



The Flaming Chalice

October 2019

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

... an inspiring alternative for spiritual explorers

October Services:

**October 6: “Women’s Rights Today and Tomorrow” Guest Speaker Madeline Vrolyk.
Service Leader Tim Van Bodegom**

Madeline is studying women’s studies at Western University and is the Coordinator of the Gender Equality Network at Western and a volunteer at Anova (previously the Sexual Assault Centre and Women’s Community House). She will share her own perspective on the Feminist Movement, #MeToo, intersectionality, and trans* rights - improving and evolving our activism.



**October 13: Canadian Thanksgiving Weekend “Circle Discussion”
Service Leader Steve Lane**

On Oct. 14, Canadians celebrate their rendition of Thanksgiving Day. Steve will lead us in a circle discussion for those who wish to acknowledge and share the unique blessings he/she has in life and how it has contributed to peace of mind and joy. Many Unitarians give thanks every day for gifts large and small that their life has brought them. Please join us.

**October 20: “Democracy Now!” with Bob Sutton
Service Leader Brenda Woolston**

Tomorrow Canadians will go to the polls to elect the next Federal government. Bob will reflect on the current state of democracy in Canada and globally and will touch on several interesting proposals aimed at reforming political process for the 21st century. He is a retired educator and member of Samara, a non-partisan organization that encourages citizens to become engaged in the political process.

**October 27: “Aftershock – the Second Generation speaks” A 2-part service with
Dwayne Cloes/ Service Leader Allan McKeown
Today is “Bring a Guest” Sunday**

Dwayne is a documentary film-maker and this is his second documentary examining Canada’s notorious residential school system. **Part 1:** Dwayne will talk about his motivation for meeting with survivors, the children of survivors and for making his films.

Part 2: You are invited to stay after the service for lunch and to view Dwayne’s latest documentary in which the “second generation” speaks about how the abuses suffered by their parents as residential school victims have affected *their* lives as children of the survivors. It is a very powerful, moving and thought-provoking film. Q and A will follow.

*“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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**TODAY IS ALSO SOUP SUNDAY. \$5 PER FAMILY OR PAY WHAT YOU CAN!
All proceeds to the Inn of the Good Shepherd.**

The stained glass chalice in the

**Executive Team Update will return in the
November Newsletter**



October Theme: "Blessings"



The Moment of Magic

by: Victoria E. Safford

Now is the moment of magic,
when the whole, round earth turns again toward the sun,

and here's a blessing:

the days will be longer and brighter now,
even before the winter settles in to chill us.

Now is the moment of magic,
when people beaten down and broken,
with nothing left but misery and candles and their own clear voices,
kindle tiny lights and whisper secret music,

and here's a blessing:

the dark universe is suddenly illuminated by the lights of the menorah,
suddenly ablaze with the lights of the kinara,
and the whole world is glad and loud with winter singing.

Now is the moment of magic,
when an eastern star beckons the ignorant toward an unknown goal,

and here's a blessing:

they find nothing in the end but an ordinary baby,
born at midnight, born in poverty, and the baby's cry, like bells ringing,
makes people wonder as they wander through their lives,
what human love might really look like,
sound like,
feel like.

Now is the moment of magic,

and here's a blessing:

we already possess all the gifts we need;
we've already received our presents:
ears to hear music,
eyes to behold lights,
hands to build true peace on earth
and to hold each other tight in love.

President's Message:

Blessings:

The fall Equinox and the official start of the fall season has begun. The final harvests of fruits and vegetables continues, and the abundance is a sight to see at the farmers markets! The theme for October is blessings and the abundance of food from the earth is truly a blessing. Our food security depends on local farmers who grow fruits and vegetables to thrive and I want to support them as much as possible.

There are many layers of harvests in our lives and connecting to the blessings helps when we pay attention. I know how challenging it can be to see the blessings in our experiences when they are difficult. When I focus on my feelings and release them, I feel an underlying blessing for healing and release even if the outcome does not change.

I recently had an opportunity to celebrate with others for the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario's (EFAO) 40th anniversary. People that I had known for many years were there. I had volunteered in the organic agriculture movement since 1988 and was the first full time employee of EFAO for 5 years from 2000 to 2005. My exit from the organic movement was difficult and painful for several reasons but now I see it as a blessing. I had a dark night of the soul after, which lead me to my vision quest. I wondered what my purpose was in the world because I connected my values, training and education with organic/ecological agriculture.

From that experience I found other opportunities and a home for my emotional well being, economic security, and values. I have the fortune of personal growth and soul connection working with First Nation communities and the Unitarian Fellowship! It was bittersweet for me to go to the anniversary event because it brought up some wounds and feelings of inadequacy and yet this was also an invitation and a blessing to heal.

Blessings to all and Happy Thanksgiving!

In Fellowship,

Annette



Social Justice Action Team Update:



The program is now moving along in high gear with the program now focused on a **Community Tree Fest which will be held on Saturday October 19th from 10 am to 4 pm** at the Rebound- HUB parking lot on Indian Road/Wellington. This will be an opportunity for the HUB youth and ourselves to highlight the many benefits of native trees to our ecosystem. In addition to this eco-education opportunity, we will share information about the Teenage Tree Program and ask for feedback to support development. Lastly, we hope many people will purchase saplings to either plant on their own properties or in our community parks. Plans are in place to roll out a community wide publicity campaign. Mark this date in your calendars and join us at this event. **Volunteers are welcome.**

Some key activities leading up to the Community Tree Fest include:

- **Volunteering at the AFN nursery continues with the next one scheduled for Saturday October 5th from 3 pm to 5:30 pm.** Volunteers from our Fellowship have been the core group and the HUB Youth have been invited to participate as well.
- A **city-wide seed collection day** has been scheduled for **Sunday October 6th from 1 to 5 pm.** Larry Cornelis will provide a short talk and then we will go out to various locations as subgroups. We will start at the Return The Landscape location at 100 Christina. Seed collection will continue throughout the fall.
- Preparing the saplings for sale at the **AFN nursery on Saturday October 12th from 10 am to 3 pm** (pizza offered for volunteers).
- **Sapling tree planting** in city parks starting the week of October 21. A tree planting day is now being organized by Climate Action Sarnia (in partnership with Return The Landscape) on **Saturday, October 26th.**

The **Tree Identification & Ecology Workshop** that was held on September 14th was a great success and a second workshop is currently being planned.

Good news on the funding side; This summer, Suncor made a \$15,000 donation for each of two years and the Sarnia Community Foundation contributed \$5,000. These monies complement the Unitarian donation of \$5,000 per year for 3 years.

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

SARNIA/LAMBTON



HOSTED BY **CLIMATE ACTION SARNIA** AND 100 DEBATES ON THE ENVIRONMENT

THURSDAY OCTOBER 3, 2019

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

ST BENEDICT'S PARISH HALL

1011 OAK AVENUE

SARNIA, ON

PARKING AVAILABLE

A non-partisan **All Candidates Debate on the Environment**. Part of the 100 Debates project which is co-ordinating debates Canada-wide October 3, 2019. Come and hear your candidate's best policy proposals for climate change and the environment.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR ACTION

Regular Events:

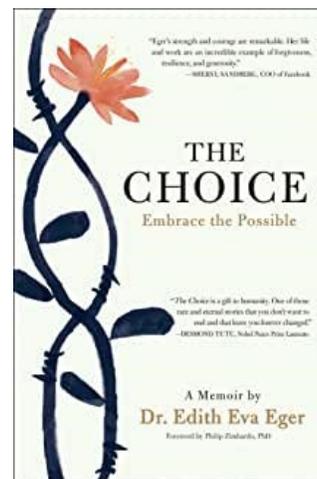
Book Club: Continues to meet on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 9:15 am at John's Restaurant on London Line. The book for October is **"The Choice" Embrace th Possible** a memoir by Dr. Edith Eva Eger.

Men's Group: Details will be announced as they become available.

Women's Group: Details will be announced as they become available.



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



October 27th is "Bring a Guest" Sunday. This special day provides an opportunity for members and friends of the Fellowship to invite a friend or family member as a guest to our Sunday service.

It is also Soup Sunday so everyone will be invited to stay and share lunch and great conversation.

Service that day is in 2 parts and features a documentary film with a Q&A period after. This special occasion will allow us to introduce our Fellowship and its qualities to our friends and family.

Quotes on Blessings

"Life is not always easy to live, but the opportunity to do so is a blessing beyond comprehension. In the process of living, we will face struggles, many of which will cause us to suffer and to experience pain."

L. Lionel Kendrick

"Some people come into our life as a blessing, while others come into our life as a lesson, so love them for who they are instead of judging them for who they are not."

Yolanda Hadid

"Count your blessings, not your problems. Count your own blessings, not someone else's. Remember that jealousy is when you count someone else's blessings instead of your own."

Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart

"Reflect upon your present blessings -- of which every man has many -- not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some."

Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol and Other Christmas Writings

"The problem that we have with a victim mentality is that we forget to see the blessings of the day. Because of this, our spirit is poisoned instead of nourished."

Steve Maraboli, Unapologetically You: Reflections on Life and the Human Experience

"It is only with true love and compassion that we can begin to mend what is broken in the world. It is these two blessed things that can begin to heal all broken hearts."

Steve Maraboli, Life, the Truth, and Being Free



Children's RE

The Fellowship is very pleased to announce that Aria Core, a recent Camp Councillor at Unicamp, will be taking on the 'Primary' Teacher role for our children for 2019-20. Aria grew up within our Fellowship and shares our UU values. We are also grateful that Laura Brown has agreed to continue helping out as the RE Teacher when Aria is not available. Thank you Laura for your past years of service and willingness to 'sub'! As well, gratitude to Ruby Core who has also agreed to assume Child Care/RE Assistant duties.

This year we will be using as a curriculum guide *World of Wonder* developed through the Unitarian Universalist Association. This curriculum is very congruent with our Fellowship's current social justice focus, the Tree Planting Program specifically and eco-justice more broadly. Here is a description of the program <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/wonder>.

Once downstairs each Sunday, the children light their own chalice and have a time of sharing. This is followed by a brief lesson or story and often a small craft. It is always a challenge for the RE Teacher to adapt each Sunday according to the children, of various ages, who attend! Our RE sessions/Child Care happen in the St. Clair Child and Youth Centre's 'Drop-in Room' which is located directly below the Kiwanis Room where we gather. The space is entirely 'child friendly' inclusive of child height tables and chairs.

Adult Journey Groups:



In the fall of 2017, the Program Team introduced the idea of 'Theme-Based Ministry'. This approach is used widely in Unitarian Universalist congregations. Each month, we have been trying, as much as possible, to focus on a monthly theme during services, in our newsletter and by providing monthly theme reflection packages. While reflecting on a theme package individually can be a wonderful experience, sharing on a theme within a small group can be even more enriching.

In the fall of 2018, Journey Groups, monthly small group reflection circles, began. Within these groups the theme for the month is explored in an atmosphere of respectful listening and confidentiality. Getting together in small groups is a way for Fellowship Members and Friends to form greater interpersonal connections. Please note that these 'Journey Groups' are in addition to our long-standing 'Small Group Ministry' so wonderfully facilitated for so many years by Betty Learn!

This year we are again offering both evening and afternoon 'Journey Groups'. The evening group typically meets the last Wednesday of each month at 7 pm (facilitated by Annette Verhagen) while the afternoon group typically meets the last Wednesday of each month at 12:45 pm (facilitated by Ann Steadman).

If you are interested in participating in a 'Journey Group' or would like more information, please contact Ann Steadman, RE Chair, at 519-542-9708 or asteadman@cogeco.ca.



“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

Unitarian Links

For the latest and past versions of the **Canadian Unitarian** click on this link:

<http://cuc.ca/the-canadian-unitarian/>

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

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

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