

# Weekly e-UU Newsletter

## Friday, September 18, 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, September 20, 2026

Online and In Person

***Starts at 10:30am***



### Beginning Again in Love

*Reverend Lara Cowtan*

Today we reflect on what it means to repair after rupture and how we can start over, in big and small ways, with forgiveness and apology, from a place of open-hearted compassion.

#### SEPTEMBER OFFERING

Each month, we share our undesignated Sunday offertory 50/50 with a community partner. In September, our offerings support the Ottawa Network for Education Children's Breakfast Program. ONFE's School Breakfast Program provides nutritious breakfasts and snacks every school day. Together, our community ensures that students in the region have the energy they need for physical and intellectual growth.

[School Breakfast Program - Ottawa Network for Education](#)



#### 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](mailto: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 Sunday, *and next Sunday*, after Time for All Ages, our UU Kids will gather for whole group "Welcome to RE" activities. This Sunday's activities will centre on our UU values of Justice, Interdependence, Generosity, and Love! **Our new thematic RE program, "Woven Faith", will start on Sunday, October 4th.**

**Parents:** Please join us from 9:30am to 10:15am, on Sunday September 27, in the NOW Room to discuss our new volunteer initiative and thematic programming. You will have an opportunity to fill out our 2026-2027 program registration. An activity will be provided for the children.

### This Weekend's Events

**In Person Congregational Consultation – *This Sunday*, September 20 – 12:30pm – NOW Room**

Join the Discernment Task Force for a consultation regarding Rev Lara and our Discernment Process.

**Black History Bus Tour – *This Sunday, September 20* – 12:30pm to 2:15pm – \$20**  
We have contacted Black History Ottawa to arrange a guided bus tour of Ottawa to celebrate Black Canadians, their accomplishments and enduring legacies, whether you are a history enthusiast, cultural connoisseur, or curious to learn more. Departure is from 30 Cleary Ave. There are only 10 seats left, so visit the office (or call us: 613-725-1066) to get your ticket now.  
Please Note: The bus is not equipped with mobility devices.



### 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 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](mailto:caringvisitors@firstunitarianottawa.ca)

### Settled Minister Discernment Process

Key dates to share your thoughts and hopes as we discern whether to call Rev. Lara as our settled long-term minister:



- **Online anonymous survey:** Thank you to those of you who have filled in the online survey or paper survey. The survey will close on September 30, so there is still plenty of time to complete it - either online or paper. Paper surveys are available at the back of the pews before or after service. The paper survey is double sided. Once you complete the paper survey you can drop it off on Sundays at the "urn" of discernment at the back of the pews.
- **September 20 Congregational Consultation** will be held in the NOW room after the service. Start time is 12:30pm. Please join us.
- **September 27 Fireside Chat with Rev Lara** in Worship Hall, and online, after the service. Start time is 12:30. We hope to see you there. If you are not at FirstU you can watch the Fireside Chat on the church's YouTube channel. It will also be recorded so that you can view it later.
- **October 18 Special Congregational Meeting:** The vote is open to all members of the Congregation.

If you have any questions, connect with the members of the Task Force at [discernment@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:discernment@firstunitarianottawa.ca)  
Your Discernment Task Force: Lisa Boulay, Alex Campbell, Ally Hobson, Erin Keene, and Lee Rose

### Featured Volunteer Opportunity

#### Social Justice Leaders Needed

Are you passionate about social justice? We have action groups focusing on: food security, affordable housing, climate crisis, mental health, refugee support, LGBTQ+ issues and International Human Rights. Please consider getting involved in one of these groups so they can continue in their great work. [Contact Lisa S for more information.](#)

Lisa Sharp, Volunteer Coordinator - [volunteers@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:volunteers@firstunitarianottawa.ca)



### Read All About It

#### 2025/26 Annual Report Now Available

There are a few printed copies available in the church office, or visit [the Members' Page](#) to read.

## Become a FirstU Member

Have you been engaging for at least three months with FirstU? Do you have questions about the membership process and benefits? Do you want to vote at our upcoming congregational meetings? If so, the Welcome and Membership team would love to chat with you. Please drop a line to [welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca) or stop by the Welcome Table on a Sunday. NOTE: The deadline for membership applications to be approved in time for the Oct 18 settled minister vote is Monday October 5.

## Save the Date! Holtom Lecture with The Honourable Bob Rae

Mark your calendars. This year's Holtom Lecture will be held on Tuesday, November 3 at 7:30pm, in Worship Hall, and will feature the Honourable Bob Rae speaking on the subject "What is the Direction for Canada post DAVOS?"

## Journey Groups

Explore the monthly congregational theme to deepen our spiritual and soul matters together.

- Twice monthly in-person group next meets on Tuesday Sept 22nd 2:00 to 3:30pm. New participants are welcome.
- Once monthly online Zoom group, hopefully starting Sunday Sept 27th, 7:00 to 8:30pm, dependent on a minimum of 6 participants.
- An in-person group to meet Wednesday evenings (frequency to be determined by the group), dependent on a minimum of 6 participants.

[Complete the form](#) to register, and email [adultlearningas@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:adultlearningas@firstunitarianottawa.ca) to receive the zoom link if you wish to participate online. **Facilitators are needed** and training is provided. Email [adultlearningas@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:adultlearningas@firstunitarianottawa.ca) to volunteer as a facilitator.

## FirstU BBQ Event Thank You!

Thank you to all Men's Breakfast Group volunteers who helped with Saturday's setup, event operations, and takedown. Thank you as well for the many volunteers helping with the very efficient cleanup and supporting the takedown. Initial feedback indicates a successful gathering.

## Fall Fair

With fall starting officially on the 23rd, our thoughts turn to the Fall Fair. Fall Fair will be held, this year, on November 14, so let's start planning now:

- Our [web page](#) is now accessible on our website and will provide all the information you need to keep up to date.
- Start putting aside items to donate to the Fall Fair. Regular donations will be accepted from November 9 to November 12 from 10 am to 7 pm. [Click HERE for this year's list](#) of accepted donations.
- BUT: Please drop off your donations of jewellery for the Fall Fair in the main office anytime. We are already collecting donations for sorting, repairing, and cleaning, so bring those donations in sooner rather than later.
- Volunteer with Fall Fair. If you've done it before, you know it's fun, and if you're new, it's a great way to meet people. Contact Eva B by email at [ffvols@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:ffvols@firstunitarianottawa.ca) to join.

## Find FirstU on Social Media

Did you know that FirstU has a Facebook page AND an Instagram account? Click the embedded links to give us a follow, and help spread the word about events happening at FirstU.

## Public Service Announcement: Microsoft Publisher to be Discontinued!

If you have any documents in this format, please note that support for it will end on October 1. To keep your documents accessible, you'll need to convert them to another format.

## After-Service Conversations Return

Interested in sharing some of your insights from the morning's service and hearing what others think about it? Our weekly after-service conversations are back again beginning **this Sunday**, September 20th. Grab some food from Mia's Indian Cuisine (cash preferred) in Fellowship Hall, then join us in the Lounge (near the office) for a good conversation. Coffee will be available.

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## Call to Action: Preventing Gender-Based Violence

### *Provided by the Men's Breakfast Group Compassion-to-Action Initiative*

Canada's [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) has a pillar on prevention, but does not have data to show less violence nor examples of proven prevention. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides a rich [Resource for Action](#) of examples proven to reduce intimate partner violence. One example is the Canadian "Fourth R: Strategies for Healthy Teen Relationships", which showed boys completing the program were three times less likely to perpetrate dating violence.

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## Upcoming Events

**Climate March 2026: Stop the Burning! Defend Our Climate! – *This Saturday*, September 19 – 10:30am**  
**Major's Hill Park**

Join Fridays for Future and members of the Environmental Action Group at the 2026 Climate March on Saturday, September 19, 2026. The March, which starts in Jacques Cartier Park (Gatineau), will arrive at Major's Hill Park for approximately 10:30am, before winding towards City Hall. Meet our small group from FirstU near [the Twist 1.5 sculpture](#), just north of the Chateau Laurier Hotel Parking Lot. [Click here for more information.](#)

**In Person Congregational Consultation – Sunday, September 20 – 12:30pm – NOW Room**

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**Black History Bus Tour – Sunday, September 20 – 12:30pm to 2:15pm – \$20**

We have contacted Black History Ottawa to arrange a guided bus tour of Ottawa to celebrate Black Canadians, their accomplishments and enduring legacies, whether you are a history enthusiast, cultural connoisseur, or curious to learn more. Departure is from 30 Cleary Ave. **There are only 10 seats left**, so visit the office (or call us: 613-725-1066) to get your ticket now. **Please Note:** The bus is not equipped with mobility devices.

**Women's Inclusive Pagan Circle Autumn Equinox Ritual – *This Tuesday*, September 22 – 7:00pm - 9:00pm**  
**Fellowship Hall – \$5 Suggested**

Trans women, cis women, and non-binary folks are invited to take part in our Autumn Equinox Ritual. We will be inviting in Cybele, Great Mother — so often syncretized with other nurturers — to help us begin to bed down, to rest and grow through the winter. Bring finger foods to share after the ritual and anything seasonal you'd like to include on our altar.

**Three Rivers Singers at Seniors' Climate Witness – This Wednesday, September 23 – 8:30am**  
**Bank of Canada (234 Wellington St)**

The Seniors' Climate Witness Caravan is coming to Ottawa, with many activities planned for September 19-24. [Details here.](#) Please join us outside the Bank of Canada at 8:30am this Wednesday, September 23, to hear FirstU's own Three Rivers Singers perform.

**Parents RE Meeting – Sunday, September 27 – 9:30am to 10:15am – NOW Room**

Parents, please join us from 9:30 to 10:15am on Sunday September 27th in the NOW Room to discuss our new volunteer initiative and this year's thematic programming. You will also have an opportunity to fill out our 2026-2027 program registration. Kids' activities will be provided during the meeting.

**Hybrid Fireside Chat with Reverend Lara – Sunday, September 27 – 12:30pm – Worship Hall and Online**

Join the Discernment Task Force for a hybrid Fire Side Chat with Reverend Lara after the service in Worship Hall. Planning to join us online? Check our website's Welcome page on the 27<sup>th</sup> to find the livestream link under "Upcoming Events".

**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 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.](#)
- September 22 – **Journey Group** – 2:00pm - Room 6 - Our Journey Group meets twice a month to discuss a monthly theme. September's theme is "**Beginnings**". Additional groups will form based on demand for time, type, and frequency. Starting in October, the group will meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month. [Contact Amalilly](#) for more information.
- September 22 - **Tuesday Tai Chi** - 1:00pm - Fellowship Hall - Improve your health and balance. Join us weekly to practice Tai Chi. Led by Friends of Taoist Tai Chi, Ottawa.
- September 22 – **Journey Group** – 2:00pm - Room 6 - Our Journey Group meets twice a month to discuss a monthly theme. September's theme is "**Beginnings**". Additional groups will form based on demand for

time, type, and frequency. Starting in October, the group will meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month. [Contact Amalilly](#) for more information.

- September 23 - **Online Mindfulness Meditation** - 7:00pm - Online - Contact [adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca](mailto:adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca) in advance to receive the zoom link.
- September 24 - **Thursday Tai Chi** - 10:00am - Fellowship Hall - Improve your health and balance. Join us weekly to practice Tai Chi. Led by Friends of Taoist Tai Chi, Ottawa.
- September 24 - **Thursday Evening Reading for Growth** – 7:00pm on the fourth Thursday of the month. [Contact Ken](#) for the zoom link and our first book title of the year.
- September 25 - **Men's Breakfast Group** - 8:30am - Fellowship Hall - Gentlemen are invited to join the Men's Breakfast Group on Friday September 25, for coffee, socializing, and breakfast, followed by an informative and engaging talk and ensuing discussion, by **Jim Howse** on the topic, [Preserving Indigenous Languages in the Computer Age: Nunavut and Inuktitut Syllabics](#). Register no later than Monday Sept 21 by [clicking HERE and submitting this form](#).
- September 25 - **Friday Afternoon Reading for Growth** – 1:30pm on the last Friday of the month. will be discussing ***Second Suns***, by David Relin, who spent a year with a Nepalese and an American eye surgeon as they cured blindness caused by cataracts in remote Himalayan villages. [Contact Clea](#) for the zoom link. New members are very welcome.
- October 1 - **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. Our topic will be: **"Describe the most captivating painting or artwork that you've ever seen"**
- October 16 - **Drumming Spires** - 11:00am on the third Friday of every month. Find your rhythm connection in this recreational community drum circle. Bring a small drum or improvised percussion instrument. No experience needed! Kids must be accompanied. For information, or to confirm attendance, please email [fridayspires@mail.com](mailto:fridayspires@mail.com).

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

### Canadian UU National Survey

The Canadian Unitarian Council invites Unitarian Universalists across Canada to share your perspectives, experiences, and hopes directly with the CUC, with the aim of supporting Unitarian Universalism in Canada going forward. Your insights will guide the next chapter of Canadian Unitarian Universalism. [Fill out the survey HERE](#).

### 2026 Mirth and Dignity Retreat: Moments of Joy and Moments of Peace

**October 8-11 – Crieff Hills Retreat Centre (Guelph, ON) – From \$575 USD**

Mirth and Dignity, the Canadian not-for-profit behind the wildly popular UU Hysterical Society, is holding a retreat this autumn in beautiful southern Ontario! Spend four days/three nights at the Crieff Hills retreat centre (just outside of Guelph, ON) laughing together, dedicating time to rest and recharging, and connecting with other UUs. Some of your favourite Canadian UUs are going to be there! [Full details and registration here](#).



## News from Our Friends

### Van Drivers for Unitarian House

Unitarian House needs volunteer drivers to ferry residents to and from grocery stops along Carling Avenue, between Sherbourne and Pinecrest, on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between 9:00am and Noon. For details, contact Riley at: [activities@unitarianhouse.ca](mailto:activities@unitarianhouse.ca)

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