

U.U. & you



Welcome to our April Services

Join us in exploring what it means to live our deepest values out loud. We extend a special welcome to visitors and hope you will come again.

For Zoom, if needed: User ID 666 004 431, password 010670.

April 6th – Moral Agency and Mental Illness

As much as we aspire to be responsible for our beliefs and our actions, the human mind doesn't always cooperate. From the Involuntary Treatment Act to using mental disorder as a criminal defence, we explore inherent worth and dignity at the limits of moral agency. Ben invites your thoughts in advance, especially if you have relevant experience yourself or with a loved one. minister@uuch.ca

Ben Robins with Lars Osberg

April 13th – Question Box

What questions do you have about life, the universe, or anything else? Send your questions to minister@uuch.ca by Tues Apr 8th and a selection will be answered in the service. Ask the kids in your life what their questions are; their questions are welcome too. **Ben Robins with James Morris**

April 20th – The Creative Impulse

Cats are curious, dolphins are friendly, and humans are driven to create. Not everyone, not always, but still the impulse is there, it's wired in. Today we explore the creative impulse in the human condition and perhaps in the universe itself. This service launches a series on the blossoming of spring, and on this Easter Sunday we also celebrate maple communion. **Ben Robins with Pam Griffin-Hody**

April 27th – Earth Day

On this Sunday following Earth Day, and the day before our federal election, let us reflect on the interdependent web of life and some of the leaders of our climate action movement. **Presented by the Climate Crisis Team**

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.

Universalist Unitarian
Community of Halifax
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Rev. Ben Robins
minister@uuch.ca

Andrea Dewar
Office Administrator
admin@uuch.ca

902-429-5500
Wed-Thur-Fri
1 - 6 pm

Joe Britto
Board President

Etta Hamm
Newsletter Editor

Sunday services
start at 10:30 am

All are welcome



April 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 10–11:30 am Brunch
		6 10:30 am service	7	8	9 Noon Lunch Bunch (bring your own lunch)	10
13 10:30 am service Easter Sunday 	14	15 7 pm Worship Team meeting	16 6:30 pm Board meeting 7 pm Climate Crisis meeting	17	18	19 10–11:30 am Brunch Sundown Passover ends
20 10:30 am service Noon Humanist Group	21	22 	23	24	25	26 10–11:30 Brunch
27 10:30 am service	28	29	30 7-10 pm Open Mic			

See all program dates inside.



Minister's Note

Expanding Circles of Trust

I'm in a peer group with three other ministers. Our monthly gatherings have two main parts: A check-in about how we are doing (body, mind and soul), and then a time for each of us to reflect on an issue we are addressing or a choice we have to make in the congregation we serve.

I experience these gatherings as grounding, connecting, opening, reflective, adventurous.

We begin our sessions by reading aloud a Quaker document called the *Touchstones for Co-Creating Trustworthy Spaces* (from Parker Palmer's Center for Courage and Renewal). The touchstones are guidelines for how we want to be together. Some of them are "Extend and receive welcome... Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth... When the going gets rough, turn to wonder... No fixing, no saving, no advising, no correcting each other... Attend to your own inner teacher... Treat silence as a member of the group..."

These are similar to guidelines often used in UU small groups (perhaps with more emphasis on the Quaker practices of silence and listening to the voice within). The document takes a few minutes to read aloud, and every month we ask "Do we really need to read it again?" It's written on our hearts, but yes, we decide every month, we want to say the words again. We like who we are when we fully drop into these touchstones.

During election season, or during an economic crisis, it can be tempting to choose other ways of being. Urgency, with much on the line, might tempt you towards speaking your perspective with the expectation that others agree (and condemning those who don't). You might see silence as an opportunity to repeat your talking points. When the going gets rough you might turn to righteous indignation. There are activist schools that teach these behaviours.

I don't think these behaviours work. They can succeed at cohering an in-group, but at the cost of pushing away an out-group (and eventually the in-group turns on itself).

In these times, every interaction is an opportunity to bring your worldview to life – conveying kindness, respect, mutuality, right of conscience, and more.

If you'd like to try out a Circle of Trust, let me know (minister@uuch.ca). You might especially like it if you tend to keep a protective wall up around others, if others tend to keep a protective wall up around you, or if you're curious what your inner teacher has to say.

The world I imagine can only come into being if there is a high level of trust in society. I believe that this can best happen by creating and expanding circles of trust.

I'd love to hear your thoughts,

Love,
Ben

April Programming

Fri, Apr 4th, 6-9 pm

Youth Games Night

Let's keep the energy going! Contact Ben for the location & details: minister@uuch.ca

Thur, Apr 10th, 6:30-7:30 pm

Pastoral Gathering (online) about Canadian economic uncertainty

Share what's in your heart, whether it's anxiety, hope, vulnerability, resilience, or something else. See uuch.ca/events for the Zoom link.

Sun, Apr 13th, noon-1:30

Building Your Own Theology

This is an opportunity to develop your own personal credo, the fundamental beliefs, values, and convictions that inform and direct your life. Tentative topics include human nature, ultimate reality, ethics, the meaning of life, and your sense (if any) of the holy.

Come to one or more topics. Future sessions are May 4th, May 11th, Jun 1st. Bring a bag lunch. Led by Ben Robins. Register by emailing Ben at minister@uuch.ca

Sun, Apr 20th, after the service

The Humanist Group

Meets as usual on the third Sunday to discuss thought provoking topics. All welcome. Led by Mary Lu MacDonald.

Sun, Apr 27th, 6-7 pm

Spirit Circle

A more informal service inviting openness, peace, reflection and connection to something larger.

Wed, Apr 30th, 7- 10 pm

Open Mic Night

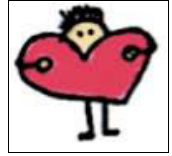
Get your act together and show us your stuff! Or be in the audience and take it all in.

Young adult group

Contact admin@uuch.ca to get on the contact list.

From the Caring Committee

Thank you to Judy Johnson, who has rotated off of the Caring Committee. Your thoughtful, grounding presence has been a gift.



Cea Connor seeks a ride to a monthly health appointment near Windsor. She is able to contribute \$80, and helping even once would be a big help. The timing is flexible, and you might connect with the beauty of nature or the charms of Windsor while she is at her appointment. Cea is at ceaconn@icloud.com

Bob Munson, another longtime member of our community, died in hospital on March 4th. We knew him as a brilliant (retired) math teacher. Ben met Bob last fall and found him to be full of humour, stories and song. Rev. Norm shared that "Bob, a freethinker who had little use for religious dogma, had a quick and irreverent sense of humour and a deep knowledge of history, music and art." Members who knew Bob agree, "he always brought smiles to our faces."

What we do: The Caring Committee offers help to individuals in our UU community in circumstances where our support might be helpful. We welcome being informed of such situations. Activities include drives to medical or other appointments, home or hospital visits, grocery shopping and other needs that arise. We also arrange for the receptions following celebration of life services at UUCH.

Can you help? If you could occasionally meet a need, it would be a big help; perhaps phoning to check in on someone who is ill or home-bound. Let us know your interest; email Ben at minister@uuch.ca

We very much appreciate the help and support those in our community give to other UUCH members and friends.

From the Caring Committee:

Faith, Shripad, Sylvia, Geoff and Ben

*Be the reason someone smiles today.
Anon.*



From the Climate Crisis Team

Your Climate Vote

This coming election arrives at a time of upheaval and tension on so many fronts; there are multiple issues on Canadians' minds. You may not think that climate change is as important as many of these other issues, but Canada's carbon emissions are still dangerously high. The emissions of today that will stay in our atmosphere for many years to come will lead to worsening climate disasters world-wide.

Today we need leaders who see further ahead than the next election, leaders who are willing to tackle the climate issues. When their candidates come to your door during this campaign here are some questions to pose:

1. How will your party reduce Canada's carbon emissions?

Background. With the removal of the consumer carbon price, how will carbon emissions be reduced in the future? What will replace those reductions?

More [here](#) Canadian Climate Institute.

2. Will your party fast-track improvements to National Building Codes to require increased energy-efficiency?

Background. Legislative changes to building codes take too long to implement, when energy-savings are needed urgently. More [here](#) Canadian Underwriter.

3. Will your party continue to provide financial incentives for Canadians to improve their own energy efficiency by renovating their homes and purchasing electric vehicles?

Background. To date, these funding programmes have been very popular with Canadians and quickly used up allocated funding. They should be expanded.

More [here](#) Clean Energy Canada.

4. Will your party support the establishment of a Youth Climate Corps in Canada, with long-term funding?

Background. Many young adults are highly motivated to make a difference to the climate of their future. A Youth Climate Corps already exists in B.C., preparing young adults for green jobs. Why not expand it across the country? More [here](#) CBC Radio "What on Earth?" 14 March 2025.

Be a good citizen, exercise your right to vote, and vote to support climate action!

Leslie Robinson and Margaret Galbraith
for the Climate Crisis Team



Reconciliation and Dismantling Racism Committee (RDR)

Support Reconciliation + Dismantling Racism and the CBC

The next 4 weeks will determine the fate of the CBC. If you love or value the CBC you are encouraged to pay close attention to the positions of each party on funding for the CBC in the current election and to ask candidates what their position is. Some parties have not yet stated their policy on the CBC so we cannot present them all here.

This issue is of interest to the RDR Committee members because the CBC has several excellent programs on Indigenous and Black issues in Canada and several other programs include interviews on these topics regularly. These shows advance the goals of UUCH by their thoughtful programming. These include:

On CBC Radio/ CBC Listen App:

Unreserved; this is my favourite, a national program hosted by Rosanna Deerchild, who is Cree. She interviews Indigenous cultural and community leaders about a wide variety of topics and events in a friendly, informative, often moving way.

Radio 1: Sun 2-3 pm; Tues 1-2 pm

Reclaimed; explores contemporary Indigenous music, sometimes a bit raucous, but you can also discover real gems.

Radio 1: Mon 3-4 pm; Radio 2: Wed 6-7 pm;
Sat 5-6 pm

Local shows feature regular stories on Indigenous and Black issues.

Information Morning hosted by Portia Clark.

Radio 1: M-F 6-8:40 am.

Mainstreet hosted by Jeff Douglas.

Radio 1: M-F 3-6 pm

The CBC News App has a series called “Being Black in Canada”.

CBC TV shows on GEM:

North of North, an 8-episode comedy series released in 2025, set in Arctic Canada

Diggstown – 3 seasons set in Halifax, about a Black legal aid lawyer (very good).

The Porter – 1 season, about efforts to create a Black Porters Union in Canada in 1920’s. Cancelled by its American media co-producer before the full story could be told.

This election will be pivotal to Canada’s future as we face unprecedented aggression. It will determine how closely Canada’s next government aligns with UUCH values, including reconciliation and dismantling racism.

In other RDR news:

EMERGING LENS Film Festival: This annual local free festival of Black films will be on **April 13-19**. It includes several films and three live performers. See <https://charlestaylortheatre.ca/emerging-lens>.

15TH ANNUAL

EMERGING LENS
CULTURAL FILM FESTIVAL

APRIL 13	APRIL 16	APRIL 17	APRIL 19
OPENING - 2PM	SCREENING - 6:30PM	SCREENING - 6:30PM	INDUSTRY EVENT - 10AM
CANADIAN MUSEUM OF IMMIGRATION AT PIER 21	CANADIAN MUSEUM OF IMMIGRATION AT PIER 21	HALIFAX NORTH LIBRARY	HALIFAX NORTH LIBRARY
			SCREENING - 6:30 PM BLACK CULTURAL CENTER

FEATURING PERFORMANCES BY:

- QUOIA STATES
- BLESSING TANGBAN
- MAYAYA

REGISTER FOR THE OPENING ONLINE:
charlestaylortheatre.ca/emerging-lens

[@theemerginglenshalifax](https://www.instagram.com/theemerginglenshalifax) charlestaylortheatre@gmail.com

Register online for the free opening night.

Brian Gifford for the RDR Committee

Meet a Fellow UU: This Is Mary-Frances

Faith Piccolo



Mary-Frances Lynch, a young Catholic girl from Cornwall Ontario, came to Halifax in 2007 to attend university and she never left. She enrolled in an Environmental Studies program at Dalhousie as a graduate student, and Halifax has been her home ever since.

So, how does a young Catholic woman from Cornwall end up at the Unitarian Church in Halifax. It was a circuitous route. Mary-Frances, as a young student, was exposed to other religions, and began to question her Catholic beliefs. Through her travels in India she explored Buddhism. She had friends who were UUs, and they piqued her interest. She attended a service about 10 years ago, but was still not committed. She also followed the service on Zoom from time to time during the pandemic.

After her son Llewyn was born, 5 years ago, Mary-Frances decided she needed to reconnect with a spiritual community, and wanted her son to experience this as well. She said she needed a “weekly dose of something to think about... what do I believe.” So she started attending services at 5500 Inglis. She and her partner have since had a second child, Flannery, now 18 months old.

So, what keeps her here? She found UUCH to be a welcoming community, and has made many friends. The ministers were “interesting and engaging”... and “there's an openness to explore other philosophies, other beliefs”... “questions and curiosity are encouraged”. She liked that.

It would seem she found what she was looking for, and officially became a member two years ago. Now she's on the board as a member at large for her second term. She's been on the Climate Crisis Team, and is involved in the weekly service from time to time.

Mary-Frances comes from a family where volunteerism was encouraged. Her father was Mayor of Cornwall at one time, and her mother was a school principal. So volunteering her time and talents at her church was a natural progression for her.

She is a businesswoman as well, having run her own company for almost 10 years. It's called Woven Communications; she is a consultant mostly with the renewable energy sector. She does event planning, writing, research and community engagement projects. As her website says, she “specializes in people and words... weaving connection between the two.”

And at the UU church in Halifax, Mary-Frances and her family have woven strong connections. We're all glad she's here.

Endowment Committee Update

As mentioned in the most recent annual report, the UUCH endowment committee has been considering whether to move our endowment fund, currently held at RBC. It's been held in socially responsible funds from the time the endowment was established. (We are thankful to Marilyn, Mary Lu, and Kay!)

The CUC is suggesting, however, that congregations try to get even further away from banks that are heavily involved with fossil fuel industries. Though one congregation alone will have little effect here, in banding with other UU congregations across the country we can make a bit more of an impact. As a committee, our goal is to examine our options in a responsible, measured way before we make any changes.

Now we want to get input from members of the congregation. Please send us your questions. Whether they are vague or detailed, we want to know what you're thinking about this possible change. Reach out to me, Margaret Galbraith, or Danielle Saulnier with your comments.

Thanks so much!

Martha Wilson



Ask Me Anything



What questions do you have about life, the universe, or anything else?

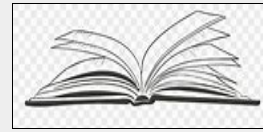
Send me your questions by **Tuesday, April 8th** and a selection will be answered in the April 13th Sunday service.

Ask the kids in your life what their questions are. Their questions are welcome too.



Email me at minister@uuch.ca
Ben

2025 Directory Distribution



A good number of directory booklets were handed out to people attending services in March. Remaining booklets will be distributed from the church office.

Members attending on Sundays (or any time you are in the building) may ask for one from Etta, Andrea, Pam Berman, Pam Griffin-Hody or anyone who has access to the office.

If you would like one to be mailed to you, call or email Andrea, our office administrator at admin@uuch.ca

No expense is 'saved' by not asking for a directory. They are already printed and paid for. Now let's use them, rather than hoard them in the office, un-used! There are plenty for our needs.

Etta Hamm

New Member Ceremony Sunday, May 4th

Would you like to become a member?

Our next new member ceremony is on May 4th during the Sunday service. A first step is to have a conversation with your minister about UUCH and what membership means.

Email me to arrange a time when we can talk: minister@uuch.ca. We already have three people confirmed.

We are a community that nurtures personal and spiritual growth, practices inclusiveness, celebrates diversity and affirms individual and collective commitment to community service and social justice.

We would love to have you deepen your relationship with our community and our mission to transform the world.

Ben



UUCH Board of Directors June 2024 – May 2025

Officers

President	Joe Britto
Vice-president	TBC
Past President	Pam Griffin-Hody
Treasurer	Molly Hurd
Secretary	Pam Berman

Members at large

Mary-Frances Lynch
Kim Turner
Avard Woolaver

A Play UUs May Want to See

Did you know that the Theatre Arts Guild (aka the Pond Playhouse) is presenting a new version of **Little Women** until April 12th? Playwright Kate Hamill's adapted version, that reflects some of the concerns of our present day, promises to be interesting and a pleasure to watch.

Louisa May Alcott, a Unitarian, the original author of *Little Women*, wrote with a more realistic slant than the religious themes that were common in her day. *Little Women* became instantly popular and has endured to this day.

Did you know that Ms. Alcott (in the mid-19th century) was a dedicated advocate of the abolitionist movement? She raised considerable funds in support of anti-slavery activism by presenting plays, some of which were based on Dickensian themes, and gave all proceeds to the cause.

Seven productions remain to April 12th. The Pond Playhouse is at 6 Parkhill Road, off the Purcell's Cove Road, Halifax. Order tickets at <https://www.tagtheatre.com>

Irene Baros-Johnson



Remember the Food Box!

If you can, please pick up a few non-perishable food items at the store and drop them in the box when you come to church. The need is real. Thank you.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions for the May newsletter is

midnight, Tuesday, April 25th, firm.

Please send your items to Etta at braeside@eastlink.ca

From the Canadian Unitarian Council

March 25, 2025

We hope you find some moments to revel in the longer days and the possibility of green and growing things. We know that the global news is hard, and urge you to find ways to care for your precious selves!



The [CUC Events Calendar](#) is where you will find **all** the information about scheduled events. Through these, you can engage with other UUs. We think these will be of interest:

- **Transitions:** Many of us are experiencing many kinds of changes and transitions in our congregations. How do you handle the transitions you are facing? Perhaps you are looking for ideas on how to help your community face change with grace? Maybe you are looking to share ideas. Choose one of: Wednesday, April 9 & Saturday, April 12.

- Our monthly **Connect and Deepen** is an online community for adults interested in meaningful reflection, conversation, and shared ideas for living our values. Saturday April 19th, 5 pm Atlantic Time (90 minutes). Topic on the 19th: Transforming. Host: Linda Thomson. Click [here](#) for registration details.

- **Congregational Conversations** are ongoing, and there is still an opportunity to participate! Registration and other details are [here](#).

- **Have you heard?** The conversation is starting; don't be left behind! *UU Expressions: Love in Real Life*, is a recently released 10-episode docu-podcast series that uncovers, celebrates, and challenges how UUism is expressed nationwide. Episodes at: <https://cuc.ca/uu-expressions-blogpost/>

We are always interested in talking with you, to learn what is happening in your congregation and to learn more about how we can support you. You can email congregationallife@cuc.ca or email us individually.

Thank you for all that you do. Your efforts and commitment to Canadian Unitarian Universalism are truly appreciated.

Rev. Anne Barker

anne.barker@cuc.ca

and

Rev. Linda Thomson

linda.thomson@cuc.ca



April 22