



Upcoming Services

December 6: "The Magical Child" - Rev. Linda Weaver Horton

The "magical child" is an archetype anchored deep in the human psyche. It appears in many cultures. Special circumstances of birth are de rigour for important religious figures. Jesus of Nazareth stands in a long line of such figures. Our faith tradition reminds us that "each night a child is born is a holy night."

Our Community Sunday special offering will go to our local Boys and Girls Club Teen Shelter. Do plan to stay for our community lunch and conversation after the service

Note: children 4 through teens will meet at the KDSCL recreation room on the corner of Bertram and Wilson streets for the full hour (They will be escorted back). Their project for December is "Angels for the Inn" (Inn from the Cold).

December 13: "The Spirituality of Waiting" - Flo Masson from Emmanuella House

Flo Masson has lived a quiet life at Emmanuella House of Prayer for the past 10 years leading retreats and providing a safe and sacred space to do personal healing work. Learning to wait has been an important part of her journey. Join us on Sunday to follow her path to that quiet place, where we can learn to center ourselves during the busy time around Advent.

December 20: "Christmas With the Grinch " - Intergenerational Cast

Our rendition of Dr. Seuss' "The Grinch who Stole Christmas" is adapted and directed by Rev. Linda Weaver Horton. It involves two choirs plus a solo or two, several dances and over 20 cast members of all ages. Come and be charmed by this classic story!

Note: There is a second opportunity to share this production with friends and family and members of the Kelowna community who might prefer a non-church service setting. There will be a MATINEE PERFORMANCE of our Grinch story at 2 PM on Saturday, December 19th, on a free-will donation basis. ½ of donations will go a charity of the cast's choice – we'll keep you posted!

December 27 - An informal Circle Service led by Hajime Naka.

Minister's Musings: Celebrating the "Evergreen Spirit" of this Season

In mid-winter festivals, we pay homage to the ancient messages of darkness and light, of death and rebirth, of despair and hope. We honor the dance of duality as it waltzes through the seasons. Ancient pagan traditions spoke much of these polarities. The dance of opposites -- the play of change -- the returning seasons had a central place in ritual and in the human psyche.

Yet pagan tradition also gives us the Christmas tree. Underneath the dance of duality, behind the play of light and shadow, penetrating the turning seasons was the evergreen spirit -- a vitality that does not die, come what may.

I invite you to reflect upon aspects the evergreen spirit as they appear in the teachings of diverse faiths. First, panentheism – “God” within as well as beyond all creation. We can come at this experience from a more concrete perspective, and call it vitality -- life energy. Here is the dynamic center -- where Mystery dwells.

Carl Jung, the great psychologist, wrote that “there are two ways to lose your soul. One of these is to worship a god outside you.” A primary danger of this season is the human yearning for salvation from outside ourselves -- be it a God-man born in Nazareth or the purchase of coveted consumer goods we often cannot really afford and which do not contribute to a renewable relationship with the earth. Embracing the evergreen spirit means we are not so dependent on outside circumstances for our well-being, be they the turning of the seasons or the economy, or the affirmation of others.

As we travel East, we find other voices chiming in. “I laugh when I hear the fish in the water is thirsty,” says the mystical Persian poet, Kabir. Taking refuge in the Buddha means taking refuge in the Buddha nature of ourselves and all things.

In Pagan traditions, that inner god-power is celebrated as vitality or life force; in China as “chi.” Freeing our chi or life force to flow more freely is one goal of a spiritual path. It leads naturally to compassionate action. The evergreen spirit sinks its roots deeply into the vitality at the heart of life.

The second aspect of the evergreen spirit is the power of the still center, witnessed to by mystics of many faiths. The evergreen spirit does not experience great swings of mood from ecstasy to depression. It holds constant in the midst of the storm of emotions -- the still point in a turning world – the source of the still, small voice within. Buddhists call this “equanimity.” Finally, there is the evergreen quality that Jewish scriptures call Hesed -- steadfast love. This is the interconnected web out of which we cannot fall – the evergreen branches that give us shelter in the storm. In terms of spiritual practice, this steadfast love manifests in the discipline of loving kindness.

The dynamic center -- where the holy dwells. The still center -- where the holy dwells. The place of steadfast love -- where the holy dwells. Vitality, equanimity, and loving kindness. These are the qualities of the Evergreen Spirit. By its compass, may we navigate safely through this season’s moments of delight and confusion, stress and disappointment, love and connection, peace and hope-- and through all the changing seasons of our lives.

In Faith,
Rev. Linda

Religious Exploration Notes

Children’s Program

Our Children’s Religious Exploration Program is going well. November 1st children and youth learned about Lotta Hitchmanova and USC Canada’s efforts at preserving biodiversity. On the 1st Sunday in December, they will work on a Christmas project for Inn from the Cold (Angels for the Inn). Other Sundays the younger (Yellow) group has engaged Dr. Seuss stories (The Lorax, Green Eggs and Ham, etc.). Our older (Green group) children have

continued their "Toolbox of Faith" program exploring character traits such as courage, flexibility, humour, and resiliency. December's program will be related to mid-winter holidays. The last Sunday of December there will be activities but no formal program.

In January the Yellow group will start on a curriculum called "Treasure Hunters," looking at what they value in themselves and their relationships. The Green group will continue to reflect upon Tools of Faith, this time qualities related to our seven Principles.

Youth Program

Several of our teens have been aides with the R.E. program, and are involved in our Christmas pageant. Two of our youth, Denise Nielson and Desta Shaw Naka, attended a social justice youth conference called "Munchacon" at the North Shore church this past month. They learned a lot about food-related justice issues, and discussed what we can do about them.

Perhaps in the new year you would consider being an R.E. leader or aide on an occasional Sunday morning – we could really use another volunteer or two! Or perhaps you might begin by offering to be a family greeter on Sunday mornings -- only a 15-minute commitment before the service to welcome any new families, orient them, and get the information we should have even for a visiting child. We are also looking for another person or two to take a turn at care-giving for our youngest (there is a small stipend available for that)

Adult Religious Exploration

Any ideas for the new year? Let Rev. Linda know!

Arts and Spirit Circle: Led by Rev. Linda, Final session: Thursday December 3rd , 7-9 P.M. at the church. We will be focussing our inner strengths through exploring tactile and movement art forms (clay sculpture and creative movement). This is not limited to church Members and Friends – bring someone with you! Teens are welcome as well.

President's Message

First, I would like to thank Wayne Broughton for filling in for me last month, when I was off on my travels.

One of the places I attended was the First Unitarian Church in Victoria (where I was a member, before Kelowna). This was their choir practice night, and it was a challenge to my brain to sing the alto of pieces that they were going to sing on the following Sunday but enjoyable, never the less. We also started practicing a piece entitled Missa Breve Pro Serveto. This is a Unitarian Mass (yes there always has to be a first time!). The words are by Rev. Frances Dearman, classics scholar and currently the Minister of the Calgary church. The music is by Tobin Stokes, a local Victoria composer. I had the opportunity to sing about half of the first section (there will be four), it is really a beautiful piece.

So why you may wonder has this mass been commissioned by Victoria. Well ... on May 21 - 24 2010 the Annual Canadian Unitarian Council, Annual Conference & Meeting is being hosted by the Victoria Unitarians, and will be held at the University of Victoria. This will be

the long weekend, and I hope that we will be able to send a large delegation from Kelowna. So mark it in your day books for 2010.

As we are still in the middle of an H1N1 and usual flu season, I hope that by the time you receive this that we will have installed a hand sanitizer in the sanctuary. But there has been a run on them, so we are on a wait list.

Three new members have joined our congregation; Melissa Spavor, Jan Dawson and Kim Dawson. I know that you will join me and the board in welcoming them.

Our Goods and Services Auction has netted around \$4500, this year. To all of you who worked so hard (and I am not going to name people, as I know that I will forget someone) my grateful thanks to you all. But having said no names, I do believe that a heartfelt vote of thanks should go to Faye Shaw for the sterling work that she did, organizing the menu, picking up all the food supplies and preparing it. It was a wonderful meal. Also thanks to Wayne our auctioneer, and Louise, without whom we would not have had an auction. Thanks to those of you who offered items and to those of you who bought -- thank you. It was a wonderful evening. And now we get to enjoy all the items we bid on.

The floor of the sanctuary is pine, and therefore a soft wood, so please when moving chairs try to lift them, instead of dragging them, and this will save the floor - thanks.

We are looking for new board members, so if you are approached by a member of the nominating committee, please consider filling one of vacancies.

Your board did a preliminary review of the 2010 budget and it as noted that the contributions to our partner church are down. So hopefully we can increase the amount that we sent to support them.

Namaste, Maggie N.

Green Sanctuary - Honouring The Earth During The Holiday Season

Winter is a time when the Earth is resting. We can look to the Earth for that lesson in our own lives. It is a time for us to pause and to rest and be grateful for all of the abundance in our life. It is also a time to remember we have choices – we can choose how we spend our resources of our time, our energy, and our money. We can choose to do what feeds our soul and to avoid what does not.

During the holiday season we are bombarded with so much commercialism it can be very difficult to find the 'Peace on Earth' that is part of the Christmas message. If you are feeling pressured or feeling inadequate or overwhelmed by the holiday season, stop and examine why you are feeling that way. Question everything.

Avoid retail therapy. You might want to throw all the flyers in the recycling and not even look at them. Avoid advertising as much as possible. When you do shop, remember you are voting with your money by who you are supporting when pay for your purchase.

Here are a few ideas to consider during the holiday season to help reduce consumption, honour the Earth, and help you to feel more at peace:

Traditions: Create your own traditions. Explore traditions from other faiths. Many have special celebrations at this time.

Gifts: Think of gifts that will not add to the unnecessary consumption of the Earth's resources. Consider living gifts (gifts of money to buy farm animals or school supplies, etc. to help people in third world countries to help themselves); re-gifting special items you no longer need; hand made gifts from materials you already have; second hand gifts; gifts that support non-profit organizations; gifts of food; gifts of activities; gifts of sharing of your time; gifts to those in need in our community.

Wrapping/packaging: When you do buy something, take your own shopping bags and try to purchase items that have minimal or no packaging. Use re-useable wrapping such as cloth gift bags that can be re-used forever, towels, newspaper, cardboard boxes decorated with coloured markers

Decorating: Keep it simple and natural. Make edible decorations (popcorn strings, apple rings, cranberry wreaths, gingerbread people) or handmade ones using natural or recycled/reused materials (origami peace cranes from used gift wrap, paper cut-out snowflakes). Cut up last years Christmas cards to make tags for your gifts.

Food: Consider local; organic; fair trade – or at least from as close to home as possible. Choose healthy, natural foods.

To close I will share with you something my mid twenties son said to me after Thanksgiving dinner. We had all had fun preparing the feast together for a very special extended family celebration. At bedtime Duncan said 'Mom this was great – just like Christmas. Actually it was even better than Christmas because there were no gifts.' That really brought home to me the realization that what is most important about Christmas in our adult family can be summed up in four F's: Family, Friends, Food and Fun.

Christmas with Children

It is very easy to get caught up in trying to give children everything they 'want' - wants that are mostly created by advertising. One family's creative solution is to give each child just four gifts - 1 thing they want, 1 thing they need, 1 thing to wear, and 1 book to read. I like that. My grandparents always gave me a book at Christmas which I eagerly looked forward to. I still have all of them with their greetings to me written inside.

When my children were growing up, a special part of Christmas for them was making gifts for family members (with some help from parents in the early years). Some of the items are still treasured and in use 20 or more years later. My daughter encouraged me to share what she remembers:

Suet/peanut butter bird feeders, peanut brittle, baking, tree decorations including ones with their photos, plastic mesh eyeglass cases and pouches for little fold up scissors, wooden trivets and cutting boards, shoe bags and clothes peg bags, gift certificates for doing things for people.

Our family has a tradition from my childhood where only one person at a time opens a gift and everyone else watches. It honours the giver and the gift. Often my children were more

excited watching a family member open the gift they had made for them than opening their own gifts!

Submitted by Gwen Steele for the Green Sanctuary Committee

Treasurer's Report

For the month ended October 31, 2009

	Current <u>Period</u>	Current <u>Budget</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>	Year-to-Date <u>Budget</u>
TOTAL INCOME	6,534	13,736	85,900	86,141
TOTAL EXPENSE	8,625	8,435	86,891	84,720
EXCESS INCOME /EXPENSES	-2,091	5,301	-991	1,421

We received a good amount of Pledge Income in October. (4,105) . The year to date pledges are over budget by \$4,500. The current budget included the garage sale and goods and services auction. The goods and services auction didn't happen until November and we decided against the garage sale so our income compared to budget was considerably less.

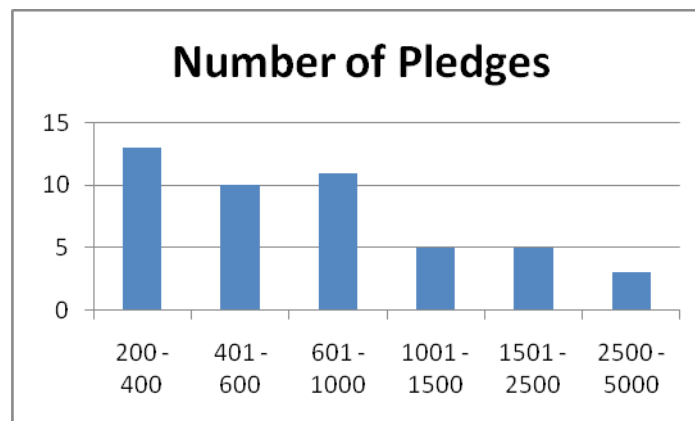
We spent \$712 in office supplies., refurbished computer, toner cartridge, black press advertising and several packages of photocopy paper. As well \$803 in church repairs, sewer back-up , floor material for sanctuary, furnace repair.

Our special collection last month was for the Drop In Center – We collected \$230.00.

Canvass Update

Our goal for this year is \$67,000 . So far we have received \$47,000 from 44 pledging units. Thank you very much for your contributions .The estimate for the remaining 20 contributors is \$13,600. This will leave us short \$6,400 . The board will have to take that amount out of the budget next month . This will not be easy as it is already a tight budget. One of the hardest cuts will likely be the minister's salary increase.

The pledge break-down is as follows:



Respectfully yours,
Liz Earl

Poet's Corner

Here are a few - by "HA HA Haiku by Hajime"

the maple tree
undressed by the north wind
strip dancing

wind chimes swaying
metal legs clinking dancing
in the north wind

early morning jogger
inhales frosty vapour...
exhaled by tailpipes

leaves fall through the night
maple branches sway back and forth
raking the moon

looking out the window
a leaf shivering on a naked branch...
i get dressed

Cheers, & Chuckles,
Sterling

Announcements

Christmas Carolling to our Elders

Saturday, December 12th, 1:30-4 P.M. We would like to send two or three groups to 3 homes each, so we need volunteers of all ages to add their voices. This has been a lovely experience the last several years for those who took part! There will be a sign-up sheet at church, or let Rev. Linda know.

Christmas Pageant

This year's pageant is "Christmas with the Grinch," our own jived-up reader's theatre rendition of the Dr. Seuss classic with a few songs and dances woven in.

We'll be doing a public performance on Saturday, December 19th at 2 PM. In addition to Sunday morning, so tell your friends! Our rehearsals are launched with a cast 20+. We still need volunteers for our support team: costuming, lights, sound, set, etc. Let Rev. Linda know of your interest. (revlwhorton@yahoo.ca)

Rehearsal Schedule

Sundays, December 6th and 13th, 12:30-2 PM (family choir noon-12:20 PM on the 13th)

Wed. December 16th (tentative) 4-6 PM. Tech rehearsal (cast not needed)

Thursday, December 17th, 4:15-6:15 P.M. Dress Rehearsal

Saturday, December 19th, 1 PM Cast Call; 2 P.M. public performance

Sunday, December 20th: 9:30 A.M. Cast Call; 10:30 A.M. performance for worship.

Come sleep with us!

Planning to come to the Winter Olympics 2010? Beacon Unitarian Church in the Tri-Cities suburb of Vancouver, BC is offering in-home bed and breakfast, January through March, 2010.

For information go to www.BeaconUnitarian.org or call registrar, Joy Silver at (604) 939-2213 or e-mail odetojoy@telus.net

Volunteer Position Open - Creating Members' & Friends' Nametags

We are in need of someone to take this over from John Palmer. Our thanks to John who has done this for us for many years. Usually a request will come from Audrey Pekrul or Rick Hardman to make up a name tag for a newcomer to our community. I have all the necessary supplies and can fill you in on the details of how to proceed. This is not a large time commitment and only requires a computer and some computer skills.

Please contact me if you can assist in this way. Thank you

Louise McKenzie - 250-768-6959 or mlouisemckenzie@shaw.ca

Project Co-ordinator

The CUC has advertised for a Project Coordinator. The job description is at <http://www.charityvillage.com/cvnet/viewlisting.aspx?id=204224> - please feel free to pass this on to anyone who you feel may be interested.

If you have any questions, please contact me at phil@cuc.ca.

Philip Strapp
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Unitarian Fellowship of Kelowna, 1310 Bertram Street, Kelowna, BC V1Y 2E8, (250) 763-7212, email: unitarian@silk.net
For more information about our congregation please visit our website: www.unitariancongregation.org/kelowna

Sunday Services begin at 10:30 am. Childcare and programs are available year round.

The Signal is distributed on the last Sunday of each month. Deadline for submissions is the Monday prior to distribution. Please send submissions to ufksignal@hotmail.com