



Universalist Unitarian
Community of Halifax
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Wed-Thur-Fri
1 - 6 pm

Joe Britto
Board President

Etta Hamm
Newsletter Editor

Sunday services
start at 10:30 am

All are welcome

Welcome to our March 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.

March 2 – Committing to Climate Action If you are unsure what you can do about the changing climate, this service is for you. Kate Brooks, Community Climate Activator with the Ecology Action Centre will speak to us about the Climate Commitment Badge program.
Margaret Galbraith and the Climate Crisis Team

March 9 – National Women’s Day was first observed in the US on March 8, 1909. Inspired by labor strikes, Clara Zetkin proposed making it an international movement in 1910, leading to the first International Women’s Day in 1911. A 1917 women’s strike in Russia sparked a revolution. The UN recognized it in 1971, and today it honors women’s resilience worldwide.
Amy Moonshadow

March 16 – Infinity in a Grain of Sand
In this service we inhabit a mystical worldview, inviting awe, wonder, and an opening to the unknown. This is part 1 of a 3-part series exploring mysticism, naturalism and theism.
Ben Robins with assistant

March 23 -- Spring Equinox
This multigenerational service will include poetry, story, and music for all ages as we explore the themes of transformation and growth moving into spring! Dig into a morning of earth-based spirituality with us. This is part 2 of a 3-part series exploring mysticism, naturalism and theism.
Katherine Hutka and family with Ben Robins

March 30 – I Felt a Presence
We explore a theistic worldview, that there is a divine presence that exists outside of time. This is part 3 of a 3-part series exploring mysticism, naturalism and theism.
Ben Robins with Mary Lu MacDonald

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.

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 10-11:30 am Brunch
2 10:30 am Service	3	4	5 12 noon Rally at Province House	6	7	8 10-11:30 am Brunch 
9 Daylight Saving Time in effect 10:30 am Service	10	11 7 pm Worship Team Meeting	12 Noon Lunch Bunch 6:30 pm Board Meeting	13	14	15 10-11:30 am Brunch
16 10:30 am Service Potluck! See inside	17 	18	19	20 	21	22 10-11:30 Brunch 
23 10:30 am Service	24 Early newsletter submissions welcome	25 Newsletter Deadline all day to midnight	26	27	28	29 10-11:30 Brunch Ramadan ends (started Feb 28)
30 10:30 am Service	31					

Love. Interdependence. Justice.



Minister's Note

Both/And Thinking in Turbulent Times

Dear UUCH,

My underlying intention going into 2025 was to stay grounded in an attitude of "both/and". Do we value my needs or your needs? Both. Do we value self-reliance or interdependence? Both. Unity or diversity? Both. Tradition or change? Both.

In turbulent times, it can be tempting to pick just one. Someone is spreading fire, and we resist by fighting fire with fire. Or we respond by being 100% water. There are times when each of these responses is helpful, but they can turn us into one-dimensional caricatures of ourselves.

When our southern neighbour is being too aggressive, or to put it another way, too yang, some of us crank up our own level of yang (I've recently noticed the thrill of nationalism light up my veins), while some of us say that the world needs yin – we focus on creating spaces that centre compassion. But we need both yin and yang.

The author Barry Johnson, in a book called *And*, describes how we can become overly-focused on one value, enjoy the fruits of it for awhile, but then the downsides emerge and we switch to its opposite. For example, we over-value the individual, until we become isolated, and then we switch to valuing the group. This in turn bears fruit until it doesn't, and we switch back. These wild swings undermine the integrity of the system. He recommends staying conscious that both poles provide value, so that you can integrate them into a greater whole.

When you tell me one of your principles, I know something about you. But I know you much more deeply when I know how far you take that principle before it bumps into one of your other principles. How much do you care for your neighbour before deciding that what they need is a little space? How much do you protect your kid before deciding that they need to risk using their own judgment?

My desire for a free society is in tension with my desire for an interdependent society. We need both freedom and interdependence. Put another way, I value both individual flourishing and group flourishing. They complement each other but are also in tension. It's both/and, not either/or. This both/and thinking is baked into our 8 principles: Our first principle honours the individual and our seventh principle honours the interdependent web.

In turbulent times, when things get out of balance and polarized, it is tempting to achieve balance by pulling as hard as you can to the opposite side (if society is too yang, advocate for yin). But this out-of-balance message feeds a polarized conversation. Speak up for the whole picture of what you value – name how your own principles are in tension with each other. Both/and thinking is what the world needs, and it's good for the soul.

I'd love to hear from you. How is your heart? Where are you putting your energy? What are you grounding in or aligning with?

Love,
Ben
minister@uuch.ca



March Programming

Sunday, March 16th after the service



St. Patrick's Day Potluck

Come for the food, the fun, the fellowship, and a nod to Saint Patrick. See the notice on your right.

Humanist Group participants also meet on this, their regular date.

Sunday, March 23rd, 12:15

Point Pleasant Park Hike

Meet at the upper parking lot. Rides will likely be available from UUCH at **noon**.

Wednesday, March 26th, 7 – 10 pm

Open Mic Night

Always on the last Wednesday. Come singers, singer-songwriters, instrumentalists, poets and more. And of course, the enthusiastic audience.



Sunday, March 30th, 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. **Bring a bag lunch.**

Same time, same place on April 13th, May 4th, May 11th and June 1st. Led by Ben Robins.

Register by emailing Ben at minister@uuch.ca

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Alternate places to meet

A Muslim group has rented UUCH every evening of Ramadan from Feb 28th to March 29th. It's a wonderful use of our space as we make some money from the rental, and it's an opportunity for us to get together elsewhere in the community. **Email Ben with ideas, minister@uuch.ca**

Friday, April 4th, 6 – 9 pm

Youth Games Night

Contact Ben at minister@uuch.ca for location and details.

Young Adult Group

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

St. Patrick's Day Pot Luck Lunch Sunday, March 16th after the service

Let's welcome the coming of spring with good scoff, a potluck lunch to celebrate the breaking up of winter, and pay tribute to good old Saint Patrick!



Your food donation can be Irish-themed or not!

What to bring:

- **Appetizers** – Soup, salad, finger foods, bread, rolls, etc.
- **Main courses** – Casseroles, pasta dishes, vegetables, or any hearty fare.
- **Desserts & beverages** – Cake, pie, cookies, squares, ice cream, fruit, juice, etc.

A few notes:

- Hot dishes must arrive fully cooked (not frozen).
- Volunteers are needed for setup and cleanup. There'll be a sign-up sheet in the ballroom.

Everyone is welcome!

Contact: Faith Piccolo

From the Caring Committee



Dr. Philip Welch, a 50-year member of UUCH, died at 'the Parkland' in Dartmouth on January 21st at the age of 91.

He was retired from an illustrious career as Professor of Pediatrics and Senate Member at Dalhousie University, and well known in the Atlantic Region as a pioneer and consultant in Medical Genetics.

At UUCH, over many years, he read selected passages of Dickens's *Christmas Carol* in the deep resonant voice he was known for – enjoyed by all at candlelight services at Christmastime. He was also a valued UUCH board member in times past.

Philip was predeceased by his wife, Elvira Gonella, and is survived by three sons and a daughter.

We were glad to hear recently that after months of health challenges, **Glenda Butt** is now regaining strength, enjoying walks, and feeling optimistic.

David Ballum-Haftka, a former UUCH member, expresses his thanks for the support he received from our members last year as he worked his way through the aftermath of a fire at his home.

Can you help? Would you like to know when there is a congregant in need of a visit, or help during an illness, or a ride to an appointment? Tell us your interest by emailing minister@uuch.ca. If you could occasionally meet a need, it would be a big help.

Our mandate is to offer 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.

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

From the Caring Committee:

Faith, Judy, Shripad, Sylvia, Geoff and Ben

Happy to be Together



*From left to right: Zahra, Ehsan, Nargis, Mustafa.
Photo taken May 2024 at Blomidon Provincial Park.*

As we celebrated the first anniversary of our reunion with Nargis's mom and brother in November, we were filled with deepest gratitude towards everyone at UUCH who made it possible for us to be together again. Thank you!

Ehsan(16) is in high school. He is having the best time of his life making friends, playing real football (soccer) and the other football which he complains about it not having much to do with foot.

Zahra is taking English classes at ISANS. She can't wait to start working when her language barrier is gone!

Mustafa Hussein

Food Box Reminder

We have people in our neighbourhood who do not have enough food to see them through the month until their next



cheque. You are encouraged, as able, to bring non-perishable items for our Food Box in the front entrance.

Suggestions: Canned soup, beans, tuna or salmon; pasta (KD); peanut butter, canned milk, cereal, dry soup. Also very much appreciated by recipients are toiletries, hygiene items and warm socks.

Your Caring Committee



From the Climate Crisis Team

There is a lot of talk these days about standing up for Canada, and yet we know we need to be tackling the changing climate. How can we do both?

Many of us are looking for local products, sold by local businesses. A website called madeinca.ca has created (by crowd sourcing) a remarkable list of products *either made or produced* in Canada to help shoppers looking to buy Canadian (they might need more Nova Scotians in their crowd!). Buying from sources from Eastern Canada instead of the US will also reduce transportation miles and emissions, but another way to reduce emissions as you buy Canadian is **to prevent food waste**.

We know we should plan meals before we buy the groceries and then of course we need to make efficient use of what we bought. But preventing food loss is about more than less food in the garbage. It goes back to the production of that food – the land and water used for growing, the packaging and transportation involved in distribution, the buildings used for storing and selling it, the jobs of all the people involved all along the line. Using food more efficiently means more efficient use at all levels of food production and distribution, and **carbon emissions are reduced** at every stage.

So as you are supporting Canada with your purchasing, use your purchases wisely, but especially your food – lower your carbon footprint and fight climate change.

Margaret Galbraith
and the Climate Crisis Team

More on the Cunard Steamship Line

Following our presentation on February 16th titled "Cunard Navigates Anti-Black Racism" we learned that today, the Cunard Steamship Line encourages under-resourced youth to participate in the *Building Boats, Changing Lives* program sponsored by the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic. The experience fosters a spirit of camaraderie and teamwork, teaches critical decision-making and other new skills – and inspires further successes in life.

Irene Baros-Johnson
for the Reconciliation and
Dismantling Racism Committee

UUCH Board of Directors June 2024 – May 2025

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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions
for the April newsletter is

Tuesday, March 25th, firm.

Please send your items to

Etta at braeside@eastlink.ca

A Message from the Ecology Action Centre

The EAC sent the following message out by email on February 26th to members who had requested to be kept informed on Provincial Government matters. It's full of ideas for actions you can take to keep our government honest, open, and above board. It's worth reading – and taking action!

Margaret Galbraith, Climate Crisis Team



Wow, has it ever been a week!

From lifting bans on fracking and uranium mining, to limiting debate, to concerning changes to how citizens can make Freedom of Information requests, trying to keep up with the Houston government's onslaught of reckless, anti-democratic legislation is like drinking from a fire hose.

So many of you are asking what you can do to help combat the authoritarian behaviour of this government. Stay tuned for an announcement of a rally at Province House soon! In the meantime, here are some important ways you can take action right now:

- Register to speak at Law Amendments. You can speak on Bill 1 to address the measures that are eroding our democracy, or Bill 6 to address the lifting of the uranium ban and the fracking moratorium. You can register by calling (902)424-8941.
- Submit your concerns to Law Amendments via email. Your letter will be added to the public record about these issues. Email your submissions to Legc.office@novascotia.ca
- Keep calling your elected representatives. Call and email your MLA and the Premier's office to share your concerns, and encourage your friends and family to do the same! Now is the time to keep the pressure on and demand that they change their course. Click here to find your MLA's contact info!
- Write letters to the editor in your local paper. This is a great way to have your voice heard and make it clear that Nova Scotians across the province oppose these undemocratic moves.
- Post on social media. Make a short video of yourself sharing your concerns, or write a piece to share around.

We will also be releasing fact sheets on uranium mining, fracking, mining royalties, lithium, and other issues impacted by the premier's push for natural resources. These are coming soon.

Thanks for being engaged on these issues, and keep up your resistance! Together we are strong, and together we will win – on behalf of clean water, air and land, on behalf of democracy, and on behalf of our communities and our future generations. In gratitude and solidarity,

Your friends at the Ecology Action Centre

From the RDR Committee

Enslavement Canada

Did you know that there was a time when there was an Underground Railroad to the US from Canada? It helped Africans fleeing enslavement in Canada. That was one of several surprising stories in an exhibit called “A History Exposed: The Enslavement of Black People in Canada” which members of the RDR committee saw in early January at the Museum of Immigration.

We Canadians rightfully take pride in having provided safe haven for those escaping enslavement before the American Civil War, but for several years, enslaved people in Canada escaped to northern US states that abolished slavery before the British empire did in 1834. The first law in British North America to limit enslavement was enacted in Upper Canada (Ontario) in 1797.

In the 1750’s-60’s, enslaved Africans likely prepared salt cod on Mauger’s Beach, jutting into Halifax’s outer harbour from McNab’s Island. The cod was shipped to the Caribbean to feed enslaved Africans labouring on plantations. Joshua Mauger was one of Nova Scotia’s wealthiest people at the time, a merchant and slave trader. Mauger ran the cod salt operation on Mauger’s Beach.

In Montreal

Marie-Joseph Angelique, a fiercely independent enslaved African in Montreal, was accused of starting a fire that destroyed much of old Montreal in 1734.

A Montreal school for girls run by nuns in the 1600’s used enslaved people.

Coming up

“A History Exposed: The Enslavement of Black People in Canada” will be installed at the Black Cultural Centre in Cherry Brook from mid March to June. We encourage UUCH members to see it and to visit other exhibits while you are there.

Brian Gifford
for Reconciliation and Dismantling Racism Committee



Canadian Unitarian Council
Conseil unitarien du Canada

CUC eNews

Interdependence. Love. Justice.



Abridged for the UUCH Newsletter

Linda Thomson Announces Retirement

Rev. Linda Thomson, likes to joke that if there had been a poll entitled “Least Likely To Become A Religious Professional” conducted in high school, she would have been at the top of the list. Yet life surprises us all. In June, Linda is retiring as the CUC’s Congregational Life Lead for the Central and Eastern regions, after holding this position for over 20 years. Based in Burlington, Ontario, she had previously served in a similar role with the Unitarian Universalist Association’s St. Lawrence District. She applied for her current position when the CUC took over providing services to Canadian congregations in 2002.



Linda was drawn to her position by her strong belief that Unitarian Universalism can be a positive force in both individuals’ lives and the wider world.

“Things I don’t think I ever would have thought of before, became apparent to me through my involvement with UUism,” she says. “My worldview really expanded. That felt to me like a really important and good thing to be part of.”

“Sometimes when I’ve been in a room full of committed UUs, I just get moved,” she says. “By the care and commitment of the people who love their congregations and are willing to give part of themselves to those congregations and their missions. These are volunteers who are working hard to make the world better. And that really keeps me going a lot of the time.”

In a time of rising secularism and anti-religiosity, Linda believes UUism is handling the challenges this poses better than many other faith traditions. But she’s nonetheless concerned by the sense, particularly among the younger generations, that church is “old-fashioned” or irrelevant, a misconception she hopes can be addressed.

“That is probably where my place of concern lies,” she says. How do we make ourselves known and how do we disavow people of the notion that we are not relevant to their lives because people have a need to reflect on the meaning of life and the big questions and to be in community with one another and to be challenged. And there are other ways to do it, but we’re a really great way to do it, and I want people to know that.”

“I’ll miss the people,” she says. “I’ve made lots of dear relationships and I won’t be in regular contact with those folks as much anymore. That feels like a bit of a looming hole.” In retirement, Linda is looking forward to once again singing in her church choir, doing some traveling, and perhaps some contract work. “I’m open to what opportunities arise,” she says.

Executive Director Vyda Ng says Linda holds large swaths of CUC history. “Linda has been a steady, wise and experienced presence throughout all the changes at the CUC since 2002. I have depended on her knowledge and memory and will sorely miss Linda.” For the CUC, we will be advertising and hiring a Congregational Life position later in the spring, with a planned overlap with Linda before she leaves.”

Save the date: [Celebrate Linda’s retirement](#) with us on **June 7th** from [5:00 - 8:00] pm AT.



Clara Zetkin
July 5, 1857 - June 20, 1933
[Wikipedia.org/wiki/Clara_Zetkin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clara_Zetkin)