

Holiday Season is time for a six month update letter to CUUWA members so **GREETINGS FROM CUUWA Council members.**



You are reading our second annual newsletter but already CUUWA has a tradition of sending the three wise women (above). They arrive in your email box with our hopes that this dark winter season has some highlights that illuminate your lives. Please give yourself the gift of time to celebrate these stars in your firmament: it is a constellation of joy that will guide you through tough hours.

Highlights for CUUWA include the ripple effect of the Pink Tea: plans for the 2014 and 2015 AGM events. Two committees further the aims of our organization. The March woman-centred service invitation has been accepted by many congregations and fellowships; perhaps one of them is yours. A few dark areas slow us down. Finally, our newsletter concludes with individual statements from each Council member.

Council meets quarterly using electronic communications: email, conference calls or Skype. Our webpage is a resource to all, please check it out at: <http://www.cuuwa.org/> and a listserve cuuwa.cuc@gmail.com. We hope you will distribute some of the information that arrives in your email box including this newsletter.

The AGM Pink Tea was such a success! It attracted double the number of attendees that we'd anticipated. Everyone is so grateful to the Calgary team, led by Jane Ebbert. As a consequence, Council recommends that CUUWA use the tea concept at future CUC conferences.

However, our resources are too slender to host such a large event annually so the 2014 AGM will be an electronic one planned for June 1. The concept of members gathering within local clusters to network across Canada for an electronic conference call worked well in 2012.

In 2015 the CUC annual conference will be in Ottawa. Our 2015 tea will have a human rights theme, tentatively focusing on reproductive rights and/or aboriginal issues. Your suggestions will be appreciated.



The two committees are chaired by Gillian Burton (By Law) and Margaret Linton (Reproductive Justice). Brief reports are included in their individual statements in the final section of this newsletter. Again, if any member has a particular interest in either of these areas, please contact the Council.

Two other initiatives are stalled. We'd hoped to establish an ongoing liaison with women Ministers of our denomination. While several are members of CUUWA, no Minister has responded to our request to be a liaison between the Ministerial Association and our organization. The other dark area is the proposed on-line courses. Jessica Motherwell accepted a new professional appointment this Fall and then her parents-in-law were involved in a serious car accident. Betty would like to develop an on-line short version of Cakes for the Queen of Heaven but needs a partner who would enjoy the challenge. Is someone out there willing to respond?

March 8 is International Women's Day. It's a reminder that, although more women have more education, workplace equity has not been achieved. It's a reminder that women's lives are more than mothering but also to appreciate and nurture other types of creativity and achievement. Last year at least 6 congregations and fellowships held a woman-centred service – the goal is to double that number. Please check with your service committee to see if anything has been scheduled. If so, share that event with us. If not, please at least, light a candle during the services closest to that date.

Before closing this newsletter with the six Council members' comments, here are some thoughts about the passing of Nelson Mandela. It might seem strange for a women's association to commemorate a man but Madiba was a clan

leader of the human species. His compassion illuminates all lives, making us more humane.

Here is a brief feminist analysis using the 4 perspectives that frame CUUWA.

Personal: Mandela had 3 consecutive wives (unlike his father who had 4 concurrent wives); each one served him well for a few decades of his life; each is a strong person in her own right. Mandela stated that as he walked out of prison after 27 years, he realized that if he didn't forgive those who had done him wrong, he would remain imprisoned for the rest of his life. How many of us have left "a prison" after many years but remained emotionally imprisoned!

Professional: Mandela believed that, to achieve equity, education was the greatest weapon. In addition, he knew how to use humour, with a style that made us want to laugh and work together. That 'weapon' is as difficult a skill to hone as is compassion – try it!

Political: Mandela was the first black president of South Africa and when he died, many dignitaries travelled to honour him. The Canadian delegation included 5 Prime Ministers; one was Kim Campbell. All were interviewed by Canadian news services except her. Alison Redford, Premier of Alberta, had been a legal advisor during Mandela's imprisonment period; she had one interview. At the Stadium Memorial service, the Mandela family eulogy was presented by his grandson, not the daughter who was an Ambassador. Ponder the implications of the various "solitudes of silences" as Mandela did.

Public: Bill Clinton's favourite Mandela story is the time he observed Mandela greet a blue-eyed white girl at an airport, asking if she knew whom he was. She did. He replied that

she also might one day be president if she worked hard. That goal is one that all of us should work to achieve. Nelson Mandela was the first person to be awarded honorary Canadian citizenship, therefore it is fitting that Canadian women honour his gifts.

R.I.P. Madiba.



Voices of Council members (listed alphabetically by surname):

I have greatly enjoyed the friendship and cooperation of our executive members, mostly at long distance, and the marvelous meeting in Calgary where we met all of you! A heartfelt happy holidays to all, and here's to action and public service in 2014 that will advance women within and outside our beloved denomination.

Gillian Burton, Legal Advisor and Chair By Law Committee, Toronto

PS the Committee had one Fall meeting that resulted in many good suggestions and it will be more active early in 2014.

The Comox Valley Fellowship has revived the Women's Spirit Circle with a nice balance between original founding members and newcomers. The December circle will focus upon holiday customs that reflect women's stories, experiences and traditions. In the Fellowship, we've begun planning an alternative service for the March 8 weekend because it is not a regular service date this year. Our Solstice Service will be December 21, Saturday evening and you all will be sent seasonal greetings. Please take time to feel them upon your cheek!! May more of us enjoy Peace on our Planet and may the Planet itself respond to our Mothering.

Betty Donaldson, Chair, Vancouver Island

Greetings fellow UU women,

Wasn't it fun in Calgary this May! It was a pleasure to meet so many of you from across the country. The generous hospitality that greeted us in Calgary was warm and the program on the Famous Five most stimulating.

I am on the Reproductive Justice Committee which consists of Jane Fox, Martha Wilson, Margaret Linton, with Jessica Motherwell on leave from the committee. We are looking for a project that will excite and involve the CUUWA membership. What social actions do you see taking in reproductive justice? We would love to know. Given the rumblings in the last Conservative policy convention, we fear that Canadian women may be called to action to protect the existing reproductive legislation; we need to be prepared.

OWL support is high on our list, to maintain healthy congregations and families with open minds. Martha is preparing a report on how the OWL program has affected those congregations that have the program; this will consist of anecdotal reporting and analysis of stats. We expect to see that OWL has contributed to the growth of our congregations and hope that distribution of this report will encourage congregations to cultivate an OWL program. If you have a contribution from you or your congregation's experience, Martha logicalprocess@gmail.com would love to hear from you.

The Afripad Lunapad ideas are on hold right now; the idea of connecting the Afripad project to Child Haven is not needed, as

Child Haven has implemented a program to create menstrual products for their and others needs.

In Ottawa, many women are looking forward to the reproductive justice course based on the curriculum offered by the UUA ([link to course on UUA website](#)). This will be offered in the spring, as well as be the topic for the International Women's Day Service. The modules are being adapted for the Canadian context by Rozanne Lépine; these additions will be available to all once the course is completed and evaluated. Wishing you a cozy winter,

Margaret Linton, Vice-Chair and WebWeaver Ottawa

The strength I felt in the room full of UU women at the amazing Pink Tea in Calgary is memorable for me. It's an honour to be secretary of the Council and to witness the dedication of our members.

May 2014 be another banner year for women's leadership globally.

Adina Lyon, Secretary , Winnipeg

Toronto First will be developing a new initiative under the auspices of the CUUWA to create a Social Justice program for Violence Against Women. We will go through the process of becoming a supportive congregation to enable funding collections to be taken once a year to support a charity that serves abused women and girls. In Toronto, some of these are Interval House, Nellies and the Canadian Women's Foundation. It has taken a while to discover how we might serve but I think

this will be a good thing for everyone in our congregation. We will ask for a speaker from one of these organizations to address the congregation once a year around International Women's Day.

Janice Tait, Treasurer. Toronto

It's mid-December as I write, and Halifax is pretty, with a light frosting of snow. The holiday bustle is in full swing, and in my household tempers are usually pretty frayed by dinnertime. During periods like this I'm so thankful to have the UU community and principles to keep me more grounded and focused on what the priorities should be. Right now my to-do list just went over onto a second page; but also this morning I have renewed my resolve to meet the end of the year with a tiny measure of calmness, sanity, and peace. I'm fortunate to have the things that matter most, and I'm committed to trying again in the new year to help heal the problems I'm able, in some small way, to address.

It's good to be a part of this particular group, and I want to send all fellow members a warm greeting and a thank-you for all you do. Happy new year!

Martha Wilson, Atlantic Canada Director

DATES TO MARK ON YOUR NEW APPOINTMENT CALENDAR:

- **March 8 (or thereabout) - Women's Service**
- **June 1 Electronic AGM – join a local cluster**
- **May 25 2015 – Tea and Rights discussion at CUC ACM in Ottawa.**

