

Unitarian Church of Montreal Église unitarienne de Montréal



Newsletter

June / juin 2009

Worship Calendar

Services start at 10:30 am, unless otherwise noted

June 7

On the Day We Began

Rev. Diane Rollert

Musician: Jean Séguin, Jazz pianist

Please bring donations of non-perishable food for the NDG Food Depot.

June 14

Decision-making for Our Highest Good
— Spiritual discernment from a multi-faith perspective (Aboriginal to Wiccan)

Dr. Nancy C. Reeves with Rev. Diane Rollert

For more information about Nancy Reeves, see page 6.

Flower communion. Please bring a flower to exchange with others.

Everyone is invited after the service for a special social hour to thank all our volunteers from java jivers to Religious Education teachers. Please bring finger foods to share and to express your appreciation.

June 21

Standing at the Edge of Summer

Rev. Diane Rollert

Musician: Louise Halperin

June 28

10:45 Service in the Park.

See p. 5 for details.



President's Message

Welcoming Responsibly

Participating in the Democratic Process

A few Sundays ago, I was outside greeting people when I had a brief exchange with a long-time member about the governance of this church. When I expressed my concern over the fact that we had yet to find a person to fill the position of Vice President for the next session, she remarked, "Everyone loves democracy, but so few are willing to work for it."

I remember that statement each time I think about how difficult it has been for our Nominating Committee to find candidates to fill the positions on the Board. We passed an entire session without a chair for the Building Committee, and it looks like the next session's challenge will be finding a Vice-President. I hope that, by the time you are reading this, a candidate will have been found. Nonetheless, why is it so hard to find candidates for Board positions?

The position of Vice-President is an important one. The VP must assist the President, taking over in case of the latter's absence. He/she is also the "President in Waiting". We have had a few situations in recent years where a candidate filled the position of VP, but only for one year, not going on to become President. In these instances, we owe a debt of gratitude to those who stepped in to fill the void.

Now we are searching for someone who will act as Vice President for one year, and then become President. If a VP cannot be found, we will have no one

June 7 Tour de L'Île advisory:

Please walk or take the Metro!

Many of the streets surrounding the church will be closed for the Montreal Bike Fest from 8:40 a.m. to 13:15 p.m. on June 7. Our block of De Maisonneuve O. will be closed to cars during this time.

to take the position of President when my term is over! Who will then act as your President? Perhaps a previous President could temporarily step in and help out, but is that really the democratic process in action?

Second thoughts about becoming Vice President anyone?

Other announcements:

You may have noticed that the hedges surrounding the building and in the back garden have been trimmed. The issue of people noisily loitering in the back garden at all hours of the night has prompted us to act to reduce the "fortress effect" that the bushes created. We are hoping that good visibility from both Bulmer and Claremont Streets will help to discourage uninvited guests from congregating in the garden.

Upgrades to the sound system were done the week of May 11.

A new programmable digital "sound column" was installed in the Sanctuary to project sound at specific targeted angles throughout the room. The lectern microphone can now be multi-directional, set at a much higher level, without fear of feedback. We also have an MP3 recorder, replacing the outdated audio-cassette recorder. MP3 files recorded on a flash-memory card can be easily copied and archived, and made available as podcasts on our website.

I look forward to seeing you at our June 1st Annual General Meeting. Please attend and be part of our democratic process in action. In making the effort to be there, you are doing your part for democracy. Have a great June!

David Kersulis

President of the Board of Management

Church Office Summer Hours

Monday to Thursday, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Friday 10:00 am to noon

Closed for holidays: Monday, 27 July and will re-open Monday, 17 August

Telephone Messages: The answering machine will be working all summer and will be monitored daily. Call 514 485-9933 leave a message and someone will get back to you.

Emergency: In case of emergency, contact any member of the Executive listed on the last page of the newsletter.

Verna Litwack

Church Administrator
www.ucmtl.ca

Tel: 514-485-9933


Fax: 514-485-7999

Used Stamps to help with Guide Dog Training

The UCM Caring Network is collecting postage stamps again! If you receive mail with unusual (not everyday regular) Canadian or US stamps or stamps from a foreign country, please carefully cut them from the envelope leaving a ¼ inch border around the stamp. Drop these in the gold box located next to the name tag boxes in the Church lobby. The Caring Network will ship these to Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind www.guidedogs.ca <<http://www.guidedogs.ca/>>. Proceeds of stamp sales will provide help for their work (This project is in honour of Muriel Clark and in memory of Jane Hugessen.)

Walking Tour Postponed

The Unitarian historical walking tour of Old Montreal by Charles Eddis, offered on BidNite and scheduled for Sunday May 31, has been postponed until the fall for health reasons.



Memorial Flowers

June 7
Edna and Bill Mills
and Mabel and
William Thomas

June 14
Lydia Howell-Fisher

June 21
Len and Mary Picard

Please contact Christine Rourke, 514-761-0669, if you would like to remember a friend or loved one in this special way.

Entre Nous

Rev. John Marsh to be new minister to Ottawa Unitarians

At a vote taken after a congregational meeting this past Sunday, May 10, members of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa have issued Rev. Marsh a resounding call to ministry, voting 98.5 percent in favour. Rev. Marsh accepted with enthusiasm.

Born in Norwell, Massachusetts, Rev. Marsh obtained a Masters in Divinity from Harvard in 1982; he was ordained the same year. Rev. Marsh's first parish ministry was in Edmonton, where he worked to re-create a sense of worship in the congregation and to reach out to the gay and lesbian community. During his tenure in Edmonton, Rev. Marsh met his wife Alison; they have been married for 22 years. Rev. and Mrs. Marsh and their three children are all Canadian citizens.

Rev. Marsh has served Unitarian Universalist congregations in professional positions since 1976, in various US cities. He is currently an interim minister at First Parish Church in Arlington, Massachusetts. In the wider community, Rev. Marsh has partnered with Faithful Fools Street Ministry and Habitat for Humanity in San Francisco, and was the founding chair on the board of directors of California People of Faith Working to End the Death Penalty.

First Unitarian's Settled Minister Search Committee worked for over a year to call a minister. The First Unitarian congregation thanks the Search Committee--comprising co-chairs Kent Swinburne and Gwen Harman, Alastair Henderson, Sue Williams, Donna Bowen-Willer, Charles Lanktree, Blair Erskine,

and Margot Clarke—for completing their task with thoughtfulness, discernment, and good grace.

John and Alison Marsh expect to move to Ottawa this summer; they will be welcomed with open arms.

Shree Kumar Rai Legally in Canada after Two Years in Sanctuary

Ottawa, April 24 – The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa is pleased to announce that Shree Kumar Rai, a refugee from Nepal who has been in sanctuary since February 27, 2007, has been legally admitted to Canada.

The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa accepted Mr. Rai into sanctuary after a thorough review of his case. Mr. Rai fled to Canada during a civil war in Nepal when his life was in danger. The congregation determined that the immigration system failed to recognize Mr. Rai as a genuine refugee and that he would be in danger if he were forced to return to Nepal.

Mr. Rai has now met all of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's requirements for permanent entry as a skilled worker. He is a skilled sushi chef and has been offered employment at an Ottawa restaurant. He will soon be joined here from Nepal by his wife Dikchhya and teenage son Aditya, whom he has not seen for more than 12 years.

The First Unitarian Congregation would like to thank the Honourable Jason Kenney, the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, and his officials for their help in resolving Mr. Rai's case.

Assistant Custodian Wanted

Assistant Custodian needed to work at UCM weekdays and weekends — with Head Custodian for general maintenance, and alone for various events. Workload may average 5 to 30 hours per month depending on the season. Flexibility and strong back an asset. Please send a CV to office@ucmtl.ca (to the attention of the Personnel Committee) or mail it to UCM (see address on back page)

Understanding Our Church

An up-to-date edition of Understanding Our Church has been posted on our website under the heading "Who We Are". This document comprises By-Laws and Standing Rules of the Unitarian Church of Montreal and is given to each person who signs our Membership Book.

Two members of our Board of Management -- Barbara Jackson and Janine Cobb -- have worked on this over the last few months, locating discrepancies, ferreting out unclear language and eradicating some high-flown philosophical statements. Their goal was to make it readable, coherent and easily understood.

It is now available for you in PDF format. You may want to download it, particularly if yours is an outdated version. If you cannot download from the UCM website, you may request a hard copy from the Church office at office@ucmtl.ca.

The Standing Rules are reviewed every two years, but this is the first major overhaul in a long time. The By-Laws will be scrutinized in similar fashion next year.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Barbara Jackson at bejackson@sympatico.ca (514-488-5877) or Janine Cobb at janine.cobb@gmail.com (514-938-9617).

Activities

SUNDAYS

Exploring the Intangible

Date: June 7

Time: 12:15 pm

Location: Youth Room

Contact: Christine Rourke, 514-761-0669

Subject: In what circumstances has religion done more harm than good?

All are welcome.

TUESDAYS

Seeking the Sacred in Stories

Led by Rev. Diane Rollert

Monthly Brown Bag Lunch Group

Dates: June 9

Time: Noon to 1:00 pm

Location: Garden Room

We meet in the Garden Room on the first lower level of the church.

This month we will read the short story "Vision" by Alistair MacLeod.

For more information, contact the church office. This will be our last meeting until the fall. Bring some food to share for an end of the year celebration.

Carmina Choir

Dates: June 2 and 9

Time: 7:30 pm

Location: Phoenix Hall

Contact: Keith Robinson 514-931-9028 or Brian Brice 514-843-6497

Carmina is looking for voices, particularly male, to join them. No audition. The ability to read music is not necessary. Solo possibilities, if desired. Bring a sense of humour, good will, and a black binder if possible.

Play Group

Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Time: 10:00 am–noon

Location: Nursery

Contact: Melani Litwack, 514-488-9884

We welcome children under five on Tuesdays and Thursdays on a drop-in basis accompanied by a (grand)parent or caregiver. Pack a snack for your child(ren). Coffee is provided. Open to all, whether church members or not. No charge but a donation of \$2/day per family is suggested.

Note: The last play group will be held June 9th and will re-start September 10.

WEDNESDAYS

Grief Workshop

Wednesday June 10, 1:00 p.m.

We all suffer. We all experience loss in this world. Though when it happens, we feel alone, utterly alone. We feel devastated. Sometimes, we feel afraid, sometimes even terrified. We change our view of the world. We don't know if we will ever be the same.

And the truth is, we won't be the same. Grief changes us.

We all experience grief at some point in our lives. It can be a blessed experience, if we give ourselves the time and space to grieve.

Sometimes we need help and that's okay. Grieving alone is not always the answer. When we give ourselves permission to grieve we move into new dimensions, new levels of awareness and spiritual deepening. We re-engage with the world.

If you and yours would like to come together for a sacred time of grieving, using art, spiritual dialogue and meditation and experience your grief as a healing, moving, deepening experience, then please join me for an introductory workshop on Wednesday, June 10, at 1:00 pm.

All are welcome.

Blessings and peace to your day.

Vivianne LaRiviere
Spiritual Arts Practitioner
(www.thesongroom.ca)
450 458-7906

Book Discussion Group

Date: June 17

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: TBD

Contact: Kathy Douglas, 514-488-9608

This is the Book Group's annual Eh-Gee-Em-planning-plus-potluck meeting to decide on next year's books. Newcomers are welcome. All are invited to bring their book suggestions along with a contribution to the supper. Please call Kathy during the week preceding the meeting to confirm details.

Midday Meal with Music

Date: June 17

Times: 10:00 am Scrabble and Bridge; 12:30 pm Lunch; 1:30 pm Music

Contact: Ruth di Giovanni., 514-934-4956

Cost: \$5.00

Note that this is the last Midday Meal until the Fall.

THURSDAYS**Drumming circle**

Date: June 18 (the third Thursday of every month)

Time: 6.30-8.30 pm

Location: Children's Chapel.

Contact: Contact Ann Beer (514-426-1204) or Allen Lobo (514-484-3014)

A group of us meet to drum, share stories, and extend our sense of community. Group drumming has been shown to have great benefits both physically and emotionally, as it allows us to meditate in a simple way that links back to the most fundamental sound of life: the mother's heartbeat. Nourished by many spiritual traditions, Drum circles are forming all over the world as people come together to explore this ancient tradition.

Bring your own drum (any kind) if you have one, and also shakers, rattles and other rhythm instruments. We can usually help with extra drums. No previous drumming experience or musical training is needed.

Members and friends are welcome.

Film and Conversation

with Rev. Diane Rollert and Vivianne LaRivière

Film: *Griefwalker*

Thursday, 4 June, 6:30 pm

A documentary portrait of palliative caregiver Stephen Jenkinson and his work. This screening is made possible by the film's director. Jenkinson's challenging message can seem shockingly direct--that our deaths are not something to be denied or avoided, but 'befriended'. We'll follow the film (70 minutes long) with discussion.

Play Group

See *Tuesdays*.

Note: The last play group will be held June 9th and will re-start September 10.

FRIDAYS**First Friday Potluck**

Friday, June 5th, 6:00 pm in Phoenix Hall

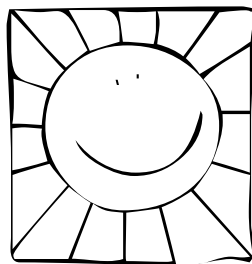
Come join us for an evening of friendly company with an eclectic array of food. After supper, we will be showing the movie "Whale Rider", and there will be space for those who want a friendly game of bridge or scrabble. Hope to see you there!

SATURDAYS**Walking Group**

Date/time: Saturdays, 10:00 am

Contact: Diana Kleins, 514-747-9375 or Krystyna Matula, 514-287-0814

For those who enjoy nature and companionship, join us for walks in and around Montreal at a moderate pace and in a pleasant, informal atmosphere. A stop for refreshments after at a nearby coffee shop to plan the next week's meeting place/walk completes the morning.

**Special Events****Service in the park**

Date: Sunday, June 28

Time: 10:45 am

Location: Westmount Park



Our annual picnic service will once again be held in Westmount Park. There will be someone at the church at 10:30 am to help folks find their way to the site. Please bring your own chairs, blankets, etc. (and a spare for those without if you can manage it). If you wish to stay for picnicking, bring some food for yourself, and some to share if you are so inclined. This is not a formal potluck event! Musical instruments, voices and songbooks are most welcome; feel free to jam after the service. We usually have at least a few folks with frisbees, footballs and such for the sports folks.

Summer safety note: please remember sunhats, sunglasses and sunscreen!

See you there!

Carmina Concert

You are invited to join CARMINA à Paris — Music by Offenbach, Fauré, Massenet, Bizet and popular songs with a French flavour

Saturday, June 13, at 8:00 pm

Suggested donation \$10

Information 514 843-6497

Introducing Special Guest Nancy Reeves, June 14-15

Dr. Nancy C. Reeves, from Victoria, B.C., will be joining us for worship on June 14 and for a workshop on June 15 to speak about decision-making and spiritual discernment drawing upon the wisdom of many faiths. Nancy is a clinical psychologist, psychotherapist, spiritual director, best-selling author, and published poet. She works extensively in the areas of trauma, grief, loss and transformation and spirituality. Nancy is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Victoria and guest lecturer at universities and colleges in Canada and the U.S. She presents workshops and retreats throughout North America, Scotland, England, Ireland, Wales, New Zealand and Australia. Nancy was theme presenter at the week-long UU summer camp, Eliot Seabeck Washington State, and has presented at a number of UU churches and gatherings in the U.S. and Canada. She has published 8 books and over 40 articles in professional journals and general-interest magazines. If you'd like to know more, her website is www.nancyreeves.com

Decision Making from a Multi-Faith Perspective

Monday, June 15, 7-9 pm

Workshop with Dr. Nancy Reeves
Nancy will delve into the subject of decision-making and spiritual discernment from a multi-faith perspective, engaging participants through individual and group activities. Come hear her preach on Sunday, June 14, and then attend the workshop for deeper exploration.

"Building a Sustainable City" speaker event

On Friday, June 19, there will be a panel discussion on sustainability featuring three Montreal personalities:

Dimitri Roussopoulos, founder of the Urban Ecology Center, Richard Bergeron, founder of Projet Montréal, and Pierre Gauthier, professor of Geography, Planning and Environment.

The evening will feature a presentation by each of the three panelists, followed by a question and answer period.

Refreshments will be served.

Time: 6:00 to 8:30 pm

Place: Collège Notre-Dame, 3791 chemin Queen Mary, Montreal, Qc. H3V 1A8

Tickets: \$20 regular admission, \$10 for students and seniors

For more information or tickets, contact Cym Gomery, 514-369-8933



Religious Education

Bravo for NEW Teacher Appreciation Day

We know "It takes a village to raise a child", and so the Religious Education (RE) Committee decided to tell our Unitarian "village" how grateful we are for their support earlier than in the past. This year our Teacher Appreciation Day was held on Mothers' Day Sunday.

We think this will become our annual custom – it's a better date for attendance, and the ceremony during the Time for All Ages was well appreciated, from the chalice lighting written by Sarah Thompson (please see below, it is so good we hope to use it again) to the potted flowers presented to all 35 current volunteers in our RE programme. Each pot that the children carried forward held a Primers-decorated card – a two sided "flower stick" signed by Shawn Dohring, RE Committee chair, and DRE Caroline Balderston Parry, with a fine quote to underscore the "Bravissimo!" that we then sang. In fact, Caroline got so carried away singing she forgot to read out the quote, so here it is:

Since Unitarian Universalists have no creed, we don't try to "give" our children religion. Instead, we help them to grow their own, to question, to wonder. This year they have flourished! Thank you for your open minds and open hearts.

As all sang, "Well done, indeed, and how, WOW!"

Chalice Lighting

by Sarah J. Thompson

A good teacher is like a candle that lights the way for others.

Mothers light up the world with their words and hope.

Mothers and teachers surround us with love and kindness.

Un bon prof est comme une chandelle qui éclaire le chemin pour les autres.

Nos mères illuminent le monde avec leurs mots et leur espoir.

Nos mères et nos profs nous entourent avec leur amour et leur gentillesse.

RE staff evaluations

Thanks to all those who completed an evaluation for our Youth Program Coordinator, Elizabeth Charbonneau, and for Rita Izzi, our RE Assistant. We are now asking for feedback for our Director of Religious Education, Caroline Balderston Parry, completing her first "year" with us. Input will be accepted through June 7th. Please help the RE Committee, as well as the Personnel Committee, with this annual review: Forms are available from the RE Committee Chair, Shawn Dohring, at 514-461-1388 or dohrings@yahoo.com

Spirit Play Conference a fine event!

Not only did 11 more people from our congregation take the Spirit Play training to teach RE through this inspiring program, giving us a total of 15 trained SP Teachers, but there were also many congregants in attendance at the May 1 and 2 conference held here. Seven people joined the 26 other attendees from all over the U.S. and Canada, and a lot of people turned out for the Friday evening song fest with Nick

Page, renowned music leader from the UUA Musicians Network. Pictures and more comments on the conference are available on our church website, and more information about Spirit Play can be found at www.spiritplay.net/ The inspiring keynote given by Nita Penfold on the final afternoon of the conference should be on that website soon -- keep checking!

Meantime, the RE office is compiling a Wish list for Spirit Play equipment we will need - such as 20 small throw rugs, to define each child's work space.

We are also delighted to announce two "Spirit Play Work Bees" to frame the summer, to which all crafty and handy people are invited. Sparrow Alden, talented DRE from Norwich, Vermont, who gave a terrific workshop at the conference called "Spirit Play on a Shoestring", will lead us on Saturday, June 13. Details TBA - please mark your calendars and plan to come join the fun! We will meet again on Saturday, August 29 to try and get all our materials and rooms ready for the fall start to our program. All welcome!

End of the RE "year" celebration, Sunday June 14 after service

Our RE children will have a special Children's Chapel time that day with Caroline, including some singing games, which we hope to share upstairs in Phoenix Hall later, along with finger food for all. Plan to stay and join the festivities to celebrate a fabulous RE year!

Youth Work to Travel

This year the youth raised over \$800. by serving soup and lunches on six Soup Sundays and helping out on BidNite. With leftover funds from last year, we were able to pay for flights to Thunder Bay, so that three youth (Annie McLaughlin, Dean Konstantinos Hirtle Kattou, and Shannon Horan) and one adult (Elizabeth Charbonneau) could attend CanUUdle.

Annie, Dean and Sharon report: "We had a great time meeting and getting to know youth and youth allies from across Canada and even from the U.S. The theme was about remembering what we all learned in Kindergarten, which we explored in workshops, fun games and activities, and youth-led worship services. We also went swimming and participated in the multi-generational lunch and workshops with the adults at the ACM. It was a memorable and transformative experience."

Education about Religious Education

Caroline Balderston Parry, Director of Religious Education (DRE), attended "The Curriculum is the Church" workshop for DREs during the two days before the Canadian Unitarian Council's Annual General Meeting (CUC AGM). She reports that the workshop and AGM were inspiring and that she has many new ideas to work on over the coming year. Please ask her for more details as there is more than what we can publish here! Caroline plans to emphasize how teaching and leading in RE can nourish the spirit of those involved - as well as nurture our young people.

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Key People at the UCM

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Minister Emeritus: Reverend Charles Eddis
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Board President: David Kersulis, 514-365-3191,
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Director of Religious Education: Caroline Balder-
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Lay Chaplains:

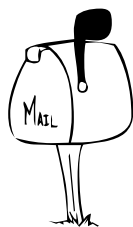
Ann Beer 514-426-120, ann_beer@hotmail.com
Nicoline Guerrier, 450-458-5860, nguerrier@
hudson.net

Summer newsletter submissions

Email your submissions to news@ucmtl.ca
or place them in the mailbox upstairs. Please
include your name, phone number and
email address to your article or notice.

**Deadline: Wednesday, June 17
at 8:00 pm**

Attachments must be in
Word (or plain text), *but we
prefer that you put your ar-
ticle in the body of your email.*
Please note that we can't open
WordPerfect files or edit PDFs.



CARING NETWORK

The coordinator for June is Kim Bartlett, Home 514 731-
2207, Work 514 398-4462, kim.bartlett@mcgill.ca

Members of Le Groupe francophone can contact Francine
Desmarais at 514-750-0709 or fdesma@gmail.com

If you know of someone in our UU community who needs
help, please get in touch. We have over 20 people registered
as carers—individuals happy to make hospital or home vis-
its, make telephone check-up calls, prepare and/or deliver
food, or act as chauffeur. If there are other needs, we will do
our best to satisfy them.

Just now, we are short of drivers. If you have a car and are
willing to help out, please give us a call.

UCM Board Members

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