



The Flaming Chalice

January 2022

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.

January Services - VIA ZOOM ONLY

Theme—Blessings

Jan 2: Burning Bowl Ritual

As we enter into the New Year 2022, what burdens, hurts, or attachments (to what no longer serves you) can you release in the cleansing flame?

Jan 9: Compost & Faith: What Living Soils and Living Faith Have in Common – Shane Rozeveld

Shane and wife Emma, own and operate Aslan Organics. Aslan Organics, located on Michigan Line near Camlachie, is a micro-scale diversified Market Garden. More than 30 kinds of vegetables are grown on only 1 acre of land.

<https://www.aslanorganics.ca/>

Jan 16: Rayjon Share Care... Nan Tèt Ansanm (In Unity) – Heather Smith, ED

Current events in Haiti don't often make Canadian news. But when they do, it's never good news: earthquakes, hurricanes, political assassinations, kidnappings, hunger, and disease. Is that all there is to Haiti? Can good news come out of such sorrow? In the face of so much injustice, what role can we, as a global community, play? (Rayjon is a Sarnia based charity.)

Jan 23: The Fifth Gospel: The Holy Land and her People – Rev. Vicars Hodge

In the 4th C, St. Jerome, who lived in Bethlehem, called the Holy Land the Fifth Gospel — because pilgrims are transformed by the experience. In my times of pilgrimage and sabbatical in the Lands of the Bible I have made explored the land from "Dan to Beersheba" and formed deep friendships on both sides of the political divide. My 8th pilgrimage is planned for May 2022.

Jan 30: Violence in Health Care - Jim Brophy & Margaret Heath

Jin and Margaret's recent book, *Code White – Sounding the Alarm about Violence Against Healthcare Workers*, is an expose of a phenomenon that is widespread and yet largely not known by the public. Refer to page 2 two more detail.

JANUARY

*"Love is the spirit of
this church, and service
its law. This is our great
covenant: to dwell
together in peace, to
seek the truth in love,
and to help one
another."*

James Vila Blake.

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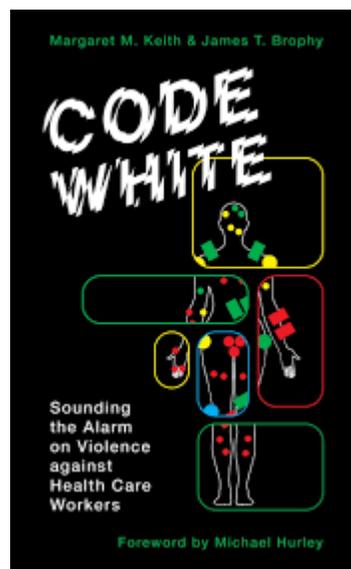
Sunday, January 30—Code White

Code White – Sounding the Alarm about Violence Against Healthcare Workers is an expose of a phenomenon that is widespread and yet largely not known by the public. Through health care workers' own voices, we learn what it is like to work in a state of almost constant hypervigilance, never knowing for certain when they might be harassed or threatened or assaulted. They are the true "experts" about such violence and its negative physical and psychological. Their ideas for prevention are based on their own personal knowledge and lived experience. The book reveals the institutional and systemic failure to protect health care workers from violence and the failure to adequately support them in its aftermath. Violence against health care workers is symptomatic of sick health care system that is inexorably unravelling. Increasingly, governments are failing to provide much needed funding for health care, leading to frustratingly long patient wait times, understaffing, bed shortages, and appallingly impersonal long-term care. Under such conditions, it is not surprising that violence against rushed and harried staff would flourish.



The authors, James Brophy and Margaret Keith both have PhD's in environmental health from the University of Stirling in Scotland.

As a couple and as research partners, they have studied an extensive range of important occupational and environmental health issues. Both worked at the Sarnia Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) where they helped to document one of the largest cohorts of asbestos diseased workers in Canadian history – the industrial workers in Sarnia.



They also assisted the First Nation's community of Aamjiwnaang in examining health problems that were hypothesized to be associated with environmental pollution arising from the petrochemical industry. Margaret was a co-author, along with Ada Lockridge, of an article that found a skewed birth ratio among the Aamjiwnaang community that generated international scientific attention. In 2008 they were recipients of the Gold Award in Environmental Health by Canadian Geographic for their work in assisting the Aamjiwnaang community.

Code White: Sounding the Alarm on Violence against Health Care Workers, drew heavily on three important research studies they conducted over the past five years. The first two focussed on violence against health care staff in the hospital and long-term care settings and the third on health care worker protection during the pandemic.



President's Message

The theme for the month of January is 'Blessing'.

The following passage from the December 2021 issue of The Journey by the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto speaks to me.

The late Irish poet and former priest John O'Donohue wrote often about the power of blessing. He recommended not only counting our blessings by affirming the things for which we're grateful, but also undertaking the *act* of blessing.

He taught that every person is able to bless others, saying that "A blessing is a circle of light drawn around a person to protect, heal and strengthen."

How do we recognize our blessings and what we are grateful for? Many of us are truly blessed in many, many ways. The closeness, love and warmth of family and friends often immediately come to mind. Some of us are blessed with material well being and a sense of security. Still others can include good mental and physical health even in times of stress. What are your true blessings?

And how do we bless others and protect, heal and strengthen others? One way is being there for others especially in their time of need. Another way is to bless the things that we share in common and put aside any perceived differences. Maybe another way is to give hope to others when hope appears to be in short supply. How might you bless others?

In-Person/Hybrid & ZOOM Only Services (Again)

Mostly in-person/hybrid services were offered from the early part of October through December 19th and were well attended and received. We met both the needs of people that enjoyed in-person services and still have Zoom available for others that are physically remote. It was an excellent team effort by pulling through the technical and logistical challenges. Some outside speakers gave very positive feedback to us as a small Fellowship on how well things went. Ann Steadman has been coordinating the efforts with the help of many people.

However, with the emergence of the latest Covid-19 variant Omicron, we have been forced to go back to Zoom only services for the time being. This is another example of how we as a Fellowship have been adapting to changing circumstances.

We are looking forward to providing a varied and thought provoking series of Sunday morning services again this year.

In Fellowship, Dwayne O'Neill

Social Justice

The Story of Soup Sundays and The Inn of the Good Shepherd

Many years ago, to help the fellowship out during a 'lean' period, the then Treasurer, Elaine Abrametz proposed holding monthly 'Soup Sundays' to raise funds. Soup Sundays became greatly successful with Fellowship members donating crocks of home-made soup supplemented by fresh market bread and butter. Not only was operational money raised, but perhaps more importantly, these monthly lunches were enjoyed as times of extended fellowship.

Many years ago as well, Sharon MacKay coordinated a team of Fellowship volunteers who once a month cooked and served a Sunday evening meal at the Inn of the Good Shepherd. Due to diminished energy and person power, this social justice initiative eventually came to an end. As a Fellowship, however, we did not want to cut off support for the Inn. And so, the idea emerged to use our 'Soup Sunday' proceeds as an annual December gift to the Inn. Despite not being able to hold actual 'Soup Sundays' during 2020 and 2021, an annual donation has continued to be made. Given these hard COVID times the Executive this year upped the gift to \$1,250!



Member-At-Large, Eileen Zinn, presents cheque to Inn ED

Myles Vanni.



The Fellowship allocated US\$1,600 to the Kiva social justice initiative in 2015 and since then 137 loans have been made for a total of \$11,925 in loans over that time period. The loans have been made to individuals and small groups in more than 15 different countries.

As of the end of December, there were a total of 38 active Kiva loans totalling US\$1,426 (net after repayments) with an additional \$19 not invested. 7 of these loans are in arrears in their repayments with a total of \$120 in arrears. There is the possibility of a portion of the loans in arrears becoming a loan loss.

From the total US\$1,600 commitment, a \$50 donation was made to Kiva, another \$50 was associated with loan losses and \$55 due to currency losses.

The next status update is scheduled for July 2022 (as a regular twice a year update).

“It is more blessed to give than receive” ([Acts 20:35](#)).

Social Action Going Forward

You may recall to in early July last year, a survey was sent out to gauge what social action direction the members and friends are most interested in. It asked- “what inspires and energizes you in this area”.

The question at that time was around **Social Action Energy** where 10 being fully energized with head, heart and hands and a 1 would represent a good idea but doesn't energize my heart and hands.

Social Action Areas & Energy:

Habitat Restoration 8.3. Climate Action 6.9, Poverty Reduction 6.6, Racism Transformation 5.6, Regenerative Agriculture 5.6, Youth Mental Health 4.6

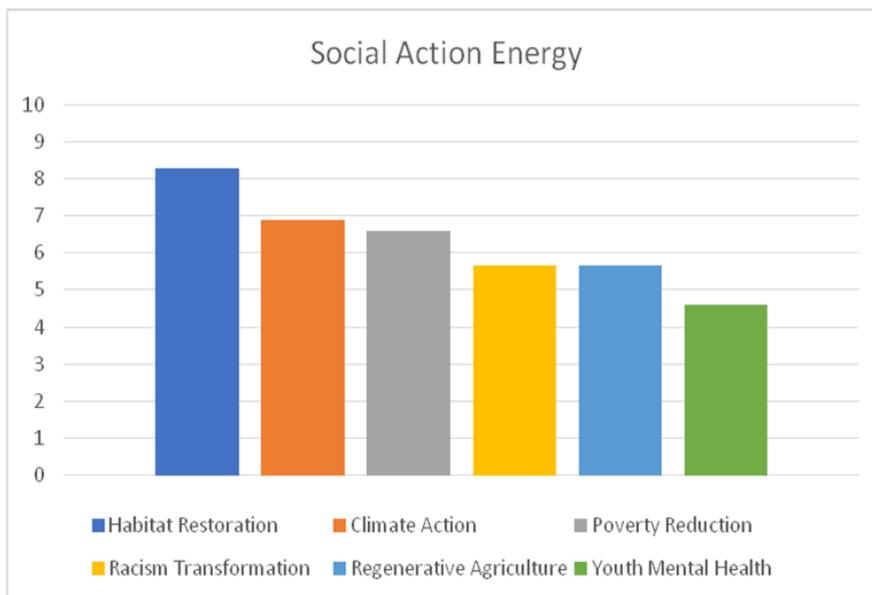
The area of most energy is Habitat Restoration with Climate Action and Poverty Reduction very close together at a lower level.

At this time, we're asking for suggestions from you on what specific social justice activities that we as individuals and possibly as a group can get involved with?

These may be opportunities that you are currently connected with or wish to be.

In addition, we would like to see who would be interested in being part of a social action team. Please contact me if you would like to be involved in this important area.

Dwayne



How To Donate

Thank you for the eTransfers and cheques that have been arriving.

Your continued financial support is appreciated. If you would like to make an eTransfer donation, please send it to: UFSPH.executive@gmail.com. There is no longer a need for a security question. If you prefer to write a cheque, please designate the payee as Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia and Port Huron and mail the cheque to:

Mark Woolston, UFSPH Treasurer, 1993 Rainbow Trail, Sarnia, ON, N7T 7H6

A PayPal donation button has been added to our website, <https://www.uusarnia.com/>. Please note that PayPal charges for this service, and we are only crediting the donor with the net amount.

CUC Inclusivity Forums



Happy 2022 As part of our commitment to dismantling systemic barriers to full inclusion, the Social Justice team has prepared 3 Inclusivity forums: a FREE learning series that will focus on:

Becoming more conscious of privilege, power, and biases

Practice noticing our own discomfort that arises when our beliefs, opinions, biases, etc are challenged, and our response to it, and

How to shift our UU culture to be more inclusive and aware.

Session 1 - Diverse Relationships and Families

Wednesday, February 2, 7 pm ET (1.5 hours)
Registration ends January 19: <https://bit.ly/InclusivityForumS1>

This forum will focus on the experiences of UU's in diverse relationships and family structures within UU groups/congregations. This includes, but it not limited to, ethically non-monogamous relationships (where informed consent is necessary), polyamorous families/relationships, families where parents are no longer romantic partners but continue to co-parent and have family together, platonic families, and those who 'do' relationships and family outside of society's norms.

Materials will be shared with registrants in advance. At the forum, we'll discuss how UU communities can become more inclusive. The CUC's [Responsibility Covenant](#) will be used to promote safety for all in attendance. A caucus group will be available for those in alternative relationships/families should they prefer to discuss together.

Session 2: Welcoming People of all Dis/Abilities

Wednesday, March 2, 7 pm ET (1.5 hours) **Registration ends February 16:** <https://bit.ly/InclusivityForumS2>

This forum will focus on the experiences of UU's with various dis/abilities within UU groups/congregations. This includes, but is not limited to various physical, mental, and emotional dis/abilities. **We will share materials with registrants in advance** and then we'll meet to discuss how UU communities can become more inclusive. The CUC's [Responsibility Covenant](#) will be used to promote safety for all in attendance by helping those with relative privilege to keep personal discomfort in check without projecting. A caucus group will be available for those with different dis/abilities, should they prefer to discuss together.

Session 3: Welcoming People of all Classes

Wednesday, April 6, 7 pm ET (1.5 hours)
Registration ends March 23: <https://bit.ly/InclusivityForumS3>

This forum will focus on people's experiences of classism in UU groups/congregations and how our organizational cultures can shift to be more aware of how we privilege those who have more socio-economic wealth over those who have less. The **materials provided for registrants in advance** will introduce the basics of class and classism, along with stories from those with lived experience. During the Forum, the CUC's [Responsibility Covenant](#) will be used to promote safety for all in attendance by helping those with relative privilege to keep personal discomfort in check without projecting. A caucus group will be available for those who feel they experience classism should they prefer to discuss together.

Find more CUC events on the [CUC Events Calendar](#).

Vyda Ng, Executive Director

A New Day's Lyric—Amanda Gorman

May this be the day
 We come together.
 Mourning, we come to mend,
 Withered, we come to weather,
 Torn, we come to tend,
 Battered, we come to better.
 Tethered by this year of yearning,
 We are learning
 That though we weren't ready for this,
 We have been readied by it.
 We steadily vow that no matter
 How we are weighed down,
 We must always pave a way forward.

This hope is our door, our portal.
 Even if we never get back to normal,
 Someday we can venture beyond it,
 To leave the known and take the first steps.
 So let us not return to what was normal,
 But reach toward what is next.

What was cursed, we will cure.
 What was plagued, we will prove pure.
 Where we tend to argue, we will try to agree,
 Those fortunes we forswore, now the future we fore-
 see,
 Where we weren't aware, we're now awake;
 Those moments we missed
 Are now these moments we make,
 The moments we meet,
 And our hearts, once altogether beaten,
 Now all together beat.

Come, look up with kindness yet,
 For even solace can be sourced from sorrow.
 We remember, not just for the sake of yesterday,
 But to take on tomorrow.

We heed this old spirit,
 In a new day's lyric,
 In our hearts, we hear it:
 For auld lang syne, my dear,
 For auld lang syne.
 Be bold, sang Time this year,
 Be bold, sang Time,
 For when you honor yesterday,
 Tomorrow ye will find.
 Know what we've fought
 Need not be forgot nor for none.
 It defines us, binds us as one,
 Come over, join this day just begun.
 For wherever we come together,
 We will forever overcome.

*Amanda Gorman said she wrote the poem to
 "celebrate the new year and honor the hurt and the
 humanity of the last one."*



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

January's Theme—Blessings

Blessings

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/2021/The-Journey-2021-12-Blessing.pdf>



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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