

Weekly e-UU Newsletter

Friday, January 23, 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, January 25, 2026

[Online](#) and In Person

Starts at 10:30am



Everything is Holy Now

Rev Lara Cowtan

This Sunday, we lean into the practice of cultivating a sense of wonder and reverence for the world around us.

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 January, our Sunday collections, unless marked towards your pledge, will be split 50/50 with our community partner, the Ten Oaks Project.

Ten Oaks Project is a grassroots charitable organization working to support 2SLGBTQ+ (two spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer) children, youth and families to thrive.

Based in Ottawa, Ten Oaks was founded in 2004 and, after 20 years, continues to offer affirming and life-changing camp and community programming rooted in play. All youth deserve a supportive place where they can be their true and authentic selves, but for many 2SLGBTQ+ youth and families, inclusive spaces are hard to find. To help continue to deliver transformative experiences to our community, donate to Ten Oaks – so that all kids who need it have a safe space.



Children's Religious Exploration

This Sunday, after Time for All Ages, we'll head downstairs for the Our Unitarian Gifts program, where we'll explore our values in fun and engaging ways. This week, we're continuing with our theme of The Gifts of Generosity.

- Ages 5 and under in the Rainbow Room with Rita
- Ages 6-7 in the Chalice Room with Jodi
- Ages 8+ in the Wonder Room with Susie

Please bring indoor shoes or slippers, as we'll be asking the kids to leave their outdoor boots on the boot trays. Kids are encouraged to leave a pair of indoor shoes/slippers in their RE Room for the season.

Caring Contacts for January

[Lisa Sharp](#) - 613-608-8698

[Karen Swinburne](#) - 613-234-4305

[David Hudson](#) - 613-402-5744

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.

Special Congregational Meeting

This Sunday, January 25, 12:30pm

In person and on Zoom



The meeting will be available both in-person and on Zoom, although in case of serious inclement weather, the entire meeting may be conducted on Zoom. **Voter registration (both in-person and online) will be from 12:00 – 12:30pm.**

FirstU Members will be able to attend **and vote** both in person and via Zoom. Meeting material are available on the [Members' Page](#) of the FirstU website.

Important: Members and observers who wish to join **online** should register **in advance** to receive the Zoom link for the meeting [HERE](#). **Please do not wait until meeting time to get your Zoom link, as you need to allow time to be registered to vote when you join online.**

PROXY: If you are a member and are unable to attend the meeting in person or on Zoom, please submit a **proxy**. Proxy forms and instructions on completing your proxy can be found on the Members' Page. Proxies can be submitted:

- By email to uuoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca
- In person at the Congregational Office
- Brought to registration at the Special Meeting in Worship Hall

Please submit proxies as soon as possible so that voter registration can proceed smoothly.

Please join us for this important meeting.

We expect it to be short, as the sole purpose is to approve a motion to authorize the mortgage or lien of the congregation's property, should it be needed to increase FirstU's equity in the new Aspire Riverview Homes project.

Featured Volunteer Opportunity

Back-Up Office Assistant Position

There is a need for three or four volunteers who would be able occasionally to cover the office reception desk when an Office Assistant is absent. The tasks would include: attendance from 10:00am to 3:00pm, answering the phone, directing or assisting people who come to the office and other duties. Training and familiarization will be provided. Contact oas@firstunitarianottawa.ca if interested.

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

Think Before You Print

As you've likely noticed, costs are rising across the board—and that includes keeping the FirstU supply closet stocked. Copy paper prices alone have increased by more than 40% since COVID, so we're asking everyone to be mindful when printing at the office. To help reduce waste, please consider the following:

- **Adjust your margins:** When formatting documents, choose narrow margins to fit more content on each page.
- **Tweak spacing and font size:** Small changes here can significantly reduce page count. (We've all had that frustrating moment when page 2 prints with a single line on it!)
- **Print double-sided:** Make good use of all that white space on the backs of pages, by choosing double-sided printing in Settings
- **Do a test print:** A quick test page ensures everything looks right before printing in larger quantities.

Thank you for helping us use our resources wisely!

Our Whole Lives Facilitators Wanted

Have you heard about OWL? It is our lifespan Sexuality Education program called [Our Whole Lives](#). We are looking for someone to help facilitate our upcoming Kindergarten - Grade 1 curriculum. This would require an **interview with Jodi** and an online **facilitator training in March**. We will be offering the **8 week program from April to June**. If you are interested and would like more information, please [email Jodi](#).

Religious Exploration Volunteers Wanted

Our [Religious Exploration for Children and Youth](#) (RE) programs are growing, and we want you to grow with us! Please [contact Jodi](#) if you'd like to learn more about how you can support our UU Kids, and our RE Staff, by volunteering with us.

Environmental Action Group (EAG) Advocacy Reminder

Time to remind you of last month's advocacy asking you to join the EAG in signing [LeadNow's petition](#) in response to the memorandum of understanding between the governments of Canada and Alberta. It focuses on stopping a bitumen pipeline from Alberta to the BC coast which would threaten our oceans, wildlife, rivers, and forests, and has received no Indigenous consent. Linked to this same MOU is [STAND.Earth's petition](#) calling for the upholding of the tanker ban to protect the BC Pacific coast from dangerous bitumen tankers. [For further information, click here!](#)

Aspire Riverview Homes Update

The loan program to increase our equity position in Aspire Riverview Homes is progressing well! Our 6-year term loans have been fully subscribed, and we are now accepting 11-year term loans only. These 11-year loans carry an interest rate of 4%, with a balloon payment at maturity. We are seeking to raise a total of \$1.8 million from private and institutional investors. Minimum investment is \$10,000. The program has already attracted private investment from outside the congregation. Contact invest@firstunitarianottawa.ca for more information.

Thank You from Fall Fair

Fall Fair's Silent Auction has a second side that you might not know about. Generous FirstU members and friends donate jewellery and art pieces that, thanks to discounts from local auction houses, we're able to sell at auction for higher bids, some of which start as high as \$1000. If you'd like to see some of these beautiful pieces, scroll through this Brooks & Palen auction and look at the items in lots 212-220, as well as 232 and 234. The upcoming February 5 Heffel auction will include, on our behalf, 'Sea Goddess Feeding her Young' by Inuk artist Sakiassie Ragee. These beautiful items may not be seen at Fall Fair, but we're grateful to all of you who donate them.

Online Journey Group

Join Amalilly for a new, *online* journey group on the second and fourth Sundays of the month.

The discussion runs from 6:30pm to 8:00pm on Zoom. [Click here for the zoom link](#), and email Amalilly at JourneyGroupAS@firstunitarianottawa.ca to receive the materials.

After-Service Conversations Now Weekly!

Are you interested in sharing some of your insights about the morning's service, or perhaps hearing what others think about it? Our after-service conversations will now be held every Sunday and we'd love to have you join us. Grab some food in Fellowship Hall then join us in the Lounge (near the office) for a good conversation. Coffee will be available.

Recurring Event Topics and Updates

- [Click HERE for a full list of our recurring events, plus zoom links for those that occur online.](#)
- **January 30 – Friday Afternoon Reading for Growth – 1:30pm.** Their book for January is *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*, by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. [Contact Clea](#) for the zoom link.
- **February 4 - Drop-In Euchre - 6:30pm** in Fellowship Hall.
- **February 5 - Virtual Discussion Circle - 1:30pm** on zoom. [Click here to find the zoom link.](#) This session's discussion topic is "The New World Order".
- **February 13 - The Men's Breakfast Group** will meet at **8:00am in Fellowship Hall** for breakfast and an engaging talk followed by a lively discussion. Register by this Monday, February 9 by [filling out this form.](#)
- **February 20 - Drumming Spires:** Come find your rhythm connection in this recreational community drum circle, **11:00am on the third Friday of every month**, in Fellowship Hall. Please bring a small drum, coffee canister or percussion instrument. No experience needed. Please accompany children who attend. For information and to RSVP, email: FridaySpires@mail.com
- **February 26 – Thursday Evening Reading for Growth – 7:00pm.** [Contact Ken](#) for the latest book and the zoom link.



Upcoming Events

Special Congregational Meeting – *This Sunday*, January 25 – 12:30pm – In Person (Worship Hall) and on Zoom
Members of the congregation will be able to participate and vote at this meeting both in person and via Zoom ([register for the zoom link](#) well in advance please). Meeting materials, proxy forms, and zoom registration are available on [the Members' Page](#).

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>



Save the Date

Women's Inclusive Pagan Circle - Imbolc Ritual – Monday, February 2 – 7:00pm

Fellowship Hall – \$5 Suggested Donation

Trans women, cis women, and non-binary folks are invited to join us as we honour Brigid, the Irish triple-goddess of smithcraft, poetry, and healing, on her feast day, February 2nd. Bring finger foods to share after the ritual and anything seasonal you'd like to include on our altar. We gather at 7:00pm and start our rituals around 7:30pm. Participation is by donation (\$5 suggested).

Empathy: The Superpower of Connection – Tuesday Feb. 3 - 7:00pm – Room 3

Empathy is key to creating strong relationships, reducing stress and enhancing emotional awareness. Join us to learn basic empathic skills and to distinguish these from other seemingly supportive but non-empathic approaches. Learn more on the [Adult Learning and Growth](#) page and, to register, contact adultlearning@firstunitariaottawa.ca

UU Pride Group Presents: Pal-Entines Day – Sunday, February 8 – 12:30pm – Fellowship Hall

Join 2SLGBTQIA+ friends, their chosen family, and allies from the UU community after service for snacks and fun activities. No registration is required; kids are welcome to attend with caregivers (no childcare is available). Please feel free to bring your own favourite board game!

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