



The Flaming Chalice

January 2021

Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia & Port Huron

Lochiel Kiwanis Centre, 180 College Ave. N. Sarnia, Ontario

... an inspiring alternative for spiritual explorers

January 2021 Services by ZOOM: Sundays 11 a.m.

January 3: "The World's on Fire (and We Still Fall in Love)" Rev. Erin J. Walter

The New Year starts with renewed energy and purpose, even in a pandemic. Drawing upon scripture, spiritual practice, and original music, UU Rev. Erin Walter, based in Austin Texas, will reflect on how to foster joy and gratitude in the midst of our ongoing struggles. ErinWalter.com.

January 10: "THE CRACKED CUP" Guest Speaker Liz James, Saskatoon Unitarian and founder of "Mirth and Dignity", a forum for UU humor.

Liz was half way through Ministerial formation when she realized she was on track to be a truly mediocre minister at best. Rather than try to fit into the thing she was failing at, she began the painful process of trying to figure out a path that was a better fit. What began as a practical joke became an experiment, and then became a 40,000 person religious community. <https://www.uua.org/offices/people/liz-james> A shared service with the Unitarian Fellowship of London.

January 17: "Siri, What's My Purpose?" Guest Speaker Amber Dawn Bellemare

Amber, originally from Sarnia, is a UU in Montreal. She will share her journey to become an advocate for sex workers using her motivation and skills as an artist to confront new barbaric laws that are harmful and also to promote actions that are making a positive difference. Amber is also the Program Co-Ordinator for the "Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Initiative" of the Canadian Unitarian Council.

January 24: "Challenges of Infection Control in Health Care" Guest Speaker Helen Shaw, Manager of Infection Control and Prevention, Bluewater Health.

Strategies to protect hospital and long term care patients and staff from hospital acquired infections and other transmissible infectious diseases have roots in 19th century advances in nursing and medicine. Helen will share her thoughts on managing the challenges that are ever changing as health care evolves and so do the microbes.

January 31: International Governance, Best Practices for Smaller Nations. Guest Speaker Kelly Culver, FRSA, CMC.

Kelly, a passionate social and public entrepreneur, is the founder and Director of The Culver Group Inc (Canada) and The Culver Group Inc Global Business Centre (Mauritius) and iIMPACT uIMPACT Innovation Foundation in The Netherlands. Kelly is internationally recognized for her outstanding achievements in social progress and development in Small Developing States and Commonwealth countries.



"Anybody can create community with people who believe just like they do."

The true test of community rests in the ability to create it with people who disagree with us."

Lee Barker, UU Minister

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Our January theme is “Purpose”.



Struggling souls catch light
from other souls who are fully
lit and willing to show it.

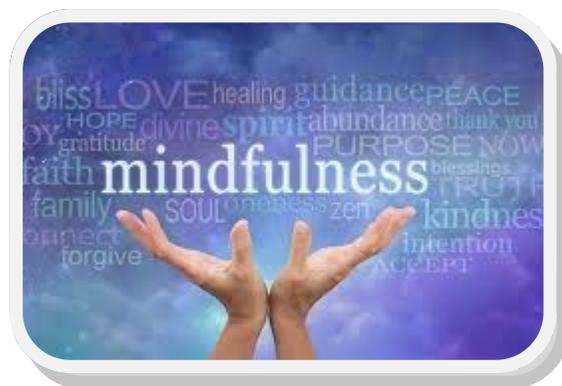
Everything we do is an act of
poetry or a painting if we do it
with mindfulness.

When we do not trouble
ourselves about whether or
not something is a work of
art, if we just act in each
moment with composure and
mindfulness, each minute of
our life is a work of art

Thich Nhat Hanh,
Our Life is a Work of Art

President’s Message — by Dwayne O’Neill

The quotation about mindfulness, given on the left by Thich Nhat Hanh, reminded me of how mindfulness and purpose are intertwined in our lives.



Our purpose may not necessarily be in what we hope to accomplish but rather may be in the how and why we live our everyday lives. It may be ‘being there’ at the times when others need us the most.

In Fellowship, Dwayne



Executive Notes From the President

The Executive Team met in December with the special topic of outreach and publicity on the agenda.

As background information, our membership is now 38 members and this corresponds to a drop of 18% over a few years. If this trend continues, we may be below 30 members in a few more years.

At the meeting, I shared ideas on how important elements such as Our Focus, Our Programs, Our Connections and Our Champions interrelate with an emphasis on our Fellowship being a loving community.



Our Focus involves identifying groups and individuals in our area who are searching for a loving community such as ours. Some of these individuals are on a spiritual journey or they are families with young children who want their values reflected by others in their spiritual community. Others might be couples and extended family members who are connected to the LGBTQ2 community or individuals where social justice action is important. Focussing on these groups is the first step towards connecting them to our Fellowship.

Our Programs can then be tailored towards the needs of these individuals in addition to providing Sunday worship services. We can provide new programs that draw people in and connect them to our Fellowship for an experience of deeper belonging.

Our Connections currently include word of mouth, inviting friends and family, UU Weekly Connections, the monthly newsletter and our website. The Fellowship's Facebook Group and You Tube Channel are more recent. The task is to strengthen the connections between the individuals (Our Focus) and the Fellowship (Our Programs).

Our Champions will be the catalysts in making this happen! Our members and friends have interests and values that are aligned with the people in Our Focus. As Champions, they would connect these people to our loving community and the programs we provide.

In Fellowship, Dwayne O'Neill

Keep Your Dreams Alive

- Listen.
- Light the way.
- Lend a hand.
- Make decisions.
- Commit.
- Take risks.
- Fail *forward*.
- Build community.
- Nurture meaningful relationships.
- Be real.
- Give thanks.
- Invest in someone, or something, that you believe in.
- Live.
- Love.
- Dream.
- Dream BIG.
- Be transformed.
- Change the world.
- LEAD.

And keep your dreams alive.

By Hope Johnson

From *Bless the Imperfect—Meditations for Congregational Leaders*, Skinner House Books Boston

Local Updates

Thank You Bill!



Bill Franks officially retired as one of our lay chaplains on December 31, 2020. Bill has served both our Fellowship and our broader community for some 11 ½ years. He was officially thanked by our former Congregational Lay Chaplain Committee chair, Ann Steadman, during our service on December 20th. A card and gift certificate to the Book Keeper have been sent to Bill on behalf of the Fellowship. All the best Bill!



Treasurer's Corner



Thank you for the eTransfers and the cheques that have been arriving since we stopped having in-person services.

Your continued financial support is appreciated. If you would like to make an eTransfer donation, please send it to UFSPH.executive@gmail.com and also send an email to MEWoolston@hotmail.com with the answer to the security question. Please use a security question that can't be answered by referencing our membership directory. If you prefer to write a cheque, please designate the payee as Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia and Port Huron and mail the cheque to Mark Woolston, UFSPH Treasurer, 1993 Rainbow Trail, Sarnia, ON, N7T 7H6.

The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.

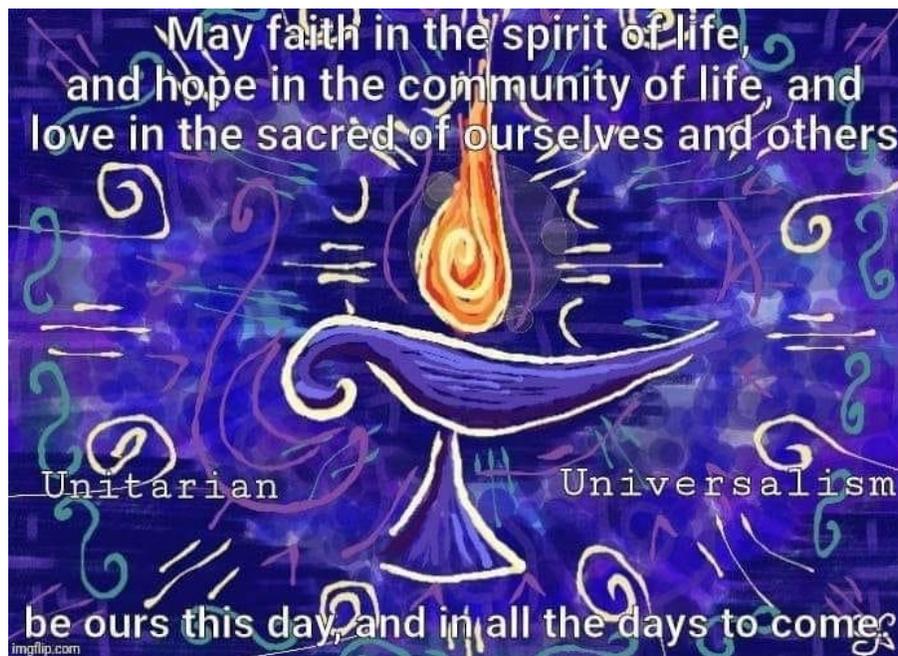
Coretta Scott King

On a lighter side...

Former member, and now a 'friend' of our Fellowship, Christy Plommer has continued to be both courageous and brave. She has participated in the 2020 'Polar Bear Swim' in Nanaimo B.C. Well done Christy! Christy has previously helped our Fellowship with R.E. leadership, redeveloping our website and volunteering significantly for our Refugee Sponsorship initiative. Christy, you, Evan and Jacoba are greatly missed..



As this tumultuous year of 2020 has come to an end...



Wishing All a Safe and Healthy New Year 2021!

UU Midwinter Retreat - "Going Viral" - February 6, 2021

Your Midwinter Retreat Committee is delighted to let you know that registration is now open for the 2021 online Midwinter Retreat on February 6, 2021. As in recent years we have online registration . Here is a link to our website for online registration and more details:

<http://uumidwinterretreat.blogspot.com/>

We have now assembled a draft schedule; workshop details will follow:

THEME: "GOING VIRAL"

Cost: \$15 per household (or per computer connection)

All events Saturday, February 6, 2021. Times are EST.

All events on Zoom, using multiple rooms as required.

12:00-12:30 PM - Welcome, introductions, housekeeping, quick icebreaker/check-in

12:30-12:45 PM - Comfort Break - get what you need for the next session, engage on the chat

12:45-2:15 PM - Keynote Address by Liz James, Q&A

2:15-2:30 PM - Comfort Break

2:30-3:45 PM - Concurrent Sessions

3:45-5:00 PM - Concurrent Sessions

5:00-6:00 PM - Getchyer Dinner Ready

6:00-8:00 PM – Cabaret – Hosted by Tracey Szarka

Also Online Games, Social Gathering

Liz James is a member of the Saskatoon Unitarians. She runs Mirth and Dignity, an organization dedicated to UU humour, which can be found at <https://www.uuhystericalsociety.com> and also on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/UUHystericalSocietyCoffeeHour> Liz also does preaching and can be reached through her website at <https://www.lizjameswrites.com>

Sending heartfelt wishes to all of you for a Happy New Year,

Helen Iacovino, Registrar

Purpose: Points to Ponder

If you can tune into your purpose and really align with it, setting goals so that your vision is an expression of that purpose, then life flows much more easily.
Jack Canfield

Definiteness of purpose is the starting point of all achievement.
W. Clement Stone

The person without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder.
Thomas Carlyle

The heart of human excellence often begins to beat when you discover a pursuit that absorbs you, frees you, challenges you, or gives you a sense of meaning, joy, or passion.
Terry Orlick



Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction.
John F. Kennedy

True happiness... is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.
Helen Keller

People take different roads seeking fulfillment and happiness. Just because they're not on your road doesn't mean they've gotten lost.
Dalai Lama

To begin to think with purpose, is to enter the ranks of those strong ones who only recognize failure as one of the pathways to attainment.
James Allen

Musicians must make music, artists must paint, poets must write if they are ultimately to be at peace with themselves. What humans can be, they must be.
Abraham Maslow

It is not enough to be industrious; so are the ants. What are you industrious about?
Henry David Thoreau

The soul which has no fixed purpose in life is lost; to be everywhere, is to be nowhere.
Michel de Montaigne

It's not enough to have lived. We should be determined to live for something.
Winston S. Churchill

Everyone has been made for some particular work and the desire for that work has been put in every heart.
Jalaluddin Rumi

January's Theme—Purpose



Please click on the link below to access the theme package so graciously shared by the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto.

<https://www.firstunitariantoronto.org/wp-content/publications/nh/2020/New-Horizons-2020-09-Purpose.pdf>

Links to Larger Canadian UU Churches Who Are Streaming Sunday Services

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

<https://vancouverunitarians.ca/>

<https://victoriaunitarian.ca/>

<https://www.uce.ca/sunday-services-online/> (Edmonton)

<https://uuch.ca/> (Halifax)

Other UU links:

Canadian Unitarian Council <https://cuc.ca/>

Unitarian Universalist Associations latest **UUWorld** <http://www.uuworld.org/>

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asteadman@cogeco.ca