



***Dark Money:
Epiphany and the Hidden Trillions***

Rev. Steven Epperson

– January 8, 2017 –

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF VANCOUVER

Celebration of Worship

January 8, 2017

At the front of the church you will find unlit candles. You are welcome to light a candle in remembrance, in gratitude, in prayer, in celebration.



*The prelude helps to create a spirit for shared celebration and worship.
Please refrain from conversing and please turn off your cell phones.*



Prelude	Musical Selections	Bright Lights, Thicker Glasses*
Opening Words/Greeting Our Neighbours		Rev. Steven Epperson
Kindling the Chalice Flame		Rev. Steven Epperson
Opening Hymn #350		<i>The Ceaseless Flow of Endless Time</i>
Story for all Ages		read by Rev. Steven Epperson

Let's sing the children out "Go now..."

Welcome and Announcements		Huguette Hayden
Reading from the Book of Celebrations and Concerns		Huguette Hayden
Offering: <i>We deeply appreciate your presence here, your offerings and the gifts you share.</i>		<i>Tax Man</i> The Beatles Bright Lights, Thicker Glasses*
Meditation, spoken then silent		Rev. Steven Epperson
Musical Response		<i>Jaiselmer</i> Michael Dunn Bright Lights, Thicker Glasses*
Sermon	<i>Dark Money: Epiphany and the Hidden Trillions</i>	Rev. Steven Epperson
Closing Hymn #355		<i>We Lift Our Hearts In Thanks</i>
Closing Words/Extinguishing the Chalice Flame		

Valediction

*Carry the flame of peace and love, until we meet again.
Carry the flame of peace and love, until we meet again.*

* It is a pleasure today to welcome *Brighter Lights, Thicker Glasses* composed of Michael Dunn, Brian Samuels and John Palmer. They play eclectic, original and unusual music on guitars, cello, and a variety of stringed instruments. Contact Michael for info. about upcoming gigs.

guitarbuilder@shaw.ca –Elliott



Bastian Obermayer, left, and Frederik Obermaier, reporters for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* who led the Panama Papers investigation.

Next Sunday Service: January 15, 2017, 11 am

The Radical King

Rev. Steven Epperson

Chalice Choir sings

The seats in the rear of the church are **reserved**:
(when facing the front) *left side for parents with babies or small children in childcare, and right side for persons in wheelchairs*

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ucvevents@gmail.com. Please include your name.

Off-Shore Tax Havens 101

A tax haven is a place that attracts non-resident funds by offering light regulation, low-or zero taxation and secrecy.

How to shelter and move money in and out of offshore companies and other structures.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/offshore-tax-havens-1.3520086>, etc.

Step 1: Choose a tax haven

There are up to 90 offshore jurisdictions around the world to choose from. They include places like Switzerland, Luxembourg, Delaware, and the Channel Islands, but many are in the Caribbean (eg. Cayman Islands, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, etc.).

Step 2: Create a corporation or other entity

A shell company* (see glossary) or a trust is set up with the help of offshore providers* and investment advisers (like Mossack Fonseca). In Panama and other tax havens, these can be approved in as little as three days for a nominal fee. Another place to park a mountain of cash is in a private foundation, a non-profit entity which can then own a corporation, adding another layer of secrecy to tax-evasion.

Step 3: Create a (secret) identity

One or more "nominees"* are hired to front for the company or trust. These agents don't manage the money but act on the owner's behalf, and only their names will appear on all company documents.

Step 4: Open a bank account

The money going in and out of a shell company needs a home. For extra anonymity, open a bank account in a different offshore location than where the company or trust is registered.

Step 5: Getting/Moving the money

Examples: 1. Take out a loan from domestic branch of your offshore bank, using the money there as collateral, then invest it in global financial markets, Vancouver real estate, etc., and generate income. Income is taxed only if you self-report or if offshore bank informs the authorities. (not likely!) 2. Pay yourself from company or trust for fictitious consulting, etc. 3. Get your offshore company to sue you and then "settle" out of court for a large sum, etc..

Step 6: Spend the money

Go to an ATM using credit cards issued in the name of the offshore company. Relocate to your tax haven, or any place with low taxes (great skiing in Switzerland, fine beaches in Barbados--a Canadian favourite!). Or, once you or your company (Petro Canada, Loblaws, Eldorado Gold, etc.) pays modest tax in your haven, any leftover profits can be brought back to Canada tax-free! (Thank you Bill S-2, passed by Canadian Parliament in December 1980!)

Then NDP freshman finance critic Bob Rae said this to the House, warning about tax treaties Canada was signing in 1980:

“The government is entering into these tax treaties without being aware of the impact they will have on domestic taxation in Canada. Money that is income and is not being taxed at the corporate level, on which the government receives no revenue, has the unfortunate effect of increasing the load of taxation on the average citizen.”

Off-Shore Tax Haven Glossary

(from Obermayer and Obermeier, *The Panama Papers...*)

Offshore provider: law firms and financial services worldwide (eg. Mossack Fonseca RBC, Deutsche Bank, etc.) specializing in selling shell companies, setting up trusts, foundations, etc. in tax havens.

Registered agent: offices of authorized service provider. They check to see if company name is available, file required paperwork, and oversee payment of annual fees. Official address of many shell companies are the same as registered agent. eg.: 1209 North Orange Street, Wilmington, Delaware, has over 200,000 shell companies registered at this address.

Shell company: a letterbox company with no employees at address of registered agent. (e.g. Drex Technologies, Glory Top Investment Company, etc. See “End Client/Ultimate Beneficial Owner,”)

End Client/Ultimate beneficial owner: the confidential, real owner of a company who receives the “benefit.” (eg Rami Makhoul, financier of the Hafiz al Assad regime and wealthiest man in Syria, see Drex Technologies above; Lee Shing Put, son-in-law of current vice premier of China, see Glory Top Investment Company above)

Nominee beneficial owner/nominee director: pretends to be ultimate beneficial owner (UBO). If a bank, etc. asks for name of UBO, nominee owner’s name used. Background checks are conducted only on him/her. The real UBO remains hidden. Nominee director is front person paid to act as company and foundation director and signs contracts and other paperwork. All decisions are made by real UBO, who remains hidden.

Solutions: What Can We Do?—Write!

The Honourable Bill Morneau, MP
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

SAMPLE

Dear Mr. Morneau:

Among the religious/moral values I hold dear are truth, justice, equity and the democratic process. I am writing to you with these values firmly in view. I am shocked by the recent revelations of the “Panama Papers” and their disclosure of the scourge of tax havens, off-shored wealth and the estimated \$6 billion of taxable revenue lost to our nation every year. Democracies are based on principle of “fiscal consent,” the fundamental social contract that everybody has to pay taxes on a fair and transparent basis so as to finance equitable access to public goods and services.

Economists have concluded that there is a solution to the threat to democracy and the dire effects of lost tax revenue as a consequence of tax havens: first, create an effective system for the automatic global exchange of information about bank accounts; and second, establish a globally transparent register of all companies that would list the **real** owners of companies and foundations. This information would enable Canada and other national tax administrations to fight tax evasion and to levy taxes on capital-income flows and wealth stocks.

I call on our government to lead out in advocacy for the international community to take these two steps.

Sincerely,

JANUARY 8, 2017

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM: We are committed to providing safe, compassionate, age-appropriate programming for all children and youth who attend or visit UCV. Our goal is to find the Fun with Meaning! Sunday morning classes and childcare are provided free of charge as part of the mission of this congregation. Everyone attends the start of service together through the chalice lighting, opening hymn, and story for all ages.

After the story children ages 3-12 proceed to the lower level of Hewett Centre for their classes: Chalice Children (age 3-6); Stardust Origins (ages 7-9 and 10-12).

Childcare is available for children, up to age three, between 10:45 and 12:30 in Servetus Room on the main floor of Hewett Centre opposite the library.

Children and babies are welcome to remain with their parents/guardians through the service if they prefer.

Please meet your child downstairs after the service: children under age 9 will remain in class until met by a responsible family member.

YOUTH GROUP: Our High School Youth Group (grades 8-12) meets from 1—3 pm each Sunday in Hitschmanova on the lower level of Hewett Centre. Our Youth Group is led collaboratively by the youth and trained advisors. They explore issues of faith development, social justice, life experiences, trials, tribulations and joys of navigating life—and they always include a good measure of fun and games. All youth members and visitors are welcome anytime.

2017 MULTIFAITH CALENDARS now available for purchase before and after the service in Hewett Hall! Beautiful, art filled calendars include notes about festivals each month from world religions of all kinds. They make wonderful gifts! \$15 each or 2 for \$25. All proceeds support the Children and Youth programming.

FORUM, FIRESIDE, 12:30 – 1:30 PM:

Tea with the DRE. There are plans in the works for Coming of Age, new O.W.L. offerings for grades K-1 and 5-6, Mystery Pals, and a season of science, evolution, and social justice. Parents come talk about your wishes and goals, students come share, members of all walks discover how you can help make these visions a reality.

MEDITATION: Join us for the Sunday morning sitting meditation at 10—10:45 am. There is brief guidance at the beginning of each sit. In consideration of others, please try to come on time. Any inquiries can be sent to victoriaoginski@gmail.com.

ART IN THE CHURCH:

Alchemical Visions by Louise Bunn / *SignPosts* by Mary Bennett. New work in mixed-media. Mon, Jan. 9: Mary Bennett will be available for another “art walkabout” before circle dancing. 6—6:30 pm, Sanctuary; 6:30—7 pm, Fireside Room.

Sun, Jan. 15: A walkabout with the artists. Fireside Room, 12:15—12:30 pm (before the forum) and Sanctuary 12:30—12:45 pm. Drop in, chat, and ask questions.

Wed, Jan. 25: 7—9 pm, Artists’ Talk – Louise and Mary will give an illustrated talk about their current work (and what preceded it and what’s coming next). Starts in Fireside Room and then moves to Sanctuary for a walkabout.

HOW WE’RE CHANGING THE WORLD!

Our Tibetans are enjoying their well-equipped suite; their previous home was a cave with no plumbing, heat or electricity.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MESSY CHURCH + MAKE DINNER is this coming Friday, January 13! Come join us in chasing away the January blues with a traditional Chili Supper (both veggie and meat!). All ages welcome for feast, fun, and fellowship. Suggested donation \$5 adult/\$3 child.

THIRD SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION happens Jan 15 at 12:30 pm in Lindsey-Priestley. *The Dalai Lama's Cat* by David Michie is a delightful read. Through the voice of the this warmhearted, irreverent and wise cat we get to see and hear the life of the Dalai Lama, and to share the challenges the cat faces as she applies the Buddhist teachings to her own experience.

ACTIVISTS ACROSS AGES EVENING: Friday, January 20, 6—9 pm in the Hewett Hall. The Environment and Social Justice Committees are inviting local activists and UCV members to share an evening of food, storytelling and building relationships. Are there similarities between Vietnam and Kinder Morgan? Standing Rock and the Civil Rights movement? What can we learn? In this uncertain age, we are stronger when we work together. Main course by the Environment Committee. Potluck appies or desserts would be welcomed. Please email Tamiko Suzuki to reserve a spot as space is limited. Tamiko.l.suzuki@gmail.com

UCV CARE AND CONCERN ANNOUNCEMENT

A new way to reach out in time of need:

“If you or others in the congregation are in need of support in times of transition, loss, illness, moving, etc.,

please contact: careandconcern@vancouverunitarians.ca”

sincerely, Rev. Steven Epperson

Warm Welcome!

Please visit our Visitors' Table and get a nametag in the Sanctuary foyer. Drop by the Welcome Table in Hewett Centre after the service and stay for coffee or tea and friendly conversation. Learn about our church and our community. Look for people wearing yellow nametags, who are welcoming you today.

If you are a new family visiting with children or babies, we look forward to welcoming you in person. Free childcare is available for children 3 and under, and children 4 and over are invited to join in this week's program activities. Children are also welcome to stay for the church service if they prefer. If you feel that you need to slip out of the service with a crying baby, please feel free to rejoin the service at any time. The service can also be heard in the foyer and in Hewett Centre.

SUPPORT TEAM TODAY

COFFEE SET UP AND SERVERS

Ann Foster, Amy Megumi Anderson

FLOWERS

Lorraine Calame

LIBRARY AND LITERATURE STALL

Kaelyn Elfert, Lindsay Udem

LUNCH

Cancelled

ORDER OF SERVICE

Hunter MacNiven

SOUND

Galen Elfert

GREETERS

Margo Elfert, Sakura Nandana, Setty Pendakur, Penny Pearson

WELCOME AND INFORMATION TABLE

Alison Pearson, Nancy Barker

STAFF

PARISH MINISTER

Rev. Steven Epperson

COMMUNITY MINISTER

Rev. Laura Imayoshi

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Kiersten Moore

CHOIR DIRECTOR

Donna Brown

MUSIC ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER

Elliott Dainow

CASUAL CARETAKERS

James Wilson, Ben Yeung, Mark Klassen,

Paul Nash, Matt Yeung

CONGREGATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

Hunter MacNiven

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Marcus Hynes

BOOKKEEPER

Collene Harris

SUNDAY RECEPTIONISTS

Virginia Crabill, Robert Schultz

UCV LAY CHAPLAINS

Nan Gregory, Louise Bunn

The Unitarian Church of Vancouver

We are a community of diverse beliefs and shared values.

In fellowship with one another, we seek spiritual growth, social justice, and environmental sustainability through worship, ethical action, education, and artistic expression. We welcome all who would join this compassionate and visionary community

The UCV campus is a Smoke-Free Environment