

Weekly e-UU Newsletter

Friday, March 8, 2026

We acknowledge that our campus is located on traditional, unsundered and unceded Algonquin Anishinaabeg Territory; and that the work of reconciliation is a responsibility of our congregation, and of all Canadians.

Sunday, March 8, 2026

[Online](#) and In Person

Starts at 10:30am



Oh, My Goddess!

Reverend Lara Cowtan

This Sunday, we explore the enduring wisdom of Goddess traditions and the divine feminine.

Sunday Service Announcements

If you would like an announcement made during the livestreamed Sunday Service, please email the Board of Directors at boardannouncements@firstunitarianottawa.ca by Friday at 10am. Do allow for time in case there are questions with regard to the announcement. Also note that announcements may need to be edited for length and that time-sensitive announcements may be prioritized.

New: Information about Your Sunday Offering

The offerings collected each Sunday help us to live into our values within this congregation and in supporting many good works beyond our walls by highlighting a community partner organization each month to share with.

During the entire month of March, our Sunday collections, unless marked towards your pledge, will be split 50/50 with our community partner, the [Women's Legal Education and Action Fund \(LEAF\)](#).

Since 1985, the [Women's Legal Education and Action Fund \(LEAF\)](#), which is based in the *uOttawa Law School*, has achieved significant landmark victories in Canada by using strategic litigation and legal education to advance gender equality. LEAF has intervened in over 160 cases, strengthening the Charter of Rights and Freedoms regarding reproductive freedom, workplace discrimination, pay equity, and the prevention of gender-based violence.



Children's Religious Exploration

This Sunday, after Time for All Ages, we'll head downstairs to learn about Pluralism, as part of our **Gifts of our Faith Program**.

- In the **Rainbow room** with Rita and Anusha, we will participate in activities surrounding the book "The Sandwich Swap".
- In the **Chalice room** with Esther *and* in the **Wonder room** with Jodi, we will be learning about how our pluralistic faith teaches us to celebrate differences.

Caring Contacts for March

[Clea Derwent](#) – 613-694-0505

[Coral Sato](#) - 613-599-8838

Caring Cards for February: Kerri T, Maureen S, Barry C and Family, Margaret L, Bobbee E and Sam W, Bill W, Joycelyn L, Isabel B, Rev E.N. Hill, Ben C and Family.

We are all interconnected, interdependent and minister to each other in many ways. Our monthly Caring Contacts take your phone calls and emails when you wish to alert us to a need or a concern or have a joy to celebrate. We try to ensure no one is forgotten and that appropriate help is provided when requested.



Featured Volunteer Opportunity

Volunteers Needed to Support Congregational Meetings

Two key roles need to be filled before the upcoming **Annual General Meeting on April 26:**

1. **Head Scrutineer:** this involves preparing the member lists used by scrutineers to register members and process proxies for Congregational Meetings, arranging for scrutineers at the meeting, and overseeing the process in general. Knowledge of Google sheets is helpful.
2. **Zoom Host:** this involves managing the Zoom background supporting in-person congregational meetings, and on occasion providing hosting for hybrid congregational meetings allowing voting in-person or on Zoom. Experience facilitating Zoom calls useful.

Training for both positions will be provided.

For more information, please [contact Mary Ella](#).

Want to let the congregation know about a volunteer opportunity? [Fill out this online form](#) to let people know!
Chuck Shields, Volunteer Coordinator - volunteers@firstunitarianottawa.ca



Read All About It

Watch Your Scents Please

Friends, please remember that FirstU is a scent-free building. Please don't wear fragrances – perfume, cologne, aftershave, etc. – to church. Chemicals in scented products can be harmful to people with fragrance sensitivities, asthma, allergies, and other medical conditions. An easy way to avoid setting off someone's allergies or scent sensitivities is to switch to fragrance-free laundry detergent, shampoo/conditioner, and moisturizer.

Splinters from the Board

The following are the key points from the February 18 meeting of the FirstU Board:

- Approved the memberships of Elaine Hoskins, Erin Keene and Bob Thomson.
- Agreed on steps to take to remind congregants and others using our space that our building is scent-free.
- Discussed steps to take to consider having, in collaboration with the Fellowship, an intern minister starting this fall.
- Received a financial report through the end of 2025.
- Agreed to shift \$100K of the congregation's investments to be a loan to boost our equity share in the Aspire Riverview Homes building.
- Reviewed the January 25 Special Congregational Meeting and identified lessons learned regarding holding a hybrid meeting that involves both participants meeting in person and others joining on-line.
- Received update on the Odayanhaway Project
- Discussions with Unitarian House of Ottawa (UHO) and River Parkway Children's Centre regarding adjustments to the campus hydro supply
- Discussions with UHO about various issues
- Selected a board working group that will identify the members to propose to the congregation during the Annual General Meeting of the task force that will lead the discernment process regarding Rev. Lara continuing as our minister.

March Journey Groups: Seeking Wisdom

Come join us in exploring the practice of Seeking Wisdom. What can we learn from the multiple truths that come

from varied identities, life experiences, religions and cultures? We meet in person *and* online. [Click HERE for this month's dates and times.](#)

The Time & Talent Auction returns in April!

If you have items to offer (services, meals, guided tours, cottage stays and more) [email coordinator David Chernushenko](#). Ditto if you are new and want to know more about this community-building and revenue-generating event.

Little Free Libraries

FirstU has two Little Free Libraries - one for adults and one for children - located outside the west side (elevator) doors. While we accept up to 10 books at a time from donors, we would be happy to accept larger quantities if you have them. Simply bring them along to a Sunday Service and give them to Andrew Drake, or email him at andrewdrake235@gmail.com to arrange a pickup.

Our Whole Lives – For Kindergarten – Grade One

OWL supports parents in educating children about birth, babies, bodies and families. Following a Parent Meeting and Parent/Child Orientation, the 8 sessions engage children with stories, songs and activities and include a weekly HomeLink - a homework project for parents and children to do together. We are happy to be offering the Kindergarten – Grade One OWL program starting in April and open to all 5, 6 and 7 year-olds. for details and to register, contact dre@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

Are You Curious About Crafting Worship?

Later this spring, Rev Lara will be leading a workshop for our Worship Team as they prepare for summer services. If you feel called to help shape Worship — to craft words, readings, and ritual that hold our community in meaning and care — she would love to hear from you. Please reach out at minister@firstunitarianottawa.ca for information about applying to become a Worship Associate.



Upcoming Events

Get Involved with the Justice and Equality Action Group - Sunday, March 15 - 12:00pm - Room 6

If you are interested in getting involved in our food cupboard, affordable housing at FirstU, and/or international human rights, please join us to share your ideas. For more information, [contact Lisa S.](#)

Mapmaking: Navigating your Spiritual Journey at FirstU - Tuesdays: March 24, April 7 - May 5 - 7:00pm - Room 6

Mapmaking is ideal for newish congregants, but long-time ones very welcome. Over the course of six sessions, you'll connect with others; reflect on your concepts of spirituality, faith and our UU principles; learn about the congregation and the UU realm; consider what belonging to FirstU means; and develop your own 'credo' of who and where you are in your faith journey. To register, email adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

FirstU Children's Choir Program Begins - Wednesdays, starting on March 25 - 5:00pm - NOW Room

FirstU is thrilled to announce that our new Children's Choir program will be starting March 25 and running through to June! Rehearsals will be Wednesdays from 5:00pm - 6:00pm, in the NOW Room. For kids ages 6+. No musical experience necessary! [Register HERE.](#)

Women's Inclusive Pagan Circle Ostara Ritual - Wednesday, March 25 - 7:00pm - Fellowship Hall - \$5 Suggested

Trans women, cis women, and non-binary people are invited to join us as we celebrate Mother Nature, the Green Man, and the balance of the elements at Spring Equinox! Wear green and other earthy colours if you want to! Bring finger foods to share after the ritual, and anything you'd like to include on our seasonal altar.

Our Whole Lives Info Session for Kindergarten and Grade One - Sunday, March 29 - 11:45am - Room 2

We're happy to be offering the Kindergarten - Grade One Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education program, starting in April and open to all 5, 6 and 7 year olds. This program supports parents in educating children about birth, babies, bodies and families. Need more information before committing? Come to our info session on March 29.

Authentic Selves Workshop - Tuesday March 31 - 6:30pm - Fellowship Hall

This workshop is based on the UU Common Read for 2024-25, *Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families*. This Common Read invites UUs to deepen their understanding of how gender identity has shaped their lives, while the workshops spotlight our own true storytelling as an exercise of faith, emphasizing the crucial role of support from families and communities in the journey to living authentically. No need to register, just come take part.

For weekly, biweekly, and monthly recurring events, visit our Make Friends page:

<https://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/make-friends.html#recurring>

Visit our calendar for more upcoming events:

<https://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/calendar.html>



Recurring Events: Topics and Changes

Are you looking for the Recurring Events item that used to be in the Read All About It section? We've moved that information to our website.

- Looking for the next topic for your favourite recurring discussion or book group? [Click here.](#)
- Need to check if a weekly, biweekly, or monthly event has been rescheduled? [Click here](#), or check our [month-at-a-glance calendar.](#)
- Looking for a new social group to join, or need to confirm a zoom link or locate a registration form? [Click HERE](#) for a full list of our recurring events, plus zoom links for those that occur online.



Unitarian Universalist nUUs

Registration and Staffing Applications at Unicamp are Open!

Unicamp is a UU campground and retreat centre with 50 acres of forests, meadows, streams, and a spring-fed pond, where folks can explore, relax, and reconnect with self, community, and Nature. Registration is open for three [kids' sleep-away camp weeks in July](#), as well as [Adult Camp events](#) in August, and [drop-in Family Camp programming](#). You can also apply for one of many staff positions - from Prep Cook and Lifeguard to Program Director and Assistant Property Manager - by [filling out the application form here.](#)

Reciprocal Annual Mentorship Program (RAMP!)

The Reciprocal Annual Mentorship Program (RAMP!) is a four-month national pilot offering two ways to learn and connect within the Unitarian Universalist movement, RAMP offers pathways to connect Unitarian Universalists across generations to build skills, share wisdom, and strengthen our communities for the future. Whether you participate closely, join a workshop, or engage through other aligned CUC programming, this journey is about all of us, turning toward one another and facing the future together. [Full details HERE.](#) Register for a [Public Workshop here.](#)



Chez FirstU

Tone Cluster Presents: RISE II - *This Saturday, March 7 - 4:30pm* – Worship Hall - \$25 (varied pricing available)

RISE returns! Building on last year's concert of protest songs, this year's program continues the call to action by challenging the expectations that hold us back while embracing the change needed to move forward. Urgent, hopeful, and powerful, RISE blurs the line between stage and seats as we raise our voices together. [Get your tickets HERE.](#)



News from Our Friends

Unitarian House Spring Clothing and Jewellery Sale - Thursday March 19 - 11:00am - Founder's Room, 20 Cleary

Explore a wide selection of quality, gently used clothing and accessories donated by friends of Unitarian House including brand-name dress shop overstock. All proceeds support Unitarian House Residents' Association. Unsold items will be distributed among local charities. Sandwich/soup lunch available for purchase at mid-day.

Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) presents: Home of Our Hearts: An East Coast Afternoon

Sunday, March 29 - 3:00pm - Woodroffe United Church (207 Woodroffe Ave)

By Donation, \$25 Suggested

Join the Atlantic Voices choir and special guest folk duo 100 Floors Above for a special concert in support of Odenak, MHI's latest housing build at Lebreton Flats. This project will build over 608 new residential rental units -- 250 of them affordable -- in two towers at 665 Albert Street, between Ottawa's future Ādisōke main public library and the Pimisi LRT station. Admission is by donation, with \$25 suggested. Doors open at 2:30pm, and parking is available on site.

Get the eUU in your inbox: <https://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/connect-with-us.html#nUUs>