

The Quest



February 2019 Services: Perseverance

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February 3

Perseverance While Living in the Mystery

Is it possible to sit with the mystery of a situation, to not try to find an answer, a resolution, an explanation, but to just witness and experience the mystery? While answers to many of life's questions lay at are as close us as the nearest smart device, what would it be like to persevere with the mystery of it all; can we sit with the silence? Can we focus on the uncertainties, rather than attempting to explain them away?

Presenter: Danielle Webber

Worship Arts Facilitator: Lynn Nugent

Music: Music Director Jane Perry

February 10

The Perseverance of Youth

What could youth have to persevere through that's so tough? Learn about the realities of modern teen life and what it takes to cope in this eye-opening service planned and presented by our youth.

Presenters: Members of Calgary Unitarians' Youth Community

Music: Music Director Jane Perry

February 17 - World Day for Social Justice

"Social justice" includes issues of poverty, unemployment, and exclusion that results in economic harm or social ostracism. Promoting human rights, removing artificial social barriers based on race, gender, or religion, and standing up for the rights of migrants, the disabled, and the elderly are among the observance's themes on any given year.

Presenters: Calgary Unitarians Social Justice Committee; Penney Kome and Lynn Nugent

Music: UUPhonia

February 24 -

Stewardship: Perseverance for the Planet

Many religious traditions promote some concept of stewardship -- that it is our responsibility to care for the environment and each other. When the systems we have created to "enhance" human comfort are at risk of destroying the planet, we need to see our stewardship as a process; we must seed change. Today's service will explore how our community can serve as faithful stewards.

Presenter: Martin Settle is Executive Director of USC Canada

Worship Arts Facilitator: Mary-Anna Louise Kovar

Music: UUPhonia



Debra's Deliberations



While Debra is on sabbatical, Pastoral Concerns can be directed to:

Liz Blackstock caring@calgaryunitarians.ca 403-807-7677 or

Mary Anna Louise Kovar president@calgaryunitarians.ca 403-271-4182. Debra will return on March 1st.

Splinters from the Board ~ February 2019

The Board has been very busy through the first month of the New Year- planning and organizing congregational meetings, planning and participating in worship services as well as all the usual things we do on an ongoing basis. I hope that many of you were able to attend the January 20th town hall meeting where we talked about our hopes and dreams for our community and how we might fulfill them. If you were unable to attend and there is something you wish you had been able to contribute, please do share it with us- by email, in person or a message in my mailbox. We have scheduled our 2nd town hall to talk about casino fundraising for March 3. The Board has been researching the many different aspects of this question and has been in conversation with other congregations who have raised funds with casinos. We hope to be able to give you a well-rounded presentation of information that will enable informed discussion. The facilitator of this meeting will be from outside our community.

The Board received no nominations for the Panabaker award this year and the rules preclude the Board choosing/nominating a recipient. I invite you to visit our website here:

<http://unitarianscalgary.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Panabaker-Award.2018.pdf> and review the information regarding this award. Over the course of the year be alert to the current and past contributions of those around you. Do you see someone you would like to nominate next year?

The caring, generosity and enthusiasm that I experience when I am with you makes me proud to be a Calgary Unitarian. Thank you.

Mary-Anna Louise Kovar, President, Calgary Unitarians Board of Trustees

February4-Others - Sharing Our Faith The Sharing Our Faith Program of the Canadian Unitarian Council encourages relationships among and between its member congregations and communities. Over the next 2 years the CUC will focus its social justice work on water issues. Everyone on our planet is impacted by water justice. Join us we explore water- as a resource and as a metaphor.



Build Your Own Theology 1



Join us as we explore the fundamental religious and spiritual beliefs, values, and convictions that inform and direct our lives. We will begin by looking at our UU principles and sources, explore our personal understandings of human nature, ultimate reality, ethics, and what gives meaning to our lives. By the end of our time together we will each have written **our** own personal credo - the principles that guide how we act in the world.

Facilitators: Rev Debra Faulk and Lynn Nugent

Time: Wednesdays 7 - 9 p.m., April 10 - May 29.

Cost: There is a book of readings and exercises that each participant will need. The cost will be approximately \$20.00; subsidy available upon request.

For further information or to register, email Lynn Nugent at lnugent@shaw.ca



Thanks to everyone who helped make the Christmas dinner a success once again: Head Chef Dean Kasner, Rebekah Mobley – Kasner, Nick and Andy for

coming early to set up, Libby and Dorothy for the games, Bev for the blessing and to the clean-up crew. The amazing variety of food and the fellowship – as always – were wonderful.

Sheila Ward deserves huge Kudos as our chief music librarian. We've made her an honorary choir member as a thank-you for all the time she puts in as both librarian and our long-serving Cabaret emcee. Sheila's work as choir librarian sees her showing up 30 minutes early for choir on a regular basis so that she greets incoming choristers and hand out their packets of music in an orderly fashion.

Sheila was the driving force behind the new lateral filing cabinets we acquired two years ago for the music library, and she has been tireless in weeding the library to make room for the over 500 individual new pieces of music we order annually. She also collects and files all our choir music at the end of each choir semester. It's a big job, and one that Sheila does admirably. Sheila's library helps this season have included Debbie Chipperfield, Linda Brown, and Judy Osborne. Warm thanks to them all!

This is just a sampling of the many people who contribute in numerous ways to our community. When you catch someone in the act of kindness and service please share the info by emailing Kudos@calgaryunitarians.ca.



♪ UpBeat News with Jane Perry ♪

February Is Full of Fabulous Music!



An Afternoon of Chamber Music. Cellist Tom Mirhady returns with the latest installment of his annual concert offering. This year's performance features classical music that draws on the folk traditions of Hungary, Czech Republic, Armenia, and Iran. With violinist Laurie Syer pianist Jamie Syer, and musician Vafa Adib (santur and tonbak.) Sunday, February 3 at 2:30pm in Panabaker Hall. Tickets are now available through www.brownpapertickets.com: \$25 regular, \$20 senior/student. Pay-what-you-can option. Free for children age 12 and under.

Coffee Choir returns for another friendly afternoon series of coffee and singing. Join us in Wickenden Hall on any and all these three Tuesdays: February 12, 19, and 26. Doors open at 1:30pm for refreshments and conversation, and then we sing from 2:00pm to 3:00pm.

Resident Choirs in Concert!

One Voice Chorus presents its divinely decadent **Rainbow Cabaret** at Calgary Unitarians on Saturday, February 23 at 7:30pm. Let your favourite LGBTQ2+ choir lift your spirits with solos, duos, and full-choir numbers, all done with OVC's usual sparkle and flair! Cash bar and refreshment stand. Tickets: \$25 general admission.

www.onevoicechorus.ca

Calgary Renaissance Singers & Players present **String Theory Music Collective**, Calgary's professional ensemble of early-music instrumentalists. Sunday, February 24 at 7:30pm at St. Stephen's Anglican Church (1121 14 Avenue SW.) The concert **Terpsichore** is all about the dances of the late Renaissance and early Baroque and will feature dancers from the School of Alberta Ballet, with choreography by historical-dance specialist Aram Manukyan. Tickets: \$30 regular, \$25 senior/student. Free for those under age 18. www.renaissance-singers.com

And coming up in March...

Choral workshop with Linda Morrison! Saturday, March 16 from 9:30am to 4:00pm in Panabaker Hall. Vocal Latitudes and UUphonia present Montreal-based choral specialist and solo performer Linda Morrison in an energetic workshop that will touch on Celtic music, Georgian choral singing, and gospel music. The workshop choir will perform a concert with Ms. Morrison on Sunday, March 17 at 2:00pm in Panabaker Hall. Chorister registration information will be available in the March Quest and in the weekly E-News.



Religious Exploration Program

Building a Sharing Community

We have begun building the CYRE libraries for all ages, and welcome book and DVD donations. Sign out a book to borrow for the week or the month!

Explore our CYRE Lending Libraries:

Explorers Room 3 – books for ages 2-7

Elementary Room 1 – books for ages 7-11

Room 7 – Books for Youth 12 -18, our Banned Book Library, and Adult Books.

We also have a budding DVD library.

The Great Children's Clothing Exchange

We are currently collecting any unwanted, good condition clothes for children 0-12. Once we have enough donations, we will advertise a few dates for shopping at our "free store" after the Sunday service. This is a great way to get those closets cleaned out, and stock up on useful items! Any items not taken will be donated to charity at the end of our program. Many children have a hard time letting go of a favorite item. Knowing that their gift will benefit a friend in their own community can make all the difference. Contact DRE Sheila MacMaster to make donation arrangements:
dre@calgaryunitarians.ca

Every month the CYRE program hosts a free movie. Our February family friendly movie is **Friday, February 8th, 2019**. Doors open at 6pm and the movie starts at 6:30pm!

We sell a great array of reasonably priced snacks and all the proceeds go towards the purchase of our very own commercial popcorn machine. Come on out, have a good time and support our dream!

Our Dream Machine:

4oz Street Vendor Commercial Popcorn Machine with cart.





Come Get Wise About OWL!



OWL (Our Whole Lives) is an all-inclusive educational program which provides accurate, age appropriate information, puts sexuality in the context of values and personal responsibility, supports healthy decision making, and strengthens social skills. These skills and values help prepare youth to make healthy choices for life.

OWL models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. It helps adolescents address their attitudes, values, and feelings about themselves, their sexuality, and others' sexuality. Participants are guided by trained facilitators through an engaging curriculum that addresses topics most important to young adolescents, including those typically excluded from sexuality education and health classes. Our 2019 trained OWL facilitator team includes Kerri Conner, Sheila MacMaster and Holly Noelle. Our program includes a Parent Orientation has ongoing support and updates for parents, so that parents are comfortable continuing the conversation.

There will be a Parent Information Night, Monday February 11th at 6:45pm to 7:45pm downstairs in Room 4. There will be light refreshments, and a chance to talk our trained facilitators and ask questions. Please RSVP to owl@calgaryunitarians.ca. For more information on the program, please email Director of Religious Education Sheila MacMaster here: dre@calgaryunitarians.ca.

OWL Curriculum

UNIT 1 Introduction

- 1 What is Sexuality?
- 2 Examining Values
- 3 The Language of Sexuality

UNIT 2 You, as a Sexual Being

- 4 Anatomy and Physiology
- 5 Personal Concerns About Puberty
- 6 Body Image
- 7 Gender Identity
- 8 Gender Expression, Roles & Stereotypes
- 9 Sexual Orientation
- 10 Guest Panel
- 11 Sexuality and Disability

UNIT 3 Relationships

- 12 Healthy Relationships
- 13 Relationship Skills

UNIT 4 Contemporary Issues

- 14 Sexuality, Social Media and the Internet
- 15 Bullying & Bystander Responsibilities

UNIT 5 Responsible Sexual Behavior

- 16 Redefining Abstinence
- 17 Lovemaking
- 18 Consent Education
- 19 Option 2

UNIT 6 STIs, Pregnancy & Parenting Decisions

- 20 Sexually Transmitted Infections
- 21 Pregnancy, Parenting, & Teen Parenting
- 22 Unintended Pregnancy Options
- 23 Contraception and Safer Sex

UNIT 7 Communicating about Sexuality

- 24 Sexual Decision Making
- 25 Communicating with a Sexual Partner
- 26 Self Care, Celebration, & Closure



Fun Fridays Are Here!

February 8 Family Movie Night: Bolt



Bolt The days of canine superstar Bolt (John Travolta) are filled with danger and intrigue ... until the cameras stop rolling. But Bolt doesn't know that he's on a TV show; he thinks his amazing powers are real. When Bolt is accidentally shipped from his Hollywood soundstage to the mean streets of New York, he begins his most-amazing adventure: Armed only with his delusions and accompanied by a cat and a hamster, he sets out to find his owner, Penny.

Doors open at 6:30; movie starts at 7:00 pm.

February 22 Green Sanctuary Movie Night: Containment

Containment is a documentary by Peter Galison and Rob Moss that is part observational essay, part graphic novel. Containment explores the idea that over millennia, nothing stays put. The film is part graphic novel and part observational essay mixed with sci-fi that is more science than fiction, weaving between an uneasy present and an imaginative, troubled and distant future. Containment explores the struggle to keep waste confined over millennia.



Doors open 6:30. Film at 7:00, Please bring a dessert or appetizer to share. Admission is free. Donations accepted to cover costs. To register, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/y975bdvl>



Join Us for February's Pub Night



When: February 6th from 7:00-9:30pm

Where: Kensington Pub- 207 10A St. NW

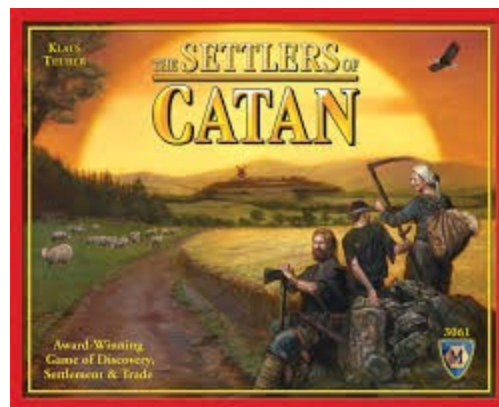
www.kensingtonpub.com

You've read about, you've heard about it, now come out and experience it for yourself! Pub Night is a night of great conversation and fellowship at one of Calgary's most iconic pubs. The menu is very inclusive, complete with gluten free and vegetarian options.

Pub Nights are held on the first Wednesday of every month. Come check it out!

Young Adults Board Games Day

When: February 16th from 2:00-6:00pm



Have you ever wondered if there is more to tabletop gaming than Scrabble, Monopoly or Risk? Come connect with the young(ish) adults in your community with some games, snacks, conversation and laughter! We will have all of this and more. Please feel free to bring a favourite board game and a snack or drink to share.

Stitching Circle: New Name for a Classic Group!

Our new dates are every two weeks, starting on January 9th from 10:00 am to noon. ALL other dates will be canceled. We welcome all stitchers. Our new meeting times are every two weeks starting February 6, from 10 - 12 in Wickenden Hall. Whether you are a beginner or an expert, you are more than welcome! Advice on stitching and other topics is readily available, as well as general camaraderie, laughs and a good time.



Any questions? Contact:

Carolyn Preston @ 403-240-0603

Bev Webber @ 403-863-3110



What Does It Mean To Be A People of Perseverance?

"People cry not because they are weak. It's because they've been strong too long." - Shane Koyczan

"This morning I have been pondering a nearly forgotten lesson I learned in high school music. Sometimes in band or choir, music requires players or singers to hold a note longer than they can hold a note. In those cases, we were taught to mindfully stagger when we took a breath, so the sound appeared uninterrupted. Everyone got to breathe, and the music stayed strong and vibrant... So let's remember the advice of music: Take a breath. The rest of the chorus will sing. The rest of the band will play. Rejoin so others can breathe. Together, we can sustain a very long, beautiful song for a very, very long time. You don't have to do it all, but you must add your voice to the song." – Amiee Van Ausdall

So, have you been strong too long?

It's not the usual question when tackling the topic of perseverance. Most often we're asked, "Are you ready to **be** strong?" The standard recipe is well known: Buck up! Grin and bear it! Keep pushing! Keep moving forward! Dig deep; you are stronger than you know! But maybe Koyczan is right. Maybe this typical roadmap isn't the path to perseverance; maybe it's just the path to breakdown.

And when we combine Koyczan's quote with Van Ausdall's invitation to breath, we suddenly see that balance plays a bigger role in perseverance than we often assume. As a people of perseverance, we are called not just to grit and strong wills, but to gentleness and self-care. Constantly pushing ourselves without also giving ourselves the gift of pause gets us nowhere. Digging deeper without making time to fill our wells is a recipe for self-inflicted pain.

All of which is to say that maybe vulnerability is the real secret to perseverance. Maybe admitting you're tired and asking for help is the real strength that gets us through. That dominant myth of Sisyphus pushing his rock up that endless hill hasn't done us any favors. We assume that [Sisyphus](#) is suffering because his work is endless, but maybe it's his isolation and lack of a place to rest that is his true torment.

So, friends, this month, let's not torment ourselves. We don't have to give up those pep talks about digging deep and being stronger than we know. But right alongside that, let's make sure we're also doing the more tender work of propping each other up and reminding each other to breathe.

Rabbi David Wolf tells a story that we all should carry with us this month:

A boy and his father were walking along a road when they came across a large stone. "Do you think if I use all of my strength, I can move this rock?" the child asked. His father answered, "If you use all of your strength, I am sure you can do it." The boy began to push the rock. Exerting himself as much as he could, he pushed and pushed. The rock did not move. Discouraged, he said to his father, "You were wrong. I can't do it." His father put his arm around the boy's shoulder and said, "No son. You didn't use all your strength – you didn't ask me to help."

What a gift to remember that perseverance isn't a solo act. May that be the gift this month gives us all.



Our Spiritual Exercises

Option A:

What Props Up Your Perseverance?

Forget that image of [Sisyphus](#) pushing his rock up the hill all by his lonesome. It is a myth after all. In real life we rarely push or carry our boulders on our own. Our perseverance is always propped up by something or someone. This exercise invites you to celebrate and share that which enabled -and enables - you to carry on through tough times.

But here's the catch: In order to help your other group members expand their view of possible sources of sustenance, try to think of the unexpected thing that propped or props you up. For instance, maybe it was the relative you least expected that stepped forward in your time of need. Or maybe it was the person who gave you gifts of beauty when everyone else was telling you how they got through so you can too. In short, pick a surprising person, song, book, quote, insight, spiritual practice or experience that propped up your perseverance and come to your group ready to share its story. And if there is an object connected to it, consider bringing that in as well.

Option B:

Let Beauty Birth Your Perseverance

"In my own worst seasons, I've come back from the colorless world of despair by forcing myself to look hard, for a long time, at a single glorious thing: a flame of red geranium outside my bedroom window. And then another: my daughter in a yellow dress. And another: the perfect outline of a full, dark sphere behind the crescent moon... until I learned to be in love with my life again. Like a stroke victim retraining new parts of the brain to grasp lost skills, I have taught myself joy, over and over again."

- Barbara Kingsolver

In the packet introduction, we talked about how perseverance requires a balance of self-care and a strong will. Digging deep is important, but unless one takes the time to fill one's well, that digging will be useless. Barbara Kingsolver lifts up beauty as one of those things that fills our wells and makes our perseverance possible.

So this month, accept Kingsolver's invitation: **stare at one glorious thing each day for at least two weeks.**

It can be the same glorious thing or you can seek out a different one each day. It's the "staring" that is really the important part. Give it your attention long enough to sink in. You will know when you are done; your body will tell you. Just stare until you, like Kingsolver, feel joy starting to tingle at the edges of your skin and caress your face into a smile.

Come to your group and let them know the result of following Kingsolver's advice.



Option C: The Perseverance that Birthed Your Beauty

Ahlaam Lala Abduljalil shares a raw, honest and moving poem about the many acts of perseverance that gave birth to her freedom and beauty. It's called Open-Hearted Beauty and can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y8vau4pb>

In her poem, Ahlaam introduces each of her acts of perseverance with the phrase "It takes..." This exercise invites you to use these "It takes..." phrases to reflect on what it has taken for you to birth your own hard-won freedom and beauty. Here's a suggested approach:

Listen to Ahlaam's poem multiple times, maybe even playing it at a slower speed for a time or two. As you listen, identify the 3-4 "It takes..." lines that stick out to you. Listen for the lines that connect with and are similar to your own experience. Write them down. You now have two options.

First, you can simply spend some time meditating and reflecting on those chosen lines and your own experiences they take you back to. Then come to your group ready to share how that reflective experience was for you.

A second option is to write up your own "It takes..." list. Imagine that you, like Ahlaam, were to try to explain to others what has gone into your journey. Take the time to list the many forms of perseverance that it took to birth your own beauty. Come to your group ready to share what you are comfortable sharing.

Option D: Get the Obstacles Out of the Way

Yes, perseverance is often about the work of putting one foot in front of the other. It's about keeping going. But sometimes the problem isn't in keeping our feet moving; it's an obstacle in the middle of our path. It's about getting unstuck not so much keeping going. This exercise invites you to lean into this type of perseverance that is about recognizing and removing those obstacles.

Check out this article: <https://tinyurl.com/y77qbbaq>. It's about the barriers to happiness, but its list contains many of the same things that prevent us from moving forward, many of the things that prevent us from persevering. You can make your engagement with the article as simple or complex as you need. You can simply weave it into your meditation practice and use it to identify a place of stuckness that you might not have fully recognized. Or you can take it to the next level and work on removing your obstacle using the advice contained in the column.



Your Question

As always, don't treat these questions like "homework" or a list that needs to be covered in its entirety. Instead, simply pick the single question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal is to figure out what being a part of a people of perseverance means for you and your daily living. So, which question is calling to you? Which one contains "your work"?

1. The saying is widely known: "Trees that bend in the storm don't break." Are you trying to stand tall and remain immovable, when life is asking you to bend?
2. We all fall. Very few of us pick ourselves up on our own. Perseverance is rarely a solo act. Who in your life needs a bit of help getting back up off the mat?
3. What if the way through your pain is to feel it?
4. It's hard right now. The light at the end of the tunnel is still a way off. You've remembered to just keep moving forward. But have you remembered to breathe? Have you remembered to be tender with and to take care of yourself, not just push yourself?
5. Are you sure your strategy of "grin and bear it" is still working? What's the worst that could happen if you just walked away?
6. It is said that people who persevere don't just struggle through their pain; they share and tell stories of their pain. Others then respond with their own stories of pain and struggle, leading to the discovery that we are not as alone as we thought. So is it time for you to be a storyteller, not just a survivor?
7. Have you made friends with defeat? Do you still resent it? Or have you figured out the hidden gift, lesson or blessing of your defeat?
8. You think you've lost the struggle? Or could it be that you've just lost your illusions?
9. Yes, it is important to gratefully acknowledge the shoulders of those you stand on. But how are you doing with the equally important work of offering your shoulders to others? Could it be that perseverance is something we pass on?
10. It is said that mastery requires persevering through [10,000 hours](#) of practice. If you are feeling like you are failing or not good enough, might it be time to consider that you are only 5,000 hours in?

What's your question? Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to hear it.



Companion Pieces

Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection

The below recommended resources are not “required reading.” We will not analyze these pieces at our small group meeting. Instead they are here to companion you on your personal journey this month, get your thinking started, and open you to new ways of thinking about what it means to be part of a people of Perseverance.

Word Roots

While perseverance literally comes from Latin *per* (thoroughly) + *severus* (severe), we could also turn to sustain, from the Latin roots *sub* (up from below) + *tenere* (to hold) or persist *per* (thoroughly) + *sistere* (to stand).

Wise Words

This morning I have been pondering a nearly forgotten lesson I learned in high school music. Sometimes in band or choir, music requires players or singers to hold a note longer than they actually can hold a note. In those cases, we were taught to mindfully stagger when we took a breath so the sound appeared uninterrupted. Everyone got to breathe, and the music stayed strong and vibrant... So let's remember the advice of music: Take a breath. The rest of the chorus will sing. The rest of the band will play. Rejoin so others can breathe. Together, we can sustain a very long, beautiful song for a very, very long time. You don't have to do it all, but you must add your voice to the song.

- Amiee Van Ausdall

To sustain a stay in a dry and barren desert, it is necessary to be about something great enough to be worth a lifetime of unrewarded effort. There are simply some divine cravings in life—the liberation of the poor, the equality of women, the humanity of the entire human race—that are worth striving for, living for, dying for, finished or unfinished, for as long as it takes to achieve them. No single capital campaign will do the trick. No one speech will change the climate. No single law will undo eons of damage.

It will take a million lives dedicated to the long haul and heaped on top of one another. That's why the Zen saying, “O snail, climb Mount Fuji, but slowly, slowly,” is so important. If we are to persevere for the long haul, we must not overdrive our souls. We must immerse ourselves in good music, good reading, great beauty and peace so that everything good in us can rise again and lead us on beyond disappointment, beyond boredom, beyond criticism, beyond loss. Then life has vision again; then going on seems both possible and necessary.

- Joan Chittister

I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not ended.

- Nelson Mandela

Success is a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don't quit when you're tired. You quit when the gorilla is tired.

- Robert Strauss

If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito.

- The Dalai Lama



She stood in the storm, & when the wind did not blow her away, she adjusted her sails.

- Elizabeth Edwards

The universe always falls in love with a stubborn heart. - Anon

Big shots are only little shots who kept shooting.

- Christopher Morley

The road to success is dotted with many tempting parking places. - Unknown

Still I Rise

Maya Angelou

Full poem found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7jq7zrr>

"You may write me down in history

With your bitter, twisted lies,

You may trod me in the very dirt

But still, like dust, I'll rise..."

Read by Maya Angelou: <https://tinyurl.com/ltzljpg>

Maya Angelou turned forty on April 4, 1968. She had planned a big party in Harlem, with many of the day's black intellectual elite among the guests. History had other ideas; Dr. King's assassination sent Angelou into a weeks-long depression. It was fellow writer James Baldwin who helped her dig out of it. Angelou recalls Baldwin's assistance in her book *A Song Flung Up to Heaven*, where she writes that laughter and ancestral guidance got her through:

"There was very little serious conversation. The times were so solemn and the daily news so somber that we snatched mirth from unlikely places and gave servings of it to one another with both hands...

I told Jimmy I was so glad to laugh. Jimmy said, "We survived slavery. . . . You know how we survived? We put surviving into our poems and into our songs. We put it into our folk tales. We danced surviving in Congo Square in New Orleans and put it in our pots when we cooked pinto beans. . . . [W]e knew, if we wanted to

survive, we had better lift our own spirits. So we laughed whenever we got the chance."

- Kenny Wiley, from [Nights Can Be Tough](#)

Heartbreak is how we mature; yet we use the word heartbreak as if it only occurs when things have gone wrong: an unrequited love, a shattered dream, a child lost before their time. Heartbreak, we hope, is something we hope we can avoid; something to guard against, a chasm to be carefully looked for and then walked around; the hope is to find a way to place our feet where the elemental forces of life will keep us in the manner to which we want to be accustomed and which will keep us from the losses that all other human beings have experienced without exception since the beginning of conscious time. But heartbreak may be the very essence of being human, of being on the journey from here to there, and of coming to care deeply for what we find along the way... If heartbreak is inevitable and inescapable, it might be asking us to look for it and make friends with it, to see it as our constant and instructive companion, and even perhaps, in the depth of its impact as well as in its hindsight, to see it as its own reward. Heartbreak asks us not to look for an alternative path, because there is no alternative path. It is a deeper introduction to what we love and have loved, an inescapable and often beautiful question, something or someone who has been with us all along, asking us to be ready for the last letting go.

- David Whyte

In my own worst seasons, I've come back from the colorless world of despair by forcing myself to look hard, for a long time, at a single glorious thing: a flame of red geranium outside my bedroom window. And then another: my daughter in a yellow dress. And another: the perfect outline of a full, dark sphere behind the crescent moon... until I learned to be in love with my life again. Like a stroke victim retraining new parts of the brain to grasp lost skills, I have taught myself joy, over and over again.

- Barbara Kingsolver



Optimism

[Jane Hirshfield](#)

More and more I have come to admire resilience.
Not the simple resistance of a pillow, whose foam
returns over and over to the same shape, but the sinuous tenacity of a tree: finding the light newly blocked on one side, it turns in another. A blind intelligence, true. But out of such persistence arose turtles, rivers, mitochondria, figs -- all this resinous, unretractable earth.

Pause.
Breath.
Repair your universe.
Proceed.

- Anon

Let it hurt.
Let it bleed.
Let it heal.
And let it go.

- Nikita Gill

Be soft.
Do not let the world
make you hard.
Do not let pain
make you hate.
Do not let bitterness
Steal your sweetness.

- Kurt Vonnegut

Go all the way

Charles Bukowski

Full poem found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yciw893e>

Inspirational video reading: <https://tinyurl.com/qb4ye73>

"If you're going to try, go all the way.
Otherwise, don't even start.
This could mean losing girlfriends, wives, relatives and maybe even your mind.
It could mean not eating for three or four days.
It could mean freezing on a park bench.
It could mean jail.

It could mean derision...

If you're going to try, go all the way.

There is no other feeling like that.

You will be alone with the gods, and the nights will flame with fire.

You will ride life straight to perfect laughter.

It's the only good fight there is."

Long-Haul People

Rev. Rudy Nemser, UU minister

You find them in churches
when you're lucky;
other places too, though I mostly
only know ecclesiastical varieties.

Long haul people
upon whose shoulders
(and pocketbooks and casseroles
and daylight/nighttime hours)
a church is built and maintained
after the brass is tarnished and
cushions need re-stitching.

They pay their pledges full and on time
even when the music's modern;
support each canvass though the sermons aren't always short;
mow lawns and come to suppers;
teach Sunday School when
there's no one else and they'll miss the service.
Asked what they think of the minister,
or plans for the kitchen renovation,
or the choral anthem, or Christmas pageant,
or color of the bathroom paint,
they'll reply: individuals and fashions
arrive and pass.

The church—their church—will be here, steady and hale. For a long, long time. It will.

For long haul people bless a church
with a very special blessing.



Much protest is naive; it expects quick, visible improvements and despairs and gives up when such improvement does not come. Protestors who hold out longer have perhaps understood that success is not the proper goal... Protest that endures, I think, is moved by a hope far more modest than that of public success: namely, the hope of preserving qualities in one's own heart and spirit that would be destroyed by acquiescence.

- Wendell Berry, "On Difficult Hope"

Defeat

Kahlil Gibran

Full poem found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybtlzmaz>

"Defeat, my Defeat, my self-knowledge and my defiance,
Through you I know that I am yet young and swift of foot
And not to be trapped by withering laurels.
And in you I have found aloneness
And the joy of being shunned and scorned....

Defeat, my Defeat, my deathless courage,
You and I shall laugh together with the storm,
And together we shall dig graves for all that die in us,
And we shall stand in the sun with a will,
And we shall be dangerous."

Why do you want to shut out of your life any uneasiness, any misery, any depression, since after all you don't know what work these conditions are doing inside you? Why do you want to persecute yourself with the question of where all this is coming from and where it is going? Since you know, after all, that you are in the midst of transitions and you wished for nothing so much as to change. If there is anything unhealthy in your reactions, just bear in mind that sickness is the means by which an organism frees itself from what is alien; so one must simply help it to be sick, to have its whole sickness and to break out with it, since that is the way it gets better.

- Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*

She who has not been tried,
what does she know?

She who has been surprised
abounds with vigilance.

Betrayed, she recognizes what is true.

Scarred, she finds her resilience.
Her illusions gone, she deepens.

- MJ Abell

Life's reality is that we cannot bounce back. We cannot bounce back because we cannot go back in time to the people we used to be. The parent who loses a child never bounces back. The nineteen-year-old who sails for war is gone forever, even if he returns. You know that there is no bouncing back. There is only moving through.

"What happens to us becomes a part of us. Resilient people do not bounce back from hard experiences; they find healthy ways to integrate them into their lives.

- [Eric Greitens](#)

The Long Haul

- [prttybrd](#)

I promise to love you through it all.
Through all the pain and distance
Through the emptiness and fear
Through the nothing that feels like everything
And through the everything that feels like love
I will love you

I'm making my shoulders strong for the young to stand upon,
stepping lightly on the backs of those
who hold me up.

It's a chain of life unending,
ever new and ever bending,

- Susan Osborn singer/songwriter

The Three Stonecutters - a parable about the secret to perseverance

A man came across three stonecutters and asked them what they were doing. The first replied, "I am making a living."

The second kept on hammering while he said, "I am doing the best job of stonecutting in the entire county." The third looked up with a visionary gleam in his eye and said, "I am building a cathedral."

When you feel like quitting, think about why you started. -

Aly Juma



won't you celebrate with me

Lucille Clifton

won't you celebrate with me
 what i have shaped into
 a kind of life? i had no model.
 born in babylon
 both nonwhite and woman
 what did i see to be except myself?
 i made it up
 here on this bridge between
 starshine and clay,
 my one hand holding tight
 my other hand; come celebrate
 with me that everyday
 something has tried to kill me
 and has failed.

Clifton reading her poem: <https://tinyurl.com/pjb3kj4>

Songs and Music

Time Will Tell

Gregory Alan Isakov

<https://tinyurl.com/y96yosxt>

"Time, she says,
 "There's no turning back,
 Keep your eyes on the tracks"
 Through the fields, somewhere there's blue
 Oh, time will tell, she'll see us through..."

Love is the Water that Wears Down the Rock

Brother Sun

<https://tinyurl.com/yblskd6u>

I'll Rise

by Maya Angelou and sung by Ben Harper

<https://tinyurl.com/y93pcdhz>

East To The West

Michael Franti

<https://tinyurl.com/ydboqpzc>

"To the east to the west
 To the north and south
 To the east to the west
 One love people never gonna stop..."

Dear Brother

Nahko and Medicine for the People

"At a time in our country where every 28hrs a black or brown person is shot by a police officer, it is imperative to call on

our white allies to stand in solidarity with those that face state violence every day. where is the justice? in this song, we ask our allies to remember that to be color blind is to be system blind. "

Somebody's Hurting My Brother

Yara Allen

<https://tinyurl.com/y9kqyrsz>

"It's gone on far too long...and we won't be silent anymore..."

Higher Ground - Songs Around the World

<https://tinyurl.com/ybkcanlw>

Get Up Stand Up - Songs Around The World

<https://tinyurl.com/ycfa2vp2>

Don't Give Up - Peter Gabriel

Covered by Herbie Hancock, P!nk, John Legend

<https://tinyurl.com/nqmvqg4>

Never Give Up

Sia - cover by Matt Johnson

<https://tinyurl.com/ycyf64m5>

Love (A Song for Valentine's; Try not to smile!)

Nat King Cole - Cover by [Mister Kanish](#)

<https://tinyurl.com/ya38ne8v>

Videos

Instructions for a Bad Day

Shane Koyczan

A stunning and inspiring guide to perseverance!

<https://tinyurl.com/hxmhe8v>

The text: <https://tinyurl.com/yaat5jwo>

A Conversation About Growing Up Black - The New York Times

(Connecting Perseverance and African American History Month)

<https://tinyurl.com/yckyexuk>

"My parents would tell me - especially my mom - she would tell me "You have to endure. You have to muscle through it. It is part of being a person of color in America..."

For Random Acts of Kindness (Feb. 17)

<https://tinyurl.com/qcppkdj>

Give a little love, get a little love...



Sisyphus

Jankovics Marcell

<https://vimeo.com/23083554>

"In modern life, Sisyphus has become a metaphor for laborious futility. We call Sisyphean the task of, say, replying to messages in an exponentially overflowing inbox. But residing in Sisyphus is also something invisible to the pitying or scornful cynic's eye — not the foolishness of his plight, but its fundamental hopefulness. Inherent to doing a task so self-defeating over and over without losing heart is the elemental belief that it can be done. Rather than letting his crushing despair crush him under the collapsing rock, Sisyphus presses on and on and on. He may be a tragic hero, but he is first and foremost a hero, precisely for this unrelenting faith in the possibility of accomplishing the impossible. His optimistic tenacity renders him the epitome of the creative spirit captured in Steinbeck's assertion that a great artist "always works at the impossible." In this beautiful Oscar-nominated 1974 animated film, Hungarian graphic artist and animator Marcell Jankovics (b. October 21, 1941) brings to life the myth of Sisyphus in a minimalist, maximally evocative black-and-white visual narrative."

-Maria Popova

Open-Hearted Beauty

(Connecting Perseverance and African American History Month)

Ahlaam

<https://tinyurl.com/y8vau4pb>

The cost and perseverance of beauty...

How Do You Mend A Broken Heart? - Soul Pancake

<https://tinyurl.com/ybjcbx75>

When Facing Adversity, Which One Are You: Potato, Egg or Coffee Bean?

<https://tinyurl.com/y8o8dchf>

Articles

Five Ways Science Says to Handle Difficult Times

Kira M Newman

<https://tinyurl.com/ybxxdxt>

How To Bounce Back From Failure — Over And Over Again

Carolyn Gregoire

<https://tinyurl.com/y73pf393>

Books

Rising Strong: The Reckoning, The Rumble, The Revolution

Brené Brown

<https://tinyurl.com/y9b4ptzy>

"This is a book about what it takes to get back up."

Option B: Facing Adversity, Building Resilience, and Finding Joy

Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant

"From Facebook's COO and Wharton's top-rated professor, the #1 New York Times best-selling authors of Lean In and Originals: a powerful, inspiring, and practical book about building resilience and moving forward after life's inevitable setbacks."

Article about the book found [here](#)

Endure: The Power of Spiritual Assets for Resilience to Trauma & Stress

Daniel D Maurer

<https://tinyurl.com/ydbnogaw>

Resilience: Why Things Bounce Back

Andrew Zolli & Ann Marie Healy

Review: "Provocative, optimistic, and eye-opening,

Resilience sheds light on why some systems, people, and communities fall apart the face of disruption and, ultimately, how they can learn to bounce back."

Podcast related to the book: <https://tinyurl.com/y7jn75kg>

The Impossible Will Take a Little While: Perseverance and Hope in Troubled Times

Paul Rogat Loeb

<https://tinyurl.com/y845j2xr>

A review: "What keeps us going when times get tough?

How have the leaders and unsung heroes of world-changing political movements persevered in the face of cynicism, fear, and seemingly overwhelming odds? In The Impossible Will Take a Little While, they answer these questions in their own words, creating a conversation among some of the most visionary and eloquent voices of our times. "



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Movies

127 Hours

<https://tinyurl.com/yd7cgkr2>

"127 Hours" is the true story of mountain climber Aron Ralston's remarkable adventure to save himself after a fallen boulder crashes on his arm and traps him in an isolated canyon in Utah... A visceral thrilling story that will take an audience on a never before experienced journey and prove what we can do when we choose life."

Lion

<https://tinyurl.com/y6wrxmni>

Five-year-old Saroo gets lost on a train which takes him thousands of Kilometers across India, away from home and family. Twenty-five years later, armed with only a handful of memories, his unwavering determination, and a revolutionary technology known as Google Earth, he sets out to find his lost family and finally return to his first home.

More: <https://tinyurl.com/y8gxcqs7>

They Will Have to Kill Us First

<https://tinyurl.com/ybl3dhqw>

A documentary celebrating the courageous and creative use of music as a form of resistance. Set in Mali where jihadists have banned all music-making.



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Million Dollar Baby

"A powerful emotional drama about a woman boxer and her crusty old trainer and the slow miracle that draws them together."

Slumdog Millionaire

"A picaresque tale about a resilient and loving boy from the slums of Mumbai whose luck takes him from poverty to the wildly popular game show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire.""

The Wrestler

<https://tinyurl.com/ybf37q3m>

Babe

The masterful family move about the most persistent and resilient pig in movie history!

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Packets are for use by member congregations of the Soul Matters Sharing Circle.

Learn how to join at <http://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/>



Soul Matters



Upcoming Themes for Reflections in 2019

March - Balance
April - Emergence
May - Creativity



Theme Based Ministry

Each month our Sunday services hold the focus of an overarching topic/theme, such as integrity, compassion, or joy. The presenters approach each month's theme in a variety of ways, all with the intention of taking us deeper.

The themes are presented for contemplation on Sunday mornings and in the monthly Reflections section of the Quest. This material provides an opportunity for personal exploration of the theme with spiritual practices, questions, reading and other resources. The other component of Theme Based Ministry are the small discussion groups, Theme Based Listening Circles (TLCs).

Theme Based Listening Circles (TLCs)

TLCs are facilitated small groups of up to 10 people. They meet at various times toward the end of each month to reflect together on the theme of the month.

These groups offer the opportunity for deepening relationships, self-awareness, enhancing listening skills, personal growth and spiritual development. You can register for a group on the website. For further information contact are@calgaryunitarians.ca

Current Groups meet:

4th Thursday of the month 12:30 – 2:30

4th Sunday of the month 12:00 – 2:00

Harriet Tubman: Perseverance in Action



Harriet Tubman, fugitive slave and “conductor” on the Underground Railroad was born in 1820 in Maryland. When she was 13 while working as a field hand, she was struck in the head by an overseer. Her injury caused seizures for the rest of her life. In 1849, after the death of her master, Tubman escaped and headed north to Philadelphia. She worked as a cook to finance her trips to liberate slaves via the Underground Railroad, a loosely organized network of safe houses and people who helped fugitives pass from the slave states to free states in the north.

The enactment of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850 strengthened the rights of slave owners to pursue escapees and return them to slavery. Because northern states could no longer offer freedom seekers the same degree of protection, Tubman began bringing them across the border to Upper Canada at Niagara Falls and then on to St. Catharines. In the fall of 1851 Tubman moved to St. Catharines, which became the center of her anti-slavery activities for the next seven years. Between 1852 and 1857, Tubman made 11 trips into the United States from St. Catharines to bring fugitive slaves to Canada and helped them adjust to freedom in their new country. After a \$40,000 reward was posted for her capture dead or alive, her trips became even more risky, but she persevered.

Following the war, Tubman relocated to Auburn, New York where she died of pneumonia in 1913 at the age of 93. Never able to read or write and physically challenged, Harriet Tubman was able to put aside these difficulties. Over the course of her trips into the slave states, she personally liberated an estimated 300 people. Tubman made more trips and liberated more slaves than any other guide on the Underground Railroad. Her story remains a testament to perseverance, bravery and integrity.



Time and Talent Auction 2019



What Time or Talent Can You Donate?

You've heard the buzz! The annual Time and Talent Auction is around the corner! We invite you to share what you have with our UU community through a silent auction fundraiser.

Items and experiences that are up for bid include:

- Home grown catnip
- Horseback riding lessons
- Landscaping consultation
- Home baked banana bread
- House concerts
- Wine tasting
- Tree removal
- House cleaning

Two ways to bid: in person in Wickenden on Sundays February 3 and February 10, or submit your bid via email to jebgaudet@gmail.com. Bids will be updated every Sunday by 5pm. The deadline for final bids is 12 pm on Feb 10. Go to timetalentauction.weebly.com to view all the generous donations!

Questions?

Talk to Lisa Hurrle lisaphurrle@gmail.com or Jeb Gaudet jebgaudet@gmail.com



Be a Sweetheart!

Order Your Co-op Cards for February

Co-op card gift cards are an easy way to support our church. Use them for groceries, gas or to stock up the liquor cabinet; purchasing a Coop card from us costs you nothing. When you spend \$100, you GET a \$100 gift card AND Co-op donates back to the church.

Win-win!!

Use the gift cards like cash when you make purchases at Calgary Co-op (or any affiliated Co-op in Western Canada). If you're a Co-op member, you also receive dividends at the end of each year. Order your February Gift Card (by cheque, cash or e-transfer) on or before **Sunday, February 3**. We'll collect your order after the church service that Sunday, or you can order in advance by placing your cheque or e-transfer pledge in the church office before February 3. You can pick up your order the following Sunday, **February 10**.

Any questions? Contact anyone on our team: Ev Dewar ev.dewar@kogawa.com, Barbara Lane (barbaralane54@gmail.com), Alex Russell itfromblighty@gmail.com or Sheila Ward sggward@shaw.ca

We Need Your Help: Volunteer Sign Up Made Easy!

Have you ever wondered how things run so smoothly on Sunday mornings? The coffee is always on, the warm welcome you receive upon arrival, things are all set up and ready to go, and the ushers handing you the order of service and show you to a seat. It's all managed and run by volunteers, people just like you! If you haven't had the opportunity to volunteer, would like to do so, or wish to do more, please visit our volunteer sign up page at SignUp.com or you can talk to one of us on Sunday.



Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

- 1) Click on one of the links below to see our SignUp.
- 2) Review the options listed and choose the spot(s) you like.
- 3) Sign up! It's Easy - you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.com.

Coffee Prep or Cleanup - <http://signup.com/go/MuUAPaH>

Ushers - <http://signup.com/go/iJvGdSM>

Welcomers - <http://signup.com/go/WSWPzsf>

Service Setup - <http://signup.com/go/eHRFtLz>

We'll be happy and excited to see your name beside a job for any of the Sundays this year!

~ Eric Leavitt, Barbara Lane, Donna Antonio and Brandis Purcell



How to Reach Our Staff

Minister

Rev Debra Faulk
debra@calgaryunitarians.ca
403 702-6486

Director of Religious Exploration / Youth Program Coordinator

Sheila MacMaster 403-404-1361
dre@calgaryunitarians.ca

Music Director

Jane Perry
music@calgaryunitarians.ca

Administrator

Martha Mantikoski
office@calgaryunitarians.ca
403-276-2436
Monday -Wednesday & Friday
9am to Noon
Office closed Thursdays



Grow in Wisdom
Deepen Relationships
Act for Justice

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Publishing the Quest

The Quest is published 11 times per year by Calgary Unitarians. Electronic copies are available at www.calgaryunitarians.ca. Submissions of articles, photographs, and event announcements are encouraged. Questions about the Quest, please email: quest@calgaryunitarians.ca.

***The Quest Deadline is the
15th of every month except
for July.***

ENEWS

The ENEWS is published via email once a week on Wednesday. Material for the ENEWS must be submitted by Tuesday midnight. If you would like to receive the ENEWS, please email enews@calgaryunitarians.ca

Booking Rooms

As our facility gets busier it is important that if rooms are needed they are booked in advance. Space can be reserved either by filling out the online booking form found here: <http://tinyurl.com/ybq27pq6>, by contacting the Administrator at 403-276-2436 or via email at office@calgaryunitarians.ca

Lay Chaplains: Beverly Webber and Lynn Nugent

Our Lay Chaplains are trained to perform rites of passage, such as weddings, funerals/memorial services, child dedications, etc. They are available to provide such services for a fee to the wider community. (Services for Calgary Unitarians members are provided by the minister.) Our lay chaplains can be contacted by calling 403-276-2436 or via email: laychaplains@calgaryunitarians.ca.

The Caring Team

The Caring Team provides support to the members, friends, and families of the congregation. If life has you stressed because of illness, hospitalization, moving, we can help. If you have something to be celebrated, such as a graduation, marriage or new child, we are there with you. We are all part of the Caring Team! Need support, have a concern, or want to be of service? Contact caring@calgaryunitarians.ca