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# The Gift of Welcome

*In The Spirit* | September, 2023

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## This Sunday's Service, September 3rd

**Sunday, September 3rd, 10:30 am**

*Guided by the Light*

Adriane Matheson-Smith, Homilist

Johnathan Savard, Worship Associate

This service explores the beliefs, worship styles, and history of the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers. We will learn about the belief in the divine Light within all and allowing that light to guide one's actions. Adriane Matheson-Smith will share some of her experiences growing up in a Quaker family before guiding the congregation through a short worship in the traditional Quaker style. A Quaker service is conducted in silence with no leadership; all that feel compelled to speak are welcome to do so.

**Adriane Matheson-Smith** was born in Brunei Darussalam while her parents were teaching abroad, and came to Canada when she was seven months old. She was raised in a Quaker family in Barrie, Ontario, and was taught to appreciate a variety of beliefs. Adriane studied geological engineering at Queen's University, then moved to Thunder Bay, where she was introduced to Unitarian Universalist values and principles at the Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship. She and her husband Johnathan moved to Victoria in 2020, where she works for Elections BC, and they joined the First Unitarian Church of Victoria in 2022.



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## Sunday Services in September

**Sunday, September 10th, 10:30 am**

*Welcoming Change*

Rev. Shana Lynngood, Homilist

Rosemary Harrison, Worship Associate

As we return to a new program year in the life of our congregation, we begin with the theme of welcome. In many ways, offering welcome seems so, so simple. What could be easier than inviting someone in and offering them a seat, a listening ear, some empathy? And yet, we know that human connecting can be hard, especially if there are differences between us (both personality and in terms of identity) that can lead to misunderstandings or disagreements. To deeply welcome means welcoming change. We also begin our new church year by welcoming an exciting musical guest. Jen Hayman, one of the luminaries in UU music leadership, will be with us in September and October for two residencies. She will be working with our Chalice Choir this Sunday.

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**Sunday, September 17, 10:30 am**

*Life is a Mix*

Rev. Melora Lynngood, Homilist

Mollie Twidale, Worship Associate

This Sunday, we look at welcome as the practice of acceptance: acceptance of ourselves and our imperfect lives, acceptance of the world as it actually is. How do we move through the hard stuff of our days without closing our hearts to the good stuff as well? How can we appreciate the gratuities even when they are entwined with – and threaded through with – flaws? Given that life is a mix of hard stuff and good stuff, how do we want to BE as we navigate through it all?

Jen Hayman will be with us again this Sunday leading music with local musicians.

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**Sunday, September 24, 10:30 am**

*The Art of Community*

Rev. Shana Lynngood, Homilist

Jana Kotaska, Worship Associate

One of the things we hear again and again is just how many people are feeling isolated and lonely. More and more people say they have few connections in their lives and the ones that they do have are not of the depth or level of meaning they would like. Creating community is hard. It takes deliberate and intentional effort, and it takes a willingness to stick with it. What does that have to do with our ability to welcome—both our own deepest selves and the vulnerable truths of others? Let's explore this question this Sunday as we continue to ponder our future as a community.

## Miss a Sunday Service?

You can view past Sunday worship services [here](#). No sign-in required.

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## Covid Update

Effective July 1, 2023, masks are no longer required during Services in the Sanctuary.

Meanwhile, please continue to be prudent.

- Don't come to church if you are feeling ill.
- Make sure your vaccinations are up-to-date.
- By all means, you can continue to wear a mask in the Sanctuary if you wish.
- As before, small groups meeting anywhere on or off church property are free to decide democratically whether to mask or not.

To our knowledge, no one has yet caught Covid in the Sanctuary. But if you do get Covid and believe you may have contracted it in the church, please advise us immediately by sending an email to [covidteam@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:covidteam@victoriaunitarian.ca) specifying if possible which room you believe you may have gotten it in. Your information will be kept strictly confidential, but the Covid Team will use it to continue to assess whether we need to adjust our guidelines to ensure the community's safety.

*From your FUCV COVID-19 Team (Nancy Dobbs, Rev. Melora Lynngood, Kristina Stevens, Katherine Maas, and Jim Willis)*

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## GVAT Annual Picnic

You're all invited ...

To GVAT's annual picnic for all member organizations, not just for active GVAT volunteers.  
**Sunday, September 3, 2023 5-7:30pm** at Beaver Lake-picnic shelter by Filter Beds parking lot

Please bring:

- fellow congregants, friends, family
- Potluck food to share
- Non-alcoholic beverages

- Re-useable dishes, cutlery, napkins

Chairs or blankets

Lawn games (eg. bocce, croquet...)

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## Pub Night

Join us on **Monday, September 4th at 7 pm** at **Lure in the Delta Ocean Pointe at 100 Harbour Rd.** It's close to bus routes and there is plenty of parking on Tyee and in the underground parking, for which you will receive an exit code on your bill.

It's a relaxed evening of lively conversation and getting to know each other. Some eat dinner, others just enjoy a beverage. We have reserved tables against the interior wall in the bar

area. Pub Night is held the First Monday monthly. If you have questions please contact John Hopewell [hopewell@telus.net](mailto:hopewell@telus.net)

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## Garden Work Party

Sat 30th Sep 9am-2pm

Gardens and Grounds Work Party. Woodsplitting and seasonal maintenance with a shared meal.

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## All Ages Sing-A-Long & Picnic

Sat 16th Sep noon onward in the Sanctuary & front lawns

Bring your own picnic lunch and stay for an all ages sing-a-long with our musical guest Jen Hayman, one of the luminaries in UU music leadership.



*Jennifer Hayman is an accomplished choral conductor, educator, singer, and pianist. In her tenure as Director of Music and Arts at All Souls Unitarian DC, Jen grew the music program to include more than 200 participants, ages 5-80, in eight diverse performing ensembles. Jen led a successful flash mob for voting rights on the steps of the Supreme Court, resulting in a viral video that was featured on the Huffington Post, Upworthy.com, and the Rachel Maddow Show (2013). On the eve of the 2017 Women's March in DC, Jen directed a 700-voice Solidarity Sing in conjunction with All Souls' ongoing work as a sanctuary*

*congregation. Jen has led performances for the Smithsonian, Kennedy Center of the performing arts, National Public Radio (2019), the National Arboretum and The Phillips Collection (2022). She has performed for two Supreme Court justices and alongside countless civil rights and social justice leaders.*

*Prior to her work in DC, Jen worked for an orchestra in Philadelphia, a record label in New York City and a tour manager for a rock band on Vans Warped Tour. Equally passionate about both classical and popular music, Jen has collaborated with various rock and pop musicians and has been featured on numerous recordings as a pianist and vocalist. In her spare time, Jen can be found thrift shopping for retro home goods, trying to coordinate red, orange, and turquoise in the same outfit, and having dance parties with her husband, Rob, and son, Simon.*

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## Autumn Equinox Embodied Soul Celebration

Sun 22nd Sep 6:30pm-8pm in the Farmhouse Common Room

Equinox and Solstice Rituals enrich life and aid spiritual development. They honour the start of each season and serve as focal points for individuals and communities, strengthening connections with dimensions of self, other, sacred forces, and Nature. They commonly include times of silent introspection, exuberant expression and vocal interaction.

Join long-time church member Madelaine Clarke and guest facilitator Gail Peekeekoot ([www.riteintentions.com](http://www.riteintentions.com)), DMin, MN, RN -- a certified Life-Cycle Celebrant who creates and leads ritual and ceremonies for healing and for the important turning points in the lives of people and communities on the following 2024 dates from 6:30-8:00pm:

- \* Sunday, September 22 (Fall begins with the Autumnal Equinox)
- \* Saturday, December 21 (Winter begins with the Winter Solstice)
- \* Tuesday, March 19 (Spring begins with the Vernal Equinox)
- \* Thursday, June 20 (Summer begins with the Summer Solstice)

All Embodied Soul Celebrations commence in the Farmhouse Common Room and transition to the Labyrinth (weather permitting).

While there is no fee to participate, donations are welcome and contribute to Labyrinth environs enhancement projects that are currently under development. A water bottle, weather-wise clothing layers and a journal are recommended.

To assist with preparations, please register in advance: [mpclarke13magda61@gmail.com](mailto:mpclarke13magda61@gmail.com). Doors open 15 minutes prior to the event to ensure a prompt start; if you are delayed, please plan to join us for the next event rather than arriving late. Blessed Be!!

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## Share the Plate September - THRUU (Truth, Healing & Reconciliation)

The Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Committee of our church (THRUU) proposed that for September, our Share the Plate recipient be R.A.V.E.N. (**Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs**).

I am proud to be a founding board member of this organization. RAVEN Trust is a registered charity, based in Victoria, with a mission to raise funds for Indigenous people's access to justice. RAVEN was formed to recognize the need to redress an inherent imbalance. To obtain justice in the courts for Canada's First Nations in their struggle to protect rights and lands, native leaders, advocates, and their legal teams almost always face overwhelming odds. Guided by some of the most brilliant legal advisors in the country, RAVEN works to

ensure environmental justice for all.

Through Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, the law is clearly on the side of Indigenous peoples: Their victories protect us all. Supporting the assertion of the inherent and constitutionally protected rights of Indigenous peoples is a powerful pathway towards reconciliation and environmental justice.

**September 30th is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.**

I urge you to support RAVEN as generously as you are able.

Lynn Hunter

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## Artist of the Month for September: Katharine Geddes

### Contemporary Landscape Artist

Living in Victoria on Vancouver Island, I enjoy plein air painting in all seasons and being outside in nature.



Capturing the freshness and impression of a scene is most important to me and is the foundation of my studio work. Painting outside is an excuse for me to be there, in a forest, a garden or at the ocean. I capture the essence of a scene with oil paint and cold wax, using expressive marks leaning towards abstraction. I also create larger mixed media works in the studio.

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## Soul Matters for September

### Welcome Theme Questions

This month we explore the gift of **Welcome**.

Here are some questions to spark your thinking inspired by the UU Soul Matters Network. Discuss the questions with a fellow congregant, with friends or family, and/or journal about them on your own. If the list is overwhelming, scan it, and simply choose one question to ponder and revisit over the course of the month. See what insights might come from living with the question over time. Pick the one question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal is to figure out which question is “yours.” Which question captures the call of your inner voice? Which one contains “your work”? What is it trying to get you to notice? Where is it trying to lead you?

1. Who welcomed you in when you needed it most? How has that gift changed you? What would you say to the person if you had the chance?
2. What do you know now about welcoming in the present moment that you didn't know when you were younger?
3. What if, as some say, God is the force that disrupts our comfortable plans and notions? What if wholeness and holiness only leak into our lives when we welcome those moments of life being turned on its head?
4. What would you tell someone younger than yourself about welcoming in grief?
5. Have you ever welcomed in a moment so fully that you suddenly felt one with it?
6. What part of you do you wish your family of origin would have welcomed more enthusiastically?
7. Is welcoming in an awareness of death helpful?
8. Do you know what it's like to encounter a welcome that requires you to remove parts of yourself to belong?
9. Theologian Joan D. Chittister said, “Hospitality is simply love on the loose.” Does that ring true for you?
10. Has welcoming change gotten easier or harder as you've grown older?
11. What part of yourself is hardest to welcome in and embrace with compassion: Your vulnerable self? Your flawed self? Your easily frightened self? Your angry self?
12. We all have past friendships we wish we could have taken deeper, that were cut short because we moved or other life events took priority. If you could welcome one of those unfulfilled friendships back into your life, which one would it be? And why?
13. What is trying to get itself welcomed into your life right now?
14. What new ideas have you welcomed in since you've been a UU?
15. If you were asked to name 2 ways you could help make your church more welcoming, what would they be?
16. **What's your question?** Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to hear it.

## This Month's Spiritual Exercises

It's one thing to analyze a theme; it's quite another to experience it. By pulling us out of the space of *thinking* and into the space of *doing*, these exercises invite us to figure out not just



what we have to say about life, but also what life has to say to us.

*These suggested spiritual exercises are some of those suggested by the Unitarian Universalist Soul Matters Network this month. Pick the exercise that speaks to you the most.*

## Option A

### A Week of Welcoming Gratefulness & The Present Moment

Welcoming the present moment is one of the most important of all spiritual practices. Yet, it's also one of the hardest. So to make it a bit easier, we've put together a list of videos to help you. For one week at least, start your day by listening to one of these videos. You can journal after listening or just sit quietly with what the video opens up for you. Think of this as a morning meditation. Be sure to give some thought to your surroundings. Some will listen while sitting at your kitchen table sipping your first cup of coffee. Others will listen while sitting on your back porch looking out as the morning presents itself.

During the week, pay attention to how beginning your day this way alters the way you travel through it. Consider journaling to capture your thoughts. Share with a friend or fellow congregant 2-3 examples of the difference the videos made.

- A Good Day, Brother David Steindl-Rast  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpkEvBtyL7M&amp;t=47s>
- The Meaning of Life, Sam Harris  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UjE2A1He58>
- This is what was bequeathed us, Gregory Orr  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrvMpAavaAw>
- Grateful Voices - James  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFi-LzWHH98>
- The Power Is Here Now, Alexia Chellun  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rJfU1A6cxs>
- Live Fully Now, Alan Watt  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdqVF7-8wng>
- Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude, Ross Gay  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uURnrX-v6o&amp;t=416s>
- Gratitude, Mary Oliver  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XKg514\\_K3s&amp;t=65s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XKg514_K3s&amp;t=65s)
- This is Water, David Foster Wallace  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eC7xzavzEKY>
- We Are Going to Die, Richard Dawkins  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOXMjCnKwb4&amp;t=11s>

## Option B

### Welcome in the Work (and gift) of Meditation

If you want to welcome mindfulness in a more formal way, consider doing some guided meditations for a week. To help, we've assembled a handful of guided meditations below.

They are by psychologist and mindfulness teacher, Shauna Shapiro. Before you jump into the list, watch these two videos to better understand what mindfulness practice is and what gifts it offers.

#### **About Mindfulness Meditation:**

- Mindfulness, the Brain & Your Happiness Set Point  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AqgMo1P05E>
- A Joyful Mind - Mindfulness Documentary  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HBX92PT3264>

#### **Guided Meditations:**

- Always Here, the power of the present moment  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8sxeRvJu9g>
- Morning I love you med  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUVzB2q39Ak>
- Self Kindness  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLq0sB0vQO4>
- Setting Intentions  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ms3xIVsUSg>
- Calming the Anxious Mind  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxmOzEGknZA>
- Forgiveness and Letting Go  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acF4fPLTJiQ>

## Option C

### Welcome in the World Nearby

[Alastair Humphreys](#) is an adventurer. A serious one. He's cycled around the world, rowed the Atlantic, walked across southern India, just to name a few. But lately he's gone from big to small, from global and grand to local and familiar. He ordered a 12-mile square map of the area where he lives, and then he spent a year exploring each half-mile square on that map. The result? The world around him came alive again. He tells the story of this local adventure [here](#).

How might you do a bit of the same this month? How might you welcome in the "world nearby" more deeply?! There's no one right way. Don't get caught up on exploring a 12-mile square area; the 3–5-mile radius around your home is likely plenty. Maybe you look for a road you rarely travel on and walk or bike it so you can take it in slowly. Maybe you go to one of your favourite parks or coffee shops and soak it in until you notice something new or see it in a new light. Or how about spending a couple weeks taking pictures of your neighbourhood, capturing it from a new perspective or placing it in a new frame. Or you could go on a treasure hunt to document as many of the unique sounds of your local world. And what about drawing or painting it?

Whatever approach you use, the goal is to welcome in the world around you in a new way,

and by doing so to enable that nearby world to come alive! Share with a friend or fellow congregant what surprised you most and what gift the exercise gave you.

## Option D

### Welcome the Unwelcomed with Words

Many spiritual traditions call us to welcome the unwelcomed. Here's how the Buddhist teacher, [Pema Chödrön](#), describes this holy work:

“Accepting something isn't the same as liking it. To accept a feeling that we habitually associate with discomfort doesn't mean we immediately turn around and start enjoying it. It means being okay with it as part of the texture of human life.”

The poet Pádraig Ó Tuama tackles this work with words, in his poem, The Facts of Life, found here: <https://medium.com/bricology/the-facts-of-life-a-poem-by-p%C3%A1draig-%C3%B3-tuama-ea7111ae2f72>

Notice how Ó Tuama begins with a list of “facts” that are mostly hard and unwanted, but as the poem goes on, he weaves in more and more “facts” that are hopeful and full of peaceful acceptance. So using Ó Tuama's poem as a guide, write your own “Facts of Life poem.” Begin it with a list of the hard and unwelcome facts you've encountered and slowly weave in the hopeful facts and insights that make up, as Pema Chodron says, the full texture of your life. Be sure to note that Ó Tuama gives you an easy structure to work with by starting each sentence with “That...”

## Option E

### Explore The Journey of Welcoming Yourself

When it comes to the journey of welcoming ourselves, Zen priest and Sensei, Rev. angel Kyodo Williams, is one of the wisest guides out there. So for this exercise, digest this interview with her on self- belonging: <https://revangel.com/the-alchemy-of-belonging-podcast/>

Here are some suggestions to guide your experience:

- As you listen to the interview, try to identify the 2-3 quotes or moments that stuck out the most for you. Then ask yourself, “How are these stand out pieces trying to offer me a word of comfort or challenge?”
- After you are done listening, spend some time paying attention to your body and identify how you are feeling. Write down all the various feelings you are having. Take your time to be sure to get in touch with the hard-to-notice, as well as the easy-to-notice feelings. Reflect on what wisdom these feelings might contain.
- Ask yourself, “What do I want to change because of this interview?”

## Option G

### Welcome in a Wider World of Music

Did you know that [we stop exploring](#) new music as we age?! It turns out that our musical tastes begin to crystallize as early as age 13 or 14 and they become largely [locked in place](#) by

our early 20s! So let's unlock that door and welcome in some new music! We suggest you do that by exploring these two music websites:

- NPR Tiny Desk Concerts

<https://www.youtube.com/@nprmusic>

- Soundcheck Live Performances & Conversations

<https://www.newsounds.org/shows/soundcheck>

Go through them methodically or just close your eyes and randomly click. However you explore is up to you.

But along the way, try some of these intentional listening practices:

- Pause when a song strongly grabs you or strongly turns you off. Then try to articulate why each is the case. To go deep, keep asking "Why is that?" after each of your answers.
- Pay attention to whether hearing the musician talk about their music changes your opinion of it.
- Go through the songs with a friend, partner or child. Make it a game by having each of you rank the songs on a scale of 1-10. Dig into and discuss those moments when your rankings are far off and when they are the same. What does that say about not only each of you but also your relationship with each other?

### Soul Matters Songs on the Theme

Check out the Spotify song collections for each month's themes:

<https://open.spotify.com/user/mjf4kicgvwkk17jfbzb0un6gg>

Direct link to The Gift of Welcome playlist on spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0NgJqwi4ryWFasZcMOvcrP?si=037e5be8c5aa4bf1>

With Video! Also available as a youtube playlist. :

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL\\_fSD0\\_Ps01IGauCVL\\_mKQ/playlists](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL_fSD0_Ps01IGauCVL_mKQ/playlists)

Direct link to The Gift of Welcome playlist on youtube:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?>

<list=PLvXOKgOQVYP6rgEsVSTSOuUJQVt1Gxh6e&si=ib0QJJSbhFiHJq-o>

## Annual Budget Campaign 2024

### FUNDING OUR FUTURE

**This year the ABC invites you to envision the future that you will want to fund.**

Small group meetings, i.e., cottage meetings of 8-10 people, will be hosted in homes, at the church and on Zoom, the first three weeks of October. Be sure to read about cottage meetings and how you sign up to attend in the Sept. 14th Eweekly.

All members and friends will receive the ABC package either September 24th at church or in the mail. You may also find it on our website <https://victoriaunitarian.ca/> by Sept. 24th. If you do not receive a copy of the ABC package, contact Patty Disbrow at [pattydisbrow@gmail.com](mailto:pattydisbrow@gmail.com) or 250 686 6797.

If you are a member or friend of First Unitarian Church of Victoria, please bring your pledge form to your cottage meeting. After your meeting you can:

- bring your pledge form to FUCV in person;
- send it in the mail; or
- pledge online.

We ask that you pledge by October 22. Your pledges are necessary to budget for 2024.

**Your ABC Team:**

**Lynne Bonner, Nancy Dobbs, Bruce Nicol, Kathleen Zimmerman, Patty Disbrow**

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## Using Our Breeze Online Directory

### Why do we keep asking you to get set up on the Congregation's Breeze database?

This is because Breeze contains the only updated online directory for church members and friends as well as the key contacts list that contains the names, contact info and roles for the church leadership. It is also an excellent way to pledge and continue to 'give' throughout the year. Finally, by using Breeze you assist our hard-working Treasurer who would have to enter your giving information.

The ABC Team would like you to set up your Breeze account in preparation for the 2024 Annual Budget Campaign (ABC). If you have not activated it, please contact Anna at [communications@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:communications@victoriaunitarian.ca). If you would like someone to come into your home and assist you in getting set up, contact Marion Pape ([marionpape@shaw.ca](mailto:marionpape@shaw.ca)). She is making it her goal to personally help people use Breeze.

### Instructions on searching Breeze:

To begin your own learning, follow these simple instructions:

Open your Internet browser to login to Breeze <https://fucv.breezechms.com/login> with your username and password. This 'Sign in' will bring you to the Breeze Dashboard page. Click My Profile for your individual profile page (takes a while for your photo to come up). From this My Profile page you can search most of Breeze e.g.

- **Search for other members** by clicking the search people box in the upper right corner of your profile page or the Navigation Dashboard at the top of the page, inserting their name, and then clicking on their photo.
- **Edit your contact details** to add or update any personal information including your birthdate, cell phone number and emergency contact information. Add or change your photo by clicking on the photo box and follow the prompts. Each Section Head (i.e. **Main, Family, Communications**) is on a grey rectangular bar. Hover over the bar with your mouse to expose "Click to edit", to the right of the section name and edit the info you wish to change or add. Remember to **SAVE** once you are done.

- **Search for Key Contacts FUCV Leadership:** The key contacts list is updated regularly on Breeze. The document answers most of the questions you might have about FUCV. From your own profile page, scroll down the page to the bottom right to find Our Church Community. Under this heading find pdf documents for Key Contacts, and Neighbourhood Groups Positions.
  - **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.
  - **Pledging:** Directly relevant to our 2024 ABC, you can check your record of contributions including your history of pledging. Outside of the Treasurer, only you can see this info. From your profile page, click on the **Giving Button** located on the far-left side of your profile page, in a list under “Details”. This is a great way to look up your record of contributions. Once into your Giving information, click ‘Pledge’ to see your pledge history on the left side of the page in a list under Details and then pledge in the centre of the page.
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## From the GVAT Team

### Win for Mental Health with Victoria’s new Community-Led Crisis Response Team

On May 25th, AVI Health & Community Services announced that the Community-Led Crisis Response Team (CLCR) is now operating in Victoria. This peer-assisted mobile crisis response team responds to 911 calls to de-escalate crises and develop community care plans with persons experiencing crisis. This good news is the result of years of work by GVAT, dating back to at least 2018 when GVAT held one of their first major events. GVAT member organizations continue to build on this important win and to advocate for permanent funding for 24/7 CLCR service and expansion throughout the greater Victoria region.

### Affordable Housing Team Update

- ongoing work engaging with mayors and others about our Housing for All Campaign
- planning fall initiative with member organizations and allies, on Real Rent Control (Vacancy control) to address rental protections and reduce no-fault evictions of tenants -working.
- participating in community consultations and Public Hearings on Official Community Plan (OCP) changes being undertaken by Victoria, Esquimalt, and Saanich in 2023 and to ensure that GVAT Affordable Rental housing priorities are identified and included.
- met with Ravi Kahlon, the Minister of Housing, in July

## Climate Justice Team Update

- United for Old-Growth event on February 25th, and follow-up [Op-Ed](#) to show community support for old-growth forests protection
- Transportation subcommittee meeting with Victoria and Saanich mayors and councilors to support:
  - wheelchairs and mobility scooters use of AAA bike and roll routes
  - Clean BC Vehicle Kilometers Traveled (VKT) target
  - Bus lanes on Douglas downtown Victoria and on McKenzie to UVic
  - letter to the editor on the provincial VKT target published in the Saanich News <https://twitter.com/ActingGreater/status/1656381096211402752>

## IAF Allies News

- GVAT is participating in international IAF meetings this summer .
- Long time IAF NorthWest organizer Joe Chrastil retired July 2023.
- GVAT is collaborating on training opportunities with other Canadian IAF affiliates.
- Metro Vancouver Alliance (MVA) is actively campaigning again, and like GVAT, focused on both affordable housing and climate justice, creating abundant opportunities for collaborative work in BC.

## GVAT staff and Board News:

- GVAT is hiring a part time organizer.
- GVAT welcomed [Yvonne Hsieh and Tracey Scott](#) to it's 2023 Board. Gratitude to FUCV's own Susan Layng for her years of GVAT board service.
- Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion became an official committee of the GVAT Board, and GVAT's Indigenous Relationships Learning Circle is a sub-committee of EDI committee, offering trainings to support GVAT's commitment and humility towards reconciliation.

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# Native Plant Garden Party

**When:** October 1 st after the service

**Who:** all ages

**Where:** front lawn

**Details:** Along with the usual tea, coffee and goodies, there will be hot dogs and s'mores. Trowels will be available or bring your own. You are also welcome to simply watch and

socialize.

September 30th, is the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. Participating in this planting is a small act of reconciliation by restoring some of the native plants that have been destroyed on the Island.

**Dropins welcome & RSVPs help** us plan food  
[anna@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:anna@victoriaunitarian.ca)




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## Formation of a Mentoring Relationship Between FUCV and UUFLM

**Statement of intent for First Unitarian Church of Victoria to support the formation of a new Unitarian Universalist fellowship on the Lower Mainland.**

A group of about 50 North Shore Unitarian congregation members, former members, and other interested parties are in the process of establishing a new Unitarian Universalist congregation on the Lower Mainland by breaking away from their current church. UUFLM wants to establish a congregation recognized by the Canadian Unitarian Council and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). To this end, UUFLM has asked the FUCV Board to mentor them, by supporting their lay chaplain, and handling their financial procedures until UUFLM is fully recognized by CRA. The FUCV Board has approved this approach. UUFLM will set up a special account in which to keep their funds separate from FUCV's. Ryan Guenther, UUFLM's Treasurer, will work with our Treasurer to properly account for UUFLM's finances. The FUCV Board, with UUFLM's assistance, will draft an agreement confirming FUCV's and UUFLM's responsibilities. The agreement will remain in force until UUFLM receives charitable status from CRA, possibly up to two years.

UUFLM are united in the future that they envision for Unitarian Universalism. They are committed to doing church differently so that they can be truly inclusive. This means examining everything from how they make decisions and run meetings to rethinking bylaws and the way they do worship. They embrace interdependence, diversity, and the centrality of covenant and relationships.

UUFLM are inspired by the amazing diversity of their children, youth, and young adult communities. UUFLM take their inspiration from their worship together, encourage empathy, compassion, and open minds and how they succeed in building Beloved Community. They value children, youth and young adults as full members of their community who offer deep wisdom and creativity and are committed to finding ways to integrate them



fully into all aspects of how they are together and what they do.

UUFLM embraces the Eighth Principle which calls on them to hold each other accountable with love and care when they have said or done things that do not uphold the inherent worth and dignity of everyone. UUFLM believe people when they tell of their experience even when that experience does not match their own. They seek to be a congregation that emphasizes and engages in meaningful social justice action.

UUFLM offers an opportunity for Unitarian Universalists who want to co-create something new, something that centres love, something that honours all of our principles. They offer a culture that recognizes disagreement and conflict as opportunity while taking care to express disagreement with humility and openness to other perspectives. They commit to engaging in dialogue, not debate, and seeking resolutions that everyone impacted is willing to try.

UUFLM welcome Unitarian Universalists from the lower mainland who share their vision and commit to a covenant of right relations. They have worked and continue to work hard to create and maintain a congregation of respect and trust. FUCV congregation members are welcome to address questions to our President ([jimwillis568@gmail.com](mailto:jimwillis568@gmail.com)) or Treasurer ([kristinalstevens@gmail.com](mailto:kristinalstevens@gmail.com)).

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## Board Meeting & Minutes

Next board meeting Thu 14th Sep 5:30pm

[July 13th board meeting minutes](#)

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## Changes to Care and Concern Team

Our church Care and Concern Team consisting of Mary Ellen Nicol, Maggie Nixon, Stephanie Ippen and Barb Boyle along with our ministerial contact, Rev. Melora, will be undergoing changes as our new church year starts up.

Barb Boyle is stepping off the team in order to focus on her work as a Lay Chaplain and Mary-ellen Nicol will be stepping up as chair of the Care & Concern Team. Change is coming and the team is excited to see what it brings.

The team is looking for someone who might be interested to come on the team as liaison for 3 of our 12 neighbourhood groups including Esquimalt, James Bay and Western. The team is also looking for people interested in becoming the care and concern person for several neighbourhood groups including Grand Central, Fairfield, Esquimalt and Nearby.

Let the team know if you are interested in becoming more involved in our caring community.

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## Our Caring Corner

Our Care and Concern (C&C) Team at First Unitarian Church of Victoria and our co-ministers are continuing with this new way to share information with our church community as we come out of this time of COVID-19 induced isolation. In our **Caring Corner**, we will list the names of those members of our community who welcome our support as they cope with a loss, illness, or other life concern.

We ensure that each individual is comfortable with having their name uplifted in writing in the EWeekly, shared aloud in the prayer and meditation time in the Sunday service, or both before doing so.

Names will remain for 2 weeks so that as many of us as possible have an opportunity to reach out.

**Nancy Dobbbs** has written to let our church community know about a health issue she is having at this time: *"I have been diagnosed with breast cancer metastasized to my bones. I am in Ontario with my family until September 5th. I don't know when I will see an oncologist on my return. At this present time, this cancer is considered incurable, but it might be manageable with treatment.*

*A new life adventure ahead ... living with cancer."*

Please consider this an opportunity to reach out to others. There are an infinite number of ways to express caring: a short hand-written note, an email or text message, a chat on the telephone. Perhaps a moment of holding someone in need in your thoughts and heart!

Whatever you are moved to do is perfect!

### FUCV C&C Team

Maggie Nixon (Nearby, Far Out, Royal Oak West NG's) e) [maggien5390@gmail.com](mailto:maggien5390@gmail.com)

Stephanie Ippen (Gordon Head, Cadboro Bay, Royal Oak East NG's) e)

[stephanieippen@gmail.com](mailto:stephanieippen@gmail.com)

Mary-Ellen Nicol (Grand Central, Oak Bay, Fairfield NG's) e) [nicolme@yahoo.com](mailto:nicolme@yahoo.com)

Barbara Boyle (Western, Esquimalt, James Bay NG's) e) [barbara.boyle@shaw.ca](mailto:barbara.boyle@shaw.ca)

[Revs Shana](#) and [Melora](#)

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## Depression & Anxiety Support Circle

We are a confidential peer-led support group. Zoom and sometimes In-Person meetings are a mix of structured sharing and informal conversation, to provide a safe space, as well as foster warmth and humour wherever it can be found, during our 90 minutes together.

During summer we are meeting more sporadically.

Please contact Lies: [eweijjs@ryerson.ca](mailto:eweijjs@ryerson.ca) for more information about our meeting schedule.

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## Monday Unitarian Walkers

Monday Unitarian Walkers welcomes ALL interested Unitarian members and friends to join us for weekly walks Monday afternoons at 1pm. The walkers take turns leading walks for an hour to an hour and a half at different locations throughout Greater Victoria from September to June.

If you are interested in joining these weekly walks, please contact:  
Chris Cook [49chriscook@gmail.com](mailto:49chriscook@gmail.com) to be put on the email list.



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## Call for Volunteers

We have exciting plans for upcoming music shows in the Sanctuary and we could use a couple of volunteers to help with marketing. Ideally we find someone who has experience in marketing and someone with social media experience. We want to formulate a consistent professional message and then distribute that to as many social media platforms as possible as inexpensively as possible.

Can you help us?

Please contact: Fritz Schulze [fritz@collect.org](mailto:fritz@collect.org)

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## Fall 2023 CUC Communication from your Congregational Life Team

We know you are planning and preparing for the next year of congregational life. We are too. Our top priority for the coming year is to be in frequent contact with you. We are excited to know your plans and what your needs are. Based on conversations with you, we'll do our best to provide responsive, timely support and resources.

We are also looking forward to the CUC Board's initiative around Strategic Planning and hope your congregations will take part in shaping our shared future.

**Upcoming Events:** Times and links are available on the [CUC Events Calendar](#)

- **Unicamp Young Adult (YA) retreat: Sept 8-11/23**
- **Gathered Here: online drop-in YA gatherings resuming Sept 19/23**
- **Connect & Deepen: Seasons of Change, online drop-in adult gatherings resuming Sept 24/23**
- **Leader's Roundtable: Youth Adviser Training Info Session Sept 30/23**
- **Lay Chaplains' Chat: Oct 2/23**
- **Rising Together: online drop-in BIPOC gatherings Oct 11/23**
- **Gathered Here: Oct 13/23**
- **Connect & Deepen: Being Good Ancestors Oct 15/23**
- **Decision Making Task Force: Sociocracy Oct 21/23**
- **Leader's Roundtable: Strategic Planning Oct 28/23**
- **Gathered Here: Nov 14/23**
- **Decision Making Task Force: Consensus Nov 18/23**
- **Connect & Deepen: Looking for Light Nov 19/23**
- **November Weekend: Nov 25 & 26/23**
  - **Saturday National Workshops: Working Well Together**
  - **Sunday National Service: Reemerging, Reimagining, & Renewal**
- **Gathered Here: Dec 8/23**
- **Connect & Deepen: Winter Dreaming, Dec 17/23**

If you've received this letter and think it may be of interest to others in your congregation, please forward it. If it came to you in error, you can update your congregation's contact info by emailing [info@cuc.ca](mailto:info@cuc.ca)

To reach us, you can email [congregationalife@cuc.ca](mailto:congregationalife@cuc.ca) or email us individually.

*We appreciate you, and are looking forward to the year ahead!*

Rev. Anne Barker [anne.barker@cuc.ca](mailto:anne.barker@cuc.ca)

Rev. Linda Thomson [linda.thomson@cuc.ca](mailto:linda.thomson@cuc.ca)

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## David Arkenstone Concert

Sep 24th @ 7:30pm

First Unitarian Church of Victoria

[Tickets](#)



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## Lumina Youth Choir

The Ensemble Laude Choral Society is launching a new youth choir for treble singers aged 15-24.

email [lumina@ensemblelaude.org](mailto:lumina@ensemblelaude.org)

DO YOU LOVE TO SING?  
THE ENSEMBLE LAUDE CHORAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

# LUMINA

*Treble Youth Choir*

AN INNOVATIVE NEW CHOIR FOR SOPRANO/ALTO  
SINGERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15-24

DIRECTED BY  
Christina Banman & Dr. Elizabeth Maclsaac

SING | GROW | CONNECT

MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT  
ENSEMBLELAUDE.ORG/LUMINA-TREBLE-YOUTH-CHOIR  
OR BY EMAILING LUMINA@ENSEMBLELAUDE.ORG

ENSEMBLE LAUDE  
www.ensemblelaude.org

## **Isaak Olam Foundation**

The IISAAK OLAM Foundation (<https://iisaakolam.ca/>) is looking for an Early Childhood Ethical Space Educator. This can be either one full time position or two half time positions starting September 2023 in Tofino/Victoria.

The IISAAK OLAM Foundation is an Indigenous-led not-for-profit that designs and leads land-based activities for young children aged 1 to 6 years. This position is responsible for preparing healthy snacks and meals, assisting with cleaning needs, administration, communications, grant writing, and reporting.

The IISAAK OLAM Foundation’s purpose is to share knowledge and build capacity for Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). Their programs and collaborations support Indigenous leadership in the conservation of biological and cultural diversity, the development of sustainable and resilient communities, reconciliation between Indigenous and newcomer societies, and innovative solutions for (re)connecting people with their environment, in order to support the establishment and long-term capacity of IPCAs and to

educate Canadians about their value and relevance.

To apply, mail your cover letter and resume to [management@iisaakolam.ca](mailto:management@iisaakolam.ca)

## Newsletter (In The Spirit) Feedback

We welcome feedback. Email [communicationsfeedback@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:communicationsfeedback@victoriaunitarian.ca)

## Church Staff Info

**Church office open 11-1 Sun-Thu (except long weekends)**

Email staff at addresses listed below or call 250-744-2665 and leave a voice message, your call will be returned by the next work day.

**Niki Mullin**

**Church Administrator**

Sun, Mon & Wed 8-3pm

except stat holiday long weekends

IN PERSON - Sun & Wed 11am - 1pm

[churchoffice@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:churchoffice@victoriaunitarian.ca)

[fucv.churchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:fucv.churchoffice@gmail.com)

**Anna Isaacs**

**Communications Coordinator**

Tue-Thu 11-2

IN PERSON Tue & Thu

[communications@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:communications@victoriaunitarian.ca)

[fucv.communications@gmail.com](mailto:fucv.communications@gmail.com)

778-557-3492 (work cell)

**Minister Emerita**

**Reverend Jane Bramadat**

**Lay Chaplains**

[laychaplains@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:laychaplains@victoriaunitarian.ca)

Jenny Heston 250-509-1240

Barbara Boyle 250-381-0264

Oceanna Hall 250-886-1077

**Anna Isaacs**

**Family Programs**

[anna@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:anna@victoriaunitarian.ca)

778-557-3492 (work cell)

Sun, Tue-Thu afternoons and by appointment

## IN THE SPIRIT AND E-WEEKLY SUBMISSIONS

E-weekly submissions to:

[eweekly@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:eweekly@victoriaunitarian.ca)

DEADLINE: 3pm Tuesdays

IN THE SPIRIT submissions to:

[newsletter@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:newsletter@victoriaunitarian.ca)

DEADLINE is the 15th of the month.

*The e-weekly and In the Spirit are produced by a three member volunteer team: Kathy Vinton, Lesley Duthie, Lies Weijs, with communications staff support.*

## ARCHIVED MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

Read or download

[The Victoria Unitarian](#)

## CONTACTS & LINKS

- [Church website](#)

- [Event calendar](#)

- [Facebook](#)

- [Email the office](#)

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