



The Don Heights Bulletin

December 2011

Volume 57, Issue 4

Sunday Services, 10:30 a.m.

December 4th at 10:30 a.m.

Community as a Bridge

Presenter: Carly Gaylor

Service Leader: Beryl Hunter

Music: Nick Nanos and the Don Heights Choir



The spectrum of charity to social service to social justice can be challenging to navigate when choosing social actions. In this service I will explore the intersection of community and social justice through my work at Welcome Inn.

RE Topic: Love

COFFEE GROUP 4

December 11th at 10:30 a.m.



Paradox

Presenter: Wayne Walder

Service Leader: Germaine Kovary

Music: Nick Nanos and the Don Heights Choir

It conquers the tiger, it conquers the lion, and it conquers the enraged bull..... They all fall, overcome at its feet..... What is it..... ?

COFFEE GROUP 5

RE Topic: Learning About Different Faiths

Amnesty International

We will be writing postcards to prisoners of conscience after the service on December 11. Don Heights will collect stamps and mail them.

~ Linda Schofield

Don Heights Annual Christmas Party

Friday, December 2, 2011 at 6 pm. at Don Heights

Everyone is welcome. Spend a pleasant evening with old and new friends. Pick up some small gifts. Pot luck dinner, lots of music, and Christmas craft sale.

Please rsvp to Don Heights by November 30 to 416-444-8839 or Email: office@donheights.ca

For further information, contact Judy Newman.



December 18th at 7:00 p.m.

Spirits of Christmas

Service Leaders: Robert Bray, Sharyn Devine, Ellen Jamal, Germaine Kovary and Linda Schofield

Music: Nick Nanos and the Don Heights Choir

This year our evening service will be one of exploring the meanings of Christmas through characters embodying the Essence of Christmas and various Spirits of Christmas. We will consider our religious heritage from the beginning story to our present understanding.

Join us in the singing of a few of our favourite carols with special music performed by Nick Nanos and the Don Heights Choir.

Contributions to the mitten tree will benefit the Agincourt Community Service Association (ACSA) and we will end with our traditional Moravian Love Feast.

COFFEE GROUP 6

December 25th at 10:30 a.m.

Presenter: Rose Perri and other poetry readers.

Music: Rob Sutherland



There will be music and there will be poetry! Rose Perri will begin with a poem she has created about Christmas, accompanied by Rob Sutherland on piano. You are invited to bring and read a Christmas poem.

11:00am - Christmas Day Brunch

Brunch will follow our short Sunday Service.

It will be pot luck and there will be a sign-up for your contribution at the back of the room.

COFFEE GROUP 1

CANVASS 2012

"Pennies from Heaven but Dollars from Us"

Just a reminder that by the time you see this notice, the end of our canvass will be less than a week away. Please remember to complete your pledge form and return it to my attention in the envelope provided. It would be wonderful if this year we had 100% return by December 4!

Thanks,
Ruth Plumpton

Don Heights Unitarian Congregation

Don Heights is a resilient, welcoming community of diverse individuals, promoting love, reason and freedom in religion, fostering lifelong spiritual growth and acting for social justice and the environment.

***Freedom in religion;
Justice in action.***

18 Wynford Drive, Suite 102
Sunday Services Suite 103
Toronto, ON M3C 3S2
Phone: 416-444-8839
Email: office@donheights.ca
Web: www.donheights.ca

The Don Heights office is open
Monday to Friday
from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Board of Directors

Co-President - Margo Holland
Co-President - Germaine Kovary
Vice-President - Robert Bray
Treasurer - Ruth Plumpton
Secretary - Jane Robson

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Ellen Jamal
Lidia Labate
Jeanne Lovell
Judy Newman

Caring Chair

Margo Holland

Lay Chaplains

Margo Holland
Judy Newman

Editorial Committee

Sharyn Devine
Lorna Weigand

Office Administrator

Christine Cover



This month's column was written
by Board member Robert Bray

In her article in the October bulletin, Ellen Jamal referred to herself as being a "newly minted" member of the Board.... well this month you are hearing from a "retread", one who has been coming to Don Heights for more than 40 years and on the Board at least three times!

And yes, Don Heights has changed a lot during that time. In the late sixties we had our own building; a plain simple box of a thing, on Antrim Crescent at Kennedy Road. Designed by Parkin Architects and not much more than four walls and a roof, it was "a cheapie" costing I believe only about \$25,000. Our building was surrounded by farmers' fields where horses and ponies frolicked, and at first it did not even have main drainage!

Yet it served Don Heights well. The plain interior of the auditorium – concrete block wall, smooth green coloured concrete floor and ribbed precast concrete ceiling – would be easily and simply decorated to suit almost any purpose; regular Sunday services of course, rummage sales, art shows, film nights, (with one of those old fashioned 16 mm film projectors), theatrical reviews (written by Stew Fisher), and of course parties – any excuse for a party, and always with decent food!

Well I suppose we were all younger and slimmer and had our own natural-coloured hair and were of course somewhat more numerous, (the Sunday children's programme overflowed into a nearby school.)

When I joined, Don Heights no longer had a minister. The first Sunday Service I remember attending was given by Paul Carr, (now at another congregation), who described why he had felt it necessary to bring his family from the U.S. to Canada to avoid the Viet Nam draft. It was a great and passionate address and there were

many more as good. So I thought, Don Heights is where the Sunday speakers can talk about all that is dear to them -- that which comes from the heart. ***This is spirituality*** – this is the place for me.

Since then our circumstances have changed many times: our premises are leased, not owned, and we have candles, ritual readings and sing hymns which would not have been tolerated back in the seventies and eighties! We have added the "Seven Principles". We have however kept the original podium platforms, now carpeted blue instead of "sixties orange"!

But today, thanks to our Board, our present Sunday Services Committee and very many others, much of the above spirituality, though different, is still available here at the Wynford Drive Don Heights.

As John Plumpton's favourite, Winston Churchill, once said, "I am easily satisfied with the very best." I believe, too, that when we as individuals contribute what we are good at and like doing, we ***do*** give of our very best, so that a worthwhile congregation can be built and maintained.

This to me is what Don Heights is all about. I hope you agree!

~ Robert Bray



Donations Statements Enclosed with Bulletin

Since we're almost through our financial year at Don Heights, it's a good time to confirm the status of donations year to date to ensure that my records match yours.

The statement enclosed provides details of donations you made to Don Heights during the period January 1 to November 13, 2011. If you have made a pledge, that too will show on the statement. If you have made neither a pledge nor an identified donation, there will be no statement enclosed.

If you notice any discrepancy between my records and yours, please let me know right away.

Thanks so much,
Ruth Plumpton, Treasurer

Report of the Social Action Committee

SOS (**Street Outreach Services**) is no longer operating. The soaps, etc we collect are now going to ACSA (Agincourt Community Services Association) because they have now installed a shower. We are looking into a suitable charity to replace this one. We will contact the North York Women's shelter to see if they are in need of a specific item(s), such as the cooking pots we donated to them in the past. Our members are generous and contribute well to specific causes. We'd like the charity to benefit youth in difficulty or a cause helping the people in this city in a daily struggle because of poverty and unemployment.

Out of the Cold: The congregation did a wonderful job hosting and preparing dinner, breakfast and a box lunch to go for the homeless people who used the shelter November 11/12. We were saddened to know that seven people needed to be turned away because the Knox Christian Centre was at capacity. The Friday overnight shelter is a cold weather interfaith activity. Groups involved are United, Christian Reform, Presbyterian, Anglican, Lions Club, Church of Christ, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist and Church of Christ. Don Heights will host again January 6/7.

Lorna Weigand will arrange a date for a tour of the **facilities at ACSA** so that members can appreciate why we have always supported them so fully. Jane Robson was the previous Executive Director. Murray Fulcher is on the Board of Directors and he buys food for their food bank from our monthly collection.

Habitat for Humanity – We do not yet have a date for a 1012 build. Tom Brown is to be the contact person in order to plan a date and ask for congregational participation. Last year's build was very successful.

Occupy Toronto ~ Claudia Larrain has been living there in a tent. Lorna's daughter Rebecca is very involved. Lorna has brought soup and food to the protesters. Michael Kenny is also involved. The mayor has moved to get the camp out of the park, so we will monitor the progress of this movement on behalf of the 99% closely.

The Mega Quarry Protest: So far, we have protested at a local town hall, have joined a protest at Queen's Park, carrying the Don Heights banner and several of us attended Foodstock. The issue of protecting our farmland and our water is absolutely important to all of us.

~ submitted by Sharyn Devine

Don Heights Adult Program for December

Here's what's coming up in December for Don Heights Adult Program. You can check the Sunday Orders of Service as well as Christine's Upcoming Events e-mails for further details.

The **Spiritual Dialogue Circle**, held on the first Monday of each month, will meet on December 5 at 7:00 p.m. The topic this month: Woman.

The **Meditation** group had a successful beginning in October and will meet most Sundays from 9:45 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. before the Sunday service. Come to the Darwin Room (the small room with the couches!) to see what it's all about.

The **Book Group** will not meet in December. Our January book is *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese.

Our monthly **Afternoon at the Movies** will meet on Wednesday, December 7 to see *The Way*, Martin Sheen's movie about El Camino. Since Tom Brown is just back from walking *The Way*, this is of great interest to many of us. The theatre and time will be announced in the preceding week.

The **Do Be Do Group** will do its magic, supporting the general maintenance and organization of Don Heights, on Tuesday, December 27 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Call Linda Schofield if you want more information.

Wine, Women, and Spirituality meets on December 30 at 7:15 at Ellen Jamal's house. This "not a therapy group" gives the women at Don Heights the opportunity to relax and talk and laugh about life.

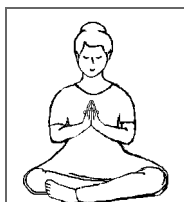
The Adult Program meeting held on November 13 after the Sunday service was very productive. You can look forward to some excellent programs in the coming months. If you have ideas for programs that would interest you, let me know.

~ Mary Doucette

Sunday Morning Meditation

I am facilitating a meditation session a number of times this fall. They are scheduled prior to the Sunday morning service from 9:45-10:15 am. These meetings will take place in the Darwin Room, and will be held most Sundays, including December 4 and 11.

A sign-up sheet is on the Adult Programming Bulletin Board, however, if you decide you would like to participate at the last minute, that will be fine too.



Please join me for a relaxing start to our Sunday.

~ Ellen Jamal



We are happy to have **Tom Brown** back in our midst after his adventures in Scotland and on the Camino de Santiago trail in France and Northern Spain. I believe he walked something over 1000 km which is pretty mind boggling and we are all anxious to hear more about this amazing experience.

Miriam Smith is now at the Seniors Health Centre at Sheppard and Leslie. She gets physiotherapy twice a day and this is helping her become more mobile after her back surgery. There is a possibility she may be discharged by the time you read this. It was good to see her at Don Heights on November 13th, her first outing. Thanks to Tom Brown for chauffeuring her and for bringing her out for lunch - as Miriam said "for some real food!"

Ellen Jamal's mother Maureen had a bad fall in her apartment recently. Maureen has attended services and functions at Don Heights so many of us know her and we wish her a speedy recovery. This has been a big stress for Ellen and Nadim in their already busy lives.

As I mentioned last month, **Mary Frost** is now on computer. Mary's daughter Jennifer Sutton had an exhibition of her paintings and photography in a gallery near the AGO. I was fortunate enough to be able to visit the exhibition and was most impressed by her talent.

WANTED - A good home for a handsome camel!!!! Several years ago **Robert Bray** designed and constructed the camel for a Christmas service and "Cecil" has resided at Don Heights ever since, except when he visited **Linda Schofield's** home. He was the Guest of Honour at a few Don Heights events there! But it is time for him to move to a new home. Do call the office if you have any ideas about someone or some place that would be a good home for this elegant creature. I am sure transportation could be arranged.

~ Rosemary Wood



Don Heights Festival Theatre



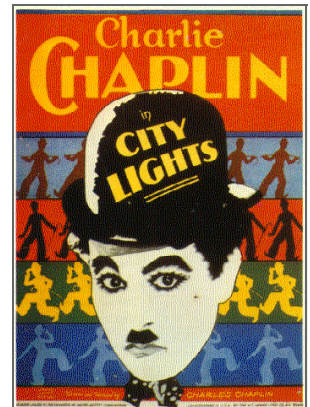
On Thursday, December 8 we will screen **City Lights** - a 1931 silent movie written, produced, directed by, and starring Charlie Chaplin as the Little Tramp.

Rated by the American Film Institute as the greatest romantic comedy of all time, *City Lights* was also one of the last silent movies ever made. However, it was not completely silent, but more of a cross-over film - *City Lights* includes a complete musical soundtrack (written by Charlie Chaplin as well) and various sound effects - but no speech or dialogue. Incredibly, Chaplin's film was *not* nominated for a single Academy Award.

The tale of blind love presents the Little Tramp character - an outcast, homeless man with his baggy pants, tight coat, cane, large shoes and small hat - with superb examples of Chaplin's acting and artistic genius. The film's theme concerns the consequences resulting from the Tramp's attachment and efforts to aid a blind girl and a millionaire, as he persuades both of them that life is worth living. Both characters cannot "see" him or recognize him for what he is. Although classified as a comedy, *City Lights* has an ending widely regarded as one of the most moving in cinema history.

Dinner at Sorento at 5:00 pm. Dessert and coffee at Don Heights at 7:00, film at 7:15. If you would like to come, please let me know by e-mail

There will be a charge of \$6 per person for dessert and coffee (proceeds to Don Heights); no charge for the show. Feel free to invite guests. It's okay to skip the dinner and just come for dessert, coffee, and the show. Just let me know so we don't run out of dessert!



Help Wanted

Christmas is just around the corner and again this year it would be appreciated if we could help **The Toronto Star Santa Claus Fund** with a helping hand by delivering presents to children's homes

I am once again looking for volunteers willing to help.

There is a sign up sheet posted near the coffee table.

We'll meet here at Don Heights on Sat, Dec 10th at 9:00 am. We usually finish by about 12 noon.

Whatever amount of time you can volunteer will be appreciated.

Thanks.

Germaine Kovary



Build a School in Honduras

The First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto, in partnership with World Accord, invites you to help build a school in the mountains of Honduras. This is a hands-on opportunity to make a difference in the lives of subsistence farmers and their families. Please join a two-week trip: beginning January 14, February 11 or March 10, 2012.

Construction and Spanish language skills are not required but would be welcomed.

For more information contact Richard Kirsh (416-767-5837 or richardkirsh@sympatico.ca).



Medically Assisted Dying and the Law

Workshop Leader: Wanda Morris

This timely and topical workshop will be presented at Don Heights on Sunday, January 29, 2012 at 1:00 pm

Wanda Morris, Executive Director of Dying with Dignity is our speaker on January 29, 2012

What Sue Rodriguez started, Gloria Taylor is determined to finish.

In this informative and engaging session you'll learn about:

- the laws governing assisted dying in Canada and around the world;
- Canadian court rulings on assisted dying, and
- the right to die challenge brought forward by Gloria Taylor and the BC Civil Liberties Association.

In 1993, Sue Rodriguez asked the Supreme Court of Canada for the right to medically-assisted dying so that she would have a peaceful way to end her suffering. The Supreme Court ruled against her then, by a 5-4 decision.

A lot has changed in the last two decades. This November, a challenge brought by BC Civil Liberties, Gloria Taylor and others is coming before the BC Supreme court. Whoever loses will undoubtedly appeal the case to the Supreme Court of Canada so this case will ultimately impact all Canadians.

~ submitted by Margo Holland

We understand that ordinary people are messengers of the most high. They go about their tasks in holy anonymity. . . Yet, if they had not been there, if they had not said what they said or did what they did, it would not be the way it is now. We would not be the way we are now. Never forget that you too yourself may be a messenger.

~ Lawrence Kushner

Travel to the Birthplace of Unitarianism

There are still a few spaces left in the journey to Transylvania and Hungary, June 4-18, 2012. So far our travellers are from Indiana, Ohio, Georgia, and Ontario.

Travelling with Unitarians is a wonderful way to take a journey. We'll experience our historic roots and explore this fascinating part of Europe. Where else can you travel where Unitarians and their unique historic churches are the highlights of the trip? A quarter of all Unitarians live there.


We'll have a 3 day stay in a Transylvanian Unitarian village — attending church, sharing a relaxed picnic and experiencing rural village life. We'll explore castles and other cultural places, enjoy the food and art and the beautiful landscapes from Cluj-Napoca, Romania, to Budapest, Hungary.

The cost is \$2075 US, plus airfare. That includes 9 nights in Transylvania and 5 in Hungary, private coach, most meals, escorts and guides, 3 and 4 star hotels, as well as staying with a family or in a guest house when we are in the rural village.

This specially designed tour for Unitarians everywhere, will be facilitated by the UU Partner Church Council Pilgrimage Service that has more than a decade of experience facilitating UU visits to this part of Europe.

For all details see www.nuuc.ca
Contact Beverly Carr, bgcarr@rogers.com
Neighbourhood UU Congregation

December 2011

| Sun. | Mon. | Tues. | Wed. | Thurs. | Fri. | Sat. |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| * = Lifespan Program ^ = Dream Event RE = Religious Exploration for Children | | | | 1 | 2 6:00 pm DH Christmas Party | 3 |
| 4 *9:45-10:15 am Meditation Group Service - 10:30 am Community as a Bridge RE Topic: Love 1:00 pm Rehearsal for Dec. 18 Craft Sale for SA | 5 January Bulletin Deadline ^ Dinner at the Donalda Club with John Kennedy 7:00 pm Spiritual Dialogue Circle - Woman | 6 7:00 - 8:00 pm *Don Heights Choir 8:00 - 9:00 pm *Don Heights Community Choir | 7 Movie Afternoon <i>The Way</i> followed by dinner with Tom Brown | 8 *5:00 pm Dinner @ Sorento 7:15 pm DH Festival Theatre Charlie Chaplin's <i>City Lights</i> | 9 | 10 9 am to 12 pm DH delivery of Toronto Star Santa Fund boxes |
| 11 *9:45-10:15 am Meditation Group Service - 10:30 am Paradox RE Topic: <i>Learning About Different Faiths</i> Signing of Cards for Amnesty International | 12 10:30 am Caring Committee | 13 7:00 - 8:00 pm *Don Heights Choir 8:00 - 9:00 pm *Don Heights Community Choir | 14 7:00 pm Board Meeting | 15 | 16 Bulletin Stuffing 7:00 pm *Open Mike Coffee House | 17 |
| 18 Christmas Evening Service - 7:00 pm Spirits of Christmas | 19 11:00 am Sunday Services Meeting | 20 7:00 - 8:00 pm *Don Heights Choir 8:00 - 9:00 pm *Don Heights Community Choir | 21 First Day of Chanukkah  | 22 Winter Solstice Yule  | 23 | 24 |
| 25 Service - 10:30 am  Music and Poetry 12:30 pm Christmas Day Brunch | 26 Oraynu Chanukah Event Boxing Day Kwanza begins | 27 10:30 am - 1:00 pm DoBeDo Group | 28 | 29 | 30 7:15 pm Wine, Women & Spirituality @ Ellen Jamal's | 31  New Years Eve |