

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”

February 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/>



February Services:

Feb. 1, 2015

“Goodwill” Guest Speaker Kevin Smith

With a vision to be the recognized leader in helping people develop work and life skills to find employment and the mission to change lives through the power of work, this is not just your neighborhood thrift store!

Feb. 8, 2015

“Human Trafficking” Speaker Helen Lomax

With this third visit to our Fellowship, Helen will be discussing her involvement with Human Trafficking - an issue very dear to her heart and one which she has spoken about to various groups in the Sarnia-Lambton area - because it even happens here!

Feb. 15, 2015

“Sharing our Faith Sunday” Service Leader Allan McKeown

The theme, ‘Journeys and Buildings’, considers the future of Unitarian Universalism in Canada. The Sharing our Faith program encourages a sense of community and connection among and between our member congregations by providing grants for growth. There will be a special collection taken this day to further the work of the CUC program.

Feb. 22, 2015

“Ageism in the Era of Selfism” Speaker: Mayor Mike Bradley

Sarnia has been identified as one of the most desirable cities in Canada for people to move to when they retire. As the percentage of seniors increases, what challenges and opportunities will result? How will attracting more seniors be of benefit to the city and do those who are critical of the growing demographic have legitimate concerns.



President's Message

Executive Team Highlights:

Executive Team Meetings are open to the members of the Fellowship. We meet 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". Your Team last met on January 19, 2014. Besides the Canvass and Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation, other highlights from the meeting are:

By-Law Changes: The Fellowship by-laws have been reviewed and a number of changes/additions have been recommended. The Executive Team will be studying these carefully. A decision about what changes will be taken to the membership for approval will be made at the February 15th meeting.

Fellowship Policies & Procedures Handbook: An updated version will be available by February 1, 2015.

Fellowship Housekeeping: Members of the Executive have done a physical clean-up and sort through of Fellowship possessions stored in the Unitarian Room. We will ensure that the required financial records and minutes of meetings will be stored in a secure manner. Electronic records will also be organized and copied to a 'stick' for ease of sharing.

Annual General Meeting (AGM): Please mark your calendars for the Fellowship's AGM on Sunday, April 25, 2015. The Executive Team for the 2015 -16 Program Year will be elected at that time. ***Would you be willing to serve on the Executive? Please speak to any of the current Team members.***

Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) Annual Meeting: This is set for May 15 - 17, 2015 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. ***Would you be interested in attending as a representative for our Fellowship? Please contact me at 519-542-9708 for more details.***

Investment Options: A Team consisting of Dwayne O'Neill, Dan Danner, Mark Woolston and Ann Steadman has been formed to review our financial status and to investigate investment options. The Team has met once and has another meeting scheduled for February 15, 2015.

Social Action: Plans are being developed for an End of Life Planning Workshop to be held in April 2015. A cheque for \$713, the proceeds from our Soup Sundays, has been delivered to the Inn of the Good Shepherd.

Reflection: Re-imagining Valentine's Day:

To say the least, I am not a great fan of Valentine's Day. It seems to me to be simply another Hallmark holiday courting consumerism rather than courting love. Even its origins are suspect. According to Wikipedia, "*St. Valentine's Day began as a*

liturgical celebration of one or more early Christian saints named Valentinus. Several martyrdom stories were invented for the various Valentines that belonged to February 14, and added to later martyrologies.”



But maybe there is another way to view this day that celebrates love. During her presentation “The Art of Non-Violent Protest” on January 18th, Wendy Starr referenced the Unitarian Universalist Association’s (UUA’s) *Standing on the Side of Love* campaign. It was inspired by the 2008 shooting at Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church in Knoxville. The church was targeted because they were/are welcoming to LGBTQ people and did/do have a liberal stance on many issues. The Knoxville UU church community responded with an outpouring of love that inspired the UUA to launch the *Standing on the Side of Love* campaign in 2009, with the goal of harnessing love’s power to challenging exclusion, oppression, and violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, race, religion, or any other identity. <http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/147261.shtml>

By 2010, the UUA began the tradition of re-imagining Valentine’s Day as a social justice holiday. Starting in 2012, this event has evolved into the “Thirty Days of Love”—a month-long spiritual journey and commitment to sustained action and service. This seems to me to be the perfect way to re-imagine not only Valentine’s Day but the often dreary month of February as well. To learn more about how *Standing on the Side of Love* manifests in local communities, watch this video about the Love People: <http://youtu.be/LIN4VSM5K2Q> .

Happy Valentine’s Day
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.**

Once again the Evaluation/Needs Survey will be completed during February prior to the canvass visits. It will be presented in a very easy to use computerized, web-based format through a free program called SurveyMonkey so watch your emails! (Those who do not have a computer/web access will be provided with a paper copy.) In March, canvassers will visit members and friends. The survey results will be discussed and financial pledges, for the Fellowship's 2015 -16 Program Year, will 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."*

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 February is *"Alias Grace"* by Margaret Atwood. Future selections will be discussed at the February meeting. Everyone is welcome to come out and join the discussion, whether you've read the book or not.

Men's Group: Next Men's Group is being hosted by Dan Danner in Port Huron on February 1st- Super Bowl Sunday starting at 4 pm. Please confirm that you can join us by contacting Dan and also Dwayne (doneill@cogeco.ca) for car pooling arrangements.

Women's Circle: Information on gatherings is distributed by Annette Verhagen. Please contact Annette for further information. 519-384-8549. February's event will be attending the 8th annual "Empty Bowls" event at Lambton College - 5:00 p.m. seating.

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

Mid-Winter Retreat - Our annual CUC Mid-winter Retreat is February 5-8, 2015 in Bolton, ON. Following is the website address:
<http://uumidwinterretreat.blogspot.ca/>

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”.



Please join us at our next UU Conversation Salon.

Topic: *Can we be good without God?*

Time & Date: 7 pm, Thursday, February 12, 2015

Location: Home of Christy & Evan Plommer, 117 Forsyth St. S., Sarnia

Please contact Ann to reserve your spot - 519-542-9708 or asteadman@cogeco.ca .

Save the Date! CUC Visioning Workshop – Sunday April 22, 2015

1:00 – 2:30 pm

What are your hopes for Canadian Unitarian Universalism? The CUC Board of Trustees wants to hear your thoughts and dreams for the future of our faith community. We want to lead with a vision of *what could be*, gathered through intentional conversation with congregations, communities and affiliates. What kind of world do we - as people of the chalice - want to create?

To that end, the Board has developed a **Vision for the Future** workshop to hear from congregations and other UU communities. Conversations are happening from coast to coast. In this 1 1/2 hour interactive workshop, we will reflect on some statements of intention that might shape our collective vision. What can Unitarian Universalism offer the world?

After the Board receives feedback, a task force will meet to consider what our collective vision might be. Are we aiming for a country shaped by love and justice? Do we envision a planet of healthy interdependence? The task force will update us all at the May ACM and the process will continue on in the fall. Our voices matter. Please join the conversation.

Other News

Website: Please check out our new Website <http://www.unitarian.sarnia.com/>
Many thanks to Christy Plommer, our “webmaster”, for creating such an attractive new online home for the Fellowship!

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/> .

Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)

Canada’s new Anti-Spam legislation came into effect on July 1, 2014, primarily targeting Commercial Electronic Messages (CEMs).

Church congregations are advised to take a cautionary approach to ensure that consent has been obtained from all those to whom electronic communications are sent. Consent may be either implied or expressed.

As you know, our Fellowship distributes our regular newsletter monthly by e-mail to members and friends as well as others who have asked to receive it.

Anyone, other than members and friends will now be required to provide express written consent by signing the form recently developed for that purpose.

Each issue of the newsletter will also contain information regarding how to “unsubscribe” at any time should you wish to do so.

To clarify, following are the steps we have taken to date and we do believe they comply with the new legislation:

- Reviewed and synchronized our Fellowship distribution lists.
- Contacted those for whom an express consent was required.
- Developed a form for those who are not “members” or “friends” of the Fellowship to sign when they wish to subscribe to our newsletter and/or weekly reminders.
- Added an “unsubscribe” option to newsletter and reminder emails.

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