



The Don Heights Bulletin

March 2011

Volume 56, Issue 7

Sunday Services, 10:30 a.m.

March 6th at 10:30 a.m.

When in Zen, Do as Zendo

Presenter: Rev. Jessica Purple Rodela

Service Leader: Ellen Jamal

Music: The Don Heights Choir



They say that "practice makes perfect," but how do we react when it doesn't? How do we respond to failure? In learning the art of kyudo (Japanese archery) at New York's Zen Mountain Monastery, I dropped my arrow dozens of times. In picking it up, I learned about invitation, relationship, and persistence.

Jessica Purple Rodela grew up in the Canal Zone, Panama, during the tumultuous sovereignty negotiations of the 1970's. Her family returned to Texas in 1979. Over the years, Jessica has lived in Virginia, Hawaii, and California. Before entering the ministry, she worked variously as a high school English teacher, a freelance writer and a logistics analyst. She has earned a number of honours, including the Murry Intern Scholarship, the St. Lawrence Foundation Essay Award, and a Borden Sermon Award. "Rev. Jess" was called in 2008 as settled minister to First Unitarian Congregation of Waterloo, as well as serving nationally on the CUC Board and as Diversity Monitoring Chair.

Coffee Group 6

12:30 pm - Lunch Bunch at Afghan Village

YOU MAY SAY THAT I'M A DREAMER BUT I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE I HOPE SOMEDAY YOU'LL JOIN US AND THE WORLD WILL BE AS ONE

March 13th at 10:30 a.m.

Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream

Presenter: Rev. Michelle Singh

Service Leader: Ellen Jamal

An introduction to the Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream

movement which was created by The Pachamama Alliance – an alliance of the Achuar indigenous people of Amazonian Ecuador and a group of North Americans. This movement is committed to mobilizing change agents to bring forth an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling, socially just human presence on this planet we call Home. www.awakeningthedreamer.org

Coffee Group 1

March 20th at 10:30 a.m.

The Interdependent Web at Equinox

Presenter: Carly Gaylor

Service Leader: Beryl Hunter

Music: The Don Heights Choir



Today's service will explore our Unitarian Universalist seventh principle, "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part," in light of the spring equinox.

Coffee Group 2

12:30 pm - Brief presentation by Terry & Nancy Lee— Toronto First's Hosts of the CUC ACM in May



March 27th at 10:30 a.m.

Poetry and Music for a Seeker: Music inspired by the writings of Rumi and others

Presenter: Garo Altinian

Service Leader: Germaine Kovary

Garo has been composing, singing and playing inspirational and devotional music for more than twenty years. His music has its roots in the Sufi traditions as well as influences of western folk music. He will play guitar, sing original compositions and recite a number of poems.

Coffee Group 3

12: 30 pm - Pot Luck & Town Hall Meeting

Summertime...and the Livin' Is Easy!



With all the snow around us.....not too many of you are thinking of Summer....BUT the Sunday Service Committee is thinking of summer. . . specifically July and August . . . we are looking ahead!

We need Service Leaders to volunteer for the eight Sunday Services during this period. The subject matter can be your choice. It can vary from Music to History, from your favourite hobby to your favourite book.

Please contact Ellen Jamal or myself, Bill Clelland, for further information.

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.*

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President's Thoughts



Strategic Planning at Don Heights

By the time you read this column some members of the board of directors will have met again on Saturday afternoon, February 19, 2011 to work on Don Heights Strategic Plan for 2010 – 2013. We would like to have it finished before our AGM in April so that members of the congregation will have time to read and discuss the details of the plan. On the last Sunday of March (after a morning of inspirational music and readings with Garo Altinian), we will share our potluck and review the work plans for our eight strategic goals approved at our AGM last year. These work plans, although written by a small group, the board of directors, the democratically elected leaders at Don Heights, are meant to reflect the ideas of the majority of the congregation.

Some of you may think it odd that we are into 2011 and still completing this 2010 – 2013 plan. Well, much has happened since 2008 when we first started talking about taking a pro-active approach to planning for our future. The biggest fundamental question that faced us then and still now, was whether we should continue on our present trajectory or make some significant changes. If we continued as is, operating with money from our "fund", we would gradually use up the funds that had resulted from the sale of our building at 4 Antrim Crescent. But on the other hand, change is hard.

This Strategic Plan is a road map to help us reach our desired vision for the period ending December 2013. When finalized, I think it will help both us and future DH leaders move forward in a wise direction. The expectation is that we will use the plan as a working document and make updates/revisions annually -

probably each spring prior to our Annual General Meeting in preparation for the upcoming church year. This spring we will be mostly focused on how we expect to operate from September 2011 until August 2012. The following spring the focus will be on September 2012 to August 2013. In 2013 it will be time to review the whole direction. Throughout this time we will be continuing to explore a long term vision for Don Heights.

From 2008 on Don Heighters have met at several planning meetings and talked and listened and voted and talked some more. We formed a strategic planning group to help listen to the talk and create a strategic plan. We're almost there. The congregation approved a new vision statement on October 4, 2009. It's printed at the top of the sidebar next to this column. I encourage you to read it over again. A lot of talking and thinking and re-crafting went into it. I think it describes the best of what we can be. We identified and approved eight strategic goals in April 2010. This year the board has been turning these goals into achievable work plans with indicators of success and target dates so we can review our progress. To carry out the plans we're going to need the energy and imagination of all the players, coaches and cheerleaders on this Don Heights team. Some people think we may even need some new energy.

Unitarian Universalism has become a religious home for many of us and we know there are others in Toronto looking for such a home. We know that our world needs more inspiration to live our lives with respect for freedom and diversity. Don Heights has resources to help create and help sustain such a place of love and inspiration for people of diverse ages and backgrounds. We need only look around and we will find Unitarian and other partners who also share a desire to create more places for people to explore their religious needs and to find both a spiritual and social action place to grow.

Lorna Weigand

Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.

~ Martin Luther King Jr.

Notes from the Board Meeting

of February 9, 2011

by Jane Robson

Financial

The expenses for 2011 were reviewed by Ruth and committee. The Board reviewed the draft budget.

Strategic Workplan

There will be a planning meeting for the Board on February 19th, 2011, at which time it is hoped that this plan can be completed.

Review of Overall Ministry

- There was excellent response to the survey
- It was resolved that, as a result of the survey, the format used for Ministry in 2010 will be continued for 2011-2012.

Hosting Empty Bowls at the CUC – ACM May 2011

- This committee has met and prepared a letter and flyer. The set cost of the meal will be \$15
- There will be opportunities for those wishing to volunteer from DH e.g. hospitality for out-of towners
- First Unitarian co-chairs that are in charge of hosting the ACM will be coming to an upcoming DH service.
- There will be no service at DH on May 21st

Website Re-Development

Lidia will send invitations to the board for access to the Web Development "wiki" which will be the central location for all information.

Religious Education Update

The search for an RE teacher has been put on hold until the Fall.

Potential Partner to share space

Don Valley Artist Club is looking for new space. Judy Clarke (a member at Toronto 1st and the art club) visited our present space and deemed it unsuitable for their purposes.

Workshop for Small Congregations (Central Region)

March 26, Guelph

Margo, Lorna, Ellen and Robert are interested in attending

Milne House

- A Town Hall meeting to discuss Milne House, will be held at the end of March
- Lorna and Jeanne will continue to attend meetings with city staff and others.

Pastors for Peace

Sunday July 3, 2011, need to coordinate with Sunday Services

Building Use Policy

Administrative Cluster is working on this policy

Sharing Our Faith

Carly will be asked to incorporate this into one of her services

Nominating Committee

Nominating committee will need to recruit three new members for the Board.

The next Board meeting will be on March 9th, 2011.

Please submit your agenda items to Lorna Weigand.

Don Heights Town Hall Meeting

– Talking about our Future –

March 27, 2011 - During and After

Our Potluck Lunch

Talk about Don Heights' future happens at all sorts of events, on Sundays, at Wednesday Cluster Meetings, occasionally at euchre games and in particular at Board meetings and Congregational Town Halls. Our future matters. We need open hearts and minds to help us discern what will be our best choices. I'm asking all of us to overcome negative reactions to change. When you hear of a new idea consider taking an Appreciative Inquiry approach and think of something positive about the suggestion before you comment on why it wouldn't work or why you don't like it. Share your ideas about how to improve ideas to make them work. Think about how to overcome challenges.

When we sing #121 in our Singing the Living Tradition – We'll Build a Land, I imagine "We'll Build a Church where we'll" Can we fill in the blanks and re-write the lyrics about the kind of church community that could meet the changing needs of people throughout their lifespan - from birth through to our end?

Our Town Hall on March 27, 2011 is an opportunity for relaxed conversations about agenda items at the AGM

Don Heights Annual General Meeting Sunday, April 17, 2011

12:30 p.m. After our Sunday Service

Potluck Sandwich Lunch

Annual Report Submissions Due Sunday, March 13, 2011

The major purpose of an Annual Report is to provide a public record of our financial position and of the major happenings that have occurred throughout the year that has just ended.

We will use a format similar to last year's Annual Report.

If you are involved in leadership at Don Heights please send highlights of your group's activities since our last Annual Meeting in April 2010 to office@donheights.ca.

Spiritual Dialogue Circle

1st Monday of the Month 7:00 to 8:30 pm

- March 7th** - *Justice* facilitated by Fara Eshrugi
- April 4th** - *Forgiveness* facilitated by Sharyn Devine
- May 2** - *Trust* facilitated by Lorna Weigand
- June 6th** - *Love* facilitated by Ellen Jamal

The Spiritual Dialogue Circle is committed to exploring the spiritual practices of different faith groups through meditation, conversation and prayer.

We share readings and experiences from our own unique spiritual traditions.

We invite everyone to share their own inner wisdom connecting spiritual practice and everyday life. How can we, as individuals, live our own practice in such a way as to affect peace in our selves and our world?

This circle is a safe and open community in which to explore, grow and be supported.

Contacts: Lorna Weigand or Rev. Michelle Singh.

Don Heights Book Group

March 20, 2011 – ***Dahanu Road*** by Anosh Irani – Zairos is a dissolute young landowner's son living in the town of Dahanu, just outside Bombay, when his life of careless luxury is brought up short by a mysterious death: the sudden suicide of Ganpat, a tribal worker on his family's estate. Soon Zairos has fallen in love with Ganpat's daughter Kusum, and finds himself defying taboos with their relationship. At the same time his grandfather, Shapur, reveals to him the story of their family and of the land that Zairos stands to inherit. Violence and hatred echo through history, and Zairos learns the terrible truth his grandfather has spent a lifetime hiding.



April 10, 2011 – ***Small Wonder – A Book of Essays*** by Barbara Kingsolver - The topics vary from a contemplation of the Grand Canyon, her vegetable garden, motherhood, and genetic engineering. This book is an examination of the people we seem to be and what we might yet make of ourselves.



The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

Don Heights Festival Theatre An Evening With Noel Coward Saturday, March 12

Two short plays by the 20th century master of English comedy and social commentator, the inheritor of Oscar Wilde's mantle. If English humour appeals to you, you will love these.



"What Mad Pursuit"
"Mrs. Capper's Birthday"

Dinner at Swiss Chalet, 900 Don Mills (next door to Sorento) - 5pm, Saturday, March 12.

Enjoy dessert and coffee (\$6 - proceeds to DH) at Don Heights at 7:00, show at 7:15. Each play is just under an hour; there will be a short intermission. If you'd like to come, please let Ron Weigand know

Don Heights at the Midwinter Retreat Service Is Our Prayer

The Midwinter Retreat took place at YMCA Cedar Glen in Bolton on the weekend of February 4-6. As usual, Don Heights was very well represented. Lorna Weigand, Ellen Jamal, Phyllis Britton, Pauli Schell, Shirley Grant, Tom Brown, Margo Holland and Judy Newman all attended.

In addition to participating in programming, socializing and networking with other Unitarians, Tom Brown also facilitated a workshop entitled Live Your Values, which explored how to get involved with social action projects like Habitat for Humanity. Margo Holland and Judy Newman attended Lay Chaplain training and enjoyed an opportunity to meet with chaplains from congregations as far away as Montreal.

If interesting speakers and workshops, lots of good food and a chance to connect with old and new friends weren't enough, a Saturday night cabaret, euchre games, scrabble, square dancing, yoga, and hiking in a beautiful country setting made for a very well rounded and enjoyable weekend indeed.

Be sure to mark your calendars for next year and get in on this wonderful getaway.

Judy Newman

Getting to Know Don Heighers: Mary Doucette

Mary has been an active member of Don Heights since joining ten years ago. When she retired she sought a place to find community and to volunteer, and Don Heights has turned out to be just what she was looking for.

Prior to retirement Mary taught math, computer science, and special education in Toronto high schools. After retiring she did volunteer teaching with Adult Basic Literacy students and students at the Pathways program in Regent Park.

The three things that make Mary happiest are learning something new, spending time with her grandchildren, and watching movies at the Toronto Film Festival.

As well as an educator, Mary is a lifelong learner and takes classes at the later-life program, the Academy for Lifelong Learning. She loves music, and reading. Two of her favourite books are *The Bean Trees* by Barbara Kingsolver and *The Theory of War* by Joan Brady.

Mary and Len have been married for 48 years, and they have two children. Their daughter Julia lives in Toronto, and married her husband Hector three years ago at a beautiful wedding ceremony at Don Heights. Their son Fred is married with two daughters, and lives in State College, Pennsylvania. It is Mary's opinion that having grandchildren is a lot more fun than raising children.

Although Mary loves Paris, she only wants to live in Toronto. One of the things she most enjoys about living here is the Toronto International Film Festival, which is the highlight of Mary's year. During the Festival she's been known to watch up to 25 movies over a ten day period.

One of Mary's greatest concerns with the world is the widening disparity between rich and poor, and the tremendous power of big money. She is particularly attracted to issues concerning women and children, but finds it difficult not to get overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of those in the world who need help.

Like so many of us, Mary is a dedicated Unitarian. She says, "For people disillusioned by the religion of their childhood, Unitarianism offers a positive way to be a part of the community and make a difference in the world."

The Don Heights' Habitat Day

On a cold January 29th a group of Don Heighers ranging in age from 15 to the late 70's showed up on the Habitat site at Kingston Road and Morningside in Scarborough. Most of them had never been on a building site before and there was some trepidation about how they would manage. There were other new volunteers there also and it took quite a while to get everyone organized with safety shoes, hard hats, tool pouches and tools. The young woman, Caroline who was in charge eventually got us organized, we did the Habitat cheer and we were split into three groups working with Habitat team leaders in three different houses.



The main job that we worked on was installing the firewalls between the units. Habitat supplied us with water and coffee which was available all day in the volunteer trailer. We had a welcome half hour break for lunch then back to work. By the end of the day we had pretty well completed the three fire walls and some people just didn't want to stop - I had to pry the screw guns out of their hands to get them to start cleaning up. The couple who would be moving into one of the houses worked with us for part of the day. It was a good experience and a number of you have been asking me when we can do it again, or could we have a regular Don Heights Building group. Well let me know, it can be organized.

Tom Brown



Habitat gives us an opportunity which is very difficult to find: to reach out and work side by side with those who never have had a decent home—but work with them on a completely equal basis. It's not a big-shot, little-shot relationship. It's a sense of equality.
~ former U.S. President Jimmy Carter

GRAPEVINE

I am writing this from Anna Maria Island, Florida. Matthew and I bid on this vacation, offered by Sharyn and Glenn at the 2010 Dream Auction. The house with pool and beautifully landscaped garden is only a five minute walk from the beach. As most of you know I love to walk and have enjoyed my early mornings on the beach and have witnessed great performances by the dolphins as they jump and dive close to shore.

Sharyn and Glenn are regulars at the Bradenton Unitarian Congregation so of course Matthew and I joined them the past two weeks. They have a Dream Auction scheduled so Sharyn has been able to share some of Don Heights' ideas with their committee, and pick up some new ones to bring back to us.

Sandra Morgan became a grandmother for the first time on February 13th. Kurt Daniel Morgan was born weighing 8 pounds, 10 ounces. The baby, his parents and his delighted grandmother are all doing fine.

Rosemary Wood and Margo Holland



A Special Thank You . . .

to those who participated in the DoBeDo Work Group to assemble the Don Heights valentines on January 25th. These brave souls cared enough to show up on one of the coldest mornings of the year.



After we put the finishing touches on the valentines we enjoyed good fellowship and lots of hot soup.

A special thanks goes to Jim Mitchell, Linda Schofield, Violet White, Mary Lynne Dewhurst, Mary Fitzpatrick and Mary Frost.

For the Caring Committee
Margo Holland and Sandra Morgan

Lunch Bunch Sunday March 6th

The board has okayed a regular, once a month after-service Lunch Bunch.

I will organize the first one at the Afghan Village restaurant at the Flemington Plaza on the first Sunday in March just south of Eglinton. We can meet at 12.30 and car pool to the restaurant. The restaurant is inexpensive and the food is interesting. Every meal comes with a large salad.

Tom Brown

Coffee Group Program

Our Coffee Group Program seems to be having its ups and downs.

The Up: many people are participating willingly and enjoying the camaraderie at the kitchen sink.

The Down: some people are not showing up to work on their Sunday, and are thus causing more work for the others in their group. This is discouraging, frustrating and annoying for the ones who do participate. The coffee program is not onerous – an hour of work once in six weeks for every person.

We need everyone's participation, so that we're assured of having coffee every Sunday.

Thank you, Your Coffee Group Coordinator
Beryl Hunter

Is Your Contact Information Up to Date?

If you have moved recently, changed your telephone number, or obtained a new e-mail address, please remember to let Don Heights' office know. Either call us at 416-444-8839 or send an e-mail to office@donheightsca.

Don Heights Presents Heather Dale in Concert

Don Heights is pleased to be able to offer congregational members and guests the opportunity to see and hear Heather Dale in concert. This will take place on **Saturday, March 5, 2011** at 7:30 pm at Don Heights Unitarian Congregation.



Heather Dale is a Toronto-born recording artist whose original songs touch on legend, mythology and history. A multi-instrumentalist and possessed of a beautiful soprano voice, Heather fuses Celtic folk with jazz, blues, rock, and world music influences, and much of her music has a whimsical quality to it which is very difficult to describe in words. If you go to her website at www.heatherdale.com you can listen to eight of her songs, from different albums.

If you are interested in attending, or simply want more information, please phone Christine at 416-444-8839 or send an e-mail to donheights.office@gmail.com.

Tickets are \$15.00 per person.

Don Heights Art Show

Saturday, April 9, 2011 at 3:00 pm

Don Heights will host an afternoon event celebrating art in April.

You are invited to bring three pieces of art created by you personally for display/sale at this event.

If you are interested, please e-mail Sharyn Devine.

A Theology For The 21st Century: Care of the Soul and Spiritual Guidance

Philosopher and theologian, Thomas Moore, author of "Care of the Soul: A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life," leads a weekend workshop at McMichael gallery in Kleinburg, April 15-16-17.

If you are interested in attending, click on the link to the website to learn all about the course.
<http://www.soul-spirit-dialogues.ca>

CUC 2011 Annual Conference

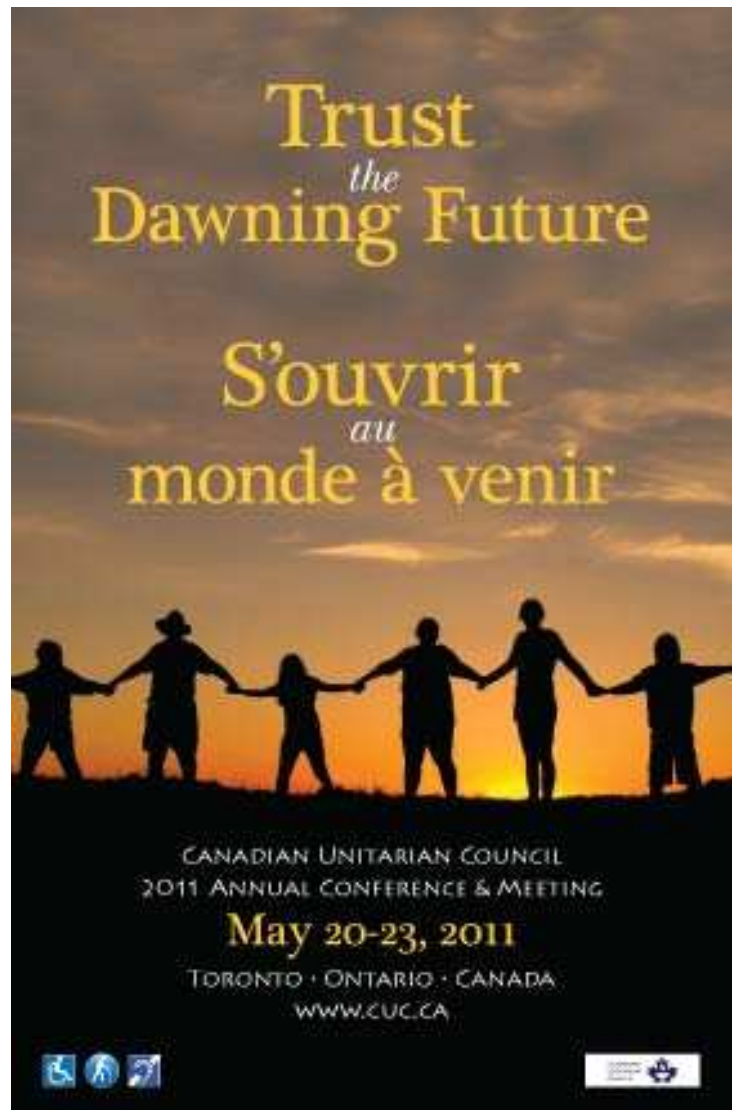
From May 20 to 23, 2011, First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto will be hosting the 50th Annual Conference: ***Trust the Dawning Future.***

The conference (all events except the Sunday morning service) will take place at the Chestnut Residence, a University of Toronto residence in the downtown core.

The Sunday Service will be held at the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall. Bus service will be provided between the residence and Convocation Hall for those who want it. We're expecting upwards of 1,000 people at the service!

There will be no Sunday Service at Don Heights on May 22, 2011.

For more information and to register please go to www.cuc.ca/conference/2011.



March 2011

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
* = Lifespan Program		1 7:00 - 8:30 pm *Don Heights Community Choir 	2 7:00 pm Program Cluster	3 7:00 - 8:30 pm *Study Group: The Power of Myth by Joseph Campbell	4 Oraynu	5  7:30 pm Heather Dale Concert
6 Service - 10:30 am When in Zen, Do As Zendo 12:30 pm - Lunch Bunch at Afghan Village	7 7:00 pm *Spiritual Dialogue Circle: Justice	8 7:00 - 8:30 pm *Don Heights Community Choir  Int. Women's Day 	9 7:00 pm Board Meeting Ash Wednesday	10 7:00 - 8:30 pm *Study Group: The Power of Myth by Joseph Campbell	11	12 5:00 pm - Dinner at Swiss Chalet 7:00 pm - DH Festival Theatre - An Evening with Noel Coward
13 Service - 10:30 am Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream Annual Report Submission Deadline	14 April Bulletin Deadline 10:30 am Caring Committee	15 7:00 - 8:30 pm *Don Heights Community Choir 	16 7:00 pm Fellowship Cluster	17  St. Patrick's Day	18 7:00 pm *Open Mike Coffee House	19  Holi
20 Service - 10:30 am The Interdependent Web at Equinox 12:30 pm - Book Group <i>Dahanu Road</i> by Anosh Irani Oraynu  Purim & Ostara	21	22 7:00 - 8:30 pm *Don Heights Community Choir 	23 7:00 pm Admin. Cluster	24	25 Bulletin Stuffing 7:15 pm *Wine, Women & Spirituality at Lorna Weigand's	26
27 Service - 10:30 am Poetry and Music for a Seeker 12:30 pm - Town Hall Meeting & Pot Luck Lunch	28 Oraynu	29 10:30 am - 1:00 pm DoBeDo Group 7:00 - 8:30 pm *Don Heights Community Choir 	30	31	April 1	April 2