



The Flaming Chalice

September 2020

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

... an inspiring alternative for spiritual explorers

September 2020 Services by ZOOM: Sundays 11 a.m.

September 6: Labour Day Weekend - There will be no service today.

You are invited to connect with the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto for their 10:30 a.m. service. The sermon topic will be “The Fruits of our Labour” presented by the Rev. Lynn Harrison.

ZOOM [FirstUnitarianToronto.org/zoomSunday](https://www.firstunitariantoronto.org/zoomSunday)

YouTube [FirstUnitarianToronto.org/watchSunday](https://www.firstunitariantoronto.org/watchSunday)

September 13: “Medical Aid in Dying – an Update” - Susan Desjardins

We welcome Susan who is a Board member at Dying With Dignity Canada to discuss how Canadians have benefitted from the legalization of “Medical Aid in Dying” (MAID) in 2016 and what needs to change to improve access for Canadians.

September 20: “A View on the Brighter Side” - Michigan resident Bob Weir

With the political and social conditions south of the Canadian border, it would be very easy for our presenter, Bob Weir, to talk about the plight of our cousins in the “Divided States of America.” Instead, Bob will recap his current 18-month road trip around the US. He will share the beauty and majesty of more than 30 locations: scenic highways, huge trees, placid rivers, intriguing sand dunes, tremendous mountains, secluded places, amazing wildlife and flora, and endearing people.

September 27: “Flowers from Concrete” - Rev. Mandy Beal, Senior Minister at Birmingham Unitarian Church, Bloomfield Township, Michigan.

Have you ever noticed a flower that has grown through a crack in concrete? The human spirit can be like that, too, finding a way to bloom despite the odds.



*“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.”*

Lee Barker, UU Minister

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Executive Notes
- 3 President’s Message
- 4 ZOOMing & AGM
- 5 Updates
- 6 Resilience: Points to Ponder
- 7 Remembering Laurence LeCapelain
- 8 UU Links—Theme & Services

Our 'theme' for September is



Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.

Arundhati Roy

Executive Notes From the President



Thanks go out to the Executive Team members that have returned this program year (Allan, Annette, Chuck, Mark, and Tracy-Lynn). A special thanks to the new members Don (Membership), Brenda (RE) and Marianne (Member-at-Large).

The Program Team has done a fantastic effort at pulling together Zoom based Sunday services since April.

The Executive Team will hold its first meeting of this program year in the second week of September. A topic on the agenda will be how will we hold Sunday services going forward.

We appreciate that you have completed the Sunday service survey that was sent in late August. We are in the process of compiling the survey results and will share a summary with you soon.

I'm pleased to be able to work with such a talented Executive Team.

Dwayne O'Neill

Your Elected Executive Team for 2020-21

Position	Person
President	Dwayne O'Neill
Vice-President	Tracy-Lynn Jutras
Past President	Annette Verhagen
Treasurer	Mark Woolston
Program	Allan McKeown
Secretary	Ineke Dijkhuizen
Membership	Don Greaves
Religious Exploration	Brenda Woolston
Member at-Large	Chuck MacKenzie
Member at-Large	Marianne Nichols

Many thanks to Dan Danner for agreeing to continue on as our excellent Book-Keeper.

President's Message — by Dwayne O'Neill

We live in extraordinary times! We are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic with about 25 million people worldwide cases and almost a million COVID-19 related deaths.

In January of this year, only nine months ago, who would have imagined all of the changes in our everyday lives..... lining up to go grocery shopping, wearing a mask inside, our children out of school for almost three months, many people working remotely from home, grandparents unable to hug and kiss their grandchildren, our seniors dying,

The COVID-19 situation has been very serious and devastating to many, especially the less fortunate and the vulnerable. COVID-19 has exposed our society's weak areas- long-term care, government planning, people living from week to week working at minimum wages.



On the other hand, COVID-19 has given me an opportunity to reflect on what is really important and to examine how I react to stress. It reinforced for me the importance of personal relationships – obviously family and close relationships but also with my friends and our spiritual community. It was an opportunity to observe how I respond when experiencing uncertain times and unexpected changes.

I feel that these are unprecedented and to some degree uncertain times. It seems more important than ever that I'm listening carefully to the needs of others and that I'm responding in a caring and helpful way.

In Fellowship, Dwayne O'Neill



"Allow" - Danna Faulds

There is no controlling life. Try corralling a lightning bolt, containing a tornado. Dam a stream and it will create a new channel. Resist, and the tide will sweep you off your feet. Allow, and grace will carry you to higher ground. The only safety lies in letting it all in – the wild and the weak; fear, fantasies, failures and success. When loss rips off the doors of the heart, or sadness veils your vision with despair, practice becomes simply bearing the truth. In the choice to let go of your known way of being, the whole world is revealed to your new eyes.

ZOOMING Into Our Future... Including AGM 2020

Our Fellowship began ZOOM Sunday services on April 19th. Many thanks to the Program Team for making this happen inclusive of providing these ZOOM opportunities for most of the Sundays in July and August. Special recognition to Allan McKeown (Program Chair) and to Don Greaves (Tech. advisor)!

Members and official 'Friends' have asked to complete a survey about our ZOOM services so far and into the future. As stated by Dwayne, "In going forward, the Executive Team is very interested in receiving your feedback on your experiences with Zoom Sunday services and to explore your feelings about the option of in-person Sunday services or other options in the future." The survey closes on Friday, September 4th. To date (September 2nd) some 27 survey responses have been submitted.



On Sunday, June 28th, with Fellowship members having become comfortable with ZOOM, we were able to hold our Annual General Meeting using this platform. Kudos to both Annette Verhagen and Dwayne O'Neill for successfully pulling off our first virtual AGM! At the end of the AGM, Dwayne thanked Annette Verhagen for serving two years as Fellowship President and continuing on as Past President. Dwayne said the following: "I expect that all have appreciated Annette's co-ordination of the Executive Team. Under her leadership the Executive Team consulted with the members and friends and initiated a new social justice project. Another highlight has been the insights that she has shared in the monthly themes for the newsletters."

It was also announced that Ann Steadman had been nominated as an 'Honorary Life Member' with the

following information being provided:

"Ann Steadman will be retiring from the Executive Team and I would like to take some time to recognize all of her service to the Fellowship over the years.

Ann first joined the Fellowship in 1999 while working at the hospital and being heavily involved with her union.

In 2007, she volunteered to lead our Lay Chaplaincy Committee and at the national CUC level as the CUC Lay Chaplaincy Committee Chair from 2016 to early this year. At the national CUC AGM in 2012, Ann presented a motion that was accepted extending the terms for lay chaplains of small lay led congregations such as our own.

Ann has been involved with almost all aspects of the Fellowship: serving as Vice-President from 2010 - 2013, President for 5 years starting in 2013 to 2018 and then continuing on as Program Chair then the RE Chair this past year.

Ann has been a leader in several of our social action initiatives. This included our efforts in medically assisted dying and taking on key roles as a member of the Syrian Refugee Sponsorship from 2015 to 2017. Ann was instrumental in connecting us to the CUC refugee sponsorship process through which we were matched with Kasra and Jamila and their three children. The success of many of these endeavours was directly the result of Ann's leadership and dedication."

This nomination was agreed to by those present.

Dear Executive Team:

I was totally 'dumbstruck' by both the kind words offered by Annette and Dwayne today at the AGM and being made an 'Honorary Life Member' of the Fellowship. This recognition was totally unexpected and something that had not ever crossed my mind. I am both humbled by and very grateful for this as I move into my second 'retirement'. For me the concept of 'retirement' has more to do with 're-tiring'... taking a bit of time to see what may come next that can be engaged in with renewed energy and, symbolically speaking, with 'new tires'.

With heart filled appreciation, *Ann*

Teenage Tree Program (TTP) – September 2020 Update



We continue to take care of the saplings from the planted seeds from last year. We have had some setbacks with COVID-19 because we were not able to access the nursery at Aamjiwnaang First Nation to take care of the seedlings or have volunteers transplant the samplings during the first stages of COVID-19. Since then, we have had one volunteer day at the nursery in August.

We plan to have a sale of plants in the fall, so we will keep you posted.

The TTP website is under construction with information on the program:

<https://teenagetreeprogram.com/>

It is exciting to see the seeds of our TTP efforts take root and appreciate all of the efforts and support from the many members and friends of the Fellowship.

Small Group Ministry

Members have resumed meeting every other Thursday afternoon outdoors at Canatara Park. All are welcome. Contact Betty Learn for info at: 519-337-4039.

How to Donate

From your online banking, request to do an eTransfer

Use the recipient email address of UFSPH.executive@gmail.com

In addition to specifying a \$ amount, please create a security question.

Send a separate email to MEWoolston@hotmail.com with the answer to the security question.

Be prepared for an eTransfer fee to be charged to your account, typically \$0.50 to \$1.50.

Alternatively, you can write a cheque to the "Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia and Port Huron" and mail it to:

Mark E. Woolston, UFSPH Treasurer, 1993 Rainbow Trail, Sarnia, Ontario,

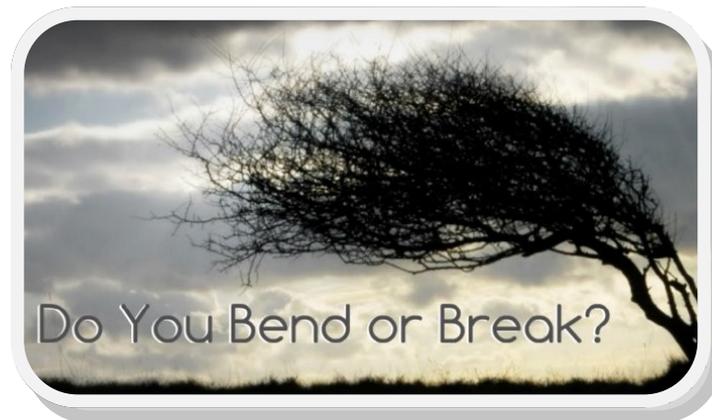
Canada, N7T 7H6

Resilience: Points to Ponder

The Fable of the Willow Tree and the Oak Tree

In the same field stand both a mighty oak tree and a willow tree. The willow tree envies the power and strength that the oak tree possesses. One day a storm, with whipping winds and torrential rain, makes its way through the field. After the storm passes, the willow tree notices that the oak tree has fallen over in the storm. In a state of confusion, she asks the farmer what happened to the oak tree. The farmer tells the willow tree that although the oak was mighty and solid, it was also rigid and inflexible and when the winds were too much for it to resist, the oak tree collapsed under the pressure. The willow thought about herself for a minute. She realized that her ability to survive the storm was due to her flexibility and adaptability as she was able to bend with the wind to weather the storm.

Better to yield when it is folly to resist, than to resist stubbornly and be destroyed.



A clay pot sitting in the sun will always be a clay pot. It has to go through the white heat of the furnace to become porcelain.

- Mildred Witte Stouven

My barn having burned down, I can now see the moon.

- Mizuta Masahide

In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer.

- Albert Camus

If your heart is broken, make art with the pieces.

- Shane Koycz

Keeping in memory....

LeCAPELAIN, Laurence Clifford

Father, Grandfather, Great Grandfather, professor, mentor, guru, and humanitarian, migrated from Trillium Villa, Sarnia, Ontario April 11, 2020, after months of battling aspiration pneumonia, just nine days short of his 91st birthday). Born in Windsor, Ontario, April 20th 1929 to parents, Edward and Alice LeCapelain (deceased) and also predeceased by siblings, Dawn Rowe, Glenn LeCapelain, and Neville LeCapelain. He will be remembered always by his life partner, Richard Lalonde, daughter, Mary Allyson Lalonde, her husband David and their children, Nicole Lalonde and husband, Brent Rowan and their sons Izaak and Zady, Jordan Lalonde and his wife, Amy and their daughter, Alya, Nathan Lalonde, and also by Laurence's separated wife, Bernadette LeCapelain, all of Guelph. Also remembered by his son Daniel LeCapelain, his wife Kara, daughter Alysha and stepdaughters, Kelly and Katie, all of Florida. There are many wonderful relatives and friends who also remember and appreciate Laurence for his support and love over the years. After receiving his Master's degree from the University of Windsor, Ontario, Laurence was a teacher for over 40 years, both in the USA and Canada. He ended his career at Lambton College as a former Dean of Liberal Arts, and professor of philosophy, English, history, psychology, ECE studies and sociology. In addition, Laurence and Richard, owners of ESQUIRE Inv. (Sarnia Ltd.) have provided housing and support for single mothers and young people since 1974. Laurence loved the company of other people, parties, talking, philosophizing, debating, reading (especially poetry), music of all genres, swimming, dancing and playing tennis. Rick and all of Laurence's family and many friends feel a great loss but are relieved that he is no longer experiencing pain and suffering. Thanks go to his many wonderful PSW's who helped over the last few years. Special thanks to Steve who went the extra mile to make Laurence's life more manageable through difficult times. Thank you to all the staff of Trillium Villa who are, as Laurence put it, "wonderful people". Also thanks to his many friends at the Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia. Cremation has taken place. A celebration of life will be scheduled at a later time. Arrangements entrusted to The McKENZIE & BLUNDY FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION CENTRE (519-344-3131). As an expression of sympathy, donations can be sent to the Inn of the Good Shepherd, 115 John St., Sarnia, ON N7T 2Z1. Messages of condolence & memories may be left at www.mckenzieblundy.com



Laurence put a great deal of effort into joining us on Sunday mornings while his health permitted. Perhaps we will especially remember him for suggesting and then funding two August Fellowship picnics (2018 & 2019). Above, Laurence is pictured at the 2019 event.

I can be changed by what
happens to me.
But I refuse to be reduced
by it.

Maya Angelou



September's Theme—Resilience

Please click on the link below to access the theme package so graciously shared by the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto.

<https://firstunitariantoronto.org/wp-content/publications/nh/2019/New-Horizons-2020-05-Resilience.pdf>

Quotes in this edition, excepting the 'Fable', come from 1st Toronto's theme package.



Links to Larger Canadian UU Churches Who Are Streaming Sunday Services

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

<https://vancouverunitarians.ca/>

<https://victoriaunitarian.ca/>

<https://www.uce.ca/sunday-services-online/> (Edmonton)

<https://uuch.ca/> (Halifax)

Other UU links:

CUC eNews <http://cuc.ca/cuc-news/>

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

Newsletter Editor: Ann Steadman

Assistant Editor: Wendy Cornelis

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

asteadman@cogeco.ca