



newsletter of the universalist unitarian church of halifax

Vol. 51, No 6
February 2017

Universalist Unitarian
Church of Halifax
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Deborah Wiggins
Music Director

RE Director
Tanya Bilsbury

Kim Turner
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 – Love and Justice

February 5

Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: Margaret Galbraith

Universalist Love

Our theology emerged from the fusion of Universalism and Unitarianism. For Universalists, God and Love were synonymous. What might Universalist love mean for you and me in 2017?

February 12

Presenter: Dr. Philip Welch; Service Leader: Marilyn Shinyei

Pharmacare!

The drugs prescribed for you by YOUR doctor, who rarely mentions the COST, but the drugs are often COSTLY. Our Prime Minister wrote to OUR doctor, Dr. Jane Philpott, Minister of Health, in March 2016, requesting her to make some changes to Canadian drug costs, e.g., bulk purchases, but no changes YET. Meanwhile, Canadian drug costs exceed those of the UK by over 14 billion dollars. What to do?

February 19

Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: Mia Huh

Balancing Love and Judgment

Mother Teresa is quoted as saying: "If you judge people, you have no time to love them." This morning we will examine that balance. How much time do we spend judging others, and what does that say about our capacity to love?

February 26

Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker, Service Assistant: Anne Knight-Gorman

Our Interdependence Calls Us to Love and Justice

The title of this service comes from the Mission Statement of the Canadian Unitarian Council: "As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, we envision a world in which our interdependence calls us to love and justice." What could this mean for our congregation in Halifax?

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.



February 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	2 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots Noon Tai Chi 7 pm Interfaith service & open house	3	4 10 am – noon UU Brunch
5 9:30 am Choir 12 pm Worship Committee	6	7	8 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	9 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots Noon Tai Chi	10 7-10 pm Coffeehouse	11 10 am -noon UU Brunch
12 9:30 am Choir 12 pm Social Responsibility	13	14 	15 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	16 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots Noon Tai Chi 6:30 pm Board	17	18 10 am – noon UU Brunch Hike to Jack Lake
19 9:30 am Choir 12 Noon Humanist Group	20	21	22 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	23 9:30-11:30 am Parents & Tots Noon Tai Chi	24	25 10 am – noon UU Brunch
26 9:30 am Choir 12 pm Intro to Uuism with Rev. Norm	27 10 am Newsletter Deadline	28				

Winter Warm-Up Coffeehouse Friday, February 10, 7 pm



Come one, come all, to this wonderful annual event!
Bring your friends and family.
A terrific line-up of performers for your enjoyment!
Bring potluck finger foods to share.
There will be a free-will donation basket at the door.

See you there!

Minister's Notes



Being mentor and advocate...

Wow... I am writing for the February newsletter already! It has been a busy time at UUCH, but on reflection, there has been a common thread in the past month's activity.

There have been many pastoral care issues over the past month, including a health crisis involving my sister in Ontario. Fortunately, most are resolving well. I am grateful to those who have allowed me into their lives at times of relocation or illness or other need.

The traditional role of minister is to be a comforting non-anxious presence, but I am becoming more and more aware of the need for advocacy. We have a wonderful network of social support from various government agencies, but often the system assumes that the person needing the help can navigate the bureaucracy on their own. This of course is a problem. When we need the help the most is when we are most vulnerable and least able to navigate a disinterested, sometimes hostile bureaucracy. This is the time when we need mentors and advocates. Everyone needs mentors and advocates at some time in their life, but there is

a real shortage of these skills, or at least of people willing to take on the role, and yet it can be a powerfully meaningful and fulfilling experience.

February is also the first anniversary of the arrival of the Althyab family in Canada. I was pleased to be able to attend a holiday party at their home, and then to assist the family in preparing for a Sunday service where they gave us some insight into the experience of leaving a life behind for a new life in a strange new country. They have given us a great gift. The opportunity of helping them has created positive energy within our congregation like nothing else that I have experienced. We have been advocates and mentors and friends, and those roles have had rich rewards for us.

We had our second shared on-line service with the Unitarian Fellowship of Fredericton in January. We have improved our technical expertise in presenting these services but still have opportunities to make the experience even better. This is important work. Fredericton is a small lay-led congregation. The small congregation in Saint John NB recently closed and the small group meeting in PEI has announced plans to disband in May. The ability to participate in a live, on-line service, might make the difference between the growth or demise of small congregations in the Maritimes. In this role, the entire Halifax congregation is acting as mentor and advocate.

I look forward to February and the opportunities it will bring. On Thursday February 2, we will, once again, be hosting an open house, as part of the United Nations Interfaith Harmony Week. With our participation, Halifax won a third-place award in this world-wide initiative last year. We have a unique voice in the interfaith movement as advocate and mentor, and it makes me proud to be your minister.

Rev. Norm Horofker

Board Buzz

As we met for the first Board meeting of 2017 the Opening Words spoke of "this great gift of Time" of a new year. We enjoy other gifts, too, that make our work for the church easier.

That most important **gift of financial security!** After years of struggling to get sufficient pledges to cover our budget needs, for 2017 we have pledges of \$121,435, which is \$4,435 over our goal of \$117,000! Not only is our operating budget for the year now secure, but also a minimum of almost \$5,000 is assured each month through the automatic monthly withdrawal process, now used by almost 2/3 of our confirmed pledgers. It is cause for great thankfulness, and much appreciation to you, the supporters of this church.

The gift of significant **financial bequests** received by UUCH last year. We are debating the best way to use these funds wisely for the future health of the congregation.

The gift of the dedication and enthusiasm of our **full and part-time staff:** with financial security comes their security, and where would we be without them?

Our energetic, caring and creative minister, **the Rev. Norm Horofker**, is involved with all aspects of our congregational life as his monthly Board report attests. Since September the church has welcomed seven new members, with several more interested. Rev. Norm himself has been no small part of their decision.

We are very fortunate with our part-time staff as well: our talented, enthusiastic **Music Director, Deborah Wiggins**, who will continue to bring us the gift of music in 2017—her own, supporting congregation members in various choir and band arrangements, guest artists, and planned events like themed music services and the upcoming Coffeehouse, February 10th.

And the particular gift of our new **Director of Religious Exploration, Tanya Bilsbury**. We welcome her to her new role and offer her the support it will take to make a success of this critical part of our congregational life.

Sandra Jamieson, our part-time **Office Administrator**, does not normally report to the Board, but in the background, she cheerfully performs so many essential office functions—a gift to any organization.

UUCH Board of Management June 2016 - May 2017

Officers

President	Kim Turner
Vice-President	Molly Hurd
Past President	Allyn Clarke
Secretary	Pam Berman
Treasurer	Marilyn Shinyei

Members at Large

Andy Blair	Mia Huh
Margaret Galbraith	Shripad Pendse

And always, without which none of the above would happen, **the gift of volunteers.** At this Board meeting alone, the agenda referenced activities by the Treasurer, the Canvass Team, and several committees: Building, RE, Property, Refugee Sponsorship, Membership—all involving dedicated volunteers, including everyone around the table.

However, volunteers burn out or move on or change positions—this gift needs continual renewal. **The Board will be bringing you a Volunteer Fair in the near future** so that you can see how essential volunteers are to the operation of UUCH, and where you may fit in to do your bit, large or small. In the meantime, check out the last page of this newsletter which lists some of the currently critical volunteer opportunities to be filled. Perhaps 2017 will be your year to contribute that special gift of volunteerism to UUCH!



*Margaret Galbraith
Board Member*

Religious Exploration



I am delighted to be your new Director of Religious Exploration. I spent January getting oriented to the position and to the individual needs and desires of youth and their parents, a task that continues. I am working with the RE committee to

structure the children's experience and to deliver quality RE programming.

Janet, Allyn, and Angela taught our older youth from *Amazing Grace: Exploring Right and Wrong*, from the UUA's *Tapestry of Faith* curriculum. The discussions focus on ethics, equipping children to think critically and spiritually about their choices.

The younger children have been engaged in decorating their own 'jars of gratitude' from glass jars kindly donated by the congregation. Every week, the children will have an opportunity (i.e., during Glads and Sads) to think of something they are grateful for or happy about, and put it in their jar. At the end of the year, we will look through our jars and upon our well-being.

Edie, a responsible and mature teen has been an indispensable help with the younger children—and I know that many others in the congregation have gifts they can share with the children, be that giving a lesson based on one of your interests or teaching a craft. Please get in touch with me if you'd like to be involved.

The RE program has a limited budget for materials and supplies. I encourage you to donate any unwanted age-appropriate craft supplies to the RE program. The children find endless ways to be creative and get through supplies fairly quickly. Non-perishable healthy snack foods with no added sugar (e.g., unsweetened applesauce, fruit canned in juice, popcorn) would also be greatly appreciated.

Tanya Bilsbury
RE Director



Hike to Jack Lake: Saturday, February 18

Jake Lake is a small upland lake located SW of Highway 102 between the Hammonds Plains Road and Bedford exits. This land was developed as a park when Bedford was an independent town but under HRM it has been reclassified as a park reserve.



UUCH hikers at Jack Lake, Feb 2015

The trail into the lake can be quite wet so I generally do this hike in winter when the ground is frozen. If we have snow, then people might wish to bring skis or snowshoes. If the trail is wet, we will divert to the Sandy and Marsh Lake trail which leads from the same trailhead.

Meet at the church at 12:30 pm or at the end of Smith Road at 1 pm. Call me if you want to arrange a ride from the Clayton Park area.

To get to the trailhead, exit the 102 at the second exit ramp at the Hammonds Plain interchange. Follow the Hammonds Plains Road under the 102, then take the first right onto Smith Road. Follow Smith Road to the end of the pavement and park as you are able. Call me at 902-483-4731 if you are lost or running late.

Allyn Clarke

DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions for the March newsletter is **10 am, Monday, February 20th.**

Please submit to both

braeside@eastlink.ca

and

uuchurch@eastlink.ca

Music Montage

*"If a crumbling world we would renew,
We must sing no ordinary song.
Peals from a noisy gong will never do;
In every breath compassion must be long."
~ Elizabeth Alexander*



February's 'Singing as We Gather'

The Gathering Hymn for February is #325 *Love Makes a Bridge*. Our theme this month is *Love and Justice*. This hymn emphasizes that love must be the precursor to justice.

Themed Music Projects

This month's Music Project is on Sunday, February 5th.

Rehearsals for this will be as follows:

Sunday, January 29th, 9:30 am (upstairs)

Sunday, February 5th, 9:30 am

The next Music Project will be on Sunday, March 5th.

Rehearsals for this will be as follows:

Sunday, February 12th at 9:30 am

Sunday, February 19th at 9:30 am

Sunday, February 26th at 9:30 am (upstairs)

Sunday, March 5th at 9:30 am

Winter Warm-Up Coffeehouse, Friday, February 10th

If you haven't already, get your calendars out and book this heartwarming annual event, our Winter Warm-Up Coffeehouse, on Friday, February 10th, from 7 to 10 pm. I'm excited to be hosting my 10th coffeehouse this year. Come one, come all, and bring your friends and family. We have a terrific line-up of performers for your enjoyment!

We encourage you to bring potluck finger foods to share. There will be a free-will donation basket at the door. See you there.

Deborah Wiggins

Music Director





The Caring Column

Elizabeth Greenhavens has moved to the Northwood Centre, 2615 Northwood Terrace, Room 111B, Halifax, NS, B3K 3S5. She is quite content there in her space by a window and has a compatible roommate. She is hoping to soon have her old telephone number back. (902-422-4279) In the meantime her number is 902-466-2278. Her daughter Erica is grateful to the many people who supported Elizabeth in so many ways which enabled Elizabeth to stay in her own home for so long.

Louise Malloch is home recovering from surgery and slowly regaining her strength. She is receiving chemotherapy which requires frequent hospital visits for treatments and tests. If you would like to add your name to the list of friends willing to help her with transportation and/or an occasional meal, please email her at lmalloch@gmail.com. We all continue to send our positive thoughts for healing to Louise.

We send our condolences to **Avard Woolaver** and family on the death of Avard's 93-year-old father Frank Nelson Woolaver, on January 1st. Frank was a man of many interests including music. He loved to sing old songs with Avard playing the guitar. He died peacefully at home surrounded by his family.

We send **Elvira Gonnella**, Philip Welch's wife, our thoughts and prayers for a speedy recovery from her recent stroke. She is making gradual progress and even able to walk a little with a walker.

Mary Ellen Onno

Be a Blessing

The thing to do, it seems to me, is to prepare yourself so you can be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud. Somebody who may not look like you, may not call God the same name you call God, if they call God at all. I may not dance your dances or speak your language. But be a blessing to somebody. That's what I think
— Maya Angelou

Notes from Farther Afield



The annual updating of the church directory necessitates contact with formerly active UUCH members who have moved away from our local area. It's always a delight to speak with **Alexina (Alex) Proctor** (who has become a personal friend and whom I occasionally visit). Alex

lives in her lovely, still-new, spacious home (designed by herself) at Advocate Harbour, NS. The location affords an expansive view of Chignecto Bay at the upper end of the Bay of Fundy. Alex has a 'back issue' that makes walking and standing difficult, but she is able to drive, and drove to Dartmouth and the Valley to spend Christmas with family and friends. She greatly enjoys playing bridge once a week, and visiting a bedridden friend in Parrsboro to whom she reads, which she says is precious time for both the friend and herself. Of the things Alex can no longer do, she misses cycling the most. Through this monthly newsletter, she keeps up on what we are doing at UUCH and enjoys seeing 'the old familiar names'. Alex sends warm greetings to all who remember her.

Susan Stephen, Scott Donovan and Rev. Helen McFadyen also are among those farther afield; all were happy to communicate with us through their welcome letters on the following page. Enjoy, and feel the fondness they still hold in their hearts for us.

Etta Hamm

CANVASS REPORT

Goal for our 2017 budget: \$117,000
Total pledged by Jan 22nd: 121,435



Thank you very much to all our members and friends who have together made this generous financial commitment to the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax for the year 2017!

The Board's Canvass Team: Pam Berman, Margaret Galbraith, Molly Hurd, Kim Turner

From Susan Stephen

We have been in Woodbury, Connecticut for over a year after leaving our farm and the province we love. Michael commutes about 30 minutes to work in Danbury each day as the Director of Electronic Publishing for Westchester Publishing Services. It is a job he is satisfied with although it does not make his heart sing.

I am working part-time with the Flanders Nature Center here in Woodbury as an educator in their food program with both children and adults, and also do some gardening training and general outdoor education when needed. We travel frequently to Nebraska to see our parents and grandchildren. My father is quite frail now, and very dependent on his oxygen. My mother struggles with arthritis. Michael's mum is experiencing loss of both mobility and cognitive functioning. Challenges!

Woodbury is a small town of 10,000 with plentiful parks and rivers and woods to enjoy. Years ago the town passed a by-law that prohibited large national chains from locating here, so all of our shops and restaurants are locally owned, which is lovely, and there are several farms in the area that we can source great produce from. These were accidents of location that we didn't know about until after we moved, but are very grateful for!

Another accident of location is that the UU society is just 10 minutes away. It has about 85 members, is very active in social justice issues regionally, and currently has a part-time minister, so there is lots of work that we can both do, in worship, music and committee work. This is extremely satisfying after being so far from an active church for so long, and I am always warmly reminded of UUCH as I attend and volunteer at MUUS (Mattatuck UU Society).



Here we are in the march on Washington DC on Saturday, January 21—what a great day!

We miss Nova Scotia and hope to be back sooner rather than later (especially after this disastrous election). However, we have lots of debts to manage and have rented the farm, so currently we are going to be here until we have gotten out from under the burdens of that past. Our house is large enough that we have lots of room to host visitors; please come visit! We are 90 minutes from NYC—it's a thought.—*Love, Susan and Michael*



From Scott Donovan

My Facebook friends may know that I've got a puppy in my life. Last November, after many weeks of training and making new friends, Daisy took the role of Toto in a local theatrical production of the Wizard of Oz. She brought a lot of joy to the show and tickled the hearts of many. The show was produced by the St. James Players, a long standing theatre company that emerged from and remains connected to St. James United Church here in Peterborough. Jovanna and I were immersed in this strong and closely-connected group for the duration of practice and the seven shows.

It confirmed in me, as if I ever had any doubts, the power of community and the richness that emerges through relationships bound by a common cause. My Unitarian Fellowship carries that same conviction. I'm pleased to be serving on the Board this year, as well as about ten thousand other activities and events in our busy yet meaningful practice of making community. If you're ever in the Kawarthas, do drop by—*In fellowship, Scott Donovan*

From Rev. Helen McFadyen

Hi everyone! Despite the distance between us, I feel a strong connection to Halifax, and affection for the UU congregation who supported and celebrated my ministerial formation over many years.



I live in the British Columbia Interior region now, where I serve as Developmental Minister to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kamloops. I'm also chipping away at requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree.

When not glued to a computer or doing the stuff of ministry, I love to hike the mountains surrounding this small hub city located where the North and South Thompson Rivers meet. I love the ruggedness, the wildlife, and the dry climate (Canada's desert zone). Most of all, the people are fascinating and generous of spirit, many coming from ranching and mining backgrounds and the large Shuswap Indigenous community. Give me a shout if coming through the BC Interior.—*With love, Helen*



United Nations International Harmony Week is celebrated this year, February 1-7. As before, the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax is one of the participants.

The entire week provides open invitations to visit the sacred spaces of the various religions celebrated in Halifax—to experience and to learn from sacred traditions that may be outside of the familiar for you. In friendship, the clerics and members of the participating groups are looking forward to welcoming people of all faiths and traditions.

Opportunities include a pre-week service with the Society of Friends (the Quakers) and a Hindu Puka ritual. These events are both on January 29th.

February 1st through the 7th offers a Taste of Shambhala, **a Universalist Unitarian Church service and open house, Thursday February 2nd** — Muslim Jummah prayer, Jewish Shabbat, a Baha'i devotional, a Pagan celebration of Imbolc (also held at UUCH), Taoist Tai Chi, a Christian service, Sikh Kirtan songs of praise and a meal, a celebration of World Interfaith Harmony at MSVU Rosaria Centre, a Brahma Kumaris guided meditation—and likely of considerable interest for some of our members, a Blanket Exercise at the Aboriginal Student Centre on Tuesday, February 7th.

The website www.ihhalifax.ca provides a schedule with all locations of the many interesting events and services that form part of this great week of celebrations. Look it up and plan your Interfaith week!

Rev. Norm needs a few volunteers to meet and greet our guests and participate in the service and open house being held at UUCH on Thursday, February 2nd at 7 pm. Are you in? Give him a call!

Etta Hamm

Volunteer Opportunities

Chair, Social Responsibility Committee

A coordinating role for a well-established group of subcommittees. Call monthly meetings, set agendas, facilitate meetings. The issues are brought to you!

Check 'More Information' at www.uuch.ca ... look under Programs, Social Responsibility for examples of activities and the terms of reference. Help support the vital work of putting our faith into action. It's very satisfying work, though not always just work—we get to have fun too! Explore the possibility by chatting with Margaret, or email her at margalbraith@eastlink.ca.

Religious Exploration volunteers

We are *always* in need of volunteers to support our Religious Exploration program that delights, engages, and benefits our children and youth—the future of our church, our community, and indeed the world. Join us anytime. See, or contact Tanya at tanya.bilsbury@gmail.com.

Norm's UU Brunch, Saturdays 10-12

We always welcome volunteers for the Saturday morning brunch, to cook, serve food, set-up or clean up—or just to socialize with our guests from the wider community who so appreciate our presence and our caring. Contact Norm, or 'just come'.

Updating the Wayside Pulpit

Every month we choose a quotation for the Wayside Pulpit (the sign on the church's front lawn). We need a volunteer to select the quote, order the print, pick it up in Burnside and insert it in the Wayside Pulpit. This is presently being done by the minister. If interested contact Norm Horofker.

Sunday morning greeters

In this enjoyable role you will greet people arriving at church and help visitors feel comfortable in their new surroundings. See Martha Wilson, our Membership Chair.

Ushers

The Worship Committee needs volunteers to be ushers on Sundays. This involves setting up the chalice etc., putting out hymnals and taking up the collection. Early ushers help with set up—late ushers help with clean-up. See Dean White who is coordinating the ushers.

The inherent worth and dignity of every person * Justice, equity and compassion in human relations * Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations * A free and responsible search for truth and meaning * The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large * The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all * Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Unitarian Universalism.