



UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF NIAGARA
A Congregation for Everybody

UCN NEWS

September - October 2024

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.

UPCOMING SERVICES

September, 2024

September 1 - Unitarian-Universalist Principles and Aspirations - service presented and led by Brian Jones

September 8 - Water Communion - service presented and led by
Rev. Pat Trudeau

This is a UU annual celebration when each congregant brings a sample of water that has been collected from a place of significance to them. It is poured into a single vessel symbolizing our shared faith derived from many different sources.

September 15 - Positive Living Niagara— service presented by Sarah Burtch and led by Shaun Ironside

September 22 - What Will You Be Harvesting? - A celebration of the Fall Equinox - service presented and led by Kathryn Waugh and Liina Veer

September 29; 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - A Celebration of the UCN's 70th Anniversary - come and meet past congregants, community members and special guests.

NOTE: NO MORNING SERVICE

SPECIAL EVENTS

CIRCLE DINNERS

HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION

Saturday, October 24 @ 5:30 pm

This is a Halloween themed dinner. Costumes are encouraged and questions will be centred on the spookiness and fun of the season.





CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Saturday, December 7 @ 5:30 pm

Questions will be centred around Christmas.

Please bring a gift that is appropriate for a senior or for Start Me Up Niagara.

Dinner will be followed by a radio play based on "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever."

Both meals are Potluck. Please bring a dinner dish (entree, salad or dessert) for sharing to each event you attend.

These events are fun and an excellent opportunity to learn more about your fellow congregants. ALL ARE WELCOME.

No RSVP's are required.

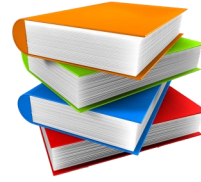
October Birthdays:

*Matt Virro, Fred Harland, Brian Jones,
Bill Bannister*



BOOK CLUB

- Karen Stovell



We are looking at possible dates for this club.
Ideally, we would meet on a Sunday after service.

One option is the third Sunday of the month during the Men's Group, but this would exclude the men who attend the Men's Group.

Alternatively, the Book Club could meet on another a Sunday or weekday at either UCN or someone's home during the day or the evening.

The first suggested book is 'Looking for Jane' by Heather Marshall. This is a story about the evolution of Canada's move to legalize abortion.

Please provide feedback to me, Mary-lyn or Eva.

September 29; 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

A Celebration of the UCN's 70th Anniversary



Come and meet past congregants, community members and special guests.

NOTE: NO MORNING SERVICE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- Mary-lyn Hopper

What a diverse slate of Summer Circle Services it has been. Attendance has been strong and many have jumped at the opportunity to provide comments during discussion. Thanks to Eva for organizing these informal services and to all those who have contributed to them.

We have begun to acknowledge in services that not only are monetary contributions key to a strong congregation, but also the time and talents of those that volunteer, which are critical to building a strong congregation. Some of these contributions are publicly recognized while others are silently appreciated. If you are aware of the time that others have given to UCN, please mention them during our time of "Joys and Concerns."

We look forward to welcoming Reverend Pat Trudeau as she leads the ingathering Water Communion on Sunday, September 8. While we value our status as a lay-led congregation, we look forward to sharing the knowledge and experience that a Unitarian Minister will bring. Remember to bring water to the service which represents a significant place or experience during your summer.

The UCN has a small collection of books on religion and other topics which reflect our UU Principles and Aspirations. Feel free to browse and borrow them. We do not have a formal sign-out system. Each book is identified as coming from UCN and we hope this will remind you to return them to our library, which is located in the rear room.

For many of us books have a key role in our lives. I think of how they have impacted me:

- introducing me to worlds beyond my back door, both in the present time and in the past. As I mentioned in the service led by Karen Stovell, I am amazed at some of the knowledge I gain about events through historical fiction, leading me to ponder why certain historical events have been widely documented and shared while others remain virtually unknown.

- providing fascinating glimpses into the lives of others through biographies
- exploring how others have interpreted religious ideas and thought
- providing instruction
- supporting ways of thinking that I have acquired through life experience

How have books impacted you? When do you reach for a book? Which books do you share? We look forward to opportunities in the coming season to share and discuss books. We will be highlighting some of the books available in the UCN library.

If you have books that you would like to give away, please bring them to UCN. In most cases they will be donated to “The Book Riot” which is a major fundraiser for “Birchway Niagara,” an agency which provides support for those in abusive situations. On occasion, a donated book will be added to our library.

I look forward to another year of exploration and discovery. I hope that you will join in this journey.



MUSIC AT THE UCN

- Penny Blake

Welcome back to our regular services at the UCN!

This year promises to be a full and busy one with special events for our 70th year and lots of music at services. Since our performance of 'One World' on May 5 which was enjoyable for both the choir and congregation, there has been a renewed interest in choral music as well.

This is a welcome change. During the pandemic none of this was possible. It was even difficult to sing hymns together. And many people substituted pieces from You-tube or Spotify to fill the gap. We have been gradually getting back to a more normal congregational musical life since then.

We are lucky now to have an experienced, versatile pianist, as well as retaining our intrepid guitarist, Sue. More is possible now. For sure, we will be able to sing more anthems, lead rounds and alternate music. But also - one of the things that the singers and choir members will do this year is become more familiar with the hymns. It helps lead the congregation and increase people's comfort levels, whether the choir is up there or not. I want what we rehearse to be pretty close to what will be happening at services.

For this, I will need the co-operation and participation of the Program Committee, and above all, the Service Leaders. A great deal of what the Music Committee does is co-ordinate the music that is performed, especially the vocal music – anthems and hymns, etc.

We do not pick the hymns (usually two) for the service leaders. This ensures variety and different points of view. Some are very comfortable finding hymns. But many now, especially since we have a number of new members, do not know all the resources we have. We will always have some suggestions handy for you to choose from. There will be some services where we can add a choir piece and the Music Committee may suggest that music. We will always make sure that these fit with your vision for the service.

I'd also like to get away from an over-reliance on music from the Internet. The purpose of having hymns is to give people the emotional release of singing and having people participate and not be mere spectators at a service. This helps build community. If you want something that our hymnals can't provide, there are some possibilities. Let it be an anthem or in place of a prelude or postlude. Find the words to either the whole piece or the chorus so people can sing along. Or – even find the music and request that some singers or the choir perform it. If enough notice is given that could be possible.

So, how do we deal with a multitude of people choosing their own music and still have the accompanists, the singers and the choir know what to rehearse? The answer is co-ordination. For this reason we have been requested by Rick and the Board to be the primary contact people for the accompanists. The earlier we know what you want, the better. But the absolute deadline for hymns is the Thursday before services.

This will make life easier for everyone. Rick and Sue are at the UCN part time, and on an irregular schedule – all over the map. Their schedules are not easy to remember - and asking you, the lay leaders to figure out which to contact would be totally confusing. Also it puts Rick & Sue into the position of being co-ordinators, and I'm pretty sure they've got enough to do.

We may not be able to get the whole choir to look at your music, but we hope that if at all possible at least either Karen or I will look at it. I know from experience (having sometimes not done this) that it can make a difference.

So, I hope that we are now all ready for the second half of our 70th year at the UCN. Welcome back!

Choir!Choir!Choir!

UCN Choir

First rehearsal

September 15, 10 AM

Come see what music is in store!

All welcome



THE VIEW FROM HERE

Reflections on the service of Aug. 25 – Insights from Toltec Wisdom

- Paul Pipher

We've been served up a lot of meat at UCN recently. What seems to be missing is a recipe for making it digestible. For example, we heard that an ancient cruel religion provides a recipe of sorts for today if original sin and guilt, owed by the male persons of our congregation [*sic*]. This was served with a side dish of blood and gore from the Vietnam War.

Sunday's talk was on Toltec wisdom. There were a number of interesting ingredients but nothing about how they could be put to practical use. One principle was that we 'shouldn't take things personally.' That might be a very good ingredient if we only know what 'taking things personally' meant. Does it mean we should ignore anything that's said to us that we don't like? Is it a convenient excuse for not taking responsibility for our actions? What if the comments were direct criticisms of who we are or what we've done? If we could establish what 'taking things personally' means, we might be able to come up with a recipe for putting it into effect.

Would it be too much to ask that we turn to Unitarian wisdom – Seven Principles and the like, for guidance? Our Unitarian congregation seems to be very reluctant to do this. Perhaps we should just change our name to PCN, the Philosophy Club of Niagara. Surely we can make more use of Unitarianism than lighting candles and listening to joys and concerns.

SOCIAL ACTION

Community Care Food Hamper

Please continue to bring a food item each week for the food hamper situated at the rear of the sanctuary. An item brought weekly by each congregant will provide the equivalent of a week's worth of groceries for a family.



Niagara Mobile Closet

203 Church St (rear door)
Tuesdays and Fridays - open 10:00 am to Noon
Sunday - open Noon to 2:00 pm

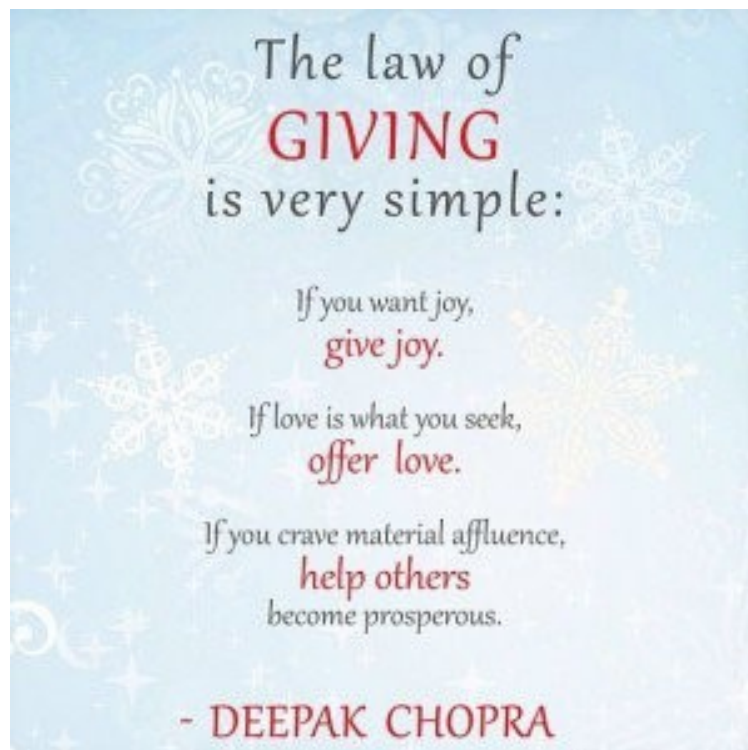
They are currently in need of work wear, job interview clothing, winter wear including boots and, especially, men's coats. You can donate any of these items that are in good repair.



HOW DO I GET MY MONEY TO UCN?

There are several ways of honouring your pledge:

- You can contribute at services via cheque or cash. There are small envelopes where you can insert your contribution and place it on the Offertory plate set out at the table at the bottom of the ramp. Please put your name on the envelope so we can issue you a tax receipt.
- You can mail your pledge directly to Brian Jones c/o UCN, 223 Church Street, St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 3E8.
- You can e-transfer your pledge using Interac. To do this you must be registered with your financial institution on-line. Just set up Unitarian Congregation of Niagara as an Interac payee using the email address ucn.communications@gmail.com.



Unitarian Congregation of Niagara

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Board of Directors

President: Mary-lyn Hopper
Vice-president: Shaun Ironside
Past-president: Matt Virro
Secretary: Sarah McLaren
Treasurer: Brian Jones
Member-at-large: Eva Schwartzentruber
Program: Eva Schwartzentruber
Social Action: Shaun Ironside

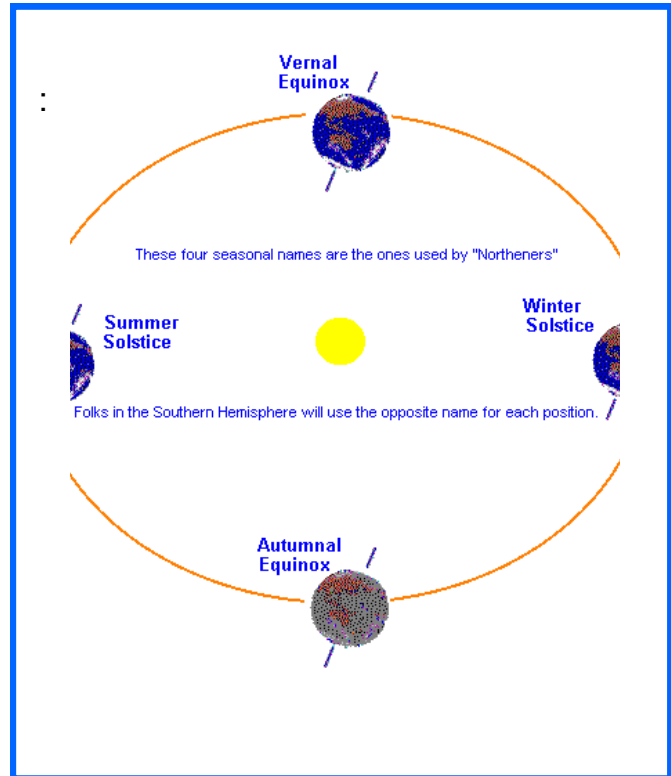
Lay Chaplains: Contact
laychaplainsucn@gmail.com
Beryl Stovell, Karen Stovell

Committee Chairs

Music: Penny Blake
Denominational Affairs: Jacob Santos
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,
Abu Hosein
Website: Jacob Santos

Trustees

Jim Glassford, Erdwin Hueniken,
Doreen Peever



**Deadline for November Newsletter:
October 25, 2024**

