

Worship Calendar for December

Sunday, December 6, 10:30 am

Dark Nights, Bright Stars

Rev. Diane Rollert

Music by Emanuel Freitas

Monthly first Sunday collection of non-perishable food for the NDG Food Depot.

Friday, December 11, 7:00 pm

A Good and Godly Night: A Near Winter Vespers Service

Rev. Diane Rollert and Curtis Murphy

Children's Chapel

Sunday, December 13, 10:30 am

A New Way Together

Rev. Diane Rollert and Special Guests Jack Mizrahi & Ali Sibtain

Music by Sandra Hunt

Our guests are two young men who met working in financial services. One is Jewish and the other Muslim. Together they have developed a seminar to inspire people of different faiths to set aside their differences in order to live a better life. They join us this Sunday to share their personal stories.

Sunday, December 20, 10:30 am

Wassail: Be Whole

A Multigenerational Service

Rev. Diane Rollert, Caroline Balderston Parry, Sandra Hunt and our children.

Followed by the annual holiday luncheon (details on p.5).

Monday, December 21, 6:30 pm

Solstice Celebration

Kirstin McKeown and Rev. Diane Rollert

Children's Chapel

A time of quiet reflection to prepare for the return of the sun after the longest day of the year. A dessert potluck follows the service. Bring something sweet to share.

Thursday, December 24, 6:00 pm

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 27, 10:30 am

Poetry and Potluck

With Yves Manseau and David Horan

Bring a favourite dish to share after the service.

Share-the-Plate

For the month of December, all the unidentified cash in the Sunday offertory will be given to the **Montreal Diet Dispensary**.

Each month, all of the unidentified loose cash in the Sunday collection is donated to a local organization in need of our support. Cheques can also be made out to the organization which will issue tax receipts directly.

Message from the Minister

A Song for the Season

Darkness seeps in,
and we long for the hours
when the soul finds its place of belonging
and our spirits are lifted with song.

Reach out, reach out,
with love for the returning of the sun
on the morning after the solstice.

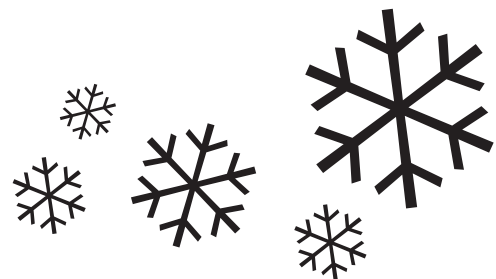
Reach out, reach out,
with hope for the child who is born
to feed the hungry and heal the sick.

Reach out, reach out,
with songs of freedom.

Bright lights of this season,
Open our hearts,
Remind us of where we need warmth,
Call us to care for one another.

Reach out, reach out,
and bring us back to centre.
May this holiday season be a time
of slowing down
and making deeper connections
for you and all those whose lives you touch.

Warm winter wishes,
Rev. Diane Rollert



Welcome and nurture

You can java jive!

Please sign up to make and serve the coffee after the Sunday services. It's easy, fun and great way to meet people. You can even dance while doing it, if you'd like. The sign-up sheet is in Phoenix Hall or you may contact Andrea Reichert at: aj_reichert@videotron.ca

Welcome Unitarians

Sunday Service Greeters are needed for Sundays. Please sign up on the sign-up sheet in Phoenix Hall or contact Petrina Lee Poy at 514-485-5555 or petrina_lee_poy@yahoo.com

Caring Network

We have over 20 people registered as helpers: individuals happy to make hospital or home visits, make telephone check-up calls, prepare and/or deliver food, or act as chauffeur.

December coordinators: Marion Blake, 514-482-8914, marion.blake@videotron.ca
OR Phyllis Greggain, 514-366-0618, norm.greggain@sympatico.ca

Membres du Groupe francophone svp communiquez avec Francine Desmarais au 450-332-3994 ou par courriel au fdesma@gmail.com

Memorial Flowers

December 6: Dr. Douglas Clarke and Hugh Clarke
December 13: Margaret and Larry Pineau
December 20:

Pointsettias are the gift of the late Rita Bourdon

Please contact Maychai Brown 514-487-3236;
or Christine Rourke 514-761-0669

if you would like to remember a friend or loved one in this special way.

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. Proceeds are going towards our building fund.

For information, visit www.beaconunitarian.org
or contact the registrar, Joy Silver
at (604) 939-2213 or odetojoy@telus.net

Entre Nous

Several of our members are in our thoughts these days:

Dorothy Clarke and **Mitchell Bourke** are in Manoir Westmount (corner of Victoria and de Maisonneuve) just down the hall from each other.

Barbara Jackson has gone from Catherine Booth to the Royal Vic. We hope she is on the mend.

Alain Lefevre has had a hip replacement and we don't know at this point if he will be going home or to Lindsay Place for rehab.

Patricia Ewing has had a bad fall and is currently in the Montreal General Hospital.

Roseann Millin is now at Mount-Sinai Hospital Center.

Diana Kleins is receiving chemotherapy starting November 30.

We hope our chief custodian, **Helmut Strohmeyer** will be back with us soon. He is at home with a broken rib. Get well soon, Helmut.

They would all appreciate your cards and good wishes.

And some good news...

Mark Abley visited Girona, Spain, in October, to receive the LiberPress Prize for international writers. The prize honours authors whose work contributes to an awareness of humanitarian values.

Gazette justice reporter and UCM website editor, **Sue Montgomery**, won the Judith Jasmin prize for investigative journalism -- the most prestigious journalism prize in Quebec -- for her December 2008 expose of child molestation by clergy at Montreal's College Notre-Dame and other Catholic institutions in the 1970s.

Stamps help raise funds to provide seeing-eye dogs.

Please keep stamps you receive on Christmas cards and packages that are unusual and/or from other countries. Cut them out keeping about 1/4 inch margin and deposit them in the 'golden' box next to the nametags are. The Caring Network will see that they are put to good use.



To receive the electronic version of the newsletter by email, please send your request to Verna Litwack, office@ucmtl.ca

Message from the President

Supporting Our Spiritual Place

I'm grateful for this "spiritual community" which offers us so much; a dynamic minister, a wonderful pianist and choir director, a religious education department meeting the needs of our children of all ages, our office administrator and our building custodian overseeing all the other essentials. And of course, we can't forget our wonderful physical space that welcomes others and us into such comfortable surroundings week after week.

If you're like me, these thoughts of appreciation are what drive me to continue to financially support this place I call my spiritual home. Sure, the money I give could be spent on other things - there's always something to spend money on out there. But I can't think of a single expenditure that gives so much enjoyment in return. Paying my taxes? Definitely not. Clothing and food? Nope. My car? Umh...(well... yes, but I'm just special that way.)

As our pledge campaign is now well underway, I ask you to be generous this year in your financial support of this church. Our expenditures have risen lately, part and parcel of building up the dynamic program that we now have to offer. Our pledge income for 2009 was lower than in past years, partly due to economic uncertainties, and also due to the sad loss of some of our long-time members. If we want to keep moving forward with all that we declare in our Mission Statement, we need to do all we can in terms of our financial support. Please give generously for 2010.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to those who have worked so hard in this year's Pledge Campaign: Bob Edgar, our treasurer, for a budget that took a lot of consultation and analysis to make the numbers work; Janine Cobb, our secretary, and Petrina Lee Poy, our membership chair for producing the pledge campaign material which was sent out to each and everyone of you. I'd be grateful just to have half of the "Energizer Bunny" batteries they possess.

I wish you all a wonderful December, happy holidays, and a wonderful 2010.

David Kersulis

Governance Task Force Update

The Governance Task Force has met and will continue to meet with the various constituencies (committees, groups, etc) in the congregation during the month of December. In these hour long consultations, we ask a number of questions concerning the operations of the committee or group and its relation to the UCM governance. We will be convening a Town Hall meeting in the new year in order to gather information from individuals in the congregation. We will keep you posted as to date and time. If you would like to contribute any feedback, please email us at governance@ucmtl.ca

Governance Task Force: Alison Hall, chair, Petrina Lee Poy, Andrew Blakeslee, Carol Cumming Speirs, Rev. Diane Rollert (ex officio)

2009 Donations

To qualify for an income tax receipt for 2009, all financial contributions (cheques and/or cash) must be received at the Church office by December 31, 2009.

You can donate online by going to www.canadahelps.org. Just follow the easy steps on the Canada Helps site. The website accepts credit card payments and issues a tax receipt directly.

In the privacy preferences section, please provide your name so that the church office can keep track of your donation. There is 3% service charge incurred by the church on each Canada Helps transaction. By adding the equivalent amount to your online contribution, you can help defray this cost.

Have any questions? Please contact Verna at the Church Office 514-485-9933 or Petrina Lee Poy 514-485-5555

Rev. John N. Marsh Installed on Nov. 16 in Ottawa

Our minister emeritus, Charles Eddis, spoke at the installation of Rev. Marsh as Ottawa First Unitarian Congregation's 15th settled minister.

Rev. Marsh is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and was ordained as a Unitarian Universalist Minister in 1982. Since then, he has served congregations in Edmonton, San Francisco, Syracuse and Utica.

What's going on...

Special Events

First Friday Potluck Supper Celebrating Dr. Lotta Friday December 4, 6 pm

The Social & Environmental Concerns Committee (SECC) is sponsoring this celebration of Lotta Hirschmanova, founder of the Unitarian Service Committee, on the 100th anniversary of her birth in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Dr Lotta, as she was known, was a refugee from WW II, fleeing to Belgium, Southern France and Portugal before finally arriving in Canada. She began to work on behalf of refugees with the USC in Boston. Three years after arriving in Canada, 1945 she founded the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada with help from the people in the Ottawa Unitarian Congregation.

She embodied what Unitarians stand for and her work lives on in the USC-Canada of today, that now focuses on help by way of self-help and the "Seeds of Survival" program that we, as a congregation, hope to be able to support in an affirmative manner in the coming year.

Delicious food and a 25-minute film are on the program. Come one, come all to learn more about Dr. Lotta and the impact she has had on Unitarians and our vision of the world.

Council Meeting Saturday, December 5, 9:30 to 11 am Children's Chapel.

Bagels and coffee will be available from 9 am. This meeting is crucial for anyone or any group that plans to use space in the Church in the upcoming months, especially the winter and spring months. At this time we will be reserving space and discussing upcoming activities and events. For more information please contact Petrina Lee Poy, membership coordinator, at 514-485-5555 or petrina_lee_poy@yahoo.com

CARMINA Choir LET THERE BE LIGHT! Saturday, December 5, 8 pm

Selections from Haydn's THE CREATION and Handel's JUDAS MACCABAEUS followed by a CAROL SING-A-LONG with audience participation. Suggested donation \$10 Info: 514-843-6497

Le dimanche 6 décembre à 19 h 30 au Sanctuaire

Le Chœur pour la Paix donnera un concert avec le thème "Paix et lumière de Noël". Ce chœur interreligieux et inter-culturel se fera un plaisir de partager avec vous l'esprit qui anime cette période de réjouissances et de fraternité.

L'entrée, de \$5 pour les adultes, sera gratuite pour les enfants.

Pascale Frémond, Directrice musicale 450-478-3904
pascale.fremond@videotron.ca

Christmas Student Concert : Violin, Voice, Guitar and Piano Saturday, December 19, 7pm In the Sanctuary.

Featuring students of all ages and levels from the studios of local music teachers Marie-France Boisvert, Emilia Cordoba, Alexandre Brault and Melissa Archambault. Come see what the kids are up to! Please join us for some pastries, coffee and tea following the concert.

Tickets are 10\$ at the door.

For information contact Marie-France at 514-773-4058 or mariefrance.boisvert@gmail.com

Le Groupe francophone

Le vendredi 4 décembre à 18 h

Le Cercle de discussion porte sur le thème de la tolérance. Apportez un plat à partager. Tout le monde est le bienvenu.

Le dimanche 13 décembre à 12 h

La réunion de travail du Comité francophone afin de préparer nos activités. Venez nous rencontrer et partager vos idées autour d'un petit lunch dans la salle Thomas de l'Église.

Nous reprendrons nos activités au mois de janvier. Nous vous souhaitons nos meilleurs voeux pour la nouvelle année 2010.

Contact: Hannelore Poncelet, 450-653-5694,
hanniponcelet@hotmail.com

**Annual Holiday/Winter Equinox Luncheon
Sunday, December 20,
after the Multigenerational service**

Suggested contribution:

\$5 per person or \$10 per family

This annual tradition is a joyful gathering and sharing of a holiday meal at the start of the festive season. You are invited to contribute salads and/or sweets to accompany the meal of tourtière & beans and vegetarian quiche (a gluten-free alternative will also be available - please advise ahead of time so we can prepare accordingly).

To offer a sweet or salad, please sign up or contact Rita Izzi or Nancy Kleins. You are also invited to help set up tables (9:15-10:15 a.m.) or help with clearing up after the event. Sign-up sheets will be posted in Phoenix Hall.

Remember, many hands make light work! We look forward to sharing this holiday event with you.

Contacts: Rita Izzi, 514-509-0586,

rita-angelina2002@yahoo.ca or

Nancy Kleins, 514-855-0005, nan@tradewords.ca

Monthly Groups & Programs

Exploring the Intangible

Sunday, December 6, 12:30pm

Children's Chapel.

Since we spent time with the Governance Task Force at the last meeting, we will discuss the topic previously announced: Is altruism a one-way street? All are welcome.

Contact: Christine Rourke at 514-761-0669

Pathway to Membership

Sunday, December 6, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Would you like to know more about Unitarian Universalism? Would you like to become a member? Join our minister for our new member orientation program to learn about our Unitarian and Universalist heritage and the meaning of membership. RSVP to office@ucmtl.ca or call 514-485-9933.

Book Discussion Group

Wednesday, December 9, 6:30 pm

Thomas Room

Our traditional festive offering in December includes a movie and a potluck. This year we'll screen

"Stranger than Fiction," a comedy described as "clever intellectual wizardry" starring Will Ferrell as an IRS agent who falls in love with the pretty baker he's auditing, admits he's slightly OCD, hears voices in his head, and barely escapes death-by-messaging. Please call Kathy re the potluck.

Contact: Kathy, 514-488-9608

Celebrating Human Rights Day:

Refugee Rights as Human Rights

Wednesday, December 9, 7:30 pm

The Westmount YMCA, 4585 Sherbrooke West

Friends of Rabbis for Human Rights-Montreal invites you to a short film and presentation by Denise Otis, Legal Officer representing the U.N. High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR) in Montreal.

Information: Shloime Perel, 514-962-8705

M.I.S.S. (Mothers in Support and Sympathy)

Monday, Dec. 14, 7:30-9:30pm

Garden Room

M.I.S.S. is a support group for parents who have lost babies or young children during pregnancy, birth, infancy or early childhood. We listen to each others' stories and try to provide a compassionate setting during times of grief and sadness. This month we will be discussing the holidays and ways we can cope with the emotional tensions of the season.

All are welcome. For more information, please visit our website: www.missfoundationcanada.org

Contact: Ann Howell, 514-639-8488,

ann.howell@gmail.com

Seeking the Sacred in Stories

Tuesday, December 15, 12:00- 1:15 p.m.

Facilitated by Rev. Diane Rollert

Bring your own brown bag lunch and join this ongoing group, as we deepen in community and search for meaning in the stories we read. All are welcome. We meet in the Garden Room on the first lower level of the church. Copies of the stories are available from the office.

Midday meal with Music

Wednesday, December 16

Lunch: 12:20 pm; Music: 1:30 pm

Please call Ruth di Giovanni to reserve at 514-934-4956 or kujo7577@hotmail.com

Programs continued on page 6

Monthly Groups & Programs Continued from page 5

Drumming Circle

Thursday, December 17, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
(third Thursday each month) Phoenix Hall
Contacts: Ann Beer at 514-426-1204 or ann_beer@hotmail.com
Allen Lobo 514-484-3014 or radiantandfree@gmail.com

Social and Environmental Concerns Committee

Sunday, December 13, 12:30

Thomas Room
Contacts: Christina Duvander at cduvander@gmail.com or Patricia Philip at trish_philip@yahoo.ca

Weekly Groups & Programs

Parts in Peace Choir Mondays, 7:30 pm

Contact: Sandra Hunt, director, 514-484-5559 or sandra.muriel.hunt@gmail.com
The last rehearsal on this month is December 21 after a celebratory pot-luck. Rehearsals will begin again January 11. We welcome committed choristers to join in the joy of singing for the Sunday service once a month. Bring a black binder for your music and a pencil for notations.

Mindfulness Meditation

Normally on Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8:30 pm, but will break for the holidays and start again on January 27.
Children's Chapel
Contact: Allen Lobo at 514-484-3014 or radiantandfree@gmail.com

Play Group

Tuesdays and Thursdays,
10 am - noon, in the Nursery

We welcome children under five on a drop-in basis accompanied by a (grand)parent or care giver. Pack a snack for your child(ren). Coffee is provided. Open to all, whether church member or not. No charge, but a donation of \$3/session per family is suggested.
Please note the last Play Group for 2009 will be Tuesday, December 22. It will start again on Thursday, January 7, 2010.

Taking Action

NDG Food Depot Door-to-Door Annual Food Drive Helpers are still needed!

Saturday, December 5, 9:30 am to 1 pm

The NDG Food Depot's new director, Fiona Keats, informs us that volunteers are needed to accompany drivers to pick up food on the Saturday. They also REALLY need people with cars who can make additional pick-ups during the week.

To help out, please contact Fiona at 514-483-4680 or admin@depotndg.org

Take A Stand—Lend a Hand

The First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto, in partnership with World Accord, invites you to help build schools in the mountains of Honduras. This is a hands-on opportunity to make a difference in the lives of subsistence farmers and their families.

Two-week trips beginning January 16, February 13 or March 13, 2010. Construction and Spanish language skills are not required but would be welcomed.

For more information contact Richard Kirsh (416-767-5837 or richardkirsh@sympatico.ca).

We're thankful to...

Cindy Yang: newcomer and parent of Jia, who does regular service in the RE library.

Janet Clancy, longtime friend and parent of Sophie, **Ruth Di Giovanni** and **Laura Golden** for their work with RE.

Hannah Canning-Gray who helped with the junior youth program while visiting from England and volunteered in the Tuesday and Thursday drop-in play groups which are so faithfully anchored by **Melani Litwack.**

All these contributions are helping Religious Education!

Message from the Director of Religious Education Christmas – and the Solstice – is Coming

The days are getting shorter and our annual multi-generational Solstice Service is coming soon.

Last year, when the service fell on the actual date of the Winter Solstice, I loved working with Diane and Sandra and sharing a number of my favourite songs, riddles, dances and poems related to the shortest day.

Incidentally, the service was deliciously redolent of the years my family lived in Toronto and coordinated the “Parry Family Christmas Show” at our local folk club.

I relish welcoming yuletide in a singing community and look forward to doing so again with all of you on December 20.

This year, our children will prepare their parts on Sunday, December 13, when they will gather in the Chapel rather than in separate classrooms. And everyone is invited to sign up on the big charts posted outside the nursery (level 2) for a small participatory dramatic role or reading.

A community rendition of “The Twelve Days of Christmas” is planned—I hope you and your family or friends take on a line of the old song to act out, maybe leading the “six geese a-laying,” or supporting the “partridge” in a congregationally-built pear tree. It will be both cooperative and hilarious!

Children’s Music Program

Shawn Dohring and Marie-France Boisvert, the co-leaders of the new Children’s Music Program, are going to organize a special number for the Solstice Multigen using our church hand bells—new members of the group are still welcome! The new Children’s Music group will have its first performance November 29, when it sings for the chalice lighting. Watch for further cameo appearances!

Profound Thanks

Our Religious Education (RE) program takes many people’s creativity and dedication to flourish. As its director, I have regular help from Ivy Trudel, the Religious Education Assistant and Youth Programs Coordinator. We also employ childcare workers, but none of us is paid to work full time at this wonderful church.

Ivy has put in many more hours this fall than the 10 for which she is reimbursed, including spending four days at the recent conference in Providence, RI, for professionals working in RE. She reported to the teacher and volunteer breakfast on November 22 that one of the most inspiring ideas she heard was from Peter Steinke, the church dynamics author and leader, who said “How YOU function, affects how OTHER people function.” She’s a great example of that truth. Ivy has also spent extra hours with the jr. youth sleepover and classroom arrangements. So hats off to Ivy in her new roles!

Caroline Balderston Parry, dre@ucmtl.ca

Special Legacy Gifts

In recent years, a number of our members have remembered the church by making special gifts. They have made donations using a gift of shares, bequests in their wills, or by naming the church as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. There are various alternatives, all of which would result in income tax savings.

This month, we remember with gratitude some of those members who made planned donations through their estates:

2009 Estate of Diana Scott
2009 Estate of Andy Hugessen
2009 Estate of Jean Cumming

If you would like to explore the possibility of making a special gift, please consult either your financial advisor or a member of the Investment Committee.

Bob Bassett
(Investment Committee members are Elizabeth Anglin, Bob Edgar and Bob Bassett)

The CUC (Canadian Unitarian Council) has advertised for a Project Coordinator.

See the job description at www.charityvillage.com and please feel free to pass this on to anyone who you feel may be interested. If you have any questions, please contact Phil Strapp, CUC financial administrator at phil@cuc.ca or 416-489-4121.

Unitarian Church of Montreal Église unitarienne de Montréal

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Tel: 514.485.9933 Fax: 514.485.7999
office@ucmtl.ca
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Mouvement unitarien universaliste au Québec www.uuqc.ca

Key people at UCM

Minister: Reverend Diane Rollert
514.485.7654 dianerollert@ucmtl.ca

Minister Emeritus: Reverend Charles Eddis
514.934.1535 eddis@ucmtl.ca

Church Administrator: Verna Litwack
514.485.9933 office@ucmtl.ca

Director of Religious Education:
Caroline Balderston Parry dre@ucmtl.ca

Church Musician: Sandra Hunt
514.484.5559 sandra.muriel.hunt@gmail.com

Custodian: Helmut Strohmeyer 514.485.9933

Memorial Flowers:
Christine Rourke 514-761-0669
cerourke@mail.com or Maychai Brown
514-487-3236 or maychaib@vl.videotron.ca

Lay Chaplains:
Ann Beer
514.426.1204 ann_beer@hotmail.com
Nicoline Guerrier
450.458.5860 nguerrier@hudson.net

January newsletter submissions

Email submissions to news@ucmtl.ca or place them (typed please) in the Newsletter mailbox at the church. Include your name and coordinates with your article or notice.

Deadline: Wednesday, December 16

UCM Board Members

Executive Committee
President: David Kersulis
514.365.3191 david.kersulis@Videotron.ca
Vice-President: VACANT
Treasurer: Robert (Bob) Edgar
514.767.1283 bedgar4@gmail.com
Secretary: Janine Cobb 514.938.9617
janine.cobb@gmail.com

Membership: Petrina Lee Poy 514.485.5555
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Religious Education: Shawn Dohring
514.461.1388, dohrings@yahoo.com

Social & Environmental Concerns:
Christina Duvander
514.630.7523 cduvander@gmail.com
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514.342.6118 trish_philip@yahoo.ca

Associational Affairs: VACANT

Worship Committee: Kirstin McKeown
514.344.9232 caitlin@openface.ca

Building & Property: Jean Freed
514.483.1058 jfreed@videotron.ca

Senior Wardens:
Phyllis Greggain 514.366.0618
norm.greggain@sympatico.ca
& Sylvia Heuckendorff 514.933.7601

Communications: Carol Cumming Speirs
514.989.1397 carol.speirs@mcgill.ca

Past President (Nominating Committee Chair):
Alison Hall 514.636.8406 ar.hall@sympatico.ca

Congregational Programs: Rosanne Baatz
514.482.6046 rbaatz@qc.aibn.com

In the event of any concern related to sexual harassment, contact the minister or Carol Cumming Spiers (514-989-1397) or Jack Cobb (514-938-9617).