

Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia and Port Huron

www.unitarian.sarnia.com

180 College Ave. N. Sarnia, Ontario

(a refreshing alternative for religious explorers)

*Anybody can create community with people who believe just like they do.
The true test of community rests in the ability to create it with people who
disagree with us.*

-Lee Barker (Unitarian Universalist, minister, educator)



"The Flaming Chalice"

April 2015



Sunday services begin at 11am followed by refreshments at Noon or shortly after. We meet in the Kiwanis Room of the Lochiel Kiwanis Community Centre (LKCC) at 180 College Ave. N. (enter at Forsyth St. main door). Dress is casual and religious dogma is hard to find, although spirituality abounds. A warm welcome awaits you!

For full details of Sunday services and all other activities and opportunities log on to our website: [http://www.unitarian.sarnia.com/](http://www.unitarian.sarnia.com)



April Services:

Apr. 5, 2015

“Deepening our Understanding of Easter” Allan McKeown
Beyond the traditional Easter story beloved of Christians, there is a universal spiritual message of hope and transformation that has the power to change our lives. Today, we explore the deeper message of this season.

Apr. 12, 2015

“What The Simpsons television characters have to teach Universal Unitarians” OR “Why Everyone Could Use a Good Yuck” with Mark Konrad (UU London)

Take one part consumer advocate – Ralph Nader, for consistency; stir in one part 60’s Anti-War Activist Abbie Hoffman for spectacle; combine Black Panther Party Co-founder Bobby Seales for bravado and mix with filmmaker Michael Moore for a flair for the absurd and; Voila! You have Mark Konrad, our speaker for this morning.

Drawing from the example of the aforementioned and many other activists he’s worked with, Mr. Konrad will talk about The Simpsons TV show.

Apr. 19, 2015

“Species at Risk” (Earth Day) Speaker **Larry Cornelis**

Larry will share his experience and knowledge about “Species at Risk” locally and globally. He will discuss why species are disappearing at an alarming rate and what our fundamental conservation strategies and practices are, or should be, to deal with this important issue.

Apr. 26, 2015

“Women of Islam” Guest Speaker **Aruba Mahmud**

Aruba oversees community outreach for the Sarnia Muslim Association and was one of the organizers of their recent Peace Gathering that several of us attended. She will speak to us about the many misunderstandings that we have about the women of Islam.

This is also SOUP SUNDAY! Stay for lunch and enjoy a steaming hot bowl of homemade soup and bread, together with great conversation and fellowship.

All proceeds to the Inn of the Good Shepherd.
Suggested cost is \$5 per family.



President's Message

Executive Team Highlights from March 19th, 2015 Meeting

Executive Priorities: All goals set for the 2014-15 Program Year have either been completed or are in process.

Religious Exploration: It was agreed to offer a 5 session adult program called *Spirit in Practice* beginning on April 28, 2015. It was also decided that a search will begin for a paid Children's R.E. Coordinator.

Finance: As of the end of February, we are showing a net budget surplus with most of our major expenses for the year having been paid.

Membership: Our Members and Friends lists have been reviewed and the appropriate adjustments made. Several people who attend regularly will be approached about becoming either Members or Friends prior to the AGM in April.

Program: Presenters and Service Leaders for April have been confirmed and planning for May and June are well underway. Cords to allow the use of Apple and newer laptops with the Kiwanis projector system have been purchased.

Social Action: The *End of Life Planning Workshop* will be held on April 22nd, 2015. The Team

also approved a letter to the Sarnia Journal as the Fellowship's response to an anti-gay letter printed on March 12, 2015.

Canadian Unitarian Council Revenue Canada Audit: The CUC received notice in February that it had been selected as part of a "random general audit performed on charities" (there are some 86,000 registered charities in Canada). The audit was scheduled around the end of March.

Executive Team Meetings are open to the members of the Fellowship. They happen at 6:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month from September to June at the Lochiel Kiwanis Centre in our basement "Unitarian Room". The next meeting will be on April 16, 2015.

April Reflection

What comes to your mind when you hear the word "Spring"? It has been said that "Spring is a season of hope, a time of awakening, of stirring and coming alive." (*The Circle of Life*, Joyce Rupp & Macrina Wiederkehr). I also think of fertility, blossoming, greening and emergence.

Joyce Rupp has written some wonderful "Antiphons for Spring". The following one especially speaks to me:

***O Midwife of Spring,
Come! Come encourage what needs to be born in us.
Draw us out of winter's nurturing womb.
Teach us to believe in our unopened buds.
Accompany us into a world starved for new life.
O Come!***

Some questions to ponder:
How, like the buds of the earth, are we opening
to new possibilities?
What is blossoming in us?
How is the spirituality of Spring bringing
about a renewal in you and in our UU community?



In Peace,
Ann

Annual Members & Friends Canvass

***Make your membership meaningful by sharing your special talents,
time and treasure, knowing that often what we receive rests in how
much of ourselves we have invested.***

(UU New Member Ceremony - author unknown)

Our annual Fellowship Canvass gives everyone the opportunity to provide feedback about the activities of the Fellowship through an Evaluation/Needs Survey and to make a financial pledge for the upcoming program year. Unitarian Universalists throughout Canada and the U.S. have traditionally followed this process to enable congregations to plan effectively.

Your Executive Team is very pleased to announce that our **Canvass Co-Chairs** are **Bill Franks and Wendy Starr** and that our canvassers this year are **Ann Steadman, Bill Franks, Brenda Woolston, Dwayne O'Neill, Judy Lindberg, Mark Woolston, Sharon MacKay and Wendy Starr.**

The Evaluation/Needs Survey wrapped up on February 28th. The collated results of this survey including all comments will be made available to members and friends. During this month of March, canvassers will visit members and friends to discuss the survey results and to explore other thoughts and suggestions about the fellowship. Financial pledges for the Fellowship's 2015 -16 Program Year will also be requested.

You are invited to reflect upon what you hope to contribute for 2015-16. What percent of your income do you currently give to the Fellowship? Can this be increased? However, as Mother Theresa has said, "It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."

Important Upcoming Events

Thursday, April 16th: Executive Team Meeting at 6:30 pm in the “Unitarian Room”.

Sunday April 19th: **Special Membership Meeting** following the service to present a report from the Investment Options Team (Dwayne O’Neill, Dan Danner, Mark Woolston and Ann Steadman). Sandwiches will be provided.

Wednesday April 22nd: **End of Life Planning Workshop** 12:30 - 4:30 pm at the Strangway Centre. Seating is limited so register as soon as possible. Twenty-five spaces will be reserved for members and friends of the Fellowship until April 1, 2015. See the poster that accompanies this newsletter for more details.

Sunday April 26th: **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** after the Soup Sunday Lunch. Reports from our various Teams received and a new Executive for the 2015-16 Program Year (July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016) will be elected. Allan McKeown and Annette Verhagen have agreed to serve as our Nominating Team. Do consider joining the Executive for 2015-16. Friends of the Fellowship are welcomed to attend the AGM. Only Members, however, can vote and stand for election to the Executive Team.

May 15 - 17: Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) Annual Meeting: This will be held in Ottawa. In 2016 the venue will be Vancouver. After 2016 the gathering will be held bi-annually. Our Fellowship is entitled to send two delegates to the AGM.

Regular Events:

Book Club: Continues to meet on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 9:15 am at ‘On the Bay’ on Front St. The book for April is “Half the Sky” by Nicholas D.Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. May’s book is “Wild” by Cheryl Strayed and in June, we will be reviewing a book suggested to us by Allan “Waking Up - A Guide to Spirituality without Religion” by Sam Harris. Everyone is welcome to come out and join the discussion, whether you’ve read the book or not.

Men’s Group: April Men’s Group gathering is Sunday April 19th at 3pm (note early start). Meet at Allan’s home and car-pool to Alton Estate Winery on Aberarder Line for a tour of the winery and sample tastings followed by dinner at Skeeter Barlow’s in Forest.

Women’s Circle: On Saturday, April 18th from 11:30 - 1:30 we have been invited to join the Muslim women at the Mosque on London Line. There will be a short presentation, a Q&A period, lunch (supplied by them) and then time to mingle and chat. Hope you can make it.

Small Group Ministry: Members meet every other Thursday afternoon at chosen locations. All are welcome. Contact Betty Learn for info at: 519-337-4039

Special Events

Volunteer Construction Trips to Central America

Toronto First is extending an invitation to all Canadian UU's to participate in the Central American Community Development Project. Over 100 Canadian UU's from 22 congregations across the country have travelled to Central America in the last 17 years to help hard working people improve their lives. Are you interested in working alongside Guatemalans, Hondurans and hundreds of Canadian volunteers from other walks of life. For more information, see www.firstunitariantoronto.org under "Social Justice" - Central America Project.

UU Conversation Salon

As stated in Wikipedia "A salon is a gathering of people under the roof of an inspiring host, held partly to amuse one another and partly to refine the taste and increase the knowledge of the participants through conversation".

Keep an eye out for information on our next salon.



Spring Adult Religious Exploration Opportunity - Spirit in Practice

Spirit in Practice weaves Unitarian Universalist values, principles, and sources with four "strands:" spiritual development, ethical development, Unitarian Universalist identity development, and faith development. This series of gatherings was developed by the Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom in response to many Unitarian Universalist adults' desire to engage in life-giving spiritual practices. The various workshops of *Spirit in Practice* invite participants to reflect, share, and grow together, exploring ways to nurture their connections with the sacred in everyday life.

Dates: Tuesdays, April 28, May 5, 12, 19, and 26

Time: 7 – 9 pm

Location: TBA

To register, contact Annette Verhagen at 519-384-8549 or averhagen@execulink.com

Other News

Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) e-newsletter. To receive this electronic newsletter from the CUC once per month, go the website at www.cuc.ca and click on the sign up link on the Home page. Also, copies of the "***Canadian Unitarian***" can be found on Sundays on the information table and are free to take home. Check out the "***Sermon of the Month***" on the CUC website.

“UU World” on line! The American quarterly magazine “UU World” is also available as a weekly electronic newsletter. Highly recommended for UU’s! Go to www.uuworld.org and click on “get weekly email updates from UU World”.

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) are UU’s from across the country involved in addressing various social justice issues. Check out their website at www.cusj.org They are also on Facebook: cusj-l@uua.org to stay up to date on developments and to offer ideas, opinions and feedback!

R.A.V.E.N. Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs
RAVEN is an NGO focusing on enforcing Aboriginal groups’ legal rights to environmental protection. They need support from all Canadians. Please visit their website at www.raventrust.com to learn more

Did You Know There Is UU Fellowship Without Walls?

The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) is the largest Unitarian Universalist congregation in the world. For UUs and others, it offers an online spiritual home beyond walls or geography. Unitarian Universalists find supportive UU fellowship and words to inspire and comfort.

The CLF website states that, “No matter where you’re located, you can join our online spiritual community. We serve anyone longing for a faith rooted in love that cultivates wonder, encourages imagination and champions justice.” To check out the CLF go to <http://www.clfuu.org/> .

Please consider sharing this newsletter with a friend and then invite them to a service! Every Sunday is “Bring a Guest Sunday”!

Each “Flaming Chalice” newsletter is printed by the Organization for Literacy Lambton (OLL): helping every person acquire the gift of literacy!

Newsletter editor: Wendy Cornelis

TO UNSUBSCRIBE TO THIS NEWSLETTER AT ANY TIME, PLEASE SEND YOUR REQUEST BY E-MAIL TO WendyCornelis55@outlook.com