



874 York Street, Fredericton, N.B., E3B 3R8 (506) 451-0919

Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.

Web Site: <http://www.uff.ca>Email: [office@uff.ca](mailto:office@uff.ca)Newsletter editor: [touchstone@uff.ca](mailto:touchstone@uff.ca)

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## November Sunday Services

The theme for November is "What does it mean to be people of Attention?" But how do we know what to give our attention? How can we be more mindful of paying attention? How does our attention make a difference in the larger community? This month's services will focus on these questions and more.

Services begin promptly at 10:30 AM so please be seated about five minutes prior to that. Thank you for your consideration of your fellow attendees and our speakers/service leaders.

**November 3** "*Do What You Can.*" A sermon from Rev. Peter Friedrichs, one of three he wrote about the theology of the late Rev. Forrest Church of NYC. Church, diagnosed with cancer, developed a mantra that he said served him well for the remaining years of his life. It consists of three statements: "Want what you have. Do what you can. Be who you are." Several weeks ago, we examined the statement "Want what you have." Service Leader will be Heather Lunergan.

**November 10** "*To Look with Absolute Attention,*" a multigenerational service coordinated by Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes. This service will include activities from "Miracles," a multi-age curriculum from the UUA. The "Miracle of Close Attention" session of the curriculum cultivates participants' ability to notice the miraculous. They discover that "looking with absolute attention," a teaching of poet and novelist May Sarton (1912-1995), can bring them in touch with their own capacity for "direct experience of mystery and wonder."

**November 17** "*Paying Attention to Religion and Poli-*

*tics.*" The Conservative Right and Evangelism are increasingly factors of Canada's political scene. Based on writings by Marci McDonald (Author of "The Armageddon Factor") and from her own research, Heather Lunergan will attempt to deconstruct the "Theo-Con" ideology. The November Board meeting will follow this service.

**November 24** "*The Acadians of Pointe Ste Anne.*" Our guest speaker will be Chantal Richard from UNBF. She set up the new exhibit on Pointe Ste Anne at the Fredericton Regional Museum and will explain why we should remember and pay attention to issues like the destruction of that settlement and removal of its people. Service Leader TBA (as of writing, either Heather or Jo-Anne, check the web site as the date approaches).

**A Special Note:** As winter approaches, this is your reminder about how the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton deals with inclement weather. The Sunday Services Committee Chair, in cooperation with the President, is responsible for determining when a Sunday service must be cancelled. This decision will normally be made, at the latest, by 7 AM on Sunday morning.

To that end, please check before heading out the 874 York - this advice also applies to various "mid-week" activities like Third Thursday, etc. The decision to cancel Sunday (or other) gatherings will be posted on the UFF website, on our facebook page, and sent as an email to our community. Obviously, if power is lost, whether or not you can access the internet, please err on the side of caution. Safety is very important, so *when in doubt, sit it out!*



## Board Update

The Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton Board had a full Agenda on October 6. As I was absent, Glenna Hanley (Past President) very capably chaired the meeting and several decisions were made. Most of them came out of the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Financial Transition. This committee was formed after the Nominating Committee was unable to find a Treasurer willing and able to serve on the Board. The Nominating Committee asked the Board to look at the responsibilities of the Treasurer and

the duties currently being completed by Myron Hedderson, Treasurer and Jeff Frooman, Chair of Finance. The Board decided at that time to purchase accounting software, to hire an office worker to help with bookkeeping, and to attempt to reduce the load of volunteers dealing with the Fellowship's finances.

The Ad hoc Committee consisted of Myron, Jeff, Kevin Wyllie, Ken Moore, Carlos Gomes, and me. Understanding that a transition to a new way of handling money and reporting on our financial position to members represented a major change to the work Myron and Jeff, we wanted to ensure that any decisions would make sense to them. We learned about the work they do and the challenges they faced, and by the October meeting were convinced that purchasing the software in itself would relieve some of the burden on volunteers. In parallel, the Board has applied for a West Bequest Fund grant to contribute to the expenses of hiring a part-time bookkeeper. The transition to the new software will take place at the beginning of the new fiscal year, January 1, 2020. Depending on funds available, the terms of employment of the bookkeeper will be determined in November and an ad will be prepared.

The Board also appointed an interim Treasurer for the January 1 to June 30 period. Myron's term as Treasurer (extended for 6 months at last year's Annual General Meeting) ends on December 31. Kevin Wyllie generously accepted the position interim Treasurer until a Treasurer is elected in June. Fortunately, Myron will be available to help with tax receipts and Jeff will continue to perform his tasks until he leaves on sabbatical in June.

Managing finances is an important responsibility of the Board, and as well as the day-to-day operations completed by the Treasurer and volunteers we also attend to the larger picture of creating a budget and planning ways to finance our programs and building expenses. As many of you know, our fiscal year is the same as the calendar year, even though our Board terms run from July 1 to June 30. This gives Committee Chairs an opportunity to carry out their plans for a few months (with whatever money is left in the current year's budget, or by making other arrangements through the Board) before submitting their requests for the following year's budget.

Our Stewardship campaign takes place in November. We will be launching it on November 3 with a lunch following the Sunday Service. At that time, members will be asked to contribute as they are willing and able to sustain and develop the work of our community. A stewardship letter and pledge form will be sent out by email and available in hard copy in the library. Decima Mitchell and I will be taking the opportunity to communicate the importance of your contributions and the Board's gratitude for the gifts of our members and friends, who share their "time, talents, and treasures" so generously.

Our congregation thrives by connecting and contributing to something beyond ourselves. We know that Fredericton,

New Brunswick, Canada, and the world need communities like ours that are committed to diversity of belief and right relations. Last year, Board members, Committee Chairs, members, and CUC Congregational Life Staff Lead Linda Thomson took advantage of several opportunities to explore our plans and aspirations for the Fellowship. Our theme was "Dreaming." In meetings, small groups, and brainstorming sessions, we thought about what we would like to see the Fellowship do if we had the funds for it. We will continue to act on some of the ideas we collected. The Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton plays a unique role in the lives of our members and friends and of people in the wider community. We share a proud heritage of religious freedom, social justice, and support for marginalized or underrepresented communities. We gratefully acknowledge that the home in which we meet stands on the unceded and unsundered territory of the Wolastoqiyik and strive to live in peace and justice with our First Peoples. We have been an officially designated Welcoming Congregation for 17 years, affirming the full participation of people in the LGBTQI2+ community. Each week, on Sunday morning and at other activities organized by our amazing volunteers, people of all ages and of diverse beliefs come together to grow, learn, and connect. We celebrate or offer compassion for each other's milestones.

Throughout our Stewardship campaign, which will be completed on December 15, we invite you to listen to members of our community about what the Fellowship means to them and to consider what it means to you. We would also like to invite you to share your dreams of what it means or would mean to be part of a connected and thriving community.

Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes  
President, 2019-2020



## Third Thursday

November's Third Thursday will be on November 21. After last month's cancellation, we will view a TED talk video entitled "*How to belong in a rapidly changing world*," by Jessie Sutherland.

While the topic of Belonging is from October, the video also calls us to pay Attention to the world around us, beginning with our own life experiences, world view, and emotional responses. From there, we can move to the larger community of our rapidly changing world.

The video will begin promptly at 7 PM. If you wish to make coffee or tea, please come a bit early, so we can enjoy the video, have a good discussion, and be on our way home by 8:30.



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## Women's Potluck Gathering

The next Unitarian Fellowship women's potluck will be held Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019. Sandra Bender will host the gathering at her home. We will gather at 6 PM and eat at 6:30 PM. Further information about location, parking, and topic for the evening will be circulated by email. For further information, contact Joan Brewer at [jebrewer@rogers.com](mailto:jebrewer@rogers.com)



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## Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers

Fredericton's Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers group (part of the Stephen Lewis Foundation) is again selling Christmas wreaths in support of grandmothers in Africa who are raising orphaned children whose parents have died from AIDS. Over the last 12 years we have raised over \$250,000 with fundraising efforts such as this. If you would like to order a 12 inch two-sided undecorated wreath, please email Linda Sprague ([spraguella39@gmail.com](mailto:spraguella39@gmail.com)) before Nov. 24. Wreaths cost \$12 each and can be paid for by cheque (Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers) or cash at the time of delivery. They will be available at 29 Fleet Court in Garden Place Saturday Nov. 30 or can be picked up at The Fellowship Dec. 1.



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## A Brief Introduction to Believing Women in Islam

by Asma Barlos and David Raeburn Finn

Barlos has already written a longer, very scholarly version of this but Finn suggested one for the general readers and helped her to produce this. She argues the Quaran has been misinterpreted and should be read as a whole to show it teaches equality of men and women. God should be seen as one, uncreated, not getting nor begotten, incomparable, since there is none like God, therefore not male or female. The use of "he" to describe God is simply a function of Arabic. The Quaran story of creation has men and women created as equal and both guilty of choosing to eat forbidden fruit. There is no story of Adam's Rib or Eve's tempting Adam. Misogynistic and patriarchal interpretations assume that when instructions are addressed to men it shows their dominance, whereas Barlos argues it shows their need of instruction at a time when women were being mistreated. The translation she and Finn use can be seen to support this.

The covering of women's bodies, heads and even faces comes from Mohamed's suggestion that believers, male and female, should lower their gaze and guard their modesty when in public. Women were having problems with the unbelievers when Mohamed moved into Mecca. The headscarf, or face-covering and long loose robes should be seen as a choice, not an order to the inferior.

Women have been seen as property because of lines that include them among the distractions men may have from higher things. Barlos says this is the distraction of desire for sexual activity, as well as for possessions, not that both are possessions. The verses often interpreted as giving men the sole right to choose when sex takes place and describing menses as shameful for women are also shown to be based on misinterpretation of the original Arabic. The duty to cultivate the garden of human creation is shared by both and not simply that of the man to till the earth and sow the seed. The famous section said to have given man the right to beat his wife is also based on a wrong translation where "to seek authority" for advice on reconciliation or divorce should be understood.

Given what is known of Mohamed's personality and his relationship with his own wives from the Quaran and the stories of his life and sayings in the Hadith, Barlos says it is unlikely he would favour the ill-treatment of women. For example, Kadija, his first wife and supporter, was a successful business woman whose help was vital to his work.

My even shorter introduction to the book obviously does not fully explain the content, which gives verses in the Quaran for us to check and provides support from Islamic scholars of many times. I have a copy if you would like to borrow it.

Sheila Andrew



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## UUUNO

Sunday, October 27 is being celebrated at the Fellowship with a multigenerational celebration of the United Nations, with emphasis on the role Unitarian Universalism has played in that organization. This is a personal reflection. Heather Lunergan.

In 1966 I was one of three HS students from Fredericton who joined many others from across Canada and the US on what was called the "UN Pilgrimage for Youth." Based on an essay I wrote and read to the "Oddfellows Lodge," at the corner of Carleton and Brunswick, I got a week in NYC. My father gave me \$40 in US money to spend. I couldn't imagine what I'd buy with so much cash, but I managed to spend it all. I bought "paper" dresses for my sister and I and a gag gift for my brother!

We went by bus (before air conditioning), stayed at a hotel,

4 girls with 2 double beds, got “checked off” at 9 pm as being “ready for bed,” checked over at 7 am as “ready to go,” ie, dressed and looking presentable, and after breakfast, we travelled on the subway, or walked. It was June in NYC. It was hot, and very loud, and dirty outside, I had never seen “litter” before and it was ankle deep sometimes on subway platforms, there were people asking me for money on corners, and I was afraid I’d perspire and then smell, after sitting on the subway to the UN building. Anyway, it was an amazing experience, sitting in the rooms where the General Assembly met, learning about the UN, etc.

We went to an “off Broadway” theatre to see “The Fantasticks,” (“The Autumn Leaves” and “Try to Remember”) and we went to Radio City Music Hall and saw the Rockettes in rehearsal, then a preview of the new movie “Barefoot in the Park,” (that’s when Jane Fonda and Robert Redford were much younger), and as I had been told, the organ recital music (about 10 minutes as an intermission) did make my body vibrate. Good memories. Great organization. Glad our community is celebrating the UU UNO.

*In fellowship*  
Heather Lunergan

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