

Our Newsletter

UU&U

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Universalist Unitarian
Community of Halifax
5500 Inglis Street
Halifax NS B3H 1J8

902-429-5500
info @ uuch.ca
uuch.ca

Rev. Ben Robins
On vacation
& study leave
to August 23rd

Andrea Dewar
Office Administrator
admin@uuch.ca
902-429-5500
Wed-Thu-Fri
10 am – 3 pm

Pam Berman
Kim Turner
Co-Presidents

Etta Hamm
Newsletter Editor

Sunday services
start at 10:30 am

All are welcome

Childcare available

Universalist Unitarian Community of Halifax

August 2026

Welcome to our Sunday Services

Summers at UUCH are traditionally lay-led and laid back. Some Sundays there will be a more traditional service, some Sundays there will be a more relaxed conversation about a topic. Of course, there will always be coffee (and tea), and (of course) every Sunday the sun will shine, and we will enjoy our refreshments and further conversation on the deck.

The Zoom link stays the same from week to week and can be found at the top left of our webpage at uuch.ca. If you need an ID and Password it's: ID: 666 004 431
Password: 010670

August 2 The Absurdities, etc. of Universalist P.T. Barnum

"The greatest show on earth" came to six cities in the Maritimes 150 years ago. We will tell of its impact. **Presenter: Irene Baros-Johnston; Service Assistant: Andrew Aulenback**

August 9 The Unity of Worship and Music

Thoughts, feelings, and stories about some of Pam's favourite hymns from our hymnals. **Service leader: Pam Griffin-Hody**

August 16 Small Joys, Awe, and Rest

As seen and felt from the Middle Earth of J.R.R. Tolkien. **Service leader: Andrew Aulenback**

August 23 Poetic Birds

We celebrate poetry by hearing poems that speak to us through images of birds. Such a part of our everyday world and yet so wildly different from us, birds capture something of the strange wonder of ordinary life. **Service leader: Martha Wilson**

August 30 Birds

In the second of our two services devoted to birds, we will hear thoughts on what it can mean to observe them, whether with an educated gaze or a casual amateur's bemusement. Either way of looking can reward us richly. **Service leader: Avarad Woolaver**

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.



UUCH in Halifax Pride Parade, July 18, 2026



The Universalist Unitarian Community of Halifax participated in the Halifax Pride Parade on Saturday, July 18th with a banner, a truck and a decorated float. The weather was great. Several thousand people turned out to see the parade. Halifax Pride was well organized with volunteers who kept things running smoothly and communicating with entries on parade status.

We had just enough walkers to hold the Standing on the Side of Love banner. Thank you, Karen, Susan, Stephen and Norm. Thank you to Paul and Margaret for driving the truck. The float carried 6 non-walkers and the Pagans joined us once again. Unfortunately, our numbers were less than we had hoped for.



Thank you to everyone who supported our fundraising and those who helped with the decorations. We were well recognized all along the route for our messages “Standing on the Side of Love” and “Celebrating and performing same-sex marriages in Canada since 1974”! We are told that we were truly impressive and that the onlookers cheered and applauded us on every block!

UUCH held their Pride Service the next day, on Sunday. Amy Moonshadow was service leader and Irene Baros-Johnson delivered a talk on a little-known piece of history about the Unitarian Universalist Association finally passing a resolution in 1984 at their Annual General Meeting that publicly endorsed marriage equality for everyone.

The Interfaith Pride Service was held at 5500 Inglis Street later in the afternoon. It was organized by John Wrightman and Elizabeth Coates and well attended. There were several speakers from different faiths including Irene Baros-Johnson for UUCH. Riley Friesen kindly volunteered to stay and manage the sound system for which we were grateful.

Janet Horofker and Irene Baros-Johnson

From the Climate Crisis Team

Our Own Protected Areas

Today (July 28th) I went for a walk with my granddaughter in a protected area, which is not on either of the maps showing Protected Areas in Nova Scotia—those protected, pending protection, or community-proposed ones. We were on the Spectacle Lake Trail surrounding



Spectacle Lake (shown above) is itself surrounded by buildings and highways in the Burnside Industrial Park. It was a guided walk, one of the protected areas highlighted during the first-ever Protected Areas Week, July 25th to August 1st.

I learned about it on the Nature NS website naturens.ca/events/launch where there is a list of guided walks being held across the province during the week. There are several on Saturday August 1st, so you may catch one even after this newsletter comes out.

We wrote last month about the issue of our province committing to protect 20% of our land by 2030, to support our federal government's commitment to protect 30% by 2030. We seem to have stalled at 14.5%. There have been consultation periods when the government has been collecting public opinions about the process, but the final one closes today, July 28th. Nature NS has more information about the importance of protecting special places in the section called "Keep It Wild", also on the website, and you can always contact your MLA. Check, too, about the degree of protection an area has – "Provincial Parks" are also vulnerable for possible sale for development; remember Owl's Head and West Mabou. Our Provincial Parks Act needs tightening up.

But right now I recommend getting out there and walking in our wilderness, near or far. This little patch of Burnside is wilderness within an urban area, with trails and boardwalks, a lily-covered lake with beautiful white flowers all over it, a beaver lodge, ducks, frogs, blueberries, wild orchids, service berries, witch hazel, mushrooms, green tamarack with tiny red buds—so much life in such a small area, flourishing within a few feet of paved parking lots and big buildings.

On Thursday July 30th I hope to join another walk, up to the top of Blue Mountain, which is part of the much larger Blue Mountain–Birch Cove Lakes Urban Wilderness. You have probably heard of it; it's one of the largest urban wilderness parks in the country, which was declared with considerable fanfare in 2021. In May 2023 it was announced that it had met the requirements of the pre-feasibility portion of the planning process, and could now move to the next. However, two years later in May 2025 a Special Planning Area was declared by the provincial government on the western edge of the proposed park, to be developed for housing, and that is now underway, so the required land acquisition for the portion including the lakes is in re-negotiation.

However, most of the park is owned by the province or HRM or Nova Scotia Nature Trust, so the trails up to Blue Mountain are still accessible. It will be another opportunity to get out to experience a different portion of Nova Scotia wilderness, this one on the edge of an increasingly urban HRM.

I encourage you to find the special places near you, officially protected or not, and get out to enjoy them. and if they aren't protected, write to your MLA to ask why they aren't? It is never too late to contact your representatives.

Margaret Galbraith
for the Climate Crisis Team

Potluck and Berries, August 24



You are invited to a blueberry-picking outing followed by a potluck lunch at the Wilsons' and Woolavers' home on Monday, August 24th. We'll meet at their house (near Windsor) around 11 am where we'll drop off our potluck contributions.

Then we will drive to Reimer Gardens in Centreville (reimergardens.com) to pick blueberries. We'll return for a late (mid-afternoon) lunch. Rain date: Tuesday, the 25th; or, if still rainy then, we'll go the following day, Wednesday.

Please indicate your interest by responding to marilyeshinyei@gmail.com and let her know if you will need a ride or can take passengers from Halifax. Carpooling details to be confirmed later.



Universalist Reunion Service & Lunch

**At 2 pm, Sunday
September 6 (Labour Day weekend) In the oldest
Universalist Church in
Canada in Minudie NS**

This historic church building has been undergoing major restoration work that began in February of this year.

Come out and see the work done to date, celebrate our Universalist Heritage, and visit this historic and beautiful part of our province.

For more information contact Norm Horofker at nhorofker@aol.com.

UU Zoomers

Since the COVID pandemic UUCH has had the capability to present our service and events online via Zoom. When we came back to services in the sanctuary, not everyone returned for various reasons.

However, what is most interesting is that this access to UUCH has brought new attendees from more distant parts of Canada, the USA, and occasionally other countries.

Some of these virtual attendees have connections with Nova Scotia while others are spiritual explorers attracted to our services and to what happens afterwards. Once the service ends, we have 30- 45 minutes for a discussion and to enjoy a growing sense of community.

Some of our regulars include a few of us around the HRM who find it difficult to attend in-person; Mary Ellen Onno in Ottawa; Margrit Robinson in Yarmouth; and several American UU friends, including Heidi Waddell in Massachusetts, Yvonne Federowicz in Rhode Island, and Gabor Kiss in Morristown, New Jersey. We have occasional check-ins from near and far. On any Sunday there may be 10–25 people online.

I am not suggesting that you drop in-person attendance to join us online, although you will always be welcome! I just want you to know that this dynamic online group is an interesting and valuable addition to our UU community.

K. Scott Wood

UUCH Board of Directors June 2026 to May 2027

Officers

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

Members at Large

Paul Galbraith Scott Wood

Board meetings resume in September.

This message from the CUC website may be of interest to our new people, friends, visitors, or anyone just passing through.



We are Canadian Unitarians and Universalists

We are people of many paths who are brave, curious, and compassionate thinkers and doers. We are diverse in faith, ethnicity, history, and spirituality, but are aligned in our desire to make a difference for the good.

We have radical roots and a history as self-motivated spiritual people. We think for ourselves, and we recognize that life experience is the strongest influence on our beliefs.

We live our values in our work for social justice. Unitarian Universalists have advocated for affordable housing, choice in dying, and world peace. We sponsor refugees and seek truth, healing, and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. We work for racial justice, criminal justice, and climate justice. And for more than forty years we have been at the forefront of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer inclusion.

We are called to love and justice through our interdependence on each other and on the world around us. We aspire to be deeply connected, radically inclusive, actively engaged, theologically alive, and spiritually grounded.

We seek to welcome you: your whole self, with all your truths and your doubts, your worries and your hopes. Find out what it means to live your deepest values out loud. Join us on this extraordinary adventure of faith.
cuc.ca

The Canadian Unitarian Council

Explore our programs, congregations, and initiatives that inspire growth, compassion and action across Canada.

Find a Canadian congregation near you in our directory of 41 congregations.



cuc.ca

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submissions for the September newsletter is **Tuesday, August 25th**.

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

Early submissions will be appreciated.

Forgot your book?

Did you forget a book at UUCH after either the morning or the afternoon service on Sunday, July 19th? It's the autobiography of a well-known Indian novelist. If so, please contact Shripad (shripen@yahoo.ca) to retrieve it.

Remember the Food Box

As able, please remember to bring non-perishable food items on Sundays – or even on weekdays if you are passing by; the entry door is never locked. You could be helping someone with a real need.

UUCH Directory Booklets Still Available

Members & friends attending on Sundays can ask for a booklet from Andrea or Etta, or anyone who has access to the office. To have one mailed to you, contact:

Andrea at admin@uuch.ca,
or Etta at braeside@eastlink.ca

Fun Holidays

Aug 3	Watermelon Day
Aug 13	Left-Handers' Day
Aug 30	Frankenstein Day
Sep 19	Talk Like a Pirate Day



Ralph Waldo Emerson