



The Flaming Chalice

November 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

November Services

In-person & via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88027173751>

November 2: 'Celebrate the Past - Plan for the Future' – Allan McKeown

Social justice has always been at the forefront of UUism. Today we will look back on our Fellowship's social justice activities and celebrate our successes as we also look to the future. Let us consider "What can we do now or in the near future that might make a difference"? A discussion circle will follow the presentation. **Clocks go ahead 1 hour!**

November 9: 'Learning from Ancestors' – Rev. Lynn Harrison

Many of our ancestors lived through times of great upheaval. What can the practice of learning from our ancestor's experiences offer us right now? Lynn speaks to us by video in this year's Meaning Making series, "Meeting this moment with love and justice."

November 16: 'The Legion Past and Future' – Les Jones

Les, President of the Sarnia Legion, will provide a brief outline about the evolution of Remembrance Day and the use of the poppy by the Royal Canadian Legion. He will also discuss the importance of continuing to care for our veterans and ensure that their sacrifices are not forgotten.

November 23: 'Do you believe in magic?' – Brendan Wiley

How does one become an "Einstein of Magic"? Join Brendan Wiley as he details the life of Stewart James, Lambton County's most prolific magician.

November 30: 'West Lambton Community Health Centre'

– Rebecca Everaert

Rebecca will present on what a Community Health Centre is and the valuable work they do in offering Primary Care & Health Promotion, rooted in community through collaboration and innovation. Special focus will include some current programs/supports that may be of interest.

Theme:

'Learning From Our Ancestors'



"We're all ghosts. We all carry inside us, people who came before us."

Liam Callanan

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Meaning Making Service #2—November 9—Learning From Ancestors**November 9 - 'Learning from Ancestors'*****Presenter: Rev. Lynn Harrison***

Lynn Harrison was ordained at Neighbourhood UU Congregation in 2015 after receiving her Master of Divinity degree from Emmanuel College at the University of Toronto. She served on the ministry team of First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto from 2016 to 2023, and currently provides guest ministry for Unitarian congregations in the Toronto area. Lynn is also a performing songwriter with deep roots in the Canadian folk music tradition and has composed numerous songs for UU communities.



Reflection by Board President Tracy Jutras

Our theme for this month is the Practice of Learning from our Ancestors' Experiences.

As the days grow shorter and the light fades earlier, we enter a sacred season that invites reflection, remembrance, and reverence. Across cultures and faith traditions, this time of year has long been recognized as a moment when the veil between the living and the dead feels especially thin—a time to honour those who came before us.

Throughout November, many spiritual paths call us to remembrance.

-In the Christian calendar, **All Souls' Day** on November 2 invites prayer and reflection for loved ones who have passed.

-In Mexico and beyond, **Día de los Muertos** bursts forth in colour and celebration—altars adorned with marigolds, candles, and photographs as families gather to share stories and meals with the spirits of their ancestors.

-In Celtic pagan tradition, **Samhain** marks the end of the harvest and the turning of the year, a liminal time when it is said that the boundary between worlds grows thin, and the wisdom of our ancestors can be felt more clearly.

-Here in Canada, we observe **Remembrance Day**, when we pause to honour those who gave their lives in war—our country's ancestors—whose courage, sacrifice, and humanity continue to shape the freedoms we know today.

Each of these rituals, though born of different lands and beliefs, share a deep truth: that remembering is sacred work. To honour our ancestors is to acknowledge that we are part of something larger than ourselves—a living thread woven through generations of love, struggle, and hope.

In Unitarian Universalism, we draw wisdom from all faiths and from the human experience itself. This month, may we find our own ways to honour the past—by lighting a candle, telling a story, sharing their experiences, visiting a grave, or simply whispering gratitude for those who helped make us who we are. Each spring, I visit my grandparents' grave in Petrolia to clean their stone and place flowers around it, and again in the fall to remove them as autumn winds down. Over time, this simple act has become a cherished ritual—a quiet way of honouring and remembering Reg and Leola.

As the wheel of the year turns once more, may remembrance deepen our compassion and strengthen our sense of belonging—to one another, to history, and to the great unfolding mystery of life.

In Fellowship, Tracy Jutras



Missing Worker Memorial
Centennial Park, Sarnia

Quotes on “Learning From Our Ancestors” To Ponder

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave. I rise. I rise. I rise.

Maya Angelou

What has been an ancient spiritual truth is now increasingly verified by science: We are all indivisibly part of one another. We share a common ancestry with everyone and everything alive on earth. The air we breathe contains atoms that have passed through the lungs of ancestors long dead. Our bodies are composed of the same elements created deep inside the furnaces of long-dead stars. We can look upon the face of anyone or anything around us and say—as a moral declaration and a spiritual, cosmological, and biological fact: You are a part of me I do not yet know.

Richard Rohr

I try to practice in a way that allows me to touch my blood ancestors and my spiritual ancestors every day. Whenever I feel sad or a little fragile, I invoke their presence for support, and they never fail to be there.

Thich Nhat Hanh

The longer each of us lives, the greater the likelihood that we will absorb atoms that were once part of Joan of Arc and Jesus Christ, of Neanderthal people and woolly mammoths. As we have breathed in our forebears, so our grandchildren and their grandchildren will take us in with their breath. We are bound up inseparably with the past and the future by the spirit we share. Every breath is a sacrament, an affirmation of our connection with all other living things, a renewal of our link with our ancestors and a contribution to generations yet to come.

David Suzuki

Seeing a person or piece of creation trampled should always disrupt something in us. It should always do something to the soul. And when you trace that trampling back across generations and systems and powers, a quiet sorrow is born in you.

Cole Arthur Riley

So when I think of the land as my mother or if I think of it as a familial relationship, I don't hate my mother because she's sick, or because she's been abused. I don't stop visiting her because she's been in an abusive relationship and she has scars and bruises. If anything, you need to intensify that relationship because it's a relationship of nurturing and caring.

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Leanne Simpson

Some people are your relatives but others are your ancestors, and you choose the ones you want to have as

ancestors. You create yourself out of those values.

Ralph Ellison

Our ancestors do not dwell in the past, they dwell inside our brains as well as in every cell of our bodies. By giving our predecessors a place of honor in our hearts, we are acknowledging the gifts that have been given to us by them. No matter what definition you choose to identify your ancestors, finding ways to honor them can empower that place in yourself where your spirit dwells.

Denise Linn, *Sacred Legacies*

Walking, I am listening to a deeper way. Suddenly all my ancestors are behind me. Be still, they say. Watch and listen. You are the result of the love of thousands.

Linda Hogan



Fellowship Happenings

Death Café

Talking about death won't kill you.



Second Death Café

Sunday, November 16th at 4 pm

BackHome Coffee and Roastery

112 Christina St. S , Sarnia

Admission is free but pre-registration is required.

The purpose of Death Café is to bring people together to enjoy a coffee or tea and talk about issues around death and dying. The aim is to increase the awareness and acceptance of death so that people can make the most of their finite lives. There is no agenda and no product messaging - just sincere and respectful dialogue. For information on the roots of the global Death Café movement: <https://deathcafe.com>

Allan McKeown has reached out to the 33 people on his waiting list who have expressed an interest in coming to a second Death Café. "We received very good reviews from those who attended the first one and are looking forward to hosting a second one. One change we will make is to limit the number of participants. There were around 30 who attended in May and although that number was manageable, we would like to create an environment that is a bit more informal and relaxed. We have set a limit of 15 participants. If interest exceeds the limit of 15, we will aim to accommodate everyone by hosting a third Death Café in January or February."

Contact Allan McKeown, Facilitator, deathcafesarnia@proton.me

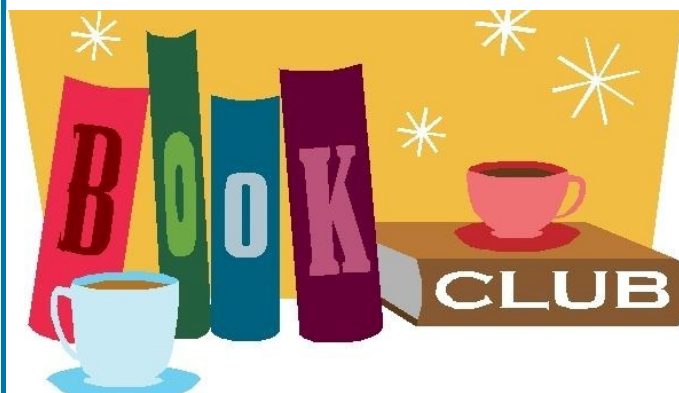
Book Club

In past years, this has been a popular group, and we're excited to begin again. Tracy Jutras will be leading the club. Registration, at ten, is now closed for the first meeting which will be held, via Zoom, on **Monday, Nov 17th at 2pm.**

The book, ***behind the beautiful forevers***, by Katherine Boo, will be discussed.

The Zoom link will be sent to the registered participants closer to the date.

Tracy is using a 'book kit' from the Lambton County Library. Please remember to return your copy to Tracy at Sunday service.



Ocean Legacy Follow-up Info



Thank you for hosting me on behalf of Ocean Legacy... For your congregants here is some follow-up information:

Ocean Legacy Foundation, a BC-based Canadian registered non-profit, with the mission of ending ocean plastic pollution: oceanlegacy.ca

EPIC Academy, a free online platform with 10 modules of Ocean Plastics education. Lessons run about 45-60 mins each, are accessible on any device (desktop, laptop, tablet, phone), designed for ages 14 to adult. Certificate of completion and full Teacher Download materials available for classroom educators. **Sign up either as a student** (*of this curriculum only, need not be at an educational institution*) **or as a Teacher.** [EpicAcademy.ca](https://epicacademy.ca)

Here is a public link for the PowerPoint from the October 5th presentation: [Ocean Legacy Foundation - EPIC Academy presentation to UU Sunday, Oct 5 2025](#)

I was warmly and genuinely welcomed by people and felt a deep, caring sense of community.

Kathryn Anderson



Midwinter Retreat 2026

Hi Fellow UU's:

I'm sending this email to inform Ontario congregations about the upcoming UU Midwinter Retreat, to be held at the Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre, just north of Toronto, this coming February.

This will be our 35th annual retreat and it is open to all. We're currently working on the details of the program, but we do have some information now:

The theme this year is "We Are All Interconnected," and we are delighted to announce that Rev. Wayne Walder will be our keynote speaker. Rev. Wayne was the minister at the Neighbourhood UU Congregation for over two decades. The weekend will follow the usual Midwinter format - the keynote presentation, choice of workshops, outdoor programs led by Cedar Glen staff, a Saturday night cabaret, games and euchre, and a Sunday service. We will also have an Art Show, organized by Lauren Renzetti – please let us know if you would like to sell your work at this show (e.g. arts/crafts/books, etc.)

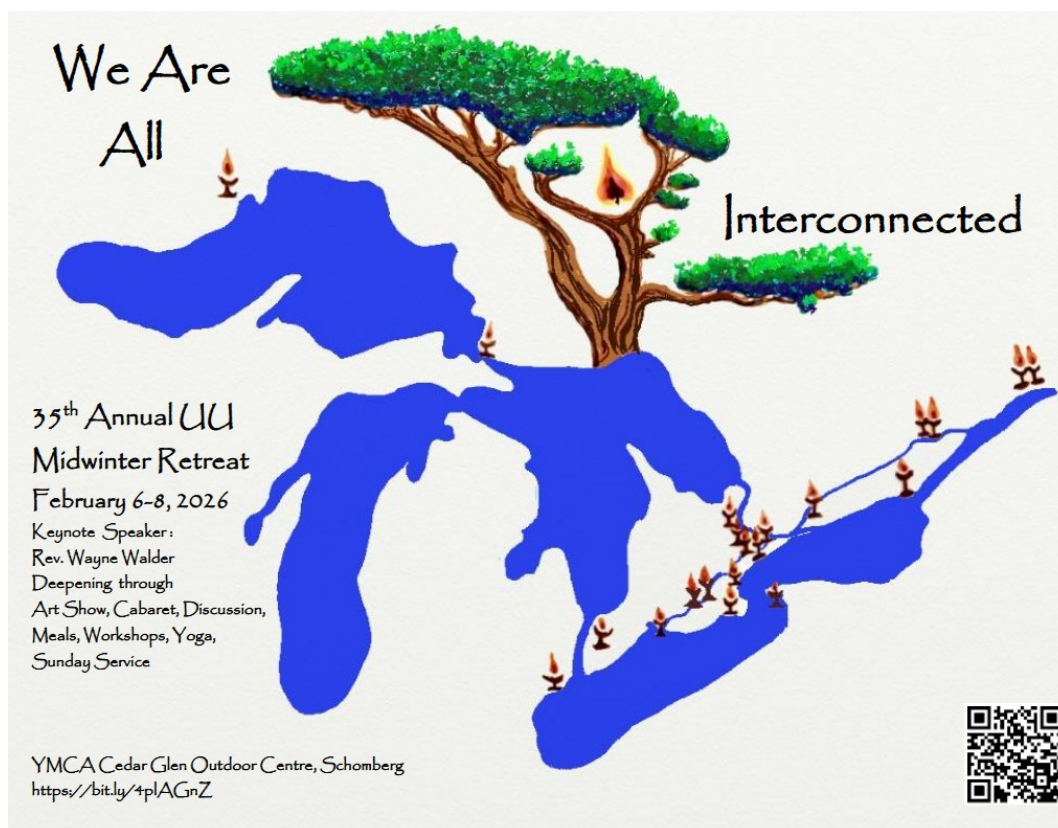
ALL Ontario Unitarians are most welcome at Midwinter – as well as any others who are interested, and people from outside Ontario if they wish to make the trip. Meeting people from other UU congregations is one of the great benefits of this event, and for some of us it is an opportunity to see Unicamp friends during the winter.

Suggestions for workshops are welcome, and registration information will be sent out in a few weeks. We also have a website and Facebook page, which will be updated as plans develop:

Website: <https://uumidwinterretreat.blogspot.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/uumwr>

Thanks! Roy Blake, Unitarian Congregation of Niagara, For the MWR Committee



Canadian Unitarian Council Programing for 2025-26



CUC Programming for the 2025-26 Year

CUC staff are excited to begin the 2025-2026 program year, adding new initiatives to existing popular programming. We outlined plans for the coming year in our recent [letter](#): here are some highlights of what we shared.

Recurring Programs: Rising Together, Connect & Deepen, Congregational Conversations, and Dismantling Barriers Events recur monthly. Details in eNews and on the [Events Calendar](#).

Join us for the CUC 2025 Fall Gathering – November 21-23! This year, we're connecting, learning, and co-creating our way forward in these transformative times. Come explore how our diverse communities fit together to live our UU values in real, meaningful ways. Through hands-on workshops, big conversations, and bold visions, we'll reflect, dream, and take action. Whether you feel steady, rooted, restless, or ready for something new— this weekend is for YOU. Let's explore the bigger picture, spark new ideas, and build connections that will carry us through the future! The weekend closes on Sunday with a [National Service: Turning Toward One Another](#), featuring Rev. Nicoline Guerrier and Camellia Jahanshahi. Programming is online, with in person satellites. Find out more and register [here](#).



We're excited to announce RAMP – the Reciprocal Annual Mentorship Program! Launching January–June 2026, RAMP is a bold, collaborative initiative from the Canadian Unitarian Council designed to help you RAMP UP your ideas, skills, connections and more by exploring sustainable, liberatory learning. This experimental 6-month pilot includes two parts: public skill-building sessions open to all, and a deeper intergenerational mentorship track for 16 selected participants (8 pairs) working together on real-time projects. Both are being designed as shareable, repeatable models.

Activating the Canadian UU Ecosystem Project. The Canadian Unitarian Council is a proud partner in the co-creation of this project – working with Canadian Ministers, Religious Educators, and Lay Leaders from across the country. A broadly collaborative initiative using a Sociocracy governance model, the CUC does not 'own' this project; we are an enthusiastic participant and supporter. Currently in the design phase, planning circles are hard at work and detailed news will be soon *coming to a communication near you!*



This year, as we intentionally embrace a spirit of Transition – we hope that you will join the activities and conversations, so we might all build together. It will be the curious, creative, and caring connections among us that continue to inspire and sustain this essential faith.

CUC Communications



The CUC's communications platform seeks to highlight issues and events of regional and national interest. Read the CUC eNews to find out what the CUC's board and staff have been up to lately, get the latest social justice news, and learn what's coming up in your area.

CUC eNews

The Canadian Unitarian Council's eNews is the digital monthly newsletter of the CUC, connecting and informing Canada's Unitarian Universalists.

Subscribe to [the eNews](#).

Past Issues 2025

October: [October 22](#)

September: [September 24](#)

August: [August 20](#); [Planning Letter from CUC Staff](#)

June: [June 18](#)

May: [May 21](#)

April: [April 1](#), [April 16](#)

March: [March 19](#)

February: [February 19](#)

January: [January 15](#)



The CUC is pleased to announce the hiring of Tatiana Saliba as its new Communications Manager. Tatiana brings a blend of communications expertise, contemplative practice, and leadership experience to this role. Her career has spanned global organizations such as BMW and Siemens, as well as nonprofits such as the Canadian Mental Health Association, and faith-based communities.

A near-death experience early in her career profoundly reshaped her path, turning her focus toward the human search for meaning and the inner dimensions of leadership and change. She has since trained in mindfulness, cognitive behavioural therapy, yogic and Buddhist philosophy, and Theory U, integrating these approaches in her work in organizational strategy and transformation.

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)



A Bruise on the Soul Part 1 of 3 By Rina Shere

October 22, 2025

"The biggest thing that [the veterans] told me was that they're carrying around this horrible idea that they are bad people because they've done something bad and they can't ever tell anybody about it—or they don't dare tell anybody about it—and may not even be able to admit it to themselves."

—David Wood, Journalist

I wasn't raised to be particularly patriotic. In fact, I used to be against military funding and intervention. Today, however, I spend my days as a mental health chaplain ministering to veterans who live with the aftermath of trauma: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), addiction, and moral injury.

Serving veterans has shifted my relationship with people who have served in our military—including my late father, who was drafted into the Army but never wanted to talk about his time in Korea. He was wounded there; he also contracted malaria. I remember once seeing him in a malarial fever, having nightmarish flashbacks of being under enemy fire.

I work with veterans who, like my father, live with trauma. What's different is how they seek help to process experiences that have impacted their relationship with themselves, their loved ones, and sometimes their faith. My ministry is centered on creating sacred space where they can feel safe enough to tell their stories without judgement. I enter into what Sr. Helen Prejean calls a "dreadful intimacy" with veterans who tell me the worst thing they ever saw or did, and were unable to stop because of their duty to protect the citizens of the United States.

Sometimes the veterans ask me, "How could God allow what I've seen? There can't be a God who would

allow that," or, "Chap, I've done some really bad things. Will God forgive me?" These questions reveal the loss of a veteran's relationship with God—their Holy ideal—or their trust in the goodness of humanity.

My Universalist theology guides me to remind our veterans that they are not defined by their worst moment or action. Indeed, many of the veterans I minister to would re-enlist if they could because the military provided a deep sense of purpose, shared mission, and camaraderie



they haven't found in the civilian world. For some, their moral injury is compounded by the loneliness and grief of discharge.

No one is outside of our circle of compassion and love. No one is outside of responsibility or accountability, either. There may be a necessary journey of making amends, and I try to help them craft a path forward—a journey that involves grieving for others as well as the loss of one's ideal self. Whatever their faith belief is, we start there and slowly try to work toward a perspective that includes acceptance, compassion...and maybe forgiveness.

Prayer: Mysterious Source of All Being, Spirit of Life and Spirit of Love, allow us to be truth tellers to ourselves and the world around us. Fortify our courage to lament; to call out in despair and rage against senseless inhumanity. May our community offer hope and healing and loosen the bonds of shame and isolation which burden so many. Amen.

<https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/bruise-soul>

Side With Love Joins “No Kings” Mobilization

Side With Love Joins “No Kings” Mobilization on October 18th, 2025 The UUA is an Official Cosponsor of the National Day of Mobilization

October 14, 2025

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) signed on in September as an official partner of the No Kings National Day of Mobilization on Saturday, October 18th. Building on the momentum from the first No Kings protests in June, Unitarian Universalists (UU) are joining millions of Americans to mobilize for another mass day of resistance, resilience, and action. Side With Love, the UUA’s organizing initiative, is helping to coordinate the participation of UUs and UU congregations during the day.

Our commitment to building a multiracial democracy shows up in how we resist the abduction and deportation of our immigrant community members; how we resist voter suppression in the legislature and at the ballot box; how we celebrate our LGBTQ+ kin and communities - and on October 18, shows up in how we collectively cry out No Kings!

About the UUA:

The UUA is the central organization for the Unitarian Universalist (UU) religious movement in the United States. Our faith is [diverse and inclusive](#) and the UUA’s 1000+ member congregations are committed to [shared values](#) and principles that hold closely the worthiness and dignity of each person as sacred, the need for justice and compassion, the right of conscience, and respect for the interdependent nature of all existence.



**An awareness of our ancestors gives us a sense of being
part of a larger story. It is a way of constituting our
individual and collective selfhood.**

Richard J. Mouw



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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