



newsletter of the universalist unitarian church of halifax

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February 2016

Universalist Unitarian
Church of Halifax
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President

Newsletter
Etta Hamm
Sylvia Mattinson
Sandra Jamieson

Sunday service
10:30 am

All are welcome

Children & Youth Education
Child care available

Theme for February – Reconciliation

February 7

Presenters: Rev. Norm Horofker and Deborah Wiggins; Service Assistant: Louise Malloch

The connection between meeting space and spirit

As we consider the future of our church, we ask, “How does the church location and building affect our mission, our spirituality, our sense of connection to our highest aspirations, to our emotions, to each other, to our larger community, to nature and to our principles?”

February 14

Presenters: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: Marilyn Shinyei

Reconciliation as a spiritual practice

Spirituality is all about connection, be that connection with a sense of a higher power, or with nature, or with our own emotions, or with our neighbours. Viewed in this light, reconciliation between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples should rightly be seen as a spiritual practice.

February 21

Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: Wynne Jordan

The role of faith systems in reconciliation?

We all operate out of a system of faith, religious or otherwise. Those who promoted residential schools for aboriginal children justified their actions based on their understanding of how the world works. There can be no reconciliation without the reconciliation of divergent faith systems. What would that look like?

February 28

Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: Allyn Clarke

What must precede reconciliation?

Reconciliation is never a first step. It can only come at the end of a process that involves many difficult steps. What are those steps and how do we find the courage to begin? After the service, several Quaker friends will be joining us for a simple meal of soup and bread, to be followed by the enactment of *the Blanket Exercise* (see page 6 for more)... not to be missed!



Our mission is to provide a community that nurtures personal and spiritual growth, practices inclusiveness, celebrates diversity and affirms individual and collective commitment to community service and social justice.

The Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax

Compassion is the doctrine of our church, the quest for truth its Sacrament, and Justice its prayer. To grow in understanding through dialogue and freedom, to support each other's dance with life, to engage the Earth in peace, to the end that we speak ourselves into Community and her each other into being. Thus do we covenant with each other and with the Universe.

February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 	3 4:45-6:15 pm After Choir	4 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots	5	6
7 9:30 am Music 12 pm Worship Committee	8	9	10 4:45-6:15 pm After Choir	11 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots	12	13 Hike: Colpitt Lake See p. 6
14  9:45 am Music 12 pm Social Responsibility	15	16	17 4:45-6:15 pm After Choir	18 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots 6:30 Board Meeting	19	20 7-10 pm Coffeehouse
21 9:45 am Music Noon Humanist Group	22 10 am Newsletter Deadline	23	24 4:45-6:15 pm After Choir	25 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots	26	27
28 9:45 am Music (upstairs) 12 pm Blanket Exercise & soup meal. See p.6	29					

Special Meeting, January 31, 12 pm

Recently, a developer has shown interest in acquiring the church property at 5500 Inglis. It is the responsibility of the UUCH Board of Directors to consider this and other options and present them to the congregation.

On January 21st, the board formally convened a task force consisting of Lars Osberg, Faith Piccolo, Kathy Spencer and Kim Turner (with Norm Horofker and Molly Hurd serving ex officio) to explore options for the future of our church building, to report monthly to the board, and to prepare a final report and recommendations for the May Annual General Meeting.

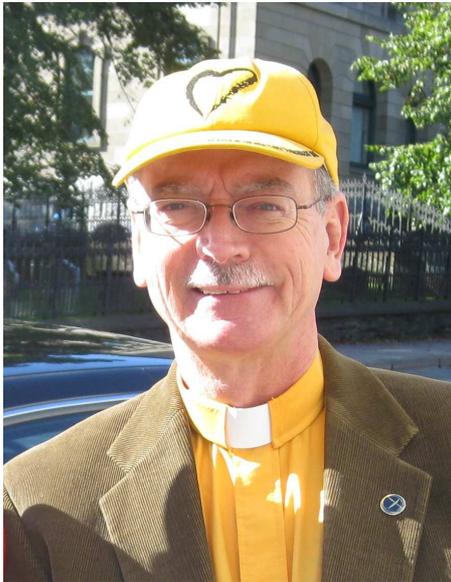
Members of the task force have met with a number of interested parties, and the task force will report to the congregation at a Special Meeting after the service on



January 31st. At this meeting, the task force will summarize the discussions that have occurred so far and will look for suggestions as to the process of ascertaining the congregation's wishes.

Lars Osberg, Chair
Building Options Task Force

Minister's Notes



Individuals and organizations

On January 31st we will update the congregation on discussions about the future of our church property. Then on February 7th we will devote our Sunday service to exploring the connection between our meeting space and our spirit.

These events got me thinking about the different needs of individuals and organizations. After 60 plus years of living, this individual is looking forward to staying put in our house on Purcell's Cove Road, content to live indefinitely in familiar and comfortable surroundings.

We often speak about our congregation as an extended family and describe 5500 Inglis Street as our church home. The church has been at this location in a space that has changed little over some 55 years! As individuals we may be getting pretty comfortable.

But healthy organizations have different trajectories and different needs than do individuals. As individuals, we all know that there is a trajectory to our lives bounded by birth and by death. A healthy organization, especially one founded with a social mission to bring more

love and justice into the world, needs a vision of an ever-expanding role in society.

Our church home has changed little in 55 years. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to those who had the vision to purchase our building and to be good stewards for it over the intervening decades. But I suspect that they would be surprised to see how little has changed since we moved into our Inglis Street building.

Heather Watts wrote this in her wonderful book *Universalism in Nova Scotia: Soul Cheering Doctrines** about the time in 1960 when the decision was made to move to Inglis Street:

“The Universalists had turned a corner... they were leaving behind years of slow decay in the Church of the Redeemer, the financial worry, the inappropriate buildings, the petty disputes and lack of community involvement that had so disturbed their ministers for the past 60 years. They had a new identity in the city...”

The decision was the right one for the times. Some 60 years later, we are a much healthier, more comfortable, more agreeable congregation. But it may once again be time to renew our vision and to turn a corner.

I trust that we will all recognize that the mission of the organization that is the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax, to bring more Love and Justice into the world, will outlive us all, if we choose wisely.

The Reverend Norm Horofker

*Newer members and friends interested in reading Heather Watts's *Universalism in Nova Scotia: Soul Cheering Doctrines* may obtain a copy from our church's lending library. We also have several copies available for purchase.

**Annual Winter Warm-up
COFFEEHOUSE
Saturday, February 20
Potluck food – free-will offering**



This is your last nudge to write this event in your calendars, and 'get your act together', for this special, annual, fun, fellowship event. Always warm and cozy, and always welcoming and uplifting, it's just what we'll all need to carry us through to spring!

If you know of someone who might offer music, comedy, dance, poetry or something else to entertain us on this special night, encourage them to contact me. *This event is open to all, so invite your family and friends, too.*

*All performers, however, must let me know in advance what they are planning, to get into the **pre-scheduled line-up!** 'Soonish' would be helpful. I'm really looking forward to it!

**Deborah Wiggins
Music Director**



Advance Notice



Spring Auction – April 10 & 17

This is just to start you thinking about the Spring Auction. What beautiful things are lurking in your closet begging to be outed? (Please leave them right where they are until March!) What special skills or services do you have to offer? Lots more detail to come in the weeks ahead.

Marilyn Shinyei

Dinner theatre coming in May



Mark the following dates in your calendar for the exciting 2016 dinner theatre, now in the planning stages. There will be three shows—on the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, **May 12th, 13th, and 14th.**

The cast of over a dozen enthusiastic and talented members and friends are looking forward to serving you dinner and entertaining you. Watch for further details as the event get closer.

Kathy Spencer and Deborah Wiggins

UUCH Refugee Sponsorship Update

Big news: Our Syrian refugee family has been called to the Canadian Embassy in Beirut! They have an appointment for Monday, January 25th. The mountains of paperwork have been approved and successfully moved to their final destination, the Canadian Embassy in Beirut. There the family will undergo a background check and have a medical examination, and then at last, they will be assigned a place to fly to Canada. We are all excited to finally see them and welcome them to their new life here. *Ahlen!*

There is a place for them to stay and a school for Anwar: The steering committee, at their most recent meeting, approved the lease of an apartment from Killam Properties as of February 1st for a significantly reduced monthly rent. The apartment is of excellent quality, has three bedrooms, is situated on Glenforest Drive, and within walking distance to Duc d'Anville Elementary School where Anwar can be enrolled. This school has been welcoming high numbers of non-English speaking immigrant children for some time.

Furnishings, transport and people to set up the apartment are ready: Sylvia Mattinson (new e-mail address viasyl100@gmail.com) and her team have been collecting and sorting donated items, with the help of Janet and Norm Horofker who are storing some of the stuff. We have drivers with large vehicles to collect and move other furnishings from several locations on moving day, which we hope will be February 1st.

Job search: A paid work-study position for Diya'a is waiting as reported earlier (Black Diamond Construction Company, Spryfield, CEO, Andrew Watts)—and a sewing machine has been offered to Sharifa from Heather Watts should she want to pursue tailoring and alterations.

Medical and dental: One of the two Arabic speaking family physicians in the area has declined to take on the family, the other one would like to meet them in person before making a decision. Wafa'a Al Atrash, the Syrian optometrist who attended our church on January 24th will provide her services, and a dentist has been recommended.

Food supplies: By the time you read this, Lia Woolaver and Jane Wilson, will have completed their drive for staple food items. The list for these came from www.syriancooking.com with input from Reem



Our family: l-r. Sarah, Diya'a, Noor, Anwar, Sharifa

Al Husni. The committee will be shopping for fresh foods when we know the family is in the air.

Fundraising:

This has been most successful and we are well able to support this family for their first 12 months in Halifax.

Financial arrangements. Kathy Spencer will take the time to explain these to the family, and answer further questions as they no doubt will arise. We will also have the banking expertise of Amira Alkasem and Walid Mokhtar.

Still needed: Volunteers to drive and/or accompany the family to appointments, errands, etc., on foot or by bus. Please contact Sylvia Mattinson, 902-454-4142 and/or Margaret Galbraith, 902-835-3767.

Welcome: Leela Pendse Shaw is creating a **welcome kit**, including a document with a **go-to list** of the various individuals for contact for different needs, and drivers are all arranged for pickup at the airport.

We are all excited and looking forward to the imminent arrival of our Syrian refugee family! We hope that the cold and rigors of the Canadian winter will be offset by the warmth and caring of our expanded UU and non-UU refugee group. **We can start by turning out to welcome them at the airport!** We should have at least 24 hours notice, so everyone who wants to come, please come. If you can't make it, we will all celebrate together with a potluck soon!

*Barbara Harsanyi, Marilyn Shinyei
and Margaret Galbraith
UUCH Refugee Sponsorship Group*

Colpitt Lake hike, Saturday, Feb 13

Colpitt Lake is located in Spryfield to the west of William's Lake. A new development has been built on the high granite outcroppings above the lake but the buildings are not visible from the path that follows the lakeshore.

On my last visit, I saw that a beaver dam across the outlet stream has raised the level of the lake by 30 to 50 cm, making the trail wet in spots. The hike is along undeveloped hiking and mountain bike trails.



A former UU hike on this trail.

We'll visit woodland brooks, waterfalls, granite barrens and a cave that is said to have been the refuge of an escaped prisoner from the penitentiary on the Northwest Arm.

On Saturday, February 13th, meet at the church at 12:30 or at the end of Colpitt Lake Road (off William's Lake Road) at 1 pm. Call me at 902-483-4731 if you are running late or are lost. We expect to return to the trailhead by 3 pm.

Allyn Clarke

Kairos Blanket Exercise, Sunday, Feb 28

Quakers and UUs bring you a meal of soup and bread following the service, along with an enactment of the Kairos "Blanket Exercise"

UUs and Quakers are working together to bring us all a special experience. The service on February 28th will be followed by a communal meal of simple but hearty soup and bread. After the meal everyone will be invited to participate in an enactment of the Blanket Exercise developed in 1997 by the ecumenical Aboriginal Rights Coalition, now a part of Kairos.



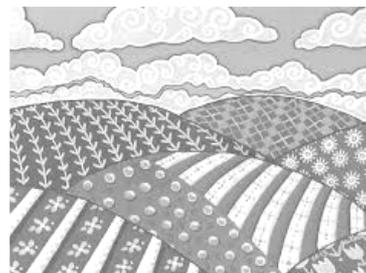
A Blanket Exercise held at a BC school

The ceremony helps us understand and experience the history of the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples in North America.

If you have participated in this exercise in the past, you will know that you want to do it again. If this is your first opportunity to participate... don't miss it!

To learn about KAIROS see www.kairoscanada.org; for the Blanket Exercise, click on "What we do."

Rev. Norm Horofker



Music Montage

*“Comes the time again to rekindle the light,
pulsing to the measure of the universal drum.
Hope reflected in a new defiant song,
burning bright the hearth of welcome.”*
~ Jim Scott



February's 'Singing As We Gather'

The Gathering Hymn for February is #34 *Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire*. In this month of the commercial Valentine's Day, our theme is Reconciliation. The tune for this hymn is called “Gift of Love”, and what more could we bring to any kind of reconciliation than that. Eckhart Tolle says “To love is to recognize yourself in another.” Only that kind of love can bring true reconciliation, I feel.

The lyrics to this gentle, lilting tune are adapted from the often-quoted verses on love from 1 Corinthians 13, which remind us that we may have everything else, but if we do not have love, we are like a 'resounding gong or a clanging cymbal', or as the hymn states, 'as sounding brass'. The last two lines of this hymn really bring the message together for me: “Let inward love guide every deed; by this we worship, and are freed.”

Monthly Music Projects

To participate in the February 7th Music Project, attend a 9:30 am rehearsal on that day for the final run-through.

Starting on Sunday, February 14th we'll be preparing for the next month's Music Project, which will be presented March 6th. The theme for March is 'Renewal'.

Rehearsal opportunities for the March 6th Music Project are:

- Sunday, Feb 14th, at 9:45 am
- Sunday, Feb 21st, at 9:45 am
- Sunday, Feb 28th, at 9:45 am (upstairs)
- Sunday, Mar 6th, 9:30 am *for final run-through*

Thank you to all those who come out before services on Sundays to participate in the Music Projects, and an extra thank you to James Morris, Louise Malloch and Mia Huh for sharing their talents in January services.

Deborah Wiggins

Music Director

uuchmusic@yahoo.ca

902-463-0988

Religious Exploration

Happy New Year from RE!

It's hard to believe that January has just about finished having its way with us. It's been a snowy month! But it has also been a fun and productive month in Religious Exploration. All our activities have emphasized our January theme of **Resilience**.

We decided by consensus to make *one* New Year's resolution—and we agreed beforehand that it couldn't be trivial, that it would have to relate somehow to our UU principles, and that it might reflect some or all of the themes we've considered so far this year: *Grace, Integrity, Wonder* and *Resilience*. This is what we came up with:

To be kinder and more respectful to all living things!*

*The children chose this precise wording after much consideration. I provided two notes for clarification:

- We believe that we are already kind and respectful toward other living things, but our resolution is to be even **kinder** and **more** respectful than we are already – and to pay attention to this, making it a deliberate act.
- Our fellow human beings are included when we talk about **all living things**.



We then talked about ways we could live up to that resolution. After all, when we have integrity we back up our words with actions. We decided to focus on one thing that we could do together: ***to feed the birds at the***

church for the duration of the winter. This, of course, is an act of *grace* and *integrity*, as well as helping the birds to find some *resilience* as they struggle through the winter months. And we *wonder* if squirrels will feed there, too.

Thank you to Janet Horofker for donating a lovely feeder and some seed. Thanks to Norm Sabowitz also, for gifting us a big bag of seed. We (and the birds) welcome any further donations, by the way.



Since then, we've made suet together in RE, fed the birds, tied a discarded Christmas tree to the deck to provide some shelter near the feeder, and promised to keep it up for as long as the birds need us to. A great beginning to 2016. We'll soon be looking for other ways to fulfill our resolution, too.

For February's theme of **Reconciliation**, I am pleased to announce that we've just confirmed some fantastic plans for the **February 28th** service and after-service. You may find hints elsewhere within these pages. Please mark the date on your calendar for the whole family to attend.

My contract ends on January 31st, and I will be making my annual trek to visit my father in Florida during the month of February. (It's tough, but somebody has to do it!) At this time RE classes will be conducted under the supervision of a group of very capable member volunteers. I thank them, and wish them the very best in continuing what we've started together.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the last four months, by the way—every minute I spent with the children was an absolute pleasure.

Thank you again to everybody who has been so supportive toward me and the RE program. It's been a ball!

Peace and love,

David Ballum-Haftka
(Interim) Director of Religious Exploration

The Ballroom Gallery presents: *Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!*
The caring and sharing art show — the kindness to strangers art show
April 3–May 29



Inspiration for this multi-media art project

The plight of millions of refugees walking across Europe seeking refuge from the ravages of war. Likewise, of course, our UUCH's sponsorship in bringing a Syrian family to Halifax. Just amazing!

“Welcome!”

Whether spoken or implied, the word *welcome* surely is one of the most cheerful, heartfelt words, as it succinctly suggests: “You are one of us—make yourself at home!”

Brainstorm for further ideas

Choose the one that speaks to you from experience.

- Hearty welcome to immigrants, foreign students, tourists, friends from away.
- While travelling abroad or at nearer to home, how were you welcomed?
- How many times have you entertained and welcomed guests in your home?
- Who has invited you warmly into their homes for a cup of tea or a meal?
- Caring welcomes are needed likewise by many other folk such as our native indigenous population, the homeless, the working poor, and those down on their luck.



Art making suggestions

Keep it simple, though strong, fascinating and unusual. Use your favourite media, or ...

- Consider paper projects such as posters, or large cards with words emblazoned on them, then decorate and colour to your heart's content.
- Play with ideas. Brainstorm for ideas. Your ideas! We can do it!
- Then make a few simple sketches and pick your favourite.
- Or cut and paste magazine pictures. Incorporate writing right on top of them.
- Break the rules of art making. Do whatever intrigues you.
- Do make the final presentation as professional as possible.

Sign up!

A sign-up sheet will appear on the front lobby bulletin board very soon. Please include your name and number of pieces. I can't wait to see what you do!

Ella Wilson



These are some of the beautiful people of the wonderful Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax. This photograph was taken on Sunday, January 10, 2016 by the talented Avard Woolaver.

The Minister's Discretionary Fund

One of the systems that serves our mission is the Minister's Discretionary Fund. This is a bank account administered at the discretion of the minister to provide material and financial assistance to the congregation's members and friends, and others when the minister deems it appropriate.

Donations to this fund are made independently of the annual pledge campaign. The fund's modest monthly income and expenses are reported to the board but the fund is not part of the church's budget.

As your minister I often become aware of situations where a few dollars can make a big difference. It can help an individual get enough to eat, or get some warm clothes, or meet a pressing need. In such situations it is usually not appropriate to disclose the details to the board and to debate the church's needs and resources.. There is in fact no time for such discussions, and frequently, amounts disbursed would not justify the board's time to consider a request.

The congregation has been generous in supporting the fund. By its nature it is administered at the discretion of the minister, and so donations to the fund with a request that the money be used for a specific purpose

will be considered, but the final decision remains with the minister. The fund has been used from time to time to help stock the Food Box when it is low.

In the past few weeks there have been some major contributions to the fund, with the request that the money be used for the Food Box program, and I have been able to honour that request. When the fund is getting low, the minister will make an appeal for donations. This article is not an appeal for funds, but simply an attempt to let people know about the fund and its use.



Contributions to the fund can be made at any time by cheque, appropriately marked, to the church office, or by placing an appropriately marked contribution in the Sunday collection. Contributions are included in the annual receipt that you receive from the church.

I thank you all for sustaining this important program.

The Reverend Norm Horofker

Sunday Service Volunteers

Feb 3

Greeting Kathy Anthony
Anne Knight-Gorman
Ushering Andy Blair (e), Janet Horofker (l)
Kitchen Devin M., Stephen Butler (set-up)
Anne Knight-Gorman (clean-up)
Audio Devin Murphy
Library TBF

Feb 10

Greeting Tracy Boyer and helper
Wietske Gradstein
Ushering Kay Smith, Kathy Anthony (e)
Dean White, Shripad Pendse (l)
Kitchen Louise Malloch, Stephen B. (set-up)
Dean White, Kathy S. (clean-up)
Audio Avard Woolaver
Library Anne Knight-Gorman

Feb 17

Greeting TBA
Ushering Eileen Ross (e)
Margaret and Paul Galbraith (l)
Kitchen Paul Galbraith, Stephen B. (set-up)
Stephen Butler (clean-up)
Audio Paul Galbraith
Library Alison Chipman

Feb 24

Greeting Sandra Clarke, Sylvia Mattinson
Ushering Wendy Ozon (e) Sylvia Mattinson (l)
Kitchen Nick B-J, Stephen Butler (set-up)
Kathy Spencer (clean-up)
Audio Nick Baros-Johnson
Library Stephen Butler

**To join the Sunday Service Support Team,
please contact Wietske Gradstein, 835-9272.**



**2016 edition
now available**

The 2016 UUCH directory is out and available to members and friends whose names are 'in the book'.

Be sure to get your copy next time you are in church. If you are unable to pick it up, we can mail it to you.

Sandra Jamieson
uuchurch@eastlink.ca
902-429-5500

Canadian Unitarian
eNews



The December issue of eNews and the January issue of UU&U published the submission deadline for eNews articles as the 15th of every month. The date is now changed to the 10th.

Submit to: communications@cuc.ca
Subscribe at: cuc.ca/cuc-eneews



The deadline for submissions
for the March newsletter is
10 am, Monday, February 22nd.

Please submit to both
braeside@eastlink.ca
and
uuchurch@eastlink.ca

