



The Flaming Chalice

June 2025

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

June Services

In-person & via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83101536641>

Theme:

'Cultivating Joy'



June 1: "Beyond the Bedside: Comprehensive Approaches to End-of-Life Care" – Jen Vogtmann, OTD, OTRL

Jen will explore the diverse role of a death doula, emphasizing how the work goes beyond bedside support to encompass preplanning, education, grief assistance, and community outreach. She will highlight the importance of creating compassionate environments for individuals and families as they navigate the end-of-life journey.

June 8: "Spring Wild Church Experience" – Mary Abma

Mary, who holds an Eco-Ministry Certificate from Seminary of the Wild, will be leading us in an outdoor, wild-church experience of spring-- a season of expansion, vitality, and renewal. We will meet outdoors at Canatara Park. Please bring a lawn chair, a bottle of water, and a journal. More info page 2.

June 15: "Joy and Justice" – Rev. Arran Morton

As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, one of our aspirations is to 'strive to work joyfully for a just and compassionate society, experimenting with new forms of community.' In this service we will explore what our active engagement with joy can teach us and how we can cultivate joy that will guide and fuel us in creating the communities and world we seek.

June 22: "Key Issues for Sarnia Today" – Councilor Chrissy McRoberts

Councilor McRoberts will discuss with us the key issues facing our city that prompted her to stand for office and how these are, or are not, being addressed by the City Council today.

June 22nd is also an 'Ice Cream Social'.

June 29: "Flower Communion" – Sharon MacKay

This is our annual ritual during which we acknowledge and express the beauty of diversity. We will also recognize our new members for 2024-25 and discuss our April Fellowship survey results.

More info on page 3.

I slept and dreamt that
life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life
was service.
I acted and behold,
service was joy.

Rabindranath Tagore

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More June Service Info

June 8: "Spring Wild Church Experience"



Directions: Take Michigan Ave. west heading into Point Edward. Go past the lights at Front St. and turn right on Alfred St. Alfred becomes Sandy Lane right at the Park border. Turn right into the park, then right to go around the small round-a-bout. Go around the circle and exit to the right on the small road which heads north towards the beach. This will lead you into the parking lot. The red circle in the above picture indicates where we will meet.

June 15: "Joy and Justice" - Rev. Arran Morton

Rev. Arran Morton (he/they) currently lives in Saint John, New Brunswick, though he is from Scotland and moved from the West Coast (Victoria, BC) to the East Coast this summer via a cross-country road trip with his family. His work has focused on love-based community building as well as training and facilitation on issues related to healthy relationships, sexuality, conflict resolution and restorative justice/practices.

Before moving to Saint John, Arran was the Minister at Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship for two years and before that the Director of Spiritual Exploration at First Unitarian Church of Victoria. He is currently a Spiritual Director and part-time Executive Director of a small non-profit that supports trans and non-binary youth and their families.



June 29: "Flower Communion"



The 'Flower Communion' was created by the Czechoslovakian, Unitarian minister, Norbert Capek. He introduced this special service on June 4, 1923. For some time, he had felt the need for some symbolic ritual to bind people more closely together, to express the beauty of diversity. So, bring a flower, wild, grown in your garden or from a florist to place in a vase and then to be chosen by another person, during the service, to take home.

Report & Reflection by President Tracy Jutras

Executive Team Report: May 2025 Highlights

- We have set a date for our annual Laurence LeCapelain Memorial Potluck Picnic and it will take place Sunday, July 27th at 11:00 a.m., Lamrecton Park Gazebo. More details will be emailed in July.
- Social evening at Maude's Variety planned for Thursday, June 5th at 6 p.m.
- Another successful Soup Sunday took place with proceeds going to the Inn of the Good Shepherd. Thank you everyone.
- A lifetime Honorary Membership will be awarded to Allan McKeown for his dedicated service to our Fellowship over the years.

June is our last month of our programming year and we will finish off the month with our annual Flower Communion Ceremony. On Sunday, June 8th, we will be having another outdoor service at Canatara Park with Mary Abma. I also want to wish all the Dads a Happy Father's Day on June 15th. Our first Death Café took place on May 25th at Backhome Coffee Roastery and it was a full house. We are hoping to plan another one soon for those who could not attend due to attendance restrictions.

Our theme for this month is "Cultivating Joy." It is so important to intentionally bring joy into your life. Humans were never meant to absorb all the terrible things that are happening in the world today. We have spent most of our life on the planet in small villages and yet here we are, 24-7 world news. I encourage you all to carve out moments of daily bliss in your life and to develop and maintain rituals that give you comfort and let's all move forward together.

In Fellowship, Tracy Jutras

All Party Motion Regarding Food Deliveries To Gaza

Dwayne O'Neill asked the Executive to consider endorsing the idea of an all political party motion regarding food deliveries to Gaza. The situation in Gaza is dire and the Israeli blockade has accelerated the starvation of the Palestinian population.

This would be sent on behalf of our Fellowship to all party leaders on a national level, Mark Carney, Andrew Scheer, Yves François Blanchet, Don Davies and Elizabeth May.

The following motion received unanimous email consent by the Executive Team:

MOTION: That the board approves sending the following statement (see below) to all of our national party leaders in Ottawa. *Moved by Tracy Jutras, Seconded by Dick Felton.*



Dear Federal Party Leaders

I implore each of you, as leaders of your respective parties, to present an all party motion to Parliament as soon as it reconvenes on May 26th.

Canadians urgently request the Netanyahu government to immediately resume food aid deliveries to the people of Gaza and remove the blockade that was imposed in early March.

The world watches as the men, women and especially children of Gaza needlessly suffer.

Respectfully,

The Unitarian Fellowship of Sarnia and Port Huron

Tracy Jutras, President



Fellowship Happenings



UU Social

Maud's Variety

125 Mitton St. S, Sarnia

Thursday, June 5, 2025

6 PM

Come, connect & enjoy great conversation!

Sunday, June 22 is an 'Ice Cream Social'!

Plan to stay after the service to enjoy a delicious ice cream cone and wonderful chats.

Small donations appreciated.

All proceeds to The Inn of the Good Shepherd.



Death Café

The May 25th event at the Backhome Coffee Roastery was a great success.

Many thanks to Mary Stearns, Tracy Jutras, Brenda Woolston, Ann Steadman & especially to Allan McKeown!

A second Death Café, to accommodate some 24 people on a wait list, is being planned .

Stay tuned for more details.

Quotes on 'Cultivating Joy' To Ponder

Joy doesn't mean forgetting what's broken; it means remembering what's beautiful. It reminds us we are alive, connected, and capable of delight even as we fight for liberation.

- **Christina Rivera**

All we have are moments. So live them as though not one can be wasted. Inhabit them, fill them with the light of your best good intention, honour them with your full presence, find the joy, the calm, the assuredness that allows the hours and the days to take care of themselves. If we can do that, we will have lived.

- **Richard Wagamese**,
Embers: One Ojibway's Meditations

I have drunken deep of joy, And I will taste no other wine tonight.

- **Percy Bysshe Shelley**

It is right it should be so; [We were] made for joy and woe; And when this we rightly know, Thro' the world we safely go. Joy and woe are woven fine, A clothing for the soul divine. Under every grief and pine runs a joy with silken twine.

- **William Blake**, *The Complete Poems*

If there was an abundance of misery in the world, there was also sufficient joy, yes - as long as one knew where to look for it.

- **Rohinton Mistry**

Find a place inside where there's joy, and the joy will burn out the pain.

- **Joseph Campbell**

There is no way to repress pleasure and expect liberation, satisfaction, or joy.

- **adrienne maree brown**

Amplifying Black joy is not about dismissing or creating an 'alternative' Black narrative that ignores the realities of our collective pain; rather, it is about holding the pain and injustices we experience as Black folks around the world in tension with the joy we experience in pain's midst. It's about using that joy as an entry into understanding the oppressive

forces we navigate through as a means to imagine and create a world free of them.

- **Clever Cruz**

I've seen what happens when we walk towards the crossroads of joy and justice: we quickly start to feel relief, excitement, and hope because social change feels

good. White people feel more capable, and people of color get an opportunity to heal parts of trauma and make more joyful decisions. Collectively, we see that the work we're doing is helping people and that makes us want to do more... Joy is the sustainable source of fuel for the long-haul work we have ahead of us, we can't treat it as a luxury.

- **Julica Hermann de la Fuente**

Joy is prayer; joy is strength joy is love; joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls.

- **Mother Teresa**



For the theme package on 'Cultivating Joy' contact Ann Steadman

519-542-9708 or ann.e.steadman53@gmail.com

Remembering Kathleen Pretty

Born: March 23, 1961 – Died: September 29, 2024



Kathleen began attending our Fellowship after coming across our website and recognizing that our Fellowship could be the spiritual home for which she had been searching.

She had been a member of the United Church in Corunna but decided to part ways when the congregation rejected a move to allow LGBTQ couples to be married in the church.

Kathleen was always a strong advocate for human and civil rights. This desire for social justice led her to work on a number of NDP election campaigns in Sarnia. She served as the Constituency Assistant to Bob Huget who was elected as our MPP in the 1990 Provincial election beating second place Mike Bradley (Liberal) by over 2000 votes.

In recent years Kathleen worked at the Inn of the Good Shepherd as Executive Assistant to Myles Vanni.

Kathleen married Bob Gray on June 26, 1999. It was the second marriage for both of them. Kathleen did not have any children from her first marriage and became a step-mother to Bob's two sons Jay and Josh.

In recent years, Kathleen and Bob suffered from cancer and Bob died on May 15th, 2022. Kathleen eventually succumbed to her cancer last September. Their ashes will be interred together on June 14th at 12 Noon in a private ceremony for family and close

friends at Black Creek cemetery, near Wilkesport. This small rural cemetery was established by Kathleen's cousins and an adjacent sideroad is known as "Pretty Road".

Members and Friends of the Fellowship are warmly invited to gather later with Kathleen and Bob's family and friends for a at the Big Fish Restaurant at 1717 London Line at 2:30 pm for some food and refreshments in honour of Kathleen and Bob.

Both Kathleen and Bob could be described as "private" individuals and I know that she wasn't too keen on socializing in her last years. On Sundays she usually sat at the back of the Kiwanis Room beside Chuck MacKenzie and me and often left soon after the service ended.

She loved, however, being a part of "UU" (as she referred to us) and adored us all. She wasn't able to attend regularly due to her health challenges but always made an effort to join us when she was able.

Kathleen did inform her executor that when she died, she wanted her and Bob's ashes to be buried in one urn in the cemetery beside Pretty Road and she wanted a Unitarian service. She chose June for the interment as that was the month of their marriage.

I hope you will be able to make your way to the Big Fish on June 14th at 2:30 pm. You may not have known Kathleen very well but if you are a UU she would hope that you will attend to honour her memory.

Respectfully Submitted, Allan McKeown

Donations in their memory are appreciated:

Kathleen Pretty Memorial Awards

For graduates of the Lambton College Culinary Management and Social Service Worker Programs through the Sarnia Community Foundation
(<https://sarniacommunityfoundation.ca>)

Bob Gray

To support the residents of the Westover Treatment Centre
(www.westovertreatmentcentre.ca)

Canadian Unitarian Council Staff Changes

Letter from the Board

Transitional is the word that comes to mind as the most appropriate naming of this time. So many transitions are happening globally, nationally, and in our own Canadian Unitarian Council ecosphere. The longest serving staff member, Reverend Linda Thompson, will retire from 23 years of service as the Congregational Life Lead for the Central and Eastern regions on June 13. We are grateful to know she will continue to offer her wisdom, insight, and inspiration as part-time Interim Minister with Toronto 1st. We so want to celebrate Linda, her commitment and her many gifts! Everyone is invited to her [farewell party](#) June 7 which will be online and in person for anyone able to come to the CUC office!

More transitions of significance were shared earlier this month with the announcement of Vyda Ng's retirement from her Executive Director position and the contracting of Reverend Anne Barker as Transitional Executive Director (TED). Below is the Board's portion of the [announcement](#) with a couple of points bolded to focus the rest of this message.

*With deep appreciation for years of committed service to our Canadian Unitarian Council, the Board of Trustees has accepted Vyda Ng's notice of retiring from her CUC Executive Director role. Her thirteen years as Executive Director have enabled the CUC to accomplish much and be effective through significant challenges, and changes. **While this is a bittersweet moment, we have profound feelings of gratitude for her commitment to the organization over the years and tremendous appreciation for her willingness to engage in a collaborative transitional plan.***

We are pleased to announce that the CUC Board has contracted with Rev Anne Barker as the Transitional Executive Director (TED) for the next three years. Her term overlaps one year with Vyda Ng's, allowing a gentler, more thorough transfer of knowledge and responsibilities followed by two years to discern the

*process and scope of the future permanent Executive Director position. **This transitional period will be a time to experiment with innovative ideas and events, consulting, and collaborating, while maintaining the vital ongoing support that CUC provides to congregations.** We are excited and looking forward to what the next three years will bring.*

The planning for Vyda's transition had already begun when Rev Anne proposed the TED position. It was an innovative and emergent idea that generated immediate curiosity, sparked energy and upended the notion of "at the speed of church" being slow.

Some brief reflections on the bolded text: to have a three-year process to review our purpose, systems, leadership model and sustainability is hope-filled and energizing. It invites activation and embodiment of our 8th Principle, to intentionally look at systems and ourselves. We have immense gratitude to everyone for the commitment to participate in this transitional plan which will only strengthen our collaboration muscle. The willingness to engage in innovative possibilities is inspiring as well as aligning with our goals and priorities approved at the 2024 AGM.

This is an exciting and full-on transitional time for the CUC. All Canadian UUs will be invited into the process. We are humbled and excited with the possibilities. Read the full [announcement](#) here.

*Your CUC Board of Trustees Co-Presidents
Rev Debra Faulk and Margaret Kohr*





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 Association's **UUWorld** <http://www.uuworld.org/>

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