

THE NOR'WESTER

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of Northwest Toronto

Issue #9

2008  2009

March 2009



March 1st @ 10:30 a.m.

“Comparative Religions—Part I”

Dr. John Mayer

March will be coming in like a lion for us as we enthusiastically welcome back John Mayer! John will be with us for the first two Sundays in March. His two part series on Comparative Religions will compare many different faiths. He will talk to us about religions of the East—Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, etc and religions of the Middle East, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the Bahai faith.

Having John Mayer join us for our Thanksgiving service has become a tradition at Northwest. It is wonderful to have him present to us in March. As many of you know, John is enjoying his retirement from Brock University where he worked as a philosophy professor. He keeps himself busy as The Unitarian Congregation of Niagara's Lay Chaplain, a Hospice Niagara volunteer, and a member of Fenwick Lions Club. His 8 grandchildren also help keep him on his toes!

March 8th @ 10:30 a.m.

“Comparative Religions—Part II”

Dr. John Mayer

John will be sharing the second part of his series on Comparative Religions with us.

Spring Forward!

Don't forget to move your clocks ahead 1 hour.



March 15th @ 10:30 a.m.

“Science & Religion: Opposites or Companions”

Betty Trott

Betty's talk will consider some work done by a philosopher of nature, Charles De Koninck (Laval, 1934-1965). De Koninck's arguments with biologists and his argument demonstrating the close bond between science and religion formed the major part of his book, *The Hollow Universe*. What he had to say is still relevant today.

Betty continues as a Professor at Ryerson University and is now teaching in the graduate program of Communication and Culture Studies, a joint program run by York University and Ryerson. She is

published in philosophy, esthetics, education, design, and metaphysics. She is a performer, choreographer and director for theatre productions at the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto.

March 22nd @ 10:30 a.m.

“Nature in a Box”

Rob Laidlaw

Rob will look at some of the issues surrounding the keeping of wildlife in captivity, how zoos represent our often one-sided relationship with animals and why we should respect and protect all animals.

Rob Laidlaw has spent the past 28 years campaigning to protect wild animals in captivity and in the wild. His work has taken him from northern Canada to tropical Asia and includes more than 1000 visits to zoos around the world. A Chartered and avid outdoorsman, he is founder of the wildlife protection organization Zoocheck Canada.



CATERED LUNCH—Following the service
All welcome!

March 29th @ 10:30 a.m.

“Living In Spirit”

Harold Wright

Harold Wright is co-leader of a "Living in Spirit" group at First Unitarian; this group is one of many small groups fostered by the Lifespan Religious Education Program. "Living in Spirit" groups provide a comfortable environment in which participants can engage in reflective thought and response based on various spiritual and practical readings presented by the group leaders. Comments from participants in Living in Spirit sessions reveal how much these experiences have increased personal spiritual development and how a sense of identity with the small group has often transferred to a feeling of solidarity with the larger congregation. Come join us as Harold leads our congregation through a sample session of "Living in Spirit".

A Unitarian Profile

Submitted by Melanie Walters

Christopher Reeve was born in New York City on September 25, 1952. He is best known for playing Superman and his alter-ego Clark Kent in the Superman series of movies. On May 27, 1995, Reeve sustained a broken neck in a horseback riding accident that left him a paraplegic. After his accident he continued to act and direct, and he became an activist with spinal cord injuries and for stem-cell research.

Reeve and his wife Dana became Unitarian Universalists in 2002. When asked why he chose this religion at that stage in his life he answered: "It gives me a moral compass. I often refer to Abe Lincoln, who said, "When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. And that is my religion." I think we all have a little voice inside us that will guide us. It may be God, I don't know. But I think if we shut out all the noise and clutter from our lives and listen to that voice, it will tell us the right thing to do. The Unitarian believes that God is good, and believes that God believes that man is good. Inherently. The Unitarian God is not a God of vengeance. And that is something I can appreciate." He and his wife Dana attended the Unitarian Church of Westport, Connecticut.

Reeve passed away on October 10, 2004 at age 52 from heart failure after being given an antibiotic for treatment of sepsis. His wife Dana passed away on March 6, 2006 at age 44 from lung cancer. Reeve is survived by his 3 children.

"Censorship & Personal Responsibility"

For anyone interested in reading a copy of the talk on "Censorship & Personal Responsibility" given by Tina Hahn at the February 1st Sunday Service, there is one available in the library at the Fellowship.

ACROSS THE DENOMINATION Upcoming Dates

CUC Annual Conference & Meeting

May 15—18, 2009
Lakehead University
Thunder Bay, Ontario

A Unitarian Odyssey to Mystic Turkey

April 19—May 4, 2009
The Neighbourhood Unitarian Universalist
Congregation is hosting this trip; it is an
exploration of many of the sites of historical
and spiritual significance. For more
information visit: <http://www.nuuc.ca>



The Ninth Inga Jarrett Memorial Concert
Saturday March 28, 2009 7:30 p.m.

Don Heights Unitarian Congregation presents
Classics for piano by
Debussy and Chopin
Arias by
Puccini

Leading 20th Century Georgian composers
Azarashvili and Taktakishvili

Flute, Cello and Piano Sonata by
Jean-Michel Damase

And the premier of
"The Blackening Landscape"
A song cycle by **Mark Richards**

Jubilee United Church, 40 Underhill Dr.
(Lawrence/DVP)
Tickets: \$20 (\$10 students)
Tel: 416-444-8839

Give it a Moment's Thought . . .

*It is not how much you do, but how
much love you put in the doing.*



Around the House



CAMEO

Wednesday March 11th
11:30 a.m.

Speaker—Lana
Youth Without Shelter

Youth Without Shelter is an emergency residence and referral agency serving youth. Join us to learn about YWS and hear the stories behind the statistics. Find out ways we can help this worthwhile organization. Please bring \$5.00 for lunch. Please sign up on the clip board in the kitchen or RSVP to Grace by March 9th (416-255-3257).

CALLING ALL BOOKIES!

The date of the next book club has been changed again to **March 8th**. Our book will be *What is America?* by Ronald Wright. The library has it on a waiting list, or on the 7 day shelf. Our moderator will be Marilyn Harris.

HOT MAMA!

Merle spent 2 weeks in Florida visiting her son and daughter-in-law and is now back sporting a fabulous tan.

THINK PINK DANCE

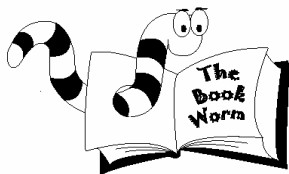
Pink popcorn, pink lemonade, pink rice crispy squares, pink roses, pink apparel. Music by DJ Melanie and her Dad, Orlando. Dance lessons by Daphne, Melanie's mom. Pink boutique and silent auction organized by Arlene Kelland. \$325

was raised for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

A Note from the Sunday Services & Social Action Committees

The Sunday Service Committee and the Social Action Committee had a meeting and as a result of feedback from the questionnaires, and our own ideas, we came up with some suggestions. We want to be more specifically Unitarian in words and actions. We want to have a Unitarian reading at all Sunday services and participate more fully in social action, which is also more Unitarian. We took these ideas to the Board meeting and these ideas were approved.

1. We should have a reading (probably from the back of our hymnal but not necessarily) related to the topic the speaker is presenting. It should be Unitarian, related to at least one of our principles, or to our history.
2. The congregation should have the opportunity to follow up on the speaker's ideas, if social action is indicated. For instance as a result of hearing the speaker from "Out of the Cold", we will now collect clothing. We should ask the speaker whether they would suggest that we write to someone in government and if so give us the name. The Social Action Committee will have stamps and envelopes available for those who wish to write. We will ask the speaker if any other action should be taken. We will ask the speaker if they'd like to put out some literature which could have suggestions about where donations might be sent.



**"All God's Children
Need Travelling Shoes"**
by Maya Angelou

All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes tells of Maya Angelou's time spent in Ghana, travelling with a group of fellow African Americans. The interaction between the African Americans and the Ghanians shows an interesting contrast in cultures, some-

times subtle, sometimes not so subtle. Exemplified are manners and interactions, impeccable on both sides, with a spotlight on Ghanaian hospitality. At one point we meet Malcolm X (a one time Muslim) who makes efforts at friendship with Mohammed Ali (a practising Muslim) in a somewhat cool encounter. Eventually Maya finds temporary employment as an actor and writer but soon becomes homesick for the U.S. and returns home. This book is a fast moving and exhilarating experience.

Reviewed by Merle Charlton