

## **DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL SERVICES – EAST 2005 ANNUAL REPORT 2005**

It is a real pleasure to report that the Regional Networking Group (RNGs), consisting of staff and Networking and Service Consultant volunteers continues to grow in its ability to meet congregational needs. On 28 occasions in 37 workshops and meetings, members from every one of the congregations in Eastern and Central Regions have attended programs and meetings delivered or facilitated by members of the team.

We have also provided information, advice, coaching and an empathetic ear by phone, e-mail and in-person on many occasions. CUC consultations focussed on a variety of issues and interests including; interim ministry, building expansion, worship, congregational leadership, ministerial transitions, finances, and strategic planning.

Feedback and evaluations from the congregations indicate that these services and connections are useful and that they provide concrete support and that they help people feel connected to our association of congregations.

Highlights for 2005 include the ongoing success of the Dreams and Dollars program, CU\*UL School and our Regional Fall Gatherings. Evidence of the Dreams & Dollars work is visible in many ways. More of our congregations are considering how they might model generosity for their members. Even though CU\*UL school was held in Calgary, some of the leaders for the program were from Central Region and there was participation from the Avalon congregation! The Regional Fall Gatherings continue to provide members from congregations with a valuable and appreciated opportunity to come together

to learn, sing, laugh, worship and network.

Electronic communication is an important tool for the two regions. Over 500 people receive the electronic versions of my congregational mailing messages. Themes that the Central & Eastern RNGs have explored in the past year include: Shared Ministry, Change, Congregational Growth, Whole Church, Healthy Congregations, and Transitions. The RNGs have been considering the development needs of congregations, based on observation and input and are working to develop programs and foci for the coming year that will provide support where it is most needed.

Early in 2006 members of the RNG team and others participated in facilitator training for the 'Healthy Congregation' program developed by the noted congregational systems theorist Peter Steinke. We'll be offering workshops, materials and supports, designed to help each of our congregations better understand how to work from strengths, to keep focused on their mission and to handle the inevitable conflicts that arise. Shared Ministry continues to be a focus and members can expect programs and material in support of this. Programs designed to help congregational leaders explore the connection between Vision and Vitality are also being planned. Further development of the non-residential components of the Canadian Unitarian Universalist Leadership Program (CU\*UL) are also anticipated. We believe that additional leadership training that augments and complements the CU\*UL School program will be a

critical factor in congregational health and vitality.

I find myself grateful for the work of congregational leaders – for the work they do in support of their beloved communities. The RNG volunteers who make the CUC’s work possible are a great joy to me. I believe that our congregations can, with appropriate

support, continue to grow in their ability to offer vital liberal religion. I am honoured and humbled by the opportunity to be a part of our National organization, and in helping to make our shared future possible.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Thomson, Director  
of Regional Services – East

<b>EASTERN REGION</b>		
<b>17 Workshops/Meeting Facilitations/Visits in 9 congregations</b>		
Congregation	Topic/Presenter	Date
Montreal	Ministerial Transition (Exit & Transition Interviews) – Linda Thomson	March
Ottawa Fellowship	Strategic Planning – Sherril Gilbert	April
North Hatley	Dreams & Dollars – Grace Flesher	May
Hamilton	Regional Information & Networking Session at Annual Conference & Meeting	May
Fredericton	Communication & Conflict – Glory Ressler	June
Montreal	Search Committee Retreat – Marnie Morrow	August
Avalon	Dreams & Dollars – Linda Thomson	August
Halifax	Board Retreat – Elisabeth Bailey	August
Montreal	Interim Ministry Start-up – Elisabeth Bailey	August
PEI	Leadership Coaching – Mary Bennett & Linda Thomson	Oct.
Kingston	Leadership/Board Retreat – Marnie Morrow	Oct.
Montreal  <i>90 participants from 10 (of 11) congregations</i>	Regional Fall Gathering Not Just Us, But Justice – Bob Stevenson En Français – Lucie-Marie Castonquay-Bower & Val Bourdon Four World Worship – Sherril Gilbert & Terry Reilly Passion for Possibilities– Kathy Sage & Linda Thomson Youth Program – Paul Hunt & Friends Young Fun & Jr. Youth– Emily West Cummins	November

**CENTRAL REGION**

**21 Workshops/Meeting Facilitations/Visits delivered in 10 congregations**

Congregation	Topic/Presenter	Date
Elora-Fergus	Sharing our Faith – Charles McNeil	February
Niagara	Conflict is a Gift – Linda Thomson	March
Toronto	Ministerial Transition (Exit & Transition Interviews)– Linda Thomson	March
Hamilton	Dreams & Dollars – Grace Flesher	March
Niagara	Process & Planning – Charles McNeil	March
Don Heights <i>(18 participants from 5 congregations)</i>	Board Leadership - Glory Ressler	March
Guelph <i>(14 participants from 5 congregations)</i>	Membership Integration – Linda Thomson	March
Waterloo	Meeting Facilitation - Marnie Morrow	May
Hamilton	Regional Information & Networking Session at Annual Conference & Meeting	May
Waterloo	Ministerial Transition (Exit & Transition Interviews)– Linda Thomson	July
Peterborough	Ministerial Transition (Exit & Transition Interviews)– Linda Thomson	August
London	Board Retreat /Meeting Facilitation – Linda Thomson	August
Toronto	Vision Process Support – Marnie Morrow	Sept.
Waterloo	Interim Ministry Start-up – Charles McNeil	Sept.
South Peel	Board Retreat/Meeting Facilitation – Charles McNeil	Sept.
Olinda  68 participants from 14 (of 16)	Regional Fall Gathering Communicating with the Community – Linda Thomson Type & Your Congregation – Charles McNeil Passion for Possibilities– Marnie Morrow Youth Program – Nate Ohl & Friends Young Fun & Jr. Youth– June Gilbertson	November
Youth Advisory Group	Meeting Facilitation – Monica Bennett	December