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Up-coming Sunday Services

We will continue to provide Sunday Services by ZOOM and the Sunday Services Committee is so grateful for the wonderful guest speakers from both inside and outside our Fellowship during this difficult time. 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.

June 6th “*Embraced by Nature*” A lifetime of Wonder, Joy, Inspiration and Renewal
Speaker: Jim Goltz
Service Leader: Jane Loughborough

June 13th “*Celebrating Being Together*” Outdoor service at the Fellowship! We will gather to share our “favourite memories of being outdoors” or “what do you look forward to being able to do outdoors”
 Please bring your own chairs, blankets and coffee.

June 20th “*Celebrating Being Together*” Outdoor service at the Fellowship!
 What do you bring to our Unitarian community? Share a poem, reading, or story about what you enjoy about being a part of our Fellowship.
 Please bring a flower to add to our bouquet at the service. Also, your chair, blanket and coffee.

June 27th “*Annual General Meeting*” by ZOOM
 Preceded by a short opening service.

The Caring Circle / Joys and Concerns

Sincere sympathy to Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes on the passing of her brother-in-law, Brian Clark

Congratulations to Myron Hedderson on his new job with NB Power

Congratulations to Suzanne Lanery on her new job with Brunswick News

Joy - Glenna’s Grandchildren are now Canadian citizens

Sympathy to the family of Andrew Spencer on his recent passing.

Congratulations to Amber Lynn Elliot and Kurtis Langevin on their joyful, small, casual wedding on April 26/21. Amber posted this lovely note: “*Today seemed like a good day to get married. So we did! No big production. No real plan. Just two kids who love one another and wanna share everything, including their last names. Today we went on an adventure and it’s only just begun.*” Jenn Carpenter-Gleim was the officiant for their marriage

The Caring Circle is available to help in any way we can with a phone call or virtual visit or delivery of any items. Please get in touch with Janet Crawford janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca or 454-0441. We haven’t had a lot of requests for help, but we could use more volunteers or committee members.

Tea and Conversation will continue over the summer but will be less frequent. Watch for notices.

If you have any postings for Joys and Concerns in Touchstone, send to janetcra@nbnet.nb.ca

CUUWA

The Canadian Unitarian Universalist Women’s Association (CUUWA) holds their Annual Tea and General Meeting on June 12, 2021, starting at 4 p.m. Atlantic time on Zoom. All are welcome to attend the Cross-Canada Conversation during the first hour of the gathering.

We invite you to bring a special cup or mug filled with the hot beverage of your choice and homemade bread, cakes, or treats to our Tea. Why do feminists gather for tea? In the past, “Pink Teas” were clandestine meetings, disguised as fancy social events, where women could safely gather to talk about politics and organize for women’s rights.

Here are the questions we’ll be discussing over tea. You may enjoy reflecting on the questions during the weeks leading up to the meeting.

- What was one insight or discovery that you made when participating in a CUUWA or another event?
- At any time during the year did you think of something you would like to talk about with CUUWA?
- What are some of the relevant or worthwhile accomplishments of/for women and feminists anywhere in the globe over the past year?
- What has sustained you during the pandemic? How are you being nurtured? How has faith or hope helped? How have you grown as a human?

For more information about the CUUWA Tea or AGM (Zoom link, membership, CUUWA National Council), please contact me at joanne.elder.nb@gmail.com. I will be completing my five-year term as CUUWA chair at this meeting and would be happy to tell you more about what we do together.

Submitted by
Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes



An 8th Principle on Anti-racism?

An Invitation to You to Join the Conversation

A couple of weeks ago I sent an email to our members to let them know that an 8th principle, focused on anti-discrimination and oppression, was passed at the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) annual general meeting on May 8. And almost immediately after it was revoked.

Our seven principles are the foundation on which we build our spiritual journey, our congregational lives and hopefully our personal lives. Other religions have dogma. We have our principles, which are values and moral guidelines, part aspirational and more open to interpretation than dogma might be. They are what centres us in this, our very liberal and very diverse religion, and they are important.

When the 8th principal was so suddenly passed at the AGM many members across the country were elated and celebrating. But just as many others responded in anger. There was no opportunity for members and congregations to have an in-depth discussion of this important proposal. In addition the voting process turned out to be in violation of CUC bylaws.

The CUC responded by revoking the vote the next day. And now they are developing a plan to give Unitarians and Universalists across Canada the opportunity to have a wide conversation about adding an 8th principle. My hope is that we can have our own conversation here at the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton.

Here is the wording of the proposed 8th principle:

We, the member congregations of the Canadian Unitarian Council, covenant to affirm and promote: “Individual and communal action that accountably dismantles racism and other oppressions in ourselves and in our institutions.”

The original six principles were adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1961. The seventh principle came in 1985 and not much has changed since then. (For new members, most Canadian congregations were part of the US-based UUA until after the CUC was created in 1961).

The idea for the 8th principle arose in the US a few years ago and is in response to the backlash against racism, initially against black people, but growing since to include Indigenous people, all people of colour and more broadly any group of citizens living with oppression. The UUA and American congregations are still in conversation over adopting an 8th principle.

The issue arose here in Canada at the CUC AGM in 2019. What evolved from that was the formation of the Dismantling Racism Study Group. This year at AGM the study group presented their final report. Before we have our local discussions it is highly recommended that members read that report, found here:

<https://cuc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/CUC-Dismantling-Racism-Final-Report.2021-05.pdf>

Or find it on the CUC website: cuc.ca> Social Justice> Racial Justice> Dismantling Racism Study Group.

The report included proposed wording for an 8th principle. There was no plan to vote on it then. But a delegate from BC made a motion to adopt the principle right away. And what transpired was as I described in my earlier email.

The plans to step back and revisit this issue are tentative at the moment but here is what is proposed (**subject to change**):

- Hold a special meeting Saturday, Nov. 27, to address the issue of the 8th principle and dismantling racism report and recommendations.
- Prior to that meeting there will be a process for congregations to do their own examination of the issues;
- May 29 (sorry it’s passed) and June 26- Roundtable discussions (for anyone on the leaders list, which is an email list for presidents, past presidents, leaders of all kinds in congregations)
- Early June-a package will go out to congregations containing the DRSG report and a document, “A Way For-

ward” which will outline a process and procedures for doing the job of addressing this issue. It will include a “responsibility covenant” document, and a list of questions to guide a discussion, or several discussions.

- September-mid October- feedback to the CUC board and Executive Director. More about this later.
- October 20 final deadline for feedback to CUC
- Nov. 6 official notice of the meeting of Nov 27
- Nov. 27 –the special virtual meeting. (Likely be Zoom)

There will be more information later.

I hope we can have our own roundtable discussions here. As the pandemic is still with us we don't know if those discussions can be in person or on line.

An Invitation: I invite all of our members to have your own conversations (unless you are in a Covid isolation) with family and friends and think hard on how you feel about the issue of racism and of the imbalance in our white privileged society.

Below is a quote from CUC president Margaret Wanlin (from Thunder Bay) and Executive Director Vyda Ng, (Toronto):

“This process of engaging with the DRSG report, of considering the 8th principle and championing its ideals, and grappling with the process which allows us to fully commit our faith community to a new path has been challenging, enlightening and, at its core, an act of deep love for one another and our faith. Together we will get this right.”

Stay tuned.

Submitted by Glenna Hanley,
CUC Board Trustee for the Eastern Region
CUC Liaison for UFF



Who Are Unitarian Universalists?

Rev. Brian Kiely of Edmonton once wrote:

“This is a church of people. It is for spiritual explorers and free thinkers. It is for people refining their values and parents wanting to teach those values to their children. It is for people who are sure about God, and for those who are not. It is for people who are concerned with injustice and people who are accepting of differences.”

Submitted by
Sheila Moore



Introducing



ElderPride is a new intergenerational social program for 2SLGBTQ+ older adults presented by Fredericton Pride and funded through the New Horizons for Seniors Program. ElderPride will offer a blended in-person and virtual group meeting experience. 2SLGBTQ+ elders will have opportunities to share their wealth of knowledge and lived experience and engage in intergenerational mentorship – all in a fun and relaxed environment. ElderPride hopes to create a space for social connections, community-building, and creativity.

Would you like to:

- Meet other older adults and youth from 2SLGBTQ+ communities?
- Share and celebrate our stories and histories?
- Share experience and knowledge across generations?
- Have fun engaging in creative arts activities?
- Enjoy a delicious meal with found family?

ElderPride Evenings will happen once a month, where we will gather in a socially distanced environment to enjoy a meal together, engage in conversation, and do a creative activity (stitching/knitting, painting, drawing, music etc.). Participants may also engage over Zoom if preferred. The venue will be accessible.

The Garden Club will meet twice a month to plant and tend our shared ElderPride plot at the St. Mary's Community Garden at 780 McEvoy Street (Bus: 16 Marysville). ElderPride participants will have access to the garden plot 7 days a week and are welcome to harvest and share among the group. Gardening tools, kneelers, seats, and seeds will be provided.

2SLGBTQ+ elders (50+) and younger folx may participate. There is no cost to engage in ElderPride. ASL interpretation will be available upon request. Transit tickets will be available. If you need assistance with transportation, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate!

Interested in participating or learning more?

Please contact Coordinator Shane (they/them) at elderpride@frederictonpride.com or leave a message at 506-500-1850 and Shane will contact you!

Presented by/Présenté par
Fierté Fredericton Pride



Tau Day

Your humble editor often looks for a day in the month for which the letter is published that might be celebrated. June could celebrate the summer solstice and the festivals that attend it, the Pagan solar Sabbat of Litha or the Christian appropriation of the date for the feast day of Saint John the Baptist.

There's Fathers' day in June, however, as one Peanuts cartoon once stated:



Looking around, I found one source which listed over a dozen different celebrations just for June 1st and 156 holidays for the month of June. I thought "Wear a Dress Day", June 1st would be a cute one to feature but was intrigued with June 28th or τ day.

We define the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter to be π . The ratio of the circumference to the radius of the circle is τ or Tau. Recall that back in March (the 3rd month), we celebrated Pi day on the 14th. Combining the month number with the day gives the first three digits of π . By similar logic, the 28th of June becomes Tau day. The value of τ is twice that of π since the radius is half the diameter of a circle.

There is, apparently, a raging war within mathematics to replace Pi by Tau when dealing with circular formulas. Who knew? Unless you're a bit of a math geek the arguments are relatively simple but somewhat arcane and you're always multiplying by two (or is it dividing... anyway) when you measure rotation with a unit based on Pi rather than Tau.



The area of a circle is πr^2 , to which the precocious child might reply: "No, silly, pie are round!" (*note: see illustration to the left for proof of this assertion.*) This joke would of course fail miserably when the area of a circle becomes $\frac{1}{2}\tau r^2$. For the conservation minded, τ uses less ink than π and for the lazy, one less brush stroke.

On the lighter side...

A group of children at a Unitarian Universalist church school were trying to determine the sex of a rabbit. "There's only one way to decide" said one child. "Let's take a vote on it."

Q: How does a UU walk on water?

A: She waits until winter.

A traveller couldn't find the local Unitarian church. After looking in the centre of town, in the suburbs, and out in the surrounding countryside, the traveller asked a farmer "Am I too far out for the UU church? The farmer responded "Nobody is too far out for them."

After God created 24 hours of alternating darkness and light, one of the angels asked him, "What are you going to do now?" God said, "I think I'm going to call it a day."

Submitted by
Sheila Moore

Between Heaven and Hell

by Peter Kreeft

Kreeft is a philosophy professor who likes to use the Socratic method to get his students asking questions and considering the answers to get nearer to the truth. In this book he considers Christian theist C.S. Lewis taking part in such a debate with modern humanist John F. Kennedy and Eastern pantheist Aldous Huxley. All of them died on the same day and Kreeft imagines them in limbo having this discussion.

Lewis asks the questions shaping the discussions, first with Kennedy and then with Huxley. This leaves the reader wondering if he is Kreeft's Socrates. However there is not a definite Christian theist conclusion and many questions are raised that Unitarians may have considered. This includes the divinity of Jesus, the literal truth of the Bible, the need for faith to go beyond factual proof and the possibility of humans being one with God. According to Lewis, God is the creator and distinct from nature. Religion is God's search for man in Western faiths and man's search for God in Eastern faiths.

On the whole Kreeft seems to think Lewis has the last word, but the reader may feel some questions are not solved. We are left to decide if Jesus really was one with God or if his claims showed him to be either mad or a bad man and a liar! Surely he could have been a good man who believed it, leaving open other views on whether it was true. Huxley suggests he was a sage, like Socrates, Laotze, Confucius, Mohammed and many others: wise, loving and creative.

The nature of God is also discussed. Lewis says he should be considered as As Yaweh, I Am. Does this mean all of us are God or is God the transcendent creator distinct from nature? Is God good not evil and not beyond good and evil? Do we have a divine life by nature if we are willing to look for it or must we receive it from God by grace? If we do not accept this gift by faith will this demonstration of free will lead to hell? The book ends with the coming of the light but many conclusions are left to the reader! Sharon

Van Abbema has a copy if anyone would like to borrow it.

Sheila Andrew



Rev. Charles Eddis

Sharing the very sad news of the passing of Rev. Charles Eddis, from Rev. Diane Rollert from the Unitarian Church of Montreal. Our hearts are heavy.

Rev. Diane Olenick Rollert:

It is with incredible grief that I must let you know that Rev. Charles Eddis died peacefully yesterday afternoon at Montreal General Hospital. He would have been 95 in July. His family would like you to know that a celebration of his life will happen sometime down the road when we can share stories, hugs and a butter tart.

I'm still in shock. Charles was my friend, my dearest colleague, my rock and support over the years, my most dedicated cheerleader. Because we are ministers, he and I talked many times about this day. But he was so robust for so long that I began to believe it would never come.

Charles served as minister of the Unitarian Church of Montreal from 1977 to 1993. He led this congregation through the 1980 Quebec referendum, the church's disastrous fire on Simpson Street in 1987, and oversaw the construction of our building on de Maisonneuve. He knew what it was to live as a phoenix. He was one of Canadian Unitarianism's greatest leaders, a pioneer and a pillar of our movement. His death is truly the end of an era.

I know how close so many of you were to Charles, and how much you loved him. For some of you, he was your first minister, the person who shaped your understanding of Unitarianism. I wish that I could say more, but my grief, like yours, is too raw right now. Charles would have told me, "Stick to it! You know what to do."

I offer you this prayer that I shared during the service this morning.



A Prayer in Memory of Rev. Charles Eddis
by Rev. Diane Rollert, 23 May 2021

Ground of Our Being,
I call out to you
because you are the name of God
that most spoke to our beloved Rev. Charles.

"Ground of being,"
words from Paul Tillich,
the source that comes before being itself.

Now, dear friend,
you have gone home to that source,
from dust to dust
a man of star stuff,
returned to the cosmos.

Kindest, loving soul,
you lifted us up out of the ashes
and kept us alive.

You tended this faith
with mind and heart
and never lost courage.

I cannot begin to fully name your legacy.

Today, I only weep,
remembering your friendship,
grateful for the many years,
that you shared this journey with all of us.

A day will come
when I will find the grand words,
when a eulogy will flow forth,
as you would have wanted it to be.

For now, bless these tears
and this ache in my heart,
for I cannot imagine
what my life would have been
without knowing you.

I can hear your voice
in the words of Tillich,
invoking the subtle,
the intangible,
the inexplicable,
that is God,
that has waited for you
at the end of the good full
life you have lived.

May the Ground of Our Being
bless you and keep you,
shine its countenance upon you
and give you peace.

Amen.

With love and deep condolences to all who were blessed to know Charles.



Andrew Spencer

Caring Circle Report

As you may remember, Andrew Spencer, went missing April 9th. He was ‘the poet for a penny’ man at the Boyce Farmer’s Market.

The Fellowship Caring Circle invited donations from friends and members of the Fellowship to help Andrew’s family. Thanks to the generosity of Andrew’s friends and members of the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton, we collected \$1570.00. We delivered the money to his mother, Nancy Spencer, Saturday, May 1st. Her grandchildren, Andrew’s daughter, Zoe 13 and son, Ke 11 were there too.



They look forward to coming to the Fellowship when we start meeting on the Fellowship grounds again. They have happy memories of going there with their Dad, Mom and their grandmother, Nancy. In gratitude for the donation Nancy Spencer gave us a poem that her son wrote. The poem says a lot about who Andrew was. Here is the poem.

I have achieved
more than I could have
dreamed.
I do not dream of money.
I do not dream of power.
I do not dream of status.
I dream of making dreamers
think.
I dream of making thinkers
dream.

On May 15th, 2021, Andrew Spencer’s body was found downriver. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the family. May he rest in peace.

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