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Up-coming Sunday Services

Sunday Services 10:30 am via zoom

While the pandemic continues its own progress and the government has decided to discontinue regulations to attempt to address it, the Fellowship has decided to have our own plan for living with CoViD. These plans were adopted March 14, 2022 and are subject to change without notice as things develop.

Objective: To have indoor and outdoor Sunday services while keeping in mind that many of our Fellowship members are seniors, people who are immunocompromised and/or people too young to be given the vaccine against COVID and therefore at a higher risk of contacting the COVID virus.

Given that our service space does not allow social distancing, we ask that people attending in-person services do the following:

VACCINATION : for the time being we ask that people attending in-person services be double vaccinated and have a booster shot. Service can be accessed through ZOOM for those unable to attend in-person.

MASKS: are optional, but we advise wearing them while moving about in the building.

SINGING: is permitted

COVID SYMPTOMS: If you have any potential covid symptoms, please attend service from your home by ZOOM.

The Sunday Services Committee is 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.

May 29th “Broken Hallelujah” – The Theology of Leonard Cohen

Cohen has been called a philosopher, a dark poet and a troubadour of truth for generations. Leonard Cohen, who died in 2016 at age 82, expressed a progressive theology with both Jewish and Christian dimensions in his sharply perceptive and heartfelt songs and poems about religion, politics, isolation, relationships, and community. In this service of music, spoken word pieces, silence, and reflection, we will explore the brokenness and the hope in Cohen’s enduring Hallelujahs.

We will watch the YouTube service given by Rev. Robin Landerman Zucker of the UU church of Flagstaff, Arizona.

June 5th “Celebrating World Environment Day”

We will hear about “who and what” the Council of Canadians is – both nationally and locally. We will learn about the most recent Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and about the adequacy of the city’s and province’s climate change plans and how all of this fits into treaty rights.

Speaker: Jean Louis Deveau and members of the Fredericton Branch of Council of Canadians.

Service Leader: Myron Hedderson

Tech: Kurtis Langevin

Hospitality: Joan Brewer

This service speaks to our Living Tradition: Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

June 12th “Immigration in COVID 19 Times”

Our speaker will speak about the pressures and forces that are driving people around the world to leave their home countries, and how our fellowship community can help make Fredericton a welcoming place for those seeking refuge.

Speaker: Jeremias Tecu

Service Leaders: Joan McFarland and Najat Abdou-McFarland

Tech: Myron Hedderson

Hospitality: Joan Brewer

This service speaks to our 6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

June 19th “Celebrating Father’s Day”

Several of our members and friends will be sharing their special stories.

Service Leader: Jenn Carpenter-Gleim

Tech: Myron Hedderson

Hospitality: Joan Brewer



Lay Chaplaincy

The Canadian Unitarian Council recommends that each congregation dedicate one Sunday a year to the Lay Chaplaincy. This year, for the UFF, that Sunday was May 15th. Usually, we talk about the Lay Chaplaincy: why we have lay chaplains and what they may and may not do. When leading the service, I will usually stress that Lay Chaplains are not Chaplains in the traditional sense in that CUC Lay Chaplains are explicitly prohibited from counselling except for discussing ceremonies. The Lay Chaplain(s) will talk about particularly memorable ceremonies at which they had officiated during the past year. We may mention the six year limit on the tenure of a Lay Chaplain and why the CUC implements that. Often we will suggest that members of the congregation consider becoming a Lay Chaplain.

Our Lay Chaplain committee meets every other month from September through May. From the first meeting in September, the Chair was reminded that the tenure of the senior Lay Chaplain, Deby Nash, would expire within the year and perhaps the Chair should get off his chair. As he was reminded, more than once, these things take time. We reviewed the CUC requirements and suggestions for the process of selecting a Lay Chaplain and pretty much followed them. We advertised in the “Touchstone” and in the congregational mailing list. A “Lay Chaplain Search Committee” was struck to review the application(s) received.

I wish to thank the following people for agreeing to serve on the search committee: Jenn Carpenter-Gleim representing the Lay Chaplains who would be colleagues with the new Lay Chaplain, Glenna Hanley representing the board of the Fellowship, Amber Elliott and Sheila Moore as congregational representatives having a relatively new and an experienced relationship with the Fellowship respectively.



Left to Right

Tony Fitzgerald, chair

Deby Nash

Decima Mitchell

Jenn Carpenter-Gleim

The chair of the Lay Chaplain committee served as the chair of the search committee.

After reviewing the submitted curriculum vitae and cover letter, the search committee agreed to invite the candidate for a Zoom interview. Following the interview, the search committee reviewed and discussed their impressions and agreed to forward the candidate’s name to the Fellowship board for their review and approval with a request, if the candidate was approved, to introduce a motion at the next congregational general meeting for the congregation’s approval. That meeting was the Budget General Meeting in January and congregational approval was given for Decima Mitchell’s name be presented to the CUC-Lay Chaplain Committee for their review and approval.

Using a template from the CUC web site, the chair of the Lay Chaplain committee drew up a Lay Chaplain Contract between Decima and the Fellowship. Using a combination of email, US and Canada post, the contract was signed by Decima and on behalf of the Fellowship Board of Trustees by the Secretary, Joan Brewer. On March 10th the signed contract was scanned and emailed to the CUC and on April 12th the CUC Lay Chaplaincy Committee approved the application and began the process of registering Decima with Service NB for the issuing of a license to officiate ceremonies of marriage within the province.



New Lay Chaplain

On Sunday we completed the process by installing Decima Mitchell as our new Lay Chaplain with the two current Lay Chaplains laying Decima’s new stole over her shoulders. The ceremony we used was adapted from a November 23rd, 2014 installation at the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton. Hamilton is a much larger church than we, so there were things that did not fit and others that needed a little tweaking. One aspect of the ceremony which drew me to it was that Hymn #354 “*We Laugh, We Cry*” in our “*Singing the Living Tradition*” was used to punctuate the ceremony, singing a verse between the ceremonial components. I have always loved this song for its final line “*And in our search for peace, maybe we’ll finally see: even to question, truly is an answer.*” I was very pleased when I was told later that one of our newer members, who had never heard the song before, was also moved by it, I presume, for her own reasons.

Following the installation, we had an abbreviated “Experiences and Visions” sessions where Deby spoke eloquently about being inspired by an earlier Lay Chaplain Sunday service in which she had been inspired to wonder whether Lay Chaplaincy was for her and the encouragement she received when she brought the idea up with others. Jenn, of course, always has tales of wonderful ceremonies but this time a caution about making sure that structures put up

just for the wedding are secure, especially if there is wind. Decima spoke of the training and the chance to learn from Jenn and Deby about the practical matters including those specific to New Brunswick.

Deby Nash's term as a Lay Chaplain will end in September, however, we thought it most appropriate to honour her at this time and thank her for her service to the Fellowship. While challenged, as we all were, by the CoViD-19 pandemic, Deby had additional health challenges and, for a while, was forced to step away. As soon as her health permitted, we were pleased to welcome her back to our meetings and into the stole of Lay Chaplaincy. A part of our Lay Chaplaincy Sunday was dedicated to her dedication to us. Jenn presented flowers and spoke about their relationship as colleague Lay Chaplains. As service leader, I thanked Deby for taking the bait and becoming a Lay Chaplain after I had spent more time than I cared being the only Lay Chaplain for the Fellowship.



Recognizing Deby's Service

Finally, thanks were said to Joan Brewer who is a member of the Lay Chaplaincy committee representing the board in addition to all the other things she does for the Fellowship. I thanked Linda Sprague who had agreed to play the piano for the song which was, as I said earlier, critical punctuation to the installation ceremony and for selecting suitable music for the offertory. Linda had also picked up the flowers that were presented to Deby and had agreed to replace Gail Moore on the Lay Chaplaincy Committee as a representative from the congregation at large. Gail has had to step away for health reasons but I thank her for the several years during which she was on our committee. All the committee members have been a collegial and productive group with whom to work.

Tony Fitzgerald
Chair, Lay Chaplaincy Committee

Joys and Concerns

We are lighting a candle for Bill Knight and his family during his illness.

Sincere sympathy to Michelle Swan on the death of her sister in law Sheri Lynn Little.

Good luck to Donna Young on her move to St. Anne's Court this summer.

Geneviève Laloux has rented a cottage in Buctouche and is having trouble finding a car to rent. If anyone could help out by driving Devon and Geneviève to Buctouche or

picking them up or lending/renting them a car, please get in touch with Geneviève (506) 454-9607.

Ken Moore lit a candle for his long time friend Jim Reid, teacher, house-painter, dentist, fisherman, golfer, grandfather, who died in May.

Janet Crawford lit a candle via zoom for the lay chaplains and promised them *On The Side of Love* T-shirts, which were donated to the Caring Committee by Michelle Swan.

Sheila Moore and the congregation wished Janet Crawford a Happy Birthday. We thank her for all she does for our Fellowship.

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 (506) 454-0441 or Robin Stanley stanleyr@nb.sympatico.ca or (506) 650-2670. The caring circle has a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/247416469728195>

If you have any postings for Joys and Concerns in Touchstone, send to stanleyr@nb.sympatico.ca. Other committee members are. Nancy Beltrandi, Deby Nash, Myron Hederson, Decima Mitchell.

Robin Stanley

CUC Delegates Update on annual meeting

This year, Robin Stanley and Heather Lunergan were the Fredericton delegates to the CUC's annual general meeting, held on Saturday, May 14. From the material provided beforehand, it appeared to be a straightforward afternoon (and it was), all done by Zoom. We had to check in one hour before the meeting. We used that hour to chat about what was going to happen. I, Heather, have been a delegate before so it was fun to explore the agenda with Robin.

Once the meeting began, Vyda Ng, the Executive Director, spoke first. She, and others, used power point slides so everything was easy to understand. After showing a steadily downward trend in UU membership (13.76% over the past years) across Canada, Vyda said that unless membership rebounds quickly, "UUism is not going to have much of a future in Canada." A focus of the meeting had to do with money and growth, in particular the budget for staff and services. Based on a chart, we could ascertain that in 2021, the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton had 'fewer than 10 hours' of interaction with CUC staff. That was among the lowest of any congregation.

The rest of the meeting was much as one would expect. Time limits on speakers were enforced, and there was little discussion on most agenda items. There were reports

from various groups operating within the CUC, including the Dismantling Racism Group, the Decision-Making Review Team, the By-Law Review Committee, the Youth Observer, and later, there were more reports, from the Sharing Our Faith Grant Committee, the Canadian UU Womens' Committee, the Shining Lights Fund, and others. In between the reports was the financial part of the meeting.

The financial records, including audited Financial Statements for 2021, proposed budgets, and other reports are available on the CUC website. The motions to accept all necessary financial materials were passed unanimously and without much discussion. Some topics could have taken more time but the time-keeper was strict. No doubt there will be ongoing discussion about the costs of salaries and services as the CUC faces the declining member base and continues to cap Annual Program Contributions. There were only two motions from the Board: one to continue the Cap on Annual Program Contributions until 2023, so as to support smaller congregations, and the other to agree to adopt the CUC's Goals & Strategic Priorities for 2022 - 2023. This list is available on the website. Both passed.

On the brighter side, the reports from the Dismantling Racism Group, the Decision-Making Review Team, the Canadian UU Women's Committee, and Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice sparked hope for the future of Unitarian Universalism in Canada. All are proposing new ways of doing things. Educator, researcher, writer George Dei has said "Inclusion is not bringing people into what already exists; it is making a new space, a better space for everyone." Many participants in the CUC 2022 AGM are

proposing new ways of doing things that will create a new space, a better space for everyone rather than continuing to only welcome people into what already exists.

Respectfully Submitted by Heather Lunergan
and Robin Stanley



Permanent Astonishment

by Tomson Highway

The title and the author's name are both intriguing and the book's mixture of changing Cree camp life in the northern woods and islands, village life, family life and residential school life keeps the reader intrigued too. Part of the astonishment comes from the positive attitude Tomson is able to take about all these aspects of his younger life.

Instead of concentrating on the negative aspects of residential school, he puts them in the context of learning, fellowship with other students and humanity's weakness. He is teased for his "girlishness" but does not let this make him angry or ashamed. Like the rest of his life, it just is.

Words in the Cree language are used, providing insight into its complexity and ability to express phenomena English has trouble with. The word for non-indigenous people is particularly intriguing! There is also much information on caribou hunting, fishing and the physical and spiritual aspects of living off the land. This is a very special book. Let me know if you would like to borrow my copy.

Sheila Andrew

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