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**Deadline for next Spire submissions:
February 21, 2015**



In Memoriam

Carol Catherine Misener –
Died December 31, 2014

Bertram Curtis –
Died January 2, 2015

JW Windland –
Died December 25, 2014
We also remember JW Windland, who, for several years, was the charismatic leader of the Exploring World Religion weekends. He shared some of his vast knowledge and love of other religions and took us to their Ottawa places of worship. Sadly, JW died of cancer on December 25.

Caring Contacts

February

Lyn Gerley
613-729-4706,
lyn.gerley@sympatico.ca

Ria Heynen
613-828-8468,
r-jheyne@bell.net



Here we are gathered,
by our Unitarian and Universalist traditions,
around our chalice which we light.

Our ritual which brings us together,
we who come from diverse backgrounds.

Other faiths use prayer beads,
make the sign of the cross,
turn prayer mills,
kneel on carpets,
light candles,
commune in circles.

For us,
our meditation and sharing today
begin with this gesture,
which, for us,
is sacred in the secular sense of the word.

—Jean-Claude Barbier



January 2015 Chalice Lighting
International Council of Unitarians
and Universalists

Did you know?

The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) issues a Global Chalice Lighting each month.

Congregations around the globe use these readings during their worship services and meetings. They identify the reading as the “Global Chalice Lighting” for the designated month and name the group which submitted it.

Chalice Lightings are posted on the Denominational Board in Fellowship Hall. Please join in solidarity with Unitarians and Universalists throughout the world and use these Chalice Lightings.



President's Corner

— Maury Prevost

Update on Town Hall Meetings

I wish everyone all the best for 2015. My first column of the new calendar year is in the spirit of keeping you up to date on some important business of the congregation.

Our first Town Hall meeting of last fall, held on October 5, was on the subject of our new three-year Strategic Plan, which was subsequently revised and approved at the Fall Congregational Meeting on October 26. The approved Plan includes eight key priorities for the coming year. There was a request to report regularly on the progress of these priorities. The first thing I can report is that, at the November 19 Board meeting, we assigned a director to each priority¹, and they have started follow-up discussions in several cases.

At our next and most recent Town Hall, on November 30, we reviewed and discussed the current plan for the western extension of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system and its potential impact on our campus and the immediate neighbourhood. The meeting was very helpful in highlighting our key concerns. In late December we sent a letter under my signature, unanimously endorsed by the Board of Directors and Campus Planning Committee, to Mayor Jim Watson, Councillors Jeff Leiper, Mark Taylor, and Stephen Blais (new Chair of the Transit Commission), Nelson Edwards (City Planning Department), and Dr. Mark Kristmanson (National Capital Commission CEO).

The letter summarized our major concerns with the current plan, namely:

- Significant traffic congestion on Cleary Avenue because of the proposed station location.
- The impact and disruption of the construction for a period of about two years, including parking and access to our campus.
- The significant disruption to the residents of Unitarian House during construction, and a concern about ongoing noise and vibration from operating trains.
- The loss of what our current Campus Plan identifies as the best potential site for any additional building on our campus.

At the same time, the letter expresses our general support for the LRT project and the expansion of public transit in Ottawa, acknowledges that we would benefit from an LRT station within easy walking distance of our campus, and expresses our readiness to work with the City on solutions to our concerns that would result in an acceptable plan. We are now awaiting a response.

The next Town Hall meeting, on February 22, will provide a forum for our congregation to provide input to the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC), of which our congregation is a member. The meeting will include a visioning process and review of draft resolutions for the May 15, 2015 CUC Annual General Meeting (being held in Ottawa during the CUC's Annual Conference and Meeting, hosted this year by our congregation).

I look forward to your participation in this Town Hall.

~ Maury Prevost

Note 1:

1. Implement theme-based ministry beginning fall 2015, including small group ministry. **Guy Belleperche**
2. As funds become available, establish and fill a communications officer position. **Maggie Sharp**
3. Explore new ways of nurturing and integrating newcomers and new members, including participation in small-group ministry. **Maury Prevost**
4. Expand connections with broader community and use rites of passage, rentals and major events, e.g. concerts, Fall Fair as outreach vehicles. **Terry Kimmel & Rob Cummings**
5. Increase the profile and congregation participation in Social Responsibility activities. **Eva Barringer**
6. Maintain strong choir presence during services and within the broader community. **Alastair Henderson**
7. Match goals and financial resources. **Chuck Triemstra**
8. Develop communication strategy to ensure effective use of traditional and new media to raise First UU's profile and attract new members. **Terry Kimmel & Rob Cummings**

Religious Exploration – Sharing a moment with Susan



The Canadian Unitarian Council's Annual Conference and Meeting,
Friday-Sunday, May 15 – 17, Algonquin College

Am I invited? Why take part?

On Sunday mornings, our children, many parents, and other caring adults gather and sing this song together.

*“Each person is important.
Be kind in all you do.*

*We celebrate the spirit and search for what
is true.*

*All people need a voice; give everyone a
vote.*

Build a fair and peaceful world.

Take care of Earth's lifeboat!”

We remind ourselves of what our faith community is all about. We sing the words again and again so that we can hold them in our hearts and minds and weave their meaning into our daily lives.

Our liberal religious movement is rooted in living our principles, not just talking about them. But what does it mean for each of us to live our principles? How do we discern from day to day, as the world around us and the circumstances of our own lives continually shift, as our understanding and awareness evolve, as our bodies change with the passing seasons? Much of this discernment is a uniquely personal process, yet we may be nourished and supported in its unfolding by our faith community. Here we may find fuel for growth, solace and

celebration, and kinship in those liminal spaces where we are letting go of one trapeze bar and reaching for the next – residing in mystery.

Our participation in faith community may at times try us, as we all show up in our beautiful yet challenging humanity. Here we may find great scope for practice, encouragement to expand previously known limits of compassion and empathy, and a chance to know ourselves and each other more deeply. And in our heartfelt knowing that we are all connected, we are companions to each other. Here we may find an invitation to serve and to share our gifts in the midst of it all.



It is in this spirit that I bring you news of the Canadian Unitarian Council's Annual Conference and Meeting, hosted this year by our congregation and held nearby at Algonquin College.

This conference is a way for UUs from across Canada to connect, to explore, to look inward, and to join our gaze outward, asking ourselves how we may best serve this world. It is an experience of faith community, and we are all invited.



Playtime in Spirit Stories with Cathryn Renaud and James Nugent

You're Invited

RE – Sharing a moment with Susan
continued from page 3...

There are many ways to take part, and we need you! As you read on in this issue of the Spire, you will learn of myriad opportunities. Please consider these among them. You could:

- Provide childcare for young UUs under the age of 6 years
- Offer assistance in our Young Fun program for children 6 to 11 years and join us on our field trip to the Experimental Farm
- Be part of a team leading a program for Junior Youth as they connect and make meaning at our conference
- Help with food for our Youth conference or serve as an overnigher
- Come to Sunday morning all-ages worship in Algonquin’s spacious theatre for the telling of the Three Rivers story with magnificent giant puppets
- Participate in the Three Rivers story
- Attend the whole conference

Come join us!

Visit <http://cuc.ca/conference/> for more conference details and contact Susan at dll@firstunitarianottawa.ca with your interest in these opportunities.

~ Susan

UU Youth Group’s visit to Parkdale Food Centre



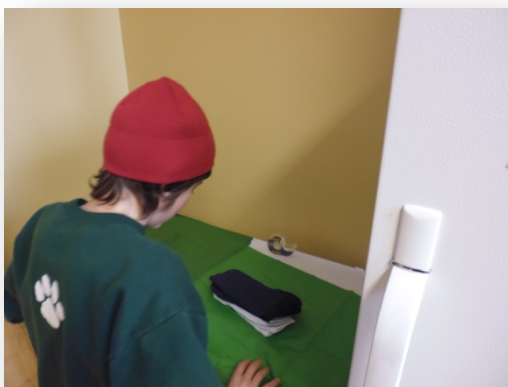
Evan Zeglinski-Spinney and Charlotte Thompson



Olivia Gibbs and Robyn Zanetti



Curtis Gibbs and Lucas Zanetti



Curtis Gibbs

The youth delivered the congregation's donation of "Healthy Extras" (toiletry kits for homeless people) and also helped with stocking shelves and wrapping holiday gifts for clients of the centre.



Lucas Zanetti

January February Worship Services

January 25

Squirrels

Speaker: John Marsh

They dart in front of our cars as they cross the road (sometimes unsuccessfully). We share our



spaces with them (sometimes unwillingly). How does our principle of respecting the interdependent web apply to our most populous neighbouring species?

February 1

Black History Month

Speakers: John Marsh and Phyllis Eleazar

Rev. Marsh will reflect on the events surrounding Selma and the new film version of the story. We will also talk about some of the lesser known contributions of African Canadians.

February 8

Where is God in All This?

Guest Speaker: Rabbi Liz Bolton

February 15

After the Ball is Over

Speaker: John Marsh

On the day after Valentine's Rev. Marsh will reflect on how we can continue to love and support our Unitarian Universalist faith even after it breaks our heart.



February 22

As Tranquil Streams that Meet and Merge

This May we will be hosting our denomination's annual national gathering. It will be a time of seeing a few old friends (such as Jane Perry and Debra Faulk) and, we hope, making some new ones. This morning's service will be a time for talking about the reasons we have a larger denomination and what we must do in order to be good hosts.

There will be a special collection for the "Sharing Our Faith" program instead of our usual Sunday offering.



New Intern in 2015-16 – Introducing A.J. Galazen

A.J. Galazen is a visual artist and a poet. He grew up in a devout Catholic family in Bloomington, Minnesota, a suburb of Minneapolis. His father taught industrial technology and his mother was a hospital administrator.

A.J. worked for 30 years as an accountant and business manager for non-profit, religious healthcare organizations serving the elderly and disabled. He has extensive experience with long-term care, insurance billing, human resources and collections counselling.

One of A.J.'s passions is sports and games. He worked for the Minneapolis Park Board as a recreational supervisor, and has organized shuffleboard and volleyball clubs for the past 25 years.

Twelve years ago, A.J. began a life transition. He moved from Minneapolis to Cornucopia, Wisconsin, a small village on the south shore of Lake Superior, and he built a spiritual retreat deep in the woods. He can see Canada from his mailbox. (Just kidding - but Thunder Bay, Ontario is only 4½ hours away!)

A.J. recently completed his Master of Divinity degree at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, and he is excited to be interning in Ottawa at a time when First Unitarian is beginning themed ministry. He has been active in Unitarian Universalist congregations for over 20 years. A.J. is married to Matthew Wolter, his partner of 28 years. Matthew works as a psychiatric nurse and will remain in Wisconsin during this internship.

Denominational Affairs

What's Going On in the Larger UU World?

As you may know, Unitarian Universalism is much bigger than just our congregation. We have many congregations and many other communities all over the world where people share our values and our vision of the Beloved Community.



Their events and activities offer exciting opportunities for personal growth and spiritual development.

February 22 is “Sharing Our Faith” Sunday

Let's take some time to explore our larger Unitarian movement and how we can engage with our sister congregations:

- *A special Sharing Our Faith collection.* Bring your cheque book, as we contribute this collection to the Canadian Unitarian Council's Sharing Our Faith fund, which gives grants to congregations with special projects to grow our faith and our movement.
- *Town Hall meeting, 12:15 - 2:00 p.m.* Attend and enjoy a conversation on the new proposed Canadian Unitarian Council vision statement. Do you find it inspiring? Would it draw you to get involved? Would you vote for it? We'll review resolutions under development to be voted on at the May 15 Annual General Meeting. You can expect a resolution from the CUC Environmental Monitoring Group recommending that all congregations and Unitarians divest from fossil fuel holdings and invest in our future energy systems (clean, renewable energy). Also expect a resolution updating the Unitarian position on abortion and reproductive rights, brought by the Canadian Unitarian Universalist Women's Association.

Canadian Unitarian Council Annual Conference and Meeting (ACM)

Seeking Justice in a Changing Land - À la recherche de la justice sur une terre changeante

We are so lucky to have the ACM in Ottawa again this year, **May 14-18**, where you can meet people from across Canada who are vitally passionate about their Unitarian faith and what it has to offer. Come and explore the intellectual, spiritual, and social justice dimensions of our movement. Even if you are volunteering for part of the conference (see announcements of volunteer opportunities from our ACM Host Committee) it is well worth registering in order to attend the streams and take advantage of the networking, worship, and learning opportunities.

Register your children and youth in dynamic children's programming organized by Susan McEwen. Join the choir led by our very own Jacob Caines! Discover what Unitarianism has to contribute to making the world a better place. What role will we play in a world where the religious landscape, the social landscape and the political and economic landscape are all changing at break neck speed? For **Early Bird Rates**, register before the end of March.

Would you like to represent First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa as a delegate?

If you would like to learn what makes our movement tick, how we do the democratic process, and the challenges we face, contact **Rev. Frances Deverell**, acting chair, Denominational Affairs, at frandev@sympatico.ca. We are looking for people willing to engage fully in denominational issues and report back to the congregation, either in newsletters, one of our team meetings, at a town hall, or in worship.

For other great opportunities to learn and grow and explore our faith in Canada and internationally, see the notices on our Denominational Affairs board in Fellowship Hall, or on our website.



A Message from the Host Committee CUC Annual Conference & Meeting, May 15-17

As many of you know, First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa is hosting the CUC Annual Conference & Meeting at Algonquin College in May 2015. We expect 275-300 fellow Unitarians from across Canada to attend. Our Host Committee has been busy for the past year planning a memorable experience for all participants.



To start things off, we're having a **T-Shirt Logo Design Competition!** Sue Williams, T-Shirt coordinator,

has placed some great posters about the contest in Fellowship Hall and on the RE bulletin board downstairs. So don't miss out on your chance to be a winning designer of T-shirts to be sold at the conference! The deadline to submit your design is February 22. For more information, contact Sue, sbwilliams@bell.net

Needless to say, we will need many, many volunteers from our congregation to make this event a success. Opportunities are endless... what about taking a shift or two (or more!) at the Registration desk, or as a greeter for the Sunday morning service? We'll need help selling T-shirts, staffing the hospitality & welcoming area, answering questions in the residence area, with special needs assistance, transportation, with programs for children and youth (see "Sharing a Moment with Susan" in this issue of the Spire) and more!

From Thursday noon right through to Monday morning, there will be lots of shift choices available. Volunteer coordinator Margot Clarke is now seeking volunteers. She would love to hear from you, at mmclarke80@gmail.com 613-820-6596.

More information will be on the CUC Host Committee bulletin board outside the office beginning February 8, as well as on the CUC Annual Conference & Meeting website, which should be up and running very soon.

Questions?

Contact your Host Committee co-chairs Kathy Yach, 613-224-6835 and Marg Lee 613-221-9155, marg.lee@sympatico.ca

Special Note!

We are still looking for 2 more people to join the Host Committee: An Ingathering Coordinator, and a Hospitality & Information Coordinator. If you would like more information about these positions, please contact Kathy or Marg ASAP.



Notes from the Office — Did you know?

- The microphones in Worship Hall are "directional mikes" – to be heard well, you have to hold the mic close to your mouth and speak directly into it. Don't be shy, be heard!
- There's a blog/bulletin board on our congregational website. Click on Other News/Links button on the main page to open the blog page and read. If you want to post something on this blog, just send your material to publications@firstunitarianottawa.ca, with "For blog" in the subject line. Please note: This blog page is for events or issues that are potentially important to our congregants, so no personal, partisan or for-profit messages will be posted.
- The church has an extensive lending library available to all congregants, expertly managed by our own Brian Cowan. If you want to know anything about religious history, notable Unitarians or world philosophy, and more – you will find it in our library, located in the Lounge.



Thank you Merci Gracias

~ compiled by Alastaire Henderson

Here are some people and activities to appreciate, recognize, and celebrate:

- ♥ Margaret Linton deserves a huge round of applause – along with her army of volunteers - for a very successful 2014 Fall Fair!
- ♥ Thanks go to John Marsh, Margaret Linton and others – you know who you are! – who worked on the 2014 Stewardship Campaign.
- ♥ Many thanks to Renee de Vry for her work as an outside property manager, who has hired and supervised arbourists, backhoe operators, gravel-spreaders, and more to take care of our campus.
- ♥ Our deep appreciation to Lyn Gerley, who recently resigned from the Spiritual Care Council, which has named her a member emerita, after serving the congregation so long and so well, and to Isabel Burrows, who has retired from handling memorial receptions and has been succeeded by Evelyn Algar.
- ♥ A very special thank you to Brian Cowan and Margot Clarke! They both spend countless hours in the church doing unsung tasks: maintaining the library, tidying the pews each week, answering the phone, signing cheques, and many other tasks, such as treasurer and volunteer co-ordinator for the CUC ACM host committee, dedicated volunteers for the Fall Fair, and more.
- ♥ A big thank-you to Tarrel Armstrong for her tireless work in organizing and running coffee hour, with her willing group of volunteers.
- ♥ Kudos to Betty Campbell for her work on the new plant labels in the Meditation Gardens, which have enhanced the garden experience for many congregants and outside visitors.
- ♥ Much appreciation to Rosemary Bonyun and her fellow knitters and crocheters for their beautiful and useful creations, which bring in a steady additional income stream to our congregation.
- ♥ A big thank you to Paula Theetge for the beautiful poster and invitation she created for the GoGos Party for Africa.
- ♥ Thanks to David Hudson for again assisting in the setting up of the Christmas tree in Worship Hall.
- ♥ Thanks to Caycee Price for all the help she gave Frances Deverell and Ron Wilson in organizing Christmas Dinner, and thanks to everyone who joined us for giving us a wonderful experience of community that day.
- ♥ Appreciation and thanks to our Caring Team for all they do behind the scenes to make sure people feel part of our community when they are facing difficulties.
- ♥ Many thanks to Karen Blakely and David Luck who once again transported our donated warm winter wear to the Snowsuit Fund after the Mitten Tree Service.
- ♥ Gratitude to Alison Harvey for her leadership of our Playground Team and to all the parents and children who are working on this project, bit by bit!
- ♥ Thank you to everyone who shared such wonderful treasures from nature with our RE children for our Advent Spiral craft activity. You brought us so many precious things and our candle holders were beautiful.
- ♥ Heartfelt gratitude to Janet Clayton, who after 20 years in Women's and Teens' clothing at the Fall Fair is saying goodbye to the convening of it, and Nonna MacKenzie, who after 25 years in Accessories is stepping down from convening it.

You can submit items by sending an email to Alastaire at hendersalas@gmail.com or by calling 613-562-2253 at least 48 hours before the Parkway Spire deadline.

‘Twas a very good year (for the Fall Fair)

The Fall Fair has three goals: to create community, to raise operating funds, and to collect goods for community services distribution. This year we managed all three very successfully.

Financial success depends on many factors and once again we managed to bring in more than 7 percent of the congregation’s yearly revenue. Much of our financial success can be attributed to those who donate food, items and energy. For example, the International Cafe relies on:

- Indian Cuisine prepared and donated by Mia’s Restaurant,
- Pad Thai from Montha McGinnis of the Siam Bistro
- Momos from the Shree Kumar family
- Mediterranean fare by Joan Auden and Ed Cuyllits
- German fare by Karl Nagelschmitz
- Coffee donated by Starbucks for the waiting customers.

Thank you all for your contributions and for encouraging your friends and neighbours to contribute. And thank you for all those who took on tasks, be they large or small; Ellen Smith, our volunteer coordinator, reports 320 volunteers this year.

Fall Fair could not be run without the willing convenors who step up to the plate and organize a booth.

- ♥ The food convenors this year were Jane Lindsay (Lunch Room), Evelyn Algar (baking, preserves), Kate Kirkwood (volunteer and coordination), the Nagelshmitz team and Auden Cuyllits team

- ♥ Clothing convenors were Angela Beale, Janet Clayton, Nonna MacKenzie, and Robert Gordon



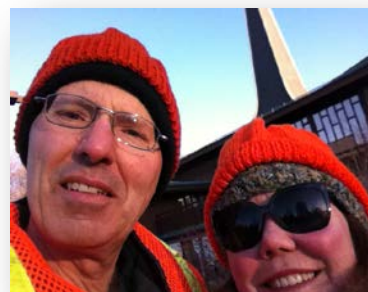
- ♥ The “finer goods” convenors were Lorraine Yorke (Silent Auction), Marg Lee and Elisabeth Waechter (Gift Shop), Barry Read (Stamps and Coins), Lise Lavoie and Carolyn McAndrew (Linens), Ria Heynen (Jewellery), Gail Scagnetti and Paula Theetge (Timeless Treasures).
- ♥ The Flea Market was organized by Lisa Sharp and Rozanne Lepine



- ♥ Books was ably managed by Carol Card and Sharon Reeves, Electronics by

Gerald and Tanya Batten and family, Children by Meghan Dunn, Music by Gerald Boucher and Steven Gabe, Large Items by Sherri Watson

- ♥ Dave Luck and Karen Blakely managed the parking through the cold day



- ♥ John Harrison kept us safe and secure, Carl Sonnen managed Sound and Announcements, Ellen Derry the aprons and Lori Snyder the recycling
- ♥ David Hudson did signage and table acquisition, Graeme Jones did room layouts and Gwen Harman jumped in where needed

These expressions of thanks to “all of the above” come from the core team of Ron Wilson, Katherine Gunn, Bob Armstrong, Ellen Smith, Jen Brennan, Kate Kirkwood, Paula Theetge, Gwen Harman and Margaret Linton.



Announcements

UU Round Table Luncheons

The new location for our round table luncheons for the first three months of 2015 will be the grocery-café, West End Well, at 969 Wellington Street at Somerset.

All Unitarian Universalists and guests are invited for lunch, for lively discussions with persons of diverse interests and experiences. The lunches are held the third Friday of each month, at 1 p.m.: February 20 and March 20. Phone Tudy McLaine, 613-745-8074 or Marjorie Daechsel, 613-596-1471, by the third Thursday evening to confirm.

Glebe/Centretown/Old Ottawa South Neighbourhood Group

Julie Harris will talk about "Taking and Giving: Working as a Historian for Inuit"

When: Sunday, February 15 at 7:30 pm

Where: Ann Denis, 113 Sunnyside Avenue

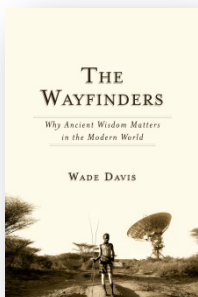
Contact: Ann at 613-730-0283, adenis@uottawa.ca

All are welcome. Bring a small dessert (finger food) to share.

Reading for Growth

The Friday Reading for Growth group will meet at 1:30 p.m. on February 27 to discuss *The Wayfinders* by Wade Davis. Newcomers are welcome.

Contact: Margot Clarke, 613-820-6596, mmclarke80@gmail.com



Hospitality Hour

Sign-up sheets for Hospitality Hour are posted through to March. Thank you to those of you who stop each week to see where you can help and sign up.

Reminders:

1. If you use items from a kitchen (main, lower level or Volunteer Room), please return them to that kitchen e.g. milk jugs, coffee urns. They are needed regularly for Hospitality Hour.

2. If there is laundry from an event (tablecloths, towels etc.), please take it home to wash and return to the kitchen promptly. Another event may need these items within a few days.

~Tarrel Armstrong
Co-ordinator

Unitarian Seniors' Program

January

Kathy Turner, a certified relocation and transitions specialist, will speak about seniors transitioning to living in a retirement community. Joycelyn Loeffelholz-Rea will lead the worship service.

When: Wednesday, Jan 28 1:00 pm: Service

1:30 pm: Program

2:30 pm: Dessert/Light snack, Coffee, Tea

(\$3 or pay what you can)

Where: Worship and Fellowship Halls

Contact: Maureen Sly, 613-728-7610, mmsly@rogers.com by Sunday, January 25. RSVP (if you are not on the phone list)

February

Christine Duport will speak about living with blindness and using a guide dog. She will be accompanied by her guide dog,

Erie. Alex Campbell will lead the worship service.

When: Thursday, February 26

1:00 pm: Service

1:30 pm: Program

2:30 pm: Dessert/Light snack, Coffee, Tea

(\$3 or pay what you can)

Where: Worship and Fellowship Halls

Contact: Maureen Sly at 613-728-7610 mmsly@rogers.com by Monday, February 23 RSVP (if you are not on the phone list).

Please Note:

- The Seniors' Program has changed to an early-afternoon format
- Earphones are available in Worship and Fellowship Halls.
- Service and program can be recorded on a CD (cost \$5) or can be made available on the Internet (free).



Photos: Alastaire Henderson



Social Responsibility Council



SR Calendar

Friday February 6

- 7:00 p.m. GoGos Party for Africa

Sunday February 8

- 12:30 p.m. Social Responsibility Council (all Working Groups)

Tuesday February 10

- 9:00 a.m. Poverty Awareness Working Group

Sunday February 15

- 10:00 a.m. Fair Trade Sales
- 10:00 a.m. Granny Squares Sales
- 12:15 p.m. Environmental Working Group

Wednesday February 18

- SRC Deadline: next Parkway Spire March-April 2015

Thursday February 19

- 3:30 p.m. Unitarian GoGos

Friday February 20

- 9:30 a.m. Social Responsibility Steering Committee

Unitarian GoGos Party for Africa

Don't miss it! Bring your friends to a Celebratory Evening with fabulous finger food, a cash bar, live music, dancing and a silent auction.

When: Friday, February 6, 2015, 7:00-10:00p.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall

Cost: Donation to the Stephen Lewis Foundation Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign

Please reserve as soon as possible: unitariangogos@gmail.com or Wendy Doyle, 613-824-7462.

2015 UU-UNO Spring Seminar: "Criminal Justice: From Punitive to Restorative"

Will you come to the 2015 UU-UNO Intergenerational Spring Seminar? The two-and-a half day gathering will take place April 9 to 11, in New York City. This year, the seminar will focus on criminal justice systems around the world.

We will tackle questions such as: Why are people imprisoned? What happens to young people who come into conflict with the law? How are the mentally ill and people with other disabilities treated in the criminal justice system? How can we help eliminate the death penalty in countries where it still exists?

Speaker panels, discussions, and creative activities will allow youths and adults to learn and act. Early bird registration rates end March 7, 2015. For more information, please go to the seminar website (<http://www.uua.org/international/events/seminar/>) or contact Tudy McLaine, 613-745-8074, or Katrin Nagelschmitz, 613-722-8775.

The congregation's Social Responsibility Working Groups, guided by the Social Responsibility Steering Committee, make up the Social Responsibility Council (SRC).

Christmas Eve Service at First Unitarian



Social Responsibility Council (SRC) Update

The working group meetings are on varying schedules and the groups carry out a wide variety of activities both within the congregation and in the wider community. They work at local, national and international levels, as described on the church website at

<http://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/social-justice.html>. The whole Council meets semi-annually.

Everyone is invited to watch for working group announcements, and come to meetings and events to find out what the groups are doing. Look for the Social Responsibility Table in Fellowship Hall after service on Sundays to learn more about us.

Congregational Social Responsibility Focus:

The congregational Strategic Plan includes a focus for commitments in the area of social responsibility. Thus the congregation has supported Ottawa's Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) over the last two years during the very successful MHI capital fundraising campaign, spearheaded by the Poverty Awareness Working Group. The Board of Directors has asked the Social Responsibility Council to help the congregation choose the focus for the next two years.

Any Social Responsibility Working Groups wishing to submit proposals for the next congregation-wide focus will please submit them by February 19. The Congregation will be asked to consider the proposals at the Annual General Meeting on April 26, 2015.

Working Groups:

Working Group (WG) chairs are reminded that the 2015 Work Plans are due now. These plans identify at least six members of the congregation who constitute the WG and describe plans for activities and funding requirements for the current year.

Social Responsibility Steering Committee (SRSC):

The Steering Committee oversees the activities of the Working Groups, and has a particular responsibility to approve the distribution of 3 percent of the congregation's pledged funding among the WGs. The WGs use these funds to carry out their plans and activities, ranging from bringing speakers to congregational events, to assisting our Youth Group's members to attend an annual United Nations session, to bringing a government-designated refugee into the country every few years.

Note: The SRSC is in need of two new members, to fill its complement of six. We meet monthly from September to June, with two additional meetings of the full SR Council in the year. The meetings are usually two hours, with minimal "homework" between meetings.

If you can join us in taking an overall view of the congregation's social responsibilities, please talk to:

- Ron Wilson, Chair
- David Hudson, Treasurer
- Ed Willer or Katherine Gunn, members at large

They can all be contacted through the church office.

~ Ron Wilson

Christmas Dinner at First Unitarian





First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

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Phone: 613-725-1066

Fax: 613-725-3259

E-mail: uoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Web site: www.firstunitarianottawa.ca

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Sunday, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

2014–2015 Board of Directors

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