

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"

May 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)



May Services:

May 3: **“Making Democracy Work Again!” Guest Speaker Bob Sutton.**
Service Leader Allan McKeown

Our 5th. Principle highlights *“the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large”*. It is a Principle we tend to take for granted and do not pay it a lot of attention. Certainly, when it comes to politics many of us feel discouraged, disenchanted, disempowered, or disinterested. Bob Sutton is a retired teacher and a member of SAMARA, a non-partisan Canadian organization dedicated to engaging citizens in restoring the *“democratic process”* as a component of a healthy democracy.

He will share his passion for “healthy, engaging democracy” and share examples of SAMARA initiatives, including one that is beginning to flourish right here in Sarnia-Lambton called *“DEMOCRACY TALKS”*.

May 10: **“Mothers Day”** Service Leader Wendy Starr

Today Wendy will share a story about her Mothers wish for her and how, if you pay attention, sometimes things really do come around full circle to where you began. What was your Mothers wish for you?

May 17: **“6th Principle- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all”** Service Leader Wendy Starr

This is a very lofty goal that we affirm. As Meg Barnhouse writes *“Everyone who has raised children knows that peace is often at odds with liberty and that justice demands a disturbance of the peace. To put those three together in one Principle is outrageous and lovely.”* Now add world community to the mix and we may be wondering, where do we start?

May 24: **“Live your way, die your way: an introduction to alternatives in end of life care”** Guest Speaker Ellen Newman. Service Leader Sharon MacKay

Ellen is a student of the Funeral Service Education program at Humber College, and a graduate of the Contemplative End of Life Care program at the Institute of Traditional Medicine in Toronto. She is a former Lay Chaplain with the Unitarian Congregation in Mississauga, and she has a keen interest in death care and end-of-life alternatives. She is the co-host of the Halton Hills Death Café, along with Marion Willms, a thana doula practicing in the Guelph area.

May 31: **“The Spirituality of Humanism” Guest Speaker Dr. Rod Martin.** Service Leader Christy Plommer

Dr. Rod Martin has been a professor of clinical psychology at the University of Western Ontario since 1984, and is currently the President of the Humanist Association of London and Area. He will discuss the origins and principles of Humanism, and will explore the concept of spirituality from a Humanist perspective. He will also briefly relate his own spiritual journey from Evangelical Christianity to Humanism.



President's Message

Executive Team Highlights from April 16th, 2015 Meeting

Survey & Canvass: Of the 46 surveys distributed some 31 replies were received (67% return rate). Some 22 members and friends were canvassed. Pledges total \$15,510. Many thanks to Canvass Co-Chairs Bill Franks and Wendy Starr and our other Canvassers!

Webpage: It was agreed that some Sunday service presentations will be posted on the Fellowship's website.

Religious Exploration: A potential candidate for the Children's R.E. Coordinator/Teacher position has been identified.

Finance: As of the end of March, we are continuing to show a net budget surplus. Dwayne O'Neill and Chuck MacKenzie have agreed to audit the books for the 2014-15 Program Year.

Membership: We currently have 43 Members and 8 official Friends. *(as of April 26th)*

Program: Presenters and Service Leaders for May have been confirmed. Lori Kyle is interested in becoming a regular guest minister. Lori is being ordained this spring and has a half time position with the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Durham.

Social Justice: As a Fellowship we will need to determine a new Social Justice focus for 2015-16.

Lay Chaplains: May 6th is an important day for 2 of our lay-chaplains. Allan will be the MC for Bluewater Health's Memorial Wall Dedication Services at the Holiday Inn at 11am and 2pm. At 7 pm, Wendy is representing us at the Inn of the Good Shepherd's inter-faith service which will be held at Grace United Church. As for Bill Franks, he will be attending Lay Chaplaincy training entitled "Hatch, Match and Dispatch: A Workshop for Lay Chaplains Focusing on Officiating at Other Ceremonies and Rituals". This will happen during the Canadian Unitarian Council's Annual Conference and Meeting in Ottawa from May 15 - 17, 2015.

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 May 21, 2015.**



May Reflection ... More Thoughts on Spring

Last month my "Reflection" focused on the meaning of Spring and new possibilities. Just prior to preparing this 'President's Report' I checked my emails only to find this wonderful quote about Spring from the *Daily Compass*.



Spring teaches me to look more carefully for the green stems of possibility, for the intuitive hunch that may turn into a larger insight, for the glance or touch that may thaw a frozen relationship, for the stranger's act of kindness that makes the world seem hospitable again. —Parker Palmer

Where in your life do you see the green stems of possibility?

I have been enjoying and resonating with morning messages from *The Daily Compass* for some time but could not remember who produces the reflections. A quick Google search gave me the answer. Well I should have guessed! *The Daily Compass* comes from [The Church of the Larger Fellowship](http://www.dailycompass.org/), the Unitarian Universalist Congregation Without Walls. If you too would like to subscribe please go to <http://www.dailycompass.org/> .

In Fellowship,
Ann

Recent Happenings

The **Special Membership Meeting** of Sunday April 19th was well attended. Many thanks to Dwayne O'Neill for his excellent *Investment Options Team* report.

The **End of Life Planning Workshop** held on Wednesday April 22nd attracted some 48 participants. The presentation around *Advance Care Planning* was very positively received.

Highlights from the Annual General Meeting of Sunday April 26th include the following:

- The Fellowship's Constitution and by-Laws were revised. The amended document will be sent to the Canada Revenue Agency.
- The budget approved for the 2015-16 Program Year will draw from past surpluses in order to separate out the Lay Chaplaincy Program, increase the number of services led by visiting ministers and to hire a Children's R.E. Coordinator/Teacher.
- The new Executive Team (serving from July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016) will consist of: Ann Steadman (President), Dwayne O'Neill (Vice-President), Wendy Cornelis (Past President), Dan Danner and Mark Woolston (Co-Treasurers), Joanne Alexander (Secretary), Wendy Starr (Program Chair), Annette Verhagen (Membership Chair) and Mary Marg McGrail (R.E. Chair). Many thanks to Sharon MacKay for being the Membership Chair for two years and for her ongoing efforts as lead of the Caring Committee.

CALL TO ACTION: KIVA Investment Initiative:

At the 2015 Annual General Meeting, members of the Fellowship approved the idea of investing \$2,000.00 with KIVA, a microfinance initiative. The next step is to form a small team to plan and implement this idea over the next few months. Please contact Dwayne O'Neill if you would be interested in being a part of this team.

Upcoming Events:

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 May is "Wild" by Cheryl Strayed. This book has also been made into a major motion picture starring Reese Witherspoon. In June, we will be reviewing a book suggested to us by Allan "Waking Up - A Guide to Spirituality without Religion" by Sam Harris and July's book is "Annabel" by Kathleen Winter, a 2014 "Canada Reads" selection and a Scotiabank Giller Prize finalist. Everyone is welcome to come out and join the discussion, whether you've read the book or not.

Men's Group: Details of the May men's group gathering have not been finalized and will be announced at a later date.

Women's Circle: On Tuesday, May 19th at 7:00 p.m. ladies will gather at the home of Zena Graf on Bright Street for a Movie and Discussion evening. Thank you Zena.

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.



Other News

Summer Services: The end of our program year is fast approaching and once again, the summer will feature more casual Sunday services covering topics that you have submitted or suggested. Once again, Sharon MacKay has volunteered (thank you Sharon) to coordinate those services, so please let her know if there is a topic you are particularly interested in and would like to discuss.

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!

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

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