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gathering at her home, 845 McLeod St., Apt. 319. Visitor parking available at back of building (there is signage), and also free parking along the short dead end street beside Queen Square park, which borders the apartment complex. We gather at 6 PM and eat at 6:30 PM. The topic for discussion is Who's coming to dinner? If you could invite any person - living or dead - to a private dinner, who would it be and why? For further information contact Joan Brewer at [jebrewer@rogers.com](mailto:jebrewer@rogers.com)

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## Sunday Services

Child care is available and all are welcome.

In November, our theme is "Ourselves and Our Stories." Throughout the month, we will be hearing from different members and friends who will share their personal journey (how they came to Fredericton, to Unitarian Universalism, to their work or a special interest, to create relationships, families or other works of art, etc) or a story about our community. We will announce the speakers or topic each week through congregational meetings. There is still time to volunteer to share a bit of your story.

**November 1 *Theme Sunday*:** Jo-Anne will offer a reflection on the theme, and Judith Day will talk about her month-long birthday celebration as she turns 70.

**November 8 : *A Group of Five, and More*:** The Jairi Family and UFF. Heather Lunegan will lead a service where those who were involved with UFF's sponsoring of the Jairi family from Kosovo will discuss the experience.

Please also bring brief remembrances of family or friends as we commemorate the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.

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## Women's Pot Luck

The next Unitarian Fellowship women's pot luck will be held Friday, November 27th. Deby Nash will host the

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## YAYAS-Bee

November 4 and 18: YAYAS-Bee

The YAYAS-Bee group started singing their own song during the mini-con held at October's Atlantic Gathering. :-)  
 If you are between 14 (12 if you contact me first) and 20, please join us on November 4 and November 18. We start at 3:30 or as soon as you can get here after school / work, and continue until about 5. On Nov. 4 we will be doing a visioning exercise the Board introduced to us. Starting on Nov. 18 Anneke and Orianna plan to start using a small group ministry format to deepen everyone's individual quest for meaning.

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## Note from the Sunday Service Committee

Do you have a suggestion for a speaker? Would you like to volunteer to talk about a topic related to the monthly theme? Do you have a compelling story to tell about your life or personal journey? The Sunday Service committee, which is co-chaired by Sarah, Najat, and Jo-Anne, will be meeting on November 1 after the service; you can offer your suggestions then or by email to Jo-Anne at other time. We meet in person approximately every two months, and use email to plan in between times.

Upcoming themes are Music and Inspiration (December), Growth and Ageing (January), and Faith (February). Each month we try to publish a short piece about the theme to encourage reflection, and submissions are wel-

come. The YAYAS-Bee (youth 14-20) group will also be talking about the monthly theme in their new small ministry group program.



## Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers

Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers is again selling double-sided, 12 inch balsam fir wreaths - undecorated sell for \$12.00 and decorated (pine cones, white cedar branches, and red velvet bow) sell for \$14.00. If you are interested in purchasing a wreath and supporting a worthy cause, e-mail Linda Sprague at [spraguella39@gmail.com](mailto:spraguella39@gmail.com)

Please give your name, phone number, as well indicate the type of wreath(s), decorated or undecorated, and the number that you would like reserved.

Deadline for orders is Nov. 22 and will be available on Nov. 29 at the Fellowship, or 29 Fleet court in Garden Place off the Woodstock Road, or they can be delivered.

*We can make a difference one granny at a time!*

[www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/grandmothers/groups.htm](http://www.stephenlewisfoundation.org/grandmothers/groups.htm)

[www.helplesotho](http://www.helplesotho)

[www.grandmothershelpinggrandmothers.ca](http://www.grandmothershelpinggrandmothers.ca)



## Ourselves and Our Stories

Fifteen Short Reflections on our November Theme: Ourselves and Our Stories

“Do you wait for things to happen, or do you make them happen yourself? I believe in writing your own story.” – [Charlotte Eriksson](#)

“We story our lives in ways that give human meaning and purpose to our endeavours, and these stories in turn shape and guide our future actions.” – [Jacqui Stedmon](#)

“To read fiction means to play a game by which we give sense to the immensity of things that happened, are happening, or will happen in the actual world. By reading narrative, we escape the anxiety that attacks us when we try to say something true about the world. This is the consoling function of narrative – the reason people tell stories, and have told stories from the beginning of time.” – [Umberto Eco, \*Six Walks in the Fictional Woods\*](#)

“Carve your name on hearts, not tombstones. A legacy is etched into the minds of others and the stories they share about you.” – [Shannon L. Alder](#)

“In many ways my life has been rather like a record of the lost and found. Perhaps all lives are like that.” – [Lucy Foley, \*The Book of Lost and Found\*](#)

“It’s like everyone tells a story about themselves inside their own head. Always. All the time. That story makes you what you are. We build ourselves out of that story.” – [Patrick Rothfuss, \*The Name of the Wind\*](#)

“We all have an ongoing narrative inside our heads, the narrative that is spoken aloud if a friend asks a question... We also hang on to scraps of dialogue. Our memories don’t usually serve us up whole scenes complete with dialogue.” – [Lydia Davis](#)

“There’s no way to really preserve a person when they’ve gone and that’s because whatever you write down it’s not the truth, it’s just a story. Stories are all we’re ever left with in our head or on paper: clever narratives put together from selected facts, legends, well edited tall tales with us in the starring roles.” – [Steven Hall, \*The Raw Shark Texts\*](#)

“Everything becomes a story and ends up drifting about in the same sphere, and then it’s hard to differentiate between what really happened and what is pure invention. Everything becomes a narrative and sounds fictitious even if it’s true.” – [Javier Marías, \*Los enamoramientos\*](#)

“I believe in fiction and the power of stories because that way we speak in tongues. We are not silenced. All of us, when in deep trauma, find we hesitate, we stammer; there are long pauses in our speech. The thing is stuck. We get our language back through the language of others. We can turn to the poem. We can open the book. Somebody has been there for us and deep-dived the words. I needed words because unhappy families are conspiracies of silence. The one who breaks the silence is never forgiven. He or she has to learn to forgive him or herself.” – [Jeanette Winterson, \*Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?\*](#)

“A well-thought-out story doesn’t need to resemble real life. Life itself tries with all its might to resemble a well-crafted story.” – [Isaac Babel](#)

“Is the narrative you now possess really and truly your own? Are your dreams really your own dreams? Might not they be someone else’s visions that could sooner or later turn into nightmares?” – [Haruki Murakami](#)

“I used to think I was a victim of my story until I realized the truth; that I am the creator of my story. I choose what type of person I will be and what type of impact I will leave on others. I will never choose the destructive path of self and outward victimization again... Once you start recognizing the truth of your story, finish the story. It happened but you’re still here, you’re still capable, powerful, you’re not your circumstance. It happened and you made it through. You’re still fully equipped with every single tool you need to fulfill your purpose.” – [Steve Maraboli](#)

“Jesus was not a theologian. He was God who told stories.” – [Madeleine L’Engle, \*Walking on Water: Reflections on Faith and Art\*](#)

“If thinking wants to think God, then it must endeavour to

tell stories.” – Eberhard Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World: On the Foundation of the Theology of the Crucified One in the Dispute Between Theism and Atheism*



## The Dunbarton Occasional

Volume I, issue 3, October 7, 2015  
77 Dunbarton, Ottawa, ON, K1K 4L5

Written with whelming enthusiasm and distributed to those who are (somewhat) interested in the difference between Fredericton ways and Ottawa ways, as seen by allison calvern, who is now privy to them both.

Here in Ottawa, i go dancing twice a week, and every time i put on my ghillies, George is nearby. You may not know this about him, but let me tell you, he had great legs. Especially in action at a ball, which was the only time he wore his kilt. Anybody who has seen Scottish country dancing knows that the kilt was designed specifically to show off a man’s legs. Hallelujah, i say, though quietly.

I fell in love with George, the dancer. In love with him. He had a strong body, and his expertise on the dance floor made him so sexy. And when he got his beard, holy cow.

Actually, i mostly went to Scottish country dance class because of him. Seeing him on the floor twisted that knot at the centre of my being, so that it was pure distraction to watch him. Not moving, not touching, not engaging with him—just watching him roiled me, a turbulence, a delicious vexation.

We all took turns with one another, and i got to dance with George, once or twice over the course of a Monday evening class. I took his hand, lined up on the lady’s side across from him, his long legs poised, his arms ready to guide me through the figures. Every dance with him was a thrill. I never minded doing the knot, or the poussette-right-round if i was dancing with George, his hand lingering on mine during rights-and-lefts, leaving me feeling ‘possessed’ by him in a small, secret way. Kilts and the power of those old male/female roles—what an indulgence.

One thing with George was, he so rarely made a mistake, we all cheered when he did! Proof that he was like us, and that maybe, one day, we could dance as he did: brilliantly. We could not, of course. He was so easy on the floor, a nonchalance in him that spread through the other dancers, up and down the set, and throughout the hall even. I have seen his friendly manner encourage adjacent sets at a ball. We can all do this, he seemed to suggest with his

mere presence. And so we did, the dances flowing with something akin to joy. Up until this year, when people asked if he was still dancing, George would say: “Well, I shuffle, yes.” But he was mistaken in that evaluation; in truth he was dancing to the end.

While it is a bit of a digression for The Dunbarton Occasional to speak of George, it is not a digression to tell you about dance classes, and how i have to change my Fredericton ways for the Ottawa ways.

For instance, Ottawa dance teachers make a list ahead of time and eMail crib notes for each dance. We are expected to learn the dances before class, apparently—a kind of homework! I didn’t even open my eMail the first time, but i did for the second class. Bratach Bana was on the list, a great dance, but complicated, and everybody here afraid to make a mistake. The teacher wears a mic and runs the class, s/he being the only person designated to actually ‘teach.’ She walks us through once—only once, unless somebody asks for a second walk though, which causes some eyes to roll—and then we dance it.

The class in Ottawa is more stiff than the Fredericton class, where we are more collaborative and prone to fits of laughing. We all feel entitled to teach one another, whispering directions left right and centre as we all learn a dance together. Not that this makes it easy for Connie, our teacher, but she puts up with us. Plus, when the music starts, Fredericton dancers get ready for our first mistake, knowing we will make one. This recognition that we will err frees us, and, sure enough, when we get to our mistake, we practice our recovery. If the set falls apart, we just start again. Laughter, recovery, and persistence are all good life skills. Not much chance for these Ottawa folk to laugh during a dance instruction, it seems to me, but i have hopes for them; for one thing, they are very welcoming.

Somehow, in spite of the laughter and the instructional free-for-all, no dance was too complicated for our Connie. Bratach Bana, Bonnie’s Stronchiray, and Montgomeries Rant—she led us through them all. Thanks to having spent so much time with her, and with all the Fredericton dancers, i can keep up now with the Ottawa SCD groups. In fact, the more i see other dancers, whether in Ottawa, Boston, or Montreal, the more i realize what a gem Fredericton has in Connie and the SCD group. Going to dance class after George died was the hardest thing of all, his dance still in the room, in the set, in the music. I keep going, lacing up my ghillies, holding out my hand.

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