



## How to Promote Your Lay Chaplaincy Services

# THE POWER OF WEB SITES

Your congregation's qualified Lay Chaplains are eager to perform services not only for your congregation but for the community at large. But how do you get the word out to people about what you offer? The web is an inexpensive way to let people know about all your services. Many lay chaplaincy committees provide sections to their congregation's web master to be posted as part of the church web site. You may want to look at the content through the eyes of someone unfamiliar with you and our religion. Think of the questions they would have and, most importantly, how to create a connection that will have them at least give you a call or send an email (increasingly popular way to ask for information as it's very non-threatening).

Ask your congregation's webmaster to be sure that key words like "wedding" and "funeral" are in the text several times on these pages. That increases the chance that someone looking for someone to perform a wedding or a funeral will find you using a search engine. Your webmaster may have other

ideas of ways to increase the chance that people looking for your services will find you easily. (When you get a request that came initially through the website, you could ask people what words they used to search.)

### Think of the benefit to the person you are helping.

Consider why someone would use your service instead of that of a traditional minister or a civil authority. Here are some of the points you may want to make. This is only a starting point - feel free to add more information you feel would be meaningful to your clients.

### INTRODUCTION

Each lay chaplain should say a little bit about themselves. Why did you become a lay chaplain? What are some of your special strengths?

(Photos of lay chaplains performing a range of services—with permission of all those in the photos—can speak strongly about the flexibility and attention to detail our lay chaplains offer.)

### Revising or Creating Your Web Pages

Here is a sample of text

you might adapt for your own congregation. You may find it helpful to also browse at what other congregations say on their websites. Here are some particularly worth looking at are:

First Unitarian—Victoria  
First Unitarian—Toronto  
First Unitarian—Ottawa  
Unitarian Fellowship of London

*(Congregations are all linked to [www.cuc.ca](http://www.cuc.ca). Click Congregations.)*

Printing out copies of the pages from these (or other sites) to take to a Lay Chaplaincy Committee meeting or, if possible, having them available at a meeting focused primarily on marketing and outreach can help the assembled group to see what fits for your congregation's program.

### SERVICES OFFERED:

#### Weddings

Take the concern and uncertainty out of planning your wedding service

Our lay chaplains help you create a personal service full of meaning for you, your beloved and your family. We can provide all kinds of materials and suggestions to help you get started. But the important

thing is, we can work together to incorporate the music and the words that will express your unique love for each other.

Unitarian lay chaplains are proud to perform marriages for any two people who wish to dedicate themselves to each other. This includes same-sex marriages. Also, if yours is an interfaith marriage or one involving two cultures, we can help you honour both traditions. For Unitarians, all religious traditions have wisdom and meaning in them and we have experience at incorporating a range of traditions to weave together a ceremony that is meaningful to all participants.

A sensitive, caring lay chaplain can make all the difference on your special day. Let's talk about making your wedding service exactly the way you want it to be. Our lay chaplains are trained by our national religious organization, the Canadian Unitarian Council, and registered to perform marriages in the province of \_\_\_\_\_.

Contact us at  
(name) (phone number) or (email address).

Continued on page 4



# COME TO SAINT JOHN—MAY 19 CUC LAY CHAPLAINCY DAY

## SHARED MINISTRY DAYS

On the Thursday and Friday prior to the CUC Annual Conference and Meeting, CUC, and some of our associate members such as CUULCA and CUSJ sponsor pre-conference workshops and meetings.

### CUC LAY CHAPLAINCY DAY

Friday is sponsored by the CUC's Lay Chaplaincy Committee provides enrichment training opportunities.

Morning session will be facilitated by Sherril Gilbert (St. John's, NL) as a sharing of "sacred moments".

10:30-2:45

### Right Relations: Lay Chaplains and their Congregations

This workshop will explore and develop the relationships which Lay Chaplains have with their congregation, and their Lay Chaplaincy Committee.

In any group of UUs we're unlikely to have complete agreement on what constitutes *Right* (or wrong!) *Relations*, and many areas involve personal judgment which is more a matter of individual fine-tuning than of clear and rigid rules. Nevertheless, some understandings and commitments follow from nomination to, and acceptance of, the Lay Chaplaincy role.

This session is an opportunity for the kind of *sharing* which contributes to a Lay Chaplain's development, for more systematic *training*, familiarising and comfort with the ethical guidelines of the CUC, and member congregations, and for the *education* of other participants in this module.

Lay chaplains, retired or prospective lay chaplains as well as congregational lay chaplaincy committee members are all welcome to attend this 2.5-hour session.

Registration is required, however there is no fee for those who are lay chaplains, retired lay chaplains, ministers, ministerial students, lay chaplaincy committees or prospective lay chaplains who are sponsored by their congregation.

**Facilitator:** Rev. Anne Treadwell

In the after-break, afternoon period, Kim Turner will present information on the legal issues involved with lay chaplaincy. Kim was president in 2001 when the resolutions that changed the program came on stream. (Back by popular demand!)

**Date and Time:** Friday, May 19 9-5

**Registration fee** - no fee for current, retired and selected lay chaplains and lay chaplaincy committee members. Others welcome \$50 if registered for conference; \$75 if not.

## UPCOMING LAY CHAPLAINCY TRAINING WORKSHOPS

DESIGNING AND LEADING RITES OF PASSAGE	First Unitarian Fellowship of Nanaimo, BC	MARCH 10 - 12, 2006
DESIGNING AND LEADING RITES OF PASSAGE	First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, ON	APRIL 28 - 30, 2006
FINDING THE POWER WITHIN	First Unitarian Church of Hamilton, ON	APRIL 28-29, 2006
THE CHALLENGING MEMORIAL SERVICE	Central or Eastern Region	<b>TBA</b>
LAY CHAPLAINCY SHARED MINISTRY DAY	Saint John, NB	MAY 19, 2006

For more details check [www.cuc.ca/lay\\_chaplaincy](http://www.cuc.ca/lay_chaplaincy)

Would you like training "close to home"? Your congregation can host a training program at your site. With 3 months' notice, we'll provide the facilitators and advertising. You handle registration and provide space, food, arrange billets and assist the facilitators. Costs are reimbursed from registration fees and CUC Training Fund. Email: [lcc@cuc.ca](mailto:lcc@cuc.ca)



## DEEPENING, MATURING AND GROWING A TRAINING-RETREAT FOR LAY CHAPLAINS

**Retreat Goal:** To assist you, our lay chaplains, to deepen your self-awareness, mature in role and identity and to grow spiritually on the job.

As a lay chaplain of your congregation, you know better than others that the role and expectations placed upon you are great, and can sometimes lead you into uncharted territory. As you lead others through intense and emotional transformative spiritual rites, how is your spirit nourished? This training-retreat will offer time for self-reflection, systems analysis of self both within and outside the congregation, for developing problem-solving tools. The weekend format will also provide an opportunity for rest and spiritual renewal among colleagues.

### LEADERS:

#### Rev. M. Raymond Drennan

Ray Drennan is an ordained UU minister and family therapist (AAMFT) who has lived and worked in several other countries (Ireland, Scotland, Mauritius & U.S.A.) and within several religious communities (Canadian and Mauritian Presbyterian Churches, United Church of Christ (USA), and the United Church of Canada. Ray has experience in community ministry, community development, institutional chaplaincy, interfaith-intercultural dialogue, family therapy and spiritual direction. In 2005 he completed a ten-year ministry at the Unitarian Church of Montreal and presently, along with his partner Ann and their two youngest children, owns and manages an inn/ spiritual retreat centre in Bouctouche, New Brunswick.

#### Nicoline Guerrier

#### Lay Chaplain, Unitarian Church of Montreal

Nicoline is a Lay Chaplain with the Unitarian Church of Montreal, and is delighted to be able to offer rites of passage to both the Anglophone and Francophone populations of her region. Most of the francophones with whom she plans rites of passage are astonished to discover the kind of collaborative approach to the creation of ritual that the Unitarian Universalist tradition offers. She is not sure whether francophones will eventually attend the UCM in greater

numbers, but in the meantime she finds the lay chaplaincy program an exciting way to introduce her faith to others.

As well as being a Lay Chaplain, Nicoline works as a Social Worker in a "CLSC" (community health centre.) She has specialized in therapeutic work with survivors of sexual assault and child sexual abuse, and has also worked in schools, with pregnant women, and with families at risk. Her current position leads her to work primarily with an immigrant population. She also volunteers in a literacy program at the school attended by her two children.

Whether working as a Lay Chaplain, a Social Worker, or a volunteer teaching children to read, engagement with others has deepened Nicoline's belief that there is a sacred dimension to all moments of authentic contact. Working collaboratively to create rites of passage has reinforced this belief: When the lay chaplain models deep listening and respectful presence to all points of view, participants are led to do this more easily for each other. Surprisingly, the end result is that the process of creation itself becomes as spiritually nourishing as the final event.

Having designed and led workshops for healthcare providers, volunteers, and parents, Nicoline is particularly interested in the ways in which deep and evolving knowledge of self, combined with a realistic understanding of role - and the limits to our various roles - enable us to engage more effectively with others. She is also passionate about facilitating any activity that helps us each to discover and honour our unique gifts.

A lifelong UU, Nicoline was raised at the Unitarian Congregation of South Peel, then later at First Unitarian in Toronto, and has been an active participant in worship services at her current congregation since 1989. She tries to find time to indulge her other great loves: yoga, running, and cross country skiing.

**Dates:** 2006 TBA—Please contact [lcc@cuc.ca](mailto:lcc@cuc.ca) to express interest.

**Registration Fee** for full weekend accommodation and meals will be between \$150-\$200



Continued from page 1

Note: Toronto First is now using an online form to make it easy for their lay chaplaincy coordinator receive information and send to the lay chaplains. They are finding that this is working well both for those inquiring and for the congregation and lay chaplains.

Both Toronto First and Ottawa First have extensive materials for couples to use to choose their own readings and ceremony. You may want to link to those sites or create your own resources. Do consider copyright issues before copying from others, however.

### **Funeral and Memorial Services**

Paying tribute to your loved one should mean more than a canned, one-size-fits-all series of prayers. Our lay chaplains will work with you to find out what kind of person we are honouring – their personality, their interests, what they were most proud of accomplishing. We want to help you and your family through this difficult time by creating a ceremony that will allow you to start your journey of grieving in your own best possible way.

In situations where a death occurred some time ago but was never formally commemorated, we can help you create a memorial

service to properly recognize and celebrate your loved one's life. This may bring the survivors closer together and create closure for those seeking a better ending.

As Unitarians, we can suggest and incorporate readings and prayers from a range of religious and contemporary sources that are comforting and or/ uplifting for you and your family.

We are more than willing to deliver services in special places that are meaningful to you or that were special to your loved one.

We will respond quickly to your requests. Our congregation has (two) lay chaplains and is also connected with other Unitarian congregations in the area in the unusual circumstance that the date and place chosen by you is not possible.

### **Child Namings and Blessings**

What a thrill it is to help families welcome your new arrival into the community, and to formally recognize the friends and family who will contribute to raising this child with you. We encourage the active inclusion of siblings and any others who will be important in this child's life. We will help you create a service of hope and

joy that honours your values and provides a vision for the future.

### **Divorce Ceremonies**

The end of a partnership is also a beginning. Whether you and your former partner hope to remain friends, or whether that is no longer possible, we can help you and those you care about recognize the significance of this event in your life. Let's create closure and a constructive path for the future.

### **New Home Blessings**

Your new home is a new start in your life. We can help you and your family create a meaningful ceremony to get started in your new space and new community in a positive, forward-thinking way. We can also help you deal with any grief that remains around leaving the old home and old neighbourhood.

### **Other Rites of Passage**

Unitarian Lay Chaplains can also work with you to provide meaningful services for events both joyous and challenging, including:

- Coming of age and special transitions, whether for you that means turning 21, 40, 65 or 80
- Graduation
- A significant anniversary/ renewal of vows

- Coming Out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or transgendered

- Moving in with someone

- The loss of a pet

- The end of a friendship or relationship

The end of a career or retirement

Please feel free to discuss your special needs with one of our lay chaplains. You will find us open and responsive to your concerns.

(Provide your contact information again)

Note: If offering ceremonies such as this are new to your congregation, the CUC recommends preparing new terms of reference and lay chaplain contracts before embarking on this new direction. Ideally, the whole congregation would be involved in some way, whether through an annual general meeting or through a worship service exploring the significance of your congregation offering these services to the wider community (and your own congregation if considered appropriate.)

*Author, Tammy Laber will be doing a presentation at the Mid-Winter Retreat near Greater Toronto in February. For more information, contact [lcc@cuc.ca](mailto:lcc@cuc.ca). Details of the event will be posted at: <http://www.cuc.ca/gta/events/index.htm>*