

First Unitarian
Congregation
of Ottawa



GETTING CONNECTED General Edition

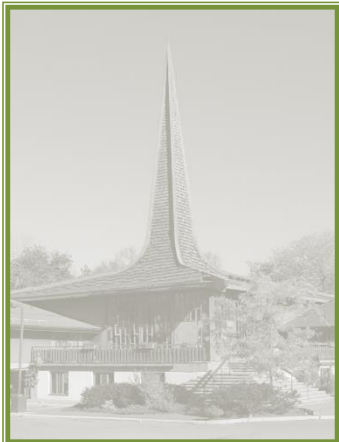


13 March 2024

First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

This document will help you connect with the groups and activities in our Congregation.

Some groups/activities invite you to drop in to see if they might be right for you. However, because meeting locations and times can change, please call the contact before you attend.



This document is prepared and maintained by volunteers like you.

To request an electronic copy or to give updates and corrections, please contact:
**gettingconnected@
firstunitarianottawa.ca**

An Activity for Everyone

Why might you consider volunteering or getting involved in groups or activities within our Congregation? Your motivations are as unique and personal as your spiritual beliefs and practices. But, one of the great strengths of our religion is that the diversity of member motivations is matched by the opportunities available for members to find what is valuable for them.

Your very personal needs or desires might lead you to look for groups or activities that foster:

- a sense of belonging,
- opportunities for spiritual growth,
- positive action to better our communities, country, and the world,
- personal sharing and close relationships with others,
- active sharing through music, work parties, or organization of events,
- intellectual growth through study, reading, discussion, meditation, or lectures,
- the development of new friendships,
- chances to make a significant difference in the world we all share.

If any of these hit a chord, please look through the wide and varied opportunities described in this document. You may be surprised at the depth and breadth of what goes on in our Congregation outside of Sunday worship. Don't hesitate to make contact and find out more – there's never any obligation and you may find a perfect match for your personal journey.

How to Find a Group or Activity

Our groups and activities fall into seven general categories. Although any group or activity may, in fact, fit well into more than one category, we've chosen a simplified list. The categories are:

Operations	Internal Service	Self Improvement	Operations
Music	Social	Social Justice & Outreach	

On Page 2 is an **index** of the groups and activities within each **category**. Starting on Page 3, the **descriptions** of the groups and activities are listed alphabetically within each category. Following the descriptions, the **contacts** are listed in alphabetical order of the group/activity names.



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1 Congregation Staff

Congregation Staff

Church Office Phone: 613-725-1066

Minister:

Rev Eric Meter x225

minister@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Community Minister:

Rev Linda Goonewardene
riverspirit888@gmail.com

Operations Manager:

Jen Brennan x221

omr@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Finance & HR Manager:

Michelle Jackson x222

fm@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Lead Custodian:

Dee Mollema x224

Custodians:

Eden Bigras, Julia Defalco
custodian cell: 613-890-1066

Music Director:

Jenn Berntson x230

music@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Director of Religious

Exploration (RE):

Jodi McIntosh x234

dre@firstunitarianottawa.ca

RE Assistant

Susan MdEwen

Sound and Lighting Co-ordinator:

Julia Defalco x223

av@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Internal Service

Book of Gratitude

The Book of Gratitude lists people who have made exceptional financial donations to First Unitarian Ottawa. It is displayed in a case in the office where members may peruse it.

BookShelf

The bookshelf sells a selection of fiction, non fiction and children's books in Fellowship Hall after Sunday services.

Caring Network*

We encourage and nurture a caring network in the Congregation. Our volunteers provide occasional transportation, phone or make personal visits to people who are ill or house bound, assist in emergencies, send caring cards, and help to organize memorial receptions for Members.

Hospitality Hour (Sunday)

Volunteers are recruited for Hospitality Hour (a sign up schedule is available) and training is provided. The kitchen is stocked with supplies such as snacks and hot & cold beverages. On Sundays, volunteers prepare the tables and beverages & snacks in Fellowship Hall before services and serve refreshments following. Clean up includes washing of dishes following Hospitality Hour.

Memorial Receptions

The Memorial Receptions Team will occasionally provide a reception after a Memorial Service for a member of our congregation. Volunteers help in setting up, serving, and cleaning up Fellowship Hall.

OWL - Our Whole Lives

OWL is a positive, comprehensive, and age-appropriate educational program that promotes sexual health and provides accurate, developmentally appropriate information in the context of our Unitarian Universalist

community. Programs for elementary aged children, youth, and adults are administered and coordinated through the Director of Religious Exploration and related groups.

Religious Education Children & Youth

tbd

Right Relations Team

Members of the FirstU Right Relations Team (RRT), guided by the congregation's covenant, provide education in healthy relations and conflict management. Members of the RRT who have relevant training and experience may act as facilitators and coaches to assist congregants in resolving their issues in the spirit of the Relational Covenant (posted on the Right Relations bulletin board outside the office).

River Parkway Children's Centre Liaison

RPCC currently serves 54 children and is located on the FirstU campus. See riverparkwaychildrenscentre.ca for more information.

Unitarian House Liaison

Unitarian House is the seniors' residence on our campus. One person from the Congregation serves on the Unitarian House Board of Governors.

W&M1 Welcome & Membership Team

There are four individual W&M groups: Greeters, Membership, Newcomer Outreach & Engagement, and Welcome Table.

W&M2 Greeters

Greeters at each Sunday service prepare the handout materials, greet people as they arrive for worship, act as ushers, assist with the elevator, and serve at the Green Mug Table. Training is offered for new volunteers.

W&M3 Membership

Handle the application process. Organize workshop to build connections with FirstU. Conduct welcome services. Report member status.

W&M4 Newcomer Outreach & Engagement

Follow up with visitors and inquiries. Organize newcomer workshop and events. Maintain relevant information on our website.

W&M5 Welcome Table

Set up welcome table on Sundays and welcome newcomers.

Worship Team and Worship Associates

The Worship Associates work with the minister to develop and participate in Sunday services.

Zoom Hospitality Hour Team

We enable the virtual fellowship hour on Zoom following the Sunday service.

Music

Choir (Chalice)

Chalice Choir is a non-auditioned choir and everyone is welcome. Previous musical experience is helpful but not necessary.

Choir (Fusion)

Fusion is designed for experienced singers. Ability to sight-read and/or learn music quickly is an asset.

Choir (Three Rivers Singers)

Three Rivers Singers is a small women's ensemble that sings in a variety of styles, aiming to highlight female composers and themes of welcome, community, and empowerment.

Music Venue Volunteers

Help with music events at FirstU, circa 12 per year.

Operations

Adult Library

The self-serve lending library in the Lounge contains roughly 900 books and other items on diverse subjects. In our basement archives room there is also a small collection of older books (some printed in the nineteenth century).

Archives

Our Archives serve three purposes: 1. to help us locate our internal information more easily, 2. to have readily at hand documentation we are legally required to keep and to produce upon request, and 3. to preserve the main outlines of our history for future generations of congregants.

Board of Directors

The Board (BoD) is elected annually by the Congregation to provide leadership in all aspects of the church community. The annual slate for the Board members is proposed by the Nominating Committee. Any Congregation Member may attend a Board

meeting except for the portions of meetings that may be in-camera.

Campus Planning Committee

The Committee assists the Board and the Congregation by studying, providing advice, and making recommendations for policies and plans related to campus planning. The committee includes non-voting representatives from our campus partners, RPCC, Or Haneshemah, and Unitarian House. The Board appoints members from our church membership.

Embracing Diversity Committee

We plan and oversee the implementation of educational, advocacy, outreach, and community-building activities to create awareness of current realities and to build attitudes, behaviours, and practices that embrace and respect diversity of all kinds.

Fall Fair

Fall Fair, our annual bazaar, is FirstU's largest fundraiser. It is a satisfying experience for some 350 volunteers.

Finance Committee

Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Governance Committee

The Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Meditation Garden Friends

This team cares for the meditation garden. Volunteers are cherished - our tasks vary from deadheading and weeding to plant research.

Nominating Committee*

The committee finds and nominates congregation members for Board positions and assists in recruiting members for major committees.

Committee members are elected at the Fall Congregational Meeting for 2-year terms.

Personnel Committee

This committee assists the Board by helping to provide watchful and careful monitoring of personnel policies and general practices. It reviews/proposes policies and facilitates communication related to personnel policies and practices. Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Property Team*

We oversee the operation of the Major Maintenance Fund, which involves expenditures of more than \$1,000 as part of our mandate to keep our building and campus functional, safe, and beautiful.

Sound & Light Team

The S+L Team operates audio-visual equipment for all Worship Hall events. New Operators are given technical training and shadow the Sound and Lighting Coordinator.

Stewardship Committee

Stewardship is a year-round function focussed on recognizing and celebrating the generosity of our congregation and community towards enabling our covenant. We do so through both fundraising and fun-raising events and activities. We develop and implement the annual pledge campaign, orchestrate special events, act

as a resource for other congregational fundraising activities, and build upon the Planned Giving program.

UU Connections Team

We make members of the Congregation more aware of Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) and international Unitarian Universalist (UU) activities and issues by encouraging participation in webinars and other training, committees/task forces, and regional, national, and international conferences and meetings, and by recruiting delegates to represent FirstU at CUC meetings.

Zoom Team Volunteers

tbd

Self Improvement

Adult Learning & Growth

The Adult Learning and Growth Team coordinates ongoing groups which foster connection and community building and offers workshops and courses to deepen understanding of Unitarian Universalism and foster spiritual growth.

Communications & Outreach Committee

This Committee assists the Board in ensuring effective communications both within and external to the Congregation. The Committee works closely with various groups in the Congregation to develop communications strategies. Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Empower Dance

EmpowerDance is for people who wish to dance without instruction. We play many

genres of music, use candlelight, and move according to our own feelings and abilities. Please make contact for more details.

Mindfulness Meditation Group

We meet weekly. All interested in 'turning inward with patience' in a supportive and mostly silent community, are welcome to join in.

Reading for Growth (Friday)

This group meets monthly. The books cover a wide range of topics such as politics, social issues, spiritual and religious thought and current events.

Reading for Growth (non-fiction)

This is a nonfiction book club meeting monthly on Zoom. We read on a wide range of subjects choosing books that are readily available in the public library.

Spiritual Growth Circle*

This group meets monthly to seek ways to support our spiritual awakening. This group might be open to new participants at a future time.

Spirituality & Philosophy Discussion Group

tbd

Women's Pagan Circle

tbd

Women's Personal Growth Group

The WPGG meets twice monthly - once in person, once on Zoom. The common theme is growth - spiritual, mental, emotional and learning more about each other in this "Sisterhood".

Social

Bridge Group

All levels of players are welcome to this mentally stimulating fellowship activity. The format is multi-table rotational, Chicago scoring. We meet from 7:00-9:00 pm the first Friday of the month on Zoom and the third Sunday afternoon in person, from September to May. Contact us or see the e-UU newsletter for dates, location, and cost.

Knitters Group

This group welcomes knitters and crocheters of any level, from beginner to expert, who enjoy creating hand-made items in a friendly, supportive setting. Using donated yarn we make a variety of goods to sell at Fall Fair, Mitten Tree, etc. or to donate to special community projects.

Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast Group is a social group open to any man, whether a member of FirstU or not. We meet for breakfast prepared by participants on the second and fourth Friday morning of each month during most of the year. The breakfast program usually consists of a speaker and the group also provides assistance for FirstU or Unitarian House events on request.

Poetry Sharing Group

This group meets every two months on Zoom to share poetry that we love. Members are welcome to share a poem they have written, but you don't have to write in order to join us.

Trivia Quiz Night

One Monday evening monthly on Zoom. Diverse questions. Play alone or with a team.

UU Pride Group

Social & support group for 2SLGBTQ+ UUs. We meet once a month for structured discussions, fun activities, games, & socializing.

Virtual Discussion Circle

Meets weekly on Zoom to discuss a topic. Thursdays 1:30-3:00

Voyageurs Group*

A group for men focused on developing their full emotional and spiritual potential. We have bi-weekly three hour meetings and semi-annual weekend retreats. The group is small and new members are welcomed as current members move on.

Social Justice & Outreach

Ajashki Food Security Project

Ajashki is a Food Security and Climate Change Learning Centre.

Environmental Action Group

The EAG promotes awareness of environmental issues and encourage individual actions.

Fair Trade Chocolate Sub Group

On Sundays and on request, we sell La Siembra Coffee/Chocolate and ZATOUN products in support of small farmer co-ops in developing countries.

Justice & Equality Action Group

We encourage our Congregation to deliberate on issues of social justice, advocate

for social change, and join with other people of faith and goodwill. Individuals are encouraged to bring their social justice concerns to the group for discussion and action.

Lay Chaplaincy Team

The Ottawa Lay Chaplaincy Committee (aka FirstU Lay Chaplaincy Team) serves both our congregation and the UU Fellowship of Ottawa. Active members of FirstU or the UUFO may apply to be lay chaplains.

Mental Health Support & Action Group

The MHSAG provides a listening presence and mutual support for each other. We also engage in actions to address mental health challenges in the Congregation and in the broader society. We support Ancoura, a charity dedicated to providing stable, affordable housing within supportive communities for persons living with a mental illness.

Social Justice Action Network

The SJAN team co-ordinates the activities of the social responsibility groups.

Truth & Reconciliation Action Group

In service to reconciliation, the TRAG seeks and supports relationship building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. We also arrange educational opportunities for our congregation.

Unitarian GoGos

We support the Stephen Lewis Foundation to Turn the Tide of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Adult Learning & Growth

Eva Berringer
Jane Lindsay

Adult Library

Brian Cowan

Ajashki Food Security Project

Sharen Bowen

Archives

Suzanne Schaller
Brian Cowan

Board of Directors

Brent Nicolle

Book of Gratitude

Bob Armstrong

BookShelf

Margaret Zielinski

Bridge Group

Brent Nicolle
Barb Ryan

Campus Planning Committee

Terry Kimmel

Caring Network*

Carmen Contreras

Choir (Chalice)

Jenn Berntson

Choir (Fusion)

Jenn Berntson

Choir (Three Rivers Singers)

Jenn Berntson

Communications & Outreach Committee

Carl Sonnen
outreach

Justice & Equality Action Group

Lisa Sharp

Congregation Staff

Church Office

Embracing Diversity Committee

Kris Cormier

Empower Dance

Janet Clayton

Knitters Group

Coral Sato

Lay Chaplaincy Team

Sharmila Khare

Meditation Garden Friends

Susan Mellor
Margaret Linton

Environmental Action Group

Mike Fletcher
Donna Bowen-Willer

Fair Trade Chocolate Sub Group

Gary Campbell

Fall Fair

Carol Card

Finance Committee

Phil Nagy

Governance Committee

Guy Belleperche

Hospitality Hour (Sunday)

Tarrel Armstrong

Memorial Receptions

Evelyn Algar

Men's Breakfast Group

Chris Hughes

Mental Health Support & Action Group

johnnie gall
Rev Linda Goonewardene

Mindfulness Meditation Group

Colleen Glass

Music Venue Volunteers

Terry Kimmel

Nominating Committee*

Mike Fletcher

OWL - Our Whole Lives

Lisa Sharp

Personnel Committee

Chuck Shields

Poetry Sharing Group

Clea Derwent

Property Team*

Ron Doyle

Reading for Growth (Friday)

Clea Derwent

Reading for Growth (non-fiction)

Katharine Elliott

Religious Education Children & Youth

Jodi McIntosh

Right Relations Team

Lena Jones
Marilen Gerber

River Parkway Children's Centre Liaison

Alexandra Devine

Social Justice Action Network

Justine De Jaegher

Spirituality & Philosophy**Discussion Group**

Paula Theetge

Stewardship Committee

Terry Kimmel
Phil Nagy

Sound & Light Team

Julia Defalco

Spiritual Growth Circle*

Lisa Boulay

Trivia Quiz Night

Andrew Drake

Truth & Reconciliation Action Group

Jan Andrews

Unitarian GoGos

Sheila Green

Unitarian House Liaison

Mary Ella Keblusek

UU Connections Team

Maury Prevost

UU Pride Group

Kris Cormier

Virtual Discussion Circle

Andrew Drake

Voyageurs Group*

Tom Rankin

W&M1 Welcome & Membership Team

Jane Lindsay

W&M2 Greeters

Barb Ryan

W&M3 Membership

Jane Lindsay

W&M4 Newcomer Outreach & Engagement

Kate Kirkwood

W&M5 Welcome Table

Mary Jackson

Women's Pagan Circle

Laurie Foster-MacLeod
Katherine Gunn

Women's Personal Growth Group

Evelyn Algar
Carmen Contreras

Worship Team and Worship Associates

Mary Jackson

Zoom Hospitality Hour Team

Sarah Adams
Mary Ella Keblusek

Zoom Team Volunteers

Carl Sonnen