

Weekly e-UU Newsletter

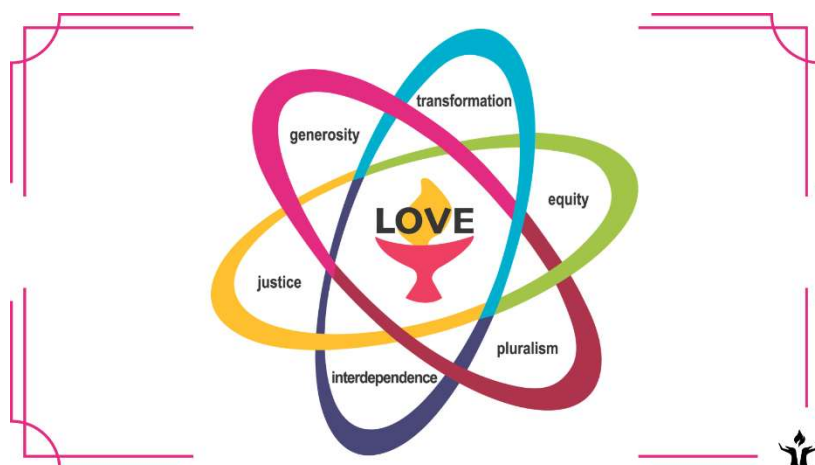
Friday, May 15, 2026

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, May 17, 2026

[Online](#) and In Person

Starts at 10:30am



Love at the Centre – UU Values in Words and Actions

Reverend Lara Cowtan

We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love. What does this mean for us as a community and as individuals?

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 May, our Sunday collections, unless marked towards your pledge, will be split 50/50 with our community partner, Flaming Chalice International.**

Flaming Chalice International supports refugees in East Africa and community-led development in Burundi. Through education, community-building, and support for vulnerable families, FCI empowers people to shape their own futures. Your generosity directly supports community-led change and the building of hope, opportunity, and resilience.



Children's Religious Exploration

This Sunday, after Time for All Ages, we'll go downstairs for a garden-themed all-ages activity to celebrate the long weekend.

Our Whole Lives: There is no OWL programming this Sunday. OWL registrants are welcome to join our garden-themed all-ages activity.

Mystery Pals: The Garden

Mystery Pals begins this Sunday! If you signed up for Mystery Pals, you should have received an email with your group name on Wednesday or Thursday. If you haven't received an email, please message Jodi.

Exchanges will occur on:

May 17th, May 24th, May 31st, and June 7th

If you are away one of these dates, you can leave a note ahead of time or email us and we will deliver it for you!

Reveal Breakfast: June 14!



FirstU's Caring Team

We are all interconnected, interdependent and minister to each other in many ways.

Caring Contacts are monthly volunteers who receive phone calls and emails when you wish to alert us to a need, a grief or a concern, or have a joy to celebrate. They prepare cards to be signed on Sundays, and try to ensure no one is forgotten, connecting people with appropriate help when requested.

Caring Contacts for May

Marilen Gerber - [Email](#) - 613-848-1688

Maury Prevost - [Email](#) - 613-231-7391

Caring Visitors are specially trained and certified FirstU Members, available to provide spiritual care and deep listening for those who seek support during a transition or challenging time. Visits can be by phone/zoom, a walk, coffee shop, in home, hospital, hospice, or wherever is comfortable.

Caring Visitors: caringvisitors@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Featured Volunteer Opportunity

Global Justice Volunteers Wanted

Are you passionate about human rights? We need some people to help organize (scheduling/promotion) of special events such as film nights and guest speakers. Training and coaching are available. To find out more, contact sjan@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

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

PFLAG Chapter at FirstU

FirstU is planning to start an Ottawa Chapter of PFLAG for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities including families, friends, allies, and loved ones. PFLAG (formerly parents, friends and families of lesbians and gays) is dedicated to creating a safe and affirming world for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community by providing peer support, advocacy and community resources. **We want to create a team to work together on scheduling, promotion, and logistics.** If you are interested in getting involved with this group contact: diversity@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Capital Pride Dates for August - Mark Your Calendars

Capital Pride is taking place one week later than normal this summer - here are important dates:

- Our Pride Service will be on Sunday August 23
- The Pride Parade will be on Sunday August 30th
- We intend on participating in the Pride Parade, and having a community information table again, more details to come.

Remember *Spring Free from Plastic*? Get Ready for a New Challenge!

We've had lots of interest at the [Spring Free from Plastic '26 table](#) in Fellowship Hall which will carry on until the end of May. To give you another opportunity to encourage the reduction of plastics in our lives, we offer you links to three active Canadian environmental groups: [Oceana](#), the David Suzuki Foundation's [Stop Plastic Pollution](#) initiative, and [Environmental Defence](#), where you can support them and sign their petitions to our Federal Leaders asking them step up action on plastic pollution. More info at the Spring Free from Plastic '26 Table.

Report from the 2026 Annual General Meeting

The 2026 AGM held on Sunday April 26 had almost 100 members represented in person or by proxy. Key notes from the AGM:

- Welcome to new FirstU board members Jane Lindsay (Member-at-Large) and Maury Prevost (Vice President)
- Thank you and farewell to Amy Bérubé (Member-at-Large) and Carl Sonnen (non-director Secretary)
- Mary Ella Keblusek moves into the role of President, while Chuck Shields transitions to Past President
- Continuing on the board are Guy Belleperche (Treasurer) and Members-at-Large Lisa Boulay, Carmen Contreras, and John Emond

- The new Minister Call Discernment Task Force was approved: Lisa Boulay, Alex Campbell, Ally Hobson, Erin Keene and Lee Rose
- Reverend Mwibutsa Ndagijimanaburundi was affirmed as a Community Minister
- Lee Rose was appointed as a new Lay Chaplain, joining Lisa Boulay and Guy Belleperche
- The 2025 Audited Financial Statement was accepted; reports were provided from the Fall Fair Task Force and the Odayanhaway campus development project

A link to the recording of the AGM can be found on the [Member's Page](#) of the FirstU website.

Multifaith Housing Initiative Tulipathon 2026

The annual Tulipathon - a fundraiser for Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI), of which FirstU is a member - will be held on **Sunday, May 24**. All funds raised go toward rent subsidies for low-income MHI tenants. You can donate and/or join the FirstU team at <https://give.gofundme.com/firstu>. We're looking for more people to walk on May 24. [Contact Maury P for information.](#)

Parking Spaces Available

Roughly ten parking spaces have been restored to FirstU. The spots are at the southwest end of Unitarian House, in front of the first garden, [as shown in this picture, in orange](#). Please feel free to use these spaces!



Upcoming Events

Introduction to Nature Journaling – Sundays, May 17, 24, and 31 – 1:00pm – Meet Outdoors, Lower Level Entrance

Join Laurie Foster-MacLeod for three Sunday afternoons in May, to explore nature around FirstU and to learn the fundamentals of nature journaling. Bring a small (8"x5" or 6" square) sketchbook - mixed media paper recommended - plus pencils, pencil sharpeners, pens, and your curiosity. **No registration required.** Drop in if you're curious. Kids welcome, but those under ten require adult accompaniment.

Biweekly Wednesday Community Dinner – Wednesday, May 20 – 5:00pm – \$10 suggested for adults (\$5 for kids)

Come join us every other Wednesday, for a community dinner. 5:00pm - 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall. To sign up [contact uuoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:uuoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca). By donation (\$10 adults, \$5 kids, suggested).

Empowering Upstanders Workshop with [Around the Rainbow](#) – Wednesday, May 20 – 6:30pm-9:00pm

In this free workshop you'll learn how you can intervene effectively without compromising your safety. Learn the "5Ds" of *Upstander Intervention* and how these strategies can be used to support the 2SLGBTQI+ community. This training will equip participants with the tools to safely and effectively intervene when they witness anti-2SLGBTQI+ hate, harassment, or discrimination! To attend, contact diversity@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Introducing Ourselves – Sunday May 24 – 12:00pm – NOW room

Are you feeling new? Introducing Ourselves is a casual meet-up for newcomers guided by Brent Nicolle and Rev. Lara Cowtan. Share what brought you to First Unitarian, ask about the basics of Unitarian Universalism, and learn about how to get connected. A light lunch will be served. Register at the Welcome Table or email welcomes@firstunitarianottawa.ca

FirstU Food Cupboard Benefit Concert – Wednesday, May 27 – 6:30pm – Worship Hall – By Donation

Join the Beacon Band for a fun evening of band music including Strauss, Mancini, Mambo Greats and Bugs Bunny's Greatest Hits – all in support of our Food Cupboard. Doors and refreshments at 6:30pm. Show starts at 7:00pm. Stay after the concert for a celebratory reception!

FirstU Food Cupboard Fundraiser: Dance Workshop – Tuesday June 16 – 7:30-8:30pm – Fellowship Hall

Groove dance fitness class fundraiser for the food cupboard, led by Deb Thompson. Suggested \$10 donation, for cis and trans women and non-binary folks. This is a very loosely choreographed (and often unchoreographed) class where you can't get it wrong! Similar to Body Groove by Misty Tripoli (see YouTube), I lead you through easy low-impact steps that you do your way to great tunes. We play with boas, scarves, ribbon sticks, drumsticks, and light up rings. Stretching and stillness to close. Email uuoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca to RSVP.

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

- May Journey Groups Topic: "Liberating Love". Email adultlearningAS@firstunitarianottawa.ca for details or to request the zoom link.
- May 18 - Our monthly online Trivia Quiz takes place on zoom at 7:00pm. [Click HERE to join the quiz!](#)
- May 22 - The Men's Breakfast Group will meet at 8:00am in Fellowship Hall for breakfast and an engaging talk followed by a lively discussion. \$10 per person. Details and registration link [HERE](#).
- May 28 - Virtual Discussion Circle - 1:30pm on zoom. This session's discussion topic is "Emotional Intelligence". [Click here to join the discussion.](#)
- May 28 – Thursday Evening Reading for Growth – 7:00pm. Our next book selection is *Cleopatra: A Life*, by Stacy Schiff. [Contact Ken](#) for the zoom link.
- May 29 – Friday Afternoon Reading for Growth – 1:30pm. Our next book selection is *Disorientation: Being Black in the World*, by Ian Williams. [Contact Clea](#) for the zoom link.

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

Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC): Reciprocal Annual Mentorship Program (RAMP!)

RAMP! offers monthly Skill-Building workshops open to everyone interested. These public, online, 90-minute workshops align with the program's monthly themes and connect with other national programming such as Congregational Conversations and Dismantling Barriers. Upcoming workshops include:

- June 27, 1:00pm: [Projects, Partnerships & Practical Wisdom from RAMP!](#)

Click the embedded links above to register for the workshop(s) of your choice!

Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC): Dismantling Barriers Series

Join the CUC online, on Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 7:00pm, for a workshop facilitated by Camellia Jahanshahi called Boundaries Are my Love Language. This session will differ from our usual Dismantling Barriers events in that Camellia will lead a workshop she designed specifically for activists, community workers, and artists on navigating and sustaining healthy boundaries. [Full details and registration HERE](#). A final session will run [on June 25](#).



News from Our Friends

Hope International presents: An Evening of Hope – Wednesday, May 20 – 6:30pm – Sala San Marco (215 Preston St)

Join Hope International for an inspiring evening with family, friends and great company: There will be a screening of a new, short film about Juanita's story - a story which reflects the transformation that's happening for hundreds of women in her community in Guatemala, and that began with clean water. Enjoy a full-course meal, a silent auction and an opportunity to help change lives. Featuring This event is free, but pre-registration is necessary. [Click here to register.](#)



Spring Free from Plastic – Replacing Plastics in Our Daily Lives

Do you remember the year 2022, halfway through the **Climate Action Focus**? The successes, the challenges, the outright failures of **Spring Free from Plastic** - our attempt to defeat the plastic scourge? This year, we've added a sixth 'R', **Replace!** The idea is to replace that unending supply of plastic with something more ecologically friendly. So, what better way to celebrate May Day than to offer you a new plastics challenge: **Spring Free from Plastic '26: Replacing Plastics in Our Daily Lives!** With that in mind, starting **May 3**, for the entire month, we will have a table set up in Fellowship Hall after service and we ask you to bring and share **ideas**. Feel free to bring post-it notes, photos, or—best of all—items you've discovered that **successfully replace and reduce the use of plastics in your daily life**. Come visit, compare, and enjoy a great conversation!



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