

Weekly e-UU Newsletter

Friday, August 28, 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, August 30, 2026

[Online](#) and In Person

Starts at 10:30am



Examining AI Through the Lens of our Shared Covenant

With guest speaker Marc-Etienne Brunet

Since ChatGPT was released in November of 2022, the world has been swept by a firestorm of AI-driven changes. This powerful new technology has fuelled prophetic predictions that range from utopian optimism to existential dread, leaving many with an unsettling feeling of uncertainty. This Sunday, FirstU member Marc-Etienne Brunet will examine AI through the lens of our shared covenant, providing insights from his role as an AI researcher, and raising questions for the community to consider.

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.



Children's Religious Exploration

This summer, children will explore the wonder of our interconnected world through The Great Web of Life, An outdoor Religious Exploration program for ages 3–12. Using our gardens and outdoor spaces as a living classroom, children will spend the summer observing, creating, playing, and building connections—both with nature and with one another. Come help us strengthen the Web of Life, one strand at a time. During our Summer Program, we will be spending a lot of time outside! Please remember sunscreen and hats to protect from the sun, and be aware that there will be a risk of ticks. Please perform a tick check when possible.



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 August
Elisabeth Morrison - [Email](#) - 613-225-6702
Bill Wylie - [Email](#) - 613-761-8092

Caring Contacts for September
Margaret DeCorte - [Email](#) - 613-722-1424
Carmen Contreras - [Email](#) - 613-565-3613

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

News from the June and August Board Meetings

- Refugee Sponsorships - the board approved FirstU sponsoring refugees under the Blended Visa Office - Referred Program, with the final selection of refugees to be made by the Refugee Support Action Group (RSAG)
- Campus Development - Kindred Credit Union has approved a loan of \$1.1 million to FirstU, to be used toward purchasing equity in Aspire and repaying personal loans made to purchase equity.
- Org Charts - An updated FirstU organizational chart was approved, and has been posted on the Members’ Page of the website, as well as in the lobby outside the church office.
- Board committee appointments - Maury Prevost as liaison to the Generosity Committee (overseeing various fundraising / stewardship efforts) and the Nominations Committee; Chuck Triemstra as a member of the Governance Committee; Chuck Shields as a member of the Nominations Committee, pending approval at the Fall Congregational Meeting.
- Property - Board approved using a portion of the \$100K that FirstU will receive from Aspire towards urgent property projects. (The \$100K is for the donation of a portion of our land near the Continental for use by the city for parkland).

For questions, please contact president@firstunitarianottawa.ca.



Settled Minister Discernment Process

For those of you who were unable to attend the launch of the Settled Minister Discernment Process (in-person or online) at the August 16 service, [here is a link to the service](#).

Stay tuned for an online survey which will be available within the next week. Paper copies of the survey will be available at the service.



Your Discernment Task Force: Alex Campbell, Ally Hobson, Erin Keene, Lee Rose, and Lisa Boulay

Featured Volunteer Opportunity

Help Make Our Sundays Run Smoothly

Each Sunday morning, it takes a team of about ten volunteers to run our service. Volunteers act as Worship Associates, singing in the choirs, sell books and do other fundraising. We need people to help with coffee hour, operate the elevator, support our children’s programing, and act as greeters. There's a place for everyone and, with Ingathering coming, we'd love to have you join us.

Please [contact Lisa S](#) if you are interested.

Lisa Sharp, Volunteer Coordinator - volunteers@firstunitarianottawa.ca



Read All About It

Pride Rides

Are you planning to drive from FirstU to the Pride staging grounds near Lebreton Flats after the service on August 30? Can you offer one or more fellow Pride Parade marchers a ride from church? If yes, please contact diversity@firstunitarianottawa.ca to let us know how many people you can carry.

What's a Journey Group?

Journey Groups are small, intentional gatherings where participants explore monthly congregational themes and life's big questions together. They offer a moving and meaningful way to connect with others and yourself while deepening clarity and commitment on your spiritual path. FirstU's Journey Groups will be starting soon, with first meetings scheduled for September 8 and 22 (see Recurring Events). Everyone is welcome to register: [Just print out and submit this form](#). The September Theme information is [available here](#). For more information contact Amalilly at JourneyGroupAS@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Odayanhaway Groundbreaking Ceremony

On Wednesday, August 19, about 100 people gathered to celebrate a ceremonial ground-breaking of the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) building that will provide 66 affordable and deeply affordable units on the FirstU campus. In addition to the ceremony, which was conducted by elder Grandmother Irene Compton, there were speakers drawn from project partners, local dignitaries and cultural performances. A large number of community partners attended as well. Rev. Lara and Cathy Connor, the project lead from OAHS, were [interviewed for All in A Day](#), with [additional print](#) and [video coverage](#) provided by CBC News. The OAHS write-up on the event is [available here](#), and photos from the Ceremony [can be viewed here](#). If you weren't able to attend the Ceremony, you can [re-watch the full livestream here](#).

Thank You to All Who Made the Groundbreaking Ceremony Possible!

The FirstU board wants to thank the many people who worked tirelessly to make the OAHS Ceremonial Groundbreaking event on Wednesday a success - despite many challenges with weather and logistics. This really was a team effort, and we were very proud of the way our entire FirstU community supported and participated in this event.

Call to Action: Preventing Gender-Based Violence

Provided by the Men’s Breakfast Group Compassion-to-Action Initiative

Indigenous women account for 26% of women killed by an intimate partner in Canada. They are 6.5 times more likely to be victims of homicide than non-Indigenous women. These realities demand more than compassion and awareness. They demand action, investment, accountability, and long-term commitment. [The Moose Hide Campaign](#) is a leader in making change to end gender-based violence, including training workshops for men and boys.



Upcoming Events

Capital Pride Street Festival – August 29-30 – 12:00pm to 8:00pm – Bank St between Nepean and Gloucester

Come visit our FirstU Info Ambassadors at our booth at this year's Pride Street Festival. We'll have kids’ activities and information about FirstU. Bring a friend and come say Hi!

**Capital Pride Parade – Sunday, August 30 – 12:30pm – Gather for the parade at Booth St and Vimy Pl
FirstU Staging Area B110, in the Red colour zone**

The Pride Parade on Sunday August 30th is a great opportunity to dress festively and get to know other FirstU Marchers! Allies welcome! Meet no later than 12:30pm at our designated spot B110, in the Red Zone. Enter the staging area at Vimy Place and Wellington OR at Booth St and Wellington. Bring water bottles. Rainbow umbrellas make great portable shade. Mobility devices encouraged - we'll be on our feet for a long time. Email diversity@firstunitarianottawa.ca with questions, ride requests, or to join our Pride WhatsApp group for parade logistics.

Gathering at the Well: Ingathering and Water Ceremony – Sunday, September 13 – 10:30am

Join in this multi-generational service as we begin our program year with a UU Water Ceremony. Please bring a small amount of sacred water (by your own definition) to share in our ritual.

Congregational BBQ – Sunday, September 13 – 11:30am – Outdoors (weather permitting)

Join us for a Welcome Back barbiecue after our Ingathering service! Bring a salad or a dessert to share. Please register by Friday, September 4, by calling the office at: 613-725-1066

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

- September 2 - **Drop-In Games Night** - 6:30pm - Room 3 - Drop-In Games Night happens on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. Join us for euchre, chess, backgammon and other games.
- September 2 - **Online Mindfulness Meditation** - 7:00pm - Online - Contact adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca in advance to receive the zoom link.
- September 3 - **Virtual Discussion Circle** - Every other Thursday at 1:30pm on zoom. Discussion circles are held biweekly, with a different topic each time. No pre-registration is required, just drop in by clicking on the link. We look forward to seeing you! [Contact Andrew](#) with any questions. The topic for our first discussion of the year will be: "**Grouphink**".
- September 8 – **Journey Group** – 2:00pm - Room 6 - Our Journey Group meets twice a month to discuss a monthly theme. September's theme is "**Beginning**". Additional groups will form based on demand for time, type, and frequency. For more information. Starting in October, the group will meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month. [Contact Amalilly](#) for more information.
- September 21 - **Virtual Trivia Night** - 7:00pm on the third Monday of every month. Join us for our monthly Trivia Quiz! All you need is a pen or pencil, paper and your "thinking cap". Play alone or team up with friends! [Contact Andrew](#) with any questions. [Click here to get the link.](#)
- **Thursday Evening Reading for Growth** – 7:00pm on the fourth Thursday of the month – **On break until September.**
- **Friday Afternoon Reading for Growth** – **On break until September.** Friday Afternoon Reading for Growth, at 1:30pm on the last Friday of the month, will start again after a summer break on September 25 with a new varied list of titles. New members are very welcome. [Contact Clea](#) for full details.

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 News

CUC Young Adult Retreat at Unicamp! – September 11-13 – Unicamp

Join Unitarian Universalist young adults (19 – 40) for a wonderful weekend of community, conversation and outdoor adventures amidst the fall colours. Unicamp provides the perfect setting for a relaxing and rejuvenating retreat with new and old UU friends. You're welcome to stay for two or three nights, whatever works best for you. [Information and registration can be found here.](#) Questions can be directed to the CUC Youth and Young Adult Coordinator, Summer at summer.christiansen@cuc.ca.

If you want to talk to someone local who's going, please contact Nina at diversity@firstunitarianottawa.ca



News from Our Friends

Together for Nature Tour – Tuesday, September 15 – 7:00pm – St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church – \$30

Join Susan Aglukark, Terra Lightfoot, and representatives from Indigenous environmental protection organizations, on September 15, for an evening show to hear and learn from Indigenous artists, musicians and land protectors inspiring change. The Together for Nature Tour is an opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples to come together to raise our voices for nature and all our relations through story and song. [Tickets available here.](#)

Unitarian House Fall Clothing and Jewellery Sale – Thursday, September 17 – 11:00am - 4:00pm – 20 Cleary

Come choose from a wide selection of quality, gently used clothing donated by friends of Unitarian House as well as Reitman's, Northern Reflections, Cleo and Ricki's. All proceeds support Unitarian House Residents' Association. Unsold items will be distributed among local charities. Soup and sandwiches will be available for purchase at mid-day. **All sales are cash only.**

Humanist Perspectives

The Summer 2026 issue of Humanist Perspectives is now available. [Read it here.](#) Want to contribute your own humanist perspective on a topic? Read the submission guidelines [here.](#)

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