 nicolme@yahoo.com
Western, Esquimalt and James Bay: Barbara Boyle (250)381-0264 barbara.boyle@shaw.ca

For NG questions, contact coordinator Kathy Vinton krvinton@shaw.ca 250 882-8650

For C&C questions, contact chair Barbara "Barb" Boyle barbara.boyle@shaw.ca 250 381-0264

The THRUU team (Truth Healing and Reconciliation Unitarian Universalists) grew out of the Indigenous Film Discussion Groups held in Spring 2020 with a mandate to facilitate education and FUCV connections to local Indigenous communities. In this new section of our monthly newsletter we plan to offer a selection of educational and - in post-pandemic times - volunteer opportunities and events.

The Canadian Unitarian Council offers a series of Film Screenings & Reflection Groups focussed on Truth Healing and Reconciliation. Participants have two weeks to view a film, read supporting materials, and then come together for a scheduled video conference call to debrief. The next film and reflection group will be based on the NFB documentary "Six Miles Deep", a portrait of a group of women who led their community, the largest reserve in Canada, Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve, in an historic blockade to protect their land. **It's simple to join! Register [here](#) by Friday, February 12 and everything you need will be emailed to you the day after the registration deadline.**

Watch the film and read the materials: February 13 – February 27, 2021

Reflection Group: Saturday, February 27, 2021, 12:30-2:00 ET

In the [news](#): Indigenous designers in B.C. outraged over claims of authenticity by non-Indigenous competitor
Read **BELOW** about **Status According to the *Indian Act***, by Lynn Beak, member of the THRUU team

Status According to the *Indian Act*

Submitted by Lynn Beak, Member of the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation UU (THRUU) Team

At the spring 2020 CUC Indigenous film series held in Victoria, questions were asked about what the term "Status Indian" meant. Below is a partial explanation from my perspective, as a settler and someone who helped lobby for changes to the *Indian Act* in the 1980's. I acknowledge that the term "Indian" is offensive to most Indigenous people, yet it is still the term used in the *Indian Act*, and therefore is difficult to replace in an explanation.

Background: Initially enacted in 1876, the *Indian Act* covers a range of matters including Indian Band governance, reserve land management and defines eligibility for Indian status.

The *Indian Act* (Act) applies only to people who are entitled to apply for "Indian status" under the Act. Métis and Inuit peoples are not covered by the Act. There are also many Indigenous people who are, for a number of complex reasons, not eligible to be registered as Indians under the Act.

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When "Indian status" (also called a registered Indian) was created, it was under federal policies of assimilation and "civilization" — the same policies led to residential schools and the systematic seizure of Indigenous children called the "Sixties Scoop". The Act determined who had certain rights such as the right to live on an Indian reserve, but from the very start, it also had, as an underlying goal, the eventual erasure of "Indians."

The idea was that as Indigenous people became "civilized," they would lose their status and become "enfranchised". Until 1985, the Act was openly discriminatory towards Indigenous women. If a woman with Indian status married a man without status, she would lose her status, even if he was an Indigenous person. However, if a man with status married a woman without status, she would gain status, whether or not she was an Indigenous person. Children could only get status if their parent had it, so if a woman lost her status, her children would also have it taken away. Also, if someone with Indian status served in the Armed Forces, obtained a university degree or became a professional, such as a doctor or lawyer, they would also have their status removed.

In 1985, after years of lobbying and protests by Indigenous women and their supporters, the Indian Act was amended as breaching section 15 - the gender equality section of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. All people who had their Indian status revoked were able to apply to have it reinstated. Even under the amended Act, however, the status system creates inequalities.

For example, there are now two types of "status Indians" that determine whether the children of a status Indian will have status or not. A 6 (1) Indian can pass their status on to their children, but a 6 (2) Indian cannot unless the other parent also has status. This is often referred to as the "second generation" cut-off. This means that many parents cannot register their children.

Currently, Indigenous women are still suing the federal government to make the status provision fairer. Many Indigenous people say the second-generation cut-off is a device used by governments to reduce the number of people who are recognized as status Indians.

What does Indian Status mean: A status card is a form of identification for government purposes. Benefits include the ability to run for Band government positions and vote in Band elections, live on reserve, and access some benefits including education and health care funding. However, the scope of these benefits is often exaggerated.

For example, education is a benefit in some treaties, and all treaty rights are constitutionally recognized in Canada, under Section 35 (1). However, post-secondary funding is limited to status Indians and is not available to non-status, Inuit or Métis peoples. These federal education funds are not adequate to meet the need and increases have been frozen for many years, resulting in long wait lists and restricted access for young people seeking higher education.

As for taxes, if you are a status Indian and you live or work off your reserve (which is most status Indians), then you pay both federal and provincial income taxes. Tax exemptions only apply in very specific, limited situations, and for the most part, this means goods and services and income are only tax-free on the reserve.

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Also, the *Indian Act* does not acknowledge treaties and treaty rights and the federal government limits some treaty rights only to status Indians and not all members of the broader Indigenous community. The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled against this limitation, but the federal government has not changed its practices.

For more information on the discriminatory treatment of Indigenous women see: <https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/2000-NWAC-Aboriginal-Womens-Rights-Are-Human-Rights-Research-Paper.pdf>

For the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission see: http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Volume_6_Reconciliation_English_Web.pdf

For the CUC Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Initiative, see <https://cuc.ca/social-justice/truth-healing-reconciliation/>

Here is some additional information that was requested from one of the other members of the THRUU Team.

Questions and Answers

1. Does a status Indian with an ID card get a monthly allowance of \$5, or some small amount like that?

The small payment you are probably thinking about is the Treaty payment. Treaty payments are not universal. Depending on the terms of the specific treaty (mainly the numbered treaties that cover the prairies), possible treaty obligations may include:

- payment of individual treaty annuities (still \$3 or \$5 annually, depending on the treaty - no inflation increase!) however this is only for First Nations who historically signed treaties. It's mainly symbolic, obviously.

- provision of ammunition and twine for nets

- provision of a suit of clothing every 3 years for chiefs and band councillors

Typically, the obligation to provide ammunition, twine and suits of clothing is satisfied by funds paid to First Nations, instead of providing actual items. There are a few chiefs who insist on the suits.

2. Does a status Indian have to renew her/his ID card annually?

Status cards started to be issued in 1956, as an official identity document confirming the cardholder to be registered under the *Indian Act*. At first, they were simple paper cards, then laminated or plastic card with a photo. Since 2009, a more secure status card (looking like a driver's licence) began to be issued. The secure ones need to be renewed every 10 years, but the older ones are theoretically still valid. Not every place will accept them though. New ones can be used instead of passports to cross into the USA for example.

Every-Member ABC Canvass Feedback Written by Suellen Gunther

Nancy Dobbs and Marion Pape undertook the complicated task of an every-member ABC canvass this year, with a focus on checking in with people to see how they are connecting with the congregation during this pandemic, as well as encouraging people to pledge. Of the 51 canvassers, 40 sent in reports, with a varying amount of detail, representing feedback from 172 members and friends. (I have recorded each member of a couple as an individual we heard from.) Three people refused to speak to their canvasser and several could not be reached, despite repeated attempts. Most of the canvassers did not include information about how **they** are connecting to the congregation, and two canvassers were disappointed that no one canvassed them. Some of the canvassers mentioned how much they enjoyed their conversations with the people they canvassed, and a few people who were canvassed said they appreciated being called personally. Several canvassers said they intended to keep in touch with the people they talked to.

Zoom Services

Not every canvasser reported on Zoom connections, but when the report included a mention of Zoom, 71 people usually or always attend the Zoom services, 13 sometimes tune in, 16 made a point of saying they never do, seven expressed that they don't like Zoom, and eight either have no computer or are unable to do Zoom, some due to mental impairment. Busy parents and older people were more likely to avoid the Zoom services.

Of those who do attend Zoom services, some commented that they **love** Zoom services, they love seeing all the faces on Zoom, they are impressed by the quality and variety of the services, they like the music in particular, or they think the services are much improved. Ten people said they were looking forward to in-person services again, a sentiment shared by most of us, I expect, and two people are quite upset that there are no in-person live services. Two people would like off-site services again and two mentioned the difficulty of driving out to the church. Twelve people attended each of the first two Zoom services in Lion Hall and Nancy reports enthusiastic people signed up to do the jobs and are planning to continue attending regularly.

Small Group Connections

The Choir, Pub Night, Zoom Sing, Chalice Circles, Men's Group, Women's Group, Soul Matters, Neighbourhood Groups, Social Action Groups, Walking Group, various committees, and fundraising events were all mentioned by members as ways they stay connected, even though most are held on Zoom. *Holding Us Together* and *Beloved Conversations* are groups that were valued. Seven people specifically said the newsletter and e-weekly keep them connected and one reads the sermons online. Working people, especially, mentioned they are "zoomed out" and 27 people said they have no small group contact. A few people said they are interacting with their friends and not the church for now.

One person suggests we have too many committees, one would like more groups dealing with indigenous matters, and one wishes there was a knitting group on Zoom making hats for the Backpack Project. One person pointed out that holding daytime groups and meetings excludes working people and another would like a Solos Group again, with a speaker and a potluck, for people who live alone.

Breeze Directory & Database

It is clear there is a lot of work and effort ahead to help people connect to Breeze and to accustom them to using it. Twenty-six couples or individuals reported they use it, 19 said they will sign up, 28 don't use it, 10 use it rarely or have no computer, and one person didn't know what it was. To learn how to

Continued on the next page...

use our Breeze Directory and Database, [click here for the November Getting on Board With Breeze article: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IF5Z-1R8GFCrxhhZ-J1sioKIwanFehmmFxtFQOiMPY8/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IF5Z-1R8GFCrxhhZ-J1sioKIwanFehmmFxtFQOiMPY8/edit?usp=sharing)

Pledging

Not every report included information on pledging. Of those who did, the reports indicated 40 pledging units had already pledged by mail or online by the time they were called, and 39 said they would pledge. One new member wanted to know how the canvass works, and ten people said they had not received a canvass packet. Nancy discovered Breeze did not identify people whose pledges were paid up for 2020, so quite a few people were not on her list to receive packets. Those pledge packets were subsequently sent. Two people said they found the information in the canvass brochure helpful.

Value of the Every-Member Canvass

People canvassed had a chance to say how they were doing, what they thought of how the church is operating during isolation, complain or offer suggestions, and ask questions. Questions and specific issues were referred to someone who could answer them or respond when appropriate. Four of the people called said they were thinking of joining the church and five said they may resign. Several families said they are taking a gap year or a sabbatical and will probably come back when services resume. Four people are comfortable knowing the church is there and they support Unitarian Universalism, even though they don't feel a need to attend. Several people who are isolated or have specific issues were referred to Care & Concern, and seven people mentioned they like the new Caring Corner in the e-weekly and the Zoom services. Apparently, church members are reaching out to the people listed there with cards and phone calls.

There was other random feedback. One person misses the Community Dinners. Several will come back to choir when it isn't on Zoom. One wants more variety and music in services, and one thinks there is too much emphasis on Covid and mental health. One thinks Intergenerational Services are for children, so she avoids them. One would like more Neighbourhood Group meetings when they can be held outside again, while another is uncomfortable gathering in-person until the pandemic is over. Two people wonder how the ministers are doing, and one person values having the tough conversations the ministers raise, as well as the way they are framing language so that people get used to it. Several people are concerned that aging will prevent them from driving out to the church and one person thinks our church is very youth-oriented, so there isn't much for older people. One person is too deaf to hear the Zoom services and would like printed sermons to read. Another with health challenges would like ingredients listed, when potlucks resume. Two people would like to see more biographies submitted to the new TRACKS section on the website and more church support for the initiative.

Three people expressed strong opinions that we should vote again on changing the name of the church, one person worries that that church service can be seen on Facebook, and another is concerned about the church budget and a financial shortfall. Several members reported they have lost income during the pandemic, and one woman suggested she has ideas to increase our rental income. Some families are too busy to connect with the church at the moment, several are enjoying Social Justice Storytime or the CELCY programs, and one parent is concerned about the violence in Minecraft.

One person thinks we should pay our staff properly before we invest in solar panels for the church, and two people would like our office staff to work in the church office at least half time, so they are more accessible and can form better connections with church members.

This every-member canvass gave us a chance to listen to each other, and the range of comments and issues raised indicate people care about the church and valued the chance to express their opinions. The personal approach also reminded people to pledge and offered an opportunity to explain church finances. All those phone calls strengthened our community while we are apart, and it is pretty clear that we all look forward to the time when we can gather together in our sanctuary once again and then crowd into Lion Hall for coffee.

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

5575 West Saanich Road • Victoria BC • V9E 2G1

www.victoriaunitarian.ca

churchoffice@victoriaunitarian.ca

250-744-2665

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rev.melora@victoriaunitarian.ca

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Cell: 250-891-6331

rev.shana@victoriaunitarian.ca

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Reverend Jane Bramadat

250-652-1272

LAY CHAPLAINS

laychaplains@victoriaunitarian.ca

Jenny Heston 250-509-1240

Kjerstin Mackie 250-598-5975

Anne Vaasjo 250-385-1603

Do you have a friend in need ... of a ceremony? A wedding, child dedication or memorial?
Tell them about FUCV's Lay Chaplains. It's what we do!

DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Arran Liddel 250-744-2695

arran@victoriaunitarian.ca

Continued next page

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CARE AND CONCERN COMMITTEE

We Care!
for hospital and home visits,
or just to talk...

Barbara Boyle
250-381-0264

or your Neighbourhood
Group Care and
Concern person



CALENDAR:

[CLICK HERE](#)

NEW MEMBERS/FRIENDS

Gisele Bentley — Friend

**The Newsletter Deadline is the
15th of the Month
EVERY MONTH!**

FROM THE EDITORS: GUIDELINES FOR YOUR SUBMISSIONS

*We try to standardize the
presentation, to avoid the dog's
breakfast aspect...:*



- Where possible we use Calibri font.
- One space between sentences and between lines.
- No pdf files, please, use Word.
- Send pictures in jpegs... Don't send text as jpegs.
- Take the deadline seriously!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

| First Name | Last Name | Birthday |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Michael | Greenly | December 01 |
| Victoria | Barr | December 04 |
| Daphne | Horne | December 04 |
| Dawn | Fizzard | December 05 |
| Michael | Eckford | December 06 |
| Edie | Taylor | December 06 |
| James | Willis | December 06 |
| John | Dalgety | December 07 |
| Liz | Graham | December 07 |
| Slaine | Sutherland | December 07 |
| Cheryl | Hall | December 08 |
| Johanna | Billung-Meyer | December 09 |
| Forrest Rae | Brown Kilgour | December 09 |
| Laura | Doyle | December 09 |
| Nancy | Dobbs | December 10 |
| Henry | Hagan-Braun | December 10 |
| Kathryn | Harwood | December 10 |
| Finlay | Taylor | December 10 |
| Anne | Bowers | December 11 |
| Lesley | Duthie | December 11 |
| Kyunje | Thokme | December 11 |
| Dorothy | Jones | December 12 |
| Nadia | Cantera | December 13 |
| Mohammad | Banaee | December 14 |
| Mary-Stephanie | Walrafen | December 14 |
| Rowena | Locklin | December 15 |
| Penny | Boyce | December 17 |
| Valerie | Howe | December 17 |
| James | Jordan | December 18 |
| Rosemary | Harrison | December 20 |
| Helen | McFadyen | December 20 |
| Nolan | Branch | December 21 |
| Lisa | Hitch | December 21 |
| Gloria | Hopewell | December 21 |
| Archie | McGugan | December 22 |
| Hugo | Sutmoller | December 22 |
| Ruth | Welburn | December 23 |
| Edith | Jasechko-Burton | December 26 |
| Christina | Harris | December 27 |
| Aaron | Brimacombe | December 28 |
| Alan | Boyle | December 30 |
| Deanna | Hutchings | December 30 |

Ads appearing in this issue are not necessarily endorsed by the church.

RENTAL NEEDED FEBRUARY/MARCH 2021

Sylvia Krogh's sister and her husband from Alberta would like to rent a place in or near Victoria for February and/or March 2021.

If you are aware of such a place please phone Sylvia at 1-780-454-6216 or email skrogh@shaw.ca

Masks - new & improved

When I started sewing the first masks in March, I held the optimistic view that they would be a temporary attire, a distant memory by the end of the year.

Now, we all realize that masks will be an accessory to our wardrobe for some time to come.

So, if you are tired of your old one and feel like upgrading to a new improved three layer model in fun patterns, let me know!

Astrid



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5575 West Saanich Rd (across from Red Barn Market)
250 592 4411 imhs@is.net
www.islandmontessori.com

Help wanted: We are looking for someone, preferably female, to take Laura to the Panorama rec, centre once a week and help her with her water walking and exercise routine. Will pay \$25 an hour (approx. 3 hours per session) or will donate the money to the church in your name. Call Nellie for details. Nellie and Laura at 778 426-0300

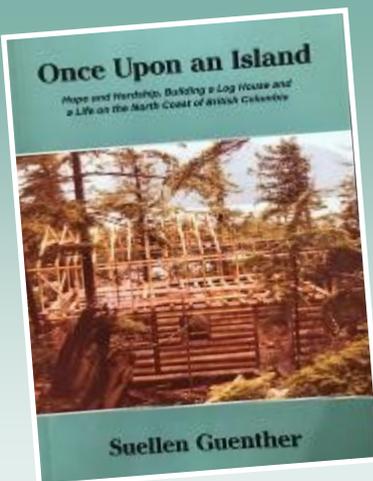


Marya's Mindful Mending

Marya will do some simple mending for you! You agree to send a donation to our Church! Highly recommended by Naida Hyde, Sarah Kendall and Christine Johnston.



Phone Marya Nijland at 250-592-6484,
email philmar@islandnet.com,
Street address: 1394 Vista Heights Victoria BC



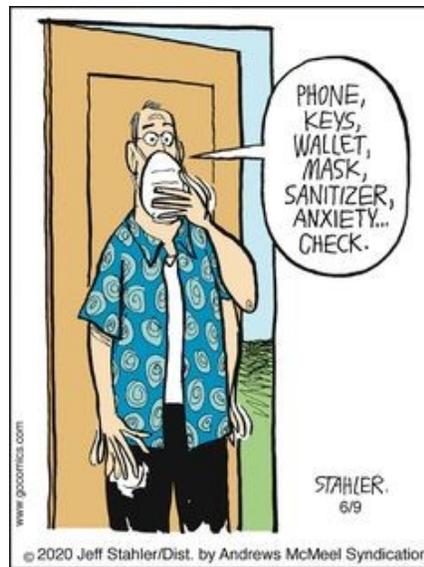
Looking for a Unique Gift? Consider Giving a Copy of my Back-to-the-Land Memoir. \$29.95

This memoir recounts the 15 years I lived on the BC North Coast during the "back to the land" movement, building a log house on Porcher Island. It is the longer version of my story, "Home Is a Tent", published in the book *Gumboot Girls*. The book is 360 pages, with 109 photographs, 27 of them in colour. \$29.95 each.

Email Suellen at sguenther@shaw.ca to place your order.



Corona virus has turned us all into dogs. We roam the house looking for food. We're told "no" if we get too close to strangers. And we get really excited about car rides and walks.



Someday we will all look back on this year and it will forever remind us to never take the little things for granted.

Shades of Pink

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Copy should be sent to
newsletter@victoriaunitarian.ca.



For those without email, copy may be left at the church
office. All copy is subject to editing.

Staff: Barbara Nyland and Jen Young (editors); Shannon
Oatway (production, distribution and paid advertisements).