

# Our Newsletter



Universalist Unitarian  
Community of Halifax

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May 2026

Universalist Unitarian  
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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 May 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.

### May 3 – Awe and Wonder in the Natural World

We begin a 5-week series on living life with awe and wonder. Today we open to the wonders of the natural world, where many feel a sense of transcendence. **Ben Robins with Pam Griffin-Hody. Note:** After social hour we'll go on a sensory walk at Point Pleasant Park; details inside.

### May 10 – Awe and Wonder: The Cosmos and Beyond

Our series on awe and wonder continues, with an opening to the majesty of this universe and the mystery beyond. A cajillion stars in each of a cajillion galaxies...billions of years...vastness beyond understanding, and mystery beyond that. **Ben Robins with Amy Moonshadow.**

### May 17 – We Face a New Age

Our series on awe and wonder continues as we wonder about the changing times we live in. What might be shifting, in you, in us, in the world? The reflection, Unitarians Face a New Age, will be a recording of a national sermon by Rev. Shawn Gauthier (formally Shawn Newton). Come early due to the Blue Nose Marathon traffic. **Rev. Shawn Gauthier (a recorded reflection) with Andrew Aulenback.**

### May 24 – Everything is Possible: Science Fiction Meets Reality








Poverty gone and all diseases cured... augmented humans playing fiddle so well you'll weep... The draw to become space pirates, or starminds, or Ewoks, or gaia... Our series on wonder continues as we imagine where the evolution of life might lead. **Ben Robins with Andrew Aulenback.**

**May 31 – Be Here Now (AGM Sunday)** We conclude our series on awe and wonder by12 going to the only place we can ever be: The present moment. What opens up to you when you tune in? **Ben Robins with James Morris and music by the Afterchoir.**

**Stay afterwards for our Annual General Meeting at noon; all are welcome.**

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.

# May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 10-11:30 am Brunch
3 10:30 service Rev. Ben Robins  ... followed by Sensory Walk @ Pt. Pleasant Park	4	5	6 Pride T-shirts to be ordered <i>this</i> month. A co- ordinator is needed! 😊	7	8  5 pm Worship Committee	9 10-11:30 am Brunch  9-11 am Birding Hike @ Shubie Park
10 10:30 service Rev. Ben Robins   Last day for CUC AGM registration	11	12  6-7:30 pm Stepping into Action -- <i>and</i> <i>stew</i>	13  6:30 pm Board Meeting	14  	15	16 10-11:30 am Brunch  
17 10:30 service National Sermon: Rev. Shaun Gauthier	18 Victoria Day  	19	20  7 pm Climate Meeting	21	22	23 10-11:30 am Brunch  10 am Brunch & Spring Clean-up
24 10:30 service Rev. Ben Robins	25	26 Newsletter Deadline  Asking for early submissions	27	28	29	30 10-11:30 Brunch  
31 10:30 service Rev. Ben Robins Afterchoir  Light Lunch Fundraiser for Pride Parade  AGM	 <p style="text-align: center;">Worry less. Smile more. Listen carefully. Take responsibility. Accept what you cannot change. Embrace the lessons. Love your life.</p>					

## Notice of Annual General Meeting Sunday, May 31, 2026

UUCH's Annual General Meeting will take place on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> following the service.

The congregation will approve this year's slate of officers for the board, and vote on a motion to amend the by-law with respect to funds being placed in the Endowment Fund. The motion to amend is as follows:

The Board proposes to amend article XV (4) of the by-law by deleting XV (4)(b) and (c) and renumbering the present (d) to (b).

The by-law would then read:

#### 4. Gifts deposited to the fund

The following monies shall be deposited to the Endowment Fund:

a) All monies, including that realized from the statutory requirement for the sale of stocks, bonds, real property, art, jewellery at the time of donation, which have been identified by the donor for the Endowment Fund,

b) All other monies, including surplus funds from the operating budget, which the members of UUCH at the annual general meeting, or any special congregational meeting, by ordinary resolution direct to be deposited to the Fund.

Members may also be asked to vote on recommendations regarding disbursements from the fund.

The Pride Parade Committee will provide a lunch with free-will donations to help offset costs to our participation.

**Pam Berman**  
**Co-president**  
**UUCH Board of Directors**

## Join the Friends of 5500 Saturday, May 23



Our building at 5500 Inglis Street is not just a UUCH property. It is listed as both a provincial and municipal heritage property. Moreover, we host several important community organizations. Thus, we have an important status in our community, and an obligation to keep 5500 looking good and functioning well!

It soon will be time for a spring clean-up around UUCH. Your Building Committee invites the Friends of 5500 to lend a hand on **Saturday, May 23rd**. We will meet at 10:00 am in the Ballroom for a scrumptious Saturday Brunch with our neighbours and other UU Community members. This will be an opportunity to brief everyone about the work to be done. The brunch is free, but any donations to the Brunch Program will be appreciated.

We will have a list of things to be done to share with you before we start. We may also have a barbecue when we wind up our work later in the afternoon. More details about that later.

I would like those who can join us for the spring clean-up to let me know that you will be attending. We need to tell the managers of the Brunch Program how many we will be, and it will help the Building Committee to plan the work. So, come have fun and be a Friend of 5500!

**K. Scott Wood, Chair**  
**UUCH Building Committee**  
**k.scott.wood@gmail.com**

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

#### Officers

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

#### Members at large

Paul Galbraith Scott Wood

## May Programming

### Sensory Walk from Point Pleasant Upper Parking Lot

Sunday May 3rd, 12:00 noon

Leave UUCH together at 11:50, or meet us at the UPPER parking lot at noon. The sensory walk might include smells, sounds, textures and more. Every time of year can bring wondrous connection to the natural world.

### Mother's Day Reflections

Sunday May 24th, 12:00 noon

Whether you are a mother or have/had a mother, we will reflect on the question: How has your mother/child relationship changed over the years? You are also welcome to contact Ben if you would like a deeper one-on-one conversation, [minister@uuch.ca](mailto:minister@uuch.ca)

### Artsparks

Thursday May 7th, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

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

### Guided Birding Hike at Shubie Park in Dartmouth

Saturday May 9th, 9 - 11 am

Join us in exploring the park's trails, spotting and listening for resident and migratory birds. All levels of birding experience are welcome. See more details in the ad on the right.

### Stepping into Action

Tuesday May 12th, 6 - 7:30 pm

Meet up with Tracy & Bernadette to share a meal (vegan/GF stew) and explore how we can contribute to our communities in ways that are driven by care. RSVP: <https://forms.gle/gVgRrydK5Q4tyXVv5> More in ad on the right.

### Youth Group

Friday May 15th, 7 pm

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

### Fentanyl Film Screening at Halifax Central Library

Thursday May 21st, 6:30pm

Halifax Central Library is showing the film *We Were Here*, and providing space to remember those lost to fentanyl. Email Ben if you would like to attend together [minister@uuch.ca](mailto:minister@uuch.ca)

### Discussion: Science Fiction and The Human Experience

Sunday May 24th, 12 noon

How does imagining distant galaxies, or a future greatly different from today, influence your experience of living a human life in this world? Same Zoom link you use for Sunday services.

### Awe & Wonder (a Zoom discussion)

Tuesday May 26th, 7 pm

One of the UU sources of wisdom is "Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life." How does awe and wonder move in you? Same Zoom link you use for Sunday services.

### Spirit Circle

Sunday, May 31, 4 - pm

A more informal service<sup>4</sup> inviting openness, peace, reflection and connection to something larger.

### Guided Birding Hike at Shubie Park

Saturday May 9th, 9 - 11 am



Meet at the Fairbanks Interpretive Centre. We'll explore the trails between Lake MicMac and Lake Charles, spotting and listening for resident and

migratory birds.

Bring binoculars if you have them; we'll also have some to share.

Accessibility: the trail is well-maintained and we will move at a relaxed pace. The path is approx. 2 km. All levels of birding experience are welcome from first-time birders to experienced naturalists! **Facilitated by Andrea Dewar.**

### Stepping into Action

Tuesday May 12, 6 - 7:30 pm

There's so much going on in the world and in our communities. It's a bit overwhelming. Is it possible to take action out there in a way that is sustainable, supportive of one another, and... joyful, even?



Join us at the UUCH in piloting these monthly meet-ups, share a meal, and explore how we can contribute in ways that are driven by care for ourselves and others.

Child care available. Food is vegan and gluten-free (vegan stew!). RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/gVgRrydK5Q4tyXVv5>

**Bernadette and Tracy**

## Pride Parade 2026

Saturday July 18

The 2026 Halifax Pride Parade will take place on Saturday, July 18th beginning at 12 noon. It is expected that the parade route will be the same as last year.



Fun UUs on parade, July 2022

**Our very small planning group** met in March and April, resulting in the following developments.

**Registered & paid:** I have confirmed with Halifax Pride that we are registered in the parade as a participant with a vehicle and float – and the registration fee is paid.

**Truck or trailer:** If anyone knows of, or has an idea for a truck or trailer that can be borrowed and used as a float, please let me know. Otherwise, our option is a pickup truck and utility trailer.

**Interfaith Event:** We have been asked by John Wrightman of the Earth-Spirit Society to participate in the planning of this year's Pride Interfaith Event. Irene B-J will be the main contact person for UUCH. If anyone would like to be involved with this community event, please let Irene or Janet know.

<https://atlanticcanadaearthspiritsociety.org/>

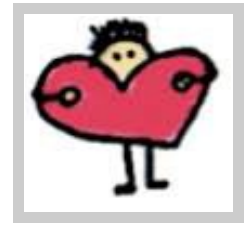
**Fundraising:** One of the ways we can fundraise is by providing a light lunch for a suggested donation of \$5, after the service and before the church's Annual General Meeting on Sunday, May 31st. If we decide on a soup lunch, I will look after providing the soups. We will need helpers and donations of crackers, breads, some cookies, etc. Other sources of help are direct donations to the church for the Pride Parade (noting Pride Parade on your donation), and Sunday plate collection on the second Sunday of May, June and July.

**Decorations/Theme:** We've decided that our theme of LOVE is still appropriate – also *Celebrating Diversity, Equality and Inclusion*. We will need signs for the float. I will check out the church basement to see what decorations and banners are still available.

Continued . . .

## From the Caring Committee

**Sylvia Mattinson** has the news that she is no longer driving due to shoulder arthritis. She would appreciate offers of rides.



This month we are especially seeking offers of meals, for those going through particularly hectic times.

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**



**T-shirts:** *Side with LOVE* is the new slogan to replace our former *Standing on the Side of Love*. Fresh Prints on Agricola Street can produce the shirts for approx. \$20 each on an order of 40. The shirt front would have the heart symbol and the slogan *Side with LOVE in Halifax*, and on the back: *UNIVERSALIST UNITARIAN COMMUNITY OF HALIFAX since 1837*. Delivery is three weeks. Shirts must be pre-ordered to determine the number and sizes needed. We need someone to follow up on this before the end of May.

**Banner:** The old *Standing on the Side of Love* banner is still in good shape. A suggestion was made that words could be covered over with same-coloured tape and new lettering superimposed. We need someone to explore this option. Does this sound like your kind of project?

**Other thoughts:** Flowers to give out during the parade. Does anyone out there have additional ideas we might want to put into play? If so, we'd love to hear from you!

**Janet Horofker**  
[jdhorofker@gmail.com](mailto:jdhorofker@gmail.com).



## From the Climate Crisis Committee

### *Fracking in Nova Scotia*

As noted in the March newsletter, the Houston government is placing emphasis on resource development as a means of generating revenue for the province. To that end, in February 2025 the Houston government lifted the moratorium on both fracking and uranium exploration. Fracking is now being actively pursued. The Houston government has provided \$30 million to Dalhousie University to research the possibilities, which will require drilling test wells, i.e. small-scale fracking.

A scientist interviewed on CBC suggested that had there been large reserves, companies would already have invested in developing them. She believed it would require subsidies to make this interesting to oil and gas concerns. Further, she submitted that the more prudent path would be to develop offshore wind, rather than fracking which releases methane, a greenhouse gas.

I attended an information session at the Super 8 Motel in Windsor. The format of the gathering was not very interactive, with placards posted around the room showing the government's position. The MLA Melissa Sheehy-Richard was in the crowd and there were many of the researchers from Dalhousie on site. The government's position and the ability to comment are available at <https://subsurfaceenergyns.ca/>. The timeline is very tight, with information sessions occurring in April, exploration agreements being negotiated in May, site selection in June, and drilling to begin in July. All of this is expected to culminate in a report of Dalhousie's research findings by the end of the year. According to the Nova Scotia Fracking Resource and Action Coalition ([www.nofrack.ca](http://www.nofrack.ca)) some problematic features include:

- government retaining control of the information
- a limited ability for Dalhousie to correct misinformation
- a lack of commitment to transparency
- a lack of genuine community participation and consent
- and the government ignoring First Nations opposition

Other anti-fracking groups were present as well, including the Ecology Action Centre. [www://ecologyaction.ca/](http://www://ecologyaction.ca/). They provided written materials entitled "What the Frack?! Things the Gas Industry Doesn't Want You to Know". They state that fracking is unsafe, invasive, impacts water resources, is expensive -- and that most of the benefits will flow to the United States as the companies involved are majority U.S. owned companies.

The CBC reported that Premier Houston said the anti-frackers were trying to interfere with people who just wanted to learn about fracking. This is not factual. I heard anti-frackers complain loudly that the public was not being heard. They took less than 5 minutes in a 2-hour session. The anti-frackers were providing written materials to the large number of generally interested residents in attendance.

**Reminder: Time is short to provide feedback to the government! Express your opinions at <https://subsurfaceenergyns.ca/>**

**Judy Johnson**  
**for the Climate Crisis Team**

# Religious Exploration for Children

April in Bloom, May in Wonder

Hello friends!

April has been a joyful little whirlwind in Religious Exploration with our theme of Hope guiding us through the month. We explored how hope is not always loud or grand. Sometimes it arrives quietly, like a blossom on a branch, a new song, a planted seed, or a small brave step.

Our children searched for hopeful messages and good news during an egg hunt, created blooming cherry trees full of spring joy, and discovered how music can be felt not only with ears, but with hearts, hands, and crayons.

For our Earth Day program we also learned about caring for our precious water through hands-on experiments, proving once again that children make excellent scientists when given a bowl of water and permission to investigate.



One of the sweetest moments of the month was our intergenerational service, where children and adults reflected together on what we are growing in this community. Seeds were planted, hopes were shared, and our church became, for a little while, a garden made of people.

Now we tiptoe into May, with Wonder as our theme. Wonder is the art of noticing. It is the pause before saying “wow.” It is asking big questions, peering closely at tiny things, and remembering that the world still has surprises tucked into its pockets. We look forward to exploring curiosity, imagination, mystery, and delight with your children in the month ahead.

So if April helped us plant hope, then May may just help us see the stars hiding in the soil.

With love,

**Christy-Lee Bojarsky**  
RE Coordinator



## Directory Updates

For years, we have had our individual contact info updates published here as they occur throughout the year. But due to privacy issues that have recently come up, these updates will no longer be published in this newsletter which is *publicly* posted on our website, and hard copies being available to visitors and *anyone* picking up a newsletter in the Ballroom.

Personal contact info changes will instead be sent out via UUInfo which is available to members and friends only.

Please continue to inform Andrea and/or of your contact info changes (email address in particular) for inclusion on the UUinfo list, and in the next year's directory.

We leave it to you whether you will continue to include your email address in your newsletter items or not.

**Pam Berman**  
Co-President  
UUCH Board of Directors

## Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submissions for the June newsletter is **Tuesday, May 26th.**

Please send your items on time to Etta at [braeside@eastlink.ca](mailto:braeside@eastlink.ca)

Early submissions will be helpful.



## Welcoming Michael Jodah as the Canadian Unitarian Council's New Executive Director

*CUC announcement, April 10, 2026*

**The CUC Board of Trustees is pleased to share that Michael Jodah has been selected as the new Executive Director of the Canadian Unitarian Council.** Michael will join on a part-time basis beginning April 13, working alongside current Executive Director Vyda Ng through a shared transition period until June 15.

Vyda's last day with the CUC will be June 30, closing a chapter of dedicated service to Canadian Unitarian Universalism.



Michael brings significant experience in executive leadership, community-building, environmental sustainability, and education. A Guyanese-Canadian social entrepreneur and academic, he has dedicated his career to building spaces where people belong, where young people are genuinely invested in, and where communities are strengthened from within. He also brings a personal connection to Unitarian Universalism, having served as a board member in a UU congregation.

Throughout the search process, Michael stood out for the grounded and collaborative way he approaches leadership: clear in his vision, attentive to people, and genuinely motivated by the growth of progressive communities across Canada. He is particularly inspired by the possibility of growing Unitarian Universalism among younger generations and deepening the role UU spaces play as places of real connection and shared life.

"I'm excited to take on this new challenge and to work alongside communities across the country," Michael shares. "I'm an action-oriented person, and I look forward to building momentum together, finding ways to grow progressive communities and strengthen the role UU spaces can play in people's lives."

Members of the Search Committee and Board expressed strong confidence in Michael's leadership, noting his experience, energy, and forward-looking vision for Canadian UUism.

Current Executive Director Vyda offers her welcome: "I welcome Michael to the CUC and the use of his skills and experience on behalf of Canadian Unitarian Universalism. I also want to extend deep appreciation to the Search Committee for their many hours of thoughtful work in this process."

We step into this next chapter with confidence in what our communities have built, and in the leadership Michael brings to what comes next.

***From the CUC Board of Trustees' Co-Presidents: Margaret Kohr & Rev. Debra Faulk ,  
CUC Executive Director Vyda Ng***

## What UUs Believe

The words below are from the red wallet card you'll find on the pamphlet rack by the front door. Please take a few, and pass them on to people who ask, "What do UUs believe?"



**We believe in the freedom of religious expression.** All individuals should be encouraged to develop their own personal theologies, and to present openly their religious opinions without fear of censure or reprisal.

**We believe in the toleration of religious ideas.** All religions in every age and culture possess not only intrinsic merit, but also potential value for those who have learned the art of listening.

**We believe in the authority of reason and conscience.** The ultimate arbiter in religion is not a church, nor a document, nor an official, but the personal choice and decision of the individual.

**We believe in the never-ending search for Truth.** If the mind and heart are truly free and open, the revelations that appear to the human spirit are infinitely numerous and wondrously exciting.

**We believe in the worth and dignity of each human being.** All people on earth have an equal claim to life, liberty, and justice—and no idea, ideal or philosophy is superior to a single human life.

**We believe in the ethical application of religion.** Good works are the natural product of a good faith, the evidence of an inner race that finds completion in social and community involvement.

**We believe in the motive force of love.** The governing principle in human relationships is the principle of love, which always seeks the welfare of others and never seeks to hurt or destroy.

**We believe in the necessity of the democratic process.** Records are open to scrutiny, elections are open to members, and ideas are open to criticism—so that people might govern themselves.

**We believe in the importance of a religious community.** This validation of experience requires the confirmation of peers, who provide a critical platform along with a network of mutual support.

