



# The Flaming Chalice

October 2023

## Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia & Port Huron

Lochiel Kiwanis Centre, 180 College Ave. N. Sarnia, Ontario [uusarnia.com](http://uusarnia.com)

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

### October Services

In-person & via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83460043365>

#### October 1: “Sharing Our UU Stories” – Members

Given that the theme for October is “Story”, some of our members will be sharing their stories about how they found Unitarian Universalism and our Fellowship. This will be followed by an ‘open mike’ for others to add their voices in this circle of sharing and caring. Soup, sandwiches, and fellowship following the service.

#### October 8: “Can We Give What We Get” – Rev. Debra Faulk & Rev. Danielle Webber

In these liminal times how does our Unitarian Universalist faith sustain us? See next page for more information.

#### October 15: “Peace Through Truth” – Robert Weir

Peace. We seek peace within. We pray for peace on earth. But how do we attain peace? One way is through truth: speaking truth, living truth, being true to ourselves, expressing our truth to others. Bob will reveal three tools of truth we can use to bring greater peace into our lives: “I” statements, transparent negotiations, and a simple process of four insightful questions that will lead us to truthful actions.

#### October 22: “Casual Acquaintance, Tiny Story”- Brad Gray

Storyteller Brad Gray will provide insight on how casual acquaintances in our lives can lead to tiny memorable stories.

#### October 29: “Samhain: Honouring our Ancestors with Ritual and Remembrance” – Tracy Jutras

Samhain was believed to be the time when the veil was thin between the world of the living and the world of the dead. Our ancestors could return to visit us, to give us help and advice. People set lights in hollowed out turnips to guide the spirits of the dead and put out food as an offering. We invite you to come and reach through the thin veil to honour our ancestors with deep listening and love.



### Theme—Story

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## Description & Presenter Bios for October 8th

### October 8: “Can We Give What We Get” – Rev. Debra Faulk & Rev. Danielle Webber

In these liminal times how does our Unitarian Universalist faith sustain us? So much loss and change has diminished our feelings of well being and connection while heightening the sense of scarcity and amplifying anxiety. What commonly held values can we call on to inform our responses, motivate actions and provide some ease? Could generosity be a response that expands to reciprocity?

#### Bio - Rev. Debra Faulk



Rev Debra Faulk, a lifelong Unitarian Universalist, retired in 2021 as Minister Emerita after 11 years with Calgary Unitarians. She received a BA in psychology and anthropology from UVic and a Master of Divinity from Vancouver School of Theology. She has served as chaplain at Vancouver General Hospital, Director of Religious Education in Victoria, and Parish Minister to congregations in Alberta and Ontario.

Previous Board experience includes both the Toronto and Calgary Interfaith Council and the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good, working to collaborate with labour and non-profits to address systemic social change in the city. Currently she is one of the two BC reps to the CUC (Canadian Unitarian Council) Board of Trustees.

Debra, as a single mom, raised two children who have blessed her with 5 grandchildren. Currently she is excited with the adventure of co-ownership of her new home in Victoria, building community and being close to family.

#### Bio - Rev. Danielle Webber

Rev. Danielle Webber (they/she) is a white, queer minister living in the traditional and unceded territory of the Okanagan/Sylix people (Kelowna, BC) with their partner Adam, and their 95lb lap dog Brin. They decided to become a minister in 2012 while completing a BA in Psychology and Religious Studies. They also completed a Master of Divinity in 2016, and a MA in Leadership Studies in 2018, both from Meadville Lombard Theological School, in Chicago.



Throughout their education, Rev. Danielle focused on multigenerational, multicultural faith formation, recognizing that we can create moments of meaning making no matter what we are doing, and how we are gathered. Essential to Rev. Danielle work is bringing to light the expansiveness of Unitarian Universalism. Through leaning into interdependence, and recognizing that faith formation can happen everywhere, UUs can become radically inclusive in creating space within our communities for those already here and those joining.

Danielle currently serves as the CUC’s Youth and Young Adult Ministry Specialist.

## President Mark's Musings for October

October's theme is "Story".

The UFSPH Executive Team met for the first meeting of 2023/24 on September 21<sup>st</sup>. The Team was made aware of the "story" of an external self-declared expert's insistence that he be involved with our "forum on residential schools on October 15<sup>th</sup>." We are not having a "forum of residential schools on October 15", we are having Bob Weir speak to us on "Peace through Truth". I think this serves as an example of how a story can go off track, stay off track and cause a lot of misery.

In the theme package (see link below) from the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto, Rev. Shawn Newton says:

"Our lives are not just made up of stories; they are also made by stories."

In September, Don Greaves shared his story with members and friends at the Fellowship. We watched as the Don-o-Meter quantified his transformation from a hard-nosed boss to an empathetic team leader.

Sometimes our stories are fun, sometimes insightful, but as both Shawn Newton and Don Greaves point out, we need to be aware that we can be controlled by "our stories" and ...sometimes the stories we tell ourselves are wrong.

As reported by The Associated Press on September 27<sup>th</sup>:

"Just after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy delivered an address in the House of Commons on Friday, Canadian lawmakers gave 98-year-old Yaroslav Hunka a standing ovation when Speaker Anthony Rota drew attention to him. Rota introduced Hunka as a war hero who fought for the First Ukrainian Division."

Hunka's story was also wrong. It has now surfaced that he served in a World War II Nazi German military formation made up predominantly of volunteers with Ukrainian ethnicity. The Speaker of the House has resigned. The Prime Minister has apologized on behalf of the Parliament of Canada

Yes, sometimes our stories are wrong, and we owe it to ourselves to challenge those stories. Perhaps we can each take a moment to reflect on the stories we have given safe harbour to, and consider whether it is time to send them out to sea.

Sometimes our stories are right, and we owe it to ourselves to celebrate those stories. Our first meeting in October will be an opportunity for members and friends to share their stories of how they connected with the Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia and Port Huron. I look forward to celebrating those stories with you.

*In Fellowship, Mark Woolston*

**'Story' theme package from the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto:**

<https://www.firstunitariantoronto.org/wp-content/publications/nh/2015/New-Horizons-2015-05-Story.pdf>

## Quotes on 'Story' To Ponder

All humans are storytellers with their own unique point of view. When we understand this, we no longer feel the need to impose our story on others or to defend what we believe. Instead, we are all of us artists with the right to create our own art.

- **Don Miguel Ruiz**

The forgiveness inherent in our faith teaches that all of us are much larger than the good or bad stories we tell about ourselves. Please don't get caught in just "my" story, my hurts, my agenda. It's too small. It's not the whole You, the Great You. It's not the great river. It's not where life is really going to happen.

- **Richard Rohr, *Everything Belongs***

Stories have power. They delight, enchant, touch, teach, recall, inspire, motivate, challenge. They help us understand. They imprint a picture on our minds. Consequently, stories often pack more punch than sermons. Want to make a point or raise an issue? Tell a story.

- **Janet Litherland**

Tell me a fact and I'll learn. Tell me a truth and I'll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever.

- **Indian Proverb**

During a long retreat, I had what seemed to me to be the earthshaking revelation that we cannot be in the present and run our storylines at the same time! It sounds pretty obvious, I know, but when you discover something like this for yourself, it changes you.

- **Pema Chodron, *When Things Fall Apart***

Our stories matter... Your stories matter... For you never know how much of a difference they make and to whom.

- **Caroline Joy Adams, *Power to Write***



Everywhere, every day, someone is changed, perhaps even saved, by words and stories.

- **Roxanne J. Coad**

Forever, people have listened to the sounds of the streets and the music of the spheres and seen in them patterns and rhythms and melodies and meanings that helped them understand both the earth they live on and their place in the greater scheme of things. To ask whether those patterns and purposes are really there is beside the point, for that's how we learn about death and disease and darkness and desire and the power of the wind and the waves and of love and hate and hope and fear, and how we make sense of them. We know that these are real, and we know they are nothing but stories and songs.

- **Edward Chamberlin**

Furthermore, we have not even to risk the journey alone; for the heroes of all time have gone before us; the labyrinth is thoroughly known; we have only to follow the thread of the hero-path...and the many stories which tell [a person's] tale.

- **Joseph Campbell**

You have to understand, my dears, that the shortest distance between truth and a human being is a story.

- **Anthony de Mello**

## Making Meaning In Liminal Times Project

As noted in the September newsletter, your Program Team has 'opted in' to a new initiative being offered by the Saskatoon Unitarians, "Making Meaning in Liminal Times". We are joining with 15 other Canadian congregations in what has been described as an "experiment in doing church differently".

Six urgent questions for our time will be examined, in collaboration with UU ministers, during October, November, January, February, March and April. This will be done through a service and a facilitated adult religious exploration session in each of these months.

We will be building our own services for the 2nd Sundays of the above months based upon materials provided including a videoed sermon/presentation.

### Sunday Service Schedule:

October 8—Can We Give What We Get? - Rev. Debra Faulk & Rev. Danielle Weber

November 13—In this polarized world...can we just talk? - Rev. Brian Kiely

January 14—To be or not to be ChatGPT? - Rev. Karen Fraser Gitlitz

February 11—What Sustains and Inspires Us in the Climate Emergency?" - Rev. Meg Roberts

March 10—In times of great change, what can the wisdom of our bodies offer us? - Arran Morton

April 14—Who do we choose to be? - Rev. Samaya Oakley



### Adult Religious Exploration Component:

On the forth **Saturday** of October and the third **Saturday** of the rest of these months there will be a two hour "deeper dive" adult religious education conversation for those who want to explore the topic in more depth. These sessions will be facilitated and hosted by that month's speaker.

More info on next page....



**Meaning Making in Liminal Times****A deeper dive  
into 6 questions  
for our time****Saturday Adult R.E. Schedule—1—3 p.m. Eastern:**

October 28, November 18, January 20, February 17, March 16, April 20.

**Members and Friends will need to sign up individually for this on-line Adult R.E. program on a sliding scale of \$30-\$120 based upon what you can afford.**

**Link for Individual Registrations:**

<https://forms.gle/JFdrFrbVw3EPZZRk7>

**Registration Deadline October 8th.**

**The Executive has approved up to 4 bursaries at \$30 each to ensure that everyone can participate.**

It is hoped that our Fellowship will be enriched by engaging with the questions and ideas presented as well as by connecting and having ongoing conversations with other UUs across Canada.

*In Fellowship, Ann Steadman, Program Chair*

**“We have to allow ourselves to be drawn into sacred space, into liminality. All transformation takes place here. There alone is our old world left behind, though we’re not yet sure of the new existence. That’s a good space where genuine newness can begin... It’s the realm where... our false certitudes are finally out of the way. This is the sacred space where the old world is able to fall apart, and a bigger world is revealed.”**

**Richard Rohr Daily Meditation: Liminal Space September 26, 2023**

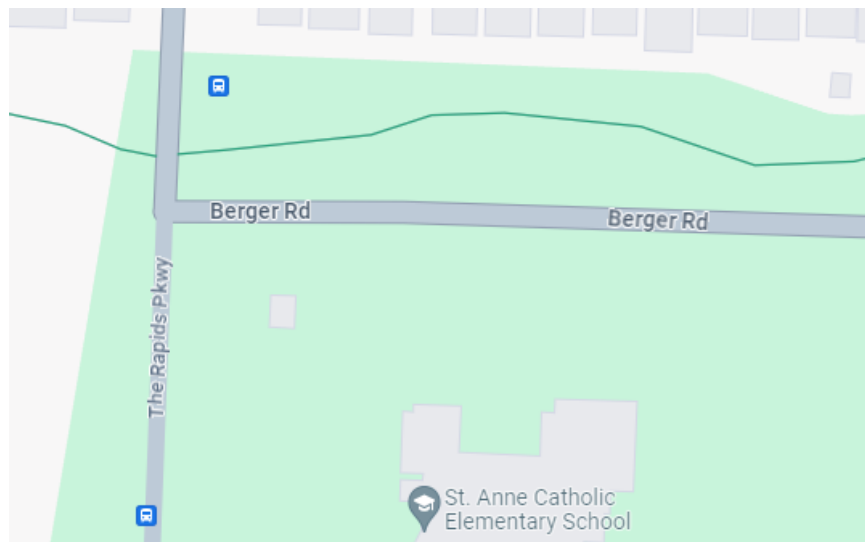
## Upcoming Events

### *Habitat Restoration Day*

**Saturday, October 14th, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.**



At 10 a.m. on Saturday October 14, we Unitarians and Climate Action Sarnia Lambton will start restoring native plants to a small area of the city. The approximately 10 metre by 10 metre area will be sanitized for native planting next spring. This easy work involves laying down cardboard and then covering with mulch for the fall and winter. If you want to help our local environment you can come out to the corner of Berger Road and Rapids Parkway. You can bring a shovel and wheelbarrow but that is not necessary. You can just come out and cheer us on. Park at one of the 2 schools near by. The city is fully behind this project and is supplying the cardboard and mulch.



Contact Don Greaves (519) 312-4960 if you have questions or require more information.

## 6 Minute Memoirs Celebrates 10 Years of Stories and Fundraising



Tickets \$15 & \$20  
uuhamilton.ca

**Live &  
on Zoom!**

12 storytellers on "Trials and Tribulations"  
Saturday, October 21 @7:30 pm EST



Twelve amazing storytellers will share their tales on the theme of "Trials and Tribulations" at the 10th anniversary of Hamilton's premier storytelling event, the 6-Minute Memoir, on Saturday, Oct. 21 at 7:30 at the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton on Dundurn St. S.

Music, cash bar, live auction also included. Tickets are \$20 each for the in-person event and \$15 per household for the virtual event on Zoom. Get your ticket at [uuhamilton.ca](http://uuhamilton.ca).

Hope to see you there, in person or virtually. All profits go to support the work of The First Unitarian Church of Hamilton and Body Brave, an organization assisting those with eating disorders ([www.bodybrave.ca](http://www.bodybrave.ca)).



## Canadian Unitarian Council



### A Call for Love and Welcome in the Face of Anti-2SLGBTQIA+ Hate

September 19, 2023

As representatives of the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) and Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada (UUMOC), we are deeply concerned about the rise in bigotry and hate directed towards the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. ([In 2021 alone, hate crimes against the queer community rose by 64%](#), and this number continues to rise.)

On September 6, 2023, we issued a statement [affirming the gender identity and expression of all students](#) in response to education policies that were recently introduced in Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. Since then, we have learned that anti-2SLGBTQIA+ activists (who would like to see more of these policies put in place) plan to rally at legislatures, city halls, and school board offices across the country on Wednesday, September 20. They are forming under the “1 Million March 4 Children” banner.

“The organizers of these events are opposed to what they call “gender ideology” and “LGBTQ indoctrination” in schools,” says Kiersten Moore, President of the CUC Board of Trustees. “They are using highly emotional rhetoric to appeal to people’s desire to protect children, but the solutions they seek will not protect kids who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans. We do not protect children’s innocence by erasing the existence of gender diverse or LGBTQ+ children and families.”

Rev. Samaya Oakley, the President of UUMOC, agrees. “When your family or your culture tell you that there is something wrong with you, there can be significant mental health impacts. Teens who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ are more likely to have suicidal thoughts than those who are straight. Many face bullying, harassment, and even violence.”

In 2006, the CUC adopted a [resolution](#) that “affirms and promotes the equal rights of persons regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.” For more than twenty years, we have been challenging ourselves to identify and address barriers that prevent gender-diverse people of all ages from participating fully in our congregations and in society.

Today we are calling on Unitarian Universalists and other people of faith and conscience to show love and welcome to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in the face of hatred.

If there is a protest in your community on September 20, make plans to [counter-protest with community partners](#).

Connect with your faith community and work together to find out what your ministry can do to respond faithfully to these issues.

Contact politicians, in particular school trustees/MPs, to express your support for gender-affirming policies and inclusive education, and your opposition to policies that would forcibly out trans youth ([sample letter](#)).

It is vital that 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals are celebrated and loved in our congregations and in our communities.

*From the CUC’s National Voice Team: UU Ministers of Canada President, Rev. Samaya Oakley; CUC Board President, Kiersten Moore, and Executive Director, Vyda Ng.*

***(Editor’s Note: Several Members joined the counter protest in Sarnia on September 20th. Go to <https://thesarniajournal.ca/clash-of-ideologies-outside-city-hall/> . Crystal Fach, founder and executive director of Diversity Ed, organized the counter protest and will be presenting at the Fellowship on December 10, 2023)***



**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 Associations latest **UUWorld** <http://www.uuworld.org/>

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