



SPRING ISSUE
MARCH 2024

Fellowship News

Infolettre UUFO



REnewed Vision

By Sarah Baxter

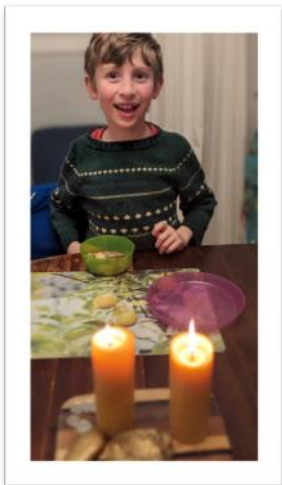
This March, we will be celebrating our 28th anniversary as a Fellowship. In 1996, UUFO came to life, with Rev. Fred leading a nomadic but dedicated community into Ottawa's east end. The Fellowship looked significantly different back then. For one thing, we didn't have a building of our own, but what we did have was a number of families and children.

Looking around now, it can be hard to picture. Where have all the children gone? Just 25 years ago, the way people attended church, the role that congregations played in the socialization and community of our families, was different. Today, expectations are different. Families are busy, and activities clutter our weekend schedules. For better or worse, the church home is less of a hub for multi-generational community, and for some of us (Millennial parents), bringing UU values and rituals (maybe learned in our own childhood R.E. classes) into our lives happens in the home.



1990s UUFO children carry bread and roses into worship

For the most part, the population who attended congregations in 1999, well, many of them are still here, but now they are celebrating their new grandchildren on our Caring and Sharing page, and taking trips to visit those (now grown-up) kids who once participated in Religious Education classes so many years ago.



2024: Leander shares a "joy of the day" at home, after lighting our family's dinner-time chalice

The Covid-19 pandemic didn't do our dwindling numbers of children any favours. In fact for many, the lack of children attending UUFO has become accepted as the life cycle of our congregation. But as the time without R.E. extends, many of us have been reckoning with feelings of loss, disappointment, and frustration.

We miss the children. We don't know how to bring them back. We are afraid of disappearing, without a new generation to inherit our joyful, values-driven community. Our limited capacity and energy are at odds with our desire for vibrancy; to share our values, to see our communities thrive into the next generation.

What can we do?

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Caring & Sharing	2
<i>Winter Roundup</i>	3
Welcome New Members	4
Board Walk	5
Movie Musings	6
<i>Our World of Music</i>	7
Coin français	8
Worship Cluster News	10
<i>Early Spring Gardening</i>	11
ReconciliAction	12
Affordable Housing News	13
Climate Action News	13
<i>Who are the people in your neighbourhood?</i>	14
<i>Facing challenges through meditation</i>	15

(Continued on page 3)

Caring and Sharing Family News



Birthday party for Fred and family

Happy 98th birthday to Minister Emeritus, **Fred Cappuccino!**
We look forward to Fred's next visit to the Fellowship Pulpit on March 17th for our 28th Anniversary.

Jean Pierre, Yvonne, Keza and Lana are settling into life in Ottawa. They are well equipped for winter and, luckily, it is a mild one.

All are healthy and seem to have dodged the dreaded respiratory illnesses we succumb to in winter despite the fact that Keza has been participating in 'play school' three times a week at the Community Centre.

Both Jean Pierre and Yvonne have registered for the weight room at the Community Centre and take turns to workout regularly.

Jean Pierre has been studying French full-time at La Cité Collégiale since January 3 and Yvonne started English as a Second Language on Wednesday, February 28. Keza and Lana are in the day care programme.

Jean Pierre now has a CV in hand and is looking forward to job searching in the near future.

Louise McDiarmid in Perth, writes that she has moved out of the retirement home she has been living in for the past year and a half or more, and is now living in her own apartment where she can do her own cooking. She is still somewhat active as an activist gadfly (A persistent irritating critic; a nuisance), something she learned in the Fellowship from the best of the best, but she is learning to be a little more diplomatic these days.

It is 15 years ago that Don and I moved to Perth. Although we were happy to be here, we still missed the Fellowship, and continued to drive in to Ottawa to attend services. The long drive began to lose its appeal after a year or two, though, and we drifted away -- physically but not spiritually.

We came to have a sense of community here in Perth, one that has been just as warm and supportive as the Fellowship, and it has been extremely important to us during Don's illness, and to me, after his death. One thing it doesn't have, though: the Fellowship's deep commitment to asking the Big Questions of life and the will to actively engage in making the world a better place. I miss You Guys.



New winter traditions —
Visit to Santa at the mall



New snow gear!

Welcoming Children Continued

(Continued from page 1)

On March 5, we will be exploring our tangled emotions, our capacity and limits, our desires and hopes, and ultimately, our vision of what we can be and offer the world.

We will explore new ideas of how to engage in multigenerational community, that might look completely different than it did 25 years ago. We will attempt to “right size” our Children and Religious Exploration expectations, to get on the same page about what ministry at UUFO could look like for families.

We want to hear your voice, your thoughts, your insights and perspectives, so that our vision includes and represents our entire community.

Join us—in exploring a UUFO Vision for Welcoming Children **Tuesday, March 5, 10:30am-1:30pm** (lunch will be served)



RE Kids, 2002

Extinguishing the chalice



FUN WITH FINANCE

Do you know... what percentage of our shared building with Heartwood House do we (UUFO) own?

(find the answer later in this newsletter!)

FELLOWSHIP WINTER ACTIVITIES ROUNDUP



Intergenerational play at Fellowship

Our all ages games day (New Year’s Eve Brunch party) was a hit, and we’re eager to host another day of games and play this Summer!



Write for Rights!



The Coldest Night of the Year

Team UUFO raised \$2500 for local charities serving people experiencing homelessness!

Board Walk: Action!! Justice!!

By Nick LePan

Social Justice has long been central to Unitarian Universalism. Our UU Principles speak directly to the goals of justice, equity, and action. Closer to home the UUFO mission statement includes “nurturing reverence for the earth as we pursue a more just and compassionate world.”

Social Action has been a key focus of the Fellowship since the beginning. I know that is not necessarily the prime focus or motivation for all UUFO members and friends. But I sense that even if you are not personally deeply involved, Fellowship members and friends more broadly are glad that this work is ongoing, that collective social justice work is crucial to who we are as spiritual people.

How do we DO social action?

Last year we replaced the general Social Action Cluster with three groups—ReconciliAction, Affordable Housing, and Climate Action. We also have a group dedicated to Refugee support, which leads the Fellowship’s involvement in sponsoring refugee families, and fundraising campaigns.

These groups represent the issues that Fellowship members have expressed shared passion for, which isn’t to say we don’t care about other issues as well. Social action of one form or another takes resources and a lot of time, energy, and commitment. Our social action initiatives run the full gamut—letter writing, joining public events for peaceful demonstration, researching issues and sharing information, membership in social action organizations, working more closely with one or more of these groups ‘on the ground’, and providing financial support to organizations doing good work.

Recently, on behalf of the board, I convened a get together of those involved in one or another of these initiatives. I wanted to hear whether we had adequate coordination for our efforts. I had the sense that the Fellowship more broadly sometimes doesn’t know what we are supporting, or how to provide feedback, or raise new ideas (especially if it doesn’t fall neatly into an existing group’s area of focus).

There was consensus that we want to be more transparent, and better at sharing information about the social justice activities we are involved in: to make it clear these groups are not closed, but that everyone is invited to bring their

Nick LePan, Board President



passion for justice to the Fellowship community.

Some of the ways we share information is through worship services, information sessions/workshops/discussions, and write-ups in Friday Notes and *Fellowship News* (see p. 12-13 for updates!). But it is clear that some information is harder to access, such as: which organizations have we supported financially?

Our annual budget allocates \$3,000 a year to charitable disbursements. In 2023 that money went to: the Boys and Girls Club; Odawa Native Friendship Centre; Alliance to End Homelessness; First Nations House of Learning; and the RR-CRC youth program. We also provide the RR-CRC Food Bank with half of the unidentified donations offered each Sunday. (That amounts to about \$1200 a year). And our memberships in Canadian Unitarian for Social Justice (CUSJ), Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) and CAFEs amount to another \$275 a year. (Did you know that? I didn’t until I asked Sarah for that info!)

Providing information and being open to feedback would confirm buy-in of the broad direction our social action initiatives are taking. And there is room for a more clear openness to bringing forward ideas and suggestions! There isn’t one magic approach. So watch for upcoming initiatives!

As a member Fellowship of the Canadian Unitarian Council, we also benefit from the National Voice Team—which issues statements on larger scale social justice issues and topics:

Past statements can be found at:

<https://cuc.ca/projects-grid/press/>

Movie Musings

By Michel Jan

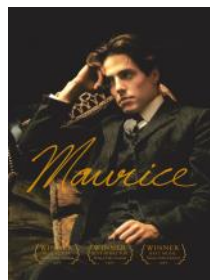
During the last three months we held three movie discussion group meetings over Zoom. We hold these on the evening of the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm and everyone is welcome. Links are available in the Friday Notes. We watch the movies on our own and then discuss them at the meeting. Links to the movies are also in Friday Notes. We limit ourselves to films available on Netflix and free streaming services.

In December we discussed two stand up comedian shows on Netflix. The first was *Nanette* by Hannah Gadsby, and the second was *Jack Whitehall: Christmas With My Father*. *Nanette* is funny for the first half and then gets serious in the second half but people liked it. Everyone liked Jack Whitehall and found it very funny. It is worth watching it if you have Netflix and if it is still on since it was a Christmas special.

In January we discussed *Margin Call* and *The Laundromat*. People liked both films which are about aspects around our monetary system. Both films include great performances by well known stars.

In February we watched *Maurice* and *Summerland*. Everyone liked both. *Maurice* is based on a novel written by E.M. Forster. Both films are about same-sex relationships because Valentine's Day is in February and both these films are love stories but not the typical Netflix / Hollywood formulaic romantic movies.

We try to watch and discuss movies that have some relevance to Unitarian Universalist concerns and / or values. You are all welcome to participate. I hope to see you in March and please watch Friday Notes for links.



An international evening with Pete Seeger

With Maurice Cabana-Proulx

In May 2023, there was a gathering at the UU Fellowship entitled *The History of Protest Music*. It turned out to be something of an homage to Pete Seeger because Pete was omnipresent in all twentieth century movements: labour, peace, civil rights, and more. He even created, with fellow Unitarian Malvina Reynolds, the first ever music album devoted to the environment.

Early in his career, Pete Seeger was fully immersed in American folklore. He took a job in Washington, D.C., assisting Alan Lomax at the Archive of American Folk Song of the Library of Congress. Lomax encouraged Seeger's folk-singing vocation and through collaboration with Woody Guthrie and the Weavers, Seeger became a major influence in American folk music. As a humanist and internationalist however, he also explored the folklore of many cultures. His repertoire included songs translated into English but also a good number of songs sang in their original language: Spanish, French, German, isiZulu, Yiddish...

This year, on May 2, our evening with Pete Seeger will explore Pete's international repertoire with a few classics from American folklore but many other songs from different cultures. Come and sing-along with us.

An International Evening with Pete Seeger

7-9 PM on May 2

In the Sanctuary at the Fellowship

RSVP: ARE@uuf.org

PUB NIGHT

Fun, food, and good conversation with
Fellowship friends!



March 21st
April 18th
May 16th

We meet at Patty's Pub on 1186 Bank St.
Everyone Welcome!

OUR WORLD OF MUSIC by Michel Boudreau

Featuring: Katie Lunn

My interview with Katie took place in a small cafe not far from her apartment. The place was quiet with just a few other patrons. We were both comfortably sheltered from the wind-chilled temperatures mischievously teasing pedestrians who were braving the sunny winter day outside.

Katie is the second youngest of five children, and was twelve when she and her family moved from Toronto to Prince Edward County, Ontario. Those who are familiar with this area of the province know it is famous for having become a trendy artsy area where tourists hobnob with local artists of all persuasion. It isn't clear if this vibe was prominent when Katie was growing up but she has fond memories of her childhood.

The interview began with the question "When did you first become aware of your musicality?" For Katie it was while growing up, as both her parents loved music of all genres. Music was often heard playing over the radio and the family frequently took themselves to live music venues.

Two of her brothers picked up playing the flute, with one of them actually making flutes later in life and becoming renowned in that field. In his teens, the older brother played in a garage band.

Katie started playing the harmonica in her late teens while traveling in Europe. She'd bought it before leaving Canada and met another Canadian at a hostel in Greece. He played guitar and they had a lot of fun jamming together. I facetiously asked her if she bumped into Leonard Cohen while in Greece. Apparently not.

Back in Canada she stopped playing the harp* but sometime in her early 20s one of her brothers bought her a guitar and song book. She taught herself to play and used it as a teaching tool while teaching kindergarten. She later moved to Toronto and started playing the harp again this time with musical friends who encouraged her to pursue it further. She took a six week course pursuing blues more than jazz but then dropped it altogether until she came to Ottawa in 2011. She joined a percussion group which reignited her musicality. One thing led

to another, with Katie ending up picking the harp again this time taking lessons. That's when things started rocking!

She's been told by an Ottawa harp teacher that there aren't many female harp-players, which puts her into a special category.

Katie feels like

she's at the top of her game when it comes to playing the blues. She is very passionate about her playing, making comments such as: "I am the blues" or "I feel like I can play anything in blues." Those are powerful statements which I can vouch for. The writer has the honor of occasionally accompanying Katie on his guitar while she blows powerful blues notes that fill the room. She has a collection of harps of various musical keys. She is especially adept at bending notes which has a very haunting effect.

Rock-on Katie !



Katie playing the harmonica at the 2022 UUFO Summer Picnic



DO YOU LIKE TO SING?

JOIN THE UUFO SONGSTERS!

The Songsters is our informal choir led by pianist and choir director, Joe McDonald. Songsters arrive at 9:45am on Sunday to rehearse the songs and hymns for the morning. They also lead the congregation in singing from the front of the sanctuary.

All voices welcome!

* NOTE: 'harp' is a colloquial term for a harmonica, often used by blues musicians

Rassemblement unitarien universaliste d'Ottawa



Aimez-vous la différence?

Gustavo Gottret

L'année 2007, à Buenos Aires, Argentine, une rencontre de l'UNESCO avait été organisée pour rendre compte de l'évolution et de l'état de l'éducation scolaire dans différents pays sud-américains. Avec deux autres collègues, j'avais le privilège de représenter la Bolivie, mon pays.

Les différents représentants exposaient les progrès réalisés dans leurs pays, ainsi que le chemin qui restait encore à parcourir à moyen et à long terme.

Le cas de la Bolivie était assez particulier. Malgré le fait d'avoir traditionnellement été considéré comme le pays le moins développé de l'Amérique du Sud, des progrès significatifs avaient été réalisés depuis une dizaine d'années avec la planification et le développement d'une profonde réforme éducative, travail qui avait pris plus d'une dizaine d'années.

En fait, il y avait eu d'autres réformes éducatives en Bolivie, mais cette dernière était la première à être partie d'un ensemble assez exhaustif de recherches effectuées dans le but d'identifier les besoins en éducation ressentis par les parents et leurs enfants, ainsi que par différents représentants de la complexe société bolivienne.

De l'immense région de l'Amazonie jusqu'aux hautes montagnes des Andes, la Bolivie est aussi riche en peuples autochtones. Auparavant, la seule langue officielle était l'espagnol. Avec la réforme éducative, toutes les langues autochtones sont devenues officielles, et l'enseignement scolaire est devenu bilingue: espagnol et la langue autochtone parlée dans la région.

Dans la rencontre de l'UNESCO, je me sentais satisfait montrant les améliorations de l'éducation en Bolivie. Après mon exposé, le coordonnateur de la rencontre prit la parole et me dit: « La reconnaissance de la diversité ethnique et culturelle en Bolivie est louable. Je me demande toutefois si vous aimez cette diversité, si vous aimez les personnes qui sont culturellement différentes ».

C'était une question à laquelle je ne pouvais pas répondre. En Bolivie, la moitié de la population est autochtone. L'autre moitié est métisse, mais souvent elle nie ses racines autochtones. Ceci est dû à l'attitude de supériorité que les Espagnols avaient lors de la conquête et tout au long de la colonisation, attitude transmise de génération en génération.

Les attitudes peuvent cependant être modifiées, peu à peu et génération après génération. La réforme éducative donnait, à ce propos, de nombreuses ressources dans le but de changer les attitudes négatives héritées.

Lorsque Miriam et moi sommes arrivés au Canada en 2008, nous avons trouvé un pays culturellement plus riche que la Bolivie, richesse qui incluait autant les nouveaux immigrants que les nombreux peuples autochtones. Par rapport aux premiers immigrants en provenance de la France et de la Grande-Bretagne, la plupart de leurs descendants actuels ont divers degrés de métissage, lequel est en général plutôt ignoré que nié.

C'est bien l'amour pour la différence qui permettrait au Canada et à la Bolivie (ainsi qu'à d'autres pays) de dépasser le multiculturalisme actuel et de s'engager dans la construction de sociétés interculturelles. L'éducation, autant formelle qu'informelle, constitue à ce propos une stratégie clé.

Il y a cependant des aspects culturels qui ne sont pas positifs. Un couteau, par exemple, n'est pas en soi « naturel » : il ne pousse pas des arbres. Un couteau est un produit culturel. C'est son utilisation qui déterminera si elle est positive ou non.

Ceci nous amène au sujet des « valeurs culturelles ». On a tendance à considérer tout aspect culturel comme positif. Mais, est-ce qu'il en est vraiment ainsi?

Quelques années avant de venir au Canada, Miriam et moi habitons à Camiri, une ville de l'Amazonie bolivienne. J'étais le directeur académique du premier centre de formation d'éducateurs et éducatrices avec une modalité interculturelle et bilingue.

Les étudiants étaient tous et toutes Guaranis, Guarayos, et Weenhayeks, les trois peuples autochtones de la région. À un moment donné de leur formation, on avait prévu de passer quelques jours dans un petit village où on pouvait réfléchir

tranquillement à plusieurs sujets éducatifs.

Lorsque nous étions arrivés au sujet des valeurs culturelles, les étudiants se sont réunis en petits groupes pour en discuter. Une demi-heure après, un représentant de chaque groupe partageait une synthèse de leurs réflexions. Après une brève discussion de l'ensemble des étudiants, on est arrivé à une conclusion : « Un trait culturel est une valeur culturelle lorsqu'il promeut la vie chez soi et chez les autres ». Il ne s'agit donc pas d'aimer ou apprécier toute différence culturelle, mais ce que nous pouvons identifier comme constituant une valeur culturelle. Et ceci vaut autant pour les cultures des autres que pour celle avec laquelle nous nous identifions.

On a tant à apprendre d'autrui... Les principes unitariens universalistes vont bien dans le sens de valeurs culturelles et spirituelles à développer pour la création de sociétés plus justes et humaines. Continuons sur ce merveilleux sentier : on n'est pas seuls! ☸

Cercle de croissance spirituelle : Nous étions vraiment heureuses de nous retrouver en février après en avoir été privé pour deux longs mois (membres malades). Afin de retoucher plus facilement notre dynamique amicale et chaleureuse, nous nous sommes permis de commencer plus tôt avec un petit dîner partage. Il fait si bon d'avoir un groupe où l'on peut harmoniser physique, psychologique, émotionnel et spirituel! Tout se passe dans la plus grande paix, l'écoute et le respect. Si cela vous interpelle, soyez le/la bienvenue. Il nous fera grand plaisir de vous y accueillir le premier jeudi du mois à 13h.

(Contact : Lucie-Marie)

Prochaines Célébrations francophones (à midi) :

24 mars : Invitée Allison Calvern

28 avril : Célébrer la journée de la terre

26 mai : Invité Rév. Mwibutsa (Fulgence) Ndagijimana

23 Juin : Se référer aux « Notes du vendredi »



poetry slant
by allison calvern

The following text is excerpted from a poem by Ellen Bass, called Relax. I give it to you because I don't know of any way to learn about poetry without reading it. Ellen Bass is a contemporary poet writing in the USA; her diction and sensibilities are also contemporary. When it comes to literature, Bass is one of us, and insightful enough to draw on ancient Eastern philosophy while commenting on today's western lifestyle. This is an excerpt. The full poem contains even more startling imagery:
<https://poets.org/poem/relax>

Relax, by Ellen Bass (an excerpt)

Bad things are going to happen. / Your tomatoes will grow a fungus . . . / Someone will leave the bag with the ice cream / melting in the car and throw / your blue cashmere sweater in the drier. / The other cat— / the one you never really liked—will contract a disease / that requires you to pry open its feverish mouth/ every four hours . . . / No matter how many vitamins you take, / how much Pilates, you'll lose your

keys, your hair and your memory . . . / There's a Buddhist story of a woman chased by a tiger. / When she comes to a cliff, she sees a sturdy vine / and climbs half way down. / But there's also a tiger below. / And two mice— one white, one black—scurry out / and begin to gnaw at the vine. At this point / she notices a wild strawberry growing from a crevice. / She looks up, down, at the mice. / Then she eats the strawberry. / So here's the view, the breeze, the pulse / in your throat. Your wallet will be stolen, you'll get fat, / slip on the bathroom tiles of a foreign hotel / and crack your hip. You'll be lonely. / Oh taste how sweet and tart / the red juice is, how the tiny seeds / crunch between your teeth. ☸

Worship Cluster Notes

By Pat Lucey



We're a lay-led Fellowship, and a big part of our congregation's shared ministry is to create, lead, and produce our Sunday services. While the Worship Cluster plans and organizes our yearly program calendar, our members and friends are all invited to take part in creating and leading our Sunday services.

A significant advantage of being lay-led is that our calendar is flexible enough so that we can enjoy a variety of speakers and points of view throughout the year; we've received plenty of positive messaging from members and friends who appreciate the range and diversity of their Sunday morning experiences with us. While most of our guest speakers have joined us in person in our Sanctuary, our hybrid format permits us to open up our circle of speakers so that we can hear from those who live too far away to join us in person. But on the many Sundays when we don't have guest speakers, we organize our own "home-grown" services, with members and friends creating and sharing the content.

Over the past several years, we've assigned monthly themes for our Sunday services, and encouraged our service leaders and speakers to explore different aspects of that monthly theme in their worship presentations. But in spring of 2023, as we took on the task of developing our 2023-2024 program calendar, we decided on a different, more flexible approach to inspiring our Sunday morning creative teams. We came up with the idea of using "Connections" as a yearly meta-theme, with different streams of topics and ideas which would reflect back on the concept of "Connections," and these streams would not be explored as consecutive blocks, but rather would be dipped into throughout the year.



Katie Lunn leads the 2022 Flower Celebration service

Here are the streams we're working with at the present time:

The Interdependent Web: Our connections to nature, the universe, the world around us.

Loneliness & Relationship: Our connections with others, from smiling at strangers to friendships and family ties.

Social Justice Connections: Our connections to organizations, and to our commitment to create a more just and compassionate world.

Connection to Wonder: Our connections with inspiration and reverence. How do we engage with feelings of awe and wonder?

Community: Our connections with one another, as a collection of people seeking "home."

Connection to Self/Heart: Our connections to our inner selves, what resonates in our heart.

Connection to Language: Our connection or disconnect from certain words and language. What resonates with us, and why? How do we navigate faith as a diverse people with different connections to different words?

Spirituality: Our connection to the spiritual, what resonates with the immaterial soul-self.

Over the coming months, there are a few Sunday services still open for enthusiastic creative teams who would like to develop a Sunday service which speaks to one of our "Connections" streams. Please let us know if you're interested in working with our Worship Team, who will collaborate with you in bringing your vision forward, and sharing it with us in a Sunday service.

Contact: worship@ufo.org

Worship Cluster Team: Sarah Baxter (Worship Coordinator), Lucie-Marie Castonguay-Bower, Laura Evans (Board liaison), Pat Lucey (cluster contact), Katie Lunn, Martha Nabatian, Nancy Rubenstein.

Early Spring Gardening

by Pat Lucey

Our Unitarian Seventh Principle is stated formally as “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” But if you’re familiar with the 7th Principle text we share with our kids in their Religious Exploration gatherings, you have learned that Unitarians “believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things.”

There are many ways in which we can care for our planet Earth – large ways, like actively engaging with and supporting environmental movements dedicated to making our planet a safer, healthier, and more sustainable place to live, and small ways, like tending to our natural surroundings, and doing our best to protect the health and well-being of the plants and animals and humans who live there. And of course one of the most pleasurable small ways to care for our natural surroundings is to plant and cultivate a garden.

Now, a garden need not be an expansive affair, overflowing with fruits and vegetables, in order to be worthy of the name – a big pot on a sunny porch with some marigolds and nasturtiums thriving in it is a beautiful little summer garden all on its own.

But what can we do now, in the first week of our chilly month of March, while we are waiting for the snow and ice to melt so we can get into our gardens? Here are some ideas:



Pat's potted flowers

☞ Start planning this year’s garden. I keep a year-by-year gardening notebook, and I rotate all my vegetable and herb plantings throughout my gardening areas, as a way to discourage pests and diseases. As well, some plants prefer partial shade while others prefer full sun, so I have to take this into account when deciding where to plant each variety.

☞ Go through the seeds you already have, and test a small sample from each seed packet for germination. Some seeds remain viable for several years, but other seeds have a short life span.

☞ Purchase new seeds as needed, either from a local garden shop, or online from one of the many seed vendors who make online shopping available.

☞ Start some plants from seed under grow lights. A south-facing window can be helpful, but you don’t receive full spectrum light through a window, so you should supplement the light coming through the window with full-spectrum grow lights. You can find small, inexpensive full-spectrum lights locally at hardware stores and garden shops – Canadian Tire offers a wide range.

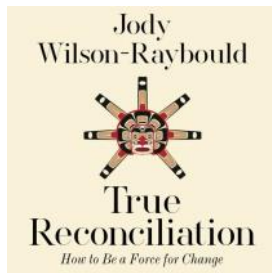
☞ Here’s a good, concise set of instructions for starting seeds indoors:
<https://www.knippelgardencentre.com/blogs/knippel-garden-centre/starting-plants-from-seed>

☞ Grow some microgreens indoors while you wait for your outdoor garden spaces to become available. Here is where you find out all you need to know about growing microgreens at home
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUauSDVB008>

☞ And last but hardly least, you can also learn to sing “The Garden Song” written by Dave Mallett. Here’s a link to a performance of this song by David Grover and the Big Bear Band, with sing-along lyrics included:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1oiVEWFHrs>

FUN WITH FINANCE ANSWER:

UUFO owns 12.5% (1/8) of the building!



ReconciliAction Circle Activity: True Reconciliation Book Discussion

On Feb. 3rd, Nanci and Tom led a group of eleven of us as we shared our reactions and insights on reading Jody Wilson-Raybould's book, *True Reconciliation*. The conclusion was unanimous. This book is powerful and, dare we say, radical. We all came away feeling a call to action and perhaps a sense of guilt that we aren't doing enough. Many people had asked Jody, "What can we do to contribute to reconciliation?" Many of us also struggle with this question.

For those who have not yet read the book, here are some main points. Her answers highlight three steps: Learn, Understand and Act.

Learn. About colonialism and the silos that have been built. pp.14-16, p.306

Understand. Our world views are different. Pp. 198, p.259

Act. By challenging ourselves and each other; by elevating and deepening our learning and understanding; and by taking action that is conscious not reactive P.283; p.306

These three steps are integrative, not linear, and each needs to be undertaken with consistency and persistence over the long term. She emphasizes that the path to "reconciliation" is a marathon, not a sprint. She observes that most of the responses so far to the Calls to Action from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) are easy, symbolic or performative actions (e.g. wearing orange t-shirts). The most comprehensive actions have yet to be touched (e.g. committing to recognizing and implementing an Aboriginal Justice system). These demand a commitment to the "marathon."

We all need to live in both worlds. Jody herself does so and, like us, finds it challenging and uncomfortable. She calls herself an "In-betweener". We share this with her as we work toward re-telling the stories of Canada and the history of Canadians.

Since the TRC in 2015, our Fellowship has spent considerable time "learning" and made many efforts at "understanding" and these efforts are ongoing. As Jody says, they are the "training" for the marathon. But understanding how we can "act" to further reconciliation is more of a challenge for most of us. Several Fellowship members have voiced an

interest in meeting again to share and deepen our insights into this aspect of "true reconciliation". Whether or not you were there in February, *you are invited to join in and share your thoughts.* (Watch for more information.)

Several of us have copies of the book that we are willing to loan to others wishing to join this discussion. Just ask Marilyn or Nanci.

In the meantime, we will continue to share information on indigenous organizations in Ottawa and ways to learn about their work and culture and to support them. **"Spotlight on ReconciliAction"** gives you easy access to much of this information. Just click on the link each week in Friday Notes. Our "neighbours" include indigenous organisations such as [Odawa Native Friendship Centre](#), [Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health](#), [Minwaashin Lodge and Inuukatiigiit \(Centre for Inuit Children, Youth and Families\)](#), all serving the urban Indigenous population. Wabano offers many cultural learning opportunities and also welcomes volunteers. Interested? Just fill out the form at '[Support Wabano](#)' which has the following invitation:

Volunteering is Your Path to Wabano. Are you looking for a way to give back? Do you want to share your time and experience the Indigenous community? Do you want to learn more about Indigenous culture? We are looking for volunteers to help us in every area of Wabano, from fundraising to helping out in the office, from delivering care packages to running fitness classes. Get started by filling out a volunteer form.

Nanci B., Claire H., Helmut K., Marilyn K., Gary W.



Affordable Housing Group

By Chris Baddeley Girard

Great news! On Feb. 12 the City of Ottawa announced that the City will receive \$176.3 million through the Government of Canada's Housing Accelerator Fund. The agreement will deliver 4,450 new homes over the next 3 years, with 90% of the funding going to building affordable housing and 10% to streamlining approvals and enhancing services. A chart listing the nine initiatives and actions planned by the City of Ottawa has been posted on the UUFO bulletin board in the Sanctuary along with extra copies to take away.

On Feb. 18, we were excited to have Sahada Alolo, Manager, Community Engagement at Multifaith Housing Initiative as the guest speaker for our Sunday service. She talked about how MHI is built on volunteer activism. Volunteers along with staff and tenants work together to build community spirit, involvement and supports for tenants in each of their buildings. This 'values approach' of MHI is truly impressive. Also impressive is the partnership MHI has developed with Dream LeBreton, who are offering their own affordable units, in addition to MHI's 130 for a total of 247 units out of 608. Of MHI's 130 units, 30% are designated for Indigenous tenants. The commitment of the Dream developer to contribute \$150,000 annually to build community supports for tenants is proof that developers can be part of the solution. On behalf of UUFO, the Affordable Housing Group is honoured to be a member and a supporter of the Multifaith Housing Initiative.

Members of our group have participated in a number of online/in house activities.

Two notable events worth mentioning are:

The Alliance to End Homelessness: Ending Homelessness is Possible: Lessons from Finland. A link for this talk can be found on the AEH website.

The Affordability Action Council: An all-in approach to solving Canada's affordability and climate crises. Their website lists links to this panel discussion as well as a final report.

As a group, we continue to explore ways and means to best influence, affect change, and inform our congregation of the issues and initiatives related to affordable housing. Items of interest will be posted either on the bulletin board in the Sanctuary or in Friday Notes. ☸



Climate Action Group

By Fran Mowbray

The Climate Action Group met this winter with the deliberate intention to « just chat »! It was a time to connect and share information, concerns and good news.

We did, however, make a request of the Board: That room rentals be required to use non-disposable plates, cups and cutlery. The amount of garbage being generated by renters, from paper plates, cups and plastic cutlery, had been considerable. We felt our request would align us with UUFO values

We are pleased that the Board has supported us in this request. Thanks to Gary for raising the issue.

Our meeting on Friday Feb 23 will be looking at ideas for the April 21 Service. This service will focus on some aspect of the Environment. All are welcome, as are any ideas or suggestions you'd like to offer at the meeting or by email. Send suggestions to UUFO, attention Climate Action Group. (climate-action@uuf.org) ☸



Who are the People in Your Neighbourhood?

Roving reporter Nanci Burns, interviewing Kim Oastler, ED of ALSO

In 1981, four visionaries worked to build a stronger voice for literacy in Ottawa. This resulted in programming at Heartwood House on Chapel St. We are fortunate that this vision resulted into two programs that now currently housed at Heartwood House: People, Words and Change and Alternative Learning Styles and Outlooks (ALSO).

PWC was previously profiled by our newsletter but this origin story was new to me. I was quite delighted to hear our very own Isobel Bisby was involved early on and had the wisdom to hire Kim Oastler in 2004 and five years later Kim became its Executive Director. Kim is still in this position. Under her direction, the program offers services on-site and by zoom and remote sites, that allow students to continue their education, including a range of hard to serve special needs students (e.g. people with anxiety issues, autism, and adults under house arrest.)

ALSO offers free upgrading classes to adults 18 years of age and older, as well as to the deaf community. The teachers work one-on-one and in small groups to support each student's learning goals. The program employs two teachers, in addition to Kim, and volunteers serve in various capacities.



When asked how she feels about being housed at Heartwood House, Kim's enthusiasm was palpable. She feels they are part of a community that is so much better together.

She shared a fun fact: four of Heartwood House staff were previously ALSO participants and now work at the reception desk with the OC Transpo Lost and Found.

ALSO has not had a funding increase from Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development for 10 years and currently has a funding gap of \$20,000. They hope to decrease this by offering a creative fundraiser in our Sanctuary on April 12th, called Banned Books. It promises to be a stimulating event with five authors reading from banned books and Chef Rick from the Ottawa Mission doing the catering. All this for only \$50. See you there!



The CUC is looking to hire a Communications Manager. This is an opportunity to create the stories. To build content. To reach thousands. To live out the values of love, justice and interdependence. If you are a communicator and a savvy collaborator, or know someone who is, check out the [job description](#). Apply by March 25, 2024 to jobs@cuc.ca.

Facing challenges through meditation

By Evangeline Danseco

One Friday, free of virtual meetings, I tackled some papers that needed be reviewed. I was working on a description of a program I have been involved with for the past ten years, but I hit a mental block and couldn't write. I could not find the words and then I began to be critical and started berating myself. I decided to shelve it for another day and when I came back to it the following week, I couldn't advance. Worse, I started getting headaches and couldn't focus on other tasks.

Meditation helped me in taking a step back, in acknowledging the thoughts, reactions and the stories I was telling myself. A meditation from Dr. Tara Brach helped me in practicing self-compassion at times like these. She has a meditation called RAIN, which stands for recognizing, allowing, investigating and nourishing. Her [10-minute guided meditation](#) and a [reading on RAIN](#) was what we recently did for our meditation circle this February. We also devoted a few minutes to sharing our reflections on the usefulness, relevance and gentleness of this meditation, how we continue to learn, and the importance of self-compassion as we navigate the many challenges we face in our lives.



Focusing on our breath is a popular method for learning to meditate. Mindfulness of our breath is one of the foundations. As Thich Nhat Hahn discussed in his book, *Awakening of the Heart*, there are also mindfulness of the body, feelings and mental formations based on sutras from the Buddha. The RAIN meditation puts these mindfulness exercises so that we can become more aware and integrate what we are experiencing in our bodies, feelings, and thoughts.

The gentleness and love with which we gift ourselves can be a powerful healing experience. Challenges will always be present, and with mindfulness meditation, we realize these challenges don't have to be the source of our suffering. Instead, we can become our own best friend and these challenges can be a path to compassion and lovingkindness.

The meditation circle meets at 10am in-person for the first Saturday, then online on the third Saturday of each month, from September to June.

Do you practice Lent?

As UUs we often have diverse and complicated connections to traditionally Christian practices.

One way that UUs have embraced a personal, spiritual approach to the Lenten season is through #UULent—a daily meditation & photo sharing practice.

Each day, participants are encouraged to intentionally reflect on a daily word, and share reflections and images on social media with the hashtag #UULent.

Sarah has found the simple daily word akin to a meditative prompt, guiding personal reflection throughout the day. You can find her reflections in her Instagram stories: [@smaeby](#)

2024 PHOTO A DAY #UULent



Join a Unitarian Universalist practice of Lent! Each day, Unitarian Universalists and our friends and family intentionally reflect on a daily word, carry our awareness throughout the day, and capture an image that represents the word for us. We share our reflections and images on social media with the hashtag #UULent. On Sundays, we challenge each other to reflect on the daily word and also embody and enact it in our lives. (Created by Rev. Mr. Barb Greve; designed by Alex Kapitan)

M	T	W	T	F	S	S	
FEBRUARY			14 ashes	15 doubt	16 ego	17 desire	18 love
19 wish	20 need	21 ready	22 teach	23 commitment	24 integrity	25 equity	
26 poverty	27 empathy	28 trust	29 fungi				
MARCH				1 humility	2 connection	3 interdependence	
4 disturb	5 stalled	6 catalyst	7 liberation	8 change	9 resilience	10 justice	
11 intentional	12 mutuality	13 grace	14 abundance	15 care	16 pleased	17 generosity	
18 faithful	19 respect	20 community	21 devotion	22 sacred	23 resistance	24 pluralism	
25 anticipation	26 imperfect	27 prayer	28 curious	29 darkness	30 pause	31 transformation	

NURTURE Your Spirit. Help HEAL Our World.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa

Everyone Welcome | Bienvenue à tous

The Unitarian Fellowship of Ottawa is a spiritual community of people with shared values and diverse beliefs.

We are guided by the warmth of love, the light of reason, and the call of justice.

We come together to nurture meaning, hope, and reverence for the earth as we pursue a more just and compassionate world.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa

400 McArthur Ave
Ottawa, ON
K1K 1G8

613-421-8360
uuf@uuf.org



We're online at:
uuf.org



Find us on Facebook!
[@UUFellowshipOttawa](https://www.facebook.com/UUFellowshipOttawa)

Fellowship News

is published quarterly by UUFO
Send submissions, comments, or letters to the editors to:
newsletter@uuf.org

Submissions for the Summer Issue are due May 15th
Many thanks to our contributors and editors!

Editorial Team:

Allison, Nanci, Pat,
Sarah



Spring at UUFO

Potlucks

March 17 Anniversary Potluck

Workshops & Discussions

March 25 Meaning Making Discussion 5 "In times of great change, what can the wisdom of our bodies offer us?"

April 22 Meaning Making Discussion 6 "Who do we choose to be?"

May 2 An International Evening with Pete Seger

Special Events

March 3 Children & R.E. Visioning Session

Monthly Activities

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
(Worship)				Cercle de croissance spirituelle (UUFO)		Meditation Circle (UUFO)
(Worship)	Board mtg (Hybrid)			Film Club (Zoom)	Writer's Group (UUFO)	
(Worship)				Pub Night (Patty's)		Meditation Circle (Zoom)
(Worship) (Célébration francophone)						
(Worship)						

Weekly event info & Zoom links come to your inbox in our [Friday Notes!](#)