

Social Justice Committee
Annual Report
July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

Working towards social justice is a core value of Unitarians so most of us are involved in some way with action to promote democracy, high quality public health services, affordable housing, peace, human rights, fair trade, ethical investing, elimination of poverty, solidarity with indigenous peoples or other significant issues of our times.

The role of our Social Justice Committee is to coordinate and organize opportunities for education and action for our congregation. We meet at 9:30 am on the 2nd Sunday of the month Sep to Jun and welcome you to join us.

We sponsored the following Sunday Forums: **Sep 9:** Proportional Representation with Jackie DeRoo; **Oct 14:** Why White Poppies on Nov 11th with Teresa Gagné and Denis Laplante; **Dec 9:** Amnesty International annual Write for Rights campaign; **Jan 13:** Meet the Social Justice Committee facilitated by Leslie Kemp; **Feb 10:** Democracy in Canada and the Need to Protect it with Melody Mason; **Mar 10:** On Settler Colonization and It's Effects with Cole Harris; **May 12:** Vancouver's Rental Housing Crisis with Jean Swanson; **Jun 9:** UCV's Genders and Sexualities Alliance with Mary Bennett.

A highlight of this past year was forming the Reconciliation Working Group to strengthen our congregation's response to calls for truth, healing and reconciliation among indigenous and non-indigenous people. Members included Rev Steven Epperson, Kiersten Moore, Leslie Kemp, Melody Mason, Rob Dainow, Cindy Cashin, Tamiko Suzuki, Yvonne Marcus, Nan Gregory and Lynn Armstrong. We established a "Reconciliation Network" webpage <https://vancouverunitarians.ca/action/reconciliation-network/> and initiated a First Sunday discussion table in Hewett Hall with books, DVD's and other resources available for loan. We co-sponsored a Mar 30th workshop with Quakers, "Building Bridges Through Understanding the Village."

We again hosted a rest stop at UCV for the annual Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser walk Feb 23. And, we again supported the annual White Poppies for Peace campaign by selling white poppies, sponsoring space for creating the wreaths and promoting the Nov 11th wreath laying ceremony at the Peace Park (Burrard & 1st). We continue to support Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) and held a CUSJ info table in Hewett Hall May 5th.

Thanks to the congregation for your support,
Leslie Kemp and Lynn Armstrong, co-chairs
<https://vancouverunitarians.ca/action/social-justice/>