



The Flaming Chalice

February 2020

Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia & Port Huron
Lochiel Kiwanis Centre, 180 College Ave. N. Sarnia, Ontario

... an inspiring alternative for spiritual explorers

February Services: Sundays 11 a.m.

February 2nd: "My Therapy Dogs—A Labour of Love"

Guest Speaker Carol Holmes, Service Leader Elizabeth Soltis.

Carol is a retired physiotherapist and a dog lover who volunteers her time with her two standard poodles "Kizzi" and "Kimba" visiting patients in hospital, hospice and nursing homes. They also visit schools where the students read to the dogs and children with autism benefit from the connection. Carol will share some of her favourite "Therapy dog experiences" (and her dogs) with us.

February 9th: "Making Waves" our annual "Sharing Our Faith" service. Service Leader Allan McKeown.

At this time of year we join with Unitarian congregations across Canada in celebrating our connections and shared community. It is an opportunity to financially contribute to the CUC (Canadian Unitarian Council) "Sharing Our Faith" fund that offers grants to congregations needing assistance for special projects.

February 16th: "Celebrating Diversity in Families"

Guest Speaker Kendra Druiett, Service Leader Marianne Nichols.

Kendra will discuss how important "family" is to the LGBTQ community in Sarnia. Whether it be the family we were born into or the people we surround ourselves with and call "family". Kendra will also address the challenges that families face when youth decide to "come out" and reveal their sexual orientation to their parents.

February 23rd: "Celebrating Unicamp!"

Guest Speakers & Service Leaders Jessica & Aria Core.

Unitarians have a summer camp. Some people believe it to be the most wonderful place on the planet; others have never heard of it. C'mon out and hear what it's all about.

Today is **SOUP SUNDAY** when we share soup, bread and conversation after the service. Cost is \$5 per family or whatever you can afford with all proceeds going to the Inn of the Good Shepherd. Thank you to those who make and bring the wonderful soups we all enjoy so much!



"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."

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Your Executive Team met on January 10, 2020



The Executive has signed the renewal with St. Clair Child & Youth Services to use the rooms downstairs for children's RE, storage and meetings.

We have a new policy to help members with bursaries for Unicamp programs. Any child, youth or family connected with our Fellowship* may be considered for a "bursary grant" to attend camping and other events offered by Unicamp for up to one half of the regular fee. Funding of "bursary grants" may come from the following sources and in the following order:

1. "unused" monies from the RE budget
2. Operational Fund
3. Development Fund

* "connected with our Fellowship" - for the purposes of this policy, this includes Members, Official Friends and those in a contractual relationship with the Fellowship (for instance RE teachers or Music Coordinators)



President's Message:

When I thought of the theme of celebration, I thought of Hector Aristizábal. I was fortunate to listen to a lecture and a theatre performance by Hector at King's College in London a few years ago. His theatre and lecture were about his arrest and torture in Colombia. The theatre piece was very powerful and moving. He conveyed so much in a small amount of time and without words.

As an activist, therapist and artist, he uses theatrical performance as part of the movement to end torture and to change US policy in Latin America. He has also founded ImaginAction to help people tap the transformative power of theater in programs around the world for community building and reconciliation, strategizing and individual healing and liberation. His theatre inspiration was using Augusta Boal's method of *Theatre of the Oppressed*.

What does this have to do with celebration? He was talking about social justice actions and told the story of the protest every year in Georgia USA to close the School of the Americas, now known as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security and Cooperation. In case you have not heard of the school...

An integral part of America's brutal colonisation of undeveloped nations is the little-known US Army "School of the Americas" located in Fort Benning, Georgia, which trains Latin American military officers and soldiers to subvert their governments and kill hope in their own countries.

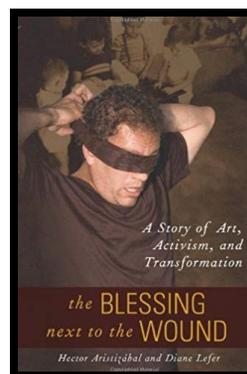
This so-called university, also known as the "School of Dictators", has produced thousands of dishonorable graduates linked to terror, torture, massacres and military death squads.

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/school-americas/5693503>

He talked about the protest and how there was celebration as well as the social action to close the school. He said we need to include celebration into our actions to change the system. It took me by surprise and I thought this could mean confronting the ugly truth of injustice without identifying with the victim archetype. Hector has done much healing from the horrific torture he endured. His life affirming outlook was very inspiring.

Hector is co-author of *The Blessing Next to the Wound: A Story of Art, Activism, and Transformation*.

In Fellowship,
Annette



Social Justice Action Team



A Teenage Tree Program celebration was held on **Sunday, December 1st** where we reflected on all of the accomplishments during the past year and acknowledged the work of all of the volunteers.

Some plans for 2020 were presented and included:

- **Sales target of around 5,000 saplings** during the year
- **Program launch**, select number of classrooms for 2020 based on sapling numbers
 - Gain approvals from the **School Boards**
- **Develop door-to-door sales program** for fundraising by the youth.
- **Tend seedlings of native species** at nursery for sale as saplings.
- **Finish planting seeds** and overwinter the planted trays.
- Make **hardwood cuttings** for select species.
- Finish native tree **information tags**
- **Fully engage the coordinating team and other teams** including nursery, sales, tree, school liaison and community eco-education teams. Formalize business plan.
- **Develop website and online inventory tracking system** and populate native tree sapling inventory on website

Please contact either Elizabeth Soltis, Annette Verhagen or Dwayne O'Neill for further information and to inquire how to be involved.



I see the Advent tradition for UU's not as the idiosyncratic and historically inaccurate superstitious remnant of a repudiated religion, but rather, the specific cultural idiom by which one culture, our culture, expresses a universal human hope for the breaking forth of more light upon the whole earth - literally, spiritually, and figuratively. — Scott McIsaac



Celebration is a kind of food we all need in our lives, and each individual brings a special recipe or offering, so that together we will make a great feast. Celebration is a human need that we must not, and cannot, deny. It is richer and fuller when many work and then celebrate together.

Corita Kent



Regular Events:

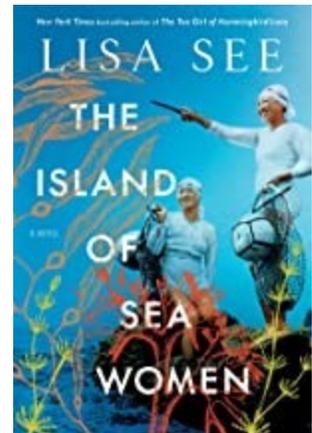
Book Club: Continues to meet on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 9:15 am at John's Restaurant on London Line. The book for February is ***The Island of Sea Women*** by Lisa See.

Men's Group: Super Bowl Pot Luck Circle Dinner at Steve and Sharon's (866 Lakeshore Rd., Sarnia) on Sunday, February 2nd at 5pm. Please bring a dish to share.

Women's Group: It seems there is interest in continuing the women's dinner get together on an "every-other-month" basis. February 4th at 5:30 pm at Paddy Flaherty's is the next one. To join the ladies, please contact Alice Walent-Bellar at 519-869-4525.

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

Journey Groups: Evening Group last Monday of each month 7 pm. Afternoon Group last Wednesday of each month at 12:45 pm. Contact Ann Steadman at 519-542-9708 for info.



When your heart is open to love,
 Sounds become music,
 Movements become dance,
 Smiles become laughter,
 Thoughts become meditation,
 And life becomes a Celebration!

- Rishika Jain

For Inspiration:

Celebration is about honoring yourself. It refuels the fire. It soothes the soul. And, it feels good!

— Mary Allen

Celebration is an active state, an act of expressing reverence or appreciation...Celebration is a confrontation, giving attention to the transcendent meaning of one's actions. — Abraham Joshua Heschel

Once you start celebrating the little victories in life, you will realize just how infinite they truly are.

— Alicia Emamdee

As we celebrate, we allow the stresses of life to fall behind and we spend our time doing things we love with the people we love. There is something about a great celebration that reminds us of the purpose of our life and of the power of our closest relationships

- Kirstine Palette

The most beautiful things are...memories and moments. If you don't celebrate those, they can pass you by.

- Alek Wek

While we tend to celebrate]...things like birthdays, holidays, anniversaries...huge business deals, or [achieving] long terms goals...it is also important to celebrate the little things, like having a hard conversation with someone...going to the gym when you just really didn't want to get out of bed, learning a new skill, trying something for the first time, fixing your broken bike; maybe even making someone laugh, or getting the grumpy cashier to smile today. While celebrating the big things is important, it's the little celebrations that count the most.

- Nicole Winkler-Schaefer

If we celebrate life with all its contradictions - embrace, experience, and ultimately live with it, then a chance exists for a spiritual life filled not only with pain and untidiness, but also with joy, community, and creativity.

- Derrick Jensen



Our thanks to the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto for their theme materials which can be found by clicking on this link <http://www.firstunitariantoronto.org/media/2019/themes/New-Horizons-2019-12-Celebration.pdf>.



“Because of the role that religion has historically played in denying gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people their full humanity, I believe that we now have a special calling to reach out to our GLBT sisters and brothers. We need to offer an explicit welcome, because the world can still be a very unwelcoming place. We need to offer radical acceptance, because neither family nor society can always be counted on to be accepting. We need to offer unconditional love, because Love is at the heart of religious community.”

— Allison Barrett, Canadian UU Minister

For the latest **CUC eNews** & past issues click on this link:

<http://cuc.ca/cuc-eneews/>

For the Unitarian Universalist Associations latest **UUWorld** click on this link:

<http://www.uuworld.org/>

Pease consider sharing this newsletter with a friend and invite them to a service.

Every Sunday is “Bring a Guest” Sunday!

Each issue of the “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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wendycornelis55@outlook.com