



The Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton

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Sunday Service 11 a.m.

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Sunday Services

April Theme: *The Simple and the Sacred*

April 30: Service Leader: Heather Lunergan. Speaker: Stephen Ward, on *Journalism Ethics in a Time of Trump: A Democratically Engaged Journalism*. Stephen Ward is an internationally recognized media ethicist whose writings and projects have influenced the development of the field in theory and practice. He is an educator, consultant, keynote speaker and award-winning author. He was a reporter, war correspondent, and newsroom manager for 14 years, covering conflicts in Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Northern Ireland before becoming the British Columbia bureau chief for The Canadian Press news agency in Vancouver and later moving to Fredericton. His current research is on the future of media ethics in a global interactive world. In this talk, Dr. Ward will “advocate for a certain type of journalism to protect egalitarian, non-populist, liberal democracy and other values.”

May Theme: *Compassion*

May 7: Service Leader: Tony Fitzgerald. Speaker: David Brown: A presentation on “*Dr. Marshall Rosenberg – Methods of Non-Violent Communication*.” This talk will explore Rosenberg’s writings on NVC, also known as Compassionate Communication.

May 14: Service Leader: Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes. *Mothers and Ancestors: a program for all ages*. We will

be talking about our ancestors, mentors, and role models in an interactive service. Please bring your stories to share in small groups. You may also choose to join the children in making family trees.

May 21: *Lay Chaplaincy*. Sheila Moore, chair of the Lay Chaplaincy Committee, will talk about the work Lay Chaplains do. Tony Fitzgerald and Debi Nash, our current Lay Chaplains, will share their experiences.

May 28: Halifax Satellite Service: Theme Service on *Compassion*. We will be streaming a service from the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax. Reverend Norm Horofker will be leading a service, including story and hymns, on the theme. There will be an opportunity for Fredericton participants to share announcements and Joys and Sorrows as usual, and we hope to have people from other Maritime locations join us.

June 4: Growth and Transitions. Please contact me if you have marked a milestone in your life (special anniversary or birthday, move, new job, retirement, birth, death of a loved one) over the past year so we can recognize the occasion.

For information on Sunday Services or to make suggestions, please write to us at Sunday_Services@UFF.ca



Joys and Concerns

Sincere sympathy to Glenna Hanley on the passing of her sister, Serena Renner as well as Serena’s husband, Paul Renner both in Sussex NB

Sincere sympathy also to Deby Nash on the passing of her sister, Diane Turnquest in the Bahamas

Gone from our sight but never from our hearts.

This is a new section for Touchstone. Please forward any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the congregation to Janet Crawford janetcr@nbnet.nb.ca



Women's Monthly Pot Luck

The next Unitarian Fellowship women's pot luck will be held Friday, May 26th. Haifa Miller and Sabina Campbell will host the gathering at the Fellowship House, 874 York Street. We gather at 6 PM and eat at 6:30 PM. Topic for discussion: Spring plants for planting or enjoyment. Do you have a favourite springtime plant? Tell us why or why not. For further information, contact Joan Brewer at jebrewer@rogers.co



Our Covenant of Right Relationships With Each Other

Almost two years ago, Sheila Moore and I attended a workshop at the Eastern Regional Fall gathering. There were three different workshops offered and by default we both ended up in the workshop about covenants of right relations. The things we heard and talked about caused us to become interested in what a covenant of right relations would look like for our Fellowship.

We first asked ourselves how a congregational covenant of right relations was different from our "principles" printed on the back of the Sunday bulletin. We came to understand that the words on the back of the Sunday bulletin represent our denominational covenant with other UUs and the world around us, while our covenant of right relations would be about how we will be with each other in this community. Uniting in the common bonds of relationship rather than in obedience to a religious dogma is a distinguishing feature of UU. In the absence of a shared and uniting religious creed, we commit with each other though the promises we make about how we will be with each other in this community. The promises and commitments we make become our covenant. A covenant of right relationships provides the context from which we can act; a covenant can support the creation of an accepting, safe congregation.

We presented a Sunday service about covenanting with each other and circulated examples of covenants from other congregations. Last fall we invited Rev. Linda Thomson to facilitate a workshop about congregational covenants of right relations where we got input from members and friends about what needed to be included in our covenant. Following the workshop a committee was formed to sift through the pages of suggestions and create the covenant. Gail Moore and Najat McFarland joined Sheila and Joan on the committee. We presented our Covenant of Right Relationships to the Board and they accepted it. Now it is the memberships turn to review it. The Covenant of Right Relationships will be on the Agenda at the AGM in June.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask one of the committee members. We hope that following the acceptance at the AGM, the Covenant will be framed and included as an item on the Agenda at each congregational gathering.

Our Covenant of Right Relationships With Each Other

Preamble

To covenant with one another is to engage in the spiritual and everyday practice of loving better. Although this document expresses our written promise to each other, our true covenant lives and breathes in our actions. We will use it to deepen our bonds with one another; during times when we are loving well, it will inspire us to love better; and in times of conflict, we will use it to guide us. We expect this covenant to be challenging, but we also expect it to inspire us, to strengthen our relationships and deepen our sense of community.

- 1. We will communicate with and about each other in an open, kindly and respectful manner by*
 - Listening mindfully with open minds and hearts*
 - Not making assumptions. Checking out what we think we heard*
 - Speaking from our own experience using "I" statements rather than "you" statements*
 - Talking with and to people rather than about each other*
 - Challenging and debating ideas respectfully and constructively*
 - Allowing time for each person to speak*
 - Communicating with others as clearly as we can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama*
- 2. We will seek peaceful and constructive resolutions when conflicts arise by*
 - Avoiding taking things personally or making assumptions*
 - Remembering that what others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream*
 - Forgiving ourselves and others and inviting people back into covenant with each other after a disagreement*
 - Saying "I'm sorry"*
 - Staying connected through difficult moments, trusting that we are each doing our best*
- 3. We will work together for the common good of our beloved community by*

- *Watching for opportunities to offer praise and thanks*
- *Providing opportunities for us to have fun together*
- *Pledging not only to tolerate but also to respect, honour and celebrate our diversity*
- *Sharing the work of our community with our time and resources as we are able to*
- *Regularly reminding each other of the covenant we have made with each other*

Grateful for the broad diversity among us, we willingly accept responsibility for our own behaviours and our obligations to honour the other. We freely enter into this covenant and agree to honour its spirit. We promise each other our help in upholding the covenant and promoting mutual respect.

This Covenant is intended to be a living document and was posted on Date approved at AGM. As the Congregation attempts to live our covenant, we expect to discover new truths and better ways of working together. We will periodically incorporate our new insights into newer versions of the covenant that better meet our needs.

Submitted by
Joan Brewer



CUUWA Women's Tea

May 28 at 1:30 pm; all are Welcome

The Canadian Unitarian Universalist Women's Association invites all who are interested in women's and feminist issues to a CUUWA Women's Tea at the Fellowship. Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes, current chair of the CUUWA, and Anneke Elder-Gomes, member of the CUUWA Council, will host the gathering. Refreshments will be served.

Please join us between 1:00 and 1:30 on Sunday, May 28, 2017, for tea, social time, and small group discussions. A cross-Canada check-in and the CUUWA Annual General Meeting, using the Zoom platform, will start promptly at 2:00 pm local time. A CUUWA member at each location will introduce the local group on Zoom, and take part in the cross-Canada check-in, and everyone will have an opportunity to find out what changes participants in other areas are striving towards, in their personal lives and in their congregations and communities. Members in good standing will be able to speak and vote during the business meeting which follows.

Those who cannot attend the Fredericton tea in person will connect using the Zoom platform at <https://zoom.us/j/3388633352>. Phone connections are available, but long distance charges will apply. Dial: +1

408 638 0968 (US Toll) or +1 646 558 8656 (US Toll) and enter the meeting number: 338 863 3352

Memberships are available now and cover the period until June 2018 at a cost of \$25 a year per person. Each additional family member pays \$5 more, and there is also a special five-year rate. Write to Jo-Anne for a membership form. AGM materials will be sent to all members in good standing a month before the meeting. If you are a member and have not received your information during the first week in May, please message me at eldergomes@yahoo.com.



Youth and Young Adults

Hello! It's time we got together, right?

We are thinking of doing two activities in May. One is a meditation session (we might do yoga in May or June, too). The other is a youth worship focusing on diversity and inclusivity.

Both will be suitable for youth 14-18 and young adults 18-35.

Interested?

The best thing to do is to join our Facebook group, where we will be discussing the details. It's at

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

Anneke Elder-Gomes
Adult Programs



My Promised Land

By Ari Shavit

A Book Review

Shavit is an Israeli journalist who covers the development of modern Israel from his great-grandfather's arrival there in 1897 to 2013, moving from the idealism of the kibbutz settlers to the remarkable variety and challenges shaping the country very recently and to all appearances now. Through a series of interviews and his own travels to significant places, he provides a well-written and intriguing story, though other readers may find, as I did, that he takes it for granted that we know the basics already.

He starts with his great-grandfather's 1897 visit on a "Thomas Cook" trip, full of the idealism of Herzl's Zionist movement and seeking land for persecuted Jews in the shared communities of kibbutz collectives and eventually a Jewish state with a Hebrew language where the diaspora would be forgotten. The 1917 Balfour Declaration showed Britain's support for this, though Shavit does not

elaborate on the crazy boundaries established with Palestinian Arab areas weaving through and around it. Interviews show how some kibbutz thrived and improved the economy for Arabs in the area and some were destroyed. Some stayed agricultural and others became industrial. Ideals included communism and pacifism. An excellent educational system developed and scientists made rapid progress. But understandable Arab anger at the loss of land led to a series of wars that drove the scientists to making Israel's atomic weapon base. The Israeli army and air force also proved remarkably successful, increasing Arab anger. Zionism turned into a "dragon of war", successfully destroying Egypt's nuclear weapon base, fighting off invasions and carrying out its own retaliatory invasions.

Israelis also became divided as the early predominantly Ashkenazi Jews from Europe often rose to middle and upper class while newer immigrants from Africa and Asia often ended up in poorer housing estates. Communities based on experience and culture of the various countries they had left developed. The early days of British protection were also replaced by a more complex Western support and Israel's own rise as a military power. Confidence grew, but fear continued and the colonisation movement into lands previously occupied by Arabs was fired by both. That's one of the big problems to this day.

So it is a very divided country with more Arabs than Israelis in Jerusalem and that percentage likely to increase. Ultra-Orthodox Jews face the song and dance nightlife culture of Tel Aviv and those believing military force and further occupation is the answer face pacifists seeking a solution. This is very difficult now as the Arab countries are coping with war and extremism and no one is in a position to arrange a peace for the whole area. The power and independence of similarly threatened Iran is an extra problem.

However, Shavit still sees hope for the idealism of his great-grandfather's people and notes the many times successful collaboration with Arab communities has been achieved. He describes the achievement of a secular democratic country with a common language that the government helped to change from one of religious discussion to a national medium. His interviews include one Arab citizen and only one woman. I'd have liked to have heard from more but he certainly covers a wide variety and sets the history vividly in place.

You are welcome to borrow my copy.

Sheila Andrew



Note From the Composer

Beginning with last month's issue of Touchstone, I have been using a package to typeset web "Uniform Resource Locators" in such a way that programs such as Adobe Acrobat for displaying the Portable Document Format files in which Touchstone is distributed may consistently recognize these URLs. When URLs are recognized, they become links like the links found in regular web pages. The links when recognized cause the mouse cursor to change shape when moving over the link and by clicking on the mouse, the link should be opened in a web browser or an email composing window, depending on the type of link.

This should make it easier to gain access to external references from the electronic version of Touchstone. Unfortunately, this feature is not available to those of you still receiving the newsletter in the form of "dead trees".

This space wants your material!
Please send articles to touchstone@uff.ca