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Sunday Service 10:30 a.m. Web Site: <http://www.uff.ca> Email: office@uff.ca
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Up-coming Sunday Services

10:30 am in person and via zoom

The Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton
Our Plan for Living with COVID and Influenza

Objective: Keeping in mind that many of our Fellowship members are seniors, and people who are immunocompromised and therefore at a higher risk of contracting viruses, we ask that people experiencing flu and/or cold symptoms join the Sunday service by ZOOM.

- **MASKS:** are optional but we ask that you respect those who may wish you to wear a mask in their presence.

April 30th Is Security Gone?

Did We Ever Have It?

Video Sermon by: Rev. Dr. Stephen Atkinson

Service Leader: Heather Lunergan

Tech Support: Wyatt Elliott

Join us for an thoughtful sermon by Stephen Atkinson, who was a member of our congregation before moving to Unitarian ministry. Stephen's talk discusses Fr Richard Rohr's "Five Lessons" and "Five Consoling Messages" and the idea that we may see the world's current troubles as a rite of initiation.

May 7th Lay Chaplain Sunday

Speakers: Jenn Carpenter-Gleim and Decima Mitchell

Service Leader: Tony Fitzgerald

Tech Support: Wyatt Elliott

The CUC recommends that each congregation set aside a service to talk about the Lay Chaplaincy. This is that Sunday.

May 14th Our Interconnected Universe, Talk Two

Speaker: Ken Little

Tech Support: Myron Hedderson

Ken has given this overview of the second of two talks he is presenting. He writes: As I approach the end of my life on Earth I am trying to sort out my thoughts about where we came from, how we got to where we are now and what we need to do to continue to thrive as a species. The second service in the series will look at the ascendancy of homo sapiens and the current state of the world. I will also venture a look to the future and explore course corrections that may help us survive as a species.

May 21st Young Adults

Exploring their Spirituality

Speakers: Tessa Walsh and Nicholas Descarie

Tech Support: Myron Hedderson

Nicholas and Tessa are new members of our congregation. They came to Unitarianism through a couple of routes, including early church attendance, loss of interest, and a desire to find a spiritual home.

May 28th AI: Where we are, where we're headed, and what it might mean

Service Leader: Myron Hedderson

Tech Support: Wyatt Elliott

Myron explained his title thus: During the fall, and even more so in the spring, new developments in artificial intelligence have been announced in rapid succession, much faster than even AI researchers expected a year or two ago. The Effective Altruist community which Myron has presented on before believes that making sure AI goes well, which they call "AI Alignment" is likely one of the most important things a person can do with their career, and if it goes badly, that could be very very bad.

Myron will discuss the developments that have happened recently, what it means in terms of where things may be headed, what efforts are underway to make sure where things are headed is someplace good, and what we know so far in answer to some of the "big questions" we will have to answer if we create a machine intelligence as capable as humans in the near future.

How will he fit all of that into half an hour? Even he does not know... Given how fast things are moving, the focus of this service may change between when this is published in Touchstone and when the service occurs, but if you're interested in the current state of play when

it comes to creating artificial intelligence, this is the talk for you.



The Caring Circle

Thoughts are with Helen Chernoff recovering after a brief period in the hospital.

Thoughts are with Deby Nash who is in Saint John, learning how to do dialysis at home.

Thoughts with Pat and Joan Daley as Joan recovers from a knee replacement.

Thoughts are with Lorna Drew, quickly recovering from eye surgery in Saint John.

Sympathy to Nic Decarie on the loss of his father, Malcolm Decarie 1933 - 1923

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@gmail.com (506) 454-0441
or with

Robin Stanley stanleyr@nb.sympatico.ca (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.

WANTED: Please let Janet or Robin know if you can help with driving or with delivering food or flowers.



Pentecost

Pentecost, also known as Whitsunday, is a Christian observance that takes place fifty days after Easter. The term 'Pentecost' is derived from the word 'pentekoste' which is the Greek word for 'fiftieth'. Since the festival is observed on the seventh Sunday following Easter which is also fifty days after Easter, it is named Pentecost.

According to Acts 2 of the New Testament in the Bible, Jesus was resurrected after his Crucifixion. The holy Bible says he spent forty days with his Apostles teaching them the word of God. Before ascending to heaven he told his disciples that they would be visited by the power of the Holy Ghost.

In Jerusalem, the apostles gathered to feast and commem-



Holy Spirit Descending

orate the Feast of Weeks or Shavuot, a Jewish festival commemorating the first fruits of the harvest and associated with the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. While the apostles were eating, the Holy Spirit descended upon the house where they were eating and into each one of them.

Many see the first Pentecost as the foundation of the modern church. We wish our Christian friends and neighbours well as they celebrate the festival, this year on May 28th.



Unitarian Women's Potluck Gathering

Women's potluck Friday, May 26th will be held at TUFF, 874 York Street.

Gather at 6 pm and eat at 6:30.

Come whether you have time to prepare something or not. We give thanks for whatever is offered.

Topic: Name a movie or book you've seen or read more than 3 times and still like. Tell us why.

I know we have done this topic before. Just wonder if your answer will be the same or different.

For more Information

Joan Brewer

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Report from the Board Meeting

April 23, 2023

In attendance were Joan Brewer, Amanda Duffie, Myron Hedderson, Heather Lunergan and Decima Mitchell, for a quorum. Tracy Gleim sent regrets.

Joan provided opening words.

Joan reported that Ken Moore is planning on a yard cleanup in the next little while and will be inviting members and friends to bring steel garden rakes to the Fellowship for some outdoor exercise.

Myron will be contacting web designer Mindy Foster to get clarification regarding the proposals she has sent to the board. Further to this, Myron will be arranging a meeting between himself, Mindy and Webmaster Tony Fitzgerald. Myron will report the results of this discussion at the next board meeting in May.

The Board passed a motion to acknowledge a particular member for contributions to the UFF. The congregant will be recognized at the AGM in June. Decima will investigate the creation of a wall plaque to contain the names of past,

present and future outstanding contributors to the life of the Fellowship.

Decima reported on the results of work being done by the Nominating Committee in preparation for the June AGM. Janet Crawford and Decima have been in contact with several people regarding Board and Committee Chair positions.

Ken Moore is stepping down as Chair of Building and Grounds, although he will continue to serve as a member of the committee. Heather will contact Ken to inquire about the list he is compiling, regarding activities and oversights that incoming B & G Chairs need to be aware of.

Submitted by
Decima Mitchell
President, UFF Board



Nurturing Wise Women



CUUWA Pink Tea invitation



Hybrid event –

zoom participation available for distant registrants.
Please join us at the Ottawa UU Fellowship,

Sunday afternoon. May 21, 2 – 4:30 PM EDT

Guest speaker is El Jones,
a Halifax-based professor, activist, & former poet laureate

AGM convenes after the presentation

Register: CUUWA.CUC@gmail.com

More event info at Website: CUUWA.CA

Submitted by
Joan McFarland



Stamped From The Beginning. The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America

by Ibram X. Kendi

America has made progress in antiracism, but Kendi's book shows every step forward has been met by a simultaneous development in racism. The problems are found in economics, politics, versions of history, pseudoscience and internal divisions within antiracists and within racists.

Economic divisions obviously started with southern states needing slaves and the north being content with underpaid escapees or those who left the south for a better life. However divisions continued to exist between products and

needs.

Political problems are examined very thoroughly, with appalling and perhaps unintentional racist presidential comments quoted, including one from Obama! Kendi claims he could have done this for every president up to Donald Trump. Desperation for votes and possibly quotation out of context can have sad effects.

Historical interpretation and pseudoscience were often convenient for racists and included ideas from otherwise respected individuals. To give just a few examples, Africans were presented as the descendants of Noah's evil son; sexual morality was declared inherently different; African women were presented as dangerously dominant and I.Q. tests were said to prove basic African inferiority.

Antiracists disagreed on answers to the inequality that remains long after abolition. "Suasionists", believed the answer could be found in persuading African Americans to live like whites. Problems here included economic differences, limited access to education, different cultures, continuing prejudice and racist success in removing voting rights. Christianity was seen as an important form of persuasion, but denominations disagreed on many issues.

Some antiracist segregationists believed, like their racist counterparts, that separation was the answer, either by sending Africans back to Sierra Leone or Liberia or keeping them in separate communities. Antiracists could see this as return to African culture, failing to appreciate the variety of those cultures or the development of African culture in America.

Some assimilationists wanted African American people to merge into a new culture with non-Africans. This bold idea found some support in remarkable Angela Davis, scholar, professor and political commentator bold enough to be jailed, as well as other feminists and Martin Luther King Junior. Some were egalitarians wanting all to be equal in rights, education and standard of living. "Top Ten" successful African Americans sometimes stressed that racial difference should not be a problem and did not always sympathise with the less successful.

Racists disagreed on the ways of keeping African Americans from what they saw as lowering life for other Americans. The Ku Klux Klan wanted to kill them. Others, as noted above, changed laws, favoured segregation or export to Africa and continued inequalities. Some said taking them away from "white" control would spoil African American lives as they were better off cared for by that.

Kendi divides his account of this long struggle into historic periods and provides solid evidence on most of his points. This is a story well written and often alarming and surprising. Thanks very much to Joan Brewer for lending me the book and her comments and underlining in it will show anyone else who borrows it that there is far more to it than my article can give.

Sheila Andrew



Star Wars Day

Star Wars Day is celebrated every year by fans of the movie franchise on May 4. The day commemorates George Lucas' Star Wars movies set in a galaxy far, far away.

Fans chose this date to celebrate their favorite movies as "May the Fourth be with you" is a pun of the franchise's famous catchphrase said by Obi-Wan Kenobi to a young Luke Skywalker "May the Force be with you".

The first known instance of someone making the pun happened two years after the release of the first Star Wars film in 1979, when Margaret Thatcher was elected Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, on May 4. Conservative supporters of Thatcher placed an advert on a London newspaper that featured the tagline "May the Fourth Be with You, Maggie. Congratulations."

Fans of the movies only held their first celebration of Star Wars Day on May the 4th in 2011, at the Toronto Underground Cinema. The event was a commemoration of all aspects of the franchise, and it featured things such as trivia games, a best costume contest, and a competition for the best fan-made parodies, mash-ups, and remixes of the original movies.

In 2013, Lucasfilm and the rights to Star Wars were purchased by Disney, who took the opportunity to make Star Wars Day an official holiday for fans around the globe. Every year, Disney organizes big events and festivities in their theme parks.



John Argall

Long time members will remember Irma Rigby. John was Irma's son-in-law and, for a while, he attended Fellowship services with Irma. He also helped Irma practice driving which got her license restored.



*John's Bench &
Commemorative Plaque*

John, unfortunately, was also a victim of vascular dementia which had forced him into early retirement and would take his life. You can read his obituary at the [Hogg Funeral Home](#) which serves the Minto and Grand Lake Area.

I would occasionally meet John walking the trails of the city and we would greet one another, sometimes stopping to talk a bit. He would comment on his situation with humour that was more than a bit wry.

Then the pandemic.

My walks this past winter often included the trails of Odell Park and the Botanical Gardens. As the weather warmed over the past few weeks, I noticed some of the new benches that had been installed last year rising out of the retreating snow. One in particular, facing the frog pond, bore a commemorative plaque for John. A Google search confirmed that it was the John Argall with whom I was acquainted and provided a lot of detail on his life.

Earlier today (I'm writing the evening before this Touchstone will be published) the weather was so nice, I decided to sit for a while on John's bench and think of him and Irma. A frog on the far side of the pond chuckled a couple of times. As I was leaving, I looked to see whether there were any tadpoles. Too early for most frogs, however, bullfrog tadpoles take a second summer to reach froghood and I hoped there might be some of those. There were a few whirligig beetles stirring the surface of the pond and a larger water beetle moving among the leaf litter on the bottom. Life, slowly returning.

I think John would enjoy the spot.

I am also reminded of a sentiment that I would try to put into celebrations of life which I officiated when a Lay Chaplain: whenever we think of the departed, they are, in a very real sense, with us again.

In fellowship
Tony Fitzgerald

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