



UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF NIAGARA

*A church for people
with enquiring minds*

Our Mission Statement: “We covenant to support an empowering church that affirms the individual and celebrates history, science and mystery in a welcoming, joyous and evolving fellowship.”

June 2021

Upcoming Services

June 6 - The Effects Your Generation May Have Had on You - service presented and led by Jim Glassford

Each generation brings its own strengths and weaknesses, and affects how we relate across and within generations. An important discussion at a time where greater and greater divisions are being expressed locally, nationally and internationally.

June 13 - Tank Boy and a Can Do Attitude - service presented and led by LesLee Turmel

June 4 is the thirty-second anniversary of the Tiananmen Square pro Democracy Protests in Beijing. Among the protestors, a lone 19 year old, in an extraordinary act of courage, defied all odds and single-handedly brought a cavalcade of tanks to a halt. What lessons can we learn from this youth who dared to challenge authoritarianism?

June 20 - Father's Day Celebration - service presented and led by Karen Stovell

An interactive service that provides an opportunity for congregants to provide photographs of their fathers and share memories they have of them.

June 27 - Principle Seven: Respect for the Interdependent Web of All Existence of Which We are a Part - service presented and led by Beryl Stovell

Exploring a principle which provides a way of embracing something greater than ourselves.

“Summer was our best season: It was sleeping on the back screened porch in cots or trying to sleep in the treehouse; summer was everything good to eat; it was a thousand colors in a parched landscape.”

- Harper Lee
To Kill a Mockingbird

**Unitarian Congregation
of Niagara**

223 Church St.
St. Catharines, ON L2R 3E8
Tel: 905-687-8433
www.unitarian-stcatharines.org

2021

PRESIDENT:

Penny Blake

VICE PRESIDENT:

Matt Virro

PAST PRESIDENT:

Anita Miecznikowski

SECRETARY: Roy Blake

TREASURER:

Erdwin Hueniken

MEMBER AT LARGE:

Liina Veer

PROGRAM:

LesLee Turmel

SOCIAL ACTION:

Beryl Stovell

LAY CHAPLAINS:

Doreen Peever

Karen Stovell

ADULT RELIGIOUS

EDUCATION: Karen Stovell

CHOIR and MUSIC:

Penny Blake /

Karen Stovell

COMMUNICATIONS:

Roy Blake

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS:

Liina Veer

LAY CHAPLAINCY:

Doreen Peever

MEMBERSHIP:

Doreen Peever

NEWSLETTER:

LesLee Turmel

PASTORAL CARE:

Doreen Peever

PROPERTY: Peter Skelton

RENTAL: Doreen Peever

**SOCIAL: Susan Velkers, Jim
Glassford, Karen Stovell,
Abu Hosein**

TRUSTEES:

Jim Glassford

Jenny Leach

Doreen Peever

Let's All Celebrate ISLENDINGADAGURINN:

A Little-Known Unitarian Holiday

The recent CUC Conference was important, relevant, and very serious – except for one event, the Saturday evening comedy night. It was headlined by Liz James, a seminary dropout who founded the UU Hysterical Society devoted to “mirth and dignity.” It is famous for its UU Hysterical Society Coffee Hour Facebook page – check it out!

Liz mentioned that in order to differentiate themselves from their American fellow students at theological school, she and some of her Canadian classmates introduced them to some Canadian Unitarian holidays, among them:

THORRABLÓT (Thor’s Feast)

SUMARDAGURINN FYRSTI (First Day of Summer)

GAMLÁRSKVÖLD (Old Year’s Eve)

and, of course,

ISLENDINGADAGURINN (Icelander’s Day)

The translation of the last one sheds some light on things. In the late 19th century a number of Icelandic people settled in and around Winnipeg and brought their version of Unitarianism, derived from Lutheranism, with them. There’s little to nothing about this strain of Unitarianism on the CUC website, so check out the website of the First UU Church of Winnipeg for the details. Naturally they brought with them some of their holidays. Those do survive on the official liturgical calendar on the CUC website, though you have to dig for them. Go there and search for “liturgical calendar.” The first thing that appears is labelled “Confluence Lectures.” Click on that and note that the first link that appears is “Canadian-Unitarian-Liturgical-Calendar.” It’s obviously out of place and will probably be removed as soon as someone at the CUC notices it. Meanwhile, enjoy! (I have downloaded the page and will send it to you if you ask nicely.)

ISLENDINGADAGURINN is celebrated on the first Monday of August, which we usually call Civic Holiday or something equally dull. I propose we adopt this name for the holiday and observe it in the traditional Unitarian way, which is to celebrate the settlement of Iceland in the ninth century.

THORRABLÓT looks like even more fun, but we will have to wait until January 21 next year to celebrate it.

– Roy Blake

President's Message . . .

The year 2021 will certainly be marked as a year of special challenges. Although the winter has been overcome by a glorious spring, the pandemic virus has not. We must continue to follow restrictions for our safety and the safety of others.

Similarly, our congregation has been an uplifting presence. I certainly am buoyed seeing so many at our Zoom services and listening to service messages.

Yet, at this moment we face special challenges. Membership and pledged income are down, but unfortunately, many costs are fixed, and stubbornly refuse to shrink. I think you can see by the analysis of our expenses provided by Liina Veer that we had significant imbalances. For one thing, the outlay on Administration was overtaking the budget for Programming. We needed to take action.

A task force from the board then looked diligently at ways to cut expenses and raise revenues. As you are aware, a special call has gone out to you to help us recoup the expenses we have incurred for the installation of a new furnace and ventilation system. The board believes it will help keep us much safer and warmer when we re-open. This has put another hole in our finances, especially as it falls on the heels of installing a new roof.

Other changes are also taking place. We have switched to another insurance firm and expect to save several hundreds with a different insurer. For many months we have done without an Order of Service, and we don't anticipate resuming this practice. We will be converting to digital distribution of newsletters, directories and AGM reports, which you can leave on-line or print. But, above all, we don't want to cut expenses in the things that make the UCN special, unique, and meaningful.

Sadly, we will have to say goodbye to Darcy Ewanchuk as our Newsletter and Publication Manager. Her hard work and expertise have always been timely and appreciated. We have found two volunteers to act as Publications Manager, Anita Miecznikowski and Mary-Lyn Hopper. I am very grateful these two have stepped up to the challenge. Their volunteer contributions will help us manage our expenses.

All is not doom and gloom. We still are strong in spirit. If we put our minds to it, I'm sure we can come out of this even stronger. We still have our Unitarian faith, and will be guided by its essential wisdom. And, most important, we have our community.

– Penny Blake

***“Live in the sunshine,
swim the sea,
drink the wild air’s salubrity.”***

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
Merlin’s Song

***“ Rejoice as summer should
chase away sorrows by living.”***

- Melissa Marr
Darkest Mercy



In Memory Theresa Pothier

It is with sadness that I announce the death of Theresa Pothier. Theresa was our pianist for ten years, serving us with inspiring music as a soloist and accompanist. We enjoyed her playing and artistry as well as her bright smile and outgoing personality. She was friends with many, and had time for us all. She will be missed not only by us, but by her students, and many others in the community of St. Catharines that she touched with her singing, piano playing and teaching.



Photo by Darcy Ewanchuk

Theresa's estate has most generously set up a scholarship fund for aspiring music students with a \$10,000 donation. There are provisions that personal contributions can be made to this fund. To mark our special connection with Theresa, the board has agreed to donate \$200.00 on behalf of the Unitarian Congregation of Niagara.

– Penny Blake

Pub Night - June 24th at 6:30 p.m. we will be having our last Zoom Pub Night of the season.

We will return to UCN Pub Night in September and maybe, just maybe, it will include us gathering for dinner and a chat at a local restaurant. Fingers crossed.

Until then, in June we will share a sandwich and beverage and look online at the theme of HEROES - Who Are your Heroes

As Unitarians, we are asked to look at sources of inspiration, words and deeds of prophetic women and men. Who amongst the many inspires you? Offers you a compass? And what is that makes someone heroic?

Has that person provided a shift in your thinking about yourself and your aspirations?

Might it be a pandemic leader or a vaccine scientist or environmentalist or musician. Perhaps family, a neighbour or friend with a special trait. Real-life heroes are, as we know, often ordinary people with an outlook and belief that helps them rise to the challenge of an extraordinary situation. Who might that be?

We invite you to come and tell us a story about someone famous or not famous - your hero. You are not limited to one!

See you on Zoom at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, June 24.
Zoom event coordinates to follow.

– Matt Virro

A Farewell to a Loyal Friend

Darcy Ewanchuk is leaving her position as Office Manager with UCN after diligently serving us for 25 years. Due to our Congregation's financial limitations, we are no longer able to fund her services.

Darcy has provided many services for us. She has been a big foundational piece for much of UCN's communication network. She has been responsible for our weekly Orders of Service, our monthly newsletters, our telephone directories, our AGM reports and pledge drives. This includes more than office work, but leg work and use of her personal resources. She has gone well beyond the functional requirements of UCN's needs by providing a stellar high quality service.

As editor of the newsletter, I can attest to Darcy's professionalism, integrity and work ethic. It has been my privilege to work with her. Not only has she been a teacher, guiding me in my job and making it easier and fun, but she has become a friend.

Thank you Darcy for being a valuable part of the UCN family.

– *LesLee Turmel*

Budget Expenses Task Force Report April 15, 2021

Present: Penny Blake, Anita Miecznikowski, Erdwin Hueniken, Liina Veer

UCN Budget History

2021:	-3330
2020:	+12,600
2019:	-30,000
2018:	-4200
2017:	-17,600
2016:	+26,000 (25,000 bequest)
2015:	-2000

At the above rate of expenditures our reserves will be depleted in approximately 11 years.

Office Solutions Services: \$23.00 per hour

- 2019 - \$4669 (as invoiced)
- newsletter = 10 issues
- directory - n = 62 (revision, updating, distribution ready)
- orders of service = 38 weeks
- sampler of services (Fall, Winter/Spring)
- canvass document packages, labels/envelopes, distribution ready
- address labels/envelope preparation for income tax receipts
- AGM Report packages: Agenda, committee reports, compiled, formatted, produced, delivered, distribution ready

2020 - \$3358 (as invoiced)

- newsletter = 10 issues
- directory - n = 40 (revision, updating, distribution ready)
- orders of service = 10 weeks
- sampler of services (Winter/Spring)
- address labels/envelope preparation for income tax receipts
- AGM Report packages: Agenda, committee reports, compiled, formatted, produced, delivered, distribution ready

2021 - budget \$5000

- \$1173 (as invoiced to date, May 31)
- newsletter = 6 issues
- AGM Report packages: Agenda, committee reports, compiled, formatted, produced, delivered, distribution ready

Newsletter total cost approx. \$230 per issue (billing for 10 hours)
 Five members and five friends receive mailed hard copies.
 Over 70 members and friends have had access to newsletter online.

Following discussion, our committee suggested that our newsletter and directory go digital. Members may print their own hard copies. For members without computers, arrangements can be made.

Social Action budget for 2021 is \$5500. To date \$2910 has been spent. The committee is asking the board to consider decreasing the amount taken from our budget and ask members or friends to make future contributions by "passing the hat" as we did for our Seniors Christmas hampers.

These proposals are up for discussion. We need to decide if we plan to budget a deficit indefinitely (i.e. until our reserves are gone) or make the necessary adjustments to keep UCN viable.

– Penny Blake



Lay Chaplains:

Doreen Peever
 Karen Stovell
laychaplainsucn@gmail.com

Unitarian Congregation of Niagara

Phone: 905-687-8433
 Website: www.unitarian-stcatharines.org
 General Inquiry: ucn.communications@gmail.com
 Communications e-mail: ucn.communications@gmail.com
 Web administrators: ucn.webadmin@gmail.com

**Unitarian Congregation
 of Niagara**
 223 Church Street
 St. Catharines, ON
 L2R 3E8

Editor:
 LesLee Turmel
larganturmel@gmail.com

Deadline for
September 2021 issue:
August 18, 2021