



UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF NIAGARA

A Congregation for Everybody

UCN NEWS

June 2023

Our 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.

SUMMER SERVICES

June 4 - Church Picnic - hosted by Eva Schwartzentruber and Paul Pipher (see details in June's newsletter).

June 11 - Ways of Religious Study - presented by Shaun Ironside

June 18 - Father's Day - presented by Brian Jones

June 25 - Retreat: Transformation and How did We Get Here? (see details in newsletter)

July 2 - Passions - presented by Susan Glassford

July 9 - Flower Communion at the Blakes

July 16 - Ethics and Artificial Intelligence - presented by Karen Stovell

July 23 - UCN and the CUC - presented by Brian Jones

July 30 - Dreaming - presented by Liina Veer

August 6 - TBD - presented by Matt Virro

August 13 - East of the Sun and West of the Moon - presented by Paul Pipher and Eva Schwartzentruber

August 20 - Nourishment and Food for Thought - presented by Sarah McLaren

August 27 - TBD - presented by Fred Harland

September 3 - TBD - presented by Abu Hosein

September 10 - Water Communion - presented by Mary-lyn Hopper

UPCOMING EVENTS



ANNUAL UCN PICNIC

Sunday, June 4

Noon, rain or shine

Albright Gardens, Beamsville

Hosted by Eva Schwartzentruber and Paul Pipher

This event is a welcoming opportunity to meet, greet and eat in a casual and green environment. It marks the end of our

regular Sunday services before we transition into our informal summer services.

This is a Potluck gathering. Bring whatever food item you wish to share from your food repertoire. Be sure to bring your own plate, utensils and beverage. A fruit punch will be provided. To ensure comfortable seating you will need to bring your own lawn chair.

Directions from St. Catharines:

- take QEW west to Ontario St. exit at Beamsville
- follow Ontario St. to King St. (a T intersection)
- turn left onto King St. to Mountain St.
- turn right onto Mountain St. and follow up the escarpment passing Albright Manor nursing home on your left (about half way up the escarpment)
- turn left onto Edelheim Rd.
- turn right at Pinegrove Cres. and follow to the sheltered picnic area. Accessible washrooms are nearby.

We look forward to seeing you.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Eva.



Sunday, June 25
9:00 am to 5:00 pm
Club La Salle
111 Arthur St.
St. Catharines

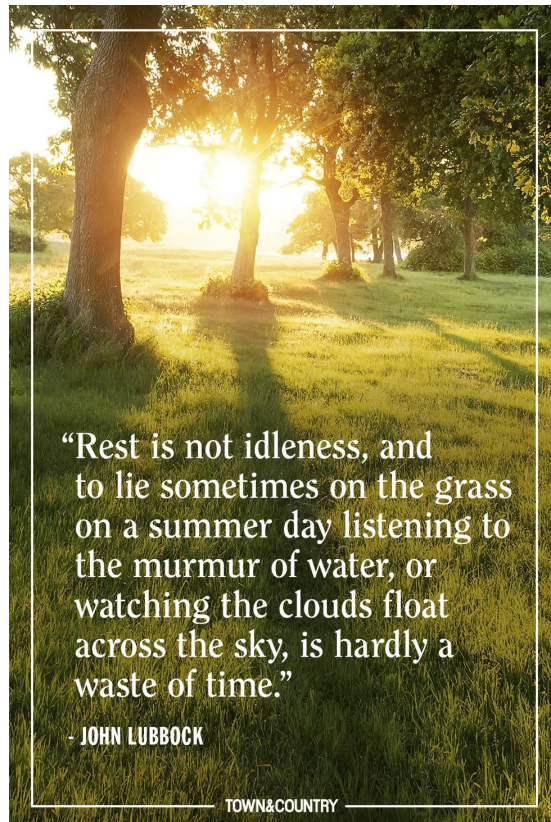
This year's retreat theme is TRANSFORMATION. It is a day-long event that invites all of us to reflect on the transformative nature of our lives. We will meet in groups, large and small, mixed groups, and separate men's and women's groups where we can explore, learn and, if we wish, share within a safe and supportive group setting. There will be a solstice ceremony and opportunities to go on quiet strolls along the beach or just meet informally for chit-chat.

A continental breakfast will be available at 9:00 am upon your arrival. Healthy snacks and lunch will also be provided. For your comfort, bring your own lawn chair. We will meet rain or shine so bring that which you need to remain comfortable whatever the weather forecast for the day.

The cost of the retreat is \$25.00 per person and is all inclusive. Please make payment arrangements with Karen Stovell. Everyone is invited to the Mandarin Restaurant (366 Bunting Rd. at Carlton St.) for dinner at day's end. The cost of that meal will be the responsibility of the individual diner.

Contact Karen Stovell if you are not registered to attend the day and wish to attend.

Looking forward to a transformative day!



FLOWER COMMUNION - Sunday, July 9, 11 am.

Rain or shine, this service will be held at the home of Penny and Roy Blake in Welland.

Please bring a lawn chair if you have one, and a snack to share after the service. Hats and sunscreen are recommended. Also, please bring a flower if possible. (We'll have extras, so don't worry if you forget.)



The flower communion was created by a Czech Unitarian minister, Norbert Čapek, in 1923. Each participant is invited to bring a flower, which will be put into a common vase. During the service each congregant takes a flower brought by someone else from the vase. Here is Rev. Čapek's explanation:

"We have chosen flowers, nature's most tender, common, and beautiful gift, as our symbol and sacrament. A flower is divine. You cannot create it whatever effort you make. [You] can create only a dead forgery without fragrance and life, nothing more."

The address is 42 Maccoomb Dr. in Welland. There is plenty of free parking on the street. See the link to Google maps below:

<https://goo.gl/maps/YdKzas1Q3LMqgoEz5>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- Matt Virro

It's always a good time to read, especially works by local talent.

Giller Prize-winning author Dr. Vincent Lam is a noted emergency physician and Medical Director of the Coderix Medical Clinic in Toronto. Among his talents, he has written an eye-opener about real people struggling with opioid addiction and the interplay of the medical community that at times works at cross purposes. It sets out the nature of people 'hiding' and why hiding complicates the helping profession from gaining traction.

The dedication in "On the Ravine" aptly reads the book is "for those who are gone and those who carry on."

It's gritty, authentic and immersive. It states that it's fiction, yet it is obviously autobiographical.

"On the Ravine" (Knopf Canada, 2022) *refers* to the Rosedale Valley ravine in Toronto. It's a familiar gathering place for the lost, needy and drug-addicted. It's a walk-along story following an Asian addictions doctor who visits the tent city on the side of a ravine, dispensing drug safety warnings, clean needles, naloxone and condoms. Addicts have worn a path just up the hill to upscale Rosedale. The surprising answer as to why that is awaits.

The book tells stories about the difficult treatment decisions that have to be made by an expert. Mixed in are back stories about big pharma and hedge fund sponsors looking for perfect drug trials to make their own big hit. A disgraced Rosedale doctor, who remains a good friend of Dr.Lam and who plays by different medical ethics, is also featured. The book considers the decisions addicts make to get high and how they deal with the lows. It's a daily grind of finding money to pay the street vendor.

What sets Dr.Lam's book apart is its precision. He offers a master class on how to engage gracefully and effectively with complex patients.



Our New Flags!!

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

It brings the UCN congregation great pleasure to welcome new members who have found their way to us and have decided to make a commitment to our community.

On Sunday, May 21 five such people joined us as new members: Dawna Allen; Mardele and Fred Harland; Shaun Ironside and Sarah McLaren.

We hope that as a new member of this community each of you will allow yourself to know and be known by this congregation. We commit to respect each of you as a friend and a potential teacher. We seek to be ever welcoming and supportive.

Welcome to the UCN family.



FRIENDSHIP

- Liina Veer

Some thoughts about friendship by David Whyte, poet and philosopher:

“But no matter the medicinal virtues of being a true friend or sustaining a long close friendship with another, the ultimate touchstone of Friendship is not improvement, neither of the other or the self, the ultimate touchstone is witness, the privilege of having been seen by someone and the equal privilege of being granted the sight of the essence of another, to have walked with them and to have believed in them and sometimes just to have accompanied them for however brief a span, on a journey impossible to accomplish alone.”

To learn more about David, go to his website davidwhyte.com

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

- LesLee Turmel

There is very little good in life that does not come from collaboration. This is especially true of our newsletter UCN NEWS.

As the newsletter team takes a break for the summer, I want to thank the team who help put it together each month:

To Penny Blake who formats, adds her artistic flare and with whom I collaborate, a hearty thank you. Aside from wrestling with computer programs, she finds new ways to present articles and helps in the research of poetry and photos which add colour and variety. The newsletter would not survive without these efforts.

To Roy Blake whose eagle eyes catch mistakes which mine do not and who keeps the newsletter as professional as a homegrown publication can be, thank you. Roy also ensures the newsletter is published on line via ucn communications and is responsible for keeping them archived on our website.

To all those who have contributed articles, ideas and announcements in our paper over the past year, the newsletter team thanks you. This is, after all, your newsletter and your contributions are critical to its existence.

We will resume publication in September. Until then, have a wonderful summer.

HANDS OFF THE GREENBELT!!

The group Environmental Defence has lawn signs protesting development of the greenbelt. If you would like a lawn sign with a metal stand that says: "Hands off the Greenbelt" and on the other side "Save Ontario's Farms Forests and Wetlands", If you would like a lawn sign with a metal stand, Mary-lyn has brought several to the UCN, or you can go to:

<https://act.environmentaldefence.ca/page/118653/petition/1> to register.

Feel free to order some for friends.





SOCIAL ACTION - BOOK RIOT

FUNDRAISING for BIRCHWAY NIAGARA (formerly Women's Place)

June 6 - 11

Gale Centre,
5152 Thorold Stone Road
Niagara Falls

The Book Riot is considered one of the largest book sale events in Canada. It offers a wide array of used books, rare books, music, puzzles, games and much more.

There is a Pre-sale entry fee of \$10.00 which goes directly to the support of domestic violence services.

Hours of Operation:

Tuesday, June 6; 4:00 to 9:00 pm

Wednesday, June 7 to Friday, June 9; 10:00 am to 9:00 pm.

Saturday, June 10 and Sunday, June 11; 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

To learn more about Birchway Niagara or how you can be of assistance to them, go to their website at birchway.ca

MISPLACED BOOK

Doreen Peever is in search of her book "Varieties of Universalism: Essays in Honour of J.R.A. Mayer." It has been inscribed to Doreen from John Mayer and is a special keepsake for Doreen.

Doreen remembers loaning it to "someone", but does not recall who that is. If you remember borrowing it from Doreen, please return it to her. And even if you don't recall borrowing it, please check your library just in case you may have forgotten you borrowed it.

Doreen thanks you for your effort.

**Unitarian Congregation
of Niagara**

223 Church St.
St. Catharines, ON L2R 3E8
905-687-8433

unitarian-stcatharines.org
ucn.communications@gmail.com

Board of Directors

President: Matt Virro
Vice-president: Mary-lyn Hopper
Past-president: Penny Blake
Secretary: Anita Miecznikowski
Treasurer: Brian Jones
Member-at-large: Eva Schwartzentruber
Program: Karen Stovell
Social Action: Beryl Stovell

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

Committee Chairs

Adult Religious Education: Karen Stovell
Music: Penny Blake, Karen Stovell
Communications: Roy Blake
Denominational Affairs: Connie Scott
Lay Chaplaincy: Doreen Peever
Membership: Doreen Peever
Newsletter: LesLee Turmel, Penny Blake
Pastoral Care: Doreen Peever
Property: Peter Skelton
Rental: Doreen Peever
Social: Susan Glassford, Jim Glassford,
Karen Stovell, Abu Hosein
Social Action: Beryl Stovell,
Erdwin Huenikan

Trustees

Jim Glassford, Erdwin Hueniken,
Doreen Peever



**Deadline for Sept. Newsletter:
August 18, 2023**

