

# First Unitarian Church of Victoria



## SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING

Program Guide

Fall, 2011

Our church is a place of gathering for people who wish to deepen and widen our UU faith and live its principles. Through body, mind, soul and heart, from cradle to sage, we nourish our spiritual and religious aspirations with each other and with those in our community.

We seek to be a culture of learning, a place where people continually expand their capacity to create the life they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking and being are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning together. We covenant to affirm and promote the seven principles that hold us together.

**Ministers:**

**Reverend Melora Lynngood**

**Reverend Shana Lynngood**

**Coordinator of Children's Spiritual Exploration and Learning:**

**Faye Mogensen**

**Director of Music:**

**Phil Hallman**

**FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA  
SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING  
PROGRAM GUIDE  
FALL 2011**

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Please watch the monthly newsletter and E-weekly for more detailed information, or contact the Church office.

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## SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING— MULTI GENERATIONAL

### SPECIAL THEME MONTHS THIS YEAR

We are planning two “Theme Months” where at some services and in both the children and adult learning groups we will focus on the chosen theme.

In October, our theme is *Purpose*  
In February, our theme is *Aspects of Love*

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO WALKABOUT?

After some services, approximately once a month, all ages are invited to join in an exploration of nearby parks. On these outings they enjoy fresh air and the companionship of other church members and friends. Participants bring their own picnic lunches and spend about 2 hours on the trail, light rain or shine. Contact Farrell Boyce 250 656 7953; [fmboyce@shaw.ca](mailto:fmboyce@shaw.ca) to be notified of upcoming plans. Outings are posted a week ahead on the Church E-Weekly Bulletin.

### SACRED CIRCLES: CELEBRATING THE SACRED IN DANCE

First Series: Fireside Room: Sundays 12:15 – 1:30pm September 18<sup>th</sup>, October 16<sup>th</sup> and November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Pre-registration by September 11<sup>th</sup> to ensure a minimum group size of 7.

Sacred Circles is a non-verbal form of small group ministry that will be facilitated by Madelaine (Mado) Clarke. It provides an opportunity for participants to ‘be danced’ in a shared experience. Through holding hands and moving rhythmically together in a circle to music, this contemplative dance form engenders a sense of oneness and well-being through healing alignment of body, mind and spirit. All dances are taught, featuring simple and repetitive steps, and no partner or special skills are required. Wear comfortable shoes and loose clothing, but no fragrances please. By donation; drop-ins are welcome to a maximum of 13. While Sacred Circles is suitable to most ages, due to its contemplative focus, children 12 and under will require child minding which is available by pre-arrangement only. To pre-register, please contact Madelaine [mpclarke@shaw.ca](mailto:mpclarke@shaw.ca) or 250-479-4701.

# SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING FOR CHILDREN

*Children's Religious Education classes begin Sunday, Sept 11*

## THIS YEAR'S THEME: WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?

**Primary (ages 5-7)** will use a curriculum entitled Wonderful Welcome and explore the many intangible gifts that help give a sense of purpose to life.

**Intermediate (ages 8-9)** will explore a program entitled We Are Made of Stardust to delve into the sense of purpose that can arise from knowing our place in the universe. Later, they will explore the guidance that our lens of our Unitarian Universalist Sources can offer, using a curriculum entitled Love Will Guide Us.

**Junior Youth (ages 10-13)** will begin the church year by exploring a sense of purpose by getting to know a few of our Neighbouring Faiths. There will be field trips to other places of worship.

In January, **ages 10-11** will fill their metaphoric Toolbox of Faith with supplies that help us achieve our purpose in life.

Concurrently, we are offering **Middle School OWL - for ages 12 and 13** where human sexuality and gender identity will be explored within a safe small group setting with sensitivity and respect. Sessions are facilitated by trained volunteers.

**YU\*Uth (ages 14-18)** Youth, Youth Advisors and Faye will continue to co-create a vibrant, engaging programme. This year we hope to add more worship and new social action projects. Monthly movie nights are also on the agenda.

**Wee-Care (ages 1-4)** from 10:20 to noon on Sundays, paid staff provides loving care for your children. Free play, stories, music, snack and outdoor exploration help children enjoy their time.

## **CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING [continued]**

### TWO WAYS TO GET MUSICAL!

Children's Choir: We practice most weeks before church at 9:30– and perform at some church services and special events.

Youth Choir: Participants are welcome from YU\*Uth and junior youth (11 years and up). We rehearse on Sundays from 12-12:30, and perform at some services and special events. To learn more about the Children's or Youth choirs, contact Nancy Dobbs [nandobbs@shaw.ca](mailto:nandobbs@shaw.ca) for information.

### MYSTERY BUDDIES

Children and adults are paired and exchange letters weekly without revealing their true identities. The Mystery Buddies learn who they are at the Mad Hatter Tea Party on *March 4* after service. Letter exchange begins *February 5th*.

### LISMER'S PRODIGIES ART WORKSHOPS

Our 14th annual opportunity for children to work on quality projects with church artists, over several Sundays throughout the church year. If you would enjoy participating as an artist or helper, please let Faye know at 250 744 2695 or [cce@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:cce@victoriaunitarian.ca)

### OUR WHOLE LIVES SEXUALITY (OWLS)

On a rotational basis, we offer this award-winning, comprehensive and progressive series geared to specific age groups (ages 6-7, 12-13, 16 and up) where human sexuality and gender identity are explored with sensitivity and respect. This holistic program equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information, helps them clarify their values and build interpersonal skills. The next OWL session is for ages 12-13, beginning in the January 2012. A required parent orientation meeting will be held in November. For more information, contact Faye Mogensen.

# SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING FOR ADULTS

## INTRODUCTION TO UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

### **Orientation**

Sunday, October 23 – Boardroom: noon – 1:30.

Whether you just walked in the door or have been coming several months, the orientation session will give you basic information about our congregation and ways to make connections in our church community. Please contact Rev. Melora at [rev.melora@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:rev.melora@victoriaunitarian.ca) or (250) 744-2601, voice mailbox #1 or cell (250) 891-6330, to find out more.

### **Considering Membership**

Tuesday, November 15 (location TBD) 7 – 9 p.m.

A gathering designed to give you the information you need in order to determine whether you would like to officially become a member of our church. Childcare can be provided upon request. Please contact Rev. Melora at [rev.melora@victoriaunitarian.ca](mailto:rev.melora@victoriaunitarian.ca) or (250) 744-2601, voice mailbox #1 or cell (250) 891-6330, to find out more.

### **Unitarian Universalism 101**

Two Tuesdays: Nov. 1 and Nov. 8 - Boardroom 7 – 9 p.m.

This is a two part course for new members or long time UU's who want a refresher on the basics. It includes an exercise in which you practice explaining what UUism is – a good skill for all of us to have.

"Church is where we practice what it means to be human".

~James Luther Adams.

## AGEING TO SAGE-ING WORKSHOP

Tuesdays, Sept. 27-Nov.1 - Board Room - 1:30-3:30 pm.

Minimum number for this workshop is 10, maximum is 20. Please register early. *The cost of the course is \$60.*

Throughout the whole of our lives, we search to be our best selves, but each stage of life offers its own opportunities and responsibilities. This six-week workshop is about the special opportunities we have in that period of life we sometimes call the senior years. How do we make simply aging become sage-ing? We will be 1) looking at the images of ageing and sage-ing 2) assessing where we have been 3) reframing the regrets of the past 4) looking at mortality 5) considering the power of a role model and 6) developing our role as a wise leader and mentor.

This workshop is based on the material in [From Aging to Sage-ing](#) by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and is led by Nancy Gray-Hemstock and Annie Klein. Nancy is a social worker and a Certified Sage-ing® Leader. She facilitates workshops from a place of mature spirituality, integrity and respect for others. Annie, who has degrees in Psychology and Education, is a Spiritual Director and artist. She is currently completing her Sage-ing certification and brings years of experience as a hospice volunteer and workshop facilitator.

The workshop is recommended for those who are 50+ but is open to those of any chronological age. To register, contact Margot Lods at 250-920-3893 or email [mlods@shaw.ca](mailto:mlods@shaw.ca). Include your name, phone number and email address. Cheques should be made out to First Unitarian Church of Victoria and dropped off or sent to the Church office. Mark on the cheque and the envelope Ageing to Sage-ing Workshop.

“For Unitarian Universalists learning is the fundamental spiritual practice”

-Reverend Dr. Rebecca Parker Starr King School for the Ministry

## COMPASSIONATE COMMUNICATION

(Also Known As Nonviolent Communication)

Saturday, Boardroom 10-12 noon for 13 weeks; drop-in from 1-3 in the library for those who have completed the 13 week course.

There are two practice groups offered. A practice group will meet for 13 weeks and follow Marshall Rosenberg's book, entitled Nonviolent Communications: A Language of Life. The book is available in our church library, from the Greater Victoria Public Library and for purchase at both Bolen Books and at the Unity Church office.

From 1pm-3pm in the library, a drop-in practice group will be held for people who have already completed the 13 week course following Rosenberg's book. There is also information available on the web. In both practice group cases, participants are requested to joyfully donate whatever they can. Contact Lil Lawrence for further information at [dodarededidatum@hotmail.com](mailto:dodarededidatum@hotmail.com).

## THE ART OF FACILITATION

Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 10am to 3pm

As we prepare to re-launch our small group ministry program, it became clear that a key element to making these groups work is strong facilitation. In fact, much of the ministry we do together in church can be more effectively advanced if and when we have able facilitators. This day-long workshop will teach facilitation skills for anyone interested in learning new skills for guiding a group through an agenda or an experience. We will discuss how to "read a room", talk about drawing people out, sitting with discomfort, and role-play some scenarios. If you are willing to consider leading a small group ministry (formerly called Chalice Circles), lead a committee, or simply desire to learn more about leadership in small groups especially in a spiritual context, then this workshop is for you.

[continued on following page]

[continued from previous] We will provide beverages and snacks, and invite participants to bring their own lunch. Session led by Rev. Shana Lynngood and Diana Smith. Maximum of 15, please register ahead of time so we can plan appropriately by emailing Rev. Shana at [rev.shana@shaw.ca](mailto:rev.shana@shaw.ca). We hope you'll join us.

### WHAT IS A GOOD DEATH?

Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>

Betty Donaldson - Comox Valley Fellowship. Using readings of various types, Betty invites people to share their experiences of being an observer(s) of people who have had such passages; then asks them to consider how they are preparing to have one for themselves. Details regarding time and place will follow, but mark your calendars for this interesting and meaningful exploration of the concept of a 'good death'.

### INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL PRACTICE RETREAT

April or May of 2012. Join Reverend Shana Lynngood for a weekend residential retreat. The location is still to be determined.

### THE LEARNING CIRCLE

Every second Tuesday, beginning September 20 -9:15 until 12:00 Boardroom or Library.

This program, led by Doug Seeley and some of the participants, has been running regularly for 11 years, and is an opportunity to explore and share what is deeply meaningful to each of us regarding some of the big questions, such as; "What is life?", "Can we bridge science and spirit?", "What is the meaning of Liberation?", "Is the Cosmos alive?", "How do we face upheaval in our world?" Poetry and a book are usually used as ongoing catalysts for our dialogue; our group has chosen *Thinking in Systems* by Donella Meadows, and *A Life of Being, Having and Doing Enough* by Wayne Muller. Further information contact Doug at: [daseeley@deepsynergy.com](mailto:daseeley@deepsynergy.com)

## ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

### BOOK CLUB

Interested in stimulating conversation and exchanging of ideas? Contact Nanw Cariad at [nanw@shaw.ca](mailto:nanw@shaw.ca) to find out more about the book club that meets in people's homes on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of each month. You could even start a new book club in your neighbourhood if you'd like!

### PARENTS CIRCLE

Generally on the first Sunday of the month during service, all parents are welcome to join these informal gatherings. They provide an opportunity for parents to share experiences, explore ideas, and generate connections in the context of Unitarian Universalist spiritual life. Topics are selected from group suggestions. Everyone is welcome to come to the occasional session or all -- as suits the individual! Questions? Email Laura Anderson at [deerpants@live.ca](mailto:deerpants@live.ca)

### CHALICE CIRCLES

There are currently 4 Chalice Circles and there are a limited number of spaces still available in these groups. Please contact Rev. Shana if you are interested in joining one of the existing chalice circles. We plan to strengthen our small ministry program in 2011/12 and to that end are offering The Art of Facilitation session outlined elsewhere in the brochure.

### THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE

The SRC seeks to raise awareness among our membership about social, economic and environmental issues (see the brochure and/or visit the SRC shelf in the church foyer). From time to time they present or cosponsor speakers, movie nights, benefit concerts and other activities. Contact Philip Symons for more information.

### THE BOWKER CREEK WATERSHED DISCUSSION GROUP

is a small group from First and Capital that meets monthly to share knowledge, ideas, opinions and perhaps most importantly how we feel, given the local and global challenges ahead. It is an opportunity for people from both churches who live in the Bowker Creek watershed area to have an open-minded and enlivening dialogue where all views are exchanged. Contact: Jackie MacDonald (Capital); Judy Gaylord (FUCV)

### BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Local Tibetan Buddhist teacher, Lama Tara, leads a session that is normally divided into two parts: the first half hour is for silent meditation; the second half is reciting from a text provided, the compassion meditation practice called Chenrezig. The second Saturday of each month is designed for beginners. We welcome donations to the teacher. Chairs are available. Floor sitters please bring your own cushions. *Every Saturday, 1-2 pm in the Boardroom.* Contact Earle Anthony [earleanthony@shaw.ca](mailto:earleanthony@shaw.ca) for more information.

### SPIRITUALITY GROUP

The Spirituality Group meets on the second Sunday of the month, except for July, August and December. Anyone who would like to come along and see if our group appeals to them is most welcome. Meetings are held in people's homes. Contact Clare Vipond at [donandclare@shaw.ca](mailto:donandclare@shaw.ca) or Nancy Dobbs at [nandobbs@shaw.ca](mailto:nandobbs@shaw.ca)

### CONTEMPLATIVE YARNCRAFT

Commencing Friday, September 16th, 1st and 3rd Fridays 7-9pm, in the homes of those willing and able to host . Open to adults of all skill levels. We work on individual and group projects, gently facilitated to ensure a balanced blend of yarncraft with storytelling, meditation (silence), and opening/closing words. Group projects such as shawls, blankets, hats and scarves are crafted with loving intent by many hands from donated yarn, and gifted to those who are in need of their warmth and comfort. Contemplative Yarncraft can help us connect to our inner rhythm. Contact Madelaine Clarke: [mpclarke@shaw.ca](mailto:mpclarke@shaw.ca) 250-479-4701.

## ON GOING MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES

### CHALICE CHOIR

This is the main adult choir of the church and meets *Thursday evenings in the Sanctuary from 7:30 to 9:30pm*. We sing two Sunday mornings a month, meeting at 10am in the Boardroom to warm up. To join, attend a rehearsal. Contact Penny Boyce [fmboyce@shaw.ca](mailto:fmboyce@shaw.ca) for more information.

### MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CHOIRS

These two choirs are open to all adults who want to sing music specially selected for either male or female voices. The choirs meet twice a month on Thursdays from 6:30 to 7:30pm, before the Chalice Choir rehearsal. *You do not need to be a member of the Chalice Choir to join the Men's and Women's choirs.* Contact Penny Boyce [fmboyce@shaw.ca](mailto:fmboyce@shaw.ca) for more information.

### DO DROP IN CHOIR

From time to time, this choir *meets early on the Sunday morning* that it sings and learns a simple piece for the service that day. No need to sign up - just turn up! Contact Kristina Stevens [kristinastevens@shaw.ca](mailto:kristinastevens@shaw.ca) for more information.

### THE JAMMERS (JOYFUL ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC MAKERS)

This small group (10 -12) of Unitarians love to sing and like to share music with seniors in extended care/nursing facilities. Join a 15 year tradition of folk songs, golden oldies and action songs. No audition, no need to be able to read music. *Practice once a month in the Boardroom, on a Friday from 1-3pm, with a tea break.* Sing once a month, also usually on a Friday afternoon, for approximately 50 minutes. Contact Hugo Sutmoller [hannyhugo@shaw.ca](mailto:hannyhugo@shaw.ca) 250 385 2299 or Sandy Emerson, 250 475 6595 [sew03@telus.net](mailto:sew03@telus.net) for more information.

## LIBRARY

The church has a well-stocked library of about two thousand books on a variety of subjects of interest to Unitarians. All aspects of religion, including world religions, are covered as well as philosophy, psychology, the environment, social justice issues, literature, biographies and history. There is also a good reference section and a selection of several periodicals. The loan period is one month.

*The library, open one-half hour before and after Sunday services is located next to the north sanctuary door. A book cart of current titles can be found in the Lion Hall during coffee hour.*

## SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Canadian Unitarian Council [www.cuc.ca](http://www.cuc.ca)

Unitarian Universalist Association [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)

Church of the Larger Fellowship [www.clf.uua.org](http://www.clf.uua.org)

# SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION AND LEARNING FOR ADULTS

The Core Purpose of the Spiritual Exploration and Learning –  
Adult [SELA] Team is to:

*create and foster pathways to learning with unique offerings  
that meet the diversity of lifespan needs. We develop,  
coordinate, nurture and sustain programs, dialogues, affinity  
groups, chalice circles, and special offerings which:*

1. Introduce new or emerging topics of faith and spiritual growth
2. Deepen shared meaning and understanding of a topic, e.g. Beloved Community
3. Provide opportunities to learn together through dialogue, exploration and self-reflection
4. Build spiritual growth within our community and reach out to others to integrate and open up boundaries
5. Build capacity for facilitation and leadership in a culture of learning
6. Engage people from the time they enter the door recognizing the uniqueness of perspectives e.g. a new member may be new to religion, new to the Unitarian faith, to this community – each have unique needs.
7. Recognize transitions: from childhood to adulthood to end of life; single to parenthood; work to retirement.

We welcome your involvement. Be in touch through Rev  
Shana.

# What holds Unitarians together?

## Seven principles.

Unitarians covenant to affirm and promote:

- the inherent worth and dignity of every person.
- justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
- acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
- a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
- the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
- the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.
- respect for the inter-dependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

*Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision.*

The living tradition we share draws from many sources:

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.

Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transcending power of love.

Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.

Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbours as ourselves.

Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.

Spiritual teaching of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.