



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
 Newsletter editor: touchstone@uff.ca

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Thoughts on Liberation

The theme for the month of April is Liberation. Thinking about this theme, when a pandemic limits our personal freedom and social gatherings, brings a variety of emotions. It also allows time to reflect and re-visit what makes each of us unique, and consider our own definition of the word “liberation.” Here are some thoughtful, perhaps even challenging quotations to ponder. Maybe one or two will lead you to explore an idea further, through research, reading, or during a phone or online chat with friends and family. Collected by Heather Lunergan.

I think a lot of my work has been a weird attempt to liberate myself, but it’s not altogether successful. Helen Mirren

For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. Nelson Mandela

I don’t know if the term ‘liberation theology,’ which can be interpreted in a very positive sense, will help us much. What’s important is the common rationality to which the church offers a fundamental contribution, and which must always help in the education of conscience, both for public and for private life. Pope Benedict XVI

The idea of music is to liberate the listener and lead him to a frame where he feels he is elevated. A. R. Rahman

No-one really feels self-confident deep down because it’s

an artificial idea. Really, people aren’t that worried about what you’re doing or what you’re saying, so you can drift around the world relatively anonymously: you must not feel persecuted and examined. Liberate yourself from that idea that people are watching you. Russell Brand

It is not women’s liberation, it is women’s and men’s liberation. Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Those who find delight in freedom from attachment in the renunciation of clinging, free from the inflow of thoughts, they are like shining lights, having reached final liberation in the world. Gautama Buddha

The paths to liberation are numerous, but the bank along the way is always the same, the Bank of Karma, where the liberation account of each of us is credited or debited depending on our actions. Yann Martel

The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion. Albert Camus

There can be no question but that the great principles of freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and voluntarism in religion, so basic in American Protestantism and so essential to democracy, ultimately are derived from the Anabaptists of the Reformation period, who for the first time clearly enunciated them and challenged the Christian world to follow them in practice.

Harold S. Bender, The Anabaptist Vision

Liberation does not come from outside. Gloria Steinem



From the Sunday Services

Committee Chair, Heather Lunergan

Well ... this are strange times. Over the years, one of the most interesting, sometimes even challenging parts of being involved with Sunday service planning and delivery has been what one beloved member called “...the endless march of Sundays.” (George R DeMille 1934 - 2015). George would have had something witty to say about the current situation, where the “march of Sundays” has been halted rather suddenly. I can’t match his wit, but I can

speak about the reality that there are no upcoming Sunday services for the month of April, 2020, or maybe for the foreseeable future. The Fellowship and our Board will comply with suggestions and orders provided by the CUC and government as we move forward. You will be kept informed, and your questions and suggestions are welcomed by the committee/board.

I don't have to explain why we have no services planned for April. I can, I suppose, point out the irony of the situation in a month where our theme is "Liberation." Seriously, though, the COVID 19 pandemic has changed our lives, as individuals, as society, and as a religious community. It is not safe, now, to be together at Unitarian House. We cannot be in the same space, hugging one another, greeting visitors, preparing coffee, smiling and settling in, lighting our chalice, making announcements, sharing a laugh, or singing these words:

"Here we have gathered, gathered side by side, Circle of kinship, come and step inside. May all who seek here, find a kindly word. May all who speak here, feel they have been heard. Sing now together, this our hearts' own song." (STLT, # 360)

On the other hand, we have technology and energetic members. We are a community that craves interaction, that enjoys shared ritual and we like discussions over coffee. The Sunday services committee will keep in touch with one another and brainstorm on how the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton can be "together" on Sunday mornings. There are innovative ways we can "gather" even if it is not "side by side" and the committee is discussing our options. One is on-line gatherings, using a platform called "ZOOM." Some of you are familiar with it, and even if you are new to it, ZOOM is simple, safe and very user-friendly. You can "attend" a gathering via your computer or cell phone. It is also free.

On Sunday, March 29, Myron Hedderson will be leading our Sunday service from his home, via ZOOM, beginning at 10:30 AM. The link to the gathering will be sent to the congregational e-mail on Saturday so you can join us. Information will also be posted on facebook and the website. Depending on how that experiment goes, we have a few other people who are willing to present modified Sunday services and discussions over the time we cannot meet in person. These may not be every week, but we shall attempt to gather electronically as often as we can.

On Saturday, a congregational email will go out explaining how to join Myron for his ZOOM service. Please read it carefully: it will have instructions on how to join in, and most importantly, it will explain how to sign up for the meeting. We want to ensure that members, friends, and those curious about U*U ism feel in community, while joining from their own homes.

Both the facebook page and the website will be kept up-to-date concerning Sunday services, as well as other items

of interest to our community. If you have questions, please contact me, Heather Lunergan, via facebook, by email to hglunergan@gmail.com or via text/call to my cell: 261-8232.



A Personal Reflection

in lieu of a Board Update

How much has your life changed since the beginning of March? When I wrote my piece for last month's Touchstone I had no idea that most countries in the world would shut down before the end of the month. Little has changed in my daily routine *and* nearly everything has changed. It has been a long month *and* everything has happened quickly.

Until a few days before it happened, people at the UFF did not know we would not be holding in-person services starting on March 15. We did not know that we would not be planning and holding meetings and deciding on subsidies for the CUC Conference, either, until a few days before the Nova Scotia government prohibited large gatherings. Organizers are now planning to move in time but not in space, meaning that the Conference will be held on the same campus on the same dates in May 2021. Some of the activities, including the AGM, will be held online, and future CUC Conferences will be held in odd years instead of even ones.

The UFF board had mixed feelings about whether to cancel Sunday Services; cancelling the March 15 service seemed hasty to some, while others were already worried about our many vulnerable members. We were one of the first places of worship in town to close down. Now many of them are holding online services, as are several UU congregations around the world. Myron will be getting our Zoom service ready by the time you read this, and I have held a virtual Third Thursday (and a Fourth Thursday!) discussion in co-operation with the CUUWA.

As the weeks have gone on, we are all becoming more accustomed to not getting together with friends and family who don't live with us. We are becoming accustomed to not attending meetings and worship services, not eating at restaurants or chatting at coffee shops or pubs, not going to concerts or plays or poetry readings. We are careful about going to grocery stores and keeping two metres apart and are learning not to touch our faces. People who have travelled know to stay home for two weeks, and if we are lucky we can find neighbours or businesses to deliver the things we need. We worry about the people we care about having to work outside their homes, whether in health care or retail. We worry about the survival of local restaurants and stores and barbers and independent bookstores; we miss our library and our book clubs, our children's teacher or our university professors, our jobs and our friends.

Reverend Meg Riley, who has long been at the forefront of virtual connection, said that half of the people she knows are overwhelmed and the other half are bored. Which category do you fit into? I am definitely overwhelmed. I didn't expect to be; I am used to meeting to Zoom, have been happy to teach other volunteers I know how to do it, have continued to read hundreds of emails a day and to work and connect with people that way, like being able to work alone in my basement office. I live with three other people I care about, cook for them according to our "new normal" recipes, rarely leave the house, watch hours of TV, read books (albeit more often online now), and prepare documents and reports. I am meeting three or four times a day on Facebook and Zoom, only slightly more than usual. Everything is normal. Except it is not.

Last week, one of the articles I shared on Facebook was entitled "That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief." [i] One my brother shared was entitled "Coronavirus Will Change the World Permanently. Here's How." [ii] Yesterday and again today I watched Thursday's episode of "The VUU," [iii] a discussion about pastoral care and ministering (in the broad sense of serving others) in these uncertain times. What all these reflections had in common was that they were sustained, thoughtful reflections on the deep and wide changes taking place in our lives. This is not business as usual.

Although I had realized I was overwhelmed—my body signalled it with fatigue, easy tears, tension over petty things—I hadn't really understood why that was. I have been feeling that I needed more time to sit with my feelings and write and read, that I wanted to be left alone with those with whom I have my closest relationships, that small circle of support. I know that it is different for people who live alone or who usually work in offices or stores and schools, but I am craving silence and solitude more now than ever, and I am getting less. Several comments made by UU religious professionals on The VUU resonated with me: "Part of what I need capacity for is to stare at the walls." "We're not at the peak yet. I have to preserve my capacity to function. In two weeks my congregants will be where I am, knowing that someone I care about will die." "You have to start with the life pieces and then add the other pieces (e.g. work) into it." "The most critical thing that leaders can be doing right now is actually spiritual care for oneself. The more you feel you don't have time for that, the more you need it." "We are enduring a slow-moving trauma." It occurred to me that some of the people around me who feel bored and want to be busy are unable to cope with their anguish and fear. They have realized how significant this period in their life is. They will be changed by it. Perhaps some of the people like me who are overwhelmed are trying to flee from that realization, too. By the time the pandemic has run its course, we will all know someone who has died from it. It may be someone in a Facebook group or a UU congregation that we once visited or a high school friend

whose obituary we read in our hometown paper. Or it may be someone we love dearly. Avoiding our fear, our denial or busyness or compulsive connecting, are attempts to hold onto a collective sense of safety, to maintain our false belief that our death and the deaths of those we love will come when we are ready and not before. Sometimes it is a trauma response; we have to avoid the anticipatory grief because we can't let ourselves be overwhelmed with helplessness once again.

This crisis can also be an opportunity to make meaning out of an unexpected tragedy, if you can take the time to contemplate, to be in the present, to wonder, to feel. This discomfort won't be easy to sit with. It may be as painful as bereavement. But perhaps it is time to dig deep. What is it that you really need, right now? What are the feelings you are sitting with? What is your body telling you that you have not heard? How can you help yourself, those close to you, those in the congregation or in groups you belong to, the wider community, the world? What is vital to your identity, and what does it mean that some elements of your sense of belonging, community, security, self are being threatened by this widespread disease? And there are larger theological, ethical, political dimensions, as well: who is most affected? How do we dismantle the patriarchy and structures of privilege and oppression to save the people who are always most disadvantaged? Beloveds, where will you find your meaning now? What is the meaning of your own life when so much is uncertain and at risk? Because in fact, it has always been. Perhaps now we can allow ourselves to feel and experience our vulnerability and our strength.

In faith,
Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes

[i] https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief?fbclid=IwAR0jJpiwMxFJbRb8xnsCEcOVXH4A3PisUIOSIWVt8cR_88i2slu7JNCE

[ii] <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/19/coronavirus-effect-economy-life-society-analysis-covid-135579>

[iii] Pastoral Care in a Coronavirus World,
Pt 3 - The VUU #292
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoZTtACd7tU&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR01dB0-q8XLTg16EJFNmfXpLWQVGp_NJVavp5ORTJgQFWeJES7q7yOml8Q



Women's Potluck

The next Unitarian Fellowship women's potluck will be held!!! Not sure when!! It may be April 24 or May 26

or June 22 or even later. I expect it will be fairly easy to come up with a topic. Where were you when borders were closed? How did you handle being quarantine? What about social distancing?. Please keep well physically, mentally and spiritually. For further information, contact Joan at jebrewer@rogers.com.



CUC Conference Cancelled

From Glenna Hanley,
CUC board member and liaison

The much anticipated Canadian Unitarian Council national conference in May has fallen victim to the dreaded Corona virus/Covid-19.

The CUC has chosen to cancel the event, just a long line of conferences and gatherings that organizations throughout Canada are cancelling to try and bring a halt to the spread of the virus.

CUC executive director Vyda Ng hosted an on line discussion with leaders from congregations across the country on March 18 to try and gather thoughts on what to do about the conference and the Annual General Meeting, both of which were to be held in Halifax from May 14 to 17.

The consensus seemed to be to move the conference to May of 2021 and to still hold it in Halifax. This was agreeable to the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax, the hosts of the convention. There has been further discussion among the organizing teams and staff and for now this is the plan.

The AGM will go ahead on Friday, May 15, but will be conducted entirely on line, with board members, staff and delegates connected by Zoom.

The meeting will be held from 1 to 4:30 pm (Atlantic Time). More information will be coming on how to get connected. There will also be a plenary session on line Thursday night, May 14, from 7:30 to 9:30 pm, to discuss the CUC's goals and strategies and issues of concern to congregations.

The staff and organizers are also looking at putting some other elements of the conference on line in May as well. No firm decisions on that yet.

Staff on the ball with pandemic

Staff at the CUC office was quick to jump in and provide guidance on what congregations should do about the corona virus soon after the first case arrived in Canada in late January.

In the beginning congregations, our own included, were looking at things like disinfecting our buildings and meeting places, arranging seating for social distancing during Sunday services. But very quickly that all switched to self-isolating at home. Sunday services were cancelled,

most indefinitely, and I believe most congregations across the country completely shuttered their buildings as did we.

Then CUC started sending out information online such as where people can tune in to streaming and on line Sunday services from other churches. There are other on line events to help people get through the challenges of isolation, harder for some people than for others.

There are meditations, and readings and other material to help strengthen your spiritual side in this challenging time.

One source is Connect and Deepen, an ongoing online gathering normally held every second Sunday. It has added extra dates for this time of crisis. If you are missing your friends and the socializing at the fellowship try this as an alternative. One good place to find the link is at cuc.ca/enews. See the March 26 edition for the Zoom link. And while you are there check out other updates and information about what is going on within the UU family during these trying times.

You can also look on the website cuc.ca and the Facebook page for more information and to stay in touch.

Stay Home, Stay Calm and Persevere



Home Delivery Options

A number of businesses have elected to provide pickup and delivery and/or ordering of needed options. The following were provided by Heather Lunergan, thanks...

Fredericton Nissan

We're here to help!

Fredericton NISSAN would like to put our vehicles to good use!

We will be offering free pick-up and delivery of on-line grocery orders as well as pharmacy prescription pick ups for those who need it!

Please text 506-440-1565 with details of delivery, we're here to help!

Fredericton NISSAN - Your community Dealership

Summit Dodge Fredericton

Summit Dodge would like to put our vehicles to good use during this time. We will be offering FREE pick-up and delivery of online grocery orders as well as pharmacy deliveries. We are here to help! Text us at 506-440-1565 to arrange your pick up.

The Cheese Market / Mulhouse Fine Food

Our Fredericton Boyce Farmers Market location is presently closed. We are happy to announce our alternative location:

Park & Pick Up; Mulder Meats Ltd
1400 Onondaga St, Oromocto NB

Orders must be placed by Wednesday 4pm via

Email: maryann@muldermeats.com

Include: With your order, your name, Contact Phone number, Method of Payment.

Pick up: Thursday between 1pm-4pm

At: Mulder Meats Ltd

1400 Onondaga Street, Oromocto NB

* Parking Lot Facing Giant Tiger **

Payment: Cash, Debit, EFT (maryann@muldermeats.com)

Text: 506-260-3037 upon your arrival. Leave your name and we will hand deliver your cheese to your car.

Our products will be prepared for you in a Health Food Inspected facility. Your health, and the health of our employees is top priority. We believe that this is the best way to serve our community. Thank you for supporting local business.

Silver Valley Farms

Is taking orders for home delivery in the Fredericton area for fresh produce and may also add Meat, poultry, fish or dairy from third parties and will do their best to accommodate as availability permits. Please email all orders and correspondence to osh911@hotmail.com. For current information on prices and ordering, check their Facebook Posts at

<https://business.facebook.com/pg/osh911/posts/>

Note that you may have to scroll down to find the post with the detail information. As of this writing, the most recent update was posted March 22 at 23:03.

Veggie Direct

Another group of vendors who have organized to deliver direct to purchaser. They went “live” the morning as this newsletter was in final composition, so not much detail here but check their website: <https://www.veggiedirect.ca/>.



Pandemic

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.
Center down.

And when your body has become still,

reach out with your heart.

Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)

Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.
Reach out your heart.
Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love—
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

—Lynn Ungar 3/11/20

Submitted by Heather Lunergan
with permission from the author,
Rev. Lynn Ungar
of the Church of the Larger Fellowship



Inclusive Language Is Evolving Language

Editor's Note: The following was received to the UFF Office email from the UUA.

No matter what words you print on your sign, if you are welcoming enough, eventually someone will ask you to change it. This should be taken as a positive.

Many LGBTQ+ people see their self-identifying language shift over their lifetimes, even if their identities themselves do not change. As our access to language and community evolves, we might “come out” to our friends, family, and congregations, sometimes many times within a relationship. In fact, new language continues to be workshopped in LGBTQ+ communities as we search for words that best communicate our particular and shared experiences. I feel this is a great strength of the LGBTQ+ community. At our best, we are always actively evolving.

I often see challenges arise around change within Unitarian Universalist communities, both interpersonally and systemically. A cis member of a congregation may refuse to work at using a newly-out trans person's pronouns because they've “just always known him as ‘he.’” A board may vote against genderless bathrooms “because they've always been this way.” I feel the resistance when someone doesn't do the work to internalize my gender and my pronouns and therefore continues to misgender me. This resistance to change makes LGBTQ+ people feel excluded, which is sometimes especially painful for folx who sought

out the faith because of its reputation as welcoming.

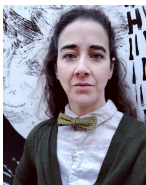
What I often hear from cis and straight allies in congregations is that they want to get their words “right.” But what’s right now for one community or individual may not be right in a decade or a year (or a week). No matter what words you print on your sign, if you are welcoming enough, eventually someone will ask you to change it. This should be taken as a positive. It means people want to be included in your community, and they feel comfortable enough with you to ask.

Mypronouns.org has more on inclusive language

May we all move into the sacred work of evolution together.

Amen and Blessed Be.
Jade Sylvan
LGBTQ Ministries
and Clara Barton Gender Justice Fellow

Jade Sylvan is a 2nd-year Master of Divinity candidate at Harvard Divinity School, and is currently a UUA Aspirant. Before pursuing their call to ministry, Jade found fulfillment and success as a writer, producer, performing artist, and teacher. Jade is also a certified yoga instructor, and continues to teach weekly and monthly yoga classes in Somerville, MA.



All in for Climate Justice People, Power, Planet

Friday, April 17 -
Saturday, April 18, 2020

Join via Zoom:



Click below to register now through April 9.

The UU@UN’s annual Intergenerational Spring Seminar, All In for Climate Justice: People, Power, Planet, will take place virtually rather than in-person due to the current threat posed by COVID-19. **Registration for all attendees (age 14+) is open!** Attendance is free, and we request a donation of \$20 per attendee so that we can pay our presenters. The Planning Committee is currently working on details for the schedule and programming which will be updated online as frequently as possible.

<https://uua874.acemlna.com/lt.php?s=4cb7b74982986d54ed30a019b44ce669&i=1890A4141A9A67211>

Editor’s Notes:

- If you are reading *Touchstone* in a web browser, the above should be a link to allow you to open the remote page through your browser. If you have to type it in, it must be entered as one long string without any spaces or tabs. Sorry. But, say... if you’re going to

look up web pages, what are you doing with a paper copy of the newsletter?

- The office often receives announcements such as this, but they usually require travel. Since this event involves no travel cost, it could be of interest to more people.



The Book of Hadith

Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad from the Mishkat al-Masabib

Charles Le Gai Eaton

Eaton choose a limited number of the 6000 words and actions of Muhammad recorded as Hadith some generations after his death and linked by scholars to what his Companions, wife Aisha and daughter Fatima remembered. The introduction makes it clear Eaton was looking for the Muslims as a community of the middle way, expansion of the reader’s understanding of the Prophet that would show his humanity mercifulness, kindness, benevolence and commonsense and his understanding that unsustainable spiritual burdens and disproportionate self-criticism could have negative effects. Mishkat al-Masib means Niche of the Lantern.

The book is divided into sections on twenty topics ranging from everyday life to religious observation and death. The Muslim community Muhammad was working to create included simple things like greeting fellow Muslims so sins would be forgiven, modesty, gathering together to read the Koran so stillness and mercy will come, protecting and helping Muslims and going on a path in search of knowledge so that can be shared. He also wanted houses built for travellers. This tradition is still very useful. Like other recommendations, it does not specifically exclude non Muslims. Charity should be given to all. Keeping Muslims within their community is encouraged by avoiding the infliction of prescribed penalties as much as possible. According to Aisha Muhammad said it was better for a leader to make a mistake in forgiveness than to make a mistake in punishing.

Some suggestions and stories on everyday life show Muhammad as a charismatic and likeable man. It is sometimes risky assuming someone is joking, but I think there are examples. When he told of a vision that included Moses suggesting he ask God how many times a day Muslims should pray and the answer was 500, Moses is said to have sent him back, saying his people could not cope with that and he doubted Muhammad’s could. God said 400, and Moses sent Muhammad back, and so on till God agreed to five.

His relationship with two of his wives is shown as friendship and support for each other. Marriage is described as

fulfilling half of religion. For the second half, man must be conscious of God. The wife must be devout. When he had a vision in which God said he had a mission as God's Prophet and a teacher for the world, Muhammad came back to his first wife and only wife for 25yrs, Kadijah, who had been his employer, and said "Cover me." wanting to avoid the strain and pain of a Prophet's life. She covered him to warm and comfort him, but told him he must go on with his mission. Several of the Hadith are said to have come from Aisha, his second wife, whom he married after Kadijah's death. She was obviously a good friend in spite of being a child bride and later sharing him with at least nine other wives. Over 2000 of the original Hadith came from her and she was active in Muslim politics after Muhammad's death, making speeches and even leading an army charge. Eaton's chosen Hadith show her arguing with Muhammad, teasing him, comforting, making love and loving him. Their daughter Fatima also provided Hadith.

He enjoyed life with his children, saying firmly that a man must be prepared to kiss his sons. A granddaughter was even taken to prayers on his back, though he had to take her off for the bowing and put her back on again for the upright sessions.

Religious observation is not shown as including enmity to Christians or Jews. Jesus is accepted as a Messenger of God like himself, though it is said Muhammad thought he was the last brick in the wall of religion. Moses and Abraham were frequent friends and communicators in his visions. Charity is seen as a form of prayer and the aging Muhammad understood the limitations imposed by the body and said sometimes its decisions must be accepted on fasting and prayer. Violence is not recommended: "Remembrance of God is the best refuge from torment, even better than Jihad in the cause of God, even if used till your sword is broken."

Aisha gave an account of Muhammad's death in her arms, saying that God finally gave the sick man a choice of life and death. He chose union with God.

Obviously this only gives a small selection of the image of Islam that the book provides. A Muslim friend brought it back from her pilgrimage to Mecca and tells me the book must be treated with respect and the symbols on the front representing Muhammad must not touch the floor or anything dirty. If you would like to borrow the book I can lend it when corona is over. Meanwhile, may we all find interesting reading!

Sheila Andrew

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



Some April Holidays

This Year, April sees significant holidays for two of the Abrahamic religions.

Our Christian Friends

April 12th, being the first Sunday following the Paschal Full Moon on April 7th is Easter and Christians who follow the Gregorian calendar will celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. May the spirit of the Lord fill your home this Easter and all the rest of your days. Wishing you a very Happy Easter that is filled with plenty of love and happiness. Wishing you and your family the happiest Easter of all. God bless you now and always.



Our Muslim Friends

The holy month of Ramadan, 1441, begins, in the Gregorian calendar, at sunset on April 23rd and continues through sunset on May 23rd for most Muslims in Canada. During Ramadan, the faithful fast from sunrise to sunset and only eat or drink from sunset till the following sunrise. Fasting is one of the pillars of Islam. Ramadan ends with Eid al-Fitr, the Festival of the Breaking of Fast. To our Muslim friends, we say "Ramadan Kareem" (Blessed Ramadan) and "Ramadan Mubarak" (Generous Ramadan) and, at sunset on May 23rd, "Eid Mubarak".



All Who Care for Mother Earth

Earth Day 2020 is an event observed annually on April 22. It is a day held to demonstrate and promote environmental awareness and calls for the protection of our planet. Earth Day is celebrated in more than 193 countries each year and is coordinated by the non-profit Earth Day Network.



Earth Day was first celebrated in 1970. It was founded by Senator Gaylord Nelson to promote ecology and the respect for life on the planet as well as to encourage awareness of the growing problems of air, water and soil pollution.

Compiled by
Tony Fitzgerald