

Weekly e-UU Newsletter

Friday, October 2, 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, October 4, 2026

[Online](#) and In Person

Starts at 10:30am



A Meditation on Courage

With Lisa Boulay and the Discernment Task Force

October's theme is Courage. How do we define courage, and where has it shown up in our lives? When are we called to be courageous—both as individuals and as a congregation? In this interactive service, guest speaker Lisa Boulay and the Settled Minister Discernment Task Force will guide us in exploring these questions and more.

Please remember to wear an orange shirt to the service.

October Offering

Each month, we share our undesignated Sunday offertory 50/50 with a community partner. In October, our offerings support [Cornerstone Housing for Women](#). Cornerstone provides a continuum of housing and support for women and gender-diverse people that is inclusive and reduces barriers.



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 Sunday, after Time for All Ages, our UU Kids will go downstairs to begin our new thematic RE program, "Woven Faith"!

- **In the Rainbow Room** (ages 2-5, with Rita) we will be exploring a new item shown to us by Ellery Churchmouse.
- **In the Chalice Room** (ages 6-8, with Esther), we will be exploring the joy of being curious and making bookmarks to share with the community.
- **In the Wonder Room** (ages 9+, with Jodi), we will be telling the story of Frankenstein's Monster and making our own creatures.

A Letter from Jodi

Dear Congregation,

After much reflection, I have made the difficult decision to step down from my role as Director of Religious Exploration, effective November 8.

This congregation has been my spiritual home for the past 22 years, and it has been an incredible blessing to serve as your DRE for the last three. Working with our children, youth, and families, has been a wonderful experience and I am very grateful to have had this opportunity.

At this point, my family needs more of my time and energy, and I have come to realize that I need to focus more fully on them and on my own wellbeing. While this was not an easy decision, I know it is the right one for this time of my life.

I am deeply appreciative of the trust, support, friendships, and opportunities I have been given. Together, we have planted many seeds and nurtured a growing community of curiosity, kindness, and compassion. It has been a joy and an honour to be part of that work.

I will continue to support the program during the transition and look forward to making the most of our remaining time together.

*With gratitude,
Jodi McIntosh*



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 October

Maryan O'Hagan - [Email](#) - 613-729-7752

Marianne Wood - [Email](#) - 613-725-3452

Caring Cards for September: Maury P.

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

Settled Minister Discernment Process

The Settled Minister Discernment Task Force would like to thank everyone who participated in the various activities (survey, zoom or online consultations, in person or online Fireside Chat with Rev Lara, conversations over coffee or at the back of the pews, etc.) of the discernment process.

Please join the Discernment Task Force this Sunday as we kick off October's theme of "Courage", and announce the Discernment Task Force recommendation.

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



Featured Volunteer Opportunity

Join the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee works to recruit new board members every spring - and we need your help in this vital role! If you would like more information, please contact Chuck S.

Lisa Sharp, Volunteer Coordinator - volunteers@firstunitarianottawa.ca



Read All About It

Orange Shirt Sunday

September 30 is our National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, also called Orange Shirt Day. Our October 4 Sunday Service will focus on one of the Anishinaabeg Seven Grandfather Teachings, and we ask that you remember to wear your orange shirts to the service that day.

Zoom Links

When a recurring zoom link is provided to you, please ensure you record the last date it works so that you will remember to request a new link. Thank you!

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 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.

Learn About Your Mayoral Candidates' Ecological Plans

The city of Ottawa Municipal Election takes place on October 26. The Environmental Action Group encourages you to find out some of our mayoral candidates' intentions for the environmental and sustainability issues facing Ottawa by watching (or re-watching) [the recent Eco-Debate on YouTube](#).

Fall Fair

Fall Fair is in six weeks, so let's prepare to have a great one.

- Donations will be accepted from Monday November 9 to Thursday November 12. Start setting aside your donations now. For a list of what to donate and what not to donate [please refer to the website](#) or pick up a flyer from the table at the back.
- Please bring any **jewellery donations** to the front office NOW so there is time to clean, repair and assess them.
- Think about volunteering. [See the website](#) for specific opportunities or contact Eva B at ffvols@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

Donating by eTransfer

Please be advised: eTransfers are automatically deposited into our bank account. **The memo line on the eTransfer must be filled in stating what the payment is for, in order to be applied to the correct budget area.** If no information is provided, it will be deposited into a general account. This means:

- If it's your pledge payment you will not get credit for the payment
- If it's a rental payment it will not be applied correctly
- If it's a registration fee you will not be registered

Michelle receives many eTransfers per month and needs your help to make sure they get to the correct place.

Please fill out the memo line. If you are new to the congregation, please make sure the office knows your contact information for tax receipting purposes. The email address for eTransfer donations is fm@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

2025/26 Annual Report Now Available

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

Call to Action: Preventing Gender-Based Violence

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

[Resource for Action](#) highlights programs for couples that are proven to prevent intimate partner violence. These work to improve communication, conflict management, and emotional regulation skills. Some work with couples starting committed relationships. Others work with couples trying to address a problem such as substance abuse. One example highlighted by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program. How can we encourage more couples to benefit from these proven programs?



Upcoming Events

FirstU Building Tour – Sunday, October 4 – 11:45am – Worship Hall

Got an event in Room Three? Wondering where the supply closet is? Trying to find our indoor labyrinth? Meet at the Lectern in Worship Hall, on the first Sunday of the month, and join one of our volunteer tour guides to get to know your way around FirstU!

FirstU Food Cupboard Food Drive – Sunday, October 11 – 10:00am

This Thanksgiving, share what you can: Please bring non-perishable food items as well as hygiene basics like (ideally unscented) deodorant, shampoo, dish soap, and toothpaste to the service. There will be tables available for your donations, and we'd love to see them filled!

The Mess We Are In – Friday, October 16 – 6:00pm (pizza dinner, by donation) – 6:45pm (discussion, kids’ activities available) – Room 3

The Mess We Are In political study group will meet to discuss the first two parts of *End Times Fascism: And the Fight for the Living World* by Astra Taylor and Naomi Klein. Pizza will be available (by donation) beforehand at 6pm and a kids’ movie will be offered in a neighbouring room. Please [contact Marc B](#) for details and to RSVP for pizza!

Special Congregational Meeting for Vote to Call Settled Minister – Sunday, October 18 – 12:30pm Worship Hall and Online

Members! Please make sure to attend this special congregational meeting where we will vote on the question of calling Reverend Lara Cowtan to be our settled minister. **Voting will be hybrid.** Meeting documents, proxy forms, and zoom link will be available on the website by October 6.

Groove Dance Fitness – Mondays, starting October 19 – 7:30pm – Fellowship Hall – \$70

Reignite your sense of play! Join other cis women, trans women, and non-binary folks aged 16+ for eight weeks of Groove Dance Fitness. Easy, low-impact steps that you do your way to great tunes, playing with boas, scarves, ribbon sticks, and light up rings. Easy-to-follow instructions - where you can't get it wrong! \$70 for the eight-week series; or \$10 for drop-in. Email foodshare@firstunitarianottawa.ca to register and get payment instructions. Net proceeds support the FirstU Food Cupboard.

Finance Deep Dive Sessions – Monday, October 19 at 10:00am AND Wednesday, October 21 at 7:00pm – [On Zoom](#)

Join Treasurer Guy B and Finance Manager, Michelle, for two deep dives into FirstU's finances during the week leading up to our Fall Congregational Meeting. Use the embedded Zoom link, above, to join the meeting of your choice at the appointed time.

Fall Congregational Meeting – Sunday, October 25 – 12:30pm – Worship Hall [and Online](#)

Join us for our annual Fall Congregational Meeting. Voting will be in-person only, so watch this space for information on proxy voting if you are unable to attend in Worship Hall. Meeting documents will be available on the Members' Page as of mid-October.

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

- October 6 – **Journey Group** – 2:00pm - Room 6 - Our Journey Group meets twice a month to discuss a monthly theme. October’s theme is “**Courage**”. 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.
- October 9 - **Men's Breakfast Group** - 8:30am - Fellowship Hall - Gentlemen are invited to join the Men's Breakfast Group on Friday, October 9, for coffee, socializing, and breakfast, followed by an informative and engaging talk [by Larry Jones on the topic of "Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence \(SETI\) – Are We Alone?"](#). Register no later than Monday, October 5, by [clicking HERE and submitting this form](#).

- October 15 - **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: **"What is the best novel you've ever read?"**
- October 22 - **Thursday Evening Reading for Growth** – 7:00pm on the fourth Thursday of the month. Our next book is ***No Beast So Fierce***, by Dane Huckelbridge, about a tiger stalking and attacking humans between 1900 and 1907, and the hunter sent to kill her. [Contact Ken](#) for the zoom link.
- October 30 - **Friday Afternoon Reading for Growth** – 1:30pm on the last Friday of the month. Our next book is ***The Moment of Lift: How Empowering Women Changes the World*** by Melinda Gates. [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 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

Inspiration and Dedication: 30 Years of the Ottawa Friends of Tibet – Saturday, October 17 – 10:00am (all day event) – Saint Paul University (223 Main St)

Ottawa Friends of Tibet invites members and friends of FirstU to join them as they celebrate their 30th anniversary and the hard work of founders Jurme & Angela Wangda, helpers Fred and Bonnie Cappuccino, and many committed volunteers. [Tickets and details here.](#)

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