



Busking on the Causeway!

Canada's National YRUU Newsletter

A Project for Every Month

Are you or your youth group looking for a project? Would you like to help a variety of different causes over the course of the year? Check out this list! Of course you don't have to do them on the assigned month, you can do them anytime!

Help Wanted!

You! And you! Sitting there reading this, yes YOU! I want you to help me! With what you ask? Why, with this wonderful amazing creation we all call Busking on the Causeway. You don't need to help on every issue, and you don't need to give more time than



I WANT YOU

you want to! Just do what you can and consider me forever indebted to you! Write an article, format a page, send in a picture. Anything! Everything! All of it is good and I could use the help. You know you wanna!

~Jessica!

All Year: Do the one-tonne challenge! Go through the one-tonne challenge websites (The One-Tonne Challenge for Youth: <http://www.co2zilla.ca/home.html>, or The government of Canada's website: <http://www.climatechange.gc.ca/onetonne/english/index.asp?pid=50>) to get some ideas, and brainstorm as a group which actions you can do to help combat climate change. Have each person make up a summary sheet of all the actions they commit too, and hold each other to your commitments! You can also make up posters for your church and/or school with ideas on them of how to cut down on green house gas emissions, or even hold a workshop for members of your congregation or for students and teachers at your school about climate change and how to cut down your GHG's.

December 2005: With the federal election coming up fast, take the chance to learn more about electoral reform and proportional representation. Check out www.fairvotecanada.org for information on different types of proportional representation, and to find out why our current system is much less than perfect. Then get involved: if you live in a province where fair vote Canada already has a campaign, print off their petition and get signatures; and if you live in another part of Canada, make your own petition and do the same! You could hold a workshop at school or at church about electoral reform, and make informational posters to post around your city, in your church and at school.

January 2006: Find out about fair trade <http://www.transfair.ca/> – what it is and why it's so important. Make up postcards to drop off at coffee shops and grocery stores that have an explanation of fair trade on the back and a request that the company consider offering more fair trade products. See the social justice website for a sample postcard (www.cuc.ca/youth/socialjustice) Have a space for a signature and ask your friends and family members to sign some and drop them off wherever they buy coffee, tea, sugar, cocoa and chocolate.

February 2006: Help combat HIV/AIDS. Run a fundraiser or an awareness event or both! Check out this website (<http://www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/share.html>) for stories of what other people have done to support the cause – then try one of their ideas, or come up with one of your own!
~Chris Michell

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Pride Rainbow Project- New Direction

The Pride Rainbow Project (www.priderainbowproject.com) is going in a new direction this year. Now that Same-Sex marriage has been won in Canada, we're broadening our horizons to support GBLTQ rights in many different ways. Our new mandate is "To support equal treatment and equal opportunity for people who are often marginalized or discriminated against based on their sexual orientation, gender expression and/or identity; through use of the banner as a rallying point."

We are currently looking for enthusiastic individuals or groups who would be willing to form a PRP Chapter. We would like to have at least one chapter in each of the four regions of Canada, which correspond almost exactly to the CUC regions, but include the territories, as well as a parallel projects in the United States, and these chapters would each receive a section of the Pride Rainbow Project banner to use in their region.

The major issues we'll be focusing on are Trans Rights, support for marginalized youth, AIDS awareness and prevention, and encouraging other nations to promote equality, including equal marriage. Each chapter will receive a section (approximately 100 to 125 feet) of the banner, and is asked to be a contact point for organizers of events and marches that want the banner to be present, and for renting out the banner for weddings and other events. In addition, Chapters can decide for themselves if they want to hold sewing bees to lengthen the banner, hold their own events, and actively seek out venues for the banner. Currently we only have a commitment from one group to form a Chapter (Central Region), and a group that is forming in the United States to do similar work there. We really need your help to get more chapters started! If you are interested in starting a chapter, or want more information, please contact us at priderainbowproject@gmail.com To see if any new chapters have been started, and to get other updates and information, visit our website at www.priderainbowproject.com

~Chris Michell

Pride Rainbow Project Executive



Banner Parade at the Hamilton CanUdle, May 2005

Social Justice Survey Information

Have you taken the Social Justice Survey yet? Did you know it's now completely online? Go to the Canadian Youth Social Justice website www.cuc.ca/youth/socialjustice to take the survey. It's also available in printable versions for you to take with you to youth group.

~Chris Michell

Youth Advisor Network Announcement

Hi everyone,

Samaya Oakley, Youth Coordinator at North Shore Unitarian Congregation in North Vancouver, a former adult member of the Youth Advisory Group, as well as experienced continental Youth Leadership trainer, OWL trainer, adult coordinator on BC YAC and CanUdle national youth conference staff has offered to do a monthly e-mail information update to the youth advisors serving UU congregations across Canada.

In order to successfully reach as many advisors as possible, we need a roster of all youth advisors currently serving in Canada. Folks trained at both Basic Youth Advisor Trainings in Vancouver and London this year will be added, and all those who choose to be connected in this way will also be invited after attending a training in the future.

However, we need a list of all 'active' youth advisors who are currently serving congregations' youth groups.

It would be very helpful if the regional YACS or congregational youth groups, could send a list of all youth advisors within our regions to Samaya.

If you would like to be added to the list, or want to suggest this to your religious education committee chair, religious education professional (DRE) and/or minister, please let me know, or e-mail Samaya directly at oakleyfam@shaw.ca.

Sylvia Bass West

sylvia@cuc.ca

519-472-7073

The Religion That Caught My Eye

Many people have their different places outside of home and school where they can go and learn life skills, connect to others like them, and have a grand old time in general. I found a place for myself in Young Religious Unitarian Universalism (YRUU), the youth body of Unitarian Universalism.

A Very, Very Brief History of Unitarian Universalism

Unitarian Universalism is an interesting religion. Its main symbol today is a Chalice, which is just a lit candle or lamp in a bowl. Before the 60's it was two separate Christian faiths but today it is liberal and open and in addition to being based on the Judeo-Christian tradition, tries to learn from other world religions. Unitarianism was not a powerful force in Christianity since neither Catholics nor Protestants were sympathetic to it. Unitarianism rejected the Trinity of God and did not view Jesus as divine, and therefore Unitarians were burned along with witches and homosexuals. Universalism was the view that God was merciful and would not send anyone to hell and that all would be redeemed. Neither of these religions were particularly strong in Europe. Unitarianism was strong in England and Transylvania and both religions took off upon reaching the New World. The Unitarian faith became quite large in the United States, with members such as Thomas Jefferson. It's a bit of an oddball religion, and in the 60's with the fusion of the two, it began to move away from its roots and to create new traditions.

How I Got Started

My connection with Unitarianism started in 1999 when my parents, both architects, were hired to build the new Unitarian church in Mississauga. When I first started with the Unitarian 'Sunday School', we were taught a sexual health/drug education program. I really learned a lot, and they didn't use tacky videos in unrealistic situations.

When I entered Grade 9 at school I also entered the most life changing organization I have experienced, Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU). Within a few months of beginning, my church in Mississauga hosted a mini-con (a one night youth conference) and I was hooked for the rest of my life.

At high school I felt out of place, having come from a liberal alternative middle school of 60 kids, to a school of 2000, but in the YRUU community I felt safe immediately. At the mini-con I was standing outside the door of my church and a guy in a cloak walked up and greeted me. It was a bit scary, quite new, but hey it was cool. A few weekends later, I found myself going to a conference in Ottawa by VIA rail. When I walked into the UU church in Ottawa, I had my arms pinned behind my back and a V drawn on my forehead with red and black sharpies. At first I was shocked and I didn't know what to do and I looked around. Others looked back at me with sharpie marks on their faces and then I found out that the 'V' was for Con-Virgin (i.e. my first official youth conference). I suppose that means that by now I am a slut. With all of this I felt like I had come home.

"No We're Not a Cult"

Since I am very enthusiastic about this part of my life I tell many people about it, and inevitably I get 'so you're part of a cult' or 'so you're part of a *sex* cult.' I wish I was part of a sex cult, but I'm not, we just become very comfortable with being around other people and not being afraid to talk about things that are important to us.

The worships at night are what connect and fuse this community through spirituality, and the openness and freedom to be who and what you are, giving people confidence and allowing you to begin to truly 'find' yourself. Although it's hard to explain worship I'll give it a shot. They are usually at night, in the dark with only a Chalice as light and involve both introspection with readings from around the world, and meditations, as well as connections outwards through people sharing stories of happy or sad things. The sheer range of different activities that worship encompasses means that it can't be put completely into words other than being to say it is about community, sharing and love.

Youth Governance: The Committee Lives On

This is not to say that being YRUU is all fun and games. There is much more to this youth community. One recent Calgary youth project was the creation of a rainbow banner over 500 feet long, to support same-sex marriage. This banner was taken to PRIDE parades all across Canada and was sent to Ottawa for rallies on Parliament Hill.

Young Religious Unitarian Universalism is a continental group and so there are levels of youth governance committees at each level. This makes the youth community more grassroots and youth driven, and lets you get involved with people from across North America. I have had the privilege of being on some of these committees. For Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritimes I am on the Youth Adult Committee, and am the representative to the New York State equivalent. This has let me give back to this great community through work, as well as giving me great experience working in groups.

One of the things I love about being part of this religion is the way that we keep looking at our views. We strive to always question our beliefs so nothing is outdated or redundant. Currently the Unitarian Universalist Association is reviewing the youth structures, since it's been 25 years since the last in-depth restructuring. These are exciting times for me since it means that we get to structure away problems in the system, and I get to be the Canadian on the Taskforce and get to know a lot of American youth.

I love being a YRUU. It has given me so much during my teenage years. It's not for everyone, but I couldn't go without it.
~Tom Rylett

Staff Applications for CanUudle VI Listserves

All right everyone! It's that time of year!! Staff Applications for CanUudleVI are coming out soon, in fact, they are in with this CUC mailing and now on the web! CanUudleVI is in beautiful Saint John, NB, May 19-22, 2006. They can use all the help and staff they can get. It's fairly simple to apply for a position, and for more information you can contact Saille Bishop-Legowski or me (Jessica Renikka) and I'll get the information for you!

~cuc-youth@yahoogroups.com For Canadian YRUUs. To subscribe, send a blank email to cuc-youth-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

~cuc-youth-news@yahoogroups.com Receive monthly news via email about what's happening across Canada. To subscribe, send a blank email to cuc-youth-news-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

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Websites:

www.cuc.ca/youth

www.uua.org/yruu

If you know of more websites that should be here Email me!

Making Contact With Me:

Social Email: goldilocks_301@hotmail.com

Busking Related: busking@cuc.ca

Why did the UU cross the road?
To support the chicken in its
search for its own path.

"Arguing with a Unitarian Universalist is like mud wrestling a pig. Pretty soon you realize the pig likes it." ~Enjoyable!



Editor's Note:

This has certainly been an experience. I give mucho thanks to Saille Bishop-Legowski for giving me this opportunity. It was really fun to watch this coming together. Thanks to everyone who submitted articles, especially Chris(who wrote about half of 'em!) Anyone who wants to help out give me a jingle, it's definitely worth the effort. If any of you have any cool ideas about columns or stories, even if you don't have the time to write them, contact me and I'll see what I can do.

*Peace, Love, and Joy
to you all!
Jessica!!*

