



LUF Newsletter

Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship

December 2011



“An inclusive spiritual community promoting a compassionate, just, and sustainable world.”



HALLOWEEN CELEBRATIONS: Dress-up time and 2012 Canvass all in one. - Do you know who the Board Member Canvasser is who has proven to be a “Jack of All Trades?” Family fun and overindulging continue on a regular basis during our LUF potlucks. Be sure to watch for the next delectable feast.

**SUNDAY SERVICE at 10:30 am at 129 S. Algoma St.
Children's Religious Exploration Classes (Child Care Provided)**

Dec. 4	Title:	The Archetype of Christmas – A sermon by Rev. Felicia Urbanski-part I
Dec. 11	Title:	TBA
Dec. 18	Title:	"It's Time! The Christmas Story Retold."
	Speaker:	Rev. Suzanne Wasilczuk
Dec. 25	Title:	No Service LUF doors will be open for Fellowship

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A MODEST INITIATIVE - FROM THE SEPTEMBER 30, 2011 EDITION OF MOOSE CALL,

A BLOG BY BARRY BEAUPRE

Here is a matter which has caused me some consternation. That is the question about what is our individual responsibility for the damage we cause the climate by our own behaviour. It is all well and good to be critical of the fossil fuel industries and their supportive politicians but are we not also part of the problem? Almost every day we get into our horseless carriages, turn the ignition and spew green house gases out the exhaust. This is our contribution to undermining the health of the planet and the future of our kids—we do this almost everyday and some days we do a lot of damage! Is this to be ignored? Are we absolved of all responsibility because we have limited choices on how to get about town or visit family in other cities.

So, what are we to do in the face of this conundrum of being trapped in this carbon energy culture where in order to get by each day we seemingly without thought contribute to undermining our children's future and denying them the right to inherit a planet just as healthy as we received from our folks.

A modest initiative a small group of us are trying to do in Thunder Bay as a way of expressing our willingness to take on some responsibility for our CO2 emissions is to start a Green Community Fund to finance community initiatives directed at reducing CO2 emissions. We are proposing to finance the fund by having individuals and families and maybe even organizations pay for their vehicle's CO2 emissions on a monthly basis. A self imposed carbon tax if you will—in most cases a very modest sum.

This monthly payment into the fund would be calculated by using an online carbon offset calculator. The donors or members would meet regularly to develop the ways and means of determining the appropriate projects to fund and monitor. This initiative would have the affect of breaking down our feelings of isolation in the face of this most serious of issues as we would be working together to come up with solutions—we would no longer be passive victims of this fossil fuel addiction syndrome but rather active, creative problem solvers with our own money to initiate community projects to get us to a better place we can leave to our kids with pride. Instead of having those waking moments of dread at 3 in the morning about the planet's future maybe those waking moments can now be triggered by a brilliant project idea.

If you live in Thunder Bay and are interested in this idea/initiative you can contact me at barry.beaupre909@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Saturday, December 10 is International Human Rights Day when people around the world write individual letters to heads of state concerning human rights abuses in their countries. They also write letters of support to prisoners-of-conscience. You can write your letters after the service on December 11 or you can do this at home through <http://www.amnesty.ca/writeathon>. Please let Jean know how many letters you will write. 345-2271 or clio12@tbaytel.net .

Ministerial Search Team

This has been an exciting time for the members of the search team and the congregation. On Saturday morning, November 19, eighteen members attended an information session on the process of searching for and hiring a part-time minister. The Rev. Antonia Won, our CUC staff consultant asked us to tell our individual stories, to pair/share key experiences in our relationship with LUF, and to assess the strengths/weaknesses, opportunities/needs of LUF at present. She then explained the difference between “calling” a minister vs. “hiring” one. She suggests that the board make the final decision in “hiring” a minister, on behalf of its members. This makes for a clearer relationship and avoids problems in the future. “Calling” a minister is recommended when engaging a 70- 100 % -time ministerial situation. A “hire” is for a fixed term (she suggested at least 2 years), which then can be renewed, and even changed to a “call”. She reminded us that moving to a professional minister is not just for the good of our present congregation, but integral in maintaining a strong voice of liberal religion in the isolation of our geographical location. Antonia is optimistic about the chances of LUF finding a good match, since there are now three times a year when new graduates are “fellowshipped”.

The team shared copies of the first (and incomplete) draft of a 9 page document, the “Congregational Record”, which describes our congregation’s history and present realities. We expect to complete this work by January, with more input from our members and friends, in particular, a rating of the skills we are looking for in a ministerial candidate. Our Congregational Record, once posted on the UUA website, will be a central piece of advertising to both U.S. and Canadian ministers. Antonia is willing to screen any candidates for us if we so desire. There are extra copies of this document on the greeters’ table, and members are encouraged to review it and offer feedback.

Although unable to comment directly on the sudden resignation of Jennifer Dixon, Executive Director of the CUC, Antonia assured us the staff were capable of continuing their work during this transition time, and promised her support for us during this next period.

Next Steps: Margaret Wanlin and Susan Tiura have agreed to co-chair the committee which will now interview and oversee the hiring of a part-time minister. They will seek other participants, and then the board will officially strike this new committee.

Submitted by Rosemary Burris, for Christine Meronyk, Ed Prinselaar, and Margaret Wanlin

**12TH EMPTY BOWLS/CARING HEARTS**

The event, held on October 16, '11 raised \$17, 000. Nelly Reedhead, chair, (centre) presents the cheques to Michael McLeod , of the Thunder Bay Food Bank and Carole Deacon of Shelter House. Each organization received \$8.500. The many volunteers from the quilting community, the Thunder Bay Potters Guild and the Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship can be mighty proud of this accomplishment

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

Del Dickey

December is the month when most of us complete our charitable donations. As part of thinking both globally and locally, there will be a special collection envelopes for the Faye Peterson Transition House and USC Canada at the December 11 service. **Please make donations by cheque (or cash), to USC Canada or Faye Peterson House. Do not write the cheque to LUF.**

The Faye Peterson House is an important city refuge for women and children needing support. USC Canada's work involves many projects that improve the lives of women and children in other countries.

In October, in Rome, representatives from around the world met to discuss large-scale investment and speculation on land – to make money or produce food for richer countries. This is hiking food prices, and taking food and land from those who depend on it most. USC Canada sees the critical link between land use and its core mission of promoting food sovereignty, biodiversity, and ecosystem resilience. According to Grassroots International, North American farmers and food organizations want stricter rules and regulations (not just 'voluntary guidelines') applied to land tenure and other forms of agricultural investment.

If you haven't the time to check out Grassroots International, or contact UN representatives remember that your support of USC Canada is a way to show your care and concern about world food issues.




COME and DECK THE HALLS
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17TH
 From 4 to 7:00 p.m.
 The hall will be prepared for the festive season.
 Please come out and lend a hand.
 Snacks and hot apple cider

For info: Contact Pyteke Blaauw 344-4052 or e-mail Blaauw@Shaw.ca

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2011

Every Sunday at 9:00am, Non-Violent Communication-LUF Basement Kitchen	Every Wednesday at 7:30pm Mindfulness Practice	Tues, Dec. 6, 6pm, Welcoming Congregation - LUF Hall	Wed, Dec, 16 7:30pm Fellowship Life/Membership Mtg. - LUF Boardroom
Every Sunday at 10:30am, Sunday Service at LUF	Every Thursday at 4:00pm Tai Chi LUF Hall	Tues., Dec.13, 5pm Sun. Service Mtg - LUF Kit	Sat. Dec. 10, 10am - LUF Children's Christmas Craft Party - LUF Hall & Kitchen
Every Sunday at 7:30pm, Meditation	Sun., Dec.,4, 9:15am, RE meeting - LUF Boardroom	Tues., Dec. 13, 7pm Nu-Moon Meeting - LUF hall	Sat., Dec. 3, 17, Bridge 1pm - LUF Hall
Every Tuesday morning, Cleaning of the Church	Mon., Dec. 12, 1 pm Finance Mtg. -LUF Kitchen	Wed., Dec. 1, 7pm Evening Chalice Circle - Offsite	Sat., Dec. 17, 4pm - Holiday Hall Decorating - LUF Hall
Every Wed. at 5:30pm Yoga with Sarah, \$6- LUF Hall	Mon., Dec. 12, 7pm LUF Board Mtg. - LUF hall	Sat., Dec. 3, 6pm - Potala Film Night - LUF Hall	Sat., Dec. 17, 8pm - Milonga Night - LUF Hall
	Mon, Dec. 12, 26, 7:30pm Men's Group - LUF Kitchen		

NEWS IN CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We are having a lot of fun in the Religious Education Program here at Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship! During Halloween the Primary class constructed a "Monster" with teacher Katie Hughdie and volunteer Anne Robinson. Our goal here was to talk about some of the things that make us feel frightened during Halloween. Each child was responsible for drawing one part of the monster - we got very creative (the monster has 4 heads, 4 legs, 3 arms and 2 tails!) It is proudly displayed in the Primary Class. We look forward to making something special for the church and practicing our role in the Christmas Service with Rev, Suzanne Wasilczuk. Please note that there is a sign up sheet by the coffee station for adults to come and help with the Primary class. There is no preparation needed! Just sign up for a Sunday that suits your fancy and come down and enjoy the kids!

The "Church Across the Street" Program for the Junior class facilitated by Pyteke Blauw, has so far taught the Juniors about Unitarian Universalism, the Jewish Faith and Christianity. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of members of our congregation including Rosemary Burriss and Ed Prinselaar) who volunteered their time to act as guest teachers. The Junior class has visited the Shaarey Shomayin Congregation as well as St Andrews church, and will look forward to attend services at St Paul's United and Faith City in the New Year. A direct quote from one of the Junior class participants on their visit to the Synagogue: "I liked that other kids could play while the service was on, but I found it hard to understand the words." (In response to what she thought about the service. Note: the service was very family oriented and children were very involved, and the majority of the service was in Hebrew).

The Children's Choir will perform again with help from our director Dianne Potts. Rehearsals will take place before church at 10am on Sunday, November 20 and Sunday November 27. We will also hold a special rehearsal on Sunday Dec 11 at 10am to practise with the adult choir. Our two December class times (Sun December 4 and 11th) will consist of rehearsal times for both Primary and Junior classes for our performance in the Christmas Service. Thank you to parents who bring their children to participate in this event - the more voices we have, the better our performance will be!

I also look forward to seeing children of the RE Program and their families join us on Saturday, Dec 10 from 10:30 to 1:00 for a Christmas Craft and Pizza Party at Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship. Please join us for various holiday crafts and activities! I am looking for volunteers to help supervise the craft activities, set up and take down tables, and work in the kitchen for our pizza lunch! We are also looking for old Christmas cards for our crafts and baking for our desert! Talk to Katie if you would like to help out! Families can RSVP to Katie at mermaidkh@hotmail.com or in person if they are interested in attending!



CHRISTMAS IN A BOX – SUPPORTING FAYE PETERSON TRANSITION HOME!

Calling all Members and Friends of Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship - the Religious Education Program is collecting shoe boxes filled with gifts for families receiving support from the Faye Peterson Home. Empty shoeboxes will be available at LUF for your filling! Shoeboxes can be filled for either a woman or children. Please see examples below:

For Women; Toiletries, Kitchen Items, Novels, Hats/Mitts etc

For Children; Gently used toys and books, Crayons, Craft Supplies, Hats/Mitts

Please fill a shoebox and support local people in our community and indicate contents of box on the outside as well as who it is intended for. For children's boxes please include age and gender.

Shoeboxes can be brought to LUF until Sunday December 18th. Contact Katie Hughdie with any questions!

A MINISTER'S EYE VIEW

Christmas can be problematic for Unitarians. Some of us still call ourselves Christian, but we recognize that we differ from mainstream Christianity. Perhaps we don't see Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Or we don't see Jesus as divine, but as a divinely-inspired prophet whose life and teachings inform our lives.

Then there are the many of us who call ourselves non-theist, pagan, Buddhist, Muslim, Jew, humanist, or perennially-questioning Unitarian. What does Christmas mean to us?

Christmas is one of my favorite celebrations – partly because it incorporates so many different traditions for me. Yule logs and a tree and a myriad of lights counteracting the long darkness – these practices remind me of my eastern European pagan roots. Singing Polish Christmas carols (I can remember the words to two of them) reminds me of my family, my childhood, and the mystery that was midnight mass. More traditional English carols speak to me of peace on earth, goodwill towards all.

Christmas, and the Jesus story, is a time for me to remember the lessons of spiritual teachers throughout the ages, messages of peace in the heart and a love that is expansive, that welcomes everyone to the Table of Life.

A recent favorite carol is "Let It Be Christmas," written by country western singer Alan Jackson. Jackson sings of Christmas as a "story of hope and joy and peace," a time when "anger and fear and hate disappear," a season that longs for a "love that lasts through the year." A season we wish could last throughout the year.

A favorite holiday movie is "Love Actually." In the opening scene we see people of all sorts rushing to greet one another, smiling, crying, hugging. The narrator tells us: "Whenever I get gloomy about the state of the world, I think about the arrivals gate at Heathrow Airport. General opinion has it we live in a world of hatred and greed, but I don't see that. Seems to me that love is everywhere.... Often it's not particularly dignified or newsworthy, but it's always there: fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, husbands and wives, boyfriends, girlfriends, old friends." The movie itself is a romantic comedy, but NOT a family movie. The folks in it are a montage of good people, the faithless, the bumbling, the silly, the hopeful, the grieving, the unrepentant sinner. These folks remind me of the motley crew that hung around with the adult Jesus. A mixed bag of people, trying to find a more balanced, more helpful, more whole-hearted way to live their lives. And love triumphs, again and again, in the end. Both in the movie, and in the Jesus story.

When all is said and done, Christmas reminds me of family, traditions, love abounding, and hope ever green.

A blessed, thoughtful, healing season of Solstice, Hanukkah, Winter, Christmas to us all.

Rev. Suzanne

"The Prophetic Imperative" book study group will begin at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, January 17th, 2012 in the LUF hall. There is a sign-up sheet on the welcoming table. Your investment for the program is \$20.00 by Dec. 30.

The Prophetic Imperative, Social Gospel in Theory and Practice, Second Edition, by Richard S. Gilbert

"This is not a how-to-save-the-world book, but a challenge to mind and conscience in the context of a church community. We have perhaps learned that true fulfillment has to do with both personal meaning and social responsibility. The two do not compete; they reinforce one another. We are in the process of learning that church social action is not a small band of marginal activists in the church decrying church inaction or seeking to represent the whole church. Rather, it is a congregational process of coming to terms with the mission of the religious community in a society that sometimes confuses the separation of church and state with the divorce of religion and public policy. This is a good place to be – within the continuing tension of piety and prophecy, spirituality and society, individual and community. It is through tension that we will work out our common destiny. As we face a very "unbrave new world," it is imperative that Unitarian Universalists take seriously the prophetic tradition that has been so central to our history and faith." – from the Preface

Submitted by Trudi J. Jones Co-chair Adult Religious Exploration at Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship

WORSHIP AND PRAISE

While teaching the work of the Canadian poet Anne Carson I came across her comments on writing: I write not for the purpose of writing. It is worship I think. Our function as a human being is to praise things, which means you have to think into them enough that you see what the good is. And that thinking requires expression for some reason.

Over the past six years I have been fortunate to have two specific contexts in which to enact praise as a form of worship, Sunday Services and ceremonies to honour transitions on the life cycle. When introducing speakers during a Sunday Service it has been my intent to articulate and reflect back their higher self. (And I have taken some good-natured ribbing about the introduction being longer than the message of said service.)

Praise is part of the narrative recounted of the life of the person being memorialized in ceremony. And in the blessing of the couple during a wedding ceremony there is occasion to voice praise. These opportunities for praise have felt like vocation to me and have brought me such depth of satisfaction. Thanks to all of you for extending these opportunities to me.

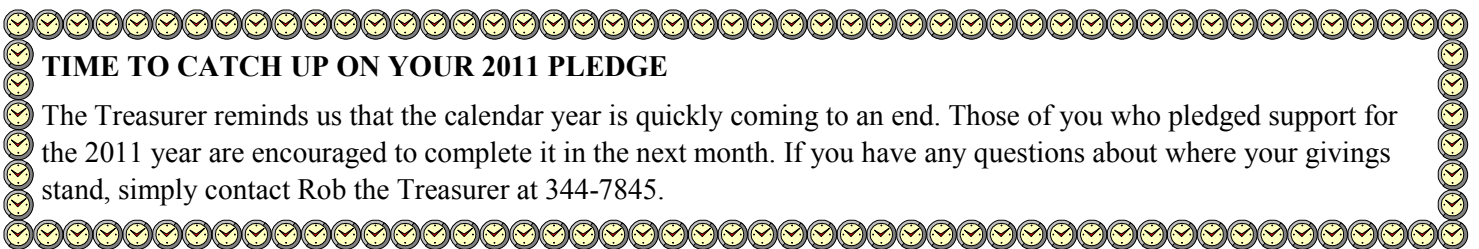
The tone of praise was present in this past Sunday Worship Service in the Rev. Antonia Won's narrative of an aboriginal creation myth. Her poetic or allegorical reading following the story pointed us toward the meaning inherent in the myth.

This work of praise is being enacted too by the members of the book reading club at Westminster United as they engage with the current literature which attempts to bring science and creation mythology into a unified cosmological world view. Ed and Del and their colleagues in this group are thinking their way into these things.

Our Del is also a strong reader of the work of Karen Armstrong. In her book *The Case For God*, Armstrong states that science is not the best model to approach God. Perhaps she is not aware of the current collective tendencies to bring together again the two parts of our human selves that were sundered by the Enlightenment and the consequent privileging of pragmatic science: the thinking of groups like the Westminster United reading club tend toward a new cosmology, a new myth, a form of praise in my books.

I do identify with Armstrong's comment in *The Case for God* that God can be approached as one approaches poetry, with a willingness to surrender to the ecstatic at the heart of creation. And this is where I would wish to make new praise. There are forty years of notes, at one time green shoots that wanted to be expanded into writing. Time now to enact the higher self represented in my dreams by Jean Morrison, a woman who writes. Time to open those files and breathe on those once green images and ideas that I might write praise in poetical dwelling.

Submitted by Susan Tiura

 **TIME TO CATCH UP ON YOUR 2011 PLEDGE**

The Treasurer reminds us that the calendar year is quickly coming to an end. Those of you who pledged support for the 2011 year are encouraged to complete it in the next month. If you have any questions about where your givings stand, simply contact Rob the Treasurer at 344-7845.

CHALICE CIRCLE MEET-UP

Chalice Circle will meet on Wednesday, December 7 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Irene Semenuk, 495 Ryerson Crescent, with Bev Leaman in charge of the program. If there is anyone requiring a ride, please call Elaine 344-5980.

LUF CONTACTS 2010



OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

President:	Bert Blaauw	344-4052
Vice-President:	Marsha Reinikka	344-9998
Secretary:	vacant	
Treasurer:	Rob Van Wyck	344-7845
Past President:	Ellen Taylor	345-3888
At Large:	Brenda Gillespie	983-2758
	Rosemary Burris	343-9241
	Margaret Wanlin	767-1939
	Elaine Foster-Seargeant	933-4845
	Fred Upshaw	768-2413

STAFF AND APPOINTED OFFICERS

Administrator	Elaine Sombrutski	344-5980 (Office)	lufship@tbaytel.net
Coordinator of Religious Exploration	Katie Hughdie	344-5980 (Office)	mermaidkh@hotmail.com
Bookkeeper	Nadia LaRussa	344-5980 (Office)	
Lay Chaplains:	Rob Van Wyck	344-7845	
	Susan Tiura	346-4223	
	David Belrose	623-3347	
	Susan Patterson-Gulka	626-8149	
Director of Music :	Heather Morrison	767-8233	
Endowment Fund Directors	Tony Carfagnini (Chair)		
	Carl Rose		
	Wayne Hill		

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND CONTACT PEOPLE

Archives:	Del Dickey	Men's Group	Jim Bishop
Bridge:	Del Dickey	Newsletter:	Elaine Sombrutski
Care Committee:	Carol Ann Brumpton	Nominating:	Ellen Taylor
Fellowship Life/Membership	Bev Leaman	Property:	Bert Blaauw
Finance:	Rob Van Wyck	Children's Religious Exploration:	Katie Hughdie
Green Sanctuary Committee:	Erin Beagle	Sanctuary Coordinator:	Del Dickey
Kitchen:	Alice Neudorf, Audrey Saxberg	Social Responsibility:	Ahti Tolvanen
Lay Chaplaincy:	Carol Ann Brumpton	Sunday Services:	Hanusia Tkaczyk
Library:	Siobhan Malashewski	Tai Chi:	Sita Holland
Adult Religious Exploration	Susan Patterson Gulka		
	Trudi Jones		
Mindfulness:	David Belrose		

AFFILIATES AND ASSOCIATES

- Canadian Unitarian Council Board (cuc.ca)
- Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily reflect those of the newsletter editor or the Board of LUF.

We hope that you enjoy receiving/reading the LUF Letter, provided free to all members and friends. Receiving the LUF Letter via the website, saves money and trees. Please notify the office at 344-5980 if you no longer require the newsletter to be sent by post. Thank you for your contributions to LUF that make it possible to produce the LUF Letter.

LAKEHEAD UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP

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Deadline for submissions: 20th of the month

The newsletter is usually distributed by the first Sunday of each month from September to June inclusive, via LUF website www.luf.ca, surface mail or hand delivered.