

REFLECTIONS

SUSTAINABILITY

Theme Based Ministry Newsletter of the Unitarian Church of Calgary
Volume 1, Issue 8 • April 2015

Theme: What does it mean to live a life of Sustainability?

'The real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth.~Thich Nhat Hanh

This month we will explore the meaning of sustainability in our lives. April 22nd is Earth Day, an occasion which seems to grow more important each year, as the question of how we can live well on this earth and with this earth becomes more and more urgent. And yet, our exploration of this theme needs to focus beyond just the understanding of “environmentalism.” Indeed, a deeper reflection on sustainability inevitably shows us how living well on the earth involves living well in our communities, in our bodies, and in our spiritual expression.

The term “sustainability” gained traction following the 1987 Brundtland report by the United Nations, and over time it has also become something of a buzzword. Perhaps part of our task is to restore some dignity to the notion of sustainability. In French, the word is “durabilité” - durability. So, something sustainable is something that lasts; though sustainability is not about being indestructible. On the contrary, perhaps the central feature of sustainability is that nothing lasts forever. In nature, everything moves in cycles of birth, death, and re-creation, whereas the current unsustainable attitude in human society is one that seeks to go onward and upward forever, to produce and consume more. A sustainable world, sustainable communities, embrace the cyclical nature of life.

At the core of sustainability is the notion of interconnectedness. Our 7th Principle calls us to affirm and promote “respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part.” This calls us to live the 7th Principle, to restore sustainability means to restore and deepen connections.

Finally, it is hard to care for something you do not love. And so perhaps, in the end, our journey toward sustainability is a journey toward love, and a journey of love: not only love for the world of our own creation, love for the world which creates us and sustains us.

Namaste,
Debra

edited from words by Curtis Murphy, Intern Minister 1st Toronto

April Services:

Sunday 10:30

April 5th

**Sustained by Life and
Love**

April 12th

Mood More than Logic

April 19th

**Sustainability
Challenge**

April 26th

If a Tree Falls ...

Soulful Sundowns

1st/3rd Wednesday 7:30pm

April 1st

Sustaining the Everyday

April 15th

Upcoming Services

April 5th *Sustained By Life and Love*

Description: We see around us new life bursting forth as the earth cycles again to spring, nature's resurrection, in the northern hemisphere. This Easter Sunday we remember the Christian passion story that speaks of the resurrection of love, Jesus's greatest message. We are sustained by the earth's bounty and by the love we give and receive.

This morning will include an extended Time for All and be followed by a fellowship brunch.

Presenters	Rev Debra Faulk & Shannon Mang	Music	Jane Perry, Music Director and Lisa Piepgrass, soloist
Service Associates	Danielle Webber, Student Minister		

April 12th *More Mood than Logic*

Description: The public is moved by mood more than logic, by instinct more than reason, and that is something every politician must make use of or guard against. Fred will also touch on Alice Munro, Al Franken, UUA President Peter Morales, with a Robert Fulghum story.

Presenter	Rev Fred Cappuccino	Music	Jane Perry, Music Director and UUphonia
Service Associate	Rev Debra Faulk		

April 19th *Sustainability Challenge*

Description: We will explore the theme of sustainability with a special focus on the impact of climate change. Lynn is the coordinator of the Calgary Climate Action Network.

Presenters	Rev Debra Faulk & Lynn Armstrong	Music	Jane Perry, Music Director
Service Associate	Chris Rothbauer, Intern		

April 26th *If a Tree Falls ...*

Description: The life and music of legendary Canadian folk musician-activist Bruce Cockburn provides the inspiration for this morning's service.

This service will include recognition of new members.

Presenter	Rev Debra Faulk	Music	Jane Perry, Music Director and the Bruce Cockburn Tribute Band
Service Associates	Rev Debra Faulk		

All above services are Sunday mornings at 10:30am

Wednesday Soulful Sundown Services –

**Held on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday from 7:30 – 8:15 p.m., these interactive worships include movement and lively discussion.*

April 1st

Sustaining the Everyday: Join us for this young adult led service as we reflect on the elements of our everyday routine that sustain us and which don't.

April 15th

Think Globally, Act Locally: Join us for this young adult led service exploring environmental sustainability in this ever melting climate.

Getting Started: April's Spiritual Exercise

Thinking about Sustainability

OPTION 1: Join Climate Justice Month - Commit2Respond!

From World Water Day (March 22) to Earth Day (April 22), Unitarian Universalists and other people of faith and conscience will embark on a spiritual journey for climate justice, organized by the new climate justice initiative Commit2Respond.

Individuals, families, groups, and congregations will get faith-filled resources, engage in powerful practices throughout the month, learn together, and more. By the end of the month we will make commitments to new long-term actions that will help us collectively shift to a low carbon future, advance human rights, and grow the climate justice movement.

Participate in Climate Justice Month by signing up as an individual, Commit2Respond. Set aside time for reflection and engage with the daily messages.

Be inspired; get connected with other people of faith and conscience committed to climate justice, and commit to long-term actions that will help save our world. www.commit2respond.org

OPTION 2: Letter to the 7th Generation (Adapted from Active Hope, by Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone)

When making major decisions, the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee has a policy that asks the question: "How will this affect the 7th generation?" In order to be able to answer this question, we have to be able to imagine who the 7th generation might be. It requires us to step out of ourselves and imagine a much larger view of time than we are accustomed to.

From Active Hope: "Closing your eyes, imagine yourself journeying forward through time and identifying with a human being living two hundred years from now. You do not need to determine this person's circumstances, only to imagine that he or she is looking back at you from the time he or she inhabits. Imagine what this person would want to say to you. Open your mind and listen. Now begin putting words down on paper as if this future person were writing a letter just to you that starts: Dear [your name]..." After hearing what this future person has to say to you, spend some time reflecting on what it means for your life. You might want to share some of this letter with your journey group, or what the experience of writing it was like.

OPTION 3: Hearing the Earth Cry

Once, at speaking engagement, an audience member asked Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh what was the one thing he thought people needed to do to save the earth. People were surprised when he replied: "What we most need to do, is hear within us the sound of the earth crying." This is more than just an exercise in imagination; it is asking us to experience the truth that we are part of the earth, and experience the feelings that come with that identification.

As Wendell Berry says, "There are no unsacred places," there are only sacred places and desecrated places. You are invited to spend some time in a desecrated place, and listen for the sound of the earth crying.

You can do this in one of two ways:

Visit a "desecrated place" - a parking lot, strip mall... any place that feels like it has had the magic, wonder and beauty drained away. Spend time there and sit with your feelings, listening for the sound of the earth crying.

OR

If going in person is not practical, visit in your mind's eye by viewing the photography of Edward Burtynsky (<http://www.edwardburtynsky.com/>) or Louis Helbig (<http://www.beautifuldestruction.ca/gallery/>), who both takes striking photos of industrial destruction. Spend some time with these images and sit with your feelings, listening for the sound of the earth crying.

For Inspiration

Remember that these readings serve as “jumping off points.” They are not here to tell us how to “do it right.” Rather they serve as windows into how others have thought about what it means to be a person of deep listening. Hearing about the journeys of others, we are better able to think through our own.

There’s a lot here. Don’t attempt to absorb or analyze it all. Rather, think of it as a treasure chest that you are sifting through to find the jewel that speaks most strongly to your heart. Come to the meeting prepared to share the selection that resonates with or speaks most powerfully to the story of your own life right now.

Sustainability, ensuring the future of life on Earth, is an infinite game, the endless expression of generosity on behalf of all. ~ *Paul Hawken*

The future is green energy, sustainability, renewable energy.~ *Arnold Schwarzenegger*

Resilience is all about being able to overcome the unexpected. Sustainability is about survival. The goal of resilience is to thrive.~ *Jamais Cascio*

In the 21st century, I think the heroes will be the people who will improve the quality of life, fight poverty and introduce more sustainability. ~ *Bertrand Piccard*

If we each take responsibility in shifting our own behavior, we can trigger the type of change that is necessary to achieve sustainability for our race or this planet. We change our planet, our environment, our humanity every day, every year, every decade, and every millennia. ~ *Yehuda Berg*

Climate change is destroying our path to sustainability. Ours is a world of looming challenges and increasingly limited resources. Sustainable development offers the best chance to adjust our course.~ *Ban Ki-moon*

The first rule of sustainability is to align with natural forces, or at least not try to defy them. *Paul Hawken*

When sustainability is viewed as being a matter of survival for your business, I believe you can create massive change. ~ *Cameron Sinclair*

Many business leaders are seeing the relationship between long term success and sustainability, and that’s very heartening. *Jacqueline Novogratz*

More and more companies are reaching out to their suppliers and contractors to work jointly on issues of sustainability, environmental responsibility, ethics, and compliance.~ *Simon Mainwaring*

If you want creativity, take a zero off your budget. If you want sustainability, take off two zeros.~ *Jaime Lerner*

Sustainability is the key to our survival on this planet and will also determine success on all levels. ~ *Shari Arison*

To me, a leader is someone who holds her- or himself accountable for finding potential in people and processes. And so what I think is really important is sustainability.~ *Brene Brown*

Philanthropy without scale and sustainability is like any other bad business that will simply wither and die on the vine. ~ *Naveen Jain*

Sustainability requires maintaining life-supporting natural capital in order for our socioeconomic goals to be met. ~ *Warren Flint*

After all, sustainability means running the global environment - Earth Inc. - like a corporation: with depreciation, amortization and maintenance accounts. In other words, keeping the asset whole, rather than undermining your natural capital. ~ *Maurice Strong*

Sustainability can’t be like some sort of a moral sacrifice or political dilemma or a philanthropical cause. It has to be a design challenge. *Bjarke Ingels*

People 'over-produce' pollution because they are not paying for the costs of dealing with it
~ Ha-Joon Chang

Everything we think about regarding sustainability - from energy to agriculture to manufacturing to population - has a water footprint. Almost all of the water on Earth is salt water, and the remaining freshwater supplies are split between agricultural use and human use - as well as maintaining the existing natural environment. ~ *Jamais Cascio*

Transparency, accountability and sustainability have become the slogans of the market leaders. Companies carry out environmental and social audits to court the consumer, and even the bluest chips woo organisations such as Greenpeace and Amnesty. ~ *Noreena Hertz*

Sustainability is a seemingly laudable goal - it tells us we need to live within our means, whether economic, ecological, or political - but it's insufficient for uncertain times. How can we live within our means when those very means can change, swiftly and unexpectedly, beneath us?
~ *Jamais Cascio*

But now sustainability is such a political category that it's getting more and more difficult to think about it in a serious way. Sustainability has become an ornament. ~ *Rem Koolhaas*

A hostility to modernity is shared by ideologies that have nothing else in common - a nostalgia for moral clarity, small-town intimacy, family values, primitive communism, ecological sustainability, communitarian solidarity, or harmonies with the rhythms of nature. ~ *Steven Pinker*

What is now called 'green architecture' is an opportunistic caricature of a much deeper consideration of the issues related to sustainability that architecture has been engaged with for many years. It was one of the first professions that was deeply concerned with these issues and that had an intellectual response to them. ~ *Rem Koolhaas*

Learning about issues such as sustainability and locavorism are things that you need to have as part of you as a chef because it will make you cook more delicious food. ~ *Rene Redzepi*

Reducing our levels of consumption will not be a sacrifice but a bonus if we simply redefine the meaning of the word 'success.' ~ *David Wann*
I actually believe 'Sustainability', as a concept, is one of the arteries leading to the heart of so many of our cultural transitions at play today. And it's this concept which leads me to bottled water, and its multibillion dollar industry. ~ *Brandon Boyd*

"The greatest shortcoming of the human race is our inability to understand the exponential function." ~ *Albert A. Bartlett*

"All the human and animal manure which the world wastes, if returned to the land, instead of being thrown into the sea, would suffice to nourish the world." ~ *Victor Hugo, Les Misérables*

Problems cannot be solved at the same level of awareness that created them. ~ *Albert Einstein*

When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world. ~ *John Muir*

"To husband is to use with care, to keep, to save, to make last, to conserve. Old usage tells us that there is a husbandry also of the land, of the soil, of the domestic plants and animals - obviously because of the importance of these things to the household. And there have been times, one of which is now, when some people have tried to practice a proper human husbandry of the nondomestic creatures in recognition of the dependence of our households and domestic life upon the wild world. Husbandry is the name of all practices that sustain life by connecting us conservingly to our places and our world; it is the art of keeping tied all the strands in the living network that sustains us.

And so it appears that most and perhaps all of industrial agriculture's manifest failures are the result of an attempt to make the land produce without husbandry." ~ *Wendell Berry*

The most sustainable way is to not make things. The second most sustainable way is to make something very useful, to solve a problem that hasn't been solved ~ *Thomas Sigsgaard*

Sustainability is about ecology, economy and equity
~ *Ralph Bicknese*

One cannot violate the promptings of one's nature without having that nature recoil upon itself.

~ *Jack London*, *White Fang*

[Sustainability is] growth based on forms and processes of development that do not undermine the integrity of the environment on which they depend ~ *Jim MacNeill* Former Secretary General of the World Commission on Environment & Development

What is the use of a house if you don't have a decent planet to put it on? ~ *Henry David Thoreau*

What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another. ~ *Gandhi*

Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it.
Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together.
All things connect. ~ *Chief Seattle*, 1854

The premise of the Taker story is 'the world belongs to man'... The premise of the Leaver story is 'man belongs to the world'." ~ *Daniel Quinn*, *Ishmael: An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit*

He, who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man. ~ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. ~ *Aldo Leopold*

We live in two interpenetrating worlds. The first is the living world, which has been forged in an evolutionary crucible over a period of four billion years. The second is the world of roads and cities, farms and artifacts, that people have been designing for themselves over the last few millennia. The condition that threatens both worlds – unsustainability – results from a lack of integration between them.

~ *Sim van der Ryn and Stuart Cowan*, *Ecological Design*

"How sad to think that nature speaks and mankind doesn't listen." ~ *Victor Hugo*

"If you can appreciate the Earth, you can appreciate the beauty of yourself. The same creator created both. And if I learned to take care of that I'll also take care of myself and help take care of others."

~ *Rachel Bagby*

"You are not Atlas carrying the world on your shoulder. It is good to remember that the planet is carrying you."

~ *Vandana Shiva*

Imagine that you and some other humans are in a spaceship, roaming around in the universe, looking for a home. You land on a planet that proves to be ideal in every way. It has deep forests and fleshy fruits and surging oceans and gentle rains and cavorting creatures and dappled sunlight and rich soil. Everything is perfect for human habitation, and everything is astonishingly beautiful.

This is how the religious naturalist thinks of our human advent on Earth. We arrived but a moment ago, and found it to be perfect for us in every way. And then we came to understand that it is perfect because we arose from it and are a part of it.
Hosannah! Not in the highest, but right here, right now, this. ~ *Ursula Goodenough*

"The most remarkable feature of this historical moment on Earth is not that we are on the way to destroying the world – we've actually been on the way for quite a while. It is that we are beginning to wake up, as from a millennia-long sleep, to a whole new relationship to our world, to ourselves and each other." ~ *Joanna Macy*

We can never have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigour, vast and titanic features, the sea-coast with its wrecks, the wilderness with its living and its decaying trees, the thundercloud, the rain which lasts three weeks...We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander.
~ *Henry David Thoreau*

If we pretend that we are at the centre,
that moles and kingfishers,
eels and coyotes are at the edge of grace,
then we circle, dead moons about a cold sun.
~ *Joseph Bruchac*

"I decided some time ago that I was going to spend no more energy trying to figure out if things were going to come out alright or not. We're engaged in a civilization-scale wager with enormously high stakes – my role, I think, is to get up every morning and try to change the odds of that wager a little bit, without any guarantee that it will come out okay." ~ *Bill McKibben*,

We look with uncertainty
beyond the old choices for
Clear-cut answers
To a softer, more permeable aliveness
Which is every moment
At the brink of death;
for something new is being born in us
If we but let it.
We stand at a new doorway,
Awaiting that which comes...
Daring to be human creatures.
Vulnerable to the beauty of existence.
Learning to love. ~ *Anne Hillman*

"Looked at as biological beings, we are no more removed from nature than any other creature. Our animal nature dictates our essential needs: clean air, clean water, clean soil, clean energy." ~ *David Suzuki*

I do not have to go
to Sacred Places
In far-off lands.
The ground I stand on
Is holy.

Here, in this little garden
I tend
My pilgrimage ends.
The wild honeybees
The hummingbird moths
The flickering fireflies at dusk
Are a microcosm
Of the Universe
Each seed that grows
Each spade of soil
Is full of miracles

And I toil and sweat
And watch and wonder
And am full of love.
Living in place
In this place.
For truth and beauty

Dwell here. ~ *Mary de La Valette*

Once we have secured the food and shelter necessary for healthy life, worlds of opportunity open up for personal growth and satisfaction. The three Ls – Learning, Love and Laughter – as well as art, music, dance, sport, communication, service and appreciation of the universe, within and around ourselves, can all make life worthwhile. Without harming the Earth, they can provide pleasure, purpose and meaning to our lives. ~ *Mike Nickerson*, Life, Money and illusion

Myth: we have to save the earth. Frankly, the earth doesn't need to be saved. Nature doesn't give a hoot if human beings are here or not. The planet has survived cataclysmic and catastrophic changes for millions upon millions of years. Over that time, it is widely believed, 99 percent of all species have come and gone while the planet has remained. Saving the environment is really about saving our environment -- making it safe for ourselves, our children, and the world as we know it. If more people saw the issue as one of saving themselves, we would probably see increased motivation and commitment to actually do so. ~ *Robert Lilienfeld, and William L. Rathje*,

"Ask the questions that have no answers.
Invest in the millenium. Plant sequoias.
Say that your main crop is the forest
that you did not plant,
that you will not live to harvest.

Say that the leaves are harvested
when they have rotted into the mold.
Call that profit. Prophecy such returns.
Put your faith in the two inches of humus
that will build under the trees
every thousand years." ~ *Wendell Berry*

5 Tips for Teaching Kids About Sustainable Living

by Emilie Sennebogen found @ <http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/conservation/conservationists/5-tips-for-teaching-kids-sustainable-living.htm#page=0>



In the new millennium, being a resident of planet Earth means you have more of a responsibility than ever to take care of your home. As our population grows and natural resources become more depleted, it's up to us to do our part to find and use alternative fuels, recycle our papers, plastics and metals, and in general, lead a more sustainable lifestyle.

And it doesn't stop with us -- it's up to us to guide our children in the same direction to help ensure our planet's sustainability for future generations. If you believe that children are our future, then you indeed need to teach them well and let them lead the way.

Read on for five tips on teaching your children about sustainable living and then help them put these lessons into practice so they can be good stewards of the Earth.

5: Lead by Example

Using the motto "Do as I say and not as I do" has to be one of the most irresponsible parenting tactics on Earth. Not to mention fruitless, because one thing we know is that kids mimic their parents' actions, from simple mannerisms and things we say to more serious choices, like smoking cigarettes.

This means that the responsibility for setting an example with actions is placed squarely on the heads of adults. If you want to teach children about sustainable living, then you have to practice it yourself. Recycling, using less water and power, even the car you drive all send powerful messages to your children. And along the way, be sure to use your words as well as actions to get the message across.



Many zoos have programs that focus on sustainable living, too.

4: Make it Fun

For kids, especially younger ones, one key to teaching them anything is to make it a fun. Viewings of NOVA episodes may be a little dry for the youngsters, but perhaps a showing of "March of the Penguins," or "Planet Earth" might grab their attention a little better.

Children have a special affinity toward animals, and viewing the world through a furry or feathery lens might be a little more provocative for their young minds. As you watch with them, teach your kids that Mother Nature and the animal kingdom depend on us and our choices to help them live healthy lives. These early, basic lessons will help ingrain in kids a big-picture responsibility as they enjoy watching animals do their thing. It's a great way to start children out on the road to leading a sustainable life.

3: Get Kids Involved

If you have kids, then you know that up to a certain age they have a strong desire to help mom and dad do just about anything. When appropriate, get your kids involved in what you're doing. Simple household tasks like recycling and using natural cleaning products are a great start. If you have teenagers in the house, you can get their help with brainstorming and working on larger projects like installing sustainable cork or bamboo flooring in your home.

One task that kids of all ages will want to be involved in is helping out with the family garden. Teach them about composting and the virtues of growing your own organic vegetables and herbs. Seeing food on the plate that came from seeds they planted is a big thrill for a kid, as well as a great lesson in sustainability.



2: Read to Them

Kids love bedtime stories. And most adults can probably recall some of their favorite stories that were read to them when they were children. This means books have a pretty big impact on children, which is why they're filled with life lessons -- from sharing and playing nice, to understanding emotions and being well-mannered. These days, there's a nice selection of green-themed books that can help teach your kids stewardship and sustainability in a language they can easily understand. Chances are your kids will be clamoring for you to read them to you over and over, driving home the

sustainability lessons that will stay with them for years to come.

1: Volunteer with Your Kids

One of the best ways to teach your kids about their surrounding environments is by signing the family up for some local volunteer work. Search your local community organizations and message boards for opportunities for environmental volunteer jobs, and then take your kids along with you. There are likely all kinds of local park and neighborhood cleanup groups in your area, and your kids will get a sense of pride in their community from making their neighborhood more beautiful. You'll also be teaching two lessons for the price of one -- protecting the environment and the importance of volunteerism. This is also a great way to lead by example. If you volunteer alongside your kids, then they'll be more likely to carry on in the family tradition in the future, which is great news for Mother Earth.



This year spend 30 minutes/day for 30 days out in nature with David Suzuki's 30x30 Nature Challenge. One of the best ways to become passionate about sustainability is to foster a life-long love affair with our surroundings. Do it with, and for your children! <http://30x30.davidsuzuki.org>

A couple of books in the DRE library that you can borrow this month:



Questions for Discussion

As always, don't treat these questions like "homework." You do not need to engage every single one. Instead, simply look them over and find the one that "hooks" you most. Then let it take you on a ride. Live with it for a while. Allow it to regularly break into—and break open—your ordinary thoughts. And then come to your TLC (Theme-based Listening Circle) meeting prepared to share that journey with your group.

1. What do we most need to create a sustainable world?
2. Do you feel that living in an unsustainable world affects you personally? If so, how? If not, why not? What are the connections between an unsustainable world and unsustainable lives, or between a sustainable world and sustainable lives?
3. What sustains you? Are you getting enough sustenance in your life? Do you feel sustained?
4. Are there any examples of sustainable living for you to draw on? Are there examples nearby, or do you need to look to other times and places? Does a sustainable life (sustaining yourself and sustaining the world) feel possible to you?
5. Would you like to do more to help envision and build a sustainable world? What calls you to action? What obstacles do you face?
6. When you think of the ongoing global ecological crisis, what are your main emotions? Fear? Anger? Excitement? Confusion?

Resources for Reflection on Sustainability

Videos, Movies and Online Resources on Sustainability

<http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/how-wolves-change-rivers/>

Great video about the eco-system, less than 5 minutes

Reclaiming the Honorable Harvest <http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/Reclaiming-the-Honorable-Harves>

“Everything you love” TED talk by Dan Dilderman, U. of T. Professor

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFoqRsWS6Ag>

This Is What Energy Democracy Looks Like

<http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/this-is-what-energy-democracy-looks-like/>

A 5 minute video of a potential workable option.

http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch_sustainability_videos/

Numerous videos about action for environmental sustainability.

Unitarian Universalist Association “Commit to Respond” to Climate Change campaign

<http://www.commit2respond.org/>

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth, Sustainability Basics

<http://uuministryforearth.org/2013-ED-Sustainability-Overview>

WALL-E (2008) An animation movie produced by Pixar and directed by Andrew Stanton. The story follows a robot named WALL-E, who is designed to clean up a waste-covered Earth far in the future. The film is seen as a critique on larger societal issues. It addresses consumerism, environmental problems, waste management and the immense impact humans have on the Earth.

An Inconvenient Truth (2006) A documentary film directed by Davis Guggenheim about former United States Vice President Al Gore’s campaign to educate citizens about global warming via a comprehensive slide show that, by own estimate made in the film, he has given more than a thousand times.

Flow: for Love of Water (2008) This documentary directed by Irena Salina features interviews with water and community activists Maude Barlow, Peter Gleick and scientists Ashok Gadgil, Rajendra Singh and Vandana Shiva. The film concentrates on the big business of privatization of water infrastructure which prioritizes profits over the availability of clean water for people and the environment.

No Impact Man (2009) An American documentary directed by Laura Gabbert and Justin Schein. The film follows Colin Beavan and his family during their year-long experiment to have sustainable zero impact on the environment.

Avatar (2009) Science fiction about humans mining for a rare, expensive mineral exploits both the native Na’vi population and the planet’s ecological balance in the name of money.

Books on Sustainability

Active Hope, How to Face the Mess We're in Without Going Crazy, Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone
Active Hope is about finding, and offering, our best response to the crisis of sustainability unfolding in our world. It offers tools that help us face the mess we're in, as well as find and play our role in the collective transition, or Great Turning, to a life-sustaining society.

Post Carbon Reader, Managing the 21st Century's Sustainability Crisis

Edited by Richard Heinberg and Daniel Lerch

How do population, water, energy, food, and climate issues impact one another? What can we do to address one problem without making the others worse? The Post Carbon Reader features essays by some of the world's most provocative thinkers on the key issues shaping our new century, from renewable energy and urban agriculture to social justice and community resilience. This insightful, award-winning collection takes a hard-nosed look at the interconnected threats of our global sustainability quandary and presents some of the most promising responses.

The Transition Handbook: From oil dependency to local resilience, by Rob Hopkins

We live in an oil-dependent world. Most people don't want to think about what happens when the oil runs out (or becomes prohibitively expensive). This title shows how the inevitable and profound changes ahead can have a positive effect.

The World Without Us, by Alan Weisman

In *The World Without Us*, Alan Weisman offers an utterly original approach to questions of humanity's impact on the planet: he asks us to envision our Earth, without us.

The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible, Charles Eisenstein

In a time of social and ecological crisis, what can we as individuals do to make the world a better place? This inspirational and thought-provoking book serves as an empowering antidote to the cynicism, frustration, paralysis, and overwhelm so many of us are feeling, replacing it with a grounding reminder of what's true: we are all connected, and our small, personal choices bear unsuspected transformational power. By fully embracing and practicing this principle of interconnectedness—called interbeing—we become more effective agents of change and have a stronger positive influence on the world.

This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate, Naomi Klein

Forget everything you think you know about global warming. The really inconvenient truth is that it's not about failed system and build something radically better.

Sea Sick: The Global Ocean in Crisis, Alanna Mitchell

Examines the current state of the world's oceans — the great unexamined ecological crisis of the planet — and the fact that we are altering everything about them; temperature, salinity, acidity, ice cover, volume, circulation, and, of course, the life within them.

Looking Ahead

The content for these packets is a group effort. We welcome submissions of your ideas of readings, stories, videos, visual images, questions, and spiritual exercises for each month's topic. While not everything will make it into this collection, it is useful for our worship team and our group facilitators. You can send submissions for April's topic of "Sustainability" by the third Sunday, April 19th, to debra@unitarianscalgary.org

Themes for Spring 2015

May – Honesty

June – Imagination

Theme-based Listening Circles (TLCs) for 2014-15

Theme-based Listening Circles are now meeting all over the city! An opportunity to connect with others to delve more deeply with the theme of the month. If you are interested in a group send an inquiry tlc@unitarianscalgary.org

Themes for September 2015 – June 2016 are now being considered

REFLECTIONS



Theme Based Ministry Newsletter of the Unitarian Church of Calgary
Volume 1, Issue 7 • March 2015

Thanks to all who contributed and appreciation for the Canadian Unitarian Congregations participating in the thematic ministry sharing circle, and Rev. Scott Tayler's Soul Matters Sharing Circle.