



Unitarian Congregation
of Guelph

Winter/Spring 2021

UCG THEMES

January: Possibility

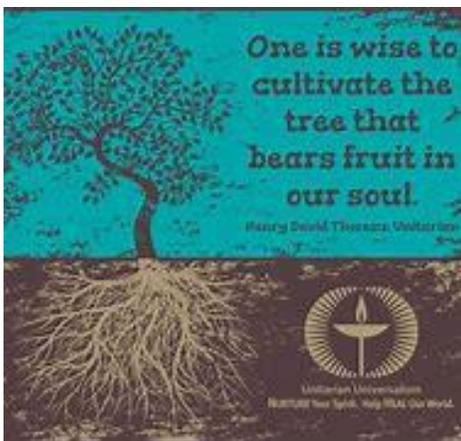
February: Beauty

March: Vision

April: Growth

May: Blessing

June: Acceptance



How do we wish to be together?

WINTER/SPRING 2021

In this issue

- **Upcoming Sunday Services**
- **New Programming Opportunities**
- **Developing Community and Connection**

“CONNECT, IMAGINE AND TRY STUFF. SEE WHAT HAPPENS, MEASURE IMPACT. TRY AGAIN.” DIANA SMITH.

To my friends and extended family at UCG – While there is no question that recent months have brought disruption to our original plans, there has also been an outpouring of love and care, as well as commitment to our community and to shared ministry.

I will admit that when the reality of the pandemic first became clear and we knew that this was something that would be with us for some time, I worried about whether and how we could withstand the turbulence of having our normal rhythms so disrupted. While the adaptations have not been easy and continue to require much of our amazing community members, the courage, strength and resilience shown by our community has been something to behold. We remain financially stable, growing in our programming and offerings and very much connected.

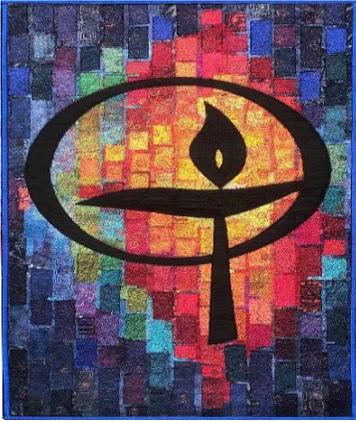
I do miss the opportunity to see one another in person and yet I value how this period has also allowed us to experiment, to try new ways of being, and to expand our sources of inspiration. In doing so, we have planted seeds together for the next chapter of our story as a congregation.

The newsletter that follows is an opportunity to see all that is being co-created and what is emerging going into the New Year. It is far too easy to take for granted all of the formal expressions of how we have deepened our connections and support of each other. We have learned and grown together, and we continue to live our purpose as a community.

I am proud, humbled and deeply grateful to this community, to our dedicated staff and volunteers for enriching all of our lives.

With love and gratitude – wishing you peace and connection in the year to come.

Christine Robinson (UCG Board President)



Sunday Services will continue online at 10:30am.

SUNDAY SERVICES

Highlights! Coming up!

- Rev. Linda Thomson from the Canadian Unitarian Council will be joining us on January 17th and March 28th, 2021
- An opportunity to explore and expand as we visit other UU congregations and explore what is happening within the broader Unitarian Universalist communities. We will be having a reflection circle after the service to inquire into our experiences and curiosity.
- Anne Bokma, Author of "My Year of Living Spiritually", will be joining us on April 11th, 2021 to talk about the Power in writing and sharing our own story. Workshop and story telling event to follow. See events calendar for full information. www.guelph-unitarians@gmail.com

Check out our event calendar on our website: www.guelph-unitarians.com

Programming 2021

NEW: HeART Space: Join Mel on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7-8pm, as we use our monthly theme as inspiration to explore creatively through visual, written and meditative art. For more information and to receive the zoom link, please email: Mel dllguelphunitarians@gmail.com

NEW: Lay Spiritual Care Peer to Peer group: All those that have taken the Part 1 and Part 2 online Lay Spiritual care training, are invited to join together on the First Monday of every Month from 7-8:30pm for a time of connection, deepening, exploration and practice as we explore questions related to our monthly theme's. If you would like to get involved or take the training, please email: Mel dllguelphunitarians@gmail.com

Dismantling Racism: This group was formed in June, in response to the desire to talk more openly about and explore more deeply the Racism in our world today. As the group has grown and evolved, we feel the desire to live the change, do our own work, and look for ways that we might work practically and collaboratively with local organizations who have a shared heartbeat with respect to Dismantling Racism, specifically with a local context. As we walk further down this path, we do so with awareness of words shared at the CUC conference by Stephen Paquette, which was to "acknowledge relationship not resources" and that the path forward with a focus on relationship includes, "Nothing for us, without us." This group meets every other Saturday afternoon. Full details available on our website.

For full program listings and for all of our Sunday Service: www.guelph-unitarians.com/events

If you would like to connect to talk further about our programs, committees, teams and our community, please reach out to Mel: dllguelphunitarians@gmail.com

Getting Involved: Serving, growing together and plugging into community

UCG Committees/Teams

More Information on our Teams and Committees

Board: The board is responsible for the fiscal, policy, vision and governance of our congregation. Combining big picture thinking with focus on upholding the Super vision for the congregation, the board is a reflection of the congregation.

Programming: This committee meets three times per year to help to guide and define programming for all ages. This committee focuses on programming as a means to developing space for personal spiritual exploration, deepening our connections and cultivating relationship.

POD: Pod members bring a snack, set up coffee, welcome folks and ensure that clean up happens after service. Supporting the hospitality of our congregation, on Sunday mornings. Currently on hiatus.

New: Lay Spiritual Care team: The function of the Lay Spiritual Care Team is to grow capacity for community, with or without a Minister to spiritually companion one another through the joys and sorrows of life. This role is specific to holding space, presence, listen and ask powerful questions, that invites and engages congregants to look within and explore their thoughts, feelings and truth, as they journey through life.

New: Lay Chaplain/Celebrant Team: Canadian Unitarian Council's lay chaplaincy program trains and supports carefully chosen lay members of Unitarian Universalist congregations to create and perform rites of passage (weddings, funeral and memorial services, child dedications, and others) for the general public and for Unitarian Universalists in congregations without ministers.

GROWING IN COMMUNITY

Five aspirations help us grow.

As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, we aspire to be:

Deeply Connected: We strive to foster healthy relationships amongst and within UU communities, with the broader world and with all life.

Radically Inclusive: We strive to create hospitable, diverse, multi-generational communities.

Actively Engaged: We strive to work joyfully for a just and compassionate society, experimenting with new forms of community.

Theologically Alive: We seek to be ever-evolving in our understanding, open to new knowledge.

Spiritually Grounded: We seek transformation through personal spiritual experiences and shared ritual.

Join us this Winter/Spring as we explore through survey, guest speakers, Facilitators, dialogue circles, visiting other congregations and being in intentional community together:

- 1) What is the dominant narrative about why we exist as a community?
- 2) Why do we come together and why does it matter?

May all we do and how we move forward be of service to this.

Teams/Committees Continued

We invite you to get involved!

The Sunday Services Team is responsible for making sure meaningful and inspiring services roll out each Sunday at 10:30. We do this by recruiting, training and supporting a talented cadre of volunteers including service leading teams, zoom moderators, video editors, camera technicians and greeters. Each service arises from the creative synergy of these amazing minds and hearts.

Would you enjoy being part of the dynamic team that puts on the Sunday Services? There are many ways to be involved, small or large. Perhaps you would like to be a greeter, combining cheerful welcomes with watching out for zoom bombers? Or maybe you would like to be part of a service leading team - a group of 3 or 4 people who craft a service from the first idea through to selecting each part of the service. Or maybe you are a behind the scenes type who would like video editing or camera work. Perhaps you would like to be a zoom moderator holding the space for each service and sharing the videos. Or maybe you like organizing details and supporting others, in which case the organizing team is for you. Whatever appeals to you, know you will be welcome and appreciated as part of the Sunday Services Team. Contact: Carey, brampyc@gmail.com

Stewardship: Working to bring focus and clarity to our financial wellness as a congregation and developing a yearly pledge drive. Supporting the financial wellness of our congregation.

Stewardship Mandate – our committee’s mission statement

- supporting abundance, soulful connection, express the dynamic of community participation, gathering contributions. We create a service to launch the annual pledge drive to engage reflection/conversation about belonging, generosity....
- communicate, implement, operationalize Board Vision re contributions/pledging
- Ensuring financial independence and sustainability, solvency
- We create spaces (in a service or one-on-one follow up) where there can be soulful connection....

TEAMS/COMMITTEES CONTINUED

NEW: The Member Engagement Team’s purpose is to increase community spirit at UCG, and to extend that spirit to visitors, newcomers, enquirers, and new members. The team helps participants in UCG’s congregational life to belong.

Under the care of MET:

Sunday Welcome: produce and/or distribute information for newcomers and enquirers, train and schedule Sunday service greeters, act as greeters on Sunday mornings, Butterfly Brigade

Social Activities: create opportunities for members, friends, and participants to have fun together; community-building, fellowship-enhancing offerings for all ages throughout the year

New Member Pathways: shepherd new participants and enquirers through the membership process; organizing and scheduling “New UU” classes for those interested in membership; with Sunday Services Committee, Board Chair, and Minister leads a New Member Recognition ceremony at least once annually in a Sunday service

Shared Ministry: makes note of members’ interests, skills, and talents, helping to connect members with opportunities for service

NEW: Reflection Circle Facilitators:

Reflection Circle- Facilitator Invitation: Do you enjoy facilitation? Are you interested in holding space for after service reflection/dialogue circles? We are looking for you!!! If you are interested in supporting this aspect of congregational life, please reach out to

Mel, dllguelphunitarians@gmail.com



Property & Environment Committee

The Property & Environment Committee maintains and enhances the Unitarian Congregation of Guelph's building and grounds, making the property an inviting and safe environment with minimal environmental footprint. It also contributes to environmental awareness where possible. We have had low use of the congregation in 2020, due of course to COVID-19. However, work still goes on as the building must be checked every few days for insurance, leaves need raking, eaves cleaning, while inside cobwebs and dust kept cleared and ongoing major cleaning (fridges, blinds, etc.) need doing even when we are not there. We also took the time over the summer to replace some older pieces of our solar system to ensure it keeps working at top efficiency. At this point, it seems quite possible that the school board will be sending two classes/cohorts into the building starting in February. They will be taking extensive care as they are in our space and we will be working with them closely. Finally, if you're interested in our non-virtual space plans, feel free to contact Helen at 226-500-3647 to help or find out how we care for our space and our part of the planet – especially if you have any expertise in areas like accessibility, the environment or contracting!

Notice how each particle moves,
Notice how everyone has just arrived here from a journey,
Notice how each wants a different food,
Notice how the stars vanish as the sun comes up,
and how all streams stream toward the ocean.

-Rumi-
