



The Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton

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Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.

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Up-coming Sunday Services

We will continue to provide Sunday Services by ZOOM each Sunday. Watch for the ZOOM information each week which will be sent to the congregational email list. Contact the chair of the membership committee, Membership@UFF.ca, to be added to the mailing list.

November 1 Dr. Andrew Cutler - "*Wisdom, Leisure and the Good Life*" Inspired by Aristotle and Ancient Greek philosophy, this talk examines the philosophical connection between the feeling of wonder, the pursuit of wisdom and the importance of friendship.
Service Leader: Heather Lunegan

November 8 Melynda Jarratt - "*The Wonderful War Brides of World War Two*" *Service Leader:* Sheila Moore

November 15 Elder Bev Perley - "*Sewing Up the Broken Pieces*" *Service Leader:* Haifa Miller

November 22 Myron Hedderson - "*Having Impossible Conversations*" *Service Leader:* Jenn Carpenter-Gleim

November 29 Joan McFarland - "*My Struggle against the Privatization of Nursing Homes in New Brunswick*" *Service Leader:* Haifa Miller



Thanks from the Fredericton Community Kitchens

At the October 25th service there was a special basket for offerings to the Fredericton Community Kitchens. I was told by the office staff at the Brunswick St. Kitchen that \$255 was in the envelope from the service. The Kitchens expressed their sincere thanks and assured that the money would be put to good use.

Tony Fitzgerald
Kitchen Volunteer



It's Pledge Time Once Again

There won't be any spaghetti dinner this time but, COVID or no COVID, we are launching our stewardship/pledge campaign this month.

Look for a letter and a pledge form from myself and new treasurer Suzanne Lanery in your snail mail. A few will show up in email if we don't have your home address.

Please respond by **NOV 30** so we can use the information to create a new budget for 2021, which will be more difficult this year with our limited abilities to meet in person.

All the information about how to get your pledge form back to Suzanne is explained in the letter.

Thank you in advance to those who are able to respond.

From Glenna Hanley,
VP of finance and facilities.



Join in a Cross Country Gathering

Normally we would be having regional gatherings at this time of the year. In their place, and because of COVID-19, the CUC (Canadian Unitarian Council) is organizing a national fall gathering on line.

The dates are Friday, Nov 13 to Sunday, Nov 15. Everything will be done on ZOOM.

Friday night will be mini-regional gatherings. Each region will have a 90- minute program. Ours in the Eastern region will be from 7 to 8:30 pm

Saturday there will be an Opening Session at 1 pm our time, followed by a number of workshops to chose from. The first ones begin at 2 pm, with four choices; and then a second set of workshops at 4 pm.

One workshop will be presented by two Indigenous leaders who have agreed to serve as elders for the CUC this year.

There will also be an event for kids ages 9 to 12. If your family wants to participate please use this registration form:

<https://cuc.ca/childrens-registration-fall2020-gathering/>

At 6 pm on Saturday there will be a session with the CUC board. The title is Sustaining Our Light and the focus will be on how we maintain ourselves as a religious organization and as congregations in the midst of this ongoing pandemic.

Saturday night at 8 pm will be a coffee house with music, poetry readings, and storytelling. If you want to be a contributor they are taking applications until Nov. 6

On Sunday it all wraps up with a national service. If you recall the Sunday service they had in May to wrap up our on line national conference it was very successful with over 1,000 people tuning in.

There is no cost for the Friday night gatherings, the coffee house on Saturday night or the Sunday service, but there is a fee for the workshops. CUC is offering a sliding scale of \$20 to \$100 and you decide what level you think you can afford to pay.

Registration deadline is **Nov 10**. Go to CUC website at cuc.ca and scroll down to a section called "FOCUS" and below that you will see the box that will connect you to the registration form and all the info you need.

You will also need to register for ZOOM at the same time.

From Glenna Hanley,
CUC board member and UFF liaison



Our Move to Ireland

My uncle Tim Ellis tried to enlist in the Canadian Air Force in 1941, but because he was blind in one eye they would not take him. Then he tried the Navy – that didn't work either. Finally, in Sussex N.B. he enlisted with the 8th Hussars in the Canadian Army and served in the tank corp. division. In many ways his service defined his life. He never forgot the stories accumulated while over-seas.

In the early 1990's he wrote these stories down in a book he called "This Hussar Remembers". Here is one of them.

Our Move to Ireland

Hove, England, 1943. The colonel said "For once, you are all going to be told, straight out, where our next move is to be. This will preclude any wild rumours and leave us to concentrate on other matters. I emphasize, you are all sworn to secrecy. We are going to Ireland to draw all new equipment and train there. Where we go from there is not yet known."

We went up the gangplank of the "Samaria" in Liverpool on November 14th; Belfast was about 160 miles away. After 11 days of steaming at a good clip we entered port. No one was prepared to say what port it was, although in fact it was Algiers, North Africa. One Hussar leaning on the rail and thoughtfully observing the people in the waterfront area – dark-skinned men in nightshirts and the occasional woman peering over the top of her veil, commented categorically to his pal "Well. . . .they AIN'T Irish!"

All that new equipment? I knew someone would ask. That's another (and sad) story.

Sheila Moore



Happy New Year

Those of us who trace our ancestry to Northern Europe almost certainly had ancestors who observed the end of the year to be the celebration of the last harvest. The Mother was to take her rest while the world slept and rejuvenated in preparation for the Spring. For the Celts, Samhain was celebrated midway between the Autumnal Equinox and the Winter Solstice. When the Roman calendar was introduced, the celebration was moved to the beginning of the month. The pagan Celts also considered the day to end with the setting of the sun which was followed by the eve of the new day. With modern usage, the celebration takes place in the evening of the last day of October.

The new year was a time when the veil between this world and the next was at its most thin and souls of the recently departed could cross over and souls on the other side could come close to our world and messages could be exchanged. Samhain was a major festival and was celebrated with fire.

With the coming of Christianity, the celebration was appropriated for the twin All Saints and All Souls days. We can still see in Halloween traces of the older festival with



the place that ghosts, witches, pumpkins and other harvest items and fire still assume in the Hallowed Evening that precedes All Saints' Day.

This year, the festival is coincident with a special Micro, Full, Blue moon. The full moon takes place when the moon is at the apogee of its orbit, the furthest it gets from the earth, and is noticeably smaller. The full moon is also the second full moon in the same month (at least in our time zone) which is the formal definition of a blue moon, moreover, meteorologists tell us that if the winds are right, smoke from fires on the West Coast may actually give the moon a slightly blue tint.



The United Nations at 75 Our Goal of World Community

In honour of the United Nations' 75th Anniversary last week, the UUA Office at the UN hosted a virtual event to highlight the importance of this global body and of continued engagement with it. Presenters spoke to the ways in which Unitarian Universalists have been and continue to be influential at the United Nations. All recognized the critical moment we find ourselves in as a planet with crises that threaten life in so many dimensions: environmental, political, social, medical, economic... There is much to be concerned about, and, we were reminded: there are also many things to celebrate! The United Nations offers us a beautiful hope for that Unitarian Universalist Sixth Principle goal of world community. If we continue to invest in and engage with the UN, our world can become one where peace, liberty, and justice are realized for all. Watch and share the video of the full event below!



<https://uua874.acemlna.com/lt.php?s=4cb7b74982986d54ed30a019b44ce669&i=2221A4896A9A73304>

Presenters in order of appearance:

- Allison Hess, International Engagement Associate, Unitarian Universalist Association

- Bruce Knotts, Director, Unitarian Universalist Association Office at the United Nations
- Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray, President, Unitarian Universalist Association
- Vyda Ng, Executive Director, Canadian Unitarian Council
- Gillian Sorensen, International Rescue Committee, formerly Assistant Secretary General at the UN, then with the UN Foundation. She is a lifelong UU.
- Hawa Diallo, United Nations Department of Global Communications
- Chris King, United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs
- Craig Mokhiber, Director, New York Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Bobbi Nassar, Co-chair, Nongovernmental Organization Committee on Human Rights at the United Nations
- Rev. Alicia R. Forde, Director, Unitarian Universalist Association International Office



A Brave and Startling Truth

During the Oct 25th UFF service we heard Maya Angelou read her poem, *A Brave and Startling Truth*. This poem was created to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations in 1995 and was read by Maya Angelou to the assembled at the UN. Maya Angelou was an American author, actress, screenwriter, dancer, poet and civil rights activist best known for her 1969 memoir, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which made literary history as the first nonfiction bestseller by an African American woman.

Maya Angelou



A Brave and Startling Truth

We, this people, on a small and lonely planet
Travelling through casual space
Past aloof stars, across the way of indifferent suns
To a destination where all signs tell us
It is possible and imperative that we learn
A brave and startling truth.

And when we come to it
To the day of peacemaking
When we release our fingers
From fists of hostility
When we come to it
When the curtain falls on the minstrel show of hate
When faces sooted with scorn are scrubbed clean
When battlefields and coliseum
Nor longer rake our unique and particular sons and daughters
Up with the bruised and bloody grass
To lay them in identical plots in foreign soil

When the rapacious storming of the churches
The screaming racket in the temples have ceased
When the pennants are waving gaily
When the banners of the world tremble
Stoutly in a good, clean breeze

When we come to it
When we let the rifles fall from our shoulders
And when our children can dress their dolls in flags of truce
When land mines of death have been removed
And the aged can walk into evenings of peace
When religious ritual is not performed
By the incense of burning flesh
And childhood dreams are not kicked awake
By nightmares of sexual abuse

When we come to it
Then we will confess that not the Pyramids
With their stones set in mysterious perfection
Nor the Gardens of Babylon
Hanging as eternal beauty
In our collective memory
Not the Grand Canyon
Kindled into delicious colour
By Western sunsets

Nor the Danube, flowing its blue soul into Europe
Not the sacred peak of Mount Fuji
Stretching to the Rising Sun
Neither Father Amazon nor Mother Mississippi
Who, with favour
Nurtures all creatures in their depths and on their shores
These are not the only wonders of the world

When we come to it
We, this people, on this minuscule globe
Who reach daily for the bomb, the blade, and the dagger
Yet who petition in the dark for tokens of peace
We, this people, on this mote of matter
In whose mouths abide cankerous words
Which challenge our very existence
Yet out of those same mouths
Can come songs of exquisite sweetness
That the heart falters in its labour
And the body is quieted into awe.

We, this people, on this small and drifting planet
Whose hands can strike with such abandon
That, in a twinkling, life is sapped from the living
Yet those same hands can touch with such healing,
irresistible tenderness,
That the haughty neck is happy to bow
And the proud back is proud to bend
Out of such chaos, of such contradiction
We learn that we are neither devils nor divines

When we come to it
We, this people, on this wayward floating body
Created on this earth, of this earth

A climate where every man and every woman
Can live freely with sanctimonious piety
Without crippling fear

When we come to it
We must confess that we are the possible
We are the miraculous, we are the true wonder of
this world
That is when, and only when,
We come to it.



A Letter in the Scroll

Understanding our Jewish Identity and Exploring the Legacy of the World's Oldest Religion

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, 2000

Rabbi Sacks, a British Orthodox Jew was the Chair of the United Hebrew Congregation of the Commonwealth from 1991 to 2013. When appointed, he called for a renewal of British Jewry and this is the basis of his book, though it is obviously intended for Jews and non-Jews in all countries.

His main point is that Jews and God have a covenant by the choice of both. This gives all Jews a direct relationship with God so both can work for a world that accepts the laws of morality and lives by them, with Jews as an example to all other religions and people. This is a procedure that has developed over time and he sees himself and other Jews as letters in the unrolling scroll.

The explanation follows Jewish life from Moses' covenant with God, through the stories of the Bible and Jewish survival from the destruction of the Temple to the Diaspora that spread Jews from their homeland to many other countries, the Holocaust that killed millions and the establishment of Israel as a country and their home. By home he means a place where you can go. He suggests that the covenant did not save them from problems but helped them to benefit from them in continuing to develop their identity and mission.

The benefits included moving from priests who claimed a special relationship to God on to rabbis whose duty is to have empathy for all and to help Jews strengthen their own direct covenant through ritual, education, family, community and homeland. This includes establishing synagogues anywhere Jews live, instead of one Temple. Ritual brings family and communities together and reinforces the moral values. Circumcision is intended to make men remember that moral values include sexual choices. Education includes healthy questioning and discussion at all levels. Community and homeland all serve to strengthen the individual covenant with God.

The result, he says, is that Judaism can offer the world

an example of the essential principles of all morality and civilisation with equality before divine and human law for all, sanctity of life, dignity of human person, individual consent, personal redemption and love as the foundation all. It is the religious source of all modern beliefs and religions and scientific discoveries.

But Sacks saw problems for Judaism in our time. Many young people are leaving the religion; family rituals are being used less and fewer people are attending synagogues. Divisions within Judaism and the founding of new sects are making united work for its aims harder. He mentions the political problems of Israel only briefly, but I see that is the topic of the book he wrote in 2003. The reasons for these problems are not entirely clear to him but he suggests

they may be one of the bad results of the Holocaust leaving Jews uncertain of their own image and role.

He himself has no hesitation in remaining a Jew and a letter in the scroll. He notes that leaders in other religions, Tony Blair the former British Prime Minister and Prince Charles have all discussed Judaism and its sacred texts with him. In 2005 he was made a knight and a life non-party member of the House of Lords in Britain. So even if readers may not entirely accept his view of Judaism his values and ideals may still be a powerful influence.

Anyone is welcome to borrow my copy.

Sheila Andrew

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Please send articles to touchstone@uff.ca