

# Finding Unitarianism on the worldwide web

**Most newcomers** still probably discover Unitarianism on the advice of a friend. But for a total stranger, it's now very easy to locate and explore the denomination on the web. If you do a Canadian Google search for the word "Unitarian" for instance, the first web site listed is the cuc's, followed by most of the country's congregations.

Even easier is to search for "Unitarian *Cityname*." This works for small congregations with modest web sites, as well

as large ones. (For example, typing "Unitarian Elora" or "Unitarian Kamloops" takes you directly to links for those lay-led fellowships.)

And of course at the cuc home page, a single click on the word "congregations" provides links to every congregation in the country with an active site.

In addition, the cuc site now has a "newcomer" link, which takes the visitor to a new portal that provides a slimmed-down site without the organizational clutter. It answers questions like who we are, what we believe, our history and rites of passage, with links to sermons and brochures.

The design of the new portal site mirrors a new identity developed earlier this year by the Unitarian Congregations of Greater Toronto, with the tag line, "ever moving, ever still." The objective is to put a more colourful face on the Unitarian identity, in an attempt to outreach and grow.

Other congregations are doing the same thing. The First UU Church of Winnipeg completely upgraded its website earlier this year. According to the Karin Carlson, the new webmaster, "We wanted a clean design, with

simple and easy-to-understand navigation, a site that would be easy to update, pages that would load quickly, and content that was current."

In their new web design, they chose to use trees and sky for their

graphics, rather than the church's stained glass windows. Why the tree metaphor? "First and most obvious: our building is surrounded by big, beautiful trees, like so many welcoming and sheltering arms, which I think is how the church community should be," says Armstrong.

The Unitarian Church of Vancouver also did a major web upgrade this year. Their first page features bright colours, a big orange sunflower, a child's face, the word "joyfully" and a clever new logo the combines two Us to make a chalice. "This week's service" is highlighted in a special yellow box, and "upcoming events" automatically scroll by in another corner. **U**

More information:

- [www.cuc.ca](http://www.cuc.ca)
- [www.cuc.ca/gta](http://www.cuc.ca/gta)
- [www.unitarian.ca](http://www.unitarian.ca)
- [www.uuwinnipeg.mb.ca](http://www.uuwinnipeg.mb.ca)
- [www.vancouverunitarians.ca](http://www.vancouverunitarians.ca)



## Ontario church is building a green sanctuary

**The Unitarian Congregation** of South Peel in Mississauga, Ontario broke ground last August for their new "green" sanctuary, which will be completed in about a year.

Susan Berry is on the Millennium Project Steering Committee, which has been working on the project for six years. She says the idea of building a green church was hatched at the eco-day camp that the congregation runs in the summer.

After much research the committee came up with a building that will use passive solar heating and cool-roof technology to reduce energy use by 60 per cent. As well, the complex of buildings at South Peel share a Waterloo bio-filter system for their wastewater. (Even though they're in an urban area, next to one of the busiest highways in the country, the congregation has its own septic system, sending no sewage to the city.)

Berry says that the new worship hall will be multi-purpose and will allow the congregation to grow beyond its current 160 members. As befitting a sanctuary, the design is also spiritual. In the middle will be a wooden circle, "to symbolize non-hierarchical belonging and also doubling as a great dance floor." On the south wall, which is mostly windows to catch the sun's heat, there are seven pillars, "to resemble trees, and also to represent our seven principles." **U**



Winnipeg has a comprehensive new web site