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February Sunday Services

Sunday services are at 10:30am and at 874 York Street.

Details on Sunday services were not received in time for publication. The following is built from a “pencilled” memo. Some items are rescheduled from storm cancelled January services and one might assume the details will be as they would have been, see [the January issue](#). See uff.ca and select the “Sunday Services” tab on the left for the details which will be posted there as soon as possible.

February 2 *On Confucius*. Speaker, Dr. Rodger Wilkie, with Heather Lunergan as service leader.

February 9 *Yoga* Speaker: Sachne Kilner, Service Leader: Joan McFarland. Sachne grew up in India in an ashram with her Canadian mother and sister where she studied and practiced yoga. According to Sachne, the yoga that she learned is very different from the yoga practiced in the West. The exercise part is just one small part of the overall spiritual practice.

February 16 *Everyone’s Birthday* Intergenerational with Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes facilitating.

February 23 *Sharing Our Faith* Heather and Glenna with a short after-ward from Jo-Anne (over coffee).



Sharing Our Faith Sunday

On Sunday, February 23, please join us for a special, annual event called Sharing Our Faith Sunday. The purpose of this service is to share words and music chosen especially

for this Sunday by Canadian Ministers within the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC). The CUC is the national, denominational body of which the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton is a part. The service will be led by Glenna Hanley, who serves the Eastern region of Canada on the Board of the CUC, and Heather Lunergan, Chair of the Sunday Services Committee in Fredericton.

As explained on the CUC website: “The Sharing Our Faith program provides funds for congregational initiatives which enhance ministry, aid congregational projects and outreach, and enhance the Unitarian Universalist movement in Canada. Once a year, congregations are encouraged to hold a “Sharing Our Faith” worship service focused on the UU faith in Canada, with a special collection for the Sharing Our Faith fund. The fund consists of these monies, supplemented by a Foundation Fund administered by the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto. The funds are allocated in the form of grants to congregations for growth projects and initiatives.”

Fredericton has received grants from Sharing Our Faith in the past. It is an on-going foundation, and grants are announced during the Annual Conference and Meeting in May, which will be held in Halifax this year.

Sharing Our Faith Sunday includes a special offering, and you are invited to contribute as you are willing and able. For simple financial reasons, each congregation gathers the donations to SOF on behalf of the CUC. That way, contributors get credit for their special gift on the regular tax receipt from their home congregation. The congregation’s Treasurer then sends one cheque to the CUC, as the combined contribution of that congregation.

Please contact Heather or Glenna if you have questions. There will be more information shared on Feb. 23, as we gather to “share our faith” locally and nationally.

Heather Lunergan



Third Thursday

Where have Third Thursdays gone? Well, I’m going to host one on Thursday, February 20 (weather permitting). Please join Heather Lunergan for a TED talk entitled “The Three Secrets of Resilient People” with conversation to follow. We will gather at 7 pm in the main room, and will

be finished by 8:30. Coffee and tea will be available for those who wish to make some. Bring a friend who might find the topic interesting. And wear something warm, given that our building takes a while to warm up on these winter evenings. And remember that anyone can host a Third Thursday. For more information contact Heather at 261-8232.



On Resilience

Poem in a Time of Peril

Barbara Rhode

Of course truth is hard.
It is a rock.
Yet I do not think it will fall upon me
And crush me.
I do not think they can hammer it to bits
And stone me.

Help me place the rock in the strong current
Of these rushing waters.
I must climb upon it.
I must know how truth feels.
When I plunge naked
Into the bright depth of these waters,
I must know how truth feels.
When I am swept by the cold fury of these waters,
I must know, with my whole being, how truth feels.
I shall remember how truth feels.

I praise the rock.
I praise the river.
I fear the drought
More than death by water.

Source: "All the Gifts of Life: Collected Meditations, Vol. 2", ed. Patricia Frevert (Skinner House Books)

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.

Elbert Hubbard

Pray that you may never have to endure all that you can learn to bear.

Yiddish proverb

It is really wonderful how much resilience there is in human nature. Let any obstructing cause, no matter what, be removed in any way, even by death, and we fly back to first principles of hope and enjoyment.

Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.

Nelson Mandela

I marvel at the resilience of the Jewish people. Their best characteristic is their desire to remember. No other people has such an obsession with memory

Elie Wiesel

The human capacity for burden is like bamboo- far more

flexible than you'd ever believe at first glance.

Jodi Picoult, *My Sister's Keeper*

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

Confucius



Board Update

The holidays and January's weather has had a major impact on our Board schedule; nonetheless, our plans are unfolding smoothly and we are happy with pace and flow of our year.

January is budget month. Our fiscal year runs according to the calendar, and our bylaws provide for a meeting of our membership some time during the first month of the year (and more often than not, on the last Sunday of January). This year, we are also in the middle of a financial transition: Myron, who has been Treasurer for many years, officially finished his term on December 31. We welcome Kevin Wyllie to the Board in this position, as we shift to an electronic accounting program and prepare to hire a bookkeeper. Jeff will be staying on until approximately the end of the Board term (June 30) to help with the day-to-day transactions, the hiring of the bookkeeper, and Kevin's orientation. The transition will be even smoother now that Myron has agreed to step into the position of Vice-President, Finance & Facilities, which was recently vacated by Patrick Daley.

Myron has completed the financial statement for 2019 and, with the Board's and the Committees' input, has prepared a budget for 2020. We were able to accept all the requests made by the committees, based on the pledges and the expected contributions of our generous members. We hope you will attend the budget meeting and share your suggestions for making the best possible use of our resources. A huge thanks to Myron and Jeff for their careful management of our funds in 2019. We are grateful to Kevin for being so actively involved in this transition and bringing his skills and ideas to the Board.

In gratitude,
Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes



A Primer on the History of Unitarian Universalism

With February's theme of resilience and March's of wisdom, this seems like a good time to review some history of what we call Unitarianism Universalism. Both (and there are variations in what people and congregations call themselves) are well-established religious communities which trace their history to the middle ages. Below are two separate items that, read together, will give the reader some ideas for further consideration or exploration. In both cases, credit is given to those whose words begin the

section. The rest of the summary is by Heather Lunergan.

1. From the Unitarian Universalist Association of the USA website, a lengthy quotation from a pamphlet by Mark W. Harris

“Unitarians and Universalists have always been heretics. We are heretics because we want to choose our faith, not because we desire to be rebellious. “Heresy” in Greek means “choice.” During the first three centuries of the Christian church, believers could choose from a variety of tenets about Jesus. Among these was a belief that Jesus was an entity sent by God on a divine mission. Thus the word “Unitarian” developed, meaning the oneness of God. Another religious choice in the first three centuries of the Common Era (CE) was universal salvation. This was the belief that no person would be condemned by God to eternal damnation in a fiery pit. Thus, a Universalist believed that all people will be saved. Christianity lost its element of choice in 325 CE when the Nicene Creed established the Trinity as dogma. For centuries thereafter, people who professed Unitarian or Universalist beliefs were persecuted.

This was true until the sixteenth century when the Protestant Reformation took hold in the remote mountains of Transylvania in eastern Europe. Here the first edict of religious toleration in history was declared in 1568 during the reign of the first and only Unitarian king, John Sigismund. Sigismund’s court preacher, Frances David, had successively converted from Catholicism to Lutheranism to Calvinism and finally to Unitarianism because he could find no biblical basis for the doctrine of the Trinity. Arguing that people should be allowed to choose among these faiths, he said, “We need not think alike to love alike.” Mark W. Harris.

2. A preview of “Out of the Flames” by Nancy and Lawrence Goldstone

“Out of the Flames is an extraordinary story – providing testament to the power of ideas, the enduring legacy of books, and the triumph of individual courage.

Out of the Flames tracks the history of The Christianism Restituto, examining Michael Servetus’s life and times and the politics of the first information during the sixteenth century. The Christianism Restituto, a heretical work of biblical scholarship, written in 1553, aimed to refute the orthodox Christianity that Michael Servetus’ old colleague, John Calvin, supported. After the book spread through the ranks of Protestant hierarchy, Servetus was tried and agonizingly burned at the stake, the last known copy of the Restitutio chained to his leg.” From Random House Penquin’s Website.

Why is this important? France David and Michael Servetus were educated, questioning, resilient, religious people who fought for, and in one case died for the right of people to question the conventions of the Christian Church. While we draw inspiration and fundamental prin-

ciples from a variety of religious groups, these two men are acknowledged as individual Christian founders of our Unitarian Universalist Religion.

The library at the Unitarian Fellowship has a large selection of books on topics related to our faith community. Please feel free to borrow a book, and return it when finished. Ours is an honour-system library and donations are welcome. Submitted by Heather Lunergan, VP Ministry and Programs.



The CUC Conference

Halifax, May 2020

The Canadian Unitarian Council’s National Conference and Annual General Meeting takes place from May 15 to May 17, with a few additional activities before and after the weekend. The Conference venue is King’s College in Halifax. All Conference events are wheelchair accessible and in close proximity.

The Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton encourages all members and friends to attend the events on the weekend. In addition, several volunteers from our congregation are needed to help with registration and exhibits. We encourage members to donate to and to take advantage of a special UFF fundraising project to contribute to the registration expenses of our members. The process of allocating funds will be determined by the Board in February; we plan to give priority to our delegates and volunteers. We will be issuing a call for a second delegate soon; please indicate your interest in volunteering for registration or exhibits (several shifts of approx 2 hours are available) to Jo-Anne as soon as you can.

Online registration for the Conference will open on February 1, 2020. Costs for Conference attendance include registration (for all, including volunteers), meals, hotel, and transportation and parking. Conference registration will cost between 300and400. We hope to help people reduce their transportation costs by facilitating car-pooling. Accommodation is available at Dalhousie’s LeMarchant Place residence, less than a 10-minute walk away, and will cost between 65and85 per night. A small number of Halifax UUs will be offering home hospitality free of charge. Buffet-style meals are expected to cost 15–40; most residence rooms have kitchen facilities and many restaurants are a 20-30 minute walk from the campus.

It is possible to register for the Conference for the entire weekend (Friday-Sunday, includes the Sunday Awards Banquet), for Saturday or Sunday (incl. the banquet) only, or for special events and meals only. The registration form enables you to choose your Stream and Workshop (see below) when you pay your registration fees, to purchase your meals, to pay for pre-Conference workshops, and to indicate your interest in joining the Conference choir or attending special events, and your food and accessibility

requirements.

Excellent and affordable programs for children (nursery, Young Fun, Junior Youth), youth 13-18 (CanUUdle), and young adults 18-35 (Chorus) are offered as part of the Conference.

What is happening at the Conference?

Wednesday, May 13

Volunteer orientation (orientation for registration volunteers will also be offered at the UFF)

Thursday, May 14

Lay Chaplaincy (professional development session), Resolutions Plenary, Delegate Orientation

Friday May 15:

1:00 - 4:30 pm: Annual General Meeting with online participation and delegate voting

5:00 - 6:30 pm: Boxed dinner

6:30 - 7:45 pm: Conference Opening and Welcome

8:00 - 9:15 pm: Confluence Lecture (UU Ministers of Canada)

9:15 - 11:15 pm: Friends of the CUC reception and informal socializing

Sat, May 16:

8:00 - 9:00 am: Networking Sessions

9:30 - 10:30 am: Talk by Carey McDonald, UUA

10:45 - 12:00 pm: Streams (full-day programs on spirituality, social responsibility, interfaith, and other topics)

12:00 - 1:00 pm: Lunch

1:45 - 4:00 pm: Streams continued

4:30 - 6:00 pm: Dialogue with the CUC Board

6:00 - 7:30 pm: International Dinner

tbc: Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice activity

8:00 - 10:00 pm: Social/music by host congregation: a Maritime Kitchen Party

Sun, May 17:

8:30 - 9:30 am: Networking sessions

10:00 - 11:30 am: Sunday Worship

12:00 - 2:00 pm: Multigenerational lunch

2:15 - 3:45 pm: Multigenerational workshops (programs for youth and older); Canadian U*U Women's Association Tea

4:15 - 5:45 pm: UU Ukuleles - open to all; also, sessions on refugees, group discussions, etc.

6:15 - 7:45 pm: Awards Banquet

8:00 - 9:00 pm: Closing ceremony & CUC Board installation

For more information, contact Jo-Anne at President@UFF.ca or at conference@cuc.ca

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