



WHAT IS THE FALL FAIR?

The annual Fall Fair at the *First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa* started as a modest endeavour about 1980, initially called the Holly and Lace Bazaar. Over the years it has grown to the extent that it now takes almost 400 volunteers to pull it off!

The Fair is a study in Unitarian Universalist principles in action: volunteers having fun getting to know each other, caring for each other, overcoming problems more or less gracefully, laughing, and working together to a common cause – to raise money for the church.

The proceeds constitute the second largest fund raising effort of the church, contributing significantly to the operating budget and programs to share our understanding of how universal compassion, tolerance and protection of other species can change lives for the better. These include the many social justice initiatives that are so close to the hearts of the congregation –donations to the food bank, the Stephen Lewis Foundation, or sponsoring refugee families.

The Fall Fair is now such a popular annual event that on the morning of the Fair, there is already a long line-up *before* doors open at 0930 (complimentary cups of coffee help chase away the chills!).

Smooth and careful organizing of this event by dedicated volunteers is key to its success. Volunteers mobilize beginning the week before the Saturday fair, and the 12,000 square foot church is transformed into a market selling anything from diamond rings at the silent auction, designer labels in the Boutique, or baking dishes, to delicious food at both the International Café and the Bistro. You name it – we sell it! (Well, almost.) Everything possible is re-used, re-purposed, or recycled. If no-one has bought it, we will contribute it to the community or recycle it responsibly.

Donations are gratefully received from community businesses, congregants, their friends and family, and anyone looking to move good but no-longer wanted treasures. And if they aren't sold at the Fair, a committed team of volunteers ensure that most of the remaining goods go to community organizations that serve the needy.

DON'T MISS IT!

