

Universalist Unitarian
Church of Halifax
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Rev. Norm Horofker
Minister
Office Hours
Tues, Wed, Fri 10-3
Cell 902-229-9239

Sandra Jamieson
Office Administrator
Office hours
Mon, 9-3 (lunch 12-1)
Wed, Fri 10-3

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 December: Presence

December 3

Being Present for Others – When it is Hard

“Being present for someone” implies that you are somehow in sync with their emotions. This can be a challenge when your emotional style is very different than that of the person you want to be present for. How do we bridge that divide?

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

December 10

Seasonal Carolling

Come join us in singing many of your favourites as a warm up to the season. Take this extra opportunity to make a joyful noise, and to keep the metaphorical hearth stoked and burning throughout the colder months. Presenter: Deborah Wiggins; Service Leader: Marilyn Shinyei

Also December 10

7 pm, at Bearly’s House of Blues and Ribs

Blue Christmas: A Bittersweet Service to Raise Your Spirits—Despite Our Sorrows

This is the sixth year that we take our UU Chalice out into the community at Christmas. This year our featured contributor, **Laura Smith**, with accompanist Lisa MacDougall will make the evening very special. Come early for dinner. The bar and the kitchen will be open during the service. — Don't miss this holiday gem (which will also include the Afterchoir)! Service Leader: Rev. Norm Horofker

December 17

Being Present for Ourselves and Being Present for Others

“At the end of the day, do others feel loved in your presence? This is the spiritual bottom line.” ~ Masin Kipp. Is it important that others always feel loved in our presence... when do we get to feel loved? Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant; Allyn Clarke

December 24, 4:30 pm at the church.

Candlelight Service

(Note: There is no morning service this Sunday.)

Our annual Candlelight Service, this year on Christmas Eve, will be a multi-generational celebration of the season with song and dance, hot cider and Moravian buns. You are invited to bring Potluck Festive Finger Food for the social gathering after the service. This is a “not to be missed tradition” at the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax that will feed your body and your soul. Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: Martha Wilson

December 31

Being Present in the Universe

The last day of the year seems like a good time to think about the big picture of presence. You are present in an astonishing universe. How does the big picture of the cosmos influence your sense of presence in the much smaller world of your day to day existence? Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: Anne Knight-Gorman

Our theme for next month (January): **Prophecy**



December 2017						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Happening this month 	Receiving donations for Christmas Hampers through Dec 17th		Kitchen renovations ongoing through December	No Parents & Tots or Tai Chi this month due to renovations	1	2
3 No Choir 12 pm Worship Committee	4	5	6 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	7	8	9
10 9:30 am Choir 7 pm Blue Christmas 	10	12 Hanukkah begins 	13 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	14	15	16 
17 9:30 am Choir Last day for Hamper donations 12 pm Humanist Group	18	19	20 Hanukkah ends  4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	21	22	23
24 No Choir No morning service 4:30 Candlelight Service * 31 No Choir 12 noon Intro to UUism with Rev. Norm	25 T'is Christmas! 	26  Kwanza	27	28	29	30 

NOTICE

The deadline for submissions for the January newsletter is outlandishly extended to **10 am, Tuesday, January 2.**
 Late contributors will miss out —no excuses, exceptions or reprieves!
 UUinfo release on the following day.
 Please submit to both braeside@eastlink.ca and uuchurch@eastlink.ca.

From your editor, with love. ☺

Minister's Notes



Budgets and missions...

At our Semi-annual General Meeting on October 30 the congregation unanimously approved our budget that will take effect in January. That might not sound very unusual, but this particular budget contained three items that are indicative of a generous, growing, healthy, spiritual community.

The first item is our decision to “give away the plate” on Sundays. I didn't attend church much as a child, but the few times I did, my father or mother would give me a quarter or two for the collection plate. That ritual of generosity has stayed with me.

Our congregation has a budget of about \$120,000. Almost all of that amount is raised through the generous pledges made by our members and friends. Most of that amount never sees our collection plate. Pledges are more frequently paid by automatic bank withdrawal or with cheques given during the one-month pledge campaign. And so, “passing the plate” on Sunday has lost some of its significance as a symbol of generosity. In the past few years we have collected about \$2,500 per year in the collection plate that has not been identified as part of a pledge.

It has been the experience of many UU congregations that giving away the money collected in the plate on Sunday (that is not identified as part of a pledge) generates a lot of good will, a sense of generosity, and has ultimately resulted in membership growth, and growth in total pledges.

And so, your Board has decided that beginning in January we will designate a charity each Sunday to receive any money collected in this way. I hope that we will take up the collection while the children are present so that they can have that same experience I had some 60 years ago.

Sometimes you can “kill two birds with one stone” (what a sad thought that is). The second decision of the Board that I want to hold up, is to fund the Saturday morning Neighbourhood Brunch as a mission of the congregation. Since its inception the Brunch has been funded by the Minister's professional expenses, the Minister's Discretionary account, and by contributions made to that account for that purpose. This was a way of using the Discretionary Account to plant a seed, and in this case, it has taken root. Each Saturday 6 to 8 volunteers prepare and serve a wonderful buffet meal with tablecloths and flowers to thirty or so of our neighbours. In order to help fund this, the Board has decided to use the proceeds from the collection plate (again, not designated for pledges) to fund the Brunch on two Sundays of each month.

And the third new initiative in the budget is the funding of the Parents and Tots play group that meets at our church on Thursday mornings. Molly Hurd initiated this program and it has grown to where we have close to twenty parents attending with their children. This serves a real need in our neighbourhood, where many people connected with the faculties of the neighbouring universities have spouses who are at home with small children. Many of these parents are new to Canada and a long way from home. The Parents and Tots program provides a social outlet for parents and children and exposes more people from our neighbourhood to our church. Tanya, our Director of Religious Exploration, makes regular social visits to the group as well. This particular budget line amounts to \$800—and \$600 of that was a gift from a family who are participating in the program.

Three new initiatives in our budget representing our community outreach ... makes me happy!

With Love... Norm

6th Annual Blue Christmas Service

at Bearly's House of Blues and Ribs

Service led by Rev. Norm Korosker

Featuring

Award winning artist

Laura Smith



Accompanied by

Lisa MacDougall

And The Afterchoir!

Sunday December 10 at 7 pm

Come early for dinner.

The bar and restaurant remain open

during and after the service.



The Caring Column

Louise Malloch is enjoying visits from her mother Susan, and her sister Nora and family. Her mother is here until late December. Nora, her wife Kira and their

sons Simon and Ezra were here for the last two weeks of November. Louise is continuing chemo while it seems helpful. Her mobility has continued to deteriorate so she is not likely to attend church. Louise will resume having visitors as she feels up to it, after her nephews leave. Please call ahead.

Marie Davis would like to thank the many people who sent her cards for her birthday and get well cards after her fall. She really appreciated them. She is doing very well now, and it's good to see her back at church.

Cynthia Marshall, who has rheumatoid arthritis, was scheduled to have her second knee replacement operation but it was cancelled as she developed an infection. She is anxious to have it done, and requests that those who believe in it send their thoughts and prayers for healing so that she can have the surgery soon.

Virginia Crabill, Vancouver, active at UUCH some years ago, died on October 29th. While in Halifax she was a passionate peace activist, among other UU causes. Virginia was valued for her social justice and refugee support work by her Unitarian Church of Vancouver community, where a celebration of life service will be held on December 1st.

Mary Ellen Onno

Our Mission

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.

Christmas Hamper Drive



Succession planning is important in any organization, and you'll be happy to know that the future of the UUCH Christmas hamper drive is in good hands. My family took on this project with Mary Ellen and Peter Onno after Helen McFadyen moved to B.C. Helen was the originator of the program, in which we raise funds from within the congregation and fill bags with holiday treats for Canadian Mental Health program clients. These individuals, identified by a CMHC staff member, tend to be people who suffer greatly from anxiety or phobias and are largely housebound.

My children, who are now in grades 11 and 8, were helped last year with the holiday shopping by the Saulnier family children: Kyla, Tristan, Destiny, Abigail and Jason. This year our two families will assemble the bags together with my daughters explaining the steps to the younger children. Next Christmas the Saulnier kids will take the lead on this, and my children will be the helpers; and that year (2018) will be my family's final year of involvement with this initiative. So look for this project to evolve and change over the next couple of years.

We will be collecting money at UUCH for the Christmas hampers through Sunday, December 17.

If you would like to make a contribution, please put it in the offering plate, clearly marked for this project. Our CMHC contact reports that a number of clients say our gifts are a true high point of their holidays. Please don't feel obligated to give to this; if you choose to, however, know that your contributions will make a real difference in the holidays of a person who is lonely.

Thank you!

Martha Wilson

Decking the Dormers



Once again we will make our beautiful building even more beautiful for the holidays and through the winter by installing balsam fir wreaths with electric candles on each of our five dormer windows. As in the past we invite members to sponsor one of these wreaths. The cost is \$25 including the installation. If you would like to sponsor a wreath please contact our Treasurer, Marilyn Shinyei—or our Minister Rev. Norm Horofker at 902-229-9239.

Kurdish family to be helped

UUCH has partnered with the South Shore Family Reunification group to bring over the extended family of a small Syrian Kurdish family now successfully settled in Mahone Bay. Shahnaz Hamo, son Ali and husband Rezan Iso (the Syrian Tailor of Mahone Bay) want to bring Shahnaz's parents, siblings and nephew from their current dangerous situation in Turkey.

We will be managing the financial donations and liaising with the CUC as the Sponsorship Agreement Holder. Watch for more on this in the coming days.

For more information contact Margaret Galbraith or Marilyn Shinyei.

Help for your Hems

Sharifa, of the Althyab family we sponsored two years ago, has started a small home sewing business and welcomes new customers.

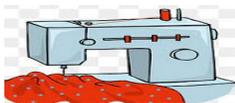
Sharifa

Fairview Hemmings & Alterations

199B Main Ave., Fairview

902-293-7516

Also on Facebook



UUCH Board of Directors

June 2017 – May 2018

Officers

President	Kim Turner
Vice-President	Margaret Galbraith
Past President	Molly Hurd
Secretary	Pam Berman
Treasurer	Marilyn Shinyei

Members at Large

Mia Huh	Shripad Pendse
Troy Saulnier	Ginny Girard

Music Montage



*"Everything in the universe has rhythm.
Everything dances." ~ Maya Angelou*

December's 'Singing As We Gather'

The Gathering Hymn for December is #164 *The Peace Not Past Our Understanding*. December's theme is *Presence*. In the month that brings the winter season and holiday celebrations with it, this hymn's lyrics paint a picture of simple togetherness and peace, and the melody is warm and welcoming.

*The peace not past our understanding falls
Like light upon the soft white tablecloth
At winter supper warm between four walls,
A thing too simple to be tried as truth.*

Monthly Music Projects

December's Themed Music Project will be on Sunday, December 17th.

The rehearsal opportunities for this are:

Sunday, December 10th, at 9:30 am

Sunday, December 17th, at 9:30 am

Please note that there is no rehearsal on Sunday, December 3rd or the morning of Sunday, December 24th. There is no service on the morning of December 24th!

The annual **Candlelight service** will be held on the evening of December 24th, and there is an opportunity to sing in that service, as well. The more the merrier, so contact me if you are interested!

Our annual **Blue Christmas** service is on the evening of December 10th at Bearley's again this year. See all the details about our special December services in another section of this newsletter.

January's Music Project will be on Sunday, January 21st.

Rehearsal opportunities for this are:

Sunday, January 7th, at 9:30 am

Sunday, January 14th, at 9:30 am

Sunday, January 21st, at 9:30 am

I wish everyone warmth, peace, gratefulness and loving togetherness this final month of 2017.

Deborah Wiggins

Music Director

Religious Exploration

In November in RE we implemented recommended reading for *A Time for All Ages*—and curriculum from the *Soul Matters Sharing Circle*, focused on the theme of identity. For example, in the 'YouSoup' activity we explored the different components of our identity and how these, in combination, make us unique.

I am pleased to announce that Danielle Saulnier has taken the role of RE chair. We will be working on establishing the specific roles of the Director of Religious Exploration, RE chair, and RE committee, for example by developing Terms of Reference. The RE committee is also busy discussing what we can do to better engage older kids, for example, through excursions or more challenging activities.

Jesse and JF held a little fundraiser for RE by harvesting the green tomatoes from the garden beds and making them into delicious salsa. The children decorated the jars, which sold out at the Christmas bazaar for \$8 apiece. Jesse and JF have also generously volunteered to take care of the raised beds.



RE fun times

Next month, we look forward to making Christmas crackers with Janet, a tradition we have inherited from Kay Smith.

Beginning in January, we will be having Young Adult Sunday once a month. On that day the young adults who are present will choose which non-profit organization that day's collection will go to.

A big thank you to Pam, Lia, and Jane for doing their bit toward keeping RE ticking.

Tanya Bilsbury
RE Director



Canvass Report

Darla and Robin have provided us with a visual report each Sunday in November as they demonstrated the “Fine Balance” with which our pledge campaign is unfolding. Sunday, November 26th they reported that we were 90% of the way to our goal of \$122,850.

As of press time we have crept up a little bit to 92% with a grand total of \$112,722 pledged. We have definite numbers from 83 out of 94 pledge units. There are still several new people to talk to, a handful who are unable to confirm a pledge at this moment and a few more who haven't returned calls but whose pledges we are pretty sure we can count on. At this point we are predicting a final count around \$118,000. So we could be about \$5,000 short of our goal.

That means that in the New Year, when the final count is in, the Board will need to reconsider the budget for 2018 and either make cutbacks or decide to access money that we tucked into savings when we had a surplus in 2016.

The Canvass Team has worked hard to reach everyone by our completion goal of November 30th. Huge thanks to our great team of Mia Huh, Pam Berman, Scott Wood, Margaret Galbraith, Sylvia Mattinson, Paul Galbraith, Darla Muzzerall and Glenda Butt and to all of you for being so responsive and generous.

Your Canvass Chair
Marilyn Shinyei

UU-UNO Update



I'm very happy to tell you that our congregation has met the requirements to earn Blue Ribbon status from the UU-UNO. Enough people have signed up for us to meet the qualifications. To all those who pledged, thank you very much for your support! Marilyn Shinyei is kindly handling the contributions through the church office. (If you have pledged but not yet paid, please contact her.) I am so glad our congregation is demonstrating this level of support for the UN and its many programs. Thanks again!

Jane Wilson

Kitchen Reno Update



Kitchen renovations begin on November 30th. Barring any glitches we may possibly have a new kitchen by Christmas; if not Christmas, maybe New Year's. We will keep you informed of the progress and you will soon see the resulting chaos for yourselves. Pretty exciting though, isn't it?

The Kitchen Task Force

Bazaar Thanks

Many thanks to all the wonderful, hardworking helpers who contributed toward the great success of our annual bazaar held in November—Faith especially, as co-chair, who did most of the heavy lifting. Everyone worked so cheerfully and put on a 'great show' for UUCH. Our visitors seemed to love everything about it, especially the very tasty food. It was a fun event, and when all was said and done we netted over \$1,500!

Elinor Egar-Reynolds
Bazaar Co-chair with Faith Piccolo



Kim Turner

Peace to our members and friends and all.