



Inside this issue:

In Memoriam.....	1
Remembering Dr. Ann Denis.....	1
Caring Contacts.....	1
Facing Windows - Rev. Eric Meter.....	2
Religious Exploration.....	3
Musical Interludes.....	3
From the Editor.....	4
Something to Celebrate!.....	4
Code Red for Humanity.....	5-6
A Prayer among Friends.....	6
Proposed 8th Unitarian Universalist Principle - Next Steps.....	7
Social Responsibility News.....	8-9
Campus Diary.....	10
Meet a Member.....	11
Thanks, Merci, Miigwetch.....	11
FirstU Information.....	12

Deadline for next Spire submissions:
November 15, 2021



In Memoriam

Christine Louise MacDonald, mother of Elizabeth ~ died June 8 2021 (at 83)

Robert “Harry” Crighton, husband of Joan Ruth, father of Scott and Eric ~ died July 17, 2021 (at 88)

Michael Christopher Carson, husband of Patricia Paul-Carson, son of the late Mary and Robert ~ died August 5, 2021 (at 71)

Also in our thoughts:

Anne Gunvor Arnold, wife of the late Keith Arnold, mother of Elisabeth, Tina and Sylvia ~ died July 4, 2021 (at 87)

Remembering Dr. Ann Barden Denis

At the Congregation’s AGM in June, we learned of the very generous donation that the Congregation had received from the estate of Ann Barden Denis, a long-time member of Ottawa First. The photos in this article show the memorial tree planted this spring by two of Ann’s close friends Marilyn Fevrier and Elizabeth Bowen. Unfortunately, there was no room for the tree in our Memorial Garden so it is growing east of the north wing of Unitarian House. The tree is a Flaming Red Maple which should produce a brilliant display of fall colours. As the seasons change, you’re welcome to drop by, remember Ann and see if her tree lives up to its name.



~ submitted by
Elizabeth Bowen



Photos: Paula Theetge

Caring Contacts

September

Sandy Devine
devineaj@outlook.com
613-224-5695

Elisabeth Morrison
eq604@ncf.ca
613-225-6702

October

Bill Wylie
billwylie@bell.net
613-761-8092

Angela Beale
ambeale@ncf.ca
613-233-5420

November

Marianne Wood
mharhwood@gmail.com
613-725-3452

Barb Ryan
ryanbarb99@gmail.com
613-710-3131

Facing Windows ~ Rev. Eric Meter



First and foremost, my wife Ann and I are thrilled to finally be with you all and settling into life in Ottawa. After a few months of feeling like I had a foot in both your faith community and the one I formerly served, it is a joy to be able to focus my attention in one place.

Let me introduce myself to you a bit more fully, even though that introduction will be continued in the next issue of *The Spire* which is set to feature an interview Mike Lloyd will conduct with me. From my experience with the Search Team, Mike knows how to ask questions that get to the heart of the matter. But that's a little way off. In the meantime, I'll leave you with these reflections. Hopefully, I won't ramble too much.

Recently I was unpacking books and finding space for them on the shelves of your minister's office. And as I held books and curios I've accumulated over the years, for the first time in over a year (I never did move into the minister's office during my previous year-long interim ministry assignment) I felt like I was greeting old friends again after a long absence.

For years I had a broadside with the following quote by Charles Lamb, "A book reads the better which is our own, and has been so long known to us, that we know the topography of its blots, and dog's ears, and can trace the dirt in it to having read it at tea with buttered muffins."

I found myself smiling as I discovered tea stains and residue of the occasional muffin crumb: This was the book I preached on that didn't quite get to the heart of things. This photo was taken of the first Coming of Age retreat I led when I barely knew what I was doing. And then there was the card the Board chair sent after our religious educator and I offered a version of Mark Twain's *The Diary of Adam and Eve* on a summer Sunday one year. Twain's account ends with Adam standing at Eve's grave, saying, "Wherever she was, there was Eden." Those were the very words the man's grandfather had engraved on his grandmother's tombstone, though no one remaining knew where they came from.

Maybe I'm just a nostalgic type, but creating good memories seems more than ever to be what a large part of life is about.

In the weeks and months to come, I cannot wait to hear about your best memories of FirstU, what the congregation means to you, and what your deepest hopes are for the future of the congregation.

Moving on, and having mentioned Mike earlier, let me take this opportunity to thank him and the rest of the search team that brought me to you: Jane Lindsay (chair),

Mary Ella Keblusek, Lena Talback, Jody McIntosh, Amy Bérubé and Phil Nagy. My debt to them certainly continues, and I can only hope that the rest of you have given them the thanks they deserve. This is one hard-working and talented bunch!

Switching gears now, I want you all to know that I will normally be at the church office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, generally from 11 am to 3 pm. And, of course, other times by appointment. Monday is my sabbath day and I find Thursdays work best for me as days when I write at home. That said, until we are able to officially re-open the church office, I will likely only be there on Tuesdays and Fridays. I can always be reached at minister@firstunitarianottawa.ca and by the time you read this, I should be getting direct calls at 343-987-1745. I'll say to you what I've said to those of every other congregation I've served: I'd much rather you reach out than not, but please don't be surprised if you contact me about a non-pastoral church matter on a Monday and I don't respond until Tuesday. And if you are unsure whether I'd consider your concern pastoral or not, I invite you to contact me then and there. We can work out the details later.

Finally, I want to explain why I chose *Facing Windows* as the title of this series of columns for *The Spire*. The windows in both the church worship space and minister's office brought to mind a movie I first watched some years ago now. *Facing Windows* is an Italian film from 2004. Some of you may be familiar with it. A reflection by the main character has stayed with me all this time. Giovanna is a woman in a less than perfect marriage. She's looking out her window, thinking of her late friend David, a survivor of the concentration camps during WWII:

I still need your advice David, one of your glances, one of your gestures. But then suddenly I feel your gestures in mine and recognize you when I speak. Does everyone who leaves you always leave part of themselves with you? Is this the secret of having memories? If that's true I feel much safer because I know I'll never be alone.

May we face our windows together, knowing that as part of this community of faith, we never need be alone.

*In shared faith,
~Rev. Eric*



Religious Exploration ~ Neo Yaxley



Musical Interludes ~ Jenn Berntson



I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the warm welcome I've had at First Unitarian. It's a strange time to be beginning a new position and meeting a new community! However it has been lovely to (slowly) make the acquaintance of some of you, and I look forward to seeing you, in-person or on Zoom, in the coming days. I have taken over the First Unitarian music email address, so please feel free to send me an email music@firstunitarianottawa.ca, introduce yourself, and share any thoughts you have with me about the musical life of FirstU!

I want to address a special note to our choristers, because I understand that the pandemic has been for you, as it has been for me, an incredibly difficult time. Choral singing is a unique joy; the feeling of your voice lifting in song with so many others to create something more powerful than you could ever have made on your own. It's something that I could always count on, every week, to lift my spirits and bring me happiness even on my most difficult days. Going without it this past year and a half has shown me how central it was to my spiritual, social, and artistic fulfillment, and I miss it with all of my heart.

I don't yet have a clear picture of what the next year will bring - and even if I did, COVID seems to waylay every plan I make! But I believe this next year will be better than the last one, and that for some part of it in some way, we will be able to experience that joy of communal singing.

I'm looking forward to my time with all of you and excited for what the future brings!

~ Jenn Berntson

From the Editor...

My dancing partner has been gone for a long time now, but it still feels like yesterday when he swept me around the ballroom of the old Standish Hall in the 60s, waltzing to the sound of the live 'big bands' on Saturday nights, the disco ball throwing starlight in every direction. Magical! Other nights we'd head for the Ottawa House or "The Gatineau", to enjoy the beats of disco and rock 'n roll as we jived up a storm into the wee hours, then stopped for breakfast on the way home. I still manage to feel the beat even now as I pick up my small dog and dance her around the living room while listening to the 'oldies' on my playlist! Ahhh, nostalgia!

September promises more memories as I spend the first two weeks at a cottage reconnecting with 'the girls' (daughter, sisters, sisters-in-law). We try to spend some cottage time together every year, but this will be the first since 2019. And yes, we will dance together, sing, play badminton, bridge and scrabble, we will eat, drink and be merry!

Fall also brings a sense of anticipation for the Congregation, as we welcome our recently arrived settled Minister, Rev. Eric Meter, and our new Director of Music, Jennifer Berntson.

Our feature article, *Code Red for Humanity*, sends an important message

for all of us and is not to be missed. Other submissions this month include the CUCs proposed *8th Principle: Dismantling Racism*, an update on the *Ajashki Garden*, poverty awareness initiatives, campus diaries, and our always interesting *Meet a Member* column.

I have no doubt that the next few months will be busy ones among our congregants for there is much work to be done. My hope is that very soon we will enjoy face-to-face encounters with each other. I, for one, will be doing my happy dance when that time arrives.

In fellowship and hope,
~Marg Lee, Spire Editor

Something to Celebrate!

On August 8, our Settled Minister Search Team, their immediate families and Rev. Eric Meter and his wife Ann De Leon gathered outside for a BBQ at 'Kimmelot' (the cottage Terry Kimmel and I own) to celebrate what we all feel was a very successful search process. As Search Team member Lena Talback said, "It was fun to see everyone again in person, to welcome Rev. Eric and Ann, meet other partners and children and enjoy everyone's tasty contributions."

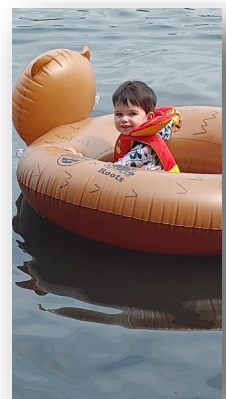
Our timing worked perfectly with Ontario's Phase 3 COVID guidelines which changed to allow such gatherings shortly before our hoped-for date. Importantly, the weather came through after anxious days of tracking differing forecasts from three weather services.

It did appear, and the post-reviews confirm, that a very good time was had by all. We mingled, laughed and smiled a lot, ate – yes a lot of that too – and hung out beside or in Pike Lake. All this was well deserved after a long and demanding search process ... demanding not only for the search team, but also for our families and Eric and Ann. We heard from one of Jodi's great kids that they had been "wanting to meet the person who kept Mom from them for so long". In the same vein, Anne Nagy said she "so appreciated that the families of the search committee members were thanked, for it (the search) was a lot of suppers with a book for company but the result is worth it!"

In the words of search team member Mike Lloyd: "The BBQ celebration was a fitting way to close the loop on our search process. It was great to be part of a multi-generational welcoming of Rev. Eric and Ann into a new era for our congregation!"

Most importantly, this welcoming seems to have shone through as beautifully evidenced in these heart-warming words from Ann: "Thank you for a memorable welcome to Ottawa from all who made it possible. I feel safe, accepted and finally home."

~ submitted by Jane Lindsay, Search Team Chair



Feature Article: Code Red for Humanity!

It is here and now and apparent across the world! Canada has major hurdles to meet any climate goal.

This past month, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a landmark 3,949-page report based on the evaluation of thousands of studies and climate model simulations. Improved data collection and more advanced understanding and methodology led to more definitive conclusions which paint grave consequences for our world if we cannot act decisively to lower our emissions immediately.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called it a “code red for humanity”!¹

Worldwide, scientists agree it is “unequivocal” that human activity has produced a world of severe heat waves, wildfires, floods, sea level rise, death and suffering of many species, and damage to the natural world. The planet is hotter now than at any time since the beginning of the last Ice Age, 125,000 years ago. Fossil fuel burning and deforestation have driven carbon dioxide levels to a two million year high; agriculture and fossil fuels have brought methane and nitrous oxide levels to an 800,000 year high. We are moving closer to irreversible climate tipping points.

The report offers five scenarios based on level of emissions to predict how likely we will be to meet the Paris targets of limiting warming to ‘below 2, preferably to 1.5°C’, compared to pre-industrial levels. All scenarios showed warming will continue to rise until mid-century to over 1.5°C. At present, the world is on track to reach a warming of 1.5°C by 2030, a decade earlier than previously predicted.

Only the very low emissions scenario sees an eventual temperature decrease falling back to 1.4°C by the end of the century. ‘The very high emissions’ scenario predicts disastrous air warming of 4.4°C by the end of the century. Every increment of warming will have consequences, in frequency and severity of climate extremes.^{2,3}

However, the positive news is that if we act now, there is still hope for preventing the worst scenarios. First, clear, decisive action must be taken by governments and political leaders to make changes to every

October/November, 2021 (COP26), is a success.

Where does Canada stand in all of this? Canada is warming at twice the global rate and in some parts of the west and north, at three times the rate. There are deep and frightening changes in the Arctic, including the collapse of ice sheets, thawing permafrost and increasing ocean salinity. We have known for years that we must transition away from fossil fuels, but have lacked the political leadership at all levels of government to take meaningful action. Environmentalists

have pointed to Canada’s stubborn refusal to scale back subsidies to fossil fuel companies, its failure to cut back on emissions and its inability to meet climate targets. **Canada’s record of emissions control is by far the worst of the G7 countries.** To meet its global share, Canada should be aiming for a decrease of 50-60% from 2005 levels by 2030. Recently Canada pledged it would reduce its emissions by 40-45%, but

if we maintain course, the latest modelling forecasts only a 36% reduction. In addition, Canada’s provinces hold jurisdiction over natural resource development and 95% of Canadian emissions are not covered by provincial or territorial climate targets. In Ontario, emissions dropped dramatically with the phasing out of coal, but with a new government and a different approach to environmental concerns, its emissions have been on the rise since 2017. Without the provinces on board, it is a major hurdle for Canada to meet any climate target.^{4,5}

...continued on page 6



[Photo Credit: The Guardian](#)

economic sector and society at large to make immediate reductions to greenhouse gases, and to bring emissions to net zero by 2050. There is now no coming back from some changes, like rising sea levels. We must be prepared with adaptation strategies to withstand and adapt to the new climatic situation, and in addition, to take crucial action to mitigate or slow the rate of growth. If we are to move forward with hope for the future we must hold our leaders accountable for these actions and ensure that the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference, scheduled to be held in Glasgow, Scotland



Code Red for Humanity *cont...*

It is difficult indeed to find solace in any of this. But action can be healing. **Remember, personal and collective actions to control our carbon footprint matter, and they can make us feel empowered.**

- ☑ Keep an eye out for Environmental Action Group information in the eUU and on the [Climate Confrontation page](#). From this page, follow links to take part in suggested EnviroActions and Challenges or join the Environmental Action Group or one of the many other groups listed.
- ☑ Talk to friends and family, find support and be supportive.
- ☑ Demand bold and ambitious climate action. Be part of our Enviro-Advocacy. It is our job to hold our political leaders accountable. There are elections at all three levels of government in the coming year. Make your voice heard and demand stronger climate action at every level.

Sustain hope! The antidote to anxiety is action. Act! Then hope is everywhere.

~ submitted by Donna Bowen-Willer

¹ <https://www.theenergymix.com/2021/08/09/no-more-excuses-unimaginable-unforgiving-world-without-drastic-moves-to-cut-emissions-ipcc-warns/>

² <https://www.theenergymix.com/2021/08/09/five-ipcc-scenarios-show-how-much-suffering-can-be-averted/>

³ <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2021/08/09/news/landmark-report-maps-out-five-scenarios-earth-climate-future>

⁴ <https://www.theenergymix.com/2021/08/09/canada-has-responsibility-power-to-make-a-difference-on-ipcc-findings/>

⁵ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/ipcc-report-canada-1.6134879>

A Prayer among Friends

*Among other wonders of our lives, we are alive
with one another, we live here
in the light of this unlikely world
that isn't ours for long.
May we spend generously
the time we are given.
May we enact our responsibilities
as thoroughly as we enjoy
our pleasures. May we see with clarity,
may we seek a vision
that serves all beings, may we honor
the mystery surpassing our sight,
and may we hold in our hands
the gift of good work
and bear it forth whole, as we
were borne forth by a power we praise
to this one Earth, this homeland of all we love.*

~ by [John Daniel](#)

Found on the [UUA website](#), this poem appears in his book [Of Earth: New and Selected Poems](#), published by Lost Horse Press."

Each day I make the
intentional decision to
breed love, hope, and
generosity, for these
are my rebellious
acts of protest.

—Christine Organ, *UU World*



IMAGE © ISTOCK/HKDBZY

Denominational Affairs: Proposed 8th Unitarian Universalist Principle in Canada – Next Steps

The FirstU Board and Denominational Affairs Team want our congregants to know that, in June, the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) provided an information package in preparation for a Special Meeting on November 27, 2021 to decide on the following motion from the CUC Board of Trustees to add an 8th UU Principle in Canada:

We, the member congregations of the Canadian Unitarian Council, covenant to affirm and promote: Individual and communal action that accountably dismantles racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

Following the final report of the CUC Dismantling Racism Study Group (see link below), there was a motion from the floor during the CUC Annual General Meeting in May to adopt the above wording as an 8th Principle, but it was ruled out of order, because congregations had not been given an opportunity for review and feedback prior to the meeting. Reconsideration of the motion for the Special Meeting in November will meet all of the procedural requirements.

Our congregation will be holding a virtual (by Zoom) Town Hall on this subject to take place on Saturday, October 2nd from 10 am to 3 pm with a one-hour break for lunch. Watch the e-UU for more information about the

Town Hall. Congregational feedback on the proposed motion is due October 20.

In the meantime, we encourage our members to learn more about the subject using the following resources:

- CUC Special Meeting information package: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/16DEDgfJc8w1wDcpoBFxvQ8qSzEnLgwWOq2CvYTkf8Jc/edit>
- CUC Dismantling Racism Study Group final report released May 2021, available for download at: <https://cuc.ca/dismantling-racism-study-group/>
- CUC 2021 Confluence Lecture: <https://sites.google.com/cuc.ca/cucconference2021/conference/confluence-lecture>

Watch for a future announcement on the selection process for the six voting delegates who will represent FirstU at the Special Meeting. We hope that many FirstU Ottawa members of all ages and backgrounds will join this conversation and consider becoming a delegate to the national meeting on November 27.

At the national level, the CUC has been hosting 8th Principle conversations on the last Saturday of each month since June, at 12:00 noon Eastern. Zoom links for the remaining sessions on September 25 and October 30 are at: <https://cuc.ca/events/leaders-roundtables-september-october-2021/1632571200/1632576600/>.

There will also be a series of four CUC-hosted forums to bring congregations together in respectful conversation on the subject at 7:00 pm Eastern on the following Sundays: September 19, October 3 & 17, and November 7. The forums are cumulative and each one will build on the one before it. Participants can attend these as a series or as stand-alone sessions. These are offered as a way for congregations to engage fully in conversation without having to organize their own discussions and to hear from others across the country. Zoom registration links for these forums are at: <https://cuc.ca/events/8th-principle-process-forum-1/1632078000/1632083400/>.

Other recommended resources related to the subject include:

- The Calls to Action of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/truth-and-reconciliation-94-calls-to-action-1.3362258>
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP): <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>

~ submitted by Maury Prevost,
Chair, Denominational Affairs Team



Social Responsibility Council (SRC) News

Environmental Action Group: Environmental Concrete

Most of us in Ottawa are aware that the use of concrete is extensive, particularly if we live in areas in which calcium carbonate is mined. And, if we live in communities in which 'intensification' high-rises are being built, the extensive use of concrete is very obvious. According to some measurements, its manufacture is possibly the third most voluminous contributor to excessive carbon dioxide, after transportation and industry. It is definitely a serious contributor to greenhouse gases.

The financial section of the Globe and Mail published Thursday, Jan 28th, contained an article related to a more environmentally sensitive method of making some variants of concrete. The process was developed in Halifax by CarbonCure, and appears to be proven successful. This process involves the infusion of

carbon dioxide in the process of converting cement to concrete, which results in the significant reduction of carbon dioxide that would normally result. Double bonus, if an economical source of carbon dioxide can be found. It was used, in part, to build portions of the Amazon building south of Ottawa. CarbonCure has an informative web site.

A modest amount of research has highlighted the following:

- There is an incredible variety of concretes, each designed to meet such varied demands as roads, sidewalks, house foundations, high rise frames, water dams, etc. It is not clear that this CO₂ approach would apply to all applications.
- The building standards, regulations and inspection processes involve

all three levels of government, and vary, in some cases, depending upon the building initiator.

It is not clear where this CO₂ approach is to be encouraged, although I suspect that it is best done at the federal level, at this point. Nevertheless, this method has been adopted. The [CarbonCure web site](#) features many organizations in Canada and the US which use this technique.

More specific information and examples of adoption can be acquired at the [CarbonCure web site](#).

Given our current government's focus on the environment, I suggest that we reach out to our MPs and encourage using this technique in our building codes and standards.

~ submitted by Tom Patterson

SRC: Poverty Awareness Action Group (PAAG)

In addition to many other initiatives, the PAAG supports and furthers the mission of the Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) which provides affordable home space, encourages harmonious relations amongst tenants of diverse backgrounds and mobilizes the resources of faith communities and others for these purposes. The FirstU community is involved in activities such as educational events, fundraising (Tulipathon, for one) and volunteer support of MHI residents and the MHI Board and its Committees.

The MHI Board is always looking for passionate and skilled volunteers

who are willing to put in an average of 10 hours a month, serving on their various committees: Property Maintenance, Membership & Outreach, Resident Relations, Development, Fundraising, Communications, and Governance. These committees meet once a month to work on issues that promote the overall growth of MHI.

Volunteer help is also welcome during special events, for speaking or promotional events (schools, etc.), for data input, writing and editing, translation (mainly English to French), data gathering and analysis, administration, information

technology, and maintenance tasks (painting, clean-ups, minor repairs).

For more information visit the MHI website at:

<https://www.multifaithhousing.ca/volunteer.html> or contact Kathy Yach at cityviewky@rogers.com.

The direct contact for anyone with questions about volunteer opportunities at Multifaith Housing Initiative is Sahada Alolo at:

comm.engagement@multifaithhousing.ca

~ submitted by Kathy Yach, Chair, PAAG

SRC News: Environmental Action Group

Ajashki Heart Garden is Growing!

Ajashki garden is up and growing after a long (and continuing) battle with dog strangling vine and gout weed! The garden has evolved from an area of mulch and weeds to thriving garden beds full of fresh food: cucumbers, kale, Swiss chard, peppers, ground cherries, tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries and zucchini, all donated by First Unitarian congregants or Kayoki Whiteduck. This is a true community garden. Most of the beds are made with recycled or found wood and they depict different styles, including piled earth, bordered gardens and containers.

We now have two Future Food Warriors, Rhe and Jordyn, who have helped to build and tend the gardens while learning about plants and agriculture. The first lesson involved understanding the difference between weeds and desired plants. One recent Thursday, participants and volunteers learned from Kayoki the art of pruning tomato plants. Pruning encourages fruiting and maximum food production. Plants have been staked by building a fence around the bed with found wood. Our Future Food Warriors have shown enthusiasm in learning about the garden and the big ideas of agriculture. Thursday afternoons are filled with sharing of skills and talents and explorations of the history of Indigenous Canada and Agricultural Knowledge. The teaching and learning relationship is relaxed and productive.

Plant identification walks help in understanding what is in the local area. The focus of these walks is on edible weeds and ornamentals. Who knew there was so much to eat outside our front doors? The Future Food Warriors have also learned how to harvest produce and to prepare garden fresh dishes for our shared lunches. The garden has been generous, enabling us to share some of the early harvest with folks at the Parkdale Food Centre.

You will notice, every time you walk in the garden, that things have changed. Guests have dropped by to speak

with us about horticulture and food systems and how they relate to climate change (conventional agricultural practices are a major contributor to climate change, while changes in our food systems can have a significant positive impact) and the environment (growing our own food creates less packaging waste). Some have visited to pull weeds, to set up a water barrel or to give us tips on how to use grape leaves in cooking, while others walk through simply to admire the growth that has taken place in a few short weeks. You are welcome to drop by and see for yourself. Kayoki and the Food Warriors are in the garden every fine Thursday morning.

Our future hopes include expanding the gardens beyond our campus location through a local yard sharing plan or other options. If you would like more information on how you can support this program, please contact:

ajashki@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

~ submitted by Kayoki Whiteduck with Lynn Kofmel-Preston



Kayoki, Rhe and Sharen display the Ajashki Heart Garden sign. Every plant is grown in memory of the children found in unmarked graves at Indian Residential schools and in support of survivors and their families.



Kayoki demonstrates to Jordyn how to prune tomato plants.



Kayoki with some garden produce for lunch.



Kayoki shows Rhe how to identify weeds.

Campus Diary – June to August

Through this cold-hot, wet-dry, NE-SW wind, ding-dong of a season, our beloved campus has thrived more than the human beings living on it. Everything is a month early this year.



Locust tree

In June, the light acid green crown of the locust tree, a memorial to Jack Wright, the designer of the meditation garden, gleams against the bright blue sky, the church spire and the darker maples behind. Despite the drought, the glorious parade of blossoming trees and flowers takes place – the pendulous, purple flowers of the black locust tree, bright red poppies, blue iris, pink columbine. By the pond in the meditation garden there are buttercups, tiny daisies and a huge, in-your-face, pale pink peony. Along the memorial garden is a bank of wild roses, white, pink and dark red.

It's so hot the city has already opened four cooling stations and the birds have gone quiet but always my walk is accompanied by the harsh, persistent calls of the redwing blackbirds, like street kids. However, there is also a promising, daylong twittering from the big Cyprus tree in the children's play area. Two pairs of crows duke it out over territory across the campus. The two victors swagger up the roof

of the daycare with their heads together like black-robed lawyers walking up Parliament Hill.

The three mature catalpa trees are blooming, their white flowers giving off a heavy perfume, while on Cleary Avenue the Japanese lilac gives off an even headier scent. I spot the first baby rabbit nibbling the leaves of flowers outside Unitarian House.

By July the great flush of summer flowers is over and the beauty of greens comes into its own. Here and there are displays of colour still – along the top of the memorial garden is a bank of the brightest blue chicory and great carpets of bright yellow birds-eye trefoil, while under the trees of the meditation garden orange daylilies are like stars reflected on a green sea.



Daylilies on a sea of green

In the great heat of July and August the memorial garden is a deep cavern of inviting green shade. Hidden in its depths are the flowers of a shrub with the strangest name, the bottlebrush bugeye – well, yes, I can see that!

There is a changed scene along the stream on the west side of the campus. The beautiful long bank of yellow daisies of previous years has been swamped by two creeping vines, Himalayan orchids, and golden rod

with gigantic stinging nettles behind. In the corner, as in the pond in the meditation garden, the bulrushes this year have been choked out by invasive zebra grass. These are gigantic plants that tower over me.

Everything now seems in suspension waiting for the great change and our return in September.

*~ article and photos submitted by
Clea Derwent*



Greens in the rock garden



Chicory and birdseye trefoil

Meet a Member: Mike Lloyd



Mike Lloyd is probably a new face to many as he only became a member in 2018. On the other hand, he is well-known “virtually” to many others. Mike was a member of the search committee for our new Minister Rev.

Eric Meter. That exercise, for Mike, as a new member, had a steep learning curve. He values the exercise for its complete understanding of the “whole church”. He feels the diversity of the committee and their close reflection on the needs of the congregation illustrated *Covenant* in its best working order.

In 2018, he and his wife Lisa were married at First Unitarian by Alex Campbell. That was a cherished Right of Passage for them and prior preparation with Alex also enlarged their understanding of our faith. They realize that their search for “community, inspiration, spiritual nourishment, intellectual stimulation and fellowship with likeminded people” has found a home.

For those of us who wrestle with how to welcome newcomers it was good to hear Mike’s appreciation of the “Green Mug” aspect of coffee hour.

On a more factual note, Mike and Lisa both grew up in Ottawa and now live in “a beautiful Stittsville neighbourhood”. They welcomed their first child Ruben, in July 2020.

Mike is trained in print journalism and has worked most of his career in communications and program evaluation. Since 2011, he has worked in administration at the Centre for Ombudsman, Resolution, and Ethics at Health Canada. Lisa works for Natural Resources Canada in renewable energy policy. They have numerous hobbies and interests—have a chat and see what you have in common.

As ‘new times’ emerge, do take a moment to speak with Mike and thank him for his participation in the Ministerial Search.

~ submitted by Marianne Wood



Thanks, Merci, Miigwetch



- ♥ Thank you to **Rev. Linda Goonewardene**, with members of The FirstU Mental Health Support & Action Group, for organizing an inspiring Sunday forum presentation on ‘The Wisdom of Caregivers’. And a heartfelt thank you especially to the three Wise Women: **Mo Gabe**, **Jan Glyde** and **Mary Lela Argus** for sharing their stories and insights of caregiving. They each reflected on the caring and support that they have received from the congregational community in the course of their respective journeys. It is good to be reminded of the importance of caring for one another during life’s challenges and not lose sight of the individual in the busyness of the multiple projects in which congregants become involved. If interested, the June 27, 2021 video entitled ‘*The Wisdom of Caregivers*’ is available on the website. ~ submitted by Lena Jones

Published quarterly, **The Parkway Spire** welcomes photos* (high resolution jpg format is preferred) and unformatted articles (max. 450 words please) that are of interest to the congregation. We also encourage the submission of one feature article for each issue of the Spire, maximum 900 words. Articles may be edited if necessary. Submissions should be sent to spire@firstunitarianottawa.ca no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication.



First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

30 Cleary Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K2A 4A1

Phone: 613-725-1066, Fax: 613-725-3259

Email: uuoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Website: www.firstunitarianottawa.ca

Facebook: www.facebook.com/First-Unitarian-Congregation-of-Ottawa

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

2020–2021 Board of Directors bod@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Lisa Sharp, President president@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Brent Nicolle, Vice President

Phil Nagy, Treasurer

Caycee Price and Amy Bérubé, Secretary

Guy Belleperche, Past President

Andrew Drake and Carl Sonnen, Members at Large

Program Staff

Rev. Eric Meter, Minister minister@firstunitarianottawa.ca 613-371-0595

Neo Yaxley, Director of Religious Exploration dre@firstunitarianottawa.ca x234

Jenn Berntson, Music Director music@firstunitarianottawa.ca x230

Rev. Ellen Bell, Spiritual Care Visitor spiritualcare@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Lay Chaplains

Alex Campbell, Lisa Boulay

Administrative Staff

Jen Brennan, Operations Manager omr@firstunitarianottawa.ca 343-987-5370

Michelle Jackson, Finance Manager fm@firstunitarianottawa.ca 343-987-8560

Allison Armstrong, Communications Coordinator (e-UU and Communiqué) publications@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Building Staff

Gareth Auden-Hole, Audiovisual55 Coordinator soundandlight@firstunitarianottawa.ca x223

Lori Clarke, Facility Manager facilitymanager@firstunitarianottawa.ca x224

Moe Harkat, Custodians custodians@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Spire Contributors

Jennifer Berntson, Elizabeth Bowen, Donna Bowen-Willer, Clea Derwent, Alexandra Devine, Lena Jones, Marg Lee, Jane Lindsay, Rev. Eric Meter, Maryan O'Hagan, Tom Patterson, Maury Prevost, Paula Theetge (photo), Kayoki Whiteduck with Lynn Kofmel-Preston, Marianne Wood, Kathy Yach, Neo Yaxley

Next deadline for submissions: November 15, 2021

Subscriptions

Electronic subscriptions are free, contact: publications@firstunitarianottawa.ca

For information on receiving the Spire via postal mail (cost \$12 per year), contact the office.

Spire Editorial Team:

Editor: Marg Lee Layout: Jan Andrews

Proofreading: Jen Brennan, Margot Clarke, Andrew Drake, Marg Lee, Susan Mellor

