

# THE NOR'WESTER

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of Northwest Toronto

Issue #6

2009



2010

December 2009



## Happy Holidays!



**December 6th @ 10:30 a.m.**

**“The Hydrogen Village and the Alternative Energy Response to Climate Change and Energy Issues ”**

**Ry Smith**

The Hydrogen Village program was developed to help create markets for emerging hydrogen and fuel cell technologies in the Greater Toronto area. Ry will discuss the reasons for creating the program, the lessons learned and how hydrogen fits into the ever growing and confusing array of solutions to the pressing world issues of environmental and energy supply stewardship.

Ry Smith has been working in the field of alternative energy for the past 18 years. Formerly the General Manager of the Natural Gas For Vehicles division of Union Gas Ltd. he has lead the design and construction of more than 50 natural gas vehicle refueling facilities and approximately 20 hydrogen energy projects in various locations around the world. Hydrogen Village is an internationally recognized deployment program funded by both the federal and provincial governments.

**December 13th @ 10:30 a.m.**

**“Learning Disabilities and Reading”**

**Tory Woollcott**

**~ Special Christmas Collection ~**

Tory will share with us the struggles faced by people who learn differently. Specifically she will discuss the importance of community support and awareness in promoting literacy. Tory says she has had a “complex relationship” with books growing up. She would like to talk with us about comics and how the world of literature is being opened up for individuals with reading disabilities as a direct result of this new kind of literature.

Tory Woollcott is a Canadian writer and artist based

in Toronto. She grew up with dyslexia and could not read or write for most of her childhood. With the help of supportive teachers, parents and friends, she learned by Grade 6. Currently Tory is an advocate for dyslexics, having written and drawn her first graphic novel, *Mirror Mind*, about her personal experiences. She has recently graduated from U of T with an Honours BA. She has appeared on CBC radio Metro Morning, Ontario Morning, Canada AM, and has been interviewed for the Toronto Star. She has spoken at several events including “Word on the Street” and “Right to Read” as well as at public schools and U of T.

**December 20th at 5:00 p.m.**

**Stone Soup Christmas Celebration**

We look forward to being with you and any friends, children, or grandchildren you may wish to bring along, to share in our annual Stone Soup Christmas Celebration. Our Stone Soup Celebration will be held December 20th at 5:00 p.m. Note the time! This might alleviate the problem of the difficulty of getting snow shovelled in the morning. Arlene Kelland will prepare the soup. People are asked to bring desserts ready to serve. Music will be expertly handled by Marilyn Harris. The glorious Northwest Unitarian choir will be on hand. Readings will be from various seasonal traditions. Special activities will be available for the children. Come and celebrate. Make this year even more special than last year’s rousing success.



**December 27th**

**No Service**



## ACROSS THE DENOMINATION

On Thanksgiving weekend over 50 people from the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax gathered and enjoyed a collective Thanksgiving Dinner. Their newsletter in reporting on the event noted, "It gave us opportunity to renew our commitment to bring more love, more kindness, more openheartedness, more non-violence, more peace, more social justice, more environmental sensitivity and more gratitude into the life that we live, into our encounters with others, and into the world we are helping to shape."

---

In Celebration of a Legacy! "Are we not on earth to make it a better, a kinder world for all?" Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova arrived in Canada in 1943 and within 2 years the Unitarian Service Committee had been organized. The work of the USC was successful because of principles she adamantly promoted. Unlike many aid agencies of the time the USC, though it had religious affiliation, was not a missionary agency. She worked hard to convince officials that "ours is no missionary effort, and our help is given with no strings attached." The excellent work of the USC continues and many congregations are taking time this November to celebrate the legacy and the 100th anniversary of Hitschmanova's birth.

---

Whether or not you believe all the news reports about the H1N1 flu pandemic, it still seems appropriate that our congregations and their leaders should embark on some planning.

Several Canadian Unitarian congregations have already begun adjusting their practices to accommodate the concerns of their congregants. Where congregants have traditionally held hands in the service, some are now being told that they should only do so if they are comfortable, and are encouraged to consider other options (hands on shoulders being one). During a "passing the peace" or greeting time in the service, some people are opting to bow slightly and offer a 'Namaste' instead of a hug or handshake.

Other congregations are making hand sanitizers available, including in dispensers near the entrance to the main meeting spaces. While there will certainly be members who think all of the news about the flu is hype, there are others, who because of compromised immune systems or personal experience, have greater anxiety about the risks

associated with congregational practices. In fact some of our assumed practices may, even when there is no current alarm about infections, need revisiting; hand holding might be awkward for those with arthritis and it is fairly certain at least some of our members have repressed immune systems.

---

Beacon Unitarian Church is offering in-home B&B spaces for those who might be planning trips to the 2010 Winter Olympics. The church and its hospitable members are located in the Coquitlam, BC area. Spots are available January - March, 2010. For information go to [www.BeaconUnitarian.org](http://www.BeaconUnitarian.org) or call registrar, Joy Silver at (604) 939-2213 or e-mail [odetojoy@telus.net](mailto:odetojoy@telus.net)

---

## Upcoming Events:

### **UCGT Annual Conference & Meeting**

Monday, December 14, 2009 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Don Heights Unitarian Congregation (18 Wynford Drive)

- Network with your peers from across the GTA
- Share ideas
- Make plans together

A light supper will be available before the meeting. There is no charge to attend the meeting. A suggested donation of \$5 towards the supper would be appreciated.

Please visit the GTA website at [www.cuc.ca/gta](http://www.cuc.ca/gta) to obtain an information package prior to the meeting.

### **Mid-Winter Retreat: A Life Of Integrity**

Cedar Glen Conference Centre, Bolton, Ontario

Featuring a workshop by Judy Magney called

"Collective Joy" <http://donheights.ca/mwr>

February 5-7, 2010

### **'Warm Up Your Soul' in Belize and Guatemala**

Experience the Rainforest and Mayan culture

See [www.nuuc.ca/UnitarianJourneys.htm](http://www.nuuc.ca/UnitarianJourneys.htm)

February 6-13, 2010

### **2010 Annual Conference & Meeting: How Shall We Live?**

CUC Annual Conference & Meeting 2010 will be hosted by the First Unitarian Church of Victoria

<http://victoriaunitarian.ca>

## ***A UNITARIAN PROFILE***

### ***Adlai Stevenson***

Adlai Ewing Stevenson II was born in Los Angeles on February 5, 1900. He came from a very political family: His grandfather Adlai Ewing Stevenson I was Vice-President of the United States under Grover Cleveland. His father, Lewis Green Stevenson was the Secretary of State for Illinois. His great-grandfather Jesse W. Fell was a campaign manager for Abraham Lincoln in his 1858 race for the US senate.

Stevenson was raised in Bloomington, Illinois. In 1918 he enlisted in the United States navy, but his training was too late for him to participate in World War I. Instead he went to Princeton University, where he received a Bachelor's Degree in 1922. His father pressured him to attend Harvard Law School but he withdrew after failing several classes. He became interested in law again a while later and graduated from the Northwestern University School of Law in 1928. In 1928 he also got married to Ellen Borden, though they were divorced in 1949.

In 1948 Stevenson was elected by a landslide to the position of Governor of Illinois. In 1952 when President Harry Truman decided not to run for office again, he encouraged Stevenson to seek the Democratic presidential nomination. Stevenson came off as overly intellectual and aristocratic so he had trouble getting support from working-class voters. In the end he lost the election to Dwight D. Eisenhower.

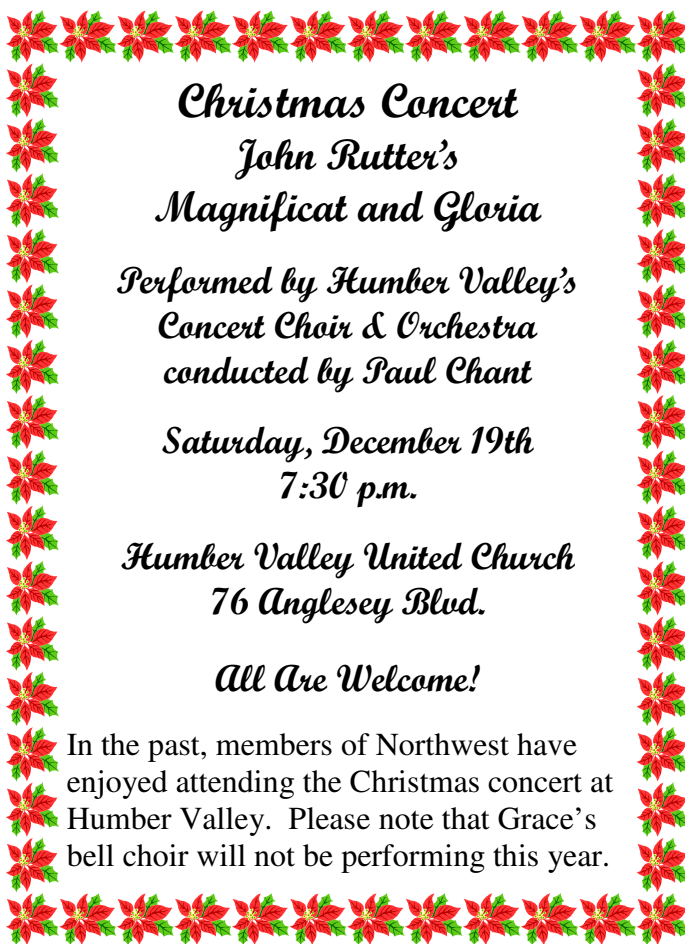
Stevenson again won the Democratic nomination for the 1956 Presidential election, becoming the last Unitarian to be nominated for the presidency by a major American political party. Even though Eisenhower had some health problems, the economy was good so voters didn't see the need for a change in leadership. Stevenson lost again, though he received the largest popular vote of any losing candidate in American history. He decided not to seek the Democratic nomination for the 1960 election. He was appointed Ambassador to the

United Nations by President John F. Kennedy.

In a letter to Senator Maurine Neuberger Stevenson wrote, "I think that one of our most important tasks is to convince others that there's nothing to fear in difference; that difference, in fact, is one of the healthiest and most invigorating of human characteristics without which life would become meaningless. Here lies the power of the liberal way: not in making the whole world Unitarian [Universalist], but in helping ourselves and others to see some of the possibilities inherent in viewpoints other than one's own; in encouraging the free interchange of ideas; in welcoming fresh approaches to the problems of life; in urging the fullest, most vigorous use of critical self-examination."

On July 14, 1965, Stevenson suffered a heart attack while walking through Grosvenor Square in London, England. He died of heart failure later that day. His service was held at the Unitarian church in Bloomington, Illinois.

~ submitted by Melanie Walters



***Christmas Concert***  
***John Rutter's***  
***Magnificat and Gloria***

***Performed by Humber Valley's***  
***Concert Choir & Orchestra***  
***conducted by Paul Chant***

***Saturday, December 19th***  
***7:30 p.m.***

***Humber Valley United Church***  
***76 Anglesey Blvd.***

***All Are Welcome!***

In the past, members of Northwest have enjoyed attending the Christmas concert at Humber Valley. Please note that Grace's bell choir will not be performing this year.



## Around the House



### CALLING ALL BOOKIES!

Our next book club meeting will be Dec. 6 after the service. The book will be "The Colony of Unrequited Dreams", a fictionalized biography of Joey Smallwood. Claire has copies from the library for anyone who wants to read it. Books must be returned by Dec. 6. We will discuss whether we should get all, or most of our books from the library book club sets. Claire is willing to get them and return them.

Our first book club meeting of the new year will be held on Jan. 10. It will be moderated by Dee Ho-a-Shoo. The book will be the Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society. Unfortunately it's not possible to get it from the library as it's all booked up. Our second meeting will be on Feb. 7 moderated by Helen Patak. The book will be "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night" which will be distributed by Claire at our Jan. 10 meeting.



### Celebrate New Year's at Northwest!

Low key get together visualized for people who don't have plans for New Year's Eve:

Fellowship House at 8 o'clock.

Refreshments (alcohol free)

Games will be available like Trivial Pursuit  
Hopefully we can tune in the TV and see the New Years welcoming celebration at City Hall, Toronto.

We'll have the karaoke machine for those so disposed.

This is the New Years Eve Celebration for people who don't have a New Year's Eve party to go to otherwise.

### Christmas CAMEO

Come share some Christmas cheer with us!

**When:** Thursday, December 10th

**Time:** 11.30 a.m.

**Where:** Northwest

**What to look forward to:** Help us write Christmas cards to our friends who are not able to come to a service. Enjoy a yummy Christmas lunch. Then join in our fun Christmas game, "Chinese Auction". Please bring a fancy wrapped \$2.00 gift to participate in the game. If you would like Grace or Judy to purchase and wrap a gift on your behalf, please let them know.

**What to wear:** Come dressed in holiday colours, if you like.

Please bring \$5.00 for lunch.

**Most importantly, come and have fun!**

R.S.V.P. to Grace by Sunday, December 6th.

It is important to let us know by then so we can plan the food accordingly.

### TRAIN TO BE A LIFESAVER!

Lifesaver 101 First Aid & CPR Training Inc. offer an Emergency First Aid, CPR and Automated External Defibrillation (AED) course (1 day - 6.5 hrs)

If we have a minimum of 10 participants an instructor will come to our Fellowship. The cost is \$50.00 + GST per person.

If we have less than 10 participants our training would be at their Head Office Facility (5324 Dundas St. West Suite #5, Etobicoke, ON M9B 1B4). The cost would be \$70 + GST per person. The website is [www.lifesaver101.com](http://www.lifesaver101.com) and tel. 416-538-5900.

Please contact Dee Ho-A-Shoo if you are interested in participating in this very worthwhile program.



***Christmas Shoes***  
**Sung by Bob Carlisle**

*This a favourite Christmas song of Grace's. It is a touching song that helps us remember that Christmas is not just a time for joy and celebrations, but also the time for sacrificing our needs to make others happy.*

It was almost Christmas time, there I stood in  
another line  
Tryin' to buy that last gift or two, not really in the  
Christmas mood  
Standing right in front of me was a little boy  
waiting anxiously  
Pacing 'round like little boys do  
And in his hands he held a pair of shoes

His clothes were worn and old, he was dirty from  
head to toe  
And when it came his time to pay  
I couldn't believe what I heard him say

Sir, I want to buy these shoes for my Mama, please  
It's Christmas Eve and these shoes are just her size  
Could you hurry, sir, Daddy says there's not much  
time  
You see she's been sick for quite a while  
And I know these shoes would make her smile  
And I want her to look beautiful if Mama meets  
Jesus tonight

He counted pennies for what seemed like years  
Then the cashier said, "Son, there's not enough  
here"  
He searched his pockets frantically  
Then he turned and he looked at me  
He said Mama made Christmas good at our house  
Though most years she just did without  
Tell me Sir, what am I going to do,  
Somehow I've got to buy her these Christmas shoes

So I laid the money down, I just had to help him out  
I'll never forget the look on his face when he said  
Mama's gonna look so great

Sir, I want to buy these shoes for my Mama, please  
It's Christmas Eve and these shoes are just her size  
Could you hurry, sir, Daddy says there's not much  
time  
You see she's been sick for quite a while  
And I know these shoes would make her smile  
And I want her to look beautiful if Mama meets  
Jesus tonight

I knew I'd caught a glimpse of heaven's love  
As he thanked me and ran out  
I knew that God had sent that little boy  
To remind me just what Christmas is all about.