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Sunday Service 11 a.m.

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## Sunday Services

Child care is available and all are welcome.

### March Theme is Gratitude

**March 1** Rev. David Hutchinson “*The Bounce-Back Effect*” with workshop to follow.

**March 8** Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes *Theme is Gratitude* Cultivating gratitude is one of the most powerful spiritual practices, but it can be challenging to feel thankful when we are suffering, grieving, or faced with adversity. In hard times, what is it that we are grateful for?

**March 15** “*Sharing Our Faith*” Sunday service led by Heather Lunergan. Discussion to follow coffee on the topic of “What are your hopes for the Canadian Unitarian Council?”

**March 22** TBA

**March 29** The Reverend David Hutchinson with an after service discussion.

**April 5** Easter – Theme-based Ministry Service: “Poetry and Creativity.” Service Leader: Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes. In celebration of Poetry Month, please bring your favourite poems on the theme of spring, seasons, or creativity to share with others.



## Adult and Youth Program Schedule

We have a busy and exciting schedule of programs of interest to adults and programs for March. Most of these activities occur on a regular basis each month, as listed below. Please see the Facebook page, website or weekly mailouts for updates and details, or contact Jo-Anne at [eldergomes@yahoo.com](mailto:eldergomes@yahoo.com).

March 11 and 25 (every two weeks starting February 25), from 3:45 to 5:00 p.m. New program: Youth and Young Adult Justice group (**YAYAJ**). This group is for youth and young adults approximately 14 to 22 years of age. Najat, Jo-Anne, Carlos and others will be introducing young people to volunteer and social justice activities in Fredericton and around the world. All are welcome. Come after school and meet with others who want to make the world a better place. Information on our youth group page on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FrederictonUUYouth/>

**Circle Conversations** with Janet Crawford. March 12 (Second Thursday of each month, from February to June 2015), from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Please contact Janet if you are interested in attending and have not done so before.

**Popcorn Theology** is a film series led by Gabe Elder-Gomes, a film student at UNB. March 15 (Third Sunday of each month, from November 2014 to April 2015), from 4:00 to 7:30 p.m. Join us for pizza at 4:00 and stay for a film and discussion of its relevance to the UU movement and world issues. All are welcome, and the program is especially designed for youth and young adults.

**Discussion Night** with Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes. March 19 (Third Thursday of each month, from February to June 2015), from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. The discussion is on a topic related to the monthly theme, and is open to all youth and adults.

**Theme Night** with Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes. March 26 (Last Thursday of each month, from February to June 2015), from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. This evening provides an opportunity for people to reflect on readings and questions of a spiritual or philosophical nature, based on our monthly theme and following a modified small group ministry for-

mat. All are welcome, and you do not need to join the group or attend every time.

Other activities include workshops with Reverend David Hutchinson, from Houlton ME, on March 1, March 29 and April 19, a workshop on visioning for the CUC on March 15, following the service, and the monthly Women's Potluck (details elsewhere in The Touchstone). If you know of other activities or would like to suggest one, please let me know so I can help coordinate and publicize them.

Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes



## Reflection on our Monthly Theme: Gratitude

Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes

Two heretical mystics, Meister Eckhart in the 14th century and Julian of Norwich in the 13th, wrote about gratitude as a way of being and of seeing. In reassuring people that "If the only prayer you say in your life is 'thank you,' that would suffice," Eckhart was making a heretical suggestion that we could pray to God directly, without intercessors. Julian of Norwich lived a solitary and contemplative life, and wrote what is believed to be the first book written by a woman in the English language, *Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love*. Her vision of life was one of hope and beauty, in which "All shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well." Julian's heresy anticipated the beliefs of our Universalist foremothers and forefathers by several centuries. She held that God was the source and embodiment of love, and that there was no hell. Julian also believed that God and Jesus were both feminine, motherly beings, and used "She" when she referred to them.

"We live in the push and pull between Eckhart's 'Thank You' and Julian's 'All Shall Be Well' on the one hand, and all those things that diminish and demean and cheapen life on the other. Such is the tension in which we have to live," writes Reverend Steven Eddington. People might categorize the two poles as optimism versus pessimism, a perspective that people are generally good rather than evil (or at least equally capable of doing good or evil acts), or perhaps a belief in the beneficence of the Divine or the universe in contrast to the reality of the human condition. We could understand how focusing on one or the other would make a difference to an individual's attitude, but does it also make a difference to our actual circumstances or our daily lives?

Gratitude is one of the most powerful spiritual practices, but it can be challenging to feel thankful when we are suffering, grieving, or faced with adversity. In hard times, what is it that we are grateful for? Does gratitude come from a concentration on the good things around us, the silver lining in our sorrows, positive thinking, at the cost

of ignoring the pain and suffering? Or can cultivating gratitude mean "growing" blessings? Can gratitude create a new reality, line sorrows in silver, and even relieve the pain in the world, or at least in our lives?



## Celebration of Faith and Diversity

The religious studies class of Dr. Alexandra Bain is again planning a Celebration of Faith and Diversity at St. Thomas University. This year, it is planned to limit the session to just a Sunday afternoon in the hopes that this will allow fewer conflicts and more people to attend. The details are still being nailed down, however, the following has, to the best of your humble servants recollection been decided.

Primarily, this article is intended to be a "save the date" request.

The celebration will take place on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 4pm with a shared meal to follow. Each participating group will prepare an item for the meal. The location will probably be the same as the past few celebrations, the Noël A. Kinsella Auditorium, however, they are considering a more intimate venue, so this may change.

The theme this year is "hospitality". Each participating group is asked to prepare a 15 minute (it may be shorter or slightly longer once details are finalized) presentation on the place that hospitality holds in our tradition.



## CUC ACM

**Registration is now open for the Canadian Unitarian Council's Annual Conference and Meeting 2015! Register by March 31 for best price and a chance to win free registration!**

This year, the ACM will take place at Algonquin College, in Ottawa, May 15-17. The ACM includes pre-conference workshops (including a Religious Education professional development session), the Annual General Meeting (governance and business meeting) on Thursday night and Friday, an Ingathering and interactive music session on Friday night, 6 streams on Saturday small group meetings and spiritual practice sessions on Sunday morning, Sunday Worship followed by a multigenerational lunch and workshops, and several special meals and meetings. There are children's programs (Child Care, Young Fun and Junior Youth (12-14) with dedicated and caring volunteers and staff, and a dynamic team of youth and adult leaders offers an amazing program at CanUUdle, the national youth conference. (For information about registration for

CanUUdle, please contact Jo-Anne as soon as possible.) Canadian UUs of all ages will meet to worship, to talk, to learn, and to grow.

**The theme is Seeking Justice in a Changing Land – À la recherche de la justice sur une terre changeante.**

We will focus on how we live out our faith as engaged and compassionate global citizens. The Saturday streams and Sunday workshops will offer opportunities to explore music; living our faith as Canadian UUs; learning about truth, healing and reconciliation with First Nations communities; democracy; sustainability; international perspectives on humanitarian and volunteer projects; food justice; Image Theatre, and a World Café.

Information at: <http://cuc.ca/acm-2015> or from Jo-Anne (Chair, ACM Program Planning Committee)

Registration at:  
<http://cuc.ca/acm-2015/adult-registration/>



## International Women's Day

Celebrate International Women's Day with the Parliament of Crows and Guests - the Youth Feminists of Fredericton.

In a sacred space of sisterhood and sharing, we meet to discuss our bodies, our experiences and our communities. In an open, inclusive, accepting environment we aim to forge strong bonds which will strengthen and sustain us as we reframe our role and vision for society. Interweaving spirituality and current events we aspire to incorporate traditional wisdom and modern knowledge, educating one another and forging a new shared dream.

Open to women and children of all ages.

March 8 2015 at 1:00 pm, and the second and fourth Sunday of each month thereafter.

See you at 874 York St.

For more information please contact Rhonda at 454-5039, or by email at [rconnell@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:rconnell@nbnet.nb.ca)



## George DeMille, 1934–2015

George Edmund Rufus DeMille, 80, of Fredericton, died February 23, 2015, due to complications following a stroke. Born October 17, 1934, of parents, Charles Rufus DeMille and Helen Victoria (Flewelling), in Hampton, NB, he lived his life and death, surrounded by love.



He graduated from Hampton Consolidated School (1952), and, as a Beaverbrook Scholar, he received degrees from UNB (BSc 1956), and McGill (MSc 1958, PhD 1964).

He married Katherine McKellar, with whom he reared three children, and moved to Fredericton in 1961, where he taught for 30 years in the Department of Physics at UNB. In 2004, he married Allison Calvern.

Active in the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton, Scottish Country Dancing, and a Masters group of bridge players, George's calm demeanor was a touchstone for many in the community and across the country, such was his gentle reach. The beloved recipient of many honours of the heart, George will be deeply missed.

He is survived by: sister Libby (Saint John); son Iain (Fredericton); daughters Janet (Thunder Bay) and Heather (Tom Lees, Kingston); and grandchildren Robyn and Andrew (Thunder Bay), and Catherine and Nicholas (Kingston).

A funeral will be held on Saturday, February 28, 4:00pm at McAdams, 160 York Street, Fredericton, with Tony Fitzgerald officiating. If you are so inclined, please consider directing donations to Child Haven International, or to The Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton.

This space wants your material!  
Please send articles to [touchstone@uff.ca](mailto:touchstone@uff.ca)