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Upcoming Services

The theme for our month of October is Identity. To quote Wikipedia: “In psychology, identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks and/or expressions that make a person (self-identity) or group (particular social category or social group). A psychological identity relates to self-image (one’s mental model of oneself), self-esteem, and individuality.”

Wake up! The Unitarian way is never boring or full of jargon, so get ready for 4 Sundays of interesting discussions about various aspects of what can collectively be called “Identity.” Beginning with a special Thanksgiving weekend service, we will also hear about identifying as Muslim, about how elder dogs and their elder owners can stay united as they age, and learn about the character-building program Childrens International Summer Village. This promises to be a good month to get back into the habit of gathering on Sunday mornings with friends, old and new; to listen, to sing, to learn, and to exchange ideas on these topics, and then to share in the Unitarian version of communion: Coffee Hour. See you soon. See you often. See you all.

September 30 *The Fredericton Homeless Shelters and Related Programs.* Guest speaker Faith McFarland and Service Leader Deby Nash. This will be an introduction to the work and special programs coordinated by Fredericton Homeless Shelters, Inc.

October 7 *Giving Thanks for Our Gifts.* At a volunteer training some of us attended in July, we responded to the questions of 1) What Can You Do? 2) What Can You Teach? and 3) What Do You Want to Learn? During a multigenerational time together on

Thanksgiving Sunday, we will have an opportunity to share our answers to these three questions, to identify our own gifts—talents, abilities, privileges, interests—and to become more familiar with those of the children, youth, and adults in the Fellowship.

October 14 Hassan Arif, with Heather Lunergan leading the service. Dr. Arif is a Lawyer and Sociologist whose research areas span regional development and urban government. However, in keeping with our theme of Identity, Dr. Arif will speak to our community about the religion of Islam.

October 21 Our Guest Speaker will be Andie Marks, Communications Coordinator for ElderDog Fredericton with Service Leader Myron Hedderson. ElderDog Canada Inc. is a national, registered Charitable Organization dedicated to ageing people, ageing dogs, and the important connection they enjoy. Locally, ElderDog assists and supports older adults in Fredericton to maintain ownership of their dogs in their own homes, by helping exercise pets and taking pets to appointments with vets and groomers. As well, they assist in re-homing dogs when a new home is necessary.

October 28 *Childrens International Summer Villages.* Debbie McKinnon is a local board member of CISV, the organization that rented our building for the month of July. The Service Leader will be Heather Lunergan. Here is what Debbie says about CISV: founded over 60 years ago, CISV is a global movement dedicated to educating and inspiring action for peace. We believe that we can help change the world by providing life-changing experiences and building friendships that last a lifetime. We offer an exciting blend of educational programs and amazing volunteer opportunities for the young and the young at heart. Our fun, ‘learning by doing’ programs begin with our original Village, a four-week residential camp for 11-year-olds. Heather Lunergan will be Service Leader.



Third Thursday Gathering

at 874 York Street.

This will be the second of three videos from the series Seven Candles by JD Stillwater. This month's film is half an hour long and goes into more depth concerning Stillwater's premise that Science and Spirituality are not opposites, but rather complementary aspects of life in the universe. At 7 pm on Thursday, October 18, join Heather Lunergan for a video and discussion. This month's title is "One Song: The Science of One".

Decaffeinated coffee will be served as well as tea and juice. Come and bring a friend.



Board Update

The Board met for our first regular meeting of the 2018-2019 year on September 9, following our Ingathering service and our corn boil. All members were in attendance, which was a great way to start the year. At Board meetings, we light a candle and do a check-in that is much like the chalice lighting and joys and sorrows elements of our worship services.

After approving the Agenda, circulated a week before, and the Minutes of the previous Board meeting, we discuss any business arising from the committee reports which have been circulated or presented. Each month, we ask each committee chair to send an electronic version of a brief report on what the committee has been doing, what concerns or plans it has made, how the board can help, etc. The general procedure for expenses, for instance, is that committees can spend on items that are part of the budget we approve for each committee or category in January, within the total amount. The committee chair simply fills out an expense form and submits the form and receipts to the Treasurer. If the expense is beyond the committee budget, unexpected or a major expense, Committee Chairs can present it to the Board. The Board may decide to approve it right away, that it isn't possible or a good idea at this time, that we need more information, or that we would like the congregation to discuss it as an important item. In fact, all of our business items are dealt with this way. We strive for consensus (i.e., that every Board member can "live with" the decision), and tend to record motions on every item that is considered a Board decision. Here is some of the information we gathered from the committee reports:

- * The use of our building by an outside group over the summer resulted in a much-appreciated donation; at this time our expenses are right on track and our revenues are ahead of the projected amount.

- * A building as large and of the age of ours needs maintenance and repairs on a regular basis; we approved a paint job on one of the outside walls and discussed some other items which would be coming up.
- * We are excited about resuming our children's programming, operated on a volunteer basis using materials from the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Church of the Larger Fellowship, and other faith and humanitarian groups. Please encourage your friends to attend with their children!
- * The chair of hospitality, Glenna, came to the meeting expressing a need for volunteers. She found a few at the Board meeting; others are always valuable and valued, so speak to her if you can help.
- * The Caring Circle, led by Janet Crawford, wants to hear about any significant event among the members and friends of the UFF. As you can imagine, it can be hard to know what is happening in everyone's life, so if you know of someone who is ill, bereaved, celebrating, or facing a major change, please let Janet or Myron know.

At this first meeting, there were a lot of details to cover, such as changing our signing officers, deciding who will pick up phone messages and who will update our new outdoor sign (reminder: talk to Janet if you have an event to publicize), filling in our Board calendar, and specifying when it is appropriate to make decisions by email. We have a Policy Manual that will be updated, and are planning a meeting of Board members and Committee Chairs (like the one we had in August) later this fall.

Board meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of the month, after the service, but the next one will (again) be on the second Sunday, October 14, to give us all a chance to celebrate Thanksgiving. Meetings are open to all members and we occasionally invite guests to make presentations. Please join us or talk to a Board member about any items of interest.

Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes

2018-2019 President of the UFF Board



Tea, Laughter and Conversation (TLC)

Wednesday October 10th 1:30 pm in the Library at the Fellowship

Please bring a joke or funny story to share. Our topic for conversation will be:

"To whom do you give thanks for all the good things in your life?"

For information call Sheila M. 450-9021



Women's Pot Luck

The next Unitarian Fellowship women's pot luck will be held Friday, October 26th. Glenna Hanley will host the gathering at her home, 721 Palmer St. We gather at 6 PM and eat at 6:30 PM. The topic for discussion will be circulated before the gathering. For further information, contact Joan Brewer at jebrewer@rogers.com



Judaism

Arthur Hertzberg ed.

Herzberg is a New Jersey Rabbi and lecturer on the history of Judaism at Columbia University. This book presents the basic values and reformation of modern Judaism with selections from the Bible and writings of Jewish scholars up to 1961. As he says, it is not possible to cover everything! It provides interesting insights into the constant debate and scholarship of this religion and the current attitudes of Israel's government. He sees Judaism as a continuing process of revelation and study to find justice and love.

The first section is on the People of the Covenant. They are shown as chosen by God to be his priests and as such to suffer more than others. It is disputed whether gentiles converted and circumcised have the same status.

God exists because some being must exist beside the things that can be perceived by the senses or apprehended by the mind. It exists because its non-existence is impossible. God is moral, creating evil as well as good. God is in the world but the glory of God will not be known till Israel is not in exile. Negative attributes are necessary to direct the mind to the truths that we must believe concerning God. who created what appears to be evil as well as good. God demands righteousness, punishes transgressions and the strands of good and evil can be so inextricably bound that human hands can not disentangle them. Hardship and trouble can be good and joy is the recognition of God.

The Torah. He defines this as Teaching and Commandment, though it can mean many things from the five books of Moses to 24 books of the Bible. Study of Torah is a commandment for Jews, suggesting a constant need for interpretation and guidance to communication with God. This includes views on Jewish life including circumcision as part of the covenant, marriage as better for man than being alone and a duty to have sex, produce children and only use birth control if very young, or pregnant or nursing. Dietary laws are required to control humanity's animal instincts, so no milk and meat in the same dish and only killing animals by bleeding as the most humane method. The most important message is to love thy neighbour.

The Cycle of the Year is defined in the Code of Jewish Law

and much discussed by Rabbis. It includes the Sabbath to attain a spiritual state and festivals such as the Passover for prayer not rejoicing, Shabuoth for harvest, Sukkoth for the end of days of repentance after Rosh Hoshannah, the New Year festival. The festivals are designed to give a sense of "homeness" with God and forgiveness for the transgressions of man against God and there are many other minor festivals.

Land. Israel is the heart of humanity and the Holy Land is the navel of the world to many Jews. Though others say no people can claim ultimate ownership of land as it is God's. Jerusalem and the temple are the Holy of Holies and exile was punishment for the Jews. Others say Jews, as the chosen people take responsibility for the sins of mankind. Return will therefore bring redemption to all mankind, conversion of humanity and the establishment of the Kingdom of God..

Doctrine. This includes God, Creation, Repentance and the Messiah as known to Christians, but with the Messiah still to come. The servant of God does not detach himself from the world. He loves it and seeks a long life because it provides him with opportunities to deserve the world to come. Passions should be restrained, but it is right if you share them to satisfy them with food, drink and cleanliness. Respect law and government unless it transgresses moral law. Every man is created equal in the divine image with an equal virtue for service. The rules of conduct are what one would expect from the commandments, with the interesting addition that one must strive to excel in physics, which would now be interpreted as science, as well as ethics This comes from Arab philosophers. Suffering is beyond man's knowing and brings recompense in the next world. Evil can be a lower degree of good. It can not proceed from God, but we do not understand the good that is hidden within it, Note some difference from the view of evil as created by God given earlier. Views differ on death and the world to come, but most Jews accept resurrection and Messianic redemption. There are also many versions of the Messiah, some saying this redemption can only occur after the return to Israel and peace for the Torah and the wisdom within it and the process will be slow.

Prayer must be regular and at set times, not left to man's spontaneous enthusiasm. It must not be too often as God has others to hear. It can be a response to what is seen, such as a new house, before meals, to rejoice in one learned in the Torah. Private prayer is also encouraged with suggested words at great length! If one can not achieve this, one's own words can be used in Yiddish, presumably this refers to the original language of anyone praying..

So Herzberg gives us interesting insights into Judaism. I have certainly not covered all of them or the disputes in detail. You can find the book in the Fellowship library.

Sheila Andrew



Samhain

It's that time of year again... the third and final harvest. With the last harvest, the year ends and Samhain celebrates the Celtic Pagan New Year. With the turning of the year the veil between the worlds is at its thinnest. Recognition of the ancestors: ancestors of the land, the beloved dead, and the mighty dead; those who have passed over to the next world, is central to the Samhain ritual.



Tree of Life

While the formal date for Samhain begins with the setting of the sun on the last day of October and continues to the setting of the sun on the first day of November, the Greater Fredericton Area Witches (GFAW) will be entering in ritual the evening of Sunday, October 28th.

The GFAW is planning to use a temporary labyrinth to enhance the trance experience of the ritual. The labyrinth will be laid out on the Saturday afternoon, October 27th and members of the congregation are welcome to walk the labyrinth after service on Sunday if they wish.

This space wants your material!
Please send articles to touchstone@uff.ca