

VOL. 66 ISSUE 01 • JANUARY 2025

THE EDMONTON UNITARIAN

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EDMONTON

LIVING LOVE THROUGH THE PRACTICE OF STORYTELLING



[January's Package: click here](#)

THIS ISSUE:

Service Descriptions	pg. 2
Minister's Reflections	pg. 3
Board Update	pg. 4
Canvass	pg. 5
Volunteer Opportunity	pg. 6
Caring Community	pg. 7
Religion on Tap	pg. 8
Soul Matters	pg. 8
CUC Events	pg. 9
Pastoral Care	pg. 10
Shaping Our Community	pg. 11
Principles and Sources	pg. 12
Social Media	pg. 13
Listen Wi-Fi	pg. 13
Holiday Office Closure	pg. 14
People Finder	pg. 14
Pullout Calendar	pg. 15



The question is not so much 'What do I learn from stories?' as 'What stories do I want to live?'

David Loy

Land Acknowledgement

In accordance with our principles, we acknowledge with gratitude that we gather on traditional Cree lands that are part of Treaty Six and shared by many nations.



A treaty is an inheritance, a responsibility and a relationship. May we be good neighbours to one another, good stewards to our planet and good ancestors to our children.

Sunday Services, 10:30 am

Dec 29

CUC National Service: The Church of Our Imagination

Please join others either in the zoom room or sanctuary to experience this wonderful service produced by our Canadian Unitarian Council. This service was aired on November 3, 2024 and we are now giving you the opportunity to view this well produced service. Our own Ilara Stefaniuk Gaudet is featured.

Here's what the CUC had to say:

In 2013 at a Canadian Unitarian Council national conference, a group of Canadian Unitarian Universalist young adults wrote a poem - The Church of Our Imagination - and captured the attention of everyone present. We are revisiting it:

And we imagine our present churches, vibrant and sustainable, embedded in a dynamic web of symbiotic relationship, within and beyond. We are called to start building this web.

Jan 5

Stand for Something Bigger Than Yourself

Chorealis

Robin Sharma (The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari) writes, "There are no extra people alive today. Every single one of us is here for a reason, a special purpose. Each of us can shift from the realm of the ordinary into the heights of the extraordinary." Join Chorealis for a contemplative service featuring the words of Robin Sharma.

Jan 12

A Cautionary Tale: Stories are Meant to be Complex

Rev. Morrison

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie delivered her ground-breaking Ted Talk in July of 2009 called: 'The Danger of a Single Story.' How does this concept of a 'single story' play out in our personal lives, our work or congregational life, or with our families? What assumptions do we make when we consider only one aspect of a story? An interesting and perhaps enlightening topic to discuss!

Jan 19

Only a Story Will Do: Storytelling in Many Forms

Rev. Morrison

In this family friendly service we will explore many aspects of storytelling. Stories can be told using music, movement, poetry, prose, oration, and art. Come and find out how many ways you can experience and tell a story!

Jan 26

The Stories We Tell Ourselves: Learning to Question

Rev. Morrison

Sometimes we tell ourselves stories that don't fit our situation any more. Sometimes we tell ourselves stories that are harmful to ourselves or others. What are some of the stories you tell yourself that may no longer serve you? In this service you will be given an opportunity to practice telling and questioning those stories.



We look forward to seeing you all on Zoom from the comfort of your own environs. Please use this link:

[https://zoom.us/j/97779453314?](https://zoom.us/j/97779453314?pwd=VVB1VWF5ZUd0UGU1ZXQ5UGVxb0tXQT09)

[pwd=VVB1VWF5ZUd0UGU1ZXQ5UGVxb0tXQT09](https://zoom.us/j/97779453314?pwd=VVB1VWF5ZUd0UGU1ZXQ5UGVxb0tXQT09)

January's Ministerial Reflections



I'm really excited about the Soul Matter's theme for January. There are so many ways to think about the concept of 'Story.' We as humans are hard wired to pay attention to story. For example; I have often gotten quite a few pages into a new book and come across a good story and then, and only then, do I remember that I've already read that book.

Stories were all our long-ago ancestors had to keep track of things like the seasons, constellations, history, calamities, and genealogy. These stories were passed down from generation to generation and often the rules of survival were embedded into those stories. I think the stories we hold about who we are, how we were raised, our successes and our growing edges are also how we survive in this day and age. Modern life is undoubtedly more comfortable now, but it is also significantly more complex.

What are some of the stories you keep telling yourself about you, your family, and the world around you? We're all the main character in our own lives, but are you the victim, hero, or villain in your stories? Do you tell yourself you're generous and kind and that's why folks are drawn to you? Or do you wonder why people struggle with your presence and tell yourself it's because their personal shortcomings?

Growing up, I told myself the story that my Dad didn't like me because I was too precocious. I asked the 'why' question too many times to suit him, or so I thought. In conversations with him when he was in his 80's, I found out I was wrong to think he didn't like me. His own demons kept him from being a loving and kind parent, and he deeply regretted that as he got older and had time for self-reflection. The story I told myself was that there was something wrong with me, not him. I think that's pretty normal for a kid!

Joseph Nguyen wrote a best seller called: Don't Believe Everything You Think: Why Your Thinking is the Beginning and End of Suffering. I'm going to add it to my reading list. I don't think I've read it yet, but maybe I have and I'll have to wait till the first good story to find out.

In peace,
Rev. Rosemary

Church Business

Board Highlights by Lynne Turvey

Food for Thought...

Welcome to 2025! I can barely believe that John and I are entering our 20th year as UCE members. There are many others who have been UCE builders for much longer than that, and we are so grateful for their dedication and service.

We have been part of a “shared ministry” for all that time, even though we might not have used that term. But ministry at its heart is service. As a UU bumper sticker affirms: “Love is our doctrine. Service is our prayer.”

Continuing in that spirit over the next few years will require some deep reflection on societal changes and the needs that have arisen from them. Our board secretary, Susan Ruttan, recently attended a Zoom presentation by an American minister, Rev. Peter Morales, entitled Liberal Religion – Is It Time for Hospice? Susan has shared six points from that talk that struck her as most salient about the future of UU churches.

- Membership is declining in UU congregations (and similar churches).
- Yet there are more lonely people in the US (and Canada) than ever before. Lots more people are living alone, smaller families, etc. “The need (to deal with this loneliness) is absolutely staggering.”
- Ask people why they come to churches like UU ones: the most common answer, more than all others combined, is “the relationships”.
- Making the church the community that people need has obstacles – the word “church” doesn’t appeal to younger people.
- UU congregations often don’t adapt to meet the need that people have for community.
- Church must focus on deep connections between people.

I listened to the recording on YouTube later. Rev. Morales provides much food for thought. One of his points right near the start is how important hospitality is in a community, to provide the opening for those human connections to occur. Rev. Rosemary has been working to find lay leadership for a hospitality team at UCE. You’ll see more information about that in this newsletter. However, we all play a part in creating a place where newcomers, people searching for relationships, can find a home.



This year's canvass theme is Just One Step! Let's all take Just One Step this year and pledge to the support of our church.

Pledging your support is part of your membership in our church. When you take Just One Step to pledge, you are "sharing the ministry of the congregation through your gifts of time, talent and money." This is part of our covenant and is part of your membership in our church. As a member, you should be returning a pledge each year. Your pledge can be in any amount, but I encourage you to give as you are able.

How do your donations support our church? Your donations go straight to our staff and programs. We are very fortunate that our building mostly pays for itself through \$140,000 in annual rentals. That is a very unique position for a church and helps keep our pledging target reasonable.

Each year we need to raise about \$160,000 in donations to support our staff and programs. That works out to about \$1000 for each church member. Are you donating \$1000 a year to support your membership?

So please take Just One Step this year and pledge your financial support to your church.

Canvass runs from January until the end of March. During this time, we ask all of our members to take Just One Step and pledge their financial support for the coming church year. Your pledge directly affects planning for next year's church programs and activities as we have to budget within our means. Please return your pledge before March 31st.



Hospitality team Lead or Co-Leaders

Volunteer Position Available!



As many of you know, volunteering at UCE is a meaningful way to serve the congregation, build fellowship, and support the church's mission to nurture community. This role is integral to ensuring that no hospitality detail is overlooked providing a warm, welcoming atmosphere for all who attend Sunday services or special gatherings,

As a volunteer in this capacity, you will oversee the hospitality efforts that bring people together and create moments of connection. This position also involves engaging with fellow volunteers, encouraging participation, and collaborating with church staff to keep everyone informed and involved. Together, your efforts will help foster a sense of belonging and care among the congregation.

Job Description:

- Ensure there are adequate coffee, tea, and snack supplies for Sunday services.
- Decide when Soup or Pot Luck Sundays will be, and work with the administrator (Janet) to give advance notice through the newsletter and weekly emails. Also, make in person announcements during the Sunday services.
- Put out volunteer sign-up sheets and if necessary recruit extra volunteers.
- Be on call for other times such as Blue Christmas when food is required.



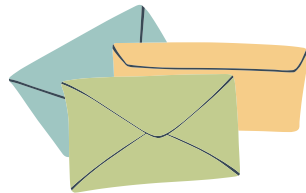
OUR CARING COMMUNITY



Thank you
Jennifer!

After many years, Jennifer Hinchcliffe will no longer be handing you post-it notes! She is stepping down as the Sunday Service volunteer wrangler. We would like to thank her for her years of ensuring our Sunday services had greeters, ushers and the all important coffee makers! Jennifer will continue help lift the spirits of the congregation by sending cards on behalf of the church.

Requests for Cards & Letters



- Corrine Jackson who is at the Grey Nuns. Cards can be sent via Geoff Jackson, Rev. Audrey or Rev. Rosemary.
- Vic and Bev Romanyshyn - cards can be sent via Rev. Audrey
- Jean Lomow - is also looking for visitors and cards! She is in the Edmonton General. 4th Floor, C Wing, Room 17.

SHARING OUR ABUNDANCE



Change for Children

In cooperation with the indigenous people of developing countries, Change for Children aims to identify the root causes of poverty and, in the spirit of solidarity, assist in finding long-term solutions.



Inge Hess

For those who remember Inge Hess, she is now doing well in Bethany Care Home in Cochrane, near her daughter Pearl.

Inge is enjoying her life there and planning to make it to 100, like her sister in Dusseldorf. If you would like a telephone call with Inge, Audrey Brooks can provide her contact information. If you plan to be in Cochrane, she would love a visit.

Check out the Pastoral Care page that's in every newsletters to learn how the team is able to support you and help find resources in the local community.



TRUCK AND MUSCLES NEEDED



Do you have a truck and access to muscled men? We need donated furniture moved to a location where it will be distributed to Ukrainians or other people setting up residences. Contact Gloria Krenbrenk 780-668-9166 or gkrenbrenk@gmail.com for details.

LIFE LONG SPIRITUAL GROWTH AT UCE



Soul Matters

For January's Theme Package, click [here](#)

Check out the Soul Matters display at
church for more inspiration and
information

UUs On Tap ✨ ✨
HAPPY
2025!

You're Invited to the first gathering
of the year, a wonderful opportunity
to catch up with fellow UUs and start
the year with a full heart (and cup)!

6 PM | JAN 29 | THREE VIKINGS
10713 124 St



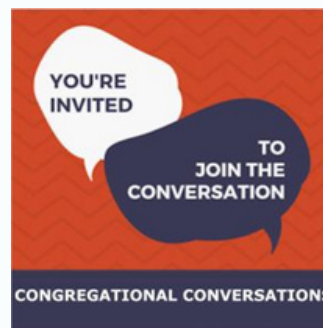
CUC Events

Congregational Conversations:

Pastoral Care (second run)

Wednesday, Jan 2, 5:30 pm MT

<https://cuc.ca/events/congregational-conversations-pastoral-care-2/1735846200/1735851600/>



Rising Together: Unitarian Universalists of Colour

Wednesday, Jan 8, 5:30 pm MT

<https://cuc.ca/events/rising-together-unitarian-universalists-of-colour-january-2025/1736364600/1736370000/>

Black folks, Indigenous folks and people of colour (BIPOC) are often in the minority in Unitarian Universalists congregations and communities. Gathering together with others who share similar identities and experiences can reduce isolation and support us in getting our spiritual needs met. Rising Together is the place where we can find each other!

Connect and Deepen

Saturday Jan 18: REFLECTING – 2:00 pm MT

<https://cuc.ca/events/connect-and-deepen-january-2025/1737216000/1737221400/>



Connect & Deepen is an online community for adults interested in meaningful reflection, conversation, and shared ideas for living our values. This welcoming space encourages spiritual, philosophical, and practical exploration. The intent is to deepen our experiences of Unitarian Universalism, enriching our own lives with thoughtful meaning-making – so that we live grounded in our UU values.



Pastoral Care

The newly minted Pastoral Care Team was active this summer at the UCE, offering practical, spiritual, and emotional support to our congregation. Members and friends were helped with housing, visiting and messages of care.

The team is ready to continue this fall!

How We Help:



Meal Deliveries: For those recovering and unable to cook.



Transportation: For rides to church.



Friendly Visits: For those in senior residences or with mobility issues.



We can also send caring cards upon request.

For assistance:

Contact Gloria Krenbrenk our Caring Connections Dispatcher at 780-668-9166 or at ucecares@uce.com.

To contact the whole team **anytime**, there is an easy way to do this. Simply go to our website, <https://www.uce.ca/contact-us/> and click on the pastoral care link.

Rev. Rosemary, Carol Hutchings, Alec Moorji and Gloria Krenbrenk

Shaping Our CommUUnity



Vision:

We open doors to all seekers of spiritual growth and nurture positive change for a just and healthy world.

Mission:

UCE Mission is to inspire social justice by questioning the status quo, engaging community and inviting all to the table.

We do this by providing an intentionally inclusive home to:

- nurture spiritual growth and transformation
- foster learning opportunities and outreach experiences
- welcome all age groups
- support action for social justice
- be guided by the principles and sources of Unitarian Universalism

UCE Covenant of Right Relations:

With love as our guide, we pledge to create a beloved community of peace and compassion. We trust our ability to work through conflict. As members and friends of UCE, we agree to:

- Honour and respect diversity in values and beliefs as a source of communal strength
- Be truthful, kind and open minded
- Assume good intent and goodwill
- Listen with open hearts and speak with care even when it is uncomfortable
- Talk to, not about, others
- Accept responsibility for our individual acts
- Address conflict promptly and ask for help when conflict is too difficult
- Be steadfast in support of our community in times of disagreement
- Share the ministry of the congregation through our gifts of time, talent and money
- Express encouragement and appreciation for the gifts of others

The Principles and Sources of our Religious Faith

UU congregations affirm and promote eight principles, which we hold as strong values and moral guides. As Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove explains, “The principles are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a guide for those of us who choose to join and participate in UU religious communities.”

Our Eight Principles

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.
- Individual and communal action that accountably dismantles racism and systemic barriers to full inclusion in ourselves and our institutions

We live out these principles within a “living tradition” of wisdom and spirituality, drawn from such diverse sources as science, poetry, scripture, and personal experience.

Our Six Sources

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world’s religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God’s love by loving our neighbours as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centred traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.
- Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

Please enjoy watching recordings of our Sunday Services again on YouTube or listen as a Podcast on SoundCloud. Just click on the link and don't forget to subscribe while you are there.

Join us in conversation on Social Media

- Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/41659071349/>
- Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/UnitarianChurch/>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmpm5DXHKM7pRnnzcC75txQ>
- SoundCloud: <https://soundcloud.com/user-189401827>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UnitarianUCE>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/unitarianuce/>

Please make sure that you continue to update your Zoom account. Zoom regularly updates to release new features and fix bugs. We recommend upgrading to the latest version once it is available. How to update Zoom: <https://support.zoom.us>

Listen Everywhere Renamed Listen Wi-Fi

Listen Wi-Fi is a service to replace our aging FM radios.

First time user

Step 1: Connect to UCE wifi on your mobile device

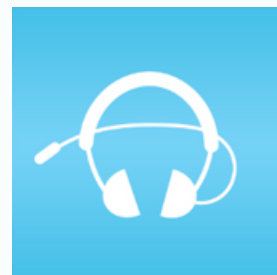
- In WiFi settings select UCE
- Type in Password:

Step 2: Download Listen WiFi App (from app store)

Step 3: Tap on Listen WiFi app on your device

Step 4: Select venue - UCE

Step 5: Adjust volume on your device



Returning user

Step 1: Connect to UCE wifi on your mobile device

- In WiFi settings select UCE
- Type in password if it has not been saved

Step 2: Tap on the Listen WiFi app

Step 3: Select venue - UCE

Step 4: Adjust volume on your device



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 Vice President: Sue Lynch
 Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair: Andrew Mills andrew@misc.ca
 Secretary: Susan Ruttan
 Trustees: Marilyn Gaa, Gerard Hayduk, Wendy Smith and Art Breier
 Minister: Reverend Rosemary Morrison rmorrison@uuma.org
 Church Office: Janet Polkovsky chadmin@uce.ca
 Head Teller: David Rae
 Choreal's Choir: Gordon Ritchie, Karen Mills
 Church Services: Gordon Ritchie
 Lay Chaplain: Marilyn Gaa
 Building and Grounds: Alan Boyle

January

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 7:30 Chorealis Rehearsal	3	4
5 10:30 am Sunday Service	6	7	8	9 7:30 Chorealis Rehearsal	10	11
12 10:30 am Sunday Service	13	14	15 7:15 UCE Board Meeting Online	16 7:30 Chorealis Rehearsal	17	18
19 10:30 am Sunday Service	20	21	22	23 7:30 Chorealis Rehearsal	24	25
26 10:30 am Sunday Service	27	28	29 6:00 pm UUs ON Tap 3 Vikings	30 7:30 Chorealis Rehearsal	31	