



newsletter of the universalist unitarian church of halifax

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January 2017

Universalist Unitarian
Church of Halifax
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Deborah Wiggins
Music Director

RE Director
Tanya Bilsbury

Kim Turner
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Newsletter
Etta Hamm
Sylvia Mattinson
Sandra Jamieson

Sunday service
10:30 am

All are welcome

Children & Youth Education
Child care available

Theme for January – Creativity

January 1

Presenter: Deborah Wiggins; Service Leader: Dean White

Hymn Singing in the New Year

Let us herald 2017 by singing some favourite hymns. Come prepared to write down and place your favourite hymn number in my hat on the piano, as you come in, and we'll draw some out and sing them, as we also contemplate what we can consciously create in 2017 through our individual and collective efforts!

January 8

Presenter: Norm Horofker; Service Assistant: David Ballum-Haftka

Creativity and Friendship

One of the most valuable things we can create is a new friendship. Why is it so difficult for many of us to do this and how might we sharpen our creativity when it comes to making, and keeping friends?

January 15

Presenter: Nawras Al Thyab; Service Leader: Norm Horofker

Exercising Creativity to Build a New Life in Canada

One year ago, Nawras Al Thyab welcomed his mother, sisters, brother-in-law and two young nieces to Canada from Syria/Lebanon. In this special service Nawras and his family will share with us their experience of creating a new life in Canada. This may give you a new perspective on your own life and your role in creating more Love and Justice in the world.

January 22

Presenter: Rev. Norm Horofker, Service Assistant: Marilyn Shinyei

Exercising Creativity as a Spiritual Practice

What does "spiritual practice" mean? Today we will explore two kinds of spiritual practice... those that help us escape from the "noise" of the world, and those that help us to engage more fully in the messiness of the world. This service will demonstrate our creativity as we again share a video link with Fredericton congregation.

January 29

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

Exercising our Imagination

Before we can create anything of value, we first must allow ourselves the luxury of imagining a better world. Why do we so often shut our imagination down with thoughts like, I can't do that, or we tried that before, or that will never work? Can we just have fun with our imagination without putting practical limits on it, as a first step to changing ourselves and the world.



JANUARY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 No music 12 pm: Pancake Brunch Worship Committee	2	3	4 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	5 Noon Tai Chi	6	7 10 am – noon UU Brunch
8 9:30 am Music 12 pm Social Responsibility	9	10	11 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	12 9:30–11:30am Parents & Tots Noon Tai Chi	13	14 10 am – noon UU Brunch
15 9:30 Music 12 pm Humanist Group	16	17	18 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	19 9:30 – 11:30 am Parents & Tots Noon Tai Chi 6:30 pm Board Meeting	20	21 10 am – noon UU Brunch 5 pm DUP Potluck 6-8 pm DUP Dance
22 9:30 Music	23 10 am Newsletter deadline	24	25 4:45-6:15 pm Afterchoir	26 9:30 – 11:30 am Parents & Tots Noon Tai Chi	27	28 10 am – noon UU Brunch
29 9:30 am Music (upstairs) 12 pm Intro to UUism with Rev. Norm	30	31				

Annual Winter Warm-UP Coffeehouse Friday, February 10, 7-10 pm

Coffeehouse fever is heating up! Already, there's buzz from different folks on new and fun ways to entertain Halifax Uus, friends and family. Invitations have been extended to a variety of new presenters as well.



So make sure you reserve the date right away on your 2017 calendars, and those of you who are inclined, dust off those shoes, costumes, voices and/or instruments and start rehearsing! This just might be the best one yet!

Deborah Wiggins
Music Director

Minister's Notes

*An invitation,
among other things...*



There are lots of things I could write about in the life of our church this month... our hiring of Tanya Bilsbury as our Director of Religious Exploration... our developing expertise in sharing our services with other congregations over the internet... our successful annual Blue Christmas Service at Bearly's (that I hope we will webcast live next year!) ... the affirming turnout for our annual Candlelight service... the devotion of our Caring Committee when our support is so important to many... the wrap-up of another Pledge Drive that I am anticipating to be a great success... our continued work with the Al Thyab family from Lebanon/Syria... and so much more. We are a blessed congregation with much to offer to the larger community.

But this month, I will use my column to invite you to participate in our Sunday services in a new way. I am looking for your help to make our time for meditation in our services more meaningful. I want to experiment with something called "passage meditation" in our services. This technique for meditation focusses on a relatively short inspirational passage, that may come from any source. I want these passages to be recommended by members of the congregation. And so you are hereby invited to submit your recommendations to me.

We are an inclusive faith that believes that we can learn from one another even though our individual beliefs cover a wide spectrum. We will provide a "take home" copy of the reading in the order of service each Sunday. During meditation, you will be invited to read the passage silently to yourself. When you do so, you will be aware that this passage was found to be particularly meaningful to someone in our congregation. Your reading should be sympathetic to the author, allowing the passage to speak to you without judgement or criticism of the content. We will be using passages from many different sources, some from the great religious traditions of the world, some from secular and humanist sources.

So, that is my request: Please send readings that you would like to incorporate into our time of meditation during Sunday services. The readings will be used without attribution to the person who made the suggestion.

Looking forward to hearing from you...

Rev. Norm Horofker

The Caring Column

Louise Malloch is recuperating from her surgeries at the QEII. Her mother Susan White is still here giving her support. She is gaining strength and walking some. She truly appreciates the support of the congregation and the well wishes and cards.



Important reminder to all:

In consideration of people who have scent sensitivities and respiratory issues, we remind our church family to try to keep our space scent-free.

When getting ready to come to church, we kindly ask that you refrain from using products such as: perfumes, colognes, after-shave, and highly scented lotions, hair sprays and deodorants when you come to church. This will be so appreciated.

Correction: In last month's newsletter I said that adults over 50 should talk to their doctors about getting the **shingles vaccine**. According to Dr. Philip Welch, the correct age is 55. Research has been done to support this. The pharmaceutical companies use the lower age.

I wish you all a happy, healthy New Year.

Mary Ellen Onno



The deadline for submissions for the February newsletter is **10 am, Monday, January 23rd.**

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

WhaleCoast Alaska 2017

Dear Canadian UUs:

Have you ever dreamed of visiting Alaska? If so, WhaleCoast Alaska 2017 is for you!



We are inviting UUs throughout the US and Canada to experience our eco-cultural and spiritual program next summer, and see Alaska through the eyes of UUs in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Sitka with friendly home-stays and unique tour activities. See wildlife, including moose, bears, caribou, whales, bald eagles, seals, and otters. Visit Denali National Park. Experience Native Alaskan culture. Forget the cruise ships—our program is the best way to visit Alaska!

Our fundraising tour program involves dozens of Alaskan UU volunteers. Programs led by Dave Frey, member of the Fairbanks UU congregation and Alaska travel expert. Find out more about this Alaskan trip of a lifetime before our tours sell out!

Visit www.WhaleCoastAK.org
or email dfrey@whalecoastAK.org
or call 907-322-4966.

This is a unique opportunity for your members to visit Alaska. I am also attaching our 2017 tour flyer for your bulletin board. We would love to have some members of your congregation travel with us next summer!

David Frey



Just a small part of a WhaleCoast Tour

Our Syrian Family, One Year Later

It is now nearly a year since our Syrian family arrived in Halifax and our 12 months of sponsorship are drawing to a close—a good time for an update.

We were one of the luckier sponsorship groups as our family arrived very quickly in February 2016, only 2-3 months after our applications went in. You will remember that this was a three-generation family, and very quickly the younger couple with their two little girls moved into their own apartment, while Sharifa, the mother/mother-in-law to that couple, along with her 10 year-old daughter stayed in the apartment that we had set up. In order to make it all work financially (as we hadn't budgeted for two apartments), the son/brother, Nawras, already living in Halifax, moved in with his mom to help with rent and other expenses.

We have been so lucky in so many ways!



Lona and Sarah at their daycare enjoying a visit from Santa.

LANGUAGE - All the adults had some English and have been taking English classes, learning on the job and even having a private tutor volunteering with them. The children are in school or daycare and, of course, are learning English in leaps and bounds.

SUPPORT - We had Arabic speaking volunteers on our team who helped family members to set up bank accounts, rental agreements and renter's insurance as well as took them shopping initially and helped them find the bargains and the Middle Eastern grocery stores. ISANS, Nova Scotia's immigrant services association, has also been very important for us and for the family. They help with setting up language training, job searching, subsidized daycare; offer classes on life in Canada and much much more. The City of Halifax has provided refugees with a free bus pass for one year which includes access to all Halifax Recreation Programs.

FAMILY HERE ON THE GROUND - We can't say enough good things about Nawras who has been vital in helping his family members adapt and learn the basics about life in Canada.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL - There is a Refugee Health Clinic here in Halifax that provides basic health care, vaccinations, etc., which will continue to serve as their family doctor or help them to find one at the end of one year. We found a caring dentist who has been providing much needed dental work, partly funded by IFHP (interim federal health program for refugees) and partly pro bono.

WORK - The family themselves have been amazing. Not people to let grass grow under their feet, the younger couple have both been working for many months now. A church connection was instrumental in offering a construction job to the young dad.

In February our support to this group of six people will officially end. But we want to tell you about what will happen next.

ONE YEAR WINDOW APPLICATION - Sharifa's husband, Nabil, and another adult son, Kais, are in Germany where they got to before the others left Lebanon for Canada. We have applied through the One-Year-Window route to bring these additional family members here. Their application is being processed as we write. We are hopeful that Nabil will be approved and on his way shortly. We are uncertain about Kais being approved because he is now 20. In any case, this means that we will be responsible to provide for Nabil for 12 months after his arrival. We have about \$4,000 remaining in our fund at this time but anticipate that we will need another \$11,000 to meet requirements if both men can get here. Of course Nabil will move in with his wife and children but we will still have a responsibility to assist. We will be asking for your help with this in early 2017.

OUTSIDE GROUP - We have just made an additional commitment (no money required from us) to assist another local group to sponsor a young Syrian man who is currently sitting in South Korea, a country that won't recognize him as a refugee and could soon deport him back to Syria. This group has raised all the money they require but are co-sponsoring with us in order to use the Canadian Unitarian Council as their Sponsorship Agreement Holder. As the CUC's representatives we will be involved in overseeing and assisting this group in their process. We should be a good resource to them as we certainly have learned a lot, especially in the early weeks after our family's arrival!

*Marilyn Shinyei
for the UUCH Refugee Sponsorship Committee*

Music Montage

*“Sing of joy while hammering each nail.
Sing of hope while pulling every weed.
So shall we sing together and prevail;
May every alleluia bear a seed.”*
~ Elizabeth Alexander



January's 'Singing as We Gather'

The Gathering Hymn for January is #1031 *Filled With Loving Kindness*. Our theme this month is *Creation*. This hymn sets in us, individually and as a whole, a desire for many of the things that will aid in opening us to a creative space and energy; loving kindness, wellness, peacefulness, ease and wholeness.

Themed Music Projects

This month's Music Project is on Sunday, January 15th.

Rehearsals for this will be as follows:

Sunday, January 8th, 9:30 am

Sunday, January 15th, 9:30 am

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

Rehearsals for this will be as follows:

Sunday, January 22nd at 9:30 am

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

Sunday, February 5th at 9:30 am

Winter Warm-Up Coffeehouse

It's not long now before we'll be enjoying that heartwarming annual event, our Winter Warm-Up Coffeehouse, scheduled this year, on Friday, February 10th, from 7:00 to 10:00 pm.

So, now is an excellent time to dust off your entertaining shoes, voices and/or instruments, and polish up your presentation. It will be here before you know it—then spring will be just around the corner!

More Music News

Sunday, January 1st will be a hymn singing service. So if you feel like singing in the new year with your favourite hymns on New Year's Day, then I invite you to come prepared to put your favourite hymn number in my hat on the piano, when you arrive, and we'll draw a few for us all to sing!

I'm wishing you all a wonderful 2017 in many, many ways, including musically.

Happy New Year!

Deborah Wiggins

Music Director

Volunteer Opportunities

A new monthly column—where members and friends will find the volunteer opportunities they so desperately seek! The roles described below are the important ones to be filled first.

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 Sunday. 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.

UUCH Board of Directors

Overheard at the church ...

... a discussion between Rev. Norm Horofker and John Piccolo who was about to buy some steel wool to stuff any holes that might be allowing mice into our building.

John: Ok, I will buy some steel wool. I think the church budget will be able to cover the expense.

Norm: Go ahead and buy the steel wool... we will build a magnificent wall of steel wool, and make the mice pay for it!



