

The Olinda Outpost

Monthly Newsletter of the [Unitarian Universalist Church of Olinda](#)
2953 Olinda Side Road, Ruthven, Ontario, N0P 2G0
Toni Janik & Bobbye Baylis, Editors



Sunday Services 10:30 am January 2024

Date	Speaker	Title	Musician(s)
Dec. 31	No Service	N/A	N/A
Jan. 7	Sarah Wert, Multiple Contributors	<i>Looking Forward and Looking Back</i>	Lorie Lyons
Jan. 14	Randy Lepp	<i>Relief, Development & Peace: The Mennonite Central Committee Story, Part 2</i>	Baylis/ Stone/ Fred Butzen
Jan. 21	Rev. Karen Gitlitz (Zoom)	<i>To be or not to be and chat GPT? (#3 in the Liminal Times series.) Via Zoom or At Olinda.</i>	
Jan. 28	TBA	TBA	Toni Janik
Feb. 4	Liz James	<i>My Mzungu Eyes Are Improving</i>	Baylis/ Stone

Ministerial Search Committee Congregational Survey

Coming Early January
See Page 9 for more Details

The Olinda church building is open for in-person services. Masks are available should you chose to wear one. The services will also continue to be broadcast via Zoom. A link to the service is emailed to those interested on Saturday afternoons. If you would like to be included, email Bobbye Baylis at bbaylis@cogeco.ca.

Report from the Board

By the time the January 2024 newsletter reaches some of you, Christmas and Winter Solstice will have passed, and the Sun will be gradually radiating increased light and warmth on the northern hemisphere. A vital characteristic of life is its adaptability to change, and we have certainly been challenged by more than our share of change this past year. The year 2023 has been recognized as being the warmest recorded year ever on Earth, and we have only begun to experience many of the consequences of its warming. Excess fires, droughts, and heat deaths are obvious signs, but because a warmer atmosphere can hold more water, we can expect more floods, storms, and even heavier snowfalls, together with increased biological reactions. The unanticipated deaths of our much-loved minister and several senior members of our church have placed an unwelcome strain on us, but it has been exciting to see how our congregation has pulled together and, with the help of the CUC, is responding well, both online and in person. Our chaplain, treasurer, and many committees (Sunday Services, Membership, Caring, Property, Finance, etc.) have been working overtime! We are celebrating the holiday season with a variety of carols and services, weekly dinner events are well attended, and plans are advanced for a happy wedding in a few days as well as for welcoming new members in the summer. Many thanks to all; we are truly blessed by your support during this critical year or two of transition.

Our search for a new minister is also now underway. As I reported last month, your Board has approved a search committee, now of five members: Toni Janik as Chair, Michael Hoffman as Vice-chair, together with Sue Markham, Ray Stone, and Joyse Gilbert. As with other Board committees, I can also attend meetings but have no vote. The Search Committee will be looking for input from the congregation in the form of a survey and discussion groups, so let me try here to explain the process as I understand it.

The committee will be searching for a contract minister, that is, a minister hired for a limited-term but renewable contract, usually for no more than a year at a time. UU churches in the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) generally follow procedures and guidance of the Unitarian Universalist Association of America (UUA) for ministerial transitions, and the contract minister route is now recommended for small churches of 125 members or fewer (we're currently down to about 53), especially since it was established that, if the church and the minister agree, after a successful contract or two, the contract minister (unlike an interim minister) can be called to a settled ministerial appointment at the church. This process allows the church and the ministerial candidate to become well familiar with each other's plans, possibilities and potentials while avoiding the frequently secret guest appearances and meetings at neighbouring churches that can encumber the more traditional search for a settled minister. There appear currently to be few candidates for small churches, so it is important for UU Olinda to produce an attractive profile of our accomplishments and plans in our search packet.

Keep tuned and enjoy a healthy, happy 2024! It is bound to be an exciting year! Please remember that there is no service on December 31, New Year's Eve, and that our Sunday Services Chair, Sarah Wert, and our treasurer Helen Moore are looking for more contributions to the service on January 7 (please see note on p. 4 of this newsletter!).

Annual Reports—Due Dates

- 1) Due date for Non-Financial reports: January 12th
- 2) Due date for Financial Reports: January 23rd, (Lloyd Fund January 29th)
- 3) Date for Annual Report distribution to congregants: February 18th
- 4) Annual Congregational Meeting for Report presentation: March 10th

Please observe the following in preparing and submitting your reports:

1) The report can be submitted in Word or other word processing software, or in the body of the email itself. Please do not submit as a PDF as we won't be able to edit.

2) ***The due date is really a last call date. We hope you don't consider the due date as a suggestion!***

3) Please send copies of your reports to Bobbye, Helen and Carmen. On the subject line please include the words **Annual Report 2023.**

4) Carmen will keep track of all the reports in a central file and send out reminders as needed; Bobbye & Helen will review content and edit.

In order to meet the timelines, we are asking that everyone kindly submit their reports in a timely manner

Carmen Smith, Secretary

Important Dates

Committee meetings may either be in-person or via Zoom. Committee chairs need to notify their members how the meeting will be held when they send out meeting reminders.

Jan. 7 Noon
Sunday Services Meeting

Jan. 11 10 am
Membership Committee Meeting via Zoom

Jan. 11 7 pm
Board Meeting

Jan. 12
Due date for non-Financial Annual Reports

Jan. 21, 2024 Noon
Social Responsibility Committee Meeting

Jan. 22
February Newsletter Reports Due Promptly

Jan. 23
Due date for Financial Annual Reports

Jan. 31
Due date for Survey for Search Committee

Sunday Services Committee Report

This fall, the members of the Sunday Services Committee pulled together with real dedication in the wake of Rev. Rod's unexpected death earlier this year. The committee succeeded in arranging for speakers to give talks at Olinda each Sunday up to the present and beyond. Over the past 4 months, a variety of ministers and layfolk provided talks that provided nourishment for the soul and/or food for thought.

In September, the committee decided to purchase a series of 6 near-monthly online services, called Meaning Making in Liminal Times, which is provided by a group of UU ministers from across the country. In October, congregants watched a recording of the first service, featuring Revs. Debra Faulk and Danielle Webber. In November, Olinda Zoomed in to the 1:30 pm livestreaming of the 2nd service, with a talk by Rev. Brian Kiely.

The committee is considering both the benefits and drawbacks of watching a recording of one of the services in the series at the usual Olinda time of 10:30 am vs attending a livestreamed service at 1:30 pm, since a recorded version doesn't provide the same sense of community with other UU congregations watching the service at the same time, but with the live-streamed option, it can be inconvenient to attend a service beginning 3 hours later than we're used to.

Currently, the search is on for a document created years ago that describes expectations for guest speakers. Once it is found, the plan is to update it as necessary and provide it to all prospective speakers.

Over the past few months, the committee has begun thinking about how we can increase our engagement with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of colour) folks. We will continue this important work in the New Year.

Congregational Participation Requested!

January 7 Service: Do you want to present a **Reading** or **Poem** or to **Relate an Event (Past or Future)**? Let both Sarah Wert and Helen Moore know by January 3, 2024.

Sarah Wert, Sunday Services Chair

Note from the Treasurer

Thanks for your generosity in donations for the church expenses as well as for two Christmas Families and donations in memory of members.

Thanks for your contributions which include attending church in person or Zoom, serving on the Board and/or Committees and doing the physical labour of maintaining the church.

Thanks for being a part of our church community.

Best wishes for Christmas and New Year.

Helen Moore

Caring Committee Report

Welcome to a new year and another chance for us to get it right. Whatever has happened in the past year, the New Year brings fresh beginnings.

The committee completed deliveries of holiday treat boxes to the homebound congregants and enjoyed our short visits with everyone. Many thanks to Carol Hylton and Carmen Smith for their continuing support.

It is with great sadness to announce the passing of Carabel Ringrose on Dec. 16, 2023, at the age of 90 yrs. . The church meant a great deal to her. She was a gentle soul who was a friend to all and always had a kind word. For many years she was chair of the caring committee; also she followed her mother Florence Dresser as the church organist to name a few of her church involvements. May she rest in peace. The congregation extends their deepest sympathies to her family.

A cheery New Year hello to Evelyn Dresser as she settles in her new home at Leamington Sun Parlor Home.

Just a friendly reminder, the caring committee is here for you, if you wish to connect. You are all important to us.

May this month give you all courage, strength and inner peace. Let there be joy, fun and laughter.

Submitted by : Linda Upcott

Caring Committee Members

Carmen Smith

Linda Upcott

Have a Happy *and* Healthy New Year!

How many times do we wish each other a “Happy and Healthy New Year” during the Holidays, either in person, or in our Holiday greeting cards or emails? There is nothing unusual or insignificant about this greeting. However, I can recall, probably back more than 65 years or so, when my brother and I were young kids, we would read all of the greeting cards, and included notes, that my parents had received during the Holidays, expecting news of the writer’s family or retirement trips. But, as the saying goes, we would “be in stitches”. We thought it was so funny to read the cards and notes, which, as my parents’ peers, and older generation got older, were mostly about the writer’s health issues. Everything from gall bladder trouble, to diabetes, to urinary incontinence, to heart attacks and cancer. We often even had to ask our parents what the description of the writer’s health issue/s meant. They would do their best to avoid a descriptive answer. Every year, as silly carefree kids, we looked forward to seeing what was going on with folks who had written notes on their previous holiday cards. We had little experience with serious health issues in our family or with our older relatives, until my grandfather, my mother’s father, a well-respected Toronto physician, and decorated WW 1 Veteran, died suddenly of a heart attack at home, when I was about six. In the space of about a year, not only did I lose my grandfather Horace, but my favourite Uncle, “Sandy” (on my father’s side), a Senator from Newfoundland, who died suddenly of a heart attack on the steps of the Senate. On the heels of that, a very good friend of my grandmother and grandfather’s, Gregory Clark, a well-known Journalist, humourist, newspaper reporter for the Toronto Star for 36 years, and author, died suddenly in February of 1977. As a child, I captured his attention when I sent him a letter answering his question “what do you want to be when you grow up” and this grew into a long friendship.

I can remember the Adults going around talking in hushed tones about these unexpected deaths, to “not upset the children” (me and my brother). I adored my grandfather and felt quite cheated that he was no longer with us, and that I would never get to see him again, at least on earth. I vividly recall him having me sit up on his knee, in his office, which was a part of their house in Toronto. He’d show me his stethoscope, let me listen to my heart, and his, and tell me all about “doctoring”. He was a soft, caring man, who knew everything, even why leaves changed colour in the Fall, and why dogs needed four legs to get around. I also cried over the loss of my Uncle Sandy, who would come to stay with us a few times a year. He was not only a feisty politician, but also a wonderful storyteller. He had a fancy pocket watch he would let me look at and see time passing, and he smoked cigars, which my mother thought was disgusting, but I thought was cool. When Gregory Clark passed, it was a different kind of loss. Uncle Greg, as we called him, was a super interesting fellow, a WW 2 war correspondent for the Toronto Star, and colleague of Earnest Hemingway and my grandfather. He was an early Order of Canada recipient, as well as receiving the Order of the British Empire, and the Military Cross for bravery at Vimy in WW 1. He had travelled all over the world, and had written 21 books, many comedic, which some of you may remember. Despite his notoriety, he was a very down-earth man, who took an interest in me, and entertained and encouraged me to write and send stories to him for many years, which he would edit and return to me. His favourite story was on the topic of what I wanted to be when I grew up. At that time, I was leaning towards being a Lion Tamer. He didn’t laugh at me.

Continued on Page 7

Have a Happy *and* Healthy New Year! (Continued)

At that age, I had little concept of life and death, and the significance of good health. I had lost the occasional turtle, but none of the little losses ever made sense to me, until I started to experience those losses of dear family members, and friends. As children, we were always told that these folks had “gone to a better place”, and that we would see them again when, we too, went to Heaven. I don’t know that I truly understand the concept of Heaven either, but I do know that if I ever did have the chance to see my grandfather Horace, and my Uncles Sandy and Gregory again, it would be amazing.

So, now I have reached the age of 74, and I have become one of the folks my brother and I used to laugh about. I now understand why those folks, who wrote cards to my parents, were more focused on their fragility of their health. As someone who has experienced some serious cardiac issues and surgeries, along with a long battle with Diabetes, as well as the experience of a “minor” stroke three years ago, I know how one’s health begins to consume more time, if one is unfortunate enough to not be in good health in their later years. And, of course, many of our friends, acquaintances, and family (including my brother), are in the same boat. I can assure you that I do not laugh at their stories anymore.

Very best wishes for a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season and NewYear!

Judy Carter & Anne Purtell



Lay Chaplaincy

Have You Ever Thought Of Becoming a Lay Chaplain?



Our UU Church is looking for a lay chaplain to perform and officiate rites of passage (weddings, funerals, memorial services, child dedication services and others) for the general public and in congregations without ministers, for members of the congregation, following guidelines issued by the CUC and additional policies established by each congregation's Board of Directors.

Lay chaplaincy is an important outreach program of the congregation, and the lay chaplains represent their congregation in the wider community. They are expected to perform rites of passage in a manner that celebrates and dignifies those special occasions in human life, adding spiritual depth to the lives of individuals and communities. Lay chaplains are at all times expected to interact with the larger community in a professional manner, and to understand and be able to articulate and model Unitarian Universalist principles and practice.

Lay chaplains are appointed by their congregation for a term for up to 6 years; they report to Olinda Board of Directors and enter into a contract that is annually reviewed with the congregation.

If you are interested and would like further detailed information please contact Sue Markham: worthysole4u@hotmail.com or 226-350-2879.

Contact Information

Minister: While we are between ministers and seek our next minister, you can contact:

President: Bill Baylis: baylis@uwindsor.ca or (519) 738-2118
or Cell phone (519) 980-2431

Chaplain: Sue Markham: worthysole4u@hotmail.com or
(226) 350-2879

Membership Chair: Toni Janik: djanik1@cogeco.ca or
(519) 966-6434

Congregational Survey Information

Dear Unitarian Universalist congregation,

As you may or may not be aware there is a Ministerial search committee in place that has been assembled to attempt to fill the shoes that our beloved Rev. Rod has left. Rev. Rod was very special to all of us, and this committee has given each other a proper amount of time to grieve and we believe this is the time to start the process to fill this position.

The Ministerial process began with the congregation being asked about potential committee members interested in finding a new Reverend, and ultimately, the church board of Directors has voted for the following 5 members to be responsible for locating and hiring a new Reverend for our church.

Chair- Toni Janik , Vice chair-Michael Hoffman , Ray Stone, Sue Markham and Joyse Gilbert

A survey is being constructed to best give you a voice in what qualities and overall Ministerial preferences you would like to see in a new Reverend, and this detailed survey will be ready for distribution by Mid-January , 2024.

The survey will be available for the congregants in a paper or electronic version , thus giving every congregant the ability to be heard.

The Search committee has also volunteered to visit any congregant at the church or at their home (if need be) who may need assistance completing the survey if you are unable to complete it online.

Please note that all surveys will need to be completed and collected by **January 31, 2024**.

If you wish to have a committee member assist you with the survey, please contact Toni Janik directly by phone or by email : djanik1@cogeco.ca

Thank you everyone for your valued participation in this process.

Toni Janik, Chair