



UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF REGINA

THE CHALICE

APRIL 2020



President's Message

Moving Forward

I am grateful for the membership in allowing me to serve as your new President. These are unique times that none of us have experienced in our lifetimes.

Your Board has pulled together in a generous spirit of Fellowship. We will attempt to meet the needs of our membership in the best way possible, beginning with Jamie Struthers presentation on Zoom March 29th.

The building will be closed to in person services till further notice. We are working with our staff for them to provide alternative duties that are acceptable to all parties involved. We will need to review this in late April to see if more changes need to be done.

We hope to have volunteers agree to plan alternative services using all technology available. This could include having joint services with other Unitarian congregations that are willing to share.

I must thank everyone for putting in their work and ideas to keep the Fellowship available in this difficult period. We will get through this and emerge stronger and more flexible. I hope that we can continue to meet the diverse spiritual needs of our membership now and in the future. Stay well and know that we all stand with you.

Thank you,
Richard Jack

Services in April

We want to keep you safe and do our part for public health. As a result, we have decided to cancel all in-person services until further notice.

For now, we are scheduling events on a week-by-week basis. Watch for our emails or check our website or Facebook page for up-to-date information.

Calling Volunteers

Hey, times are changing! There are opportunities for anyone interested in helping us address these changes. If you already see a need that is not being addressed, you can help ...

Please contact Ethel immediately at: reginauu@gmail.com or 306-522-7357

Donations

Your financial generosity is valued as we strive to remain a supportive community and keep everyone connected in a new way. Thank you for your continued financial support.

Alternate ways to donate:

You can donate via our website & Canada Helps - <https://reginaunitarians.ca/donate/>

You can send us a cheque by mail, payable to Unitarian Fellowship of Regina.

Staying Connected - while physically distant

Our Board of Trustees met on Thursday, March 19th to discuss and make decisions about our services, building rentals and moving on-line.

Many of us are finding our lives and schedules are different than usual. Activities are cancelled, restaurants are closing, etc. Some of us are busier, some are enjoying a 'retreat', some of us have children at home unexpectedly, or are trying to find daycare for our kids so we can continue working.

Our Community - How Can We Support Each Other

What would help you in these uncertain times? What help could you offer others?

- Are you able to check in with another person by phone? Or deliver some groceries? Could you keep in touch with 3 or 4 people?
- Would you like more human connections in your life? Would you like to receive a check-in call on a regular basis?
- Wondering about Zoom? If you have internet or a regular dial up phone, it's easier than you think! More information with specific details soon, but in the meantime, here is a link to start. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Meeting>

Can you think of other ways we can help others?



We envision a vibrant, diverse and inclusive home for spiritual exploration and social action.

UFR Board of Trustees

President	Richard Jack
Past President	Jamie Struthers
Secretary	Jane Knox
Treasurer	Joanne Green
Members -at-Large	Chris Soucie, Ethel Struthers George Garbe

Leadership

Finance Committee - Joanne Green
Fundraising Action Group - Jane Knox
Program Committee - Tanya Walker/Joanne Green
Property Committee - Joanne Green
Membership Committee - Jane Knox
Reconciliation Study Group - Sandra Blenkinsop

Lay Chaplains

Jamie Struthers, Hilary Craig

Lay Chaplaincy Services

The Fellowship provides non-denomination services to celebrate rites of passage, including births, weddings and deaths. *Our Lay Chaplains are available to the public to provide services.* Please feel free to contact us at (306)522-7357 or reginauu@gmail.com.

Office Hours & Rentals

Saturdays, 1-3 PM

Mike McCall is available at the Unitarian Centre once a week for any business which needs to be dealt with in person. At any other time, feel free to telephone the Centre (306-522-7357) and leave a message, or email reginauu@gmail.com

Regina Multi-Faith Forum

The Regina Multi-Faith Forum provides opportunities for people of different faith traditions to gather, get to know each other and pray together.

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/reginamultifaith/>

Board Talk

By Secretary Jane Knox

Hello friends! How good it is to be part of this caring community at this challenging time. March 2020 will be noted in history!

On Sunday March 8, 2020, about 60% of our members attended our annual meeting where we authorized simplified bylaws and received 2019 reports from all our committees and action groups. The 2019 Annual Report demonstrates that we are active and that we care about our community. It also shows that we completed the year with a positive bank balance. Nice work!

If you have not had a chance to read the *2019 Annual Report*, please have a look on the website: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_TBb5ucJfpH5TbgXU_BaqS38FjXG26Ty/view

On Tuesday March 10, 2020, the new Board held its first meeting, as usual in the lower hall. By Sunday March 15, those who attended church were spread throughout our large upper sanctuary with lots of space between us. That afternoon, 8 of us attended a workshop around an extra-large table allowing for a meter of social distance between us. The workshop was aimed at helping service leaders and it definitely built our confidence and gave us new ideas. Thanks to Liz James, our knowledgeable facilitator!

By March 19, the Board was meeting again (this time using an online platform: Zoom) to make decisions about how we would operate in a world where gatherings of more than 5 are prohibited for the safety and good health of us all. It is wonderful and heartening that we and our governments are managing this big change swiftly and with minimal fuss. As a former health professional and prevention specialist, I say: Thank you.

Our new reality takes effort from each of us as we live with less interpersonal contact and more telephone and online gatherings... Zoom, Facetime, etc. *What fun to learn these new ways of being together!* And so good to see smiling faces. Your patience is appreciated as we learn new skills and test new ways of supporting each other and operating effectively as a Fellowship.

Your new Board has accepted new responsibilities as follows:

President Richard Jack will lead us during the challenging months ahead

Past-President Jamie Struthers continues to serve as lay chaplain and also will be supporting Richard who will be carrying out other community responsibilities during the next few months.

Treasurer Joanne Green also continues as the Chair of the Property Committee, Finance Committee, and Co-chair of the Program Committee with Tanya Walker

Secretary Jane Knox is also Chair, Membership Committee, and serves on the Fundraising Action Group and the Reconciliation Study Group

Members at Large are Chris Soucie, George Garbe (Fundraising Action Group), and Ethel Struthers (Membership Committee).

The Board is responding to pandemic challenges as best it can, using the most current information available for each decision. We have determined that there will be no staff lay-offs for now as there is work to be done whether or not we gather in the building. For example, at its March 19 meeting, the Board decided that we will grasp the opportunity to strengthen our online presence during the pandemic. *Your Help Is Needed.* Board members are looking forward to working with Fellowship friends and members who are interested to build a strong and positive online presence. **Contact Ethel Struthers to be part of the excitement. Watch for changes!**



Give Us Spirit

Support for your spiritual journey

What does spirituality mean to me? (Wayne Williamson)

There are as many answers to this question as there are people in the world, I think. From living a life oriented to the holy spirit, to what is the meaning of life. Not being a follower of any religious doctrine or philosophy, my understanding of spirituality has changed over the years. In my youth my parents sent my siblings and I to Sunday school (of the Anglican persuasion) every week, and later when I went to live in the Boys Home in Montreal, Christian services were held in our auditorium every Sunday. So, in the beginning I was taught a church-based idea of spirituality. God was good and all powerful and I was in awe of all the wonders of creation, life was great.

I began to doubt this very early on. I had questions like, "why did my parents not attend church with us". Although my brother and sisters were also briefly institutionalized, they went to foster homes, "so why not me". Although my physical needs were provided, mentally and spiritually, I felt starved. Despite all the amenities in the Home, daily routine was extremely regimented with little freedom of choice. Stepping out of line was severely dealt with. At 16 I ran away from the Home and went to live briefly with an aunt and uncle before striking out on my own at 17. By then I considered myself to be agnostic and did not attend church services of any kind.

A few years later I joined the navy and in basic training I was back in church once more. Not by choice as it was pointed out to me that the first Article of War stated that a commanding officer shall ensure his men shall attend church. We paraded to either a catholic or protestant church in our dress uniforms every Sunday. Even declaring myself an atheist did not exempt me.

As my career moved onward, my life expanded to include marriage, children, divorce and sobriety, but not religious spirituality, I gained much experience and a better understanding of myself and how my life had changed. I now consider myself to be a humanist believing that there is goodness in all people despite outward appearances and actions. We all have that seed of love and respect for one another within ourselves that we must nurture no matter our colour, creed, culture or identity. I know that my spirituality is changeable, adapting to my own experiences and relationships.

I once read a story of a lecturer who asked at the end of his presentation if there were any questions. Perhaps facetiously someone asked, "What is the meaning of life?". He replied that as a young lad he had found a piece of broken mirror which he rounded off the edges and carried with him everywhere. Whenever he discovered a dark nook or cranny, he used his little mirror to reflect the light into it. That he said is the meaning of life. We are all meant to shine our light wherever we encounter darkness. My spirituality is a sense of peace and purpose and yet I am still in awe of the wonders of creation.





April Poetry

Collected for our pleasure by Pam Bocking

Many of us have mixed feelings about April. Here are some poems expressing a variety of views on April.

from April Night

The moon comes up o'er the deeps
of the woods
And the long, low dingles that hide in
the hills,
Where the ancient beeches are
moist with buds
Over the pools and the whimpering
rills.
The night is a sorceress dusk-eyed
and dear,
Akin to all eerie and elfin things,
Who weaves about us in meadow
and mere
The spell of a hundred vanished
Springs
– *Lucy Maud Montgomery*

April Rain Song

Let the rain kiss you
Let the rain beat upon your
head with silver liquid drops
Let the rain sing you a lullaby
The rain makes still pools on
the sidewalk
The rain makes running pools
in the gutter
The rain plays a little sleep
song on our roof at night
And I love the rain.
– *Langston Hughes*

An April Girl

Praise the spells and bless the charms,
I found April in my arms.
April golden, April cloudy,
Gracious, cruel, tender, rowdy;
April soft in flowered languor,
April cold in sudden anger,
Ever changing, ever true - -
I love April, I love you.
– *Ogden Nash*

from The Waste Land

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain
– *T.S. Eliot*



Lockdown

By Brother Richard Hendrick, submitted by Marena Charron

Yes there is fear.
Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.
But
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
You can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet,
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
across the empty squares,
keeping their windows open
so that those who are alone
may hear the sounds of family around them.
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.
Today a young woman I know
is busy spreading fliers with her number
through the neighbourhood
So that the elders may have someone to call on.
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples
are preparing to welcome
and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in
a new way

All over the world people are waking up to a new reality
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.
So we pray and we remember that
Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.
But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,
Sing.

A Lifelong Sharing

Love cannot remain by itself--it has no meaning.
Love has to be put into action and that action is service.
Whatever form we are,
able or disabled,
rich or poor,
it is not how much we do,
but how much love we put into the doing;
a lifelong sharing of love with others.

– Mother Teresa

#562 in Singing the Living Tradition