

Ministerial Musings



Well, it happened. Donald J. Trump was sworn in as the President of the United States on Friday, January 20. As close as I could tell, the sun rose on January 21st.

In his final press conference Barack Obama closed by saying “We will be okay,” exhibiting some faith in the resiliency of his country and even more faith in the people of that nation.

I have no doubt that the next few years will be challenging, full of face-palming moments and possibly even worse. But as most of you know by now I am an optimist by nature.

That philosophy teaches me that the worst you can envision does not often come to pass, (sadly neither does the best). In fact, unfortunate turns of events often bring out the best in people. A couple of weeks ago Erica and I went to see Henry Rollins speaking. He started as a Punk musician, but is now a writer and raconteur. Rollins is also a dedicated liberal. In this presentation he called people to mobilize and promised to go back to the US and mobilize his fellow musicians. He sees 2017 as a positive year of activism. Here is a clip recorded elsewhere on his tour with the section that caught my eye.

<https://youtube/lohBRft4Fok>

As I said in my January 22nd sermon, the inauguration of Mr. Trump should sound as a call to action to us all. In all nations of the land, we must be vigilant, we must be resistant and we need to find ways to support the millions of Americans who will be actively opposing the new administration’s policies if they threaten to demean, disempower and threaten the middle and lower class citizens, the immigrants, or the other nations of the world.

In all our Edmonton schools there are active anti-bullying programs in place to teach our children not to stand for it. Can we do any less than what we ask of our children?

In the city there is Jesse Lipscombe’s #makeitawkward campaign asking us to call out racism where we find it and have those awkward conversations.

When I, the optimist, look at the historical record, I see periods of great darkness and tragedy, but I also see that those periods give rise to some of the greatest advances in our social and technological development. Are we entering one of those shameful periods? Perhaps, but maybe just maybe it will inspire us to stand up for what we believe is right, to refuse to be bullied, to step in and rescue others from that treatment.

See you in church,

Brian

Religion on Tap

Join us for our informal drop-in social and theological discussion evening this February on **Wednesday the 15th**. Brian Kiely will host the gathering and start a conversation. Everyone is welcome. We meet at Metro Billiards, 103 Avenue and 106 Street. We meet at 7:00 pm but some people have notices that there are half price apples and beer specials until 7:00 so they have been getting there early.



Board Update

Your UCE Board met on January 11, 2017. The Canadian Unitarian Council has requested that all congregations participate in Sharing Our Faith, a national fundraising project. Congregations can apply for grants for growth initiatives from the Sharing Our Faith fund. UCE will be allocating unidentified contributions from two Sundays – January 29 and February 5 – to the Sharing Our Faith fund. All members are welcome to attend UCE board meetings as an observer. If you wish to speak on a particular topic, kindly contact President Mike Keast one week prior to the meeting. The next board meeting will be February 8, 2017 at 7:15 p.m.

Gloria Krenbrenk, Secretary

#makeitawkward



Over 30 people turned out to hear Jesse (and Julia) Lipscombe founders of the **#makeitawkward** anti-racism campaign in YEG.

A couple of things they said:

How to do get the conversation moving? Ask someone saying something racist (sexist etc.), "Why did you say that?" And just keep asking why. When you hear something wrong, own it. "What you said to that person makes me uncomfortable."

Or, when you see someone being verbally attacked or harassed, stand with the victim. Strike up a conversation with

them. Show them that you see them as real people and ignore the bully.

Chorealis Cabaret

Saturday, February 25

Featuring Chorealis, Beth Portman and All (most) Jazz

Doors at 7 pm, show at 7:30 pm

Tickets \$15 - available after service on Sundays or phone the Church Office at 780-454-8073 or email chadmin@uce.ca.



A Wizard of a Dinner



Our congregation is known for its wacky and wonderful annual dinners, and this year will be no exception. Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 8 for our Fellowship Dinner. This year's theme: The Wizard of Oz. Yes, there will be costumes, and even a yellow brick road. Music will be from the era of the famous movie, which came out in 1939 -- so, not just Judy Garland but also Glenn Miller and Billie Holliday. Lauren Kay will again be our top organizer, and Rev. Brian Kiely our chef.

Always at this dinner we present the W.H. Alexander Award to an unsung church volunteer. A UCE member who is active in the wider community will receive the Charles Potter Award for Community Engagement. Start thinking of candidates for these two honours.

Honour Our UCE Members

Two annual awards will be presented at the fellowship dinner on Saturday April 8:

- The W.H. Alexander Award honours a person or persons for extraordinary services provided to benefit the church community.
- The Charles Potter Award for Community Engagement honours a member of our congregation who has made an outstanding volunteer contribution to communities outside our church, and whose work there shows exceptional commitment to UU principles and values.

Submit your nominations for these awards by March 5 to board secretary Gloria Krenbrenk by email – gkrenbrenk@gmail.com – or in writing through the church office. The board will choose the winners at its March meeting.

Rules:

- Nominations must be made in writing by UCE members and must include reasons for nominating the person or persons.
- Members of the board may not submit nominations.
- People who have been staff members or members of the board within the preceding year are not eligible to receive the award.
- Past staff members and members of the board are eligible if the services for which they are recommended were not performed during the period when they held these special positions.
- There is no limit on the number of times a person may be nominated for, or win, the award.



Light the Way!

It's canvass time again and this year's theme is *Light the way; funding the world that you want to see*. Each time you donate to UCE you are funding the type of community that you want to see in the world. You are helping to maintain our church as a beacon of fairness, equality, acceptance, and refuge in a world where these values are at risk of being rolled back.

I'm writing this on inauguration day and on social media there is much wailing and gnashing of teeth. People are concerned that there will be many changes ahead that will cut back programs and rights that have taken years to establish. The meme "set your clocks back 300 years" is funny in a way but not something we really want to contemplate. The best thing we can do in challenging times is to set a positive example. We can do that by putting our money to work at funding organizations that will represent our principles to the world. Our church can be one of those beacons that can light the way and show others that fairness and equality live here. For canvass this year I would like you to help Light the Way. Each year we ask our members to indicate their financial support of the church by a pledge. Pledges are needed by the end of March and all church members should complete a pledge form each year (even if you are using ongoing donations). There will be more canvass details at church (especially in March). I have also updated the canvass web site at www.yxd.ca/2017 where you can find notes on a number of canvass topics.

Ready to pledge? Here is a link to the online [pledge form](#) at Wufoo.

As always, I invite you to call me to discuss your pledge. Call my cell phone at 780-918-3288 or email me at andrew@misc.ca.

Sharing Our Faith

Once a year, Canada's 46 UU congregations are asked to remember that they are part of a national family, and to show their support for that family. We do so by donating money to the Sharing Our Faith Fund, one of two national funds that give grants to UU congregations.

The board of the Unitarian Church of Edmonton has voted this year to give the cash from two Sunday collections to Sharing Our Faith. We have in years past done a Sharing collection on one Sunday. This year, we commit our unidentified donations from Jan. 29 and Feb. 5 to our fellow congregations.

Last year, Sharing grants totalling \$16,000 went out to five congregations:

- ⊕ Toronto First congregation, a big church, got support for a new Community Engagement minister;
- ⊕ Salt Spring Island UUs, a tiny congregation, got support for a children's program;
- ⊕ The Regina fellowship got to share Saskatoon's wonderful minister, Rev. Karen Fraser Gitlitz;
- ⊕ Two small UU groups, in Comox Valley and Kamloops, got money to help pay for part-time ministers. Both are friends of this congregation – Rev. Meg Roberts works with Comox Valley UUs; Rev. Helen McFadyen works in Kamloops.

One year, our own UCE could apply for a grant. In the meantime, let's support our national family. Please give generously at church on Jan. 29 and Feb. 5.

Susan Ruttan, board member, Canadian Unitarian Council

Lay Chaplaincy Training



The Lay Chaplaincy program allows congregations to empower and license individuals to perform weddings, memorials and other rites of passage on behalf of the congregation, usually for non-members. Lay Chaplains are paid for these services on a per event basis. A Lay Chaplain works closely with the minister and is required to attend a weekend training session (Friday evening through Sunday morning). Westwood will be hosting such a session on March 10-12. The cost is \$95. For some extensive detail on the program and the training event please visit:

<http://cuc.ca/event/designing-leading-rites-passage-basic-training-lay-chaplains-2>

Anyone can take the training. Afterwards you are welcome to apply to the Board for a six year appointment as our Lay Chaplain. At present that post is vacant. Former congregational Lay Chaplains include Lance Beswick, Marge Roche, Ruth Patrick, Stella Clarke, and a host of others.

If you would like to know more about this enriching work, please contact Brian Kiely or any of the retired Lay Chaplains above.

Rev. Brian Kiely

♥Heart to Heart♥

♥ Some church members visited with our dear friend Mary Ayres who is living at Miller Crossing Senior's Care Centre at 14251- 50 Street NW, T5A 5J4 (If you would like to send her a card.) The phone numbers is 780-478-9212, and ask for the third floor. The care people will bring Mary to the phone. She is alert, still has that great smile – we had a lovely visit!



♥Longtime member Inge Hess is somewhat housebound these days and would welcome messages, calls and even visits. (780-434-8187)

Religious Exploration Events



Camp fyrefly with MSQUARED2 will be presenting their community's documentary film at the **UCE** at 7:00 pm on February 10th. Donations are accepted in lieu of admission, all proceeds to support Camp fyrefly. "...an honest, amusing and at times heartbreaking tale of local LGBTQ Youth and allies who have the courage, heart and wisdom to share their personal journeys..." There will be a discussion panel afterwards. This event is brought to you by the UCE Youth Group.

Event for All Ages

Please join the fun on February 11th at 2 PM in Keeler Hall for a Valentine's Day party for all. There will be crafts, games and snacks. If you can help with a snack or a craft, please contact Lauren Kay at ucekids@uce.cd.

Save the Date for CanUUdle XVII!

CanUUdle XVII is being hosted by the Unitarian Church of Edmonton on the May 2017 long weekend: May 19-22, 2017. The CanUUdle national youth conference is at the heart of our national UU youth community, building friendships and developing leadership skills for our UU world. Last year over 80 youth and advisors participated in Vancouver. Save the date! See you in Edmonton!

Save the Date for Justice Con 2017!

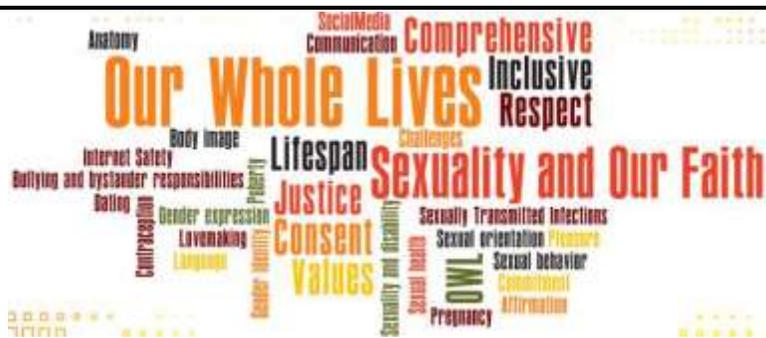
A young adult con for all ages!

- **When?** May 19 – 22, 2017
- **Where?** Westwood Unitarian Congregation – Edmonton, Alberta
- **Who?** Young adults (18-35) and people of all ages who are young at heart. Limit of 45 people.
- **What?** A “Con-style gathering” – where everyone participates in leadership, and everyone helps to create beloved community through worship, workshops, cooking and activities.
- **More Info:** <http://cuc.ca/save-date-justice-con-2017>

Adult Religious Exploration

OWL Workshops: February 6th and 20th at 6:30 pm

For more information or to register, please contact Lauren Kay at ucekids@uce.ca Childcare is available.



Labyrinth Friday



You are invited to walk our UCE Labyrinth Friday, February 3rd, 2017, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 PM. Come at a time that suits you. This ancient path of pilgrimage is rich with meaning and discovery and can be seen as a metaphor for life. There are three stages to the path:

- Moving Inward-Releasing
- Centering-Receiving
- Moving Outward-Returning

Come share a quiet evening at the Church.

UCE AND ART THERAPY

Starting February, 2017 art therapy services for adults will be offered at UCE by Karen Stevenson, practicum student in St. Stephen's College Art Therapy Program. Karen will offer one-to-one art therapy counselling sessions as well as facilitate a series of Open Studio workshops entitled *From the HeArt*.

Creative self-care, life journey, issues of aging, addiction recover and gender identity support are her areas of interest. Sunday, January 29th after the service, Karen will offer an information session on art and expressive arts therapy. All are welcome to come and learn more about what she offers.

BIO: Karen Stevenson is a member of UCE, an educator, musician and currently completing her training as an Art Therapist at St. Stephen's College. In the past she trained with the Music for Transition and Healing Program (MTHP) to offer bedside music and was an Artist on the Ward at the U of A Hospital in the early years of that program.

Returning to her first love - the arts and its creative potential, she currently works with senior adults and children/youth in her practicum work. Since 2014 she has trained as an Expressive Arts practitioner with Markus Alexander of World Arts and last April completed Expressive Arts and Trauma through the European Graduate School - Malta. She uses a creative arts approach blending visual art, writing, music, and movement and has explored digital storytelling to enhance healing.

Call or text 780.299.3676 for more information or email sustainingwonder@gmail.com



Sixth Annual Interfaith Works Project



Habitat for Humanity in conjunction with the Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative is inviting all faith groups to participate at all Habitat build sites and the ReStores. This volunteer event begins February 23rd and continues until April 27th. No experience is necessary and Habitat for Humanity provides all tools, safety equipment, training and lunch.

Volunteers must be 16 or older (volunteers who are 16 to 17 years old must be accompanied by participating parent/legal guardian). Hardhats and steel toe boots are required and can be borrowed. Audrey Brooks is once again coordinating the UCE's volunteer group. If you would like to register, please contact Audrey at audbrook@telusplanet.net.

UCE Walking Group Schedule

Walkers carpool from church, leaving at 10 am, or meet at the walk site at 10.20 am. There are often changes to the schedule so if you are not on the email list please call Sheila, 780-454-7581 the day before to confirm the walk.

February 3	Terwillegar Park
February 10	Hyatt & Bissell Centres Downtown
February 17	St Albert
February 24	Snowshoeing, Strathcona Wilderness Centre



Queen Mary Park Association Card

Members of the Unitarian Church of Edmonton are eligible to take advantage of this card and participate in the Queen Mary Park Community League events.

What's Happening at Westwood?

- Monthly Mindfulness Meditation Drop in for silent and guided meditation, no experience necessary. 4th Saturday 10:00 AM to noon.
- Sacred Circle Dances: A relaxing evening of movement and music. 2nd Friday 7:00-9:00 PM.
- Free Thinker's Book Club: Share your thoughts on popular atheist, humanist and free thinker books. Last Wednesday 7:00-8:30 PM.
- Social Justice Film night Enjoy a thoughtful movie followed by stimulating discussion. First Friday of Month 7:00 PM. This month's film on February 3rd is "Struggle to Survive"; the producer Taro Hashimoto will be in attendance and a discussion will follow the showing.



Events from the CUC

2017 CUC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: Information for Presidents, Leaders and Delegates

Where: [First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto](#), 175 St Clair Avenue West, Toronto and online via Zoom platform

When: May 13, 2017. 11:30 am – 5:30 pm EDT

The Canadian Unitarian Council's 2017 Annual General Meeting (AGM) marks the first time that delegates from all over the country will participate and vote on-line. At the 2016 AGM, the CUC successfully piloted an online voting system that allowed delegates to participate and vote online, and a similar system will be used at AGM 2017 on May 13th.

Select your delegates early. Information on delegate selection is [here](#).

Register your duly approved 2017 delegates [here](#) by April 1st, 2017. Congregations participating remotely will also need to select a board-approved Credentials Officer who will be responsible for confirming the delegates present on the day of the AGM.

Be a member in good standing with the CUC: i) the Annual Program Contribution (APC) shall not be in arrears; ii) your congregation has held its Annual General Meeting within the last year; and iii) there is a governance structure in place

[Read More...](#) (Online Participation and Voting Orientation Sessions, Planning for Online Participation, In-Person Participation and Voting)

Around Our Church

- Sermons: On the YouTube website, <http://www.youtube.com/EdmUnitarian> Need help: Contact Bill Lee billlee@ualberta.net or 780-435-7477
- Brunch: Going for brunch after church is a UCE tradition. Want to join? Contact Marge Roche or Jennifer Hinchcliffe at church
- Young Adults: If you're 15-25ish, unmarried and childless, check out our Facebook group, Edmonton UU "junior" Young Adults
- Recycling: We don't have recycling pickup at the church, so we need help with taking blue bags home for home collection or to the Recycle Centre. The bags are in the kitchen and/or social hall
- Bissell Centre: All items donated to our church green box in the foyer go to the Bissell Centre Thrift Shoppe on 88St & 118 Ave. There they are sorted, some going to the store, some to various other programs including the Community Closet at 105Ave & 96St where they are dispensed for free. Earnings from the Thrift Shoppe support the Community Closet. Also accepted is all bedding and linen with the exception of cushions and pillows, small household items, CD's and videos but no books or tapes.
For further information contact Barbara Forbes 780 439 4553 or Rosemary Falconer 780 472 9287.
- Pop Cans: We raise money from returnable bottles, tetra packs etc. donated by members. Drop your contribution in the second storage room (the single door) in Keeler Hall.
- Food: If you use our kitchen, clean it up afterward and don't leave any food behind. Public Health Regulations prohibit the storing of perishable food for more than one day
- Security: If your committee or groups are meeting after Church hours, please make sure all the exit doors are locked before setting the alarm and leaving. The exits that need to be checked are Keeler Hall and the side door (on the same as the main doors, by the picnic table).

Sunday Volunteer Schedule

Date	Membership Desk	Greeter	Usher	Service Leader	Sound Technician	Piano	Coffee
February 5 th	Kathy Stanley	Jolien Pauw	Art Breier	Chorealis	Marg Booker	Chorealis	John Turvey
February 12 th	Jolien Pauw	Lilas Lysne	Marg Roche	Audrey Brooks	Bill Lee	Karen Mills	Clair Horne
February 19 th	David Rae, Will Adair	Kathy Stanley	Rosemary Falconer		Shiraz Kay	Gordon Ritchie	Clair Horne
February 26 th	Michelle VanDerMolen	Wendy Smith	Barbara Forbes		Bill Lee	Karen Mills	Clair Horne

Minister's Office Hours

Brian is usually in the office Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 until 2:30. Sometimes community meetings and visits cause him to be away. People dropping by are most welcome, but it's always best to call ahead and check to make sure he is there.

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Church Office: Janet Polkovsky chadmin@uce.ca	780-454-8073
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Canvas: Andrew Mills andrew@misc.ca	780-432-0826
Property Management: Mike Keast	780-471-0872
Social Justice Committee: Jeff Bisanz	780-435-8209
Church Services Committee: Julius Buski	780-973-6820
Membership Committee: Michelle Van Der Molen	780-289-7576