



The Flaming Chalice

February 2023

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/81431005236>

Feb 5: "Bridge-Building towards Deeper Connection" – Elizabeth Soltis

To "springboard" into a new beginning on March 20th, Elizabeth will launch her book entitled: *Authentic Collaboration: A Bridge to Meaningful Connection*. In her talk, she will unpack some of the nuances of collaboration as the most essential skill set of our era. The art of authentic collaboration will be offered as a synonym for heart-centered relationship-building—with self, others and Earth.

Feb 12: "Bluewater Health Foundation" – Kathy Alexander

This presentation will focus on the role of Bluewater Health Foundation and the impact a generous community has on strengthening local healthcare.

Feb 19: "Taproots Green Gardens: Sustainable Agriculture on a Small-Scale" – Ryan Slyzuk

Local market gardener Ryan Slyzuk will discuss how scaling down agricultural production can work to regenerate soils and feed communities in an earth conscious and sustainable way. The talk will give an overview of regenerative farming practices as well as answer your gardening questions in a short Q&A period.

Feb 26: "Sarnia: Opportunities & Challenges for 2023" – Mayor Mike Bradley

Mayor Mike Bradley will give us his thoughts on what 2023 holds for the City of Sarnia.



Theme—Grounding

*"Instead of a creed,
Unitarian Universalists
share a spirit and vision
of radical inclusivity,
individual agency, and
social justice.*

*We embrace personal
discovery and growth
through learning,
engagement, and
service."*

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President Mark's February Musings

The UFSPH Executive met on January 19th for the fifth time this year. We missed Eileen Zinn's cheery presence, and shared our best wishes for her medical journey.

February's theme is "Grounding". No, I don't think has anything to do with Groundhog Day!

Shawn Newton, on the next page and in the theme package from the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto (link below), offers a variety of interpretations to the question "Are you grounded?" including:

Are you in touch with the spirit of life, which lives and moves and has its being in you?

Those that were able to participate on Sunday, January 29th in the winter wild church experience led by Mary Abma at the Teaching Lodge, may have experienced the same sense of "grounding" that I did.

David Plain, an elder, graciously shared the Teaching Lodge with us. It was easy to feel grounded as we crunched through the fresh snow on our wander into the bush on David's property.

Gary, the Fire Keeper, did an excellent job in helping us get grounded. He explained the significance of the fire, and led us through a celebration of Indigenous smudging, burning several medicinal plants to cleanse ourselves and help us get in touch with the spirit of life.

During the dark winter chill of February, I hope you are able to disconnect from the daily hustle and bustle and find some quiet time to reconnect with your spirit of life.

In Fellowship, Mark Woolston



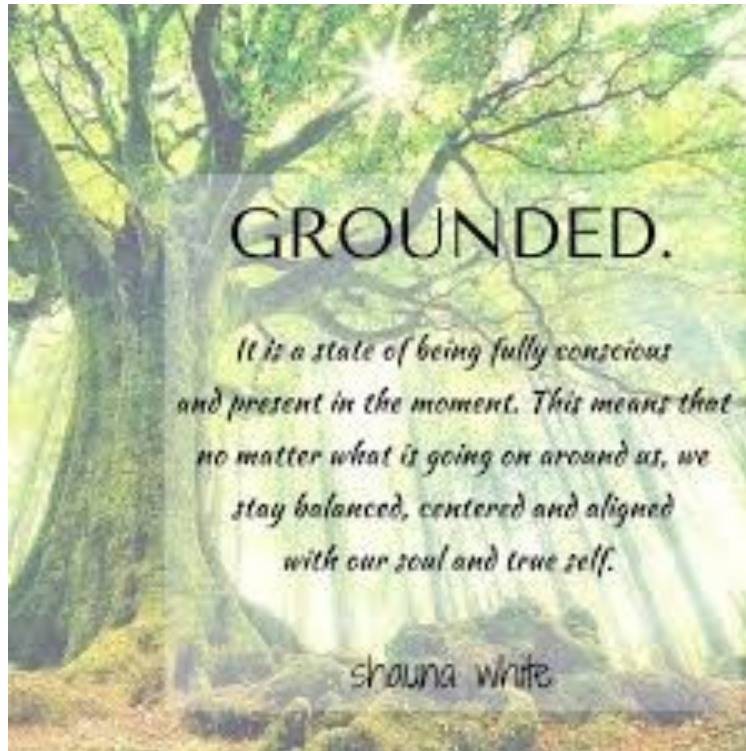
Photo courtesy Mike Beachey

February's Theme — Grounding

For spiritual nourishment and inspiration, please click on the link below to access the theme package so graciously shared by the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto.

<https://www.firstunitariantoronto.org/wp-content/publications/tj/2023/The-Journey-2023-01-Grounding.pdf>

Reflections on Being Grounded



Are you grounded?

It's a question that can land very differently, depending on one's age. To a child or teen, it's most likely a question about punishment—about whether someone is being disciplined for having broken some rule.

But to an adult (and arguably for younger people, too), the question "Are you grounded?" can mean so much more: Are your feet firmly planted? Are you connected to what most deeply sustains you? Are you staying close to home, to the heart of things? Are you in touch with the spirit of life, which lives and moves and has its being in you?

The process of grounding—of becoming grounded—is a spiritual practice itself; and there are countless ways to go about it. For some, it's a state of being reached through regular meditation or prayer. For others, it's in more physically active pursuits, from running to yoga to hiking in the great outdoors. For others, it's in tending relationships, in nurturing the ties that bind us together.

At the dawn of a new year, may you give thought and intention to becoming more grounded. Because, in my experience, people who are grounded have a better sense of who they are and what they are capable of. They are more resilient, better equipped to meet life as it comes. That is my new year's wish for you all.

In faith and love,

Shawn

(Rev. Shawn Newton, First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto)

Upcoming Opportunities

Fellowship Orientation

Date: Sunday, February 5th

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86387826507?pwd=cIN4TFhJQ1JkRFZPV0lvTnAzR3p6dz09&from=addon>

If you are new to our Fellowship or would like a refresher, please join in!

**We will be covering the following:
Principles, Sources, History & Theology of
Unitarian Universalists, Our Fellowship
(History, Organization, Social Justice &
Finances).**

Climate Action Sarnia Lambton

How Natural Burials Help the Planet

Tuesday, Feb 21st, 7 p.m.

Free Admission

Sarnia Library Theatre

Allan McKeown Presenting

Luncheon Invitation

Hello Folx,

There has been an expressed interest for an outing to a restaurant for sharing conversation and connection. Previously, the women of the Fellowship have gathered this way. I am putting out an invitation to that group as well as to anyone else who feels they would like to participate.

I am suggesting a late, off hour luncheon at either Paddy Flaherty's using one of their separate dining areas or, at the Sarnia Golf and Curling Club which Brenda could also arrange.

If you are interested in participating, please respond to Brenda Woolston tollers_r_us@hotmail.com with your weekday noonish availability and preferred venue by Feb 13.

May all your days be the best they can be.

Brenda Woolston



With Humour, the Unitarian Universalist Hysterical Society Talks Seriously

Let's talk about sex, ba-by...

One February break long ago, I found myself at the airport on the way to a UU conference. I'd just finished small talk (Where are you off to? Religious conference. And... Zero follow up questions).

Behind me, a young woman who was part of a whole gang headed somewhere warm for spring break said, "Oh sxxt, we need to get condoms!" to her friend. A little louder than she'd intended. She looked at me in horror and began apologizing.

"I don't see what you have to be sorry about," I answered, channeling UU Ministers and Religious Educators from across the nation, "By every measure of morality I can think of, making sure everyone has condoms is an act of responsibility and kindness." Her whole face transformed, and she grinned from ear to ear. "You're right!" she said, looking empowered.

Since 1971 UUs have supported positive sexuality education. Our current program is named OWL (which stands for Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education). It is a force for good in the world, for people of all ages.

Well, not everybody. Because we have this terrible habit of using acronyms without explaining them, the OWL program has led to many disappointed birdwatchers reading pamphlets titled things like "Everything you want to know about our OWL program". These pamphlets contain a great deal more than some of these birdwatchers wanted to know about sex (and gender, and consent, and healthy relationships, and...), and a great deal less than they wanted to know about owls.



That said...I /ove that UUism supports love and sexuality, in whatever constellations of people and gender and practices that all parties are enthusiastically consenting to.

(Editor's Note: article from UU Hysterical Society Facebook post—probably by Liz James)

To learn about and enjoy the Unitarian Universalist Hysterical Society click on this link <https://www.uuhystericalsociety.com/>.

To learn more about OWL click on this link [Our Whole Lives \(OWL\)](#)



Canadian Unitarian Council

CUC National Symposium 2023: Friday, May 19 – Sunday, 21, 2023



Now more than ever we need to come together to strengthen our connections, kindle hope, and move forward in love.

In the spring of 2023, the Canadian Unitarian Council and First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, in collaboration with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa, invite you to a national symposium. Join us in person in Ottawa or online to renew your spirit, reconnect with friends, and celebrate what it means to be Unitarian Universalist (UU).

You may have noticed that we are referring to this event as a symposium, not a conference. That's because it will be organized around a single issue rather than a general theme. Through engaging presentations, rich discussions, and worship, **we will explore our newest principle, which calls us "to dismantle racism and systemic barriers to full inclusion in ourselves and our institutions."**

Maury Prevost, lead for the Host Team, sends you all a warm invitation: *"On behalf of the Host Team, the hosting First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, and our collaborators at the UU Fellowship of Ottawa, I invite you to come to Ottawa in person to join us for the events over the May long weekend of 2023. Although we can't promise that the tulips will be at their best for the long weekend, spring will be well underway, and the Tulip Festival should run May 12-22 in 2023. With spring flowers, national museums, many parks, and other activities in Canada's capital city, it is a good time of year to visit Ottawa, so you may wish to extend your stay before or after the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) events."*

We look forward to seeing many of you in Ottawa and we equally look forward to welcoming online participants."

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday, May 19th, from 1:00 to 4:30 pm ET, and will have online and in-person participation.

Watch for more details in the coming months.

Registration opens mid February 2023.

(From the CUC website)



Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice**Breaking News:****Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice to Continue Advocacy!**

There was debate in 2022 whether CUSJ should fold after many years of involving UU's in social justice causes but the consensus was to continue meeting, discussing issues and speaking out.

So, it was good to connect by Zoom with over 20 UU's from different parts of Canada on January 28th for the first monthly meeting of 2023.

It was interesting, for example, to hear how UU congregations in Toronto were collaborating on affordable housing, homelessness and sponsoring an Afghan refugee family to come to Canada. They refer to their joint efforts as being part of a "*Unitarian Commons*".

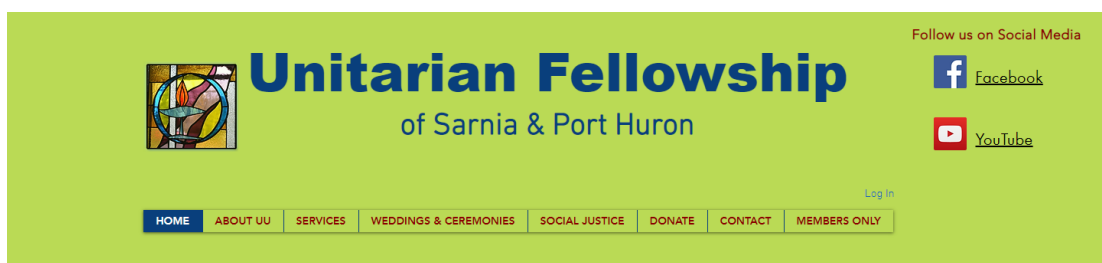
There was a presentation by Tamara Lorincz, a senior researcher at Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, who spoke about her attendance at the COP 27 international Climate Change Conference in Egypt and her subsequent visits to Russia and several Eastern European countries including the impacts of the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. A lively discussion on these topics followed. She was very critical of the \$19 billion purchase of F35 fighter jets by Canada.

Finally there was an appeal for Canadians to support Hassan Diab in his appeal to the Canadian government to stop his extradition to France in April to stand trial for a terrorist bombing he was not involved in. Hassan was cleared of any wrong doing by French investigators after spending several years in a French prison but prosecutors appealed that decision. More details here: [Justice for Hassan Diab - Stop the relentless persecution and reform Canada's Extradition Act!](#)[Justice for Hassan Diab | Stop the relentless persecution and reform Canada's Extradition Act!](#)

All in all, it was an informative Zoom meeting with other UU's interested in social justice. If you are interested in joining CUSJ contact them through the "contact" link on the website: <https://cusj.org/> CUSJ is also on Facebook: [CUSJ - Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice | Facebook](#)

Allan McKeown

Check Out Our Website—uusarnia.com

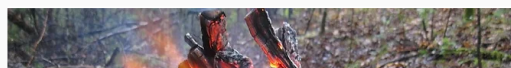


UPCOMING SERVICES

Join us every Sunday at 11 am on zoom
or in person at the Lochiel Kiwanis
Centre.

[Contact Us for Link](#)

[Click here for
January Newsletter](#)



January 29

Wild Church Experience™

Please note that at the very beginning of our website you can access the monthly service info, newsletter and social media posts (top right).



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/>

Newsletter Editor: Ann Steadman

To unsubscribe from this newsletter at any time, please send your request by email to:

asteadman@cogeco.ca