



The Flaming Chalice

February 2025

Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia & Port Huron

Lochiel Kiwanis Centre, 180 College Ave. N. Sarnia, Ontario uusarnia.com

A loving community of spiritual explorers who stand on the side of love and justice

February Services

In-person & via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83101536641>

Theme—Active Engagement



*Spirituality is all about
honoring the human journey,
loving it and living it in all its
wonder and tragedy.*

Richard Rohr

February 02: “Rabbie Burns Celebration” – Brad Gray

Through the spoken word and through music, Brad along with Helen Curtis, Maria Beauchamp and Steve Lane will celebrate Robert Burns, the national poet of Scotland. Burns was born on 25 January 1759 and was also known familiarly as Rabbie Burns.

February 09: “Sarnia: Opportunities & Challenges for 2025” - Mayor Mike Bradley

Mayor Mike will give us his thoughts on what 2025 holds for the City of Sarnia. Come with questions for Mike.

February 16: “Beyond the Bedside: Comprehensive Approaches to End-of-Life Care” – Jenn Vogtmann, OTD, OTRL

Jenn will explore the diverse role of a death doula, emphasizing how the work goes beyond bedside support to encompass preplanning, education, grief assistance, and community outreach. She will highlight the importance of creating compassionate environments for individuals and families as they navigate the end-of-life journey.

February 23: “Understanding My Grief” – St. Joseph’s Hospice Representative TBA

This presentation will cover knowledge of the grief process, what factors affect our grief, grieving styles and finally how to support grief.

This will also be ‘Soup Sunday’!

**For the theme packet on ‘Active Engagement’, contact
Ann Steadman at asteadman@cogeco.ca .**

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Sermon on Active Engagement January 26, 2025

Prophets of Love: Active Engagement in a Time of Polycrisis

Due to scheduling issues, this pre-recorded talk by Reilly Yeo was used on January 26th rather than Feb 2nd.

Reilly, a candidate for Ministry with the Unitarian Universalist Association, describes her talk as follows: “We're called in this time of climate crisis not just to change our world, but to transform it. In the process, we will need to transform ourselves. Climate change is a wake-up call that heralds the urgency of our third principle as Unitarian Universalists - spiritual growth.”



Here are the organizations mentioned in Reilly's presentation:

Common Horizon

At Common Horizon, we are building a mass movement of everyday people. We come together to take power away from the billionaire class and win solutions to the climate crisis that secure good jobs, address affordability and ensure a dignified life for all.

<https://commonhorizoncommun.org/en>

Neighbours United

Our team is focused on innovative and inclusive solutions to keep your community healthy and safe. By developing the leadership and skills of your community we believe we can all live well together.

<https://neighboursunited.org/>

Reconnection Project

Connecting you to neighbours, nature and local events. At the Reconnection Project, we make it easier to build community connections, learn about local events, and explore nature in regions across Ontario.

<https://environmentaldefence.ca/reconnect/>

My Climate Plan

My Climate Plan is a membership community and platform to help you do the most effective things you can do to defend what you love and stop runaway climate change.

<https://myclimateplan.com/>

“Riding the Red Wave: November 10 Update” – Susan Raffo

A blog about a walk across the USA during the 2024 election.

[Riding the red wave: November 10 update — Susan Raffo](#)

Locally, keep in mind **Climate Action Sarnia-Lambton**: We are a group of citizens of Sarnia and Lambton County who share a common concern about the harmful impact of human activities on the sustainability and health of the Earth's ecosystem and want to effect change.

<https://www.climateactionsarnialambton.ca/>

Reflection by President Tracy Jutras

Executive Team Report: January 2025 Highlights

- Our Christmas Poinsettia outreach was warmly received by those who live on their own.
- Our yearly cheque to the Inn of the Good Shepherd was given in December for \$1,250.
- Donation receipts have been distributed for the 2024 tax year.
- In May, our Celebrant Steve Lane will be retiring after 8 years of service. If anyone is interested in performing ceremonies for weddings and other life events, please speak with an Executive member.
- Our first pub night of the year was held at Maud's Variety on January 25th, and we all had a wonderful time.
- Our AGM date has been set for April 27th and will take place after our service. It will also coincide with Soup Sunday, so there are two great reasons to stay.
- Next year marks the 70th year of our Fellowship, and we want to celebrate. Stay tuned for more information.

February Theme: Active Engagement

Our theme for this month is Active Engagement and how we are working towards a more just and compassionate society. This is very appropriate as we are witnessing huge changes in the U.S. with incoming President Trump. Even though he is turning the clock backwards on paper, remember that it doesn't erase the gains made in society's acceptance and empathy for people from our diverse community over the years, in particular, the Transgender and Nonbinary.

What is happening with our American neighbours reaffirms our Unitarian Universalist principles, specifically the first two: the inherent worth and dignity of every person and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. Let's continue to make love our life's work and support our LGBTQ community even more.

In Fellowship, Tracy Jutras

"To my trans non-binary intersex or gender diverse beloveds: lean in. Lean In. I love you. I love you. I love you. Please do not leave the space without feeling my love and the love of others Who see you as divine. I love you. You are divine. I love you. You are Holy. I love you. You know who you are. I love you. You are worthy of being whoever you need to be to survive and thrive in this world. I love you and I will say it for 50 seconds if I need to. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. Love you. I love you. Do not leave the space without knowing that you are loved. if you Need a reminder, call me, email me, text me. what we will Not do in this space is let you go another moment, believing anything other than the fact that you are loved."

- Rev. JeKaren Bell (UUA General Assembly 2024)



Quotes on 'Active Engagement' To Ponder

Taking action is the best way to live in conditions of crisis and violation, for your spirit and your conscience as well as for society.

- **Rebecca Solnit**

Every morning, I awake torn between a desire to save the world and an inclination to savor it. This makes it hard to plan the day. But if we forget to savor the world, what possible reason do we have for saving it? In a way, the savoring must come first.

- **E.B. White**

Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us.

- **Robin Wall Kimmerer**

We don't know that it's too late. It's in the doing and trying that we define that we're a species that's worthy. We've got to act because that is our hope.

- **David Suzuki**

Much of the oxygen we breathe comes from plants that died long ago. We can give thanks to these ancestors of our present-day foliage, but we can't give back to them. We can, however, give forward. When we are unable to return the favor, we can pay it forward to someone or something else. Using this approach, we can see ourselves as part of a larger flow of giving and receiving throughout time. Receiving from the past, we can give to the future. When tackling issues such as climate change, the stance of gratitude is a refreshing alternative to guilt or fear as a source of motivation.

- **Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone**

The only way to approach such a period — where uncertainty is very large and one cannot predict what the future holds— is not to predict, but to act inventively and exuberantly in diverse, adventures in living and experiment.

- **Buzz Holling**

There's a song that wants to sing itself through us. We just got to be available. Maybe the song that is to be sung through us is the most beautiful requiem for

an irreplaceable planet or maybe it's a song of joyous rebirth as we create a new culture that doesn't destroy its world. But in any case, there's ab-

solutely no excuse for our making our passionate love for our world dependent on what we think of its degree of health, whether we think it's going to go on forever. Those are just thoughts anyway. But this moment you're alive, so you can just dial up the magic of that at any time.

- **Joanna Macy**

Your no makes the way for your yes. Boundaries create the container within which your yes is authentic. Being able to say no makes yes a choice.

- **adrienne maree brown**

The planet already contains all the wisdom of the universe, as do you and I. It has the ability to recover built into its DNA and we have the ability to change what we are doing so this can happen.

- **Christi Belcourt**

We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you the path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing.

- **Murray Sinclair**



Fellowship Happenings/Opportunities



Sunday, February 23rd is Soup Sunday!

Plan to stay after the service to enjoy a delicious lunch and wonderful conversation.

Suggested donation is \$5 per individual or \$10 per family.

All proceeds to The Inn of the Good Shepherd.

Death Café

Your Executive agreed back on November 27, 2024 to support a 'Death Café' open to the community. Allan McKeown has agreed to lead this effort. Volunteers from the Fellowship are needed to make this happen.

At a Death Cafe people drink tea, eat cake and discuss death. The aim is to increase awareness of death and to help people make the most of their (finite) lives.

Please contact Allan if willing to help.

allanmck@protonmail.com

Death Cafe

Talking about death won't kill you.

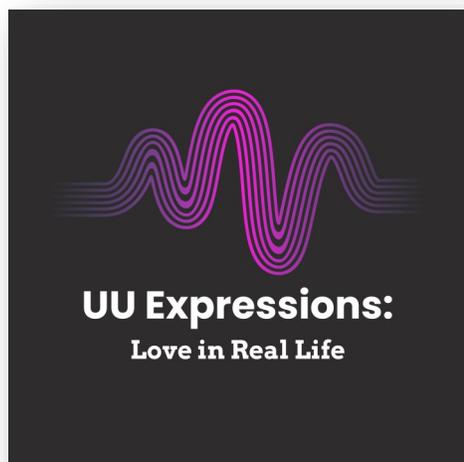


Fellowship Annual General Meeting

As agreed upon by the current Executive on January 22nd, the AGM is set for Sunday, April 27th following the service.

Please plan to attend and make your voice heard!

UU Expressions: Love in Real Life



The conversation is starting – Don't be left behind!

What does bringing Unitarian Universalist (UUism) values to life in Canada in 2025 mean? How can we embrace the diversity of our faith while imagining a sustainable future together? These big questions drive *UU Expressions: Love in Real Life*, a 10-episode docu-podcast series that uncovers, celebrates, and challenges how UUism is expressed nationwide.

Hello from Erin Horvath and Amber Bellemare

We're the Canadian Unitarian Council's (CUC) Justice and Equity team and are excited to share this series with you. As we plan for the future of UUism in Canada, our staff team began wondering: *Can we sustain a movement that allows diverse people to shape diverse expressions of UUism beyond congregational life? And if so, what does this mean for our shared national identity?*

We interviewed 27 Unitarian Universalists involved in 17 different UU expressions to find answers. Their stories reveal how UUism is flourishing (or facing challenges), and what the CUC can do to nurture a larger vision of our movement. [Listen here](#)

Get informed, get inspired, get involved!

This series will bring you up to speed on what's happening across the country RIGHT NOW and how it all connects to the bigger picture. *UU Expressions: Love in Real Life* is just the beginning of a vital conversation.



Who is willing to co-create what comes next?

What to Expect from the Podcast

Each episode dives into a key theme shaping UUism today. While you can enjoy the episodes as stand-alone stories, we encourage listening to the whole series in order to experience the journey we're presenting.

This series is more than a collection of stories; *it's a call to action. As Unitarian Universalists, it's easy to focus on the challenges within our communities, but this series reminds us that **we are part of something bigger.** Together, we can harness UUism's collective energy to survive and thrive.*

Episode 1: Wildflowers A comparison of a UU congregation, an online meme community, and a daily singing group introduces the idea of diverse UU expressions.

Episode 2: The Gap Examines the contrasts between congregational culture and young adult culture and what these differences mean for the future of UUism.

Episode 3: The Bridge Explores how intergenerational UU communities can bridge cultural gaps and foster a stronger, long-lasting faith organization.

Episode 4: Authenticity Highlights the value and challenges of authentic connection.

Episode 5: Proximity Focuses on how geography and ministry practices shape relationships within and beyond UU communities.

Episode 6: Community Ministry Celebrates how UU values are harnessed to create meaningful change in local communities.

Episode 7: Money Tackles beliefs, systems, and challenges related to money.

Episode 8: Potential Investigate how sustainable revenue streams can unlock the potential of community ministries.

Episode 9: Art or Artifact? Questions what it means to innovate while staying true to UUism's core values.

Episode 10: Goosebumps Explores the role of the CUC in supporting and amplifying the collective energy of UUism in Canada.

"This series is thought-provoking, provocative and necessary. I was drawn in, listening deeply and challenging many of my assumptions and practices. Some of the content and questions will be uncomfortable. That's okay; we can work through that discomfort together. Engage with this series as you go about your day. Listen (or watch) with open hearts and minds. The people interviewed shared their truths, perceptions, and vulnerabilities, and I thank them for their willingness and wisdom. Ask yourself, "What if..?" "How can I/we...?" "If we did that instead...?" as you imagine a thriving future for Unitarian Universalism and your part in co-creating it." - **Vyda Ng, CUC Executive Director**



Hi, Brad Gray here from our Fellowship:

I have listened to the first three episodes of the "Love in Real Life" podcast. Two of the episodes, about engagement between older and younger adults, drew my attention. Listening to them helped me better understand how diverse young adults' interests are and what might attract them to join community organizations. Having experienced the excitement of belonging to an age diverse group, I want more of it.

No Matter Who Wins—An assemblage poem by Rebecca Faulkner

I won't give up
 wave to passing cars embrace
 to less news & more music
 No matter who wins
 I will live lightly on the land
 those closest to me listen
 stand up
 for what I believe in
 I will continue
 to fight
 solar panels will keep generating electricity
 No matter who wins
 I will still ride my bike
 share my story
 keep working for justice & human rights
 I will continue
 through animation & music to decarbonize my
 community
 to restore the wildlife habitat where I live
 No matter who wins
 make kindness my priority
 I will advocate for individuals living with mental
 illness
 be the best grandmother
 No matter who wins I will champion reproductive
 rights
 with respect & kindness
 be mindful of water usage
 treat others I'll continue to fight
 advocate for gender equality
 help build a more peaceful world be respectful of
 others
 No matter who wins I will support my family friends
 & neighbors
 speak
 with respect & empathy
 champion humility

No matter who wins I will smile at people
 I won't hide
 from difficult things
 I will stay positive
 organize for peace racial equity & social justice
 I will continue
 I will show up
 to plant trees
 No matter who wins
 make art
 continue to love
 No matter who wins



Rebecca is a London-born poet based in Brooklyn. The author of *Permit Me to Write My Own Ending*, (Write Bloody Publishing, 2023) her work appears in *New York Quarterly*, *The Maine Review*, *The Poetry Society of New York*, *CALYX Press*, *Berkeley Poetry Review*, and elsewhere.

'No Matters Who Wins' reprinted from the 'Active Engagement' theme package.

Episcopal Bishop of Washington Sermon

On January 21, 2025, the bishop of Washington delivered a sermon in front of President Trump urging him to show mercy towards LGBTQ+ and migrant communities. The president condemned it as 'nasty'.



The Right Rev Mariann Edgar Budde delivering her sermon at the national prayer service at Washington National Cathedral.

Prior to addressing the President directly, the prelate described the "Foundations of Unity":

"The first foundation for unity is honoring the inherent dignity of every human being..."

A second foundation for unity is honesty in both private conversation and public discourse...

A third foundation for unity is humility, which we all need, because we are all fallible human beings..."

The Right Rev ended her homily as follows:

Let me make one final plea, Mr. President. Millions have put their trust in you. As you told the nation yesterday, you have felt the providential hand of a loving God. In the name of our God, I ask you to have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now. There are transgender children in Democratic, Republican and independent families who fear for their lives.

And the people who pick our crops and clean our office buildings; who labor in our poultry farms and meat-packing plants; who wash the dishes after we eat in restaurants and work the night shift in hospitals – they may not be citizens or have the proper documentation, but the vast majority of immigrants are not criminals. They pay taxes, and are good neighbors. They are faithful members of our church-

es, mosques and synagogues, gurdwara, and temples.

Have mercy, Mr. President, on those in our communities whose children fear that their parents will be taken away. Help those who are fleeing war zones and persecution in their own lands to find compassion and welcome here. Our God teaches us that we are to be merciful to the stranger, for we were once strangers in this land.

May God grant us all the strength and courage to honor the dignity of every human being, speak the truth in love, and walk humbly with one another and our God, for the good of all the people of this nation and the world."

Click on the below link to read the entire sermon.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/jan/24/bishop-mariann-edgar-budde-sermon-that-enraged-donald-trump>

Love, which might be called the attraction of all things toward all things, is a universal language and underlying energy that keeps showing itself despite our best efforts to resist it. It is so simple that it is hard to teach in words, yet we all know it when we see it. There is not a Native, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Islamic, or Christian way of loving. There is not a Methodist, Lutheran, or Catholic way of running a soup kitchen. There is not a gay or straight way of being faithful, nor a Black or Caucasian way of hoping. We all know positive flow when we see it, and we all know resistance and coldness when we feel it. All the rest are mere labels.

Richard Rohr

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Press Release



From the UUA President: Fierce Love Compels Us To Action

By Sofía Betancourt

January 23, 2025

Fam, Family, Familia,

There are mornings when I wake with a deep need for wisdom that comes from sources beyond my own individual self – times when the struggle toward justice and the next faithful action eludes me and I find myself grateful that I am able to turn to the larger community, the legacy of my ancestors, and the shared values of our faith tradition that I hold dear.

I wonder if, like me, you have experienced such mornings over the course of the last week – rising to the knowledge that we cannot do this alone. The extraordinary good news, even amid so much pain, is that we don't have to.

Each and all of us is in fact a vital part of the fabric of this nation, deeply beloved and deserving of protection, safety, and belonging.

We should not need to repeat the basic truth that Trans people exist in this world. That our Transgender and Nonbinary beloveds – my family and yours – are not only real, but sacred. That each and all of us is in fact a vital part of the fabric of this nation, deeply beloved and deserving of protection, safety, and belonging. That Earth itself cries out for restitution, and we must not turn away from the fight for climate justice. I send love upon love to the interconnected family that we are for one another, knowing that none of us goes it alone in these destabilizing and complex times. We are real. We are here. Together, in all the ways we can be. And we will remain committed to the struggle ahead and the future we will make together.

As the executive orders rolled out of the office of the US President on Monday, we witnessed the attempted unravelling of decades of work for a more fair and free nation. Among the documents signed this week was an unconstitutional executive order challenging the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution, which enshrines the right of citizenship to those born in the United States. Passed in 1868, the 14th Amendment has been the lasting bulwark against the Jim Crow laws designed to dehumanize Black communities in the South.

These executive orders pave the way for large-scale deportations, the separation of families, and the unjust exercise of power in ways we can expect and ways we will discover in the years to come. We know they are already being challenged in the courts. Our work must be to challenge the bad theologies and oppressive systems that support them.

I am the daughter of immigrants. Both countries of my parents' heritage – Chile and Panamá – have been held under the control of US trained dictators. This shapes my analysis, as do all our relationships, identities, and commitments. And I know that for many of us, these new executive orders do not contain abstract human rights violations, but very real harm that will impact us and those we love in our daily living.

We Unitarian Universalists are people with diverse identities, stories, and experiences. Yet we are personally, theologically, and covenantally bound together by the expansive Love that has always been the animating center of our faith. Far more powerful than any faction, leader, nation, or creed, it is this fierce Love that compels our deepest loyalty and our most courageous action. And it is this Love that moves through and between us, enabling us to nurture wisdom, guidance, courage, and grounding in ourselves and in one another.

We must respond with action. I encourage you to reach out to your local communities, support organizations that are long established in the fight for justice, and make your voices heard. Together we can build a future where love and justice reign.

In these days I send my love and solidarity – to each of you and to your families, communities, and organizing networks. To our faith, our nation, and the world. May that love take the form of courageous and faithful resistance and renewed commitment, today and in the days and years to come.

With faith and renewed purpose,

Sofia

Resources for Taking Action

[Support the Pink Haven Coalition](#). Founded and led by 2STGE+ organizers, the Pink Haven Coalition has built an international mutual-aid network that provides life-saving aid to those living under hostile governments in the U.S.

[Support the We Are Home Campaign](#). Over 20 immigrant-led coalitions have come together to deliver a clear message rooted in each person's undeniable humanity and worth—We are Home. Learn how you can support their concrete demands and intersectional organizing strategy.



Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) Statement

Showing up Together: Affirming Transgender and Nonbinary Communities

January 21, 2025

As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, we are deeply concerned by recent actions in the United States that undermine the rights and dignity of transgender and nonbinary individuals. The Executive Orders issued on January 20, 2025, which limit federal recognition to only two sexes and dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, represent a significant setback for human rights and equality.



In response, we reaffirm our continued support for transgender and nonbinary people, both within our congregations and in the broader society. We recognize and honour the full spectrum of gender identities and expressions, understanding that each person's identity is valid and deserving of respect.

Our faith calls us to uphold the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We commit to:

- **Advocacy:** Actively opposing policies and actions that discriminate against transgender and nonbinary individuals.
- **Education:** Providing resources and learning opportunities to deepen understanding of gender diversity within our communities.
- **Support:** Creating and maintaining safe, inclusive spaces where all individuals can express their true selves without fear of judgment or persecution.

We declare our unwavering solidarity with those affected by these regressive policies and pledge to work towards a world where every person, regardless of gender identity or expression, is treated with fairness, compassion, and respect.

This statement aligns with the principles and past actions of the CUC, including the 2019 and 2023 reaffirmation of commitment to trans and nonbinary individuals and the support shown by Canadian Unitarian Universalists in various initiatives.

In faith and love,
Canadian Unitarian Council's National Voice Team

The CUC's National Voice Team: UU Ministers of Canada Co-Presidents Rev. Samaya Oakley & Rev. Ben Robins; CUC Board Co-Presidents Margaret Kohr & Rev. Debra Faulk, and Executive Director Vyda Ng.





Vision

***As a spiritual community,
We embrace diversity,
We explore openly,
We stand on the side of love and justice.
Community ... Spirituality ... Service***



Other UU links:

Canadian Unitarian Council <https://cuc.ca/>

Unitarian Universalist Association's UUWorld <http://www.uuworld.org/>

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