

Holiday Season is time for the six month update letter to CUUWA members so GREETINGS from Council members. Please read on for a summary of what we have been doing and for our individual best wishes



(Leaf's Mind – a cutting by Omid Asadi, Manchester UK artist)

The 2014 AGM was a teleconference cluster meeting – quite well attended, given the distances that separate us but we had a presence at the CUC Montreal Convention. Thanks to Caroline Jondahl who set up a lovely tea table on our behalf. Since then, two major activities have highlighted the Council agenda: one was a large donation from the Prairie Women's Gathering; the second is the revision of the 1980 CUC Abortion Resolution Rights that we will present to the 2015 CUC ACM. Our relationship with the Ministerial Association is much stronger and a few membership changes have occurred on Council as well. For more information please go to the CUUWA web page. (cuuwa.org)

Council meets quarterly via teleconference meetings. We have a cross Canada representation, however, we'd like to strengthen the Atlantic Canada participation. Martha Wilson, from Nova Scotia, has stepped down and we do not have a replacement. We welcomed Karen Baxter from Saskatchewan and Rev. Carole Martignaccio, Quebec, thanks to recruitments by Ruth Patrick and Rev. Kathy Sage. We thank Rev Frances Deverell who has stepped down from Council but who remains an active supporter. One of the great achievements of 2014 has been the strong liaison with the Ministerial Association. Another achievement this year was the establishment of the first local chapter at Toronto First by Janice Tait.

Participation in the March 8 women's services increased to 12 congregations and fellowships: **we hope for 20 such participants in 2015**. Please do let us know what your church does to acknowledge women's history and heritage, rights and restitution, achievements and activism. We suspect more is happening locally than has been shared nationally. Dr. Veronica Strong Boag, UBC, is preparing a book on a mid-2th Century Unitarian political leader in Vancouver: Laura Emma Marshall Jamieson. She has asked for information. Probably many other such Unitarian women who were active in other communities across Canada had successes that should be acknowledged. Rev. Kathy and Rev. Carole are piloting a survey about women's issues within our stained glass ceiling (if any) faith community. Vyda Ng remains our anchor at the CUC office and we are so grateful. In the USA, Ellen Spencer retires in December after many years of UUWF pioneering office support.

After many years, the Prairie Women's Gathering has closed. It was a jewel in the Western Canada District crown and sustained many women during the second wave of the movement when we were exploring spirituality from our particular lens of experience. CUUWA was the **fortunate recipient of a \$3000 donation**, thus we now have a foundation upon which to build some supportive policies and programs. We'd like not to deplete this capital but to build it into a substantive amount.

Lead by the Reproductive Justice Committee (Margaret Linton, Jane Fox, Gillian Burton) and supported by Betty Donaldson, considerable time has been dedicated to revising the 1980 CUC Resolution on Abortion Rights. Unitarians were early supporters during the 1970s and 80s debate on the abortion issue. However, the closure of the New Brunswick Morgentaler clinic this year and the ongoing private members bills in the House of Commons, plus the lack of any clinics in PEI are flags to remind us that ongoing monitoring is necessary. Therefore we have updated the CUC Resolution and **will present a revision at the 2015 ACM**. We hope for support from many delegates. Please do go to the CUUWA web page for details and ask your delegate to support this motion. In consultation with a doctor and councilor who work with women inquiring about abortions, we know that the next step is to articulate a statement to values that would provide support for women within our faith community who have faced this decision. All Unitarians owe a debt to those who worked so diligently during 2014 on these documents.

Our three wise women – now a CUUWA tradition, remind all members that giving is important but do put yourself on the list of people to be loved. Cherish the winter season and yourselves. May there be peace in our hearts as well in our homes as 2014 concludes. **May 2015 bring sweetness, illumination and mystery into our lives.**



DATES TO MARK ON YOUR NEW APPOINTMENT CALENDAR:

- March 9 (or thereabout) - Women's Service
- May 16 – CUUWA AGM with Aboriginal Tea and Rights Speaker at the Ottawa CUC ACM. Support the revised CUC Resolution on Abortion Rights.
- May 18 – consider a Rideau Canal trip, post conference. Contact Betty if interested.

Blessed Be - from all members of the 2014 CUUWA Council.

Betty Donaldson, President & Chair

In November, together with five women, I've been experimenting with the revised Cakes for the Queen of Heaven course, exploring possibilities of making a Canadian version an on line course. It's been exciting – especially to realize how much Canadian women have contributed during the past 25 years.

Margaret Linton, Webmistress, 2015 AGM organizer

Holiday greetings to all from Ottawa. Planning of the CUUWA Tea and AGM in Ottawa is underway. We hope you are planning to come to Ottawa (it will be tulip season) and share time with your UU sisters. We promise the snow will be gone!

Claudette Commanda is the guest speaker; she is of the Algonquin people and granddaughter of Chief William Commanda. Her career has been in law and gender studies and she is a part-time professor at the Institute of Women's Studies and the Aboriginal Studies Program at the University of Ottawa.

Working on the Abortion Rights resolution has been a great learning experience for me; it is only when we started pulling facts together that my fears about the erosion of abortion rights in Canada were confirmed. Your support via email has been most positive and I am looking forward taking this forward at the CUC meeting in May.

Jane Fox and I, as members of the Reproductive Justice Committee, are looking for like minded women to join us. Our mandate is broad, which means any aspect of Reproductive Justice that a new member wants to address, is welcomed. Jane and I (and Martha who has recently left the committee) are particularly interested OWL and sexual health education.

Bonne année et bonne santé

Adina Lyon, Secretary and Membership Registrar

Greetings for a happy Christmas season surrounded by supportive people. Just when we think that women's rights are well understood, we're once again faced with reality. Let's be grateful in 2015 for groups such as CUUWA.

Janice Tait, Treasurer

The treasury is healthy. We have a balance of \$6704.96 on account. We have discussed the possibility of investing a portion of our money to provide interest which could be used for charitable purposes. We have a paid-up membership of 34 people.

Gillian Burton, Chair, By Law Committee

The blessings of our Unitarian faith, strong hope for all women, love of friends and family, joy of this season and the future - this is what I celebrate, and wish for you all this holiday season!

Karen Baxter, Prairie Member at Large

As I sit here looking out my window it is the first cold snap of winter (-31). But even though it is cold I could not live without snow at Christmas. I feel that Christmas should be clean and white, with soft snowflakes and crystal ice. A magical place, a place where you can wrap yourself up in the season of Christmas. I wish for you all these wonderful feelings of Christmas.

Atlantic Member at Large Need someone!!!

Kathy Sage & Carole Martignacco Ministerial Liaison

My Season Wish is that as Unitarians and Universalists we deepen our understanding and lived application of our UU Principles and Sources. May our Sources enliven our direct experience, awaken our Prophetic words and deeds, broaden our wisdom, love more justly all neighbours, quicken our reasoning, and harmonize our consumption with nature's fragility. Kathy.