

# Our Newsletter



Universalist Unitarian  
Community of Halifax

Vol. 62, No. 8

April 2026

Universalist Unitarian  
Community of Halifax  
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Wed-Thur-Fri  
10 am - 3 pm

Pam Berman  
Kim Turner  
Board Co-Presidents

Christy-Lee Bojarski  
Director, Religious  
Exploration for  
Children & Youth

Etta Hamm  
Newsletter Editor

Sunday services  
start at 10:30 am

All are welcome

Childcare available

## Welcome to our April Services

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

**The Zoom link** is the same every week; it can be found under Virtual - Zoom on our home page at [uuch.ca](http://uuch.ca). If needed: User ID 666 004 431, password 010670.

### April 5 --- Resurrection and Renewal (and maple communion)

Borrowing from traditional Easter and springtime themes, our own Brett Richardson will draw from aspects of his own story, having walked through addiction, homelessness and recovery to explore the relationships between spiritual death and resurrection; isolation and connection; and autonomy and community. We will also celebrate our annual maple communion. **Brett Richardson with Pam Griffin-Hody**

### April 12 --- Songs for the Living with George Woodhouse

Why do humans make music? Perhaps as an act of self-exploration, liberation, or connection with something beyond ourselves. Today we explore song-writing as a way of being human, a way of being alive. **Ben Robins with Andrew Aulenback and guest musician George Woodhouse**

### April 19 --- We Have Good News for Earth Day

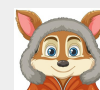
To honour the Earth and our own beautiful province let us focus on good news. We will share stories of actions across Nova Scotia to give us all hope for the future of our environment. **Presented by the Climate Crisis Team; music by the Afterchoir.**

### April 26 --- Hope: An Intergenerational Service

We will explore hope not as a feeling we wait for, but as something we practice together. Through story, music, and shared joy, we will reflect on the small, steady ways hope takes root in our lives... often quietly, and often in community. Our children will help lead us in a simple planting ritual, reminding us that even the smallest acts of care can grow into something meaningful. **Christy-Lee Bojarski, Ben Robins and more, with music by the Afterchoir**

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.

# April 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 10–11:30 am Brunch 
5 10:30 Service Easter Sunday  Brett Richardson: Renewal	6	7	8  6:30 pm Board Meeting	9	10  7 pm Worship Committee Meeting	11 10–11:30 Brunch  2 pm Memorial for Mary Lu MacDonald
12 10:30 Service Guest musician George Woodhouse	13	14	15  7 pm Climate Crisis Meeting	16	17	18 10–11:30 Brunch 
19 10:30 Service Climate Crisis Team & Afterchoir	20  7 pm Caring Committee Meeting	21	22  Earth Day	23	24 7-10 pm Coffeehouse! 	25 10 -11:30 Brunch
26 10:30 Service Intergenera- tional: Christy, Ben, Afterchoir	27	28	29	30		

## Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submissions for the May newsletter is Friday April 24th. Please send your items on time to Etta at [braeside@eastlink.ca](mailto:braeside@eastlink.ca). Thanks in advance!

## Board Buzz

**The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Unitarian Council takes place on May 23rd.** Our congregation is entitled to two (online) delegates. You have to be a member and read up on any motions because you would be voting on behalf of UUCH. There is a motion on how the CUC amends its foundational documents: Principles, Sources, Aspirations and Vision. A final wording of the motion is expected by mid-April. Delegates have to be registered by May 10th.

**Our congregation will host a one-day retreat with the Fredericton congregation on Saturday July 4th.** There will be both adult and youth programming. A nominal fee will be charged to pay for the cost of two meals (breakfast and lunch). Attendees will find their own lodging and make their own dinner arrangements. Our annual end-of-season barbecue will be held on Sunday July 5th to complete the weekend.

**Now that congregation has agreed to call Rev Ben Robins as our settled minister** the board has approved the installation ceremony for Sunday **October 4th**. At least six ministers could attend in person, and others by Zoom. Refreshments will be served after the ceremony. Mark this date on your calendar too!

**Pam Berman**

### You could have a seat at the table

The UUCH Board is the policy and visioning body of UUCH as well as being responsible for keeping things moving forward on a day-to-day basis. We work closely with the minister on all matters.

We manage the budget, we set policy, plan activities and bring recommendations to the congregation on exciting initiatives such as the new RE program and having a student intern work with us next fall.

We are looking for new members to bring different perspectives to our discussions.

We meet once a month for about one-and-a-half hours. During late fall, winter and early spring the meetings are on Zoom. If you'd like to contribute to our community in this way, please contact Pam Berman or Kim Turner, Co-Board Presidents.

### UUCH Board of Directors June 2025 – May 2026

#### Officers

Co-Presidents	Pam Berman Kim Turner
Vice-president	Vacant
Past President	Pam Griffin-Hody
Treasurer	Molly Hurd
Secretary	Karen Woolhouse

#### Members at Large

Paul Galbraith Scott Wood

### Pride Parade Meeting first Sunday, March 29th



There will be a brief meeting on Sunday, March 29th after the service in the sanctuary. This year's parade is on July 18th.

UUCH has a long history of supporting the Halifax Pride Parade. We want to involve as many people in our congregation as we can.

#### **We need volunteers to make it happen.**

If you are interested in helping to organize UUCH's entry, prepare for the day, or just want to participate by walking in the parade, please let us know. We'll be glad to hear from you.

Some topics to be discussed are getting new t-shirts and preparing a float for those who cannot walk the full route.

Questions? Can't attend the meeting but want to offer as a volunteer?

Contact Janet at:

[jdhorofker@gmail.com](mailto:jdhorofker@gmail.com)

## April Programming

### UU Principles Reflection Circle (online).

Tues April 7th, 7 – 8:30 pm

It is the same Zoom link as Sunday services.

In each session we explore one of our Eight Principles: What the principle means to you; how it has shown up in your life; how you might live it more fully; how it enhances or challenges your other deeply held beliefs.

In this reflection circle, we help each other to tune into our own inner teachers. This is not a space for advising, correcting, steering or testing each other. Come as a fellow traveller as we weave our learning journeys together.

You are encouraged to attend most or all sessions.

Drop-ins are also welcome. Email Ben to receive reflection questions in advance of each session:

[minister@uuch.ca](mailto:minister@uuch.ca).

### Artsparks

Thurs Apr 9th, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

A mostly unstructured gathering of artsy craftsy people who like to make art or stuff. Bring your supplies or use the drawing materials provided.

See Haydon's ad on the right.

### UU Principles Reflection Circle (online)

Tues April 14th, 7 – 8:30 pm

Details same as above.

### Youth Group

Fri April 17th, 7 - 9 pm

We provide a space where youth can build meaningful relationships and grow into themselves in a community that nurtures good values. Email for the location: [minister@uuch.ca](mailto:minister@uuch.ca)

### Coffeehouse

Fri Apr 24th, 7 – 10 pm

See Molly & Joe's announcement, top right.

Come and be entertained!

### Spirit Circle

Sun Apr 26th, 4 – 5 pm

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



## Coffeehouse!

Friday April 24 7 – 10 pm

A Fundraiser for the RE Program



***The acts are still coming in but we can use a few more*** – so brush up your lyrics, perfect your stand-up comedy routine, practice your juggling or tune up your instrument. Get in touch with us so we can put you in the lineup!

In addition to our guest performers, Adam and Nelle, who will play and sing upbeat music, we will showcase our homegrown talent: flutes, ukuleles, Newfie songs, mouth harps, bongos and more.

Contacts:

[joebrittomac@gmail.com](mailto:joebrittomac@gmail.com)

[molly.hurd@gmail.com](mailto:molly.hurd@gmail.com)

## Artsparks is a Go

Thursday, April 9 – 6:30 – 8:30

Following its successful launch in February, Artsparks is going monthly!

Artsparks is an all-ages drop-in event for anyone who wants to hang out and get artsy craftsy. Work on your master-piece.

Play around and have fun.

Bring your own supplies, or use the drawing materials provided.

Projects are self-directed although there may be games and collaborations, who knows? Come on, let's set the night on fire! Facilitated by Haydon Mariner.

Need more info? Email me at:

[haydonmariner@gmail.com](mailto:haydonmariner@gmail.com)



## Michael Smith Retires from Saturday Brunch



After almost 10 years of providing food for our less fortunate neighbours, Michael Smith has retired her spatula. Michael first got involved in feeding people years ago when UUCH provided casseroles to Hope Cottage once a month for several years.

During the pandemic she helped prepare bag lunches, and handed them out at the front door of the church --- all of which was very capably managed with Kath Anthony in charge. Michael then willingly stepped up after that and has done a truly super job with the brunch. Through her family and neighbours she even raised significant funds for the brunch.

The brunch has grown from Norm's simple coffee and doughnuts snack to a full menu meal complete with pancakes, French toast, sausages, bologna, oatmeal, soup, salad, muffins, fruit, coffee, tea, juice and more.

Michael has done all the shopping, driving all over town looking for the best prices on eggs, butter, fruit, and sweet treats. With the help of several loyal volunteers they provide a well balanced hot meal every Saturday morning, with up to 30 patrons happily occupying every table in the Ballroom.

But the brunch doesn't just feel the body; UUCH provides a warm, safe, positive environment for people to gather and break bread with other diners; to linger over coffee and chat with their neighbours.

'Well done, good and faithful servant.' You will be missed, Michael.

*Submitted by Faith Piccolo*

### “We are pleased to announce ...”

Now wouldn't you know it, Faith is taking over from Michael! Not a surprise, and there would be no one better.

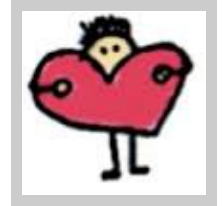
Faith is no stranger to the UUCH kitchen, having worked with the brunch bunch off and on for years and managing many other food events as well, including the weekly Sunday coffee hour.

Faith is the one who'll pitch in when no one else will. She is a diligent, responsible volunteer, can make quick decisions, and is fun to work with. We are grateful for this smooth transition. On behalf of the congregation, thank you Faith!

*Etta Hamm*

## From the Caring Committee

This month our hearts are with those in our community who have lost family, friends or other loved ones. We appreciate the sharings we've heard during Sunday services, in Joys, Sorrows & Complex Truths.



As far as we know, there have been no new major illnesses in our community in the past month. We are grateful – and also available if you would appreciate the occasional check-in about how you are doing.

The Caring Committee offers help to individuals in our UU community in circumstances where our support might be helpful. Let us know if you, or someone you know in our community, could use a drive to medical or other appointments, home or hospital visits, grocery shopping, or other needs that arise. We also arrange for the receptions following celebration of life services at UUCH.

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](mailto:minister@uuch.ca)

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

*Geoff, Shripad, Haydon and Ben*

### Food Box Appeal



We still have a food in the front porch, but since the pandemic started (5 years ago!) it has sat there empty except for the odd item now and then. But people still drop by hoping to find a little something to take home. As we are able, let's start building up our food box again. Let's see it full every Sunday, like 'the before time'.



## From the Climate Crisis Team

*Solar power, our life saver*

We have all heard of solar power these days, but do we realize how ingenious the harnessing of the sun really is? We have lived on this planet for thousands of years but the idea of using the sun's energy to create power for ourselves is relatively new. Scientists in Europe first discovered how to get electricity from the sun's reaction with certain materials in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it was the mid-1950's before Bell Labs in the US developed a solar cell from silicon. This became the basis for solar panels, as we know them today, and for a range of other materials that have solar cells embedded in them. It is an extremely clean method for generating electricity, using an eternally renewable source, but the earliest devices were very inefficient.

It wasn't until the energy crisis of the 1970's when oil became extremely expensive for a time, that the US government started a real push to make solar power more efficient and more affordable for the average homeowner. It has taken many years for it to become the popular renewable energy source that it is today, but the products are continually being improved.

Most of us know the panels that sit on rooftops of homes but they are also on commercial buildings – our Ikea store is covered in panels, perhaps other businesses with large flat roofs could do likewise?

There are many other places to put panels. Huge arrays of panels cover large areas of bare ground or fields or pasture, often to the frustration of the farmers who can no longer access their fields. Now some panels are being installed in rows, alternating with space between for crops or even trellised fruit trees.

Water is also a surface that is being covered in panels, especially in Europe. Studies have shown, however that there are issues here too, with the significant deterioration of the water quality from a lack of sunlight reaching below the surface. No more than 70% can be covered, in order to prevent the deterioration of the ecosystem of the lake.

An answer to this problem comes from Germany, where quarry ponds – no long used as pits and filled with rainwater – can have panels hanging in them, rather than laying flat. The light penetrates the water

between rows of vertically suspended panels, and the panels can access the sunlight during the early and later hours of the day. Perhaps an idea for Nova Scotia quarries? The power generated from the quarry pits could be used by the working quarry nearby.

There is also a wide range of materials that have solar cells embedded in them, such as building-applied photovoltaic products – ceramics for walls, glass for windows, roofing materials – which can be installed on buildings. (Has anyone tried those in Nova Scotia?) I have also heard of road-surfacing material with solar cells embedded – now wouldn't that be great? Roads that produced their own power!

Now I am dreaming – we have potholes! But there are really so many ways to use solar cells – harnessing the power of the sun has given hope to life on our earth beyond oil.

\*\*\*\*\*

Back down to earth, there is another area of provincial responsibility that the Houston government appears to be acting on without listening to Nova Scotians. Through the [Canada-Nova Scotia Nature Agreement](#) the Nova Scotia government has the opportunity to use federal funding to **create 82,500 hectares of new protected and conserved areas by Tuesday, March 31**. That is an area twice the size of Kejimikujik National Park, and the deadline is less than one week away.

The province appears to be using other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). They have not stated where these sites are located, what conservation values are being protected, or if these are permanent conservation sites. There has also been no public consultation.

Take Action Now! Contact CPAWS Nova Scotia to send a letter. Here's the link:

<https://cpawsns.org/take-action-nova-scotia-government-may-use-fake-protected-areas-to-achieve-land-protection-targets/>

**Margaret Galbraith**

**for the Climate Crisis Team:**

**Margrit Robinson, Bernadette Johnson, Marie Welton,  
Judy Johnson and Terry Choyce**

## Religious Exploration for Children

Hello everyone,

March brought us into the ever-turning theme of \*change\*, explored through stories, movement, and creative play. Each week followed a now familiar rhythm: gathering together, sharing glads and sads, lighting the chalice, and engaging in hands-on activities that helped bring big ideas to life.

We began by exploring how change shows up in nature and in ourselves. Through stories and activities, children reflected on growth, seasons, and the experience of being “in between” stages of life. They created seasonal tree crafts to show how change can be both beautiful and natural.

In celebration of International Women’s Day, we focused on fairness, courage, and the power of speaking up. Children shared about important people in their lives and created small protest signs about causes they care about, reminding us that every voice matters.

As the month continued, we explored how we can influence others... and ourselves. Through games and discussions, children practiced sharing ideas, listening to different perspectives, and even changing their minds. We also reflected on mistakes and second chances, creating art that showed how sometimes big growth can come from imperfect moments.



We ended the month by focusing on how small actions can make a big difference. Through storytelling and play, children saw how kindness spreads, and each created their own “light” to represent how they can help brighten the world.

Throughout March, our community of children practiced courage, compassion, and curiosity. They learned that change is not something to fear, but something we can move through... with support, with intention, and sometimes with a little glitter and glue.

As always, it is a joy to witness their growth.

**Christy-Lee Bojarski**  
**Religious Exploration Coordinator**



**APRIL 22**