



## Sunday Programs for January and February

Services start at 10:30am at 122 Harris Street, Guelph [www.guelph-unitarians.com](http://www.guelph-unitarians.com) 519-836-3443  
We have Spiritual Development programs for children 4 and older, and childcare for younger children.

### **January 3 (Pod 1)**

#### **A UNITARIAN NEW YEAR**

A panel of members shares their excitement about UCG - what brought them and what keeps them coming. Come find out more about individuals in the UCG community.

**Moderator: Harold Chapman**

### **January 10 (Pod 2)**

#### **AWAKENING AND ACTION**

Sally Ludwig and Chris Mills have been deeply touched by the work of Joanna Macy and the Work That Reconnects. In this service, they will speak to what it means to be involved in Transition Guelph, a project that lets them live their passion.

**Speakers: Sally Ludwig and Chris Mills**

**Service Leader: Paul Smith**

### **January 17 (Pod 3)**

#### **UNITED FOR PEACE**

This service will be based on the material of the United Church campaign for peace which began out of concern for the situation in Israel and Palestine, then broadened to work for peace in other parts of the world including Canada.

**Speaker: John Buttars**

**Service Leader: Maria Chovaz**

### **January 24 (Pod 4)**

**TBA**

### **January 31 (No Pod – potluck treats)**

#### **STILL SOWING THE SEEDS**

In geography, language, culture and challenges, Nepal is diverse. USC's work in Nepal draws on the natural and human environment to improve lives and work towards food security in remote regions. Kate Green is the Program Manager for Nepal, and will share the very human stories of USC's work on seeds, food and justice. Nepal was one of the last countries that Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova personally visited as part of the USC global community, and USC is still 'sowing the seeds' that she planted.

**Speaker: Kate Green**

**Service Leader: Harold Chapman**

### **February 7 (Pod 1)**

#### **LESSONS FROM THE WOODS**

Teacher and UCG-member Katie Gad will share her experiences as an outdoor educator working with young people. Learning in the great outdoors can be an exciting and life-changing experience. *Note: this is also Unicamp Sunday, so find out more about what programs Unicamp will be offering this year!*

**Speaker: Katie Gad**

**Service Leader: Anna Bishop**

### **February 14 (Pod 2)**

#### **YOUTH-LED SERVICE**

Join us for a special service led by members of our very own youth group – most of whom are new this year! Music, readings and talks will allow you to get to know our youth better as well as providing a unique worship opportunity.

**Service Leaders: Anna Bishop and youth group members**

### **February 21 (Pod 3)**

#### **VISITING MINISTER**

Details to follow. Stay tuned for a surprise!

**Service Leader: Cheryl Laird**

### **February 28 (Pod 4)**

#### **EXPERIENCES OF LIFE**

Sarah Hennekins, a student at Centre Wellington District High School, will do a presentation in word and images about her life-changing experiences with Students on Ice this past summer. Sarah and her family are founding members of the Fergus-Elora Unitarian congregation.

**Speaker: Sarah Hennekins**

**Service Leader: Burna Wilton**

## MISSION STATEMENT OF THE UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF GUELPH

The Unitarian Congregation of Guelph is a spiritual community that is deeply rooted in Unitarian Universalist principles which provide a spiritual basis for ethical living. We celebrate diversity and affirm each individual. We support social and environmental justice through a democratic process. We welcome all seekers of truth and meaning in to our religious community.

(adopted at the Annual General Meeting, September 29, 2002)

### *The UCG News*

is the newsletter published regularly by the  
Unitarian Congregation of Guelph  
122 Harris Street,  
Guelph Ontario N1E 5T1  
Phone: 519-836-3443

Typed, handwritten or phoned-in submissions are always welcome, as are contributions by e-mail to [admin@guelph-unitarians.com](mailto:admin@guelph-unitarians.com) or telephone 519-836-3443. **Items for our next newsletter are due by February 12, 2010**

In an effort to save trees and money, we are e-mailing as many newsletters as possible. If you prefer it by mail, please let us know.

### COMING EVENTS

- Jan. 6 – Chant Club 7:30pm
- Jan. 15 – Chalice Café 7:30pm
- Jan. 17 – Mindfulness Group 4:30pm  
– Youth Group meets 6pm
- Jan. 20 – Wayfinder Discussion Group
- Jan. 21 – Pagan Group 7:30pm
- Jan. 28 – Board meeting 7pm
- Jan. 29-30 – Be the Change Workshop
- Jan. 31 – Potluck after service  
– Youth Group meets 6pm
- Feb. 3 – Chant Club 7:30pm
- Feb. 5 – Movie Night 5:30pm
- Feb. 7 – Sunday Service Leaders pm
- Feb. 14 – Youth Group meets 12:30pm
- Feb. 18 – Board Meeting 5:30pm
- Feb. 18 – Pagan Group 7:30pm
- Feb. 19 – Chalice Café 7:30pm
- Feb. 21 – Mindfulness Group 4:30pm
- Feb. 25 – UCG Mid-Winter Gathering 6pm
- Feb. 27 – Be the Change Workshop
- Feb. 28 – Potluck after service  
– Youth Group meets 6pm

**Meditation:** Mondays 8pm starting Jan 4  
**Yoga Dance:** Mondays 6:45pm in January  
**Back to Basics NA group:** Tuesdays 7pm

### UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF GUELPH

122 Harris Street, Guelph Ontario N1E 5T1  
Phone 519-836-3443

[www.guelph-unitarians.com](http://www.guelph-unitarians.com)

#### Lay Chaplains

Aspen Heisey	519-822-8666
Melina Bondy	519-824-9148

#### THE BOARD FOR 2009 - 2010

President	Lorna Wylsun	519-822-1053
	<a href="mailto:lwojcick@ovc.uoguelph.ca">lwojcick@ovc.uoguelph.ca</a>	
Past President	Deirdre Yates	519-766-0523
Vice President	Helen Prinold	519-763-4585
Treasurer	Steve Chovaz	519-766-1965
Member at Large	Harold Chapman	519-763-2406
Member at Large	Maria Chovaz	519-766-1965
Member at Large	Janet Colley	519-824-0207
Member at Large	Julie Elliotson	519-831-6534

#### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<b>Social Action</b>	Open	
<b>Membership</b>	Cheryl Laird	519- 821-7324
	<a href="mailto:cheryll@rogers.com">cheryll@rogers.com</a>	
<b>Support Network</b>	Sarah McDougall	519-829-1679
<b>Sunday Services</b>	Linda Reith	519-837-9471
	<a href="mailto:lreith@on.aibn.com">lreith@on.aibn.com</a>	
<b>Chaplaincy Committee</b>	Deirdre Yates	519-766-0523
	<a href="mailto:deeyates@gmail.com">deeyates@gmail.com</a>	

#### STAFF

##### **Program Coordinator for Spiritual Development**

Melina Bondy 519-836-3443  
[melinabondy@yahoo.ca](mailto:melinabondy@yahoo.ca)

##### **Child & Youth Program Coordinator**

Rebekah Jamieson 519-836-3443  
[rebekahjamieson@hotmail.com](mailto:rebekahjamieson@hotmail.com)

##### **Office Administrator (Newsletter Editor \* Distribution and Building Rental)**

Rebekah Jamieson 519-836-3443  
[rebekahjamieson@hotmail.com](mailto:rebekahjamieson@hotmail.com)

#### OTHERS WHO HELP

<b>POD Coordinator</b>	Deirdre Yates	519-766-0523
<b>Interior Co-ordinator &amp; Exterior Co-ordinator,</b>		
	Harold Chapman	519-763-2406
<b>Musicians</b>	Naomi Matsui	519-821-2830
	Pam Dickie	519-823-1891
	Paul Smith	519-767-1033
<b>Unitunz</b>	Bruce Walton	519-837-0322
<b>Puppeteer</b>	Stuart Dixon	519-822-5008



## FROM THE CENTRE OF THE WEB – A Message from Our President

As I reflect and prepare to write this report, the thing that strikes me most significantly is the incredible energy that is present in our congregation – physical and mental energy in terms of getting things done, and for me, more importantly, spiritual and emotional energy.

Helen Prinold and her team have been working diligently to finalize the UCG Safe Steps Policy which you will be introduced to once it is approved by the Board. While it has a pragmatic function in terms of insurance and liability, this work is also a concrete demonstration of our Board’s commitment to the young people in our congregation and their

safety. Thanks to Harold Chapman as well for encouraging us to see its importance and spurring us on.

Many, many people have been putting their time and energy into this year’s fun’draining, with excellent results! The Dream Auction was a tremendous success, especially because so many of the items offered contribute to inspiring community as the lucky recipients will hike and dine and sing, take pictures, and in many other ways share their time together. Steve Chovaz and crew have already filled up to the \$5000 mark on our chalice ‘thermometer’ which Rick Boersma drew for us. The enthusiasm for Rick’s cards is part of the buzz at the fun’draining table where Aspen Heisey and Janet Colley are busily selling cards, coffee, chocolate and cleaning supplies. The workshops (Plan Your Own Memorial, The Work that Reconnects) which Melina, Linda Reith and others facilitated have also contributed to the fun’draining in a big way. Much appreciation and blessings to all who are helping.

A significant part of our operating budget is dedicated to our staff, Melina Bondy and Rebekah Jamieson. We are blessed to have these exceptional women as part of our congregation. When faced with the decision of hiring a part-time minister or investing in the children’s program, the Board at the time chose to focus our resources on young people, believing this would contribute more significantly to the growth of the congregation. And it has! Melina and Rebekah have built an excellent program which both the children and youth enjoy. We are also very lucky to have Melina as a facilitator who brings such a gentle spirit and caring manner to all the gatherings that she facilitates.

I believe and I suspect others agree, that the message of Unitarianian Universalism is an important and critical one in our current environment. And yet, at a recent training for new UU members, Cheryl Laird referred to us as one of the best-kept secrets in Guelph. I choose to believe the message of “the Rabbi’s Gift” which is told in Scott Peck’s book “The Different Drum.” The story suggests that people will be attracted by the kind of energy and community we have. As a result, one of the thoughts that keeps running through my mind now is how to support the current energy and creativity on an ongoing basis and ensure that people who join us have the experience they are seeking? We appreciate hearing your thoughts and will be posting our Board Minutes so that you can know what we are up to. Information is an important contributor to the democratic process.

Please keep in mind as well that we are coming up to our 50th anniversary as we celebrate the vision and actions of our founders, including Sherry and Stuart Dixon. The Board would appreciate your participation or any ideas or thoughts you have as we plan these important celebrations.

Blessings all, Lorna

### DREAM AUCTION A BIG SUCCESS!

At this year’s Dream Auction, we raised more money than ever – \$3600 which will go towards the operating expenses of the UCG. Thanks to everyone who participated and donated items - it was a fun night for all!

Please remember that this is an annual event on the first Saturday evening of November. We also have ongoing fun’draining events happening throughout the year, such as our Unitarian blend coffee and hot chocolate sales.

If you have any questions concerning fun’draining, please speak to Janet Colley or Lorna Wyllsun.



### Thank you!

Our thanks go to Ed Langevin and Norah Menzies for their generous contribution to the installation of the banister which helps to make our sanctuary more accessible. We appreciate their willingness to take action when they saw a need. Thanks so much!

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Happy New Year is the greeting that we offer to each other at this time of year. It does its job as a greeting. Who doesn't want to be happy? But I also wonder if there isn't a better way to greet each other? Happiness is nice, but its pursuit doesn't often lead to its end. So upon reflection, I offer you a different wish this year. I wish you a year of discovery, inspiration and deep peace. I wish you great insights from all that goes wrong and right. I wish you the sense of connection that allows you to live your freedom, to trust yourself and to sing your heart's song to the whole world. And in your discovery, inspiration, connection, freedom and insight, I feel pretty confident that happiness will be there too.



My new year will begin in France at Plum Village, the community of my great teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh. It's been 3 years since I was there last, and I have been given the opportunity to return. I'll be part of the Winter Retreat for a month, walking and sitting in mindfulness, growing in community and clarity, carrying all of you in my heart. I look forward to sharing stories and smiles and hugs with all of you when I return in February. I want to thank the Board members, Rebekah, volunteers and everyone who is pitching in to help me go within. I am grateful and honoured to be so supported. My heart is already singing.

The Children's Spiritual Development Programs will continue exploring Unitarian identity by diving into what each of the principles means and how we can live them. Michael Gilbertson has offered to lead 2 discussion groups in January about Wade Davis' Massey Lectures, *The Wayfinders*. The Monday night meditation sessions will continue in January under the leadership of Lynn Woodford and Monday night yoga will turn into yoga-dance with Rebekah. While I am away, please send your questions and ideas to either Rebekah Jamieson (Children's SD teacher and Office Administrator) or Lorna Wyllsun (Board President).

A lotus to you, Melina

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## REBEKAH'S CORNER

As many of you know, I am beginning teacher's training in January in Buffalo (Friday nights & Saturdays). Because of this, we've re-arranged the youth group nights. Parents will receive a schedule of dates and activities, and I appreciate everyone's support and flexibility this year.

**YOUTH GROUP** We've had a fun autumn with the youth, and are planning for the youth-led service on Valentine's Day. Activities for the new year include rock-climbing, a yurt sleepover, and spending more time getting to know ourselves and each other, partially based on some exercises from a UU youth curriculum called "Freedom and Responsibility."

**KIDS' STUFF** The 4-8 year old children have started an in-depth exploration of the Unitarian Universalist principles, and we will continue these until the summer (one per month – January is Principle 2, February is Principle 3, etc). We have a nice rhythm in the group and are always looking for ways to involve the children in the larger congregation. In February, we will be having a "Secret Pal" month where we have adult members of the congregation matched to certain kids and together they write letters back and forth and get clues about famous Unitarians, as well as each other. The identities of the secret pals will be revealed at the end of the month.



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## SERVICE LEADERS' WORKSHOP - FEBRUARY 8

Have you secretly wanted to be part of creating the magic of our Sunday Service? Have you admired the smooth and thoughtful delivery of the service leader and wondered, "Could I do that?" Well, you can! We have a fabulous and thorough Sunday Service Handbook and we are willing to initiate you into the confident and skilled community that weaves our services on Sunday mornings. Join us for a very practical and inspirational three-hour workshop on Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>. No commitment to service leading required. This will also be a great experience for experienced Service Leaders who want to connect with their community and hone their skills. If you're interested, or think you might be interested, please speak to Dave Hudson, Harold Chapman, Anna Bishop, Melina Bondy or Linda Reith. Not only are we the Sunday Service Committee, but we treasure the opportunity to make ideas turn into services that are satisfying and inspirational. Please join us in being Service Leaders!

## **FROM THE COMMITTEES OF THE UCG**

### **SUNDAY SERVICE COMMITTEE**

#### ***HOLDING THE FLAME***



The Sunday Service committee imagines the flow of the services that come your way each Sunday morning. We meet every six weeks or so, reflect on the services since the last meeting and put together ideas for the weeks to come. The meetings are interesting and lively,

because we all care about the variety and quality of the Sunday morning experiences.

Please consider whether you would like to be part of that process. We are about to lose Anna Bishop who has been a great resource and Nancy is preoccupied with her father's move from one state to another south of the border. It's exciting to put together a program, especially if there are six or seven people involved in dreaming and then contacting the speakers and service leaders. Just now we're a couple people short.

Our next meeting will be held at 12:30pm on Sunday, January 10th and you would be very welcome to attend and check us out. We meet at Nancy and Harold's house at 23 Toronto Street. You could choose to attend the Service Leaders Workshop on Sunday, February 8th as another way of exploring, or you could come to our retreat on March 27th. Please contact any of us for more information: Dave Hudson, Harold Chapman, Anna Bishop, Nancy Schmidt, Melina Bondy and Linda Reith.

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### **MEMBERSHIP**

The Membership Committee met in November to start the process of updating the Membership Directory. If you are currently listed in the directory, you will soon receive a call from one of the committee members enquiring about the following:

1. Changes to contact info including address, phone number, email
2. Name changes
3. Would you like to remain listed?
4. New additions or changes to number of people listed
5. Children over 16 are entitled to a separate entry if they choose.
6. If you have not been attending services, is there any reason that we can help with?

Please feel free to call Cheryl Laird (Chair of the Committee) to report any changes. Her contact info is cheryll@rogers.com or 519-821-7324.

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### **UCG SUPPORT NETWORK**

May the New Year bring you the experiences that help you best to grow! And don't forget that if you're facing some bumpy times, the UCG Support Network is here to help. Sarah McDougall will be the contact person starting in January. If you, or someone that you know, are in need of some support through difficult times, please contact Sarah and she will find someone who can help you out. If you are interested in helping with the coordinating committee, please let Sarah know. We always welcome new people to visit a meeting to see if the committee is a good fit!

On October 31st, we held a "Plan your Own Memorial Service" workshop in conjunction with the Lay Chaplaincy Committee. There were 18 people in attendance and we had an interesting and enjoyable morning. We will be offering this again so let us know if you're interested in joining. A number of people also expressed interest in learning more about Green Burials and eco-friendly options when someone dies. We are planning an information evening in the spring - stay tuned for dates.

Starting in January, we will be updating our contact list of people willing to offer care to the community through the Support Network. There will be a large chart posted in the Sunshine Room for the months of January and February. Please write your name and phone number down and check the boxes that apply to let us know if you are able to occasionally offer help in one or more of the following areas:

- TRANSPORTATION
- CARDS OR FLOWERS
- SOCIAL PHONE CALLS OR VISITS
- MEALS OR GROCERY SHOPPING
- DOG WALKING
- PRAYER AND BLESSING
- ODD JOBS/MAINTENANCE!

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### **LAY CHAPLAINCY**

#### ***Calling All Future Lay Chaplains...***

As the chair of the Lay Chaplaincy Committee, I am delighted to announce that we are beginning a search for a new lay chaplain! Aspen will be retiring in the summer of 2011 after serving a 6-year term. We would like the new chaplain to start shadowing her this summer. This is

a unique way to explore your spirituality. If you are interested in becoming a lay chaplain or being part of the search committee please let me know!

Deirdre Yates - deeyates@gmail.com 519-766-0523

**What is a Lay Chaplain?** A Lay Chaplain is a member of the congregation who creates and facilitates rites of passage for Unitarian and non-Unitarian members of their community. This includes being licensed to perform marriages, doing memorials, child dedications, as well as a variety of other ceremonies depending on the chaplain's interests. Our current chaplains are Melina Bondy and Aspen Heisey. Check out the next newsletter for a more personal account of what it is to be a lay chaplain!

## **ACTIVITIES OFFERED BY THE UCG**

### **THE WAYFINDERS DISCUSSION GROUP**

Hosted by Michael Gilbertson and friends

Wednesday, January 20 – 7pm and

Friday, January 29 – 1:30pm

Many people were able to attend Wade Davis' lecture last fall as he prepared to give the 2009 Massey Lectures, published in his new book, *The Wayfinders*. This is your chance to discuss the ideas in the book around the importance of the ethnosphere, the cultural equivalent of the biosphere. Come to discuss, learn and engage. And if you didn't get the chance to hear the lecture or read the book (there's still time!) you can listen on-line at <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/massey.html> For more information, please contact Michael Gilbertson at 519-823-7737.

#### *About The Wayfinders:*

Recently, many of us have been alarmed to learn of accelerating rates of extinction among plants and animals on our planet. But how many of us know that human cultures are going extinct at an even more shocking rate? While biologists estimate that 18 percent of mammals and 11 percent of birds are threatened, and botanists anticipate the loss of 8 percent of flora, anthropologists predict that fully 50 percent of the 7,000 languages spoken around the world today will disappear within our lifetimes. And languages are merely the canaries in the coalmine: what of the knowledge, stories, songs, and ways of seeing encoded in these disappearing voices? In *The Wayfinders*, Wade Davis offers a gripping and enlightening account of this urgent crisis. He leads us on a fascinating tour through a handful of indigenous cultures, describing the worldviews they represent and reminding us of the encroaching danger to humankind's survival should they disappear.

### **THE CHALICE CAFÉ**

January 15 and February 19 – 7:30 pm

Everyone is invited. Sponsored by the Unitarian Congregation of Guelph and hosted by members of the Guelph Unitunz musical group. Join us for a song circle.

Bring your voices, your instruments and your songs to join in the jam or just sit back and hum along.

Everyone who wants to gets a chance to lead us in a song. Come for a bit or stay for a while. This is a welcoming event for all ages.



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### **YOGA DANCE**

Mondays in January – 6:45 to 7:45pm

Replacing Melina's Monday night yoga will be Rebekah offering Yoga Dance. Rebekah and Aspen Heisey trained with the same teacher, and some of you may be familiar with Yoga Dance. For those who aren't, it is a fun and interactive form of movement and stretching. Set to music, we start with simple yoga postures to ground our bodies, then move gently into more flowing, playful and spontaneous movements. Some of it is guided, but there is also space for finding your own dance. But no dance or yoga experience is required!

Come on out to one or all Monday nights, and if you wish, stay for the meditation group immediately after. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring a water bottle. A donation of \$10 per class is suggested. If you have any questions, please contact Rebekah at 519-821-4176 or [rebekahjamieson@hotmail.com](mailto:rebekahjamieson@hotmail.com).

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### **COMMUNITY MEDITATION**

Mondays at 8pm

This is a time to gather in silent practice, whether it is in Buddhist meditation, Christian contemplation or self-healing visualizations and everything in-between. We sit together in silence for 30 minutes and then end with 10 min. of a guided loving-kindness practice. By sitting together, we support one another by sharing our time, energy and presence in a simple and special way. Everyone is welcome to this drop-in group. This is not a meditation course so there will be no formal instructions, but some guidance can be offered as needed. A \$2-5 freewill donation is appreciated to support the cost of maintaining the building. For more information, please call 519-836-3443.

## **MINDFULNESS COMMUNITY OF GUELPH**

*Practicing the teachings of Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month – 4:30 to 6:30pm**

**(January 17 and February 21)**

Mindfulness is the energy of being aware and awake to the present moment. It is the continuous practice of touching life deeply in every moment of daily life. To be mindful is to be truly alive, present and at one with those around you and with what you are doing.

We will begin with a guided sitting meditation, walking meditation and silent meditation. We will then share a teaching from Nhat Hanh and listen deeply to one another as we share what is on our hearts. This is a community practice that strengthens not only our formal meditation practice but also our ability to live in awareness and joy day by day. Thich Nhat Hanh is a Zen Master, poet, peace and human rights activist. He offers a practice of "mindfulness" that is beneficial for people of all faiths, by helping us resist and transform the speed and violence of our modern society. For more information, please contact 519-836-3443.

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**EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITY** has long been an important part of the spirituality explored at UCG. This year we have initiated regular monthly gatherings to share ritual and deepen our understanding, as well as committing to marking the eight Hinges of the Pagan Year to the best of our ability. For more information, contact Linda Reith [ireith@on.aibn.com](mailto:ireith@on.aibn.com) 519-822-4889.  
**Thursdays at 7:30pm – January 21 & February 18**

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## **AROUND THE CONGREGATION**

### **THE WISE ELDERS**

Are you interested in having a seniors-focused group at the UCG? For social gatherings, discussion groups or other opportunities to engage with others who are at the same stage of life as yourself? If so, please contact Melina Bondy at 519-836-3443. Melina will be contacting people in February to assess the needs and interests of our seniors and look at developing programming that serves these needs.

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### **ECOCONSCIOUS FUN'DRAISING**

This past November, we launched a fun'd-raising initiative to sell fair-trade and organic coffee, tea and hot chocolate. They are the perfect treat any time of the year. We will also have individual bottles of eco-friendly cleaning products for sale. For more information, contact Janet Colley at 519-824-0207 or [janetcolley@hotmail.com](mailto:janetcolley@hotmail.com).

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## **CALLING ALL REIKI HEALERS!**

Are you a Reiki healer? Would you be interested in being part of Reiki Healing Practice Sessions at the UCG? These could be drop-in sessions for the UCG members and a chance to share the magic of energy healing. We could ask for donations -- offering what we receive to the UCG space and anything extra for the healers who come. If this interests you, please contact Heather Isabela at: [heather.isabela@gmail.com](mailto:heather.isabela@gmail.com) or call 519-994-9565.

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## **LOOKING FOR ACTORS!**

On Thursday, February 25th, we will be hosting our annual Midwinter Gathering. This year, there will be a dinner theatre component to the evening, with an updated version of Mavis Kerr's "UU Worship Restaurant." So all you theatre enthusiasts, get ready and mark your calendars! And to the aspiring actors in our congregation, we are looking to fill 5 roles for this funny skit. We also need 1-2 people to help with props and costumes. If you are interested, please contact Melina in February at 519-836-3443 or [coordinator@guelph-unitarians.com](mailto:coordinator@guelph-unitarians.com). Rehearsal will begin in early February.

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## **DONATIONS CAN NOW BE MADE ON LINE**

Just a reminder that your pledged donation can be made online at [www.guelph-unitarians.com](http://www.guelph-unitarians.com) by following on the link at the bottom of the homepage. Charitable receipts will be issued whether donations are made online or in person.

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## **THE WINTER FEAST FOR THE SOUL**

**January 15 – February 23, 2010**

*A 40-day worldwide spiritual practice period for people of all faiths everywhere*

The mission of this event is to support individuals around the world in making a commitment to daily spiritual practice for forty days. A life grounded in daily practice is one that knows inner peace. It is that peace which translates into peace throughout our lives and ultimately to peace and healing for our planet. In 2009 nearly 10,000 people in at least 29 countries participated in the Winter Feast for the Soul. Lives were changed and a sense of hope was renewed. If you are interested in participating in this event, please contact Naomi Matsui at 519-821-2830. Go for it! See also [www.winterfeastforthesoul.com](http://www.winterfeastforthesoul.com)

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## **CONGREGATIONAL MIDWINTER GATHERING**

**Thursday, February 25 – 6pm**

As we build an intentional community here at the UCG, it is important that we socialize and keep in touch. Join us for an evening of learning and sharing over a free spaghetti dinner complete with theatrical fun! A great way to warm up with friends on a cold February night...

## MARY POPPINS MOVIE AND PIZZA NIGHT

**Friday, February 5th. Pizza at 6pm, film at 6:30.**

The perfect film for the child in all of us. Open to all ages! Friends are also welcome. Come dressed in your pj's and bring some cushions or blanket to cozy up for an evening with this classic film. Please phone Melina to order pizza slices for yourself or your family.

(\$1.50/slice, veg options available and Melina will make a lactose-free, gluten-free pizza to share if you place your order a week in advance!)

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## SUNSHINE ROOM UPDATE

You may have noticed some changes around the building! A big thanks to those who have helped, especially Pam and Mike for weatherstripping and Wanda for our new matching tablecloths! Please note that we are looking for a large bookshelf for the Sunshine Room along the south wall to house our library.

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## BE THE CHANGE WORKSHOP

**January 29-30, Feb. 26-27, March 27**

Discover how to obtain your most cherished desires in a changing world. Join Marsaye Treen for a special workshop series to help you slow down, find support and actualize your dreams. Based on the work of Joanna Macy, this workshop is a testing ground and the fee is accessible to all, by donation. To register, call 519-823-9333 or email [marsaye@bbs42.net](mailto:marsaye@bbs42.net)

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## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ORGANIC CONFERENCE

**January 28-31 at the University of Guelph.**

Check out the 29<sup>th</sup> annual event here in Guelph! An amazing free exhibition on Sat and Sunday. For more information, visit [www.guelphorganicconf.ca](http://www.guelphorganicconf.ca)

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### MID-WINTER UU RETREAT –

#### A LIFE OF INTEGRITY

**Friday, February 5 to Sunday, February 7, 2010**

This UU mid-winter retreat at Cedar Glen Conference Centre near Bolton, ON is an annual event offering some time in nature with like-minded folks. There is an exciting range of workshops and speakers on the topic of integrity.

A limited number of partial subsidies for full weekend attendance are available for those who would otherwise be unable to attend. Register early! For more info, please contact Sue McLeod at 416-368-4014 or visit the website for a list of workshops: [www.donheights.ca/mwr](http://www.donheights.ca/mwr)

## UNICAMP 2010

Unicamp's summer program brochure will soon be available at the Welcome Table. If you don't receive one by mail, please pick one up.



### *A new program highlight:*

May 21-24, 2010 you can experience SURVIVOR at Unicamp. If you love the program, scheme about what you would do as a contestant, and always wanted to participate here's your chance. This will be a great May 24 weekend. Contact Jessica Fleguel at [jmgfgodess@yahoo.ca](mailto:jmgfgodess@yahoo.ca) or 519-376-1753 for information or [UnicampofOntario@hotmail.com](mailto:UnicampofOntario@hotmail.com) to register.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AND US

### *How Members of our Community are Active...*

#### HOPEFUL LOUIS RIEL DAY AT QUEEN'S PARK

On November 16, 1885, Louis Riel was executed by Canada for the "treason" of leading the Northwest Rebellion for basic human rights for the Métis people and First Nations. Riel also led the 1869 rebellion that created Manitoba. Eight First Nations' people were also hanged and many imprisoned including the famous leaders Big Bear and Poundmaker. One Hundred and twenty-four years later on November 16, 2009, Riel was celebrated at Queen's Park by the Métis Nation of Ontario and the Ontario Government!

In the last couple of years, the Ontario government developed a new, positive relationship with the Métis Nation of Ontario. This led to the hopeful, upbeat Riel Day celebration in 2009. Two Ministers in the McGuinty government spoke positively about Riel and the new relationship between Ontario and the Métis Nation. Several NDP MPPs and a Conservative MPP also spoke and created an inclusive, non-partisan mood.

My father's family is Métis from both Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and at least one of my ancestors was part of the Métis rebellions. This was the first Riel Day ceremony I have attended. It was a proud time to see the Métis flag flying at Queen's Park and to observe such a constructive start to a new relationship that will, with commitment, lead to greater justice.

*- Paul Smith*