



This Month's Sunday Services

Universalist Unitarian
Church of Halifax
5500 Inglis Street
Halifax NS B3H 1J8

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Rev. Israel Buffardi
Interim Minister
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Jessica Friesen
Music Director

Marie-Claude Leroux
Director, Religious Ed
for Children & Youth

Pam Griffin-Hody
President

Etta Hamm
Newsletter Editor

Sunday services
10:30 am

All are welcome

You are invited to attend services in the sanctuary in person while respecting the space of those who are wearing masks and/or social distancing, both of which are recommended. Services start at 10:30 am.

You can also join us via **Zoom** between 10:20 and 10:30 am using [this link](#).
Meeting ID: 666 004 431 Password: 010670.

Or you can watch (live or later) on our UUCH **YouTube** channel using [this link](#).

Our Theme for January: Finding our Centre

January 8

Sending Off and Centering Ritual for the New Year

For our first service in 2023 we will share a gratitude, grief, and growing ritual to close the old year as we find our centre for the new year.

January 15 & 22

Finding Our Centre Together

On these two Sundays we'll dive further into the theme of finding our centre. We'll also help each other discern the critical difference between self-improvement and self-alignment as we experiment further with conversational and interactive Sunday programming.

January 29

Centering Our Values: Refugee Resettlement

In this lay-led service, we will share stories and reflect on the values that call us to continue our support of refugee resettlement.

Our Theme for February: Widening the Circle

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.



January



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 1:00 to 4:00 pm New Year's Day social gathering	2	3	4 8:00 pm RE Team meeting	5 7 pm Shared Ministry 7-8 pm Online gathering	6	7 10 – 11:30 am Brunch
8 10:30 am Service Rev. Israel	9	10 7 pm Worship Team meeting	11 6:30 pm Board meeting	12 7:30 pm Building Team 8:30 pm Communications Team 7-8 pm Online gathering	13	14 10 – 11:30 am Brunch
15 10L30 am Service Rev. Israel	16	17 4:30 pm Shared Ministry team meeting 7 pm Caring Team meeting	18 7 pm Climate Crisis Team meeting	19 7-8 pm Online gathering	20	21 10 – 11:30 am Brunch
22 10:30 am Service Rev. Israel	23	24 Newsletter Deadline	25	26 7:30 pm Membership Team meeting 7-8 pm Online gathering	27	28 10 – 11:30 am Brunch
29 10:30 am Service Lay-led	30	31				

The above-noted meeting dates & times are taken from the standing schedule of recurring monthly meetings (see inside). One-off scheduling changes are to be passed on to group members, and any permanent changes to the newsletter editor



***From Your
Interim Minister***

Finding Our Centre

We find ourselves now at the beginning of a new year, and we are also more than four months into this period of my transitional ministry with this congregation. I am personally very excited to dive further into exploring and experimenting with different programming and ways of gathering on Sundays. We've now experienced one Sunday of conversational gathering, and I'm planning on repeating this experiment over the course of the next few months. I also would like to incorporate opportunities for sharing feedback on this experience on Sundays when we try out different programming ideas.

While I remain excited about these ideas, I also want to draw wisdom from the eponym of January itself, Janus the Roman god of duality and transitions. Janus is typically depicted with a double sided face, gazing to both the past and the future. This image reminds me of the importance of leading from the centre — honouring what was and embracing what must be. What's more, it reminds me that moving forward is made more meaningful by embracing some stillness in the transition.

Our theme this month is finding our centre, and I hope we will allow ourselves to cherish the stillness of the wintry January centre to savour and appreciate who we are, even as we dream of what might yet be.

Rev. Israel

UUCH Sponsorship Agreement Holder News

As I wrote this on December 28th, our last newcomers for 2022, a family of eight, were flying from Toronto to Halifax in the evening. That makes a total of 116 newly arrived refugees in 2022. You will recall that travel was almost stopped completely in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic.



Selamawit, her daughter Eldanam, and niece Rahwa are Eritreans who arrived in November and are doing very well living with Selamawit's brother's family here in Halifax.

No doubt 2023 will bring even more as we are waiting for 187 people for whom we applied in 2018, 19, 20 and 21. We are very happy to report that the Syrian Kurdish family of 8 still waiting in Turkey since 2018 will arrive on January 17th! Their destination is Mahone Bay.

Add to that 187, another 198 from 2022 and you get a sense of the numbers we are dealing with. 65 of the 198 are Afghans who are being expedited; 16 of them have already arrived.

I would remind you that our role is to accept candidates for our waiting list, submit applications for them to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and monitor their well-being after they arrive. A settlement group, which may be a family or an established refugee sponsorship group, does the hard work of raising money for their first year in Canada, finds them accommodation and supports them in every way through that first year.

Our SAH team of nine people, includes four UUCH members; we would welcome another UUCH

member to join us. Let us know if you are interested and/or have questions.

Finally, one of the families we hope to see in 2023 is that of Clement and Sophie, the Rwandan Unitarians we have told you about before. We applied for them in July 2020 and for about the last 18 months we have been supporting them financially in their country of asylum. Because of that the money we raised for their first year has been depleted. We will need to do some more fundraising before they arrive so please stand by for a new appeal in the early New Year.

Marilyn Shinyei
Refugee Program Coordinator
UUCH Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH)

From the Climate Crisis Team

There are many podcasts and YouTube videos out there about the many aspects of climate change. One such event that several members of the Climate Crisis team watched was The Hitchhiker's Guide to Climate Action and we highly recommend it. Click [here](#) to watch it.



It is a Canadian production by Environmental Defence Canada and features "a virtual gathering of climate solution explorers": a sustainable city planner and solar energy innovator among others. The program originally took place November 16th but it is still available on YouTube. It is two hours of friendly, witty, very Canadian chitchat about very important subjects. We encourage you to watch it. (There is no requirement to know anything about the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, in case you are worried.)

It is also New Year's Resolution time. Let us all resolve to reduce our carbon footprint as much as possible. The planet will thank us.

Margaret Galbraith
for the Climate Crisis Team

From the Caring Team



Barbara Dacey, a long-time member of our church, was hoping to regain better health and to return to church services. Sadly, however, she died on December 15th after a hospital stay

of about four weeks. Friends of Barbara's would tell you of her compassion toward others and of her quick wit and keen sense of humour. A celebration of Barbara's life will be held at UUCH at a later date. Details will be provided when available.

A warm and lovely celebration of life was held at the church on December 10th to remember fondly and pay tribute to **Dr. John Baros-Johnson**, who was minister of our Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax for nine years starting twenty-five years ago. It was good to be able to gather together in his honour.



With a new year upon us, our team members, Shripad, Faith and I wish our members and friends happy times, good health and peace in 2023.

Sylvia Mattinson



Religious Exploration for Children & Youth



It's a new year and I look forward to getting together again for the Religious Exploration program.

We closed off 2022 in the spirit of giving by crafting holiday cards with warm greetings and a festive spirit to be offered at a local retirement home.

The kids especially enjoyed our annual tradition of making Christmas crackers, filled with trinkets to be given to family and friends over the holidays.

Our all-ages year-end candlelight service was a beautiful way to celebrate the season. The children took part in many ways: Miranda Hutka played a piano solo, Phebe Dowe sang Silent Night, and all the children embellished our story prop wreath (pictured at top) and were included in the story. It was a festive month!

We look forward to a great new year ahead.

Marie-Claude Leroux
Director
RE Program for Children & Youth



Our Endowment Fund, a Gift to the Future

Some months ago the theme for services at UUCH was *story*. By chance, this theme came along just as our endowment reached the \$100,000 mark—so the Endowment Committee decided to mark the congregation's having met this financial goal by asking a couple of questions of people who have contributed. Among other things, we wondered how people see the endowment fund enlarging the story of UUCH—and how contributing to the endowment fund might become part of the overall story of our lives.



Reflecting first for us on these deeply personal questions is longtime UUCH member Allyn Clarke. (As most of you know, Allyn's wife, Sandra, died at the end of 2019, just as the pandemic was beginning. He subsequently made a donation to the endowment fund in her memory.) His thoughts on his years in the congregation, and on the ongoing impact the church can have on our piece of the world, are insightful. In considering his time at the church, Allyn noted that he and Sandra began attending in 1970. Please enjoy hearing a bit about his perspective on those years. Allyn's comments are in bold type.

The endowment fund is one of the ways we can feel some hope and relative certainty that UUCH will still be here after we are gone. You have indicated that you intend to support the endowment fund. Can you share a little of what this feels like for you personally, or perhaps say a bit about how it differs, in your mind, from supporting the day-to-day life of the church?

The West Fund was established more than a century ago, and was made available to bring the UUCH out of the ashes in the 60s by providing the funds to hire a minister again. Endowments can be used to fund our dreams.

Do you have a sense of the church having evolved or changed during the time you have been part of it?

The church has changed with its members and ministers. In the 70s the church was dominated with 30-year-olds in couples and with young children. Most were new to Halifax and to UUism. (A New Yorker cartoon showing a figure taking the path labeled "discussion on god" characterized the congregation.) We got older and people left for jobs in other cities, and new members formed their own vision of the church. Book clubs formed, and some lasted, and the Goddess group continued. Through it all we cared for each other and the larger community.

If you look at that same question viewed through a longer time frame—say, from 150 years ago to 150 years from now—what do you feel are some of the most significant contributions our congregation might make to life in our region?

Since its founding, and hopefully continuing, the UUCH has been a community that provides a safe place to explore religious and social issues.

For all of us at UUCH, the church is part of our lives; we are also part of the life of the church. Of the various roles you've filled at UUCH over the years, is there any one that has resonated with you more than the others?

The most meaningful was when Sandra and I were leading a youth group in our living room, with baby Michelle as a participant.

What are some of your hopes for the church in the future, in terms of what the endowment fund may someday make possible?

A donation to the endowment fund is a gift to the future. I am confident that they will use it wisely.



CUC Online Events to January 31



Rising Together: UU Youth (13-19) & Emerging Adults of Colour. First Saturday. Jan 7 at 5 pm (90 mins).

Connect and Deepen. 2nd & 4th Sundays, 5 pm (90 mins). Jan 8: How do we Give Life to our Promises. Jan 22: Justice and Continuity

Lay Chaplains Chat. Dec 12, 8:30 pm. Staying connected with other chaplains.

Widening the Circle: Reflections on Becoming. Sat, Jan 14, 1 pm (90 mins). A time of sharing.

UU Connecting. 3rd Sunday, Jan 15, 8 pm. Young adults connecting and sharing.

Gathered Here. Mon, Jan 16, 9 pm. For young adults (18-35). Sharing reflections, joys and sorrows.

MyceliUUm Youth Network of Canada.

Sat, Jan 21, 3 pm (2 hrs). For Junior Youth and Youth (ages 12-19) & adult supporters. Read up on the exciting details at cuc.ca.

Leaders' Roundtable. Last Saturday each month. Jan 28, 1:30 pm (90 mins). Join Vyda Ng and CUC board members in a discussion about motions coming up at the May AGM.

Check cuc.ca for full details including registration where applicable.

Recurring Monthly Meetings

Group	Recurrence	Group Lead
Religious Exploration	1st Wednesday 8 pm	Marie-Claude Leroux
Worship	2nd Tuesday 7 pm	Israel Buffardi
Board of Directors	2nd Wednesday 6:30 pm	Pam Griffin-Hody
Building	2nd Thursday 7:30 pm	Troy Saulnier
Communications	2nd Thursday 8:30 pm	Troy Saulnier
Shared Ministry	3rd Tuesday 4:30 pm	James Morris
Caring	3rd Tuesday 2 pm	Sylvia Mattinson
Climate Crisis	3rd Wednesday 7 pm	Margaret Galbraith
Membership	4th Thursday 7:30 pm	Pam Berman

This is the standing schedule of recurring monthly meetings. One-off scheduling changes are to be passed on to group members; any permanent changes to the newsletter editor.

Any member or friend of the congregation is welcome to attend these meetings (except for Caring) as observer or participant.

UUCH Board of Directors

Officers

President	Pam Griffin-Hody
Vice-president	TBF
Past President	Troy Saulnier
Secretary	Molly Hurd
Co-Treasurers	Marilyn Shinyei Darla Muzzerall

Members at large

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Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for your contributions to the February newsletter is

Wednesday

January 25

Please send your articles on **or before** this date to Etta at braeside@eastlink.ca

