



UCN NEWS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- by Matt Virro

The Peace of Wild Things

*When despair for the world grows in me
And I wake in the night at the least sound
In fear of what my life and my children's lives
may be
I go and lie down where the wood drake
Rests in his beauty on the water, and the great
heron feeds
I come into the peace of wild things
Who do not tax their lives with forethought
Of grief.*

I come in the presence of still water

Wendell Berry

Poetry, like that above, centres me, helping me to know the choice is mine, that I can choose to be consumed by popular culture or I can choose a righteous path that sheds light on my identity. The interconnectedness of things can be demanding. Though drawn to all things around us, at times it feels that the glue that should be binding us is slowly seeping out, that the pressures of war and hate and fear and fury and denialism presses out all the synovial fluid from our joints. I think how the community we have created in Niagara gives us the binding strength that tightly holds us together with storm clouds in the air, but it involves work and commitment and, at times, it's hard.

A poem, well placed on a bookshelf that I can call upon just at the right time, a poem that reminds me instantly of that loving friend who is no longer with us and who gave me that special book with those words that can draw me again into his heart and mind, that is special. We can turn to the wonder of words to help us fend off the gloom and goop that left unprotected will terrorize us. For me, poems evoke the beauty of the moment, a sense that I have armour and can choose to have goodness prevail.



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*Enjoy the sun that is now out
and cherish it so that it can
move eternally into your heart.*

UPCOMING SERVICES

June 5 - Is Optimism Still Defensible - service presented and led by Roy Blake

On March 4, 2018, Roy Blake led a service with the title "In Defence of Optimism," in which he tried to counter the prevailing pessimistic view of the state of the world, with evidence that showed that life had been getting better, in many ways, for most people, and that this was likely to continue.

Well, a few things have changed since then. On June 5, Roy will have another look at the viability of an optimistic view of the world. "Is Optimism Still Defensible?" is the topic of this week's service. You'll have to attend to find out: Roy's been changing his opinion, and his service notes, on an almost daily basis.

June 12 - Flower Communion and Potluck Lunch - service presented and led by Penny Blake

Weather permitting, this service will be held at the home of Penny and Roy Blake in Welland. This service will not be on Zoom.

Flower communion is a ceremony where we each bring a flower to share, and take a flower from another in exchange. Please bring a lawn chair and something to share for the potluck. In case of inclement weather, we will hold this at the UCN and notify you by email. Our address is 42 Maccoomb Dr. in Welland. See the link to Google maps below:

<https://goo.gl/maps/pPHZGcxr9JpGf4ws8>





SUMMER SERVICES

Our summer services will continue in-house in July and August. They will be informal and more interactive than customary. We will meet in a circle and the traditional service rituals of chalice lighting and extinguishing, joys and concerns, and the offertory will be practiced. The service leader will speak for only five to ten minutes and then invite a fulsome discussion. There will be no Coffee Hour after the service.

Regrettably, there will be no Zoom services offered over the summer. Many of our technicians will be on a well deserved break during this season and unavailable to facilitate Zooming. We will resume our hybrid services in September.

June 19 - Priorities - service presented by Elaine Edmiston and Karen Stovell

June 25 - Family - service presented and led by Beryl Stovell

July 3 - TBA - service presented and led by Paul Pipher and Eva Schwartzentruher

July 10 - A Closer Look at the Relationship with the Environment - service presented and led by Adolf Miecznikowski

July 17 - service presented and led by Russ Baird

July 24 - TBA - service presented and led by Matt Virro

August 7 - Productive Procrastination - service presented and led by LesLee Turmel

August 14 - AVAILABLE

August 21 - Contentment - service presented and led by Karen Stovell

August 28 - Play - service presented and led by LesLee Turmel

RETREAT

Change of Venue

- by Karen Stovell




The planning committee went to “check out this venue” on Friday May 20. While a lovely place with historic old buildings, we came to the conclusion that the rabbit warren inside the buildings and the uneven ground which had no designated pathways from one place to another would pose a problem for many of us. I and others who have mobility issues would not be safe trying to navigate around the property. There is only one bedroom with an ensuite bathroom and the rest of the bedrooms and baths must be shared. This could cause some problems at night. For these reasons, we feel that we cannot safely go ahead with this venue.

We investigated changing the venue to Club LaSalle on Lake Ontario. This would mean we would have a two day retreat on Tuesday, June 21 and Wednesday, June 22 which would not involve an overnight stay. The committee met with staff at Club LaSalle on Thursday, May 26. Our congregation gathered at Club LaSalle five years ago for our retreat and found the facility and location most amenable to our needs. It continues to meet our needs.

I am disappointed that the original idea has not worked out. For the safety and comfort of all, however, we need to look at this other option. The Retreat Planning Committee will keep you updated as to our assessment, cost and recommendations.



My father didn't tell me
how to live; he lived and
let me watch him do it.
-CLARENCE BUDINGTON KELLAND



WHAT MAKES YOU
A MAN IS NOT
THE ABILITY TO
MAKE A CHILD,
IT'S THE COURAGE
TO RAISE ONE.

President Barack Obama

SOME
Super **Heroes**
Don't have
CAPES...
They are
called **DAD**

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POLLINATOR GARDEN UPDATE

Work Continues!



From left: Peter Skelton, Sue Velkers, Mary-lyn Hopper, Wade Pfaff, Moe Turmel, LesLee Turmel
Also, Karen Walsh and Matt Virro, photographer. Snacks were provided by Doreen Peever and Penny Blake.

HOW YOU CAN HELP UCN?

By donating money or time or expertise!

Your financial gifts help UCN continue to operate and better serve you and the community. To make a monetary contribution you can give cash or cheque at time of service or make an e-transfer.

To make an e-transfer, set up Unitarian Congregation of Niagara as payee at your Bank with the e-mail ucn.communications@gmail.com. We are set up for automatic deposit so you don't need a password.

If writing a cheque, make it payable to UCN and offer it at Sunday service or mail it to: Unitarian Congregation of Niagara
223 Church Street
St. Catharines, Ontario
L2R 3E8

To make a donation of time or expertise, follow the activities of the various committees and offer to participate. Organizers will typically call for and welcome all volunteers. You are always welcome to make a proposal to initiate something that is true to our principles and close to your heart.

Together, we can work harder and wiser towards a better world.

“I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver.”

Maya Angelou

SILVER SPIRE UNITED CHURCH

UCN received a letter of appreciation from Silver Spire United Church for our generous contributions to them. These helped provide needed services to the community, including shower and laundry facilities.

The UCN has reliably provided gifts to Silver Spire on behalf of our congregation. But there are also ways that we can individually contribute. In the past, they have received items from many organizations that are not appropriate for those they serve. This has put a greater workload for the church volunteers.

Therefore, they are very specific as to what they require:

- gloves (seasonal)
- men's boxer briefs
- women's underwear
- deodorant
- T shirts
- \$25.00 Giant Tiger gift cards which are a great help for groceries

These items can be delivered to the Drop-In Centre at Silver Spire United Church, 366 St.Paul Street, St.Catharines. All donations, large or small, are appreciated.

Unitarian Congregation of Niagara

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Board of Directors

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Social Action: Beryl Stovell

Lay Chaplains: Contact
laychaplainsucn@gmail.com
Beryl Stovell, Karen Stovell

Committee Chairs

Adult Religious Education: Karen Stovell
Choir and Music: Penny Blake,
Karen Stovell
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Denominational Affairs: Connie Scott
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Rental: Doreen Peever
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Karen Stovell, Abu Hosein

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Jim Glassford, Erdwin Hueniken,
Doreen Peever

Covenant

We come in peace
To this place of fellowship and love,
Searching for truth and meaning,
Seeking justice and equity through action,
Supporting each other
and serving our community,
Acknowledging and preserving the gifts of
this world,
This is our covenant with each other and
with all.



Deadline for Newsletter:

Friday, August 19

