



Our theme this month is part of a larger exploration of the new proposed UUA model of UU values. [More info](#) on this process & proposed [image & language](#).

April In the Spirit | March 28, 2024

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View [worship online](#) live & past worship recordings

We are delighted to welcome our "sibling" congregation in Victoria, Capital UU Congregation

Sunday Service, Mar 31st, 10:30am

Sunday, March 31, 10:30 am

Shifting Stones – Easter Sunday

Rev. Shana Lynngood, Homilist

Ian Warrender, Worship Associate

Pianist [Attila Fias](#), Directors of [Gettin' Higher Choir](#) Dick Jackson & Cathy Baker & [Lea Morris](#)

This Sunday, will be a memorable and moving joint service filled with beautiful music. We'll think about the central role of the boulder in the Christian Easter story of transformation that blocks the entrance to the tomb where Jesus is buried. What are the stones of our lives? War? Climate Collapse? Are there spaces and places where we are able to move those stones out of the way to seek new life—our own version of resurrection?

Lea Morris was a three year old with an Afro puffball hairstyle when she discovered the power and peace that music can provide. Her origins are in the baptist church of Baltimore. Today, she is an internationally loved singer/songwriter and choral composers whose songs are shared and sung around the world.

Many of you will remember Lea Morris's music from our virtual only services. Check out [more of her music on her youtube channel](#).



Services this Month

Sunday, April 7, 10:30 am

What the World Teaches Us

Rev. Shana Lynngood

Rosemary Harrison, Worship Associate

As we enter a month focused on interdependence, we begin by looking our relationship to the planet. Inspired by the work of professor Dacher Keltner and his work on the role of awe in our lives, we'll think about how our feelings of connection can inspire our actions.

Sunday, April 14, 10:30 am

Inter-Being

Rev. Shana Lynngood, Homilist

Mollie Twidale, Worship Associate

This auction sermon requested by Jennifer Hawthorn looks at the ways our lives move between independence and interdependence. How well do we accept the moments when we rely on others? How open are we to offering help without bitterness or resentment? How do we find a balance between care for self and care for others?

Sunday, April 21, 10:30 am

Earth Day and a Values Revolution

Dr. Trevor Hancock, Homilist

Jana Kotaska, Worship Associate

Retired UVic professor Trevor Hancock will explore the shift in our societal values that is needed to truly and deeply confront climate collapse. Trevor

has written in the Times Colonist that faith communities have a key role to play in exploring and discussing new ethical frameworks that reflect and uplift the values of human solidarity, quality of life, and ecological sensibility.

Dr. Trevor Hancock is a public health physician, health promotion consultant, and retired UVic professor. He was also the first leader of the Green Party of Canada. Since 2014, he has written a weekly column for the Times Colonist.



Sunday, April 28, 10:30 am

"Really? You go to a church?"

Rev. Melora & the Mission Team: Aeryn Bannister, Gita John-Iyam, Dar Levy, David Tietz
Ian Warrender, Worship Associate

How do you explain to your friends what this church is all about? In this service, we present the final draft of our new mission statement (upon which the congregation will vote at our May 26th Annual General Meeting). We will look at our mission in the context of our other UU guideposts, like our UU principles (also under revision!). (Stay tuned for when we reconsider the *name* of our congregation – including the word 'church' – likely next fall.)

Sunday, April 28, 7:15 pm

Spirited Jazz

Delighted to welcome the [Attila Fias Trio](#) featuring special guest, Miguelito Valdes, trumpet. This promises to be an energetic and soulful evening of Latin jazz and other jazz favorites that you won't want to miss. These unique services combine live jazz, a spoken reflection by Rev. Shana, and a time of silence.



Share the Plate For April



The Share the Plate charity for April is [International Conservation Fund of Canada](#). ICFC is Canada's leading international conservation organization. Since 2007, they have been partnering with local conservation organizations on projects in over 30 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Their work is science based and they are committed to engaging local communities and indigenous peoples, securing lasting conservation gains in priority areas. ICFC's small staff works with a sense of urgency because they can see how much they are achieving and how much is under threat.



Honoured with multiple [awards and recognitions](#), ICFC enables Canadians to help poorer countries in the developing world which have a rich and imperilled biodiversity. This is a way to help restore environmental and social justice to people who have done very little to cause climate change, but who suffer disproportionately from it. Finally, ICFC offers Canadians a way to help non-human species who are innocent victims of humanity's encroachment on their habitat and atmosphere. With low administrative costs covered by a core group of donors, 100% of every dollar raised goes to programs. Please give generously to help protect the astonishing diversity of life in the tropics.



Honoured Volunteer

Each of the Councils who organize our church volunteers selects a volunteer once a year for recognition of their notable contributions. The Honoured Volunteer selected by the Administration Council for 2024 is Jamie Twidale, leader of our Audio-Visual Team. Jamie will light the chalice on Sunday, April 14. He has kindly supplied a brief biography of his journey to our church.

"I grew up in Southern Scotland, speaking the dialect of Robbie Burns and finally learned to speak "proper" English in High School. From there to Edinburgh University where I met Mollie. We have two adult kids, 3 grandkids and 2 dogs.



"We've been UU's for around 40 years. Our first fellowship was First UU in Ottawa and we were both active in RE and the Choir. Since then we've been members of three Fellowships in California and Washington State. We've participated in and chaired various UU committees over the years and used that as a vehicle to both serve and meet new friends.

"We decided to retire back to Canada and joined here in 2019. We're still active in choir and I spend many Sundays staring at the back of your heads from the booth!" — Jamie

Artists of the Month

This month we are featuring a collection of photos from our spring break camp taken by congregation members, including photos of the creation of our Family Wing Stairwell mural.

Thanks to our mural artist in residence [Kay Gullivan](#) for this special experience for our kids and for leaving us a beautiful mural to be enjoyed for years to come. Thanks to our children and youth and their families for making this congregation a part of their spring break, to the staff and volunteers who made camp happen and to our volunteer photographers for capturing the moments.



Mural Art Show - Sun 7th

This month we are featuring a collection of photos from our spring break camp taken by congregation members, including photos of the creation of our Family Wing Stairwell mural.

Save the date! Mural art show after worship Apr 7th

- **mural unveiling** hosted by spring break camp participants answering questions about the creation process and image symbolism
- **mural photography show** in Sanctuary showcasing various photographers in our congregation that have documented mural creation
- **mural art stroll** in Family Wing showcasing murals created by our camp participants after worship.

Thanks to our mural artist in residence [Kay Gullivan](#) for this special experience for our kids and for leaving us a beautiful mural to be enjoyed for years to come. Thanks to our children and youth and their families for making this congregation a part of their spring break, to the staff and volunteers who made camp happen and to our volunteer photographers for capturing the moments.

Celebration of Life For Ruth Ralston - Sat 6th

Sat, Apr 6th at 2:00pm

Sanctuary

reception to follow in Lion Hall

I know that many of you knew and loved Ruth. She and her husband, Gordon, were pioneering members of our congregation. Ruth served on many committees and dedicated countless hours to benefit the church. She was a lovely, welcoming person and a talented artist. She also sang in the choir for many years.

Esquimalt Neighbourhood Group will host the reception for Ruth Ralston's Celebration of Life. If you are planning to attend, please bring sweet or savoury finger food to share.

Cupcake Walk - Sun 14th

14th Apr noon

a free all age family-friendly event from your Auction Committee

Learn about the many offering for our upcoming auction, including family friendly options and win some yummy cupcakes

Contact Mary-Ellen for more info 250-217-9067



All Ages Dance party - Sun 14th

14th Apr 12:30pm

a free family-friendly event

Come dance together in our beautiful Sanctuary. An informal and fun time. Song requests encouraged.

Contact anna@victoriaunitarian.ca, 778-557-3492 (work cell)



Earthy Coffee House - Sat 20th

20th Apr 5:30 dinner, 7pm open mic

Free! All ages! All welcome!



Mission Feedback Session - Sun 28th

Sun, Apr 28 noon-1:00pm In Person

Farmhouse Common Room OR

Tue, Apr 30 7-8:00pm on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/99311573589?pwd=d0FveStTS0djCUNDZnYvck9laXNidz09>

Come to the service Sunday April 28, "Really? You go to a Church?" (or watch recording) to hear about the new draft mission statement (up for vote at May 26 AGM), Then come to this session to share with us your thoughts and feelings in response.

Can't make those times? Feel free to contact any of us on the Mission Team, rev.melora@victoriaunitarian.ca, 250-891-6330

Lessons From Silence - Thu 4th & 11th

Thu Apr 4th & 11th (2 sessions)

Day sessions 11am-12:30 in Oasis Room

Evening sessions on the same day 7-8:30pm on the Ministers' Zoom account

Delve into an adult spiritual development exploration of the gifts and meaning-rich experiences of silence. In a noisy world that is always clamouring for our attention, how do we cultivate space for silence? What do we find there?

Max of 10 participants in day and 10 in evening

Register to Rev.shana@victoriaunitarian.ca or text 250-891-6331 and please indicate whether you plan to attend the day in person session or evening Zoom session.



The Biggest Fundraiser of the Year
A Great Community Builder
An Opportunity to Share Your Gifts and Talents
Online for 3 Days April 19-21
Bidding is Easy and Fun!



Time is running out...

The Deadline for Donations is
MARCH 31!

If you have an idea, let's talk about it
Contact Fran (hancockf@telus.net) or
Astrid (afedesign@firley.ca) to donate



[Link to last year's auction for inspiration!](#)

Will You Help Fill a Raffle Basket ?



Will You Help Fill a Raffle Basket?

We are preparing a raffle basket for the Online Auction **April 19-21** and we need your help. Could you contribute small decorative items, gourmet items, wine or spirits, jams & preserves, chocolate, treats? What would **you** like to find in a raffle basket?

Please bring your items to the church office and put them in the container marked, Raffle Basket OR contact Astrid at afedesign@firley.ca
Help us fill an amazing basket with small treasures!

Arran Morton's Ordination & Celebration - Sat 13th

Tuesday, April 13, 2:00pm
First Unitarian Church of Victoria

Comox Unitarian Fellowship & First Unitarian Church of Victoria Co-Ordination of Arran Morton.

Are you able to offer home billeting to visiting guests or carpooling? Please contact anna@victoriaunitarian.ca

The ceremony will be hybrid. If you are joining us in Victoria, the ceremony will be followed by a dance party with live music from 'Water in the Crawl Space' and a potluck dinner. Families and children are warmly welcomed.

1:45-2:00 pm Gathering
2:00-3:15 pm Ordination Ceremony (childcare provided)
3:15-4:00 pm Light refreshments
4:00-5:00 pm Dance Party
5:00-6:30 pm Potluck Dinner
You are welcome to come for any or all of the above.

Please RSVP:

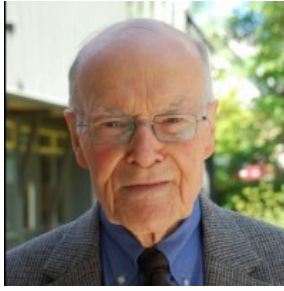
Online: <https://bit.ly/ordainArran>

In person: <https://forms.gle/oBjh1jAZ5z5bEoC1A>

More details at facebook.com/events/376728378321925/



Informal Memorial Tea in Honour of Don Mills - July 6th



Saturday, July 6, 2024

2:00pm - 4:00pm

Lion Hall

RSVPs requested

In memory of Don Mills (August 12, 1924 - December 25, 2023), his family has planned a small gathering in Lion Hall, on July 6, from 2pm to 4pm. They warmly invite those who knew Don well to attend. There will be no formal program; instead, attendees will be invited to share memories with one another informally.

RSVP Requested

To help with planning, please RSVP by using this link <https://rsvp.church/r/uYZwZfyw> (if no online access, RSVP by calling Shirely Marcuse (250) 658-8925)

Members and Friends of First Unitarian who attend are invited to bring finger food / baked goods to share.

Easter & April Sundays Free Swap

early bird Easter Sunday

Sundays in April

before & after worship

Free swap in our **Sanctuary** basement will be open before and after worship Sundays in April with an early bird opening Easter Sunday. [One minute video tour](#) of some of the current treasures! Optional invite to give as much of anything that another might find useful to the swap. Take as many things as you can use or share with others. Items remaining will be sold at a May garage sale to follow. Thanks to our Montessori for many donations as they sort their items in storage and many in our spiritual community that have already donated. Donations can be brought on any swap day or dropped in advance in the church office in front of the door with sparkly pink wings.



Sunday Evening Weekly Meditation Group - Sun 7th

Sundays at 7 p.m.

Farmhouse Common Room

(no group on Easter Sunday Mar 31,

resumes in April)

This **weekly** group will begin with a brief reading from a variety of Buddhist and other meditation writings, followed by a meditation (length decided by participants) and check-in/discussion time with tea at the end. It will be informal, bring a cushion if you have one, sit on a chair, sprawl on the floor, the choice is yours. No experience necessary, if you have never meditated before, this is a great place to start.

Contact Jesse Invik for more info jinvik@gmail.com

UU Song Circle - Fri 5th & 26th



Everyone Welcome In the Sanctuary and on Zoom

April 5 and 26 from 2-3:00pm

Jewel Spooner and Nancy Dobbs, with our tech support, Bernhard Spalteholz

Our Song Circles are Informal, relaxed, with a campfire vibe... songs of peace and joy; familiar, new, folk, world songs, lighthearted, chants...all with words provided.

Please email Nancy Dobbs nandobbs@telus.net for a Zoom link.

Anxiety & Depression 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.

Please contact Pat kinradep@gmail.com or Lies eweij@ryerson.ca for more info

UU Heart Beats Drumming Circle - Mar 31st

Sunday, Mar 31, 12 Noon
Sunflower Room



The first sound everyone on Earth heard was the sound of our mother's heartbeat. Our relationship with rhythm began in the womb. As human beings, we are intrinsically rhythmic, and this rhythm is a potent source of well-being.

We gather together at 12 NOON in the Sunflower Room in the children's wing (at the far end of the hall - name is above the door).

Bring your own djembe or other hand drum if you have one, but if not, no worries; we have plenty to share.

Whatever your level of interest or ability, you are welcome to join in; even if it's just to check out what the fuss is all about.

For more information, contact Dar darlevy@gmail.com Looking forward to drumming with you!

UU Lunch - Tue 23rd

Tues, April 23
12:00 noon
Cedar Hill Golf Course Derby Restaurant, 1400 Derby Road

Come join us for UU lunch — a social occasion on the **Fourth Tuesday** of every month, open to all members and friends of the church.

Email Pat McMahon uu.lunch.victoria@gmail.com to reserve your seat **Tuesday April 23, 12:00 noon** at Cedar Hill Golf Course Derby Restaurant, 1400 Derby Road, Saanich.

The restaurant reserves two big tables for us. It has lots of parking, and is not far from a bus route. It is centrally located in Greater Victoria, and has good food, including some relatively inexpensive menu items.



Pub Night - Mon 1st

Monday, April 1st
Join us at 7pm 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

Monday UU Walkers

Everyone is welcome to join our walks Mondays at 1 pm. We often enjoy coffee together afterwards too!. Here we are at Anderson Hill (Oak Bay) where we were treated to the first of the Camas and White Fawn Lily blooms ... and a pair of Bald Eagles.

Anyone who wishes to receive regular emails about upcoming walks may contact Lies: eweij@ryerson.ca



Updated Affiliation Options for our Congregation

For folks interested in being affiliated with us, the options just got clearer. At a recent congregational meeting, our bylaws were amended. These amendments help clarify what are the benefits and requirements of being a Visitor, Supporter (formerly known as Friend) and Member respectively.




Visitors are typically getting to know us, through our Newsletter and Eweekly, and Sunday services. They might enjoy participating in activities, meeting other folks in their Neighbourhood Group, and exploring Unitarianism.

Supporters are ready for a stronger connection. In addition to the basic benefits, they are 16 years or older, agree to support the principles of Unitarianism, and make an annual financial contribution. They can also receive pastoral care.

Members are ready to be fully committed. They get all of the basic benefits, plus pastoral care, and 3 specific rites of passage. They are also 16 years or older, agree to support the principles of Unitarianism, and make an annual financial contribution. Members are the organizational foundation of the church, as they can chair committees, serve on the Board, vote at general meetings, and serve at denominational meetings (e.g. CUC, UUA).

The table below provides an overview of the three categories. It is available as a handout at the Welcome Table every Sunday. Please contact Kathleen Zimmerman, Chair, Membership Committee, at agresults@shaw.ca if you have any questions about these changes.

AFFILIATION OPTIONS - PICK THE ONE THAT WORKS FOR YOU!

QUALIFICATIONS	VISITOR – Just getting to know us... 	SUPPORTER (formerly known as FRIEND) – Feeling more involved... 	MEMBER – For the fully committed... 
16 years of age or older		YES	YES
Supportive of the aims and objectives of Unitarianism (i.e., the Principles)		YES	YES
Willing to support the Constitution and Bylaws		YES	YES
Makes an annual financial contribution of record, according to means ^[1] , with the option of requesting a waiver		YES	YES
Willing to participate/volunteer as able	YES	YES	YES
BENEFITS			
Receive the newsletter and Eweekly	YES	YES	YES
Included in the FUCV Directory	YES	YES	YES
Included in a Neighbourhood Group	YES	YES	YES
Receive pastoral care		YES	YES
May serve on Committees	YES	YES	YES
May chair Committees and serve on the Board			YES
Three rites of passage, with no charge for Minister/Chaplain and rental [see footnote 2 below]			YES
Vote at General Meeting ^[3]			YES
Serve at denominational meetings, e.g., CUC, UUA			YES

(January 2024)

- 1 In 2024, the minimum annual financial contribution for both supporters and members is \$1.00.
- 2 Weddings, child dedications and memorial services are the three specific rites of passage that are offered as free benefits to members. This benefit includes no charge for a Minister or Lay Chaplain to perform the rite of passage service, and no charge for the rooms for the weddings and child dedications, and no charge for the room and reception area for memorial services. This benefit is available to members 60 days after their name is read into the minutes of a Board meeting.
- 3 Bylaws state that members are entitled to vote 60 days after their name is read into the minutes of a Board meeting.

Followup to RAVEN event

On behalf of the THRUU team (Truth, Healing, Reconciliation of Unitarian Universalists),

I would like to sincerely thank the board and rental committee of First Unitarian Church for providing a rent free space for the event which took place on March 9, 2024 [Growing Rooted Solidarity: Allyship and Land Back](#) (click link for video). We would also like to thank the Audio visual team who provided technical support for the event. We really appreciate your support!

RAVEN's Campaigns Director, Leslie Ann St. Amour covered some basics of colonial history in Canada and BC, and helped to break down some of the legal jargon that exists in the legal system regarding Indigenous people.

RAVEN's Communication Director, Andrea Palframan talked about the work of RAVEN, how this is part of the larger Indigenous rights movement, and how we can begin to put reconciliation into action.

Indigenous Elder Virgil Sampson from the Tsartlip Nation talked about the land and reconciliation and answered questions in a spirit of generosity. The event was an opportunity to increase our knowledge about Indigenous issues, learn about building relationships with Indigenous nations, and also to raise funds for RAVEN Trust to continue legal actions on behalf of Indigenous initiatives. RAVEN "raises legal defence funds for Indigenous Peoples in Canada to defend rights and the integrity of lands and cultures."

Thanks again, Gela Stach, for THRUU

Some comments from Andrea Palframan, the Director of Communication from RAVEN:

- 484 Transactions
- 407 registered attendees (via Zoom and live)
- 103 people registered to attend in person

The fact it was a Saturday afternoon, and that it was 'free', may have influenced people's decisions either not to attend or to register for the livestream and watch the video later. The video has had 514 views.

And we raised \$3.3k, which is wonderful!

Again, we loved meeting/seeing you on the 9th and really appreciated how attentive, curious and critical the audience members were whom we got to speak with afterwards. We are open to feedback and would like to hear how the event felt for you. Grateful for the solidarity, and for the time and effort you all put into making this event a success.

With care, Andrea

Indigenous Matters

Coast Salish Nation Treaty Negotiations Nearing Completion

A long-awaited historic moment is approaching. One that will have important impacts for five Coast Salish Nations, on whose traditional territories most south island UUs also call home - Beecher Bay (SC'IA/NEW), Malahat, Snaw-Naw-As, Songhees and T'Sou-ke. Thirty years ago, these five First Nations formed The Te'mexw Treaty Association (TTA), a small non-profit society, to support one another and to work together under one organization to negotiate five Nation-specific modern treaties with the federal and provincial governments in the British Columbia treaty process.

The modern treaties being negotiated between the TTA and the provincial and federal government deal with a wide range of issues including governance, land, resources and fiscal matters that have changed or were not addressed 160 years ago in the Douglas Treaties. Note that land and harvesting rights identified in the Douglas Treaties remain protected for all TTA members.

Each of the TTA member Nations is negotiating its own treaty and constitution. If a comprehensive treaty and land claims agreement is reached, each Nation will have ownership of land and recognition as a self-governing Nation. Now 30 years later, negotiations are at Stage 5 - Negotiations to Finalize a Treaty.

In this stage, outstanding issues from Stage 4 are resolved: chapter language is finalized, land and cash offers are completed, appendices are fleshed out, technical and legal issues are resolved and the treaty is ready to move on to ratification. The treaty for each First Nation is put to a vote by their community members.

Proposed land offers have been in the news of late throughout BC where treaty negotiations are underway. In the territories of the five member Nations of the TTA, those lands include Hatley Park, parts of Sooke Mountain and Discovery Island Provincial Parks and a parcel of land in downtown Victoria. The TTA website is an excellent resource and includes a map showing all of the areas being negotiated - <https://temexw.org/>. It is very important to understand the complexity of these negotiations. At the presentation held at our congregation on March 9, Raven Trust Campaign Director Leslie Anne St. Amour described these negotiations being about Indigenous People protecting their land and territories - jurisdiction not eviction. It is unfortunate that the term 'Land Back' has become politicized. Allyship at this time calls us to strive to understand the proposed changes and the good faith that has kept the negotiation of modern treaties moving forward.

[Royal Roads states this clearly](#) - "As part of our commitment to truth and reconciliation, we are working with partners to realize the successful repatriation of these Lands through a Treaty negotiation process. Treaties are among the most comprehensive forms of reconciliation, the embodiment of living relationships between First Nations, British Columbia and Canada. They help to support strong, healthy, thriving communities, benefit Indigenous Peoples and set us on a clear path to reconciliation. While we acknowledge that the footprint of the Royal Roads campus may change following the negotiation process, we will continue campus operations, remaining responsible and sustainably focused stewards of the campus grounds."

The Province of BC and Capital Region District also provide current and background information on current treaty negotiations: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/engagement/temexw-treaty-negotiations/> <https://pub-victoria.escrimemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=14719>

And finally, if the treaty is ratified and signed by all three parties, **Stage 6 - Implementation of the Treaty** will happen in agreed-upon phases that are tailored to the individual Nation as per their specific agreement. Over a period of time, all aspects of the treaty would be implemented in phases and on the Effective Date, the Nation would be able to exercise its new treaty rights.

It is possible there will be news in the upcoming year that one or more of the five TTA member Nations, Beecher Bay (SC'IA/NEW), Malahat, Snaw-Naw-As, Songhees or T'Sou-ke First Nations will finalize their treaty and then move to Stage 6. Historic moments indeed.

GVAT Civic Academy on Housing

Yes! GVAT is planning a public forum on housing vacancy-control. A "Civic Academy" is a forum that provides an opportunity for story-telling, education on the problems to be resolved, and small-group discussions where people can share their own stories about how the proposed action would impact them.



Why is it needed? Because not only are there homeless people on the streets for lack of housing, but working people are finding renting housing near where they work more and more difficult. Seniors and families are also having trouble finding affordable housing in our community. One solution among several is "vacancy control". Vacancy control is "real" rent control, where rental rates remain the same when tenants change. Rate increases must follow government guidelines. This would reduce the incentive for landlords to evict long-term tenants simply to replace them with higher rent-paying people.

Now is a propitious moment for promoting vacancy control because it's an election year for the provincial government. In addition, all GVAT member organizations have a mixture of tenants and homeowners among their members, so this issue is important to everyone!

GVAT's Civic Academy on housing will be held in a central location yet to be decided, likely in late April. The goal of the Civic Academy is to increase awareness of and support for vacancy control within GVAT's membership. It will also attract new organizations and people to support our goals. This is a provincial government issue so it could lead to a GVAT assembly with politicians prior to the election.

Our church is an active member of GVAT, but we have only a small Core Team to help promote and organize a movement towards more affordable housing. If this issue interests you and you would like a short-term job of helping to organize this Civic Academy, please speak up. Or if you want a longer term job, please consider joining our Core Team. In either case, contact one of our current Core Team Members.

Core Team Members: Bob Stock (chair), Evelyn Peters (Board liaison), Marion Pape, Pamela Hood-Szivek, Patty Disbrow, Philip Symons, and ex officio Rev. Melora Lynngood. New members welcome!

Theme Questions From Soul Matters



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

This theme, 'interdependence,' is part of a larger exploration of the new proposed UUA model of UU values that puts love at the centre. For the image and language of the proposed model: <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/com>

[mittees/article-ii-study-commission/final-proposed-revision-article-ii](https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/com)

Below are some questions to spark your thinking on this month's theme inspired by the UU Soul Matters Network. Discuss the questions with fellow congregants, with friends or family, and/or journal about them on your own.

This list of questions is an aid for deep reflection. They are not meant to be answered as much as to take you on a journey. Read through the questions 2-3 times until one question sticks out for you and captures your attention, or as some faith traditions say, until one of the questions "shimmers."

Then reflect on that question using one or all of these questions:

- What is going on in my life right now that makes this question so pronounced for me?
- How might my inner voice be trying to speak to me through it?
- How might Life or my inner voice be trying to offer me a word of comfort or challenge through this question?

Writing out your thoughts often enables you to go deeper. It also sometimes helps to read the list of questions to a friend or loved one and ask them which question they think is the question you need to wrestle with.

A note about self-care: Often these questions take us to a vulnerable space. It is OKAY to ignore the questions that may be triggering – or lean in if that feels safe.

1. What aspect of nature did you connect with most meaningfully as a child? A dog? A horse? A tree? The ocean? Lightning bugs? The rain? A path in the woods?
2. Do you think age impacts the way we *care for* the interdependent web?
3. Do you think age impacts the way we *connect with* the interdependent web?
4. Has a beloved young person ever altered the way you think about your relationship with nature or the planet?
5. Where do you feel your connection to nature in your body? What happens to you when that place of connection is stirred? What has that feeling of connection communicated to you most recently?
6. Do you feel that "sacrifice" has a central role to play in addressing the climate crisis?
7. When was the last time you became thoroughly absorbed in the curiosity of understanding another creature's life?
8. How has the place where you live shaped the way you understand and approach life? And yourself?
9. Some of us *live in* a place and others of us *belong to* a place. Have you found a place you belong to yet?
10. What time of day do you feel most like "yourself"?
11. Has a tree ever *spoken* to you? How about a river? Or the ocean? Or the moon? What about a weed?
12. Has your commitment to community been tripped up by the trap of self-improvement?
13. We are glad to support and bear the burdens of others. But many of us wouldn't dare "burden" those same people with *our* troubles. What has tricked you into thinking that your grief, worry or struggle is unwanted by or too heavy for others? Who or what taught you that the weight of your worries must be carried by yourself alone?
14. Have you ever had a friend that "birthed a new world in you"?

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 find 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!

Pick the exercise that speaks to you the most. Come to your group ready to share why you picked the exercise you did and what gift it gave you.

Option A

Build a Relationship with a Sibling from the Natural World

May we love the earth not as an object—beautiful nature to pass through—but as a complex, miraculous subject that we build a relationship with.

[Courtney Martin](#)

This exercise is all about leaning into Courtney Martin's wish for us. We know how to appreciate nature. And, unfortunately, we are very skilled at how to use it. But we are less practiced at building a relationship with it. So, this month, let's work on a two-way, instead of one-way, relationship with the natural world.

The key here is reciprocity, even friendship. Pick an animal, flower, plant or body of water that you have an affinity for or want to deepen your relationship with. Then spend a week (or the entire month) and engage that "natural sibling" in some or all of these ways:

- [Introduce yourself](#) and get to [know it](#).
- Take care of it somehow; Support its thriving.
- Visit it regularly, like you would a close friend.
- Capture its beauty by [photographing](#), painting or [drawing](#) it at different times of day and in [different weather](#)
- Learn about how it came to live in the place it does. Is it natural to your landscape or not?
- Learn its [scientific name](#).
- Learn [its role](#) in [its ecosystem](#).
- Learn how [Native Americans relate](#) to it.
- Spend an entire [day around it](#).
- [Sleep](#) near it.
- Practice the spiritual discipline of [listening to it](#) or even [talking to it](#). Want some guidance about listening to the natural world? Try [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)
- Bring questions to it. [Ask it for advice](#).

Option B

Be Like Noah

In the biblical story of Noah's Ark, God made sure that Noah saved all the animals along with himself. Clearly God felt that the new world would not thrive without all the natural creatures in it. But one also wonders if God commanded this because God knew we human beings *also* needed the community of creatures to thrive!

To honor the gift and miracle of the animal community, let's be like Noah this month and **collect as many animals as we can, just with a camera rather than an ark**.

As inspiration, check out how a group called The Art of Creation did a similar project: <https://www.ecodisciple.com/blog/circlewood-photo-ark/?ref=the-ecological-disciple-newsletter>.

Option C

Reconnect with the Place You Already Are

Who we are is deeply intertwined with where we live. And yet our connection to and with our nearby world is often frayed. So, in an effort to reconnect with your sense of place, we invite you this month to go on some "micro-adventures"!

Here's more information to explain it and guide you along your way:

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/05/well/live/awe-microadventure-exploration.html>
- <https://www.noemamag.com/a-single-small-map-is-enough-for-a-lifetime/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwHwXldQpxE&t=119s>
- <https://www.outsideonline.com/adventure-travel/destinations/north-america/outdoor-activities-ideas-close-to-home-fun/>

Option D

Find Yourself in the World of Climate Apathy

Social psychologists are in wide agreement that the vast majority of us suffer from some level of [climate apathy](#). However, they are quick to point out

that, in most cases, this apathy isn't driven by us not knowing the facts about the climate emergency, but instead by us not knowing how to act on what we know.

Luckily, moral philosopher, Elizabeth Cripps, is here to help. She has written a guide for how to escape climate apathy. Here's the link to it: <https://psyche.co/guides/how-to-escape-climate-apaty-and-help-to-avert-catastrophe>

So, for this exercise, read through her guide and do two things:

1. **Identify yourself in her writing.** She lifts up many different attitudes and struggles in her guide. Find the ones that describe the feelings you have. Where in her article do you see a reflection of yourself?
2. **Follow one of her suggestions.** Cripps offers many suggestions. Find one that calls to you and engage it this month, alone or with a partner.

Option E

Write a Letter to the Future

Parent-activist [Jill Kubit](#) and the behavioral scientist Trisha Shrum, [created a project](#) called [Dear Tomorrow](#) which challenges people to [write a letter](#) to a child who is important to them, for those [children to receive in 2050](#). The instructions are to express your hopes and fears about the climate crisis in your letter, describing the world you want for them, in 27 years' time. You are also asked to write about what you think especially needs to change and what you will do to help make that happen.

So, for your exercise this month, take on [Dear Tomorrow's challenge](#) of writing this letter to an important child. It helps to do it with a partner, so enlist someone to not only write a letter, but also get together with you to read and discuss each other's letter and how the process was for you.

Option F

Name the Gift of Being Bound in Friendship

Our friendships shape, save and inspire us in ways too many to count. This form of interdependence is among our most treasured. But we rarely tell our friends how much being bound to them means.

So this month, tell them! Yes, it will be awkward. Yes, it will feel incomplete and imperfect. But do it anyway. Our friends deserve to know what a gift they are to us.

If telling them off the cuff is too intimidating, consider writing it out and reading it to them. Watch this video to get inspired: https://www.instagram.com/reel/COK2d_6JinX/?igsh=MTFINnBneHRsMzUzYw%3D%3D

Option G

Ask Them about Interdependence!

One of the best ways to explore our monthly themes is to have conversations about them with people who are close to you. It not only deepens our conversations but also our relationships. Below is a list of "interdependence questions" to help you on your way. Be sure to let your conversation partner know in advance that this won't be a typical conversation. Telling them a bit about Soul Matters will help set the stage.

Interdependence Questions:

- Has a tree ever *spoken* to you? How about [a river](#)? Or the ocean? Or the moon? What about [a weed](#)?
- Do you think age impacts the way we *connect with* the interdependent web?
- How does climate anxiety or grief show up in your life?
- Do you feel that "sacrifice" has a central role to play in addressing the climate crisis?
- When was the last time you became thoroughly absorbed in the curiosity of understanding [another creature's life](#)?
- How has the place where you live shaped the way you understand and approach life? And yourself?
- Do you struggle with "burdening" others with your troubles and worries? If so, who or what led to your belief that your grief, worry or struggle is unwanted by or too heavy for others?
- Have you ever been "loved" by the natural world?

Option H

Which Interdependence Quote Calls to You?

Spend some time this month reading through the quotes in the *Companion Pieces* section below to **find the one that speaks most powerfully to you**. We encourage you to use the same discernment practice with these quotes as you do with the packet's list of questions:

- **Read through the list of quotes** a few times, noting which ones “shimmer” (i.e. call to you or have an emotional gravitational pull for you). It often helps to circle or star these quotes that stand out.
- With each reading, **narrow your focus** in on those that stick out, until you finally **settle on the one quote** that pulls at you the most.
- Then make space to **reflect** on the gift, challenge or insight your chosen quote is offering you.
- Some of us may want to **go further** and capture your reflections with journaling or creative expression.

Come to your group ready to share your quote and the journey it took you on.

Soul Matters Theme Playlist

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

<https://open.spotify.com/user/mjf4kicgvwkl7jfbzb0un6gg>

With Video! Also available as a **youtube** playlists:

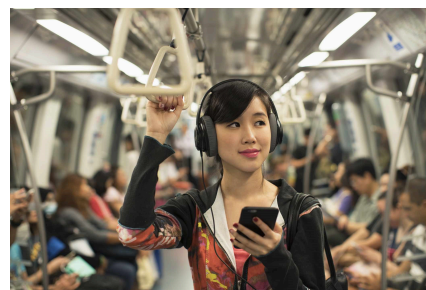
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL_fSD0_Ps01GauCVL_mKQ/playlists

Direct link to **The Gift of Interdependence** playlist on spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/4bfvKACxYZvjzp7tWauCKv?si=ba0724ba2e0a40c3&nd=1&dlsi=029983b5631f4f59>

Direct link to **The Gift of Transformation** playlist on youtube:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvXOKgOQVYP7dVbuAlecwM9vg6n9uxWCa&si=P7RUbtNnyPO7d-bZ>



Robin van Gessel Fundraisers

As I have the last 3 years, I am going to be riding in two different cycling fundraisers this year. I have been commuting about 80km/week since our move, and on weekends I'm up to 60km in one ride, which on dry days, is truly my happy place! I am deeply grateful for the many generous donations from Victoria Unitarians past and future!

On June 9, it's 100km for the Canadian Mental Health Association's Ride Don't Hide. I've ridden since 2015 to support a team called Family Voices. My page for this ride is: <https://cmha.donordrive.com/participant/Robin-vanGessel>

The other one is the Cycle of Life Tour for Vancouver Island Hospices on July 20-21. I will ride 200km over two days with a team called Breaking Wind, and we support Victoria Hospice. This will be my third year doing this ride and the page for this one is: <http://vh.convio.net/goto/RobinvanG>

Robin van Gessel, cell: 250-896-6927



Childhaven Fundraising Dinner

Fri 12th April 5:30 pm

Sanctuary

- dinner by the International Women's Catering Cooperative
- an online visit with founders, Bonnie and Fred Cappuccino
- a review of Child Haven homes with Robin Cappuccino, in person!
- a preview of a new documentary highlighting all the works of Child Haven
- a sales table with hand-made items as well as articles from the regions of the Child Haven homes

- silent auction
- an opportunity to contribute to the costs on CHI's Needs List local musical entertainment

Tickets: Adult \$50, 11 to 17-year-olds \$25, 10 and under free. Checks payable to Robin Colyer or e-transfer robincolyer@gmail.com "Childhaven Victoria" in memo. Net proceeds donated to [Child Haven International](#)

For more info 819-432-5997, robincolyer@gmail.com



Singing Workshop & Concert

After Easter Sunday Service

Mar 31, 1:00-3:00pm

Sanctuary

Easter Sunday will be a joyful day of possibilities! The service at First Unitarian will be a joint service with Capital UU Congregation, and will have musical guests including long-time UU musician, [Lea Morris](#). After the service and social time, Lea will lead an uplifting and engaging singing workshop and mini-concert, together with [Sylvia Humble](#), a dynamic performer and songleader from up-Island. The Gettin' Higher Choir and Wavelengths Community Choir are pleased to be co-sponsoring this event — Lea was a guest in one of our 2021 online "Higher Waves Choir" concerts.

Lea is a wonderful musician and songleader who captivates everyone she works with! All are invited! Please note the dates of the local workshops:

Sunday, March 31 (at First Unitarian Church) and again, in a fuller time-frame, on **Monday, April 1** (at the Church of Truth in James Bay).

You can [click here](#) to get tickets in advance!

Please consider attending! You will be glad that you did!

—Dick Jackson, Cathy Baker and Denis Donnelly

Be the Light

Vocal Workshop & Concert with Lea Morris



www.thisislea.com

Join internationally celebrated "SoulFolk" singer-songwriter and choral composer Lea Morris on her North American tour, collaborating with local song-leader Sylvia Humble for four inspiring events.

In a fun, accessible two-hour workshop, experience Lea's harmonic and polyrhythmic multilayered songs, taught by ear without sheet music. Option to participate in the concert.

The workshop is followed by a concert featuring Lea's powerful vocals and dynamic guitar work, seamlessly blending gospel, jazz, country and R&B in her unique versions of original, contemporary and traditional songs.

Parkville: Friday, March 29

McMillan Arts Centre, 10am workshop / 2pm concert

Nanaimo: Saturday, March 30

Brechin United Church, 10am workshop / 2pm concert

Saanich: Sunday, March 31

First Unitarian Church, 1-3pm workshop & mini-concert (\$45)

Victoria: Monday, April 1

Church of Truth, 3pm workshop / 7pm concert

COST: Workshop \$45; Concert \$30; Combo \$60



Save your spot – get your ticket in advance:
www.sylviahumble.ca/events/be-the-light

Need a scholarship? Please email sylvia@sylviahumble.ca



Sylvia Humble

Sing Again
COMMUNITY CHOIR

*The Gettin'
Higher
Choir*

Wavelengths
community choir

BC Choral
federation
member choir

Our Caring Corner

In our Caring Corner we list those in our community who welcome us to share in their joy, or to offer them our support as they cope with a loss, illness, or other life challenge. We ensure that each individual is comfortable with having their name uplifted before doing so. *Please consider this an opportunity to reach out to others.*

Care & Concern Neighbourhoods Team: [Maggie Nixon](#) (Nearby, Far Out, Royal Oak West), [Stephanie Ippen](#) (Gordon Head, Cadboro Bay, Royal Oak East), [Mary-Ellen Nicol](#) (Grand Central, Oak Bay, Fairfield), [Barbara Boyle](#) (Western, Esquimalt, James Bay), [Rev. Shana](#), [Rev. Melora](#)

Board Minutes & Board Members On Duty

[Minutes for March](#)

Next Meeting Apr 10th 5:30pm Zoom

Board Member on duty schedule for April

7 Katherine Maas
14 Evelyn Peters
21 Jeri Dause
28 Adriane Matheson-Smith

Birthdays This Month

2 Sarah Kendall	19 Nille Fibiger-Crossman
5 Earle Anthony	19 Suzanne Clement Thorne
6 Barbara Kovar	20 Kathleen Doerksen
9 Martha McDougall	21 Barbara Nyland
13 Maureen Sherlock	21 Luke Walrafen
14 Jan Thomson	22 Gisele Bentley
16 Mike Fibiger-Crossman	24 Barbara Boyle
16 Andreas Clesle	25 Leslie O'Hagan
17 Suzanne Beauchamp	25 Chris Cook
	28 LeAnn Andersen
	30 Erin Kinrade

Ads

inclusion of this ad does not constitute an endorsement



Office Staff Holiday

The office will be closed Mar 31, 2024 - Apr 1st 2024 for the Easter Holiday. Administrator Niki will be on a well deserved vacation returning Wed 10th Apr.

During this vacation, in person office hours will be covered by other staff Wed 3rd and phones will continue to be checked a minimum of twice daily Sun-Thu. You can also email communications@victoriaunitarian.ca with any matters needing to be addressed before Wed 10th. There will be staff available onsite, but no one stationed in the office Sun 7th.

Church Contact Info

Bradley Clarke
Caretaker
available by appointment
(no Monday availability)
bradley@victoriaunitarian.ca
778-967-5341 (cell)

Church Office
open 11-1 Sun (except long weekends) & Tue-Thu

PROMO SUBMISSIONS

promo@victoriaunitarian.ca
DEADLINE: NOON Tuesdays

IN THE SPIRIT monthly email
last Thursday each month
early submissions welcome & appreciated

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.

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
fucv.churchoffice@gmail.com

Anna Isaacs

Communications

Tue-Thu 11-2
IN PERSON Tue & Thu
communications@victoriaunitarian.ca
fucv.communications@gmail.com
778-557-3492 (work cell)

Co-Ministers

Rev. Melora Lynngood

rev.melora@victoriaunitarian.ca
Text/call 250-891-6330

Rev. Shana Lynngood

rev.shana@victoriaunitarian.ca
Text/call 250-891-6331

Monday is day off (available for pastoral emergencies)

[schedule details & which minister does what](#)

Minister Emerita

Reverend Jane Bramadat

Lay Chaplains

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
778-557-3492 (work cell)
Sun, Tue-Thu afternoons and by appointment

CONTACTS & LINKS

- [Church website](#)
- [Event calendar](#)
- [Facebook](#)

The First Unitarian Church of Victoria
5575 West Saanich Road
Victoria, BC V9E 2G1

ARCHIVED MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

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