

# THE NOR'WESTER

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of Northwest Toronto

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April 5th @ 10:30 a.m.

The Stage Committee of the Arts & Letters Club  
presents the reading of a one act play

## THE TIN WHISTLE

By Lucy Brennan

### THE TIN WHISTLE

The homeless are always with us. Walk down any street, in any city, and they are there. This story is wound around four such people.

Kay Cook was a member of the cast when this reading was presented at the Arts & Letters Club on January 30th. It was her suggestion to “take it on the road”. The four cast members, the director and the playwright, all members of the Arts & Letters Club, look forward to their performance at Northwest.

April 12th @ 10:30 a.m. ~ **EASTER**  
“Put on Your Playground Face”  
Tracey Szarka



New mothers often observe the new mothers around them and imagine that these women have it all together and are comfortable and confident in their new roles, while feeling like they are coming apart at the seams. They feel very lonely unless or until they are able to share how they are feeling. Tracey will discuss the importance of sharing—how sharing our experiences and how they make us feel can help us to heal. By doing so, we also give others permission to share their experiences so they too may begin to heal. Tracey will broaden the theme to demonstrate how many people wear the “playground face” in many arenas of life.

Tracey will relate her talk to the Unitarian’s First Principle, “affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every one person” - including one’s self.

Tracey first became a Unitarian at the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton in 1997 after adopting a cat from one of the members. Tracey, her husband Mike and their daughter now live in Oshawa and are members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Durham, where Tracey is winding down her term as a lay chaplain.

April 19th @ 10:30 a.m.

“Municipal Election Campaigns”

Robert MacDermid

Does it matter who funds election campaigns? This talk will show how municipal election campaigns in the Greater Toronto Area rely on corporate and development industry funding and how that affects political outcomes, representation and even influences the shape of the cities we live in.

Robert MacDermid is a professor of Politics at York University and teaches and writes about Canadian politics and elections.

April 26th @ 10:30 a.m.

SHARING OUR FAITH SUNDAY

“Memories, Hopes and Conversations: A Dialogue About Our National Identity”

Co-presenters—Kay Cook & Judy Magney

Once a year, it is hoped that all Canadian Unitarian congregations will unite in presenting this service as a tangible way of showing support to each other. The collection on this Sunday will go directly back to congregations to fund growth and sustainability initiatives.

This year’s service is related to the theme of Identity, in keeping with the conversation about our National Identity which was recently launched by the CUC Board. The service was conceived by Rev. Debra Faulk, and is titled after a book on *Appreciative Inquiry* by Mark Lau Branson.

We hope you find the service meaningful and thought-provoking as we engage in conversation that delves into the roots of who we are, and together map out our possibilities.



**CATERED LUNCH—Following the service**  
*All welcome!*

*Give it a Moment's Thought . . .*

*The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.*  
~ Walt Disney

## ACROSS THE DENOMINATION

Canadian Unitarians have special reasons to celebrate Barack Obama's inauguration as President of the United States. Although many people of faith marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Selma, Alabama in 1965, there were more Unitarians involved than any other religion outside the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. And a surprising number of those Unitarians either hailed from Canada or subsequently went on to make Canada their home.

Among the Canadians who were there are Arthur Hughes of Vancouver, Reverends Felix Lion (emeritus Victoria First Unitarian) and J. McRee Elrod of Victoria, Rev. Fred Cappuccino of Ottawa, and Rev. John Hanly Morgan (then minister at Toronto First Unitarian) of Toronto. "A carload went from First Congregation in Toronto," said Jeannette Morgan, the minister's wife.

Late in 2008 and early in 2009, many of us were distressed by the thought of hostilities in Gaza. Using the Peace resolutions as a guide, a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, urging governmental support of a ceasefire, was drafted. One resolution, passed in 2004 and revised in 2007 states, "Therefore be it resolved that the overarching goals of CUC policy respecting peace and global security be to prevent wars and violent conflict, and to promote respect for international law and the use of dialogue, negotiation and compromise as the principal tools for resolving conflict." It is resolutions such as these, developed by various monitoring groups and then discussed and approved by delegates at our Annual Conferences and Meetings, that give our Board President's the authority to speak on behalf of Canadian Unitarians.

When news reports of Pope Benedict's Christmas Address suggested that he ranked homosexuality as a greater risk than the destruction of the world's rain forests, the Sexual and Gender Diversity Monitoring Group determined that it was appropriate to ask for clarification and to assert another religious perspective. A letter, to the Holy See, sent from the CUC, with President Jean Pfleiderer's signature, stated the suggested interpretation was not consistent with the teaching of Jesus and other Christian leaders, and invited a corrected interpretation. "That two people love, whether they be man and man, woman and man, or woman and woman, offers more to the

world than those who condemn love" the letter stated.

An unemployed truck driver seething over liberalism told police he opened fire in a church last year because it harbored gays and multiracial families and he hoped others would follow his example.

Prosecutors opened their case file Thursday on Jim David Adkisson, 58, who pleaded guilty a month ago to killing two people and wounding six others at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church in Knoxville. The file includes interviews with investigators and a suicide note Adkisson left in his car.

Now serving a life sentence, Adkisson told police during an hour-long interrogation three hours after the July 27 shooting that he was unemployed, depressed and ready to take his anger out on what he called "an ultra-liberal" church.

Adkisson walked into the church, pulled a sawed-off shotgun from a guitar case and fired into a congregation of about 230 people watching a children's musical performance. Adkisson left a four-page suicide note in his SUV in the church parking lot. In it, he described the attack as "a hate crime," "a political protest" and "a symbolic killing."

He complained in his suicide note and later in his interview with police that he was always being laid off and his prospects were growing slim as he got older. Again, he blamed liberals and Democrats.

He entered the church with 50 shotgun cartridges. He told police he planned to kill every adult in the sanctuary, but would spare the children because they also were "victims."

"I regret that I have but one life to give for my country," said Adkisson, an Air Force veteran. "I hope I start a movement."

Nationally, there have been several announcements regarding Professional Ministry. The CUC supports these, and other religious professionals. Ministerial Transitions of note are:

**Resignations-** Rev. Allison Barrett, Hamilton, effective Dec. 31 '08; Rev. Jane Bramadat, Victoria, effective June; Rev. Meg Roberts, Calgary, effective June.

**Beginning Ministry-** Rev. Julie Denny-Hughes (Consulting Ministry), Halifax; Rev. Karen Frazer-Gitlitz, Nanaimo; Rev. Marcel Duhamel (Interim), Ottawa; Anne Barker, Westwood (Anne will be ordained by the congregation in April!)

**Congregations in Search** – several congregations are at various stages of the Ministerial Search process, they are: London, Durham and Ottawa First.

The Annual Conference and Meeting will be held on the campus of Lakehead University. The Keynote speaker will be **Rev. Chris Buice** of Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. Rev. Buice and his congregation have shown their determination to live out the UU values of respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, after the tragic deaths and injuries in the Knoxville church in July of 2008.

Registration forms for the ACM will be available on-line and at your congregation in early March. Check [www.cuc.ca/conference/2009](http://www.cuc.ca/conference/2009) for updates.

### 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>

## **BREAKING NEWS!**

### **NORTHWEST LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE**

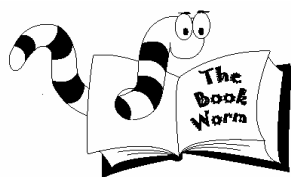
Melanie Walters reveals her behind the scene work for the last 3 months at [www.ufnwt.com](http://www.ufnwt.com). The life of Northwest Fellowship has leaped off the page!

The Unitarian Fellowship's new website, developed by Melanie Walters, in consultation with Aleisha Ting, is bright, dynamic and interactive.

The website's new features include:

- Newsletter
- Classifieds
- Recipe page
- Welcoming Congregation page
- Social Action page

The Unitarian Fellowship of Northwest Toronto invites the public to join them for the launch of their new website on Sunday, March 29th at 12:00 p.m.



#### **“Dreams from My Father” by Barak Obama**

In this lyrical, unsentimental, and compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American. It begins in New York, where Barak Obama learns that his father—a figure he knows more as a myth than as a man—has been killed in a car accident. This sudden death inspires an emotional odyssey—first to a small

town in Kansas, from which he retraces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii, and then to Kenya, where he meets the African side of his family, confronts the bitter truth of his father's life, and at last reconciles his divided inheritance.—from the book jacket

The way Obama writes is like watching a fascinating movie. You are there experiencing what he experienced; you are inside his head, sharing his thoughts. He is a true leader, inspiring people to do their best.

# Around the House



It's wonderful to see people back at The Fellowship who haven't been there for awhile. It was especially heart warming to see Dee and Deb, Dee having made it through her first round of chemotherapy and looking great.

## **CALLING ALL BOOKIES**

The Book Club will be meeting on April 19th to discuss *Moby Dick*. Moderator will be Claire. All are welcome!

## **CAMEO**

Join us at 11:30 a.m. on **Wednesday, April 8th** for a yummy spring lunch and the chance for a good chat! Please bring \$5.00 for lunch. Please sign up on the clip board in the kitchen or RSVP to Grace by March 9th .

## **UNICAMP**

A certificate was generously received from Unicamp good for 2 days at Unicamp (value \$200). For anyone interested in being considered to attend please contact Kay Cook, Chair of Denominational Affairs (kicook@roger.com).

## **A UNITARIAN PROFILE**

'Lotte Hitschmann' was born on November 28, 1909 in Prague, Czechoslovakia. After completing her PhD at the University of Prague she worked for several newspapers as well as the Yugoslavian government newspaper agency. Many of her writings reflected her anti-Nazi viewpoints. When the Germans seized a part of Czechoslovakia in September 1938 Lotte relocated to Paris and Brussels. At this time she changed her first name to 'Lotta' and her last name to the Slavic pronunciation 'Hitschmanova' which sounded less German than 'Hitschmann.'

After the Germans invaded Belgium Dr. Lotta escaped to Marseilles. One day, while lining up at Marseilles's market for lunch she keeled over from fatigue and hunger. After regaining consciousness she made her way to a medical clinic run by the

Boston based Unitarian Service Committee. This was her first contact with the organization.

In 1942, Dr. Lotta was able to escape from Europe by sailing from Lisbon to New York on a refugee-packed twin-screw steamer designed to carry bananas rather than passengers. After delivering a USC report to Boston, she quickly departed for Canada, which, unlike the United States, had granted her a visa. When she learned that her parents died in a holding camp en route to Auschwitz she decided to stay in Canada.

In July 1945, she helped to organize the Canadian branch of the Unitarian Service Committee and was made the Executive Director. This organization was affiliated with the Unitarian Church in Canada and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), though the official link was severed in 1948. Its initial objective was the relief of distressed people in France and Czechoslovakia. The program was later expanded to Italy, Greece, India, Nepal and Vietnam among other countries.

In 1970 she wrote a book entitled *The USC Story: A Quarter Century of Loving Service by the Unitarian Service Committee* about her experiences working for USC Canada. She always knew what was needed to make a story and used this expertise to full advantage, earning her the nickname "The Atomic Mosquito" because of her continuing success in getting good media coverage.

Throughout the years, Dr. Hitschmanova received many awards, including the Gold Medal from the Red Cross of France (1950) and the Medal of St. Paul from Greece (1952). In 1968 she was made an Officer of the Order of Canada and was promoted to Companion in 1979. In 1982 she retired from her position as Executive Director due to ill health. She spent the final years of her life suffering from Alzheimer's disease, but died of cancer on September 1, 1990. USC Canada continues to carry on Dr. Lotta's legacy into the 21 century.

Please visit USC Canada at [www.usc-canada.org](http://www.usc-canada.org)