

First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa Memory Book



**Celebrating 50 Years at Cleary Avenue
1967-2017**



Celebrating 50 Years at 30 Cleary Ave., 1967-2017

Special Events in 2017

An Evening with Tony Turner
A Steinway Celebration
50th Anniversary Celebratory Dinner
Multi-sensory 50th Anniversary Service
Greatest Hits: A Choir Concert Celebrating 50 Years at Cleary
Open House: An Afternoon Celebrating 50 Years at Cleary

Acknowledgements

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Forward

This memory book commemorates the 50th anniversary of our beautiful building at 30 Cleary Ave. This milestone provides an opportunity for the congregation to celebrate the achievements of the past, and to take stock and find our path forward.

The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa has been a vital part of the Ottawa community since 1898 when our first church was built at the corner of Elgin and Lewis Street. By 1962, with membership growing, it was clear we had outgrown our downtown location. Two years later, in June 1965, the old building was sold and the final service was held on Elgin Street.

In 1967 we moved to our present location. During the past 50 years in this building, we have worked hard and committed ourselves to shaping the church community in ways that are compatible with the principles and purposes of the Canadian Unitarian Council and the Unitarian Universalist Association.

As of 2017, members and staff of our congregation continue to play a vital role in fulfilling a multitude of tasks, some of which our early pioneers could never have dreamt. We are beginning a new phase of challenges: the search for a settled minister, ways to accommodate an aging congregation, how to support volunteers to prevent burnout, how to engage young working families and their children. We are also living in an internet age where a younger generation connects with the world very differently than it did 50 years ago.

The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa has never been deterred by challenges and we eagerly anticipate the next 50 years in this building. Sometimes it's the strength we have gained from past experience that allows us to embrace the future with open hearts.

I draw your attention to the Acknowledgements on the inside cover of this book. These people have all devoted many hours to making our 50th Anniversary celebrations a success, and I thank each and every one of you, along with many other members of the congregation, for your valued contributions.

Thanks for the memories!

*Kathy Yach,
Chair, 50th Anniversary Task Force*





Special Greetings from Rev. David Pohl, first Minister at 30 Cleary

I've been blessed with a good memory of our time in Ottawa from 1961 to 1971, some of which I shared with you on our return six years ago. You held two wonderful receptions for us and honored me with the title of Minister Emeritus. In my sermon then, I spoke of what it was like here in the Sixties, named many men and women who grew this congregation and built this church, and urged that you:

...not lose through neglect your own histories, your own personal and institutional stories. In this glorious and free land, this lovely capital city overlooking the route of the voyageurs, this house of cedar and glass that shelters a free religious community, may you continue to honor this congregation's legacy even as you dream new dreams for the ever-changing future and our children who succeed us.

If it takes a village to raise a child, it also takes years to build a church, in our case nearly SIX years! Within four months of my arrival in Ottawa in 1961, the congregation on Elgin and Lewis Streets purchased the building next door to help accommodate our rapidly growing religious education program, naming it the Annex. Further down Lewis Street we renovated and redecorated Unitarian House for church offices, the minister's study and other activities.

At the end of my first year here, I noted: "the time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining; which is to say that we need to develop an overall strategy for long-range plans." A Development Committee was subsequently appointed and, under Frank Macintyre's leadership, all options were explored concerning future growth: expanding the Elgin Street property, relocation to another site in the city, or even a high-rise commercial development on Elgin Street which would also contain space for the congregation and its various programs. After three years of study, discussion, and interminable meetings, 90% of the congregation voted to relocate to this present site in the West End, and another 80% agreed to engage the services of a professional fundraiser, who turned out to be a fine gentleman named McKey Humphries. A Building Committee chaired by Dick Barber was appointed, architect James Craig was selected, his design plan was approved and a contractor secured. The most difficult, if not contentious, step in the process was the decision to hire a professional fundraiser.

Though we lost a few members because of it, I am convinced that this building and Unitarian growth in the Capital District would not have happened without the professional and devoted efforts of Mr. Humphries who lived and worked among us for over five weeks, helping us raise some \$166,000 in three year pledges to supplement proceeds from the sale of the former church building and a mortgage to cover the rest. The votes to approve the design and costs were all 90% or higher.

I preached at least two sermons on religion and the arts, and a specific one on "Unitarianism and Church Architecture" in May of 1964. It sold for 15 cents! I sought to make the case for a new building:

... that would make beauty along with truth and goodness the first order of business. But many of our newer churches are dull and uninspiring. Function and practicality are allowed to dictate everything. Some designs are frankly imitative, some follow the A-frame craze, and still others are content to look like public schools, firehouses, or even Bell telephone exchanges.



I then cited such Unitarian values as simplicity, openness, warmth and a sense of being at home with nature and natural materials. And I drove our architect down to Syracuse to view the recently-built May Memorial Unitarian Church which, because of its modern cedar and glass design, was already being dubbed there as "the Unitarian cedar closet".

We held a Leave-Taking Service at the Elgin Street Church in June of 1965 and for the next twenty plus months lived in exile at Unitarian House and the Annex, with rented space at the Elgin Street School for Sunday services and religious education. Following many delays in the final weeks, we were able to hold our first services in the new building on March 19, 1967, the year of Canada's Centennial. The new Yamaha grand piano financed by a generous donor in the congregation as well as a loan from the Plandome, NY, congregation, featured member Lydia Sierhuis as soloist. Our new state-of-the-art sound system enabled us to hear the Organ Symphony by Saint-Saens.

A month later, on Sunday, April 16th, the building was formally dedicated in a Worship Hall filled to capacity. There was music by Sibelius, Bach and Jeremiah Clarke, an eloquent sermon by Leonard Mason from the Unitarian Church of Montreal, and readings by several others. But there was an entire week of special events: an inaugural Norman S. Dowd Lecture by Dr. Leslie Dewart of the University of Toronto, a Parents' Night Lecture by Dr. Angus H. MacLean of Cleveland, Ohio, a concert by the Laurentian Singers of St. Lawrence University (my alma mater), and an Art Exhibit of painting and sculpture by members of the congregation.

I close with words I wrote for our first services here a half-century ago:

In this Hall of Worship, we gather to celebrate life and to reaffirm our commitment to those values that make life sacred. Here, in this house of cedar and glass, beneath the arching northern sky, beneath these soaring beams, we shall build and nurture ties of community that welcome all and exclude none. Here, with the Gatineau Hills looking down on us like a faithful sentinel, may we be ever aware of our place in the nature of things and of our mission to help shape a future where earth shall be fair and all her people one.

Best wishes to all,

Rev. David Pohl





Introduction

April 16, 1967

In the words of Rev. David Pohl who on Sunday, April 16, 1967, formally dedicated our present home at 30 Cleary:

Now, our new building is a reality. Embodying in its design and materials the freedom, simplicity, openness and warmth that are expressive of our faith, this new building should give us renewed enthusiasm for the work of a new day.

Little can be taken for granted in the new day that is emerging. The foundation and fabric of society have been shaken and strained by rapid changes and totally new situations. Still, amid all the changes and shifting of ground, certain things abide: the mind's search for meaning and purpose, and the hunger of the human heart for love and beauty.

It is my hope that our new building will help us more effectively to relate abiding values to the new situations and changing conditions of our time. Here, in our worship and action, our fellowship and service, our learning and caring, we will give ourselves to those values that both liberate and fulfill the human spirit. Here in this beautiful house of cedar and glass beside the Ottawa, we are challenged to dedicate ourselves as well as our building to the service of those ideals whose embodiment will help make the new day a better day.



QUINQUAGENARY

The Church of our Father
 Quivered under its seismic weight,
 "No room, No room!"
 Its people cried,
*"Where shall we preach the message
 Of peace, liberty, justice?
 Where will we reveal truths
 Accompanied by reason, compassion?
 How will we spread expressions of our faith
 Embodying equity and freedom?"*

*"The foundations, fabric of society
 Are being shaken, strained
 By rapid changes, shifting grounds,
 There is an inevitable need
 For new solutions
 To calm the human quandary
 So we can dwell in serenity
 On planet earth."*

Then like in an aged arboreal wood
 Where gales and dying trees
 Strew seedlings to engender
 Revitalized growth,
 A unique structure was erected
 From steel, glass, stone, and timber
 Hewn from century trees
 Garnered from the primeval forests
 of B.C.

An unnatural swamp expunged,
 The sanctuary was majestically placed
 On a podium atop a cement bedrock,
 Its shingled roof supported
 By cantilevered beams
 Its steeple, like praying hands
 Clasped together
 Index fingers extended,
 Reaching out to the celestial vault ...

Bracing for raging storms in winter
 And greening rains of spring,
 Enduring the intense fever,
 Brash flowering of summer
 And their relief by riotous fall,
 It daily salutes this cyclic scenic panorama,
 Forever in contemplation
 With the ancient Ottawa River
 Where varying wildlife huddle
 And log booms once floated
 Toward pulp mills.

Thus the new *Unitarian Congregation*
 Of Ottawa was born,
 A holy place for worship, thanksgiving,
 Music, musings, learning
 And laughter,
 As multi-paneled angled windows
 Beckon sunlight to flood its sanctuary
 From the east, west, north, and south
 Connecting celebrants with their world without,
 Where arbours of trees flourish.

It is an aegis for matriarchs,
 Patriarchs, and their progeny,
 A fertile ground where
 A woman of colour like me
 Can be rooted to prosper,
 A pagoda for the living
 To encourage spiritual growth
 And affirm
 Respect, dignity, worth
 And communion with one another.

A shelter where, unlike a walled garden,
 A liberal faith can forsake creeds,
 Yet render a lifeline
 To humanitarian injustices,
 Revering the teachings of our forefathers
 Yet leaving the mind
 Unbarred to access
 New scientific revelations.

So we now celebrate
 Fifty years of blessings in this sanctum;
 Our spirits soar
 As we nurture the muses
 Of visual arts, poetry and song,
 We open wide our doors
 To all who would enter
 To share, to grasp tranquility,
 To take a sip of heaven
 In the only world we know.

*And the beacon
 Of the flaming chalice
 Shines on!*

~Joycelyn Loeffelholz-Rea,
 October 22, 2016

In the Beginning: Our Roots on Elgin Street



The Church of our Father



Elgin & Lewis streets 1900



Unitarian Church of Ottawa 1900



Inside Elgin Street Church

Unitarian Church Launching \$50,000 Expansion Drive

Immediate steps to provide church facilities for a rapidly-growing congregation are being taken by the Church of Our Father (Unitarian), it was announced today by Chester I. Soucy, chairman of the church's parish board.

Mr. Soucy said the church, long located at the corner of Elgin and Lewis streets, had completed arrangements for the purchase of a nearby building at 118 Lewis street, to be known as "Unitarian House". The new building, he said, would house facilities for church school classes, meeting rooms for church organizations and office facilities for the minister, the Rev. Howard Box.

As part of the ambitious church expansion program, Mr. Soucy said extensive renovations were being carried out in the church proper, and that improvements would be made to the church library, meeting

rooms, heating system and the church organ.

Mr. Soucy noted that in recent years the Unitarian Church school had expanded so rapidly that it had been necessary to carry out some classes in a nearby public school. The new rooms at Unitarian House would, he said, provide for this overflow.

Cost of additions and improvements is expected to total \$50,000 and the church is undertaking a fund-raising program to meet this cost.

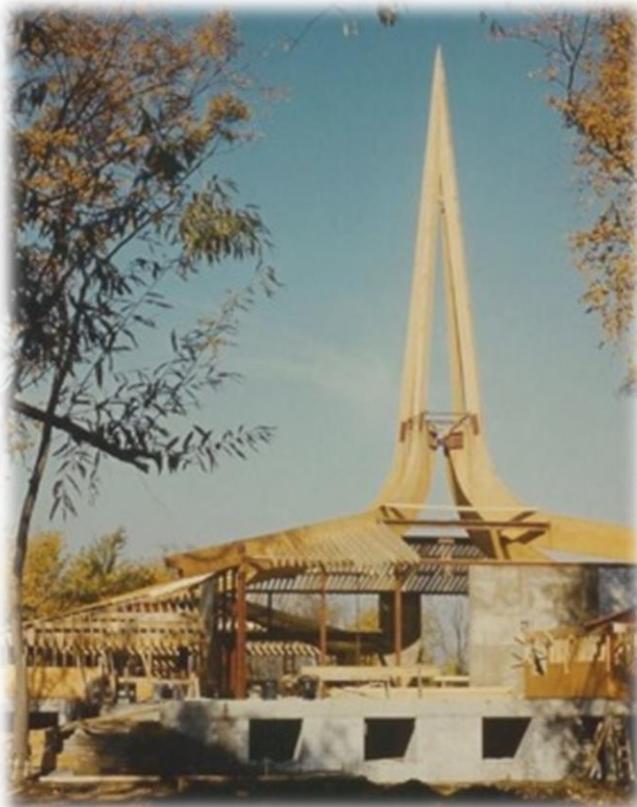
The "blitzkreig" type campaign is slated for October 16-22.

FIRE IN CHURCH.

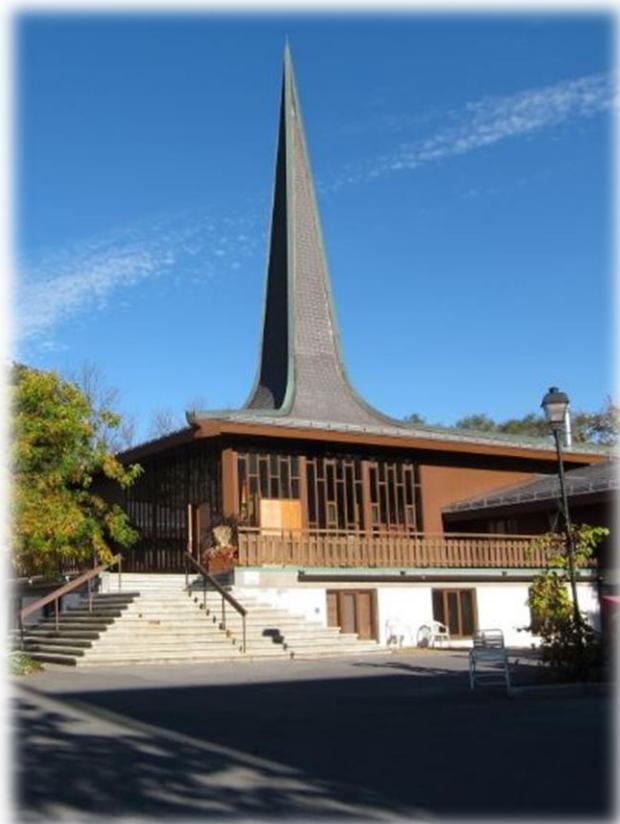
AMMAN, Jordan, Oct. 15.—(Reuters)—Fire broke out Friday in the Holy Sepulchre Church in the old city of Jerusalem, when a candle fell on a monk's clothes. No one was hurt and damage was slight.

October 15, 1955: Ottawa Journal

Laying a New Foundation



1966 Spire installation



View today

A Word from Our Architect

JAMES B. CRAIG, A.R.A.I.C.

B. Apr. 1, '66.

The Reverend David C. Pohl, in his sermon on May 24th, 1964, suggested that when Unitarians set about building a church to house and give expression to their ethical and spiritual convictions, one would expect them to make beauty along with truth and goodness the first order of business. The building had to express unity, freedom, simplicity, openness, contemporaneity, humility and a religious humanism.

There were fundamental reasons for the general planning. Because the site was low in relation to the N.C.C. Parkway, we placed the Worship Hall high on a podium created by the classroom block, so that it might enjoy the fine view across the river. The adjacent functions of fellowship, study and administration were then gathered

under the sheltering arms of a widespread roof. To give the building grace and unity, the ridges were then swept up into a towering spire which, although traditional in concept, is an expression of contemporary technology. Thirty years ago, it could not have been built this way.

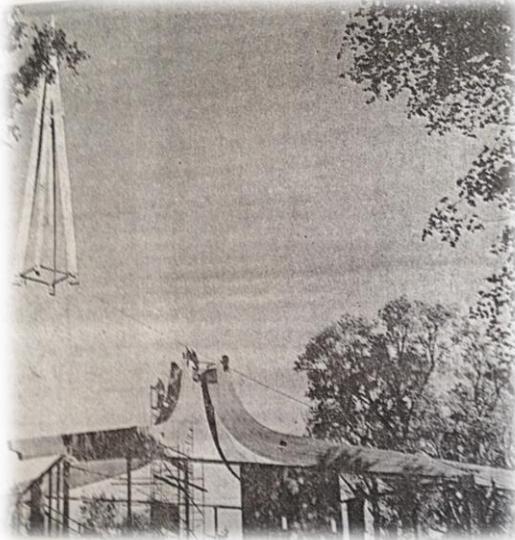
To bring the congregation as close as possible to the minister, no seat in the Worship Hall, which holds 330, is more than 45 feet from the platform, and so that people when inside will feel they are still united with the outside world, we have left large glass areas looking on to this pleasant site. The entire building makes great use of western red cedar which imparts warmth and humidity, and creates a subtle tie with the surroundings.

NEW UNITARIAN CHURCH NEARS COMPLETION

The spire rises above the new Unitarian Church of Ottawa as construction moves into its final stages. Work on the \$480,000 structure on Algonquin Avenue began last March and it is slated for completion late in January. The majority of the cost will be borne by the congregation of the Unitarian Church who presently hold their services in Elgin Street Public School. The main feature of the new building will be the large Sunday School section designed to handle the huge enrollment of children. The pastor Rev. David Pohl, Craig and Koeller are the architects and construction is being done by Uniform Builders.

(Journal Photo by Dominic ...)

1966: Ottawa Journal



Spire Installation

Plain but friendly

Have you noticed that it takes only half-an-hour to drive from one end of town to another using the Queensway and Parkways? Any church near these can serve the whole city until expansion time comes. Then another can be built at the opposite end of town.

When high land costs and off-street parking requirements for additions forces Ottawa Unitarians to abandon their inadequate old church on Elgin Street, and nearby makeshift quarters, they took advantage of the automobile age. They moved to the West End. A future interchange will take part of the new site on Algonquin but will also provide better access.

Tremendous effort

Once determined to build they made an extraordinary effort at self-examination, to discover what atmosphere would best express individual and communal attitudes towards life.

The minister, Rev. David G. Pohl, preaching on the role of the arts in a church which stresses the intellectual, rational approach to religion and life, said that the traditional approach to church architecture has been inward-looking. He asked whether this is really suitable for their group. Combining scientific and democratic methods, the building committee consulted every member through a detailed questionnaire.

Architects Craig and Kohler (with engineers Robert Halsall and Associates) translated these graphs and statistics into a warm and friendly building which uses a great deal of western red cedar. A concrete block foundation bearing on rock supports a first floor frame of open steel web joists with concrete floors. The roof with its graceful spire is a combination of Glulam ridge beams and steel.

The Worship Hall (illustrated) expresses most of the members' wishes:

Design for Living

By Barbara Lambert

affinity with the out-of-doors through placing pews on a sloping floor which faces a great north window overlooking the Ottawa River; a special hi-fi system and space for a grand piano instead of an organ, but with provision for adding organ balcony later, a room adaptable for concerts and drama as well as services.

Members supplied data on annual climatic conditions and a plot plan spotting every tree. An old railway siding bordered by elms and willows created a natural path which determined position of the main entrance.

The architect and minister investigated an admired Unitarian church in Syracuse. Mr. Craig built a model of the final scheme and showed colored slides of it to members before the design was accepted.

Influence exerted

The school of religion which takes up the entire ground floor (described two weeks ago) was the most unusual requirement. The requested direct access between the multi-purpose Worship Hall and the rooms for social gathering exerted the other major influence on design. From the front platform in this hall, a door hidden from the pews opens into the lounge at right of the lectern just out of the photograph, and left into Fellowship Hall, where members share a companionable cup of coffee after services. These two adjacent rooms also serve as entrances for special stage performances.

The warm tones of oak furniture,

cedar walls, ceiling and light fixtures, blend with crimson carpet and cushions, contrast with grey concrete floor and brilliant white hardboard walls. The large north window fills the church with light but poses a slight problem, backlighting anyone standing at the lectern. The architect is considering a window treatment not so expensive as stained glass.

Artist member Gordon Hauser, the Valley City Manufacturing Company, and the architect combined to produce admirably simple pews. The architect designed the striking overhead lamps. Members did reverberation studies for the successful hi-fi system which they made themselves.

Intimate setup

Excellent acoustics and the fact that not one of the 330 seats is more than 45 feet away from the minster, sets up an intimate relationship between speaker and audience. Even the extra 150 seats a future balcony could hold would be well within range.

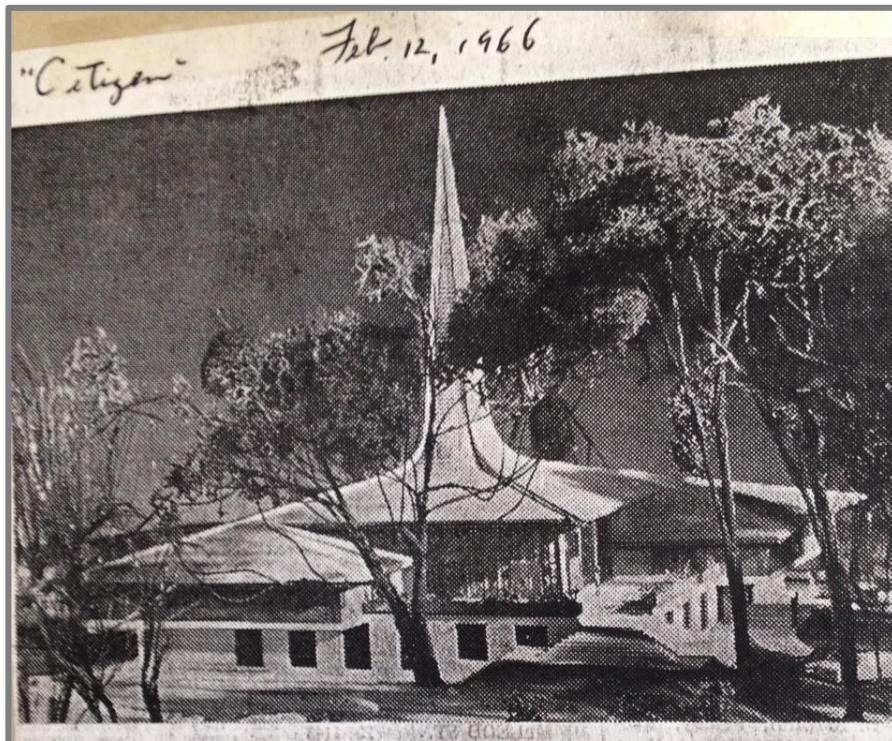
A money-saving decision put off installation of the elegant cedar grill-work planned for the back of each pew section. Disappointed, the architect believes this is one luxury which should be paid for first.

People will strain to provide basic things left out, but accept less obvious lacks. This screen would have separated the religious area from the corridor connecting the two wings, besides hiding the view of clothing hanging on wall hooks. It is an essential luxury whose absence spoils the hall.

Members do not wish to reserve their building for their own use, but to serve local needs as well. The church has just been introducing itself to the community through special programs celebrating Dedication Week, welcoming visitors.



Playground



New Unitarian church

Construction of the new Unitarian Church of Ottawa on the Western Parkway east of Woodroffe Avenue began this week. Under contract for \$401,500, the church will be completed by mid-October. At present Unitarians are holding worship services in the Elgin Street School and the 459 children are going to classes on Sunday mornings in four different buildings



April 29, 1967: Ottawa Citizen,
An Interior View...

New Beginnings

After 2½ years of planning, including 18 months of services held in Elgin Street Public School, the new building was ready in March 1967, and the week of April 12-21, 1967, declared dedication week. Our new address was 211 Algonquin Ave., Ottawa 14, Ontario, and the entrance to the property was off the north end of Woodroffe, close to the Western Parkway. A tree-lined old railway siding provided a natural path so it was used as the main entrance.

The design and materials were required to embody unity, freedom, simplicity, openness, contemporaneity, humility, and religious humanism, which is expressive of the philosophy of the Unitarian faith. They were fortunate enough to find imaginative architects and conscientious builders in the firm of Craig and Kohler, who together with engineers Robert Halsall and Associates translated dreams into reality for \$450,000.

The Worship Hall was placed on a podium created by the classroom block because of the low level of the site in relation to the Parkway, and thus the danger of flooding... Western red cedar and copper above a strong base of concrete block was used extensively in the entire building to impart warmth and humility and

create a subtle tie with the surroundings.

A wide-spreading, cedar-shingled roof encompassing areas of fellowship, study, and administration, was gathered up gracefully in a roof of cantilevered beams and steel, culminating in a towering spire... As the arts play an important role in the lives of the congregation, acoustics were also an integral part of the original plans. A balcony for seating an extra 150 was eventually pigeonholed in order to avoid undue costs.

Multi-paned, angled, large front and rear windows united the congregation with the outside world. Pews were placed on a sloping floor facing the north window which framed views of the Parkway and the Ottawa River. The Worship Hall, which holds around 330, was arranged so that no seats were more than 45 feet from the platform. A screen designed by Gordon Hauser was to have been placed behind the minister to diffuse the light when the congregation faced the pulpit, but due to costs this also had to be postponed. Large green potted plants were placed between the pulpit and the window instead.

The main aisles were carpeted in red to match the pew cushions, and added an interesting contrast to the gray painted concrete floor. On the left hand of the main

body of this hall were the Lounge, Ministers' and Administrative offices, and on the right, the Fellowship Hall for social get-togethers.

In order to keep cost affordable, certain changes had to be made to the original plans. For example, the upper floor was supposed to have been cantilevered so that it would appear to float above the lower section, a cedar grill-work planned for the back of pew sections to separate the area of worship from the corridor and lateral wings, and the future balcony all had to be eliminated.

The congregation pitched in and with their own labour, applied acoustic and floor tiles, set up a stereo system, painted, made shelves, and cushion covers. A grand piano, more versatile to the performing arts, was added to the stage instead of the customary church organ. (In later years an endowment was given for the specific purpose of providing an organ, but the congregation voted against having one.)

This edifice turned out to be a winner, not only for Unitarians, but for the architect, James B. Craig, of Craig and Kohler, who was awarded second place in the annual design contest for Ottawa.

*~Excerpt from Joycelyn Loeffelholz-Rea's book:
Looking Forward at the Past!
- A History of the Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa*

Memories of Dalton Minty

Dalton Minty (1923-1998) was involved in building the church in the role of mechanical engineer

working with the architect, Jim Craig.

Dalton was always very proud of having a part in such a creative project

and undoubtedly would be pleased to have his name associated with it. He was my partner 1985-1998.

~Doris Jelly

First Unitarian Congregation of Canada

By Marion G. Rogers

The present fine modern church building at 2101 Algonquin Avenue is the second church home of this Unitarian Congregation.

A small solid stone church at Elgin and Lewis Streets was their first church and was known then as Church of Our Father, Unitarian. It was "of cottage style architecture," the first service held Oct. 28, 1900.

The congregation had been started as the result of a meeting held Jan. 31, 1897.

The little stone church was used until it was sold in 1965.

Property for the present church was purchased in the late 1950s or early 1960s. The new church took 13 months to build and while the church was in use for a time, the formal dedication service was held on Sunday, April 16, 1967.

Set in a large property with parking lot and a grove, the church building is unexpectedly large.

The ground level with

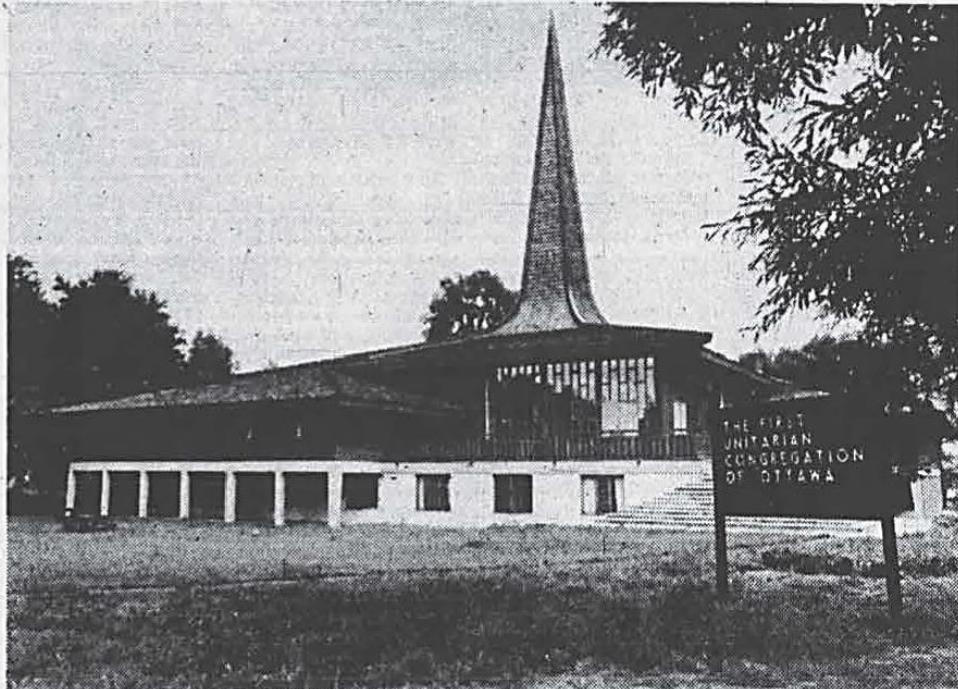
entrances is slightly smaller than the upper level which, along the outer edge has a series of support pillars. Inside the ground level at the outside all around the building are rooms of varying size. These open off a hall that extends around the four sides, but inside the outer rooms. It in turn encloses one or more large rooms that form a kind of central block.

This downstairs area is used week days by a day care centre — Sundays by the church school.

On the upper level and at opposite corners are large L-shaped decks. To one the entrance steps come from below and the entrance to the worship hall is from that deck.

At one end of the deck along the south side and as an enclosed extension of it, is part of the office area, while at the other end, around the corner, is an apartment for the caretaker.

Across the building on this upper level, to the river side, is the large fellowship hall with its



kitchen. From this room are doors to the second deck which again is L-shaped forming a corner of the building. At the other end is an entrance to the hall in the office corner. There's also a stair down to the outdoor play area.

The building was planned for multi-use.

There are six office rooms as well as the church offices — first the church secretary's and through it to the office of

Rev. Vernon C. Nichols, minister of the congregation.

Rideauwood Institute and Amnesty International both have their offices in the building.

The worship hall is laid out so the platform area is in a corner of the room backed by two large windows overlooking the rear deck and to the Ottawa River Parkway. Walls are white, the furnishings are oak, pews have red seat

backs and there's a red carpet.

Some lights are recessed and there are also drop lights in large square frames or shades made of narrow strips of wood. A wood ceiling is of the same wood strip construction.

Inside the entrance two modern pillar-like posts

are of two pieces of wood linked by a panel of chips of colored glass set into a clear plastic base. On the sides of both pillars they carry small brass memorial plaques.

With their large grounds, congregational picnics can be held in their own grove.

(c) 1977 by Marion G. Rogers

Sex education

PICTON (CP) — Rev. Ronald Marr of Ridgeway, Ont., says sex education in schools is a result of the

ANGLICAN

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

The Right Reverend W.J. Robinson
The Reverend Canon P.J. Smith
Godfrey Hewitt, Mus. D., F.R.C.O., Organist and Choirmaster
TRINITY XIII
8:20 a.m. Holy Communion
11:00 a.m. Nursery
11:00 a.m. Choral Eucharist - Rev. L.W. Cavalier
7:30 p.m. Evensong - Rev. Canon Smith
Daily: Morning Prayer 9:00 a.m.; Evening Prayer 5:00 p.m.
HOLY COMMUNION:
Tuesday 12:05 p.m.; Wednesday 10:30 a.m. (St. Bartholomew)
Thursday 7:15 a.m.; Friday 12:05 p.m.



Unitarian Church of Ottawa is pictured in its four and a half acre woodland site which overlooks the Ottawa River near the junction of Woodroffe and the NCC Parkway.

Sat. April 15, 1987

A place of dignity

Design for living

By Barbara Lambert

This afternoon between 12 and 5 o'clock, the Unitarian Church of Ottawa is holding open house, welcoming visitors to their new church at 2101 Algonquin, in the West End of town. The 4½ acre, woodland site overlooks the Ottawa River, near the junction of Woodroffe and the NCC Parkway. Surrounded by stately elms, one of the nicest things about the building is the beautiful view of trees from every window.

The architect, James Craig of Craig and Kohler, used the friendly warmth of western red cedar and copper above a strong base of concrete block, to create a structure which reflects the purity of the church, where the stress is laid on man's dignified place in the natural world. His directive was "to express unity, freedom, simplicity, openness, contemporaneity, humility and a religious humanism."

Avoid flood danger

Because the site is low in relationship to the nearby parkway, the Worship Hall was placed high to enjoy the view and avoid flood danger, although the parkway forms a natural dike against rising waters. On a podium carried by the concrete block walls of the ground floor classrooms, the Worship Hall, meeting rooms, and administration offices shelter under a wide-spreading roof, whose cedar shingles sweep gracefully upward into a towering spire.

The problem of designing a church "look" without using traditional relig-

ional symbols was solved through use of the spire, a traditional symbol but worked out in a modern way.

The photograph shows how the three main functions of the upper floor are defined architecturally, as three rectangular blocks connected at their corners. The spire rises centrally over the Worship Hall.

Inside the hall the ceiling reflects the curving roof, with an interesting wooden treatment (not illustrated next week). The left-hand section contains the minister's office, two classrooms, library and lounge. The right-hand section includes the Fellowship Hall and kitchen, where the congregation meets for coffee after every service.

The most unusual requirement for the school of religious education strongly affected the basic design. Run by a full-time education director, for 500 children from the ages of three to fifteen, this required 16 classrooms, an office for the director, and two small halls for services for juniors and intermediate students. The latter includes a projection booth.

Entered at ground level, the classrooms form a square around the room for the high school group, which is di-

rectly under the Worship Hall. This is the only room which does not look out to trees and lawn. Each has an art sink, with the spacious daygarden having special washroom equipment, and doors to outside play area.

The theory behind this school is through creative activities such as modelling, painting and drawing, which are integrated with class work. Each child is given the opportunity to find out for himself the truths upon which he may build his own religious philosophy.

Work of members

For economy's sake this whole floor is being finished by church members who have been spending their spare time applying acoustic and floor tiles, painting, making shelves and cushion covers.

Economy affected the final church design as well. Although a tight budget kept the plan a set circulation arrangement, it was also necessary to make changes in the original structural design. The upper floor would have cantilevered out to float above the lower section. Supporting this floor were pillars instead (see photograph) save \$40,000. With other lesser economies the actual cost reached was \$400,000.

For those who can't manage a visit to this unusual combination of church activities, next week's article describes the church interior, and the congregation's scientific approach to church design.

September 3, 1977: The Ottawa Journal

1913 CPR Bridge/Culvert



In 2016 work was being done on our campus to expand the Unitarian House parking area. As part of their task, workers operating south of Unitarian House (i.e. between Unitarian House and Richmond Road) cleared bushes and other plant material from a ditch about six feet deep, running in a roughly north-south direction. It was discovered that traversing this ditch, at a depth of about five feet, was a concrete structure that appeared to be a bridge/culvert. On the south side of this structure, prominently engraved into the concrete, is what seems to be the year 1913.

A local historian, Robert Grainger PhD, chairperson of the History Committee of the

Westboro Beach Community Association, came to our campus to examine the newly discovered bridge/culvert. It is Dr. Grainger's opinion that the bridge/culvert now on our campus was quite likely placed there by the CPR in 1913, during railway line maintenance or renovations in that year. The railway did not come to what is now our campus until about 1869, when the Canada Central Railway laid track across the terrain where we are presently situated. Then, possibly as early as the 1880s, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) acquired this rail system and made it a part of their main east-west line. It wasn't until about 1960 that the CPR discontinued the use of this particular railway route.

~ Brian Cowan,
Records/Archives Volunteer

Coming Back to First Unitarian

Bittersweet. That was our feeling in September 1967. We had discussed, debated, canvassed, pledged, and finally watched as the steeple was delicately lowered onto the soaring roof of our new church. And now we, with our three children, were moving west to begin a new life in Colorado. We took with us our recently acquired Unitarian spirituality that opened the door for new friendships.

Fifteen years later our daughter had returned to Ottawa, graduated from Carleton, and planned her wedding at the Church. “*Can you believe it, Mum, the service will be led by Jodi Gifford who is so friendly and has a painting of Canterbury Cathedral in her study?*” It was a familiar view not far from her grandparents’ home. So in August 1982 we paid a brief visit to “our church”, then accessed from the west before ground was broken for

Unitarian House. The address at this time was 2101 Algonquin Avenue.

A further fifteen years passed before we once again set foot on what was becoming the Unitarian Campus. We had retired and bought a house in Alta Vista and within a few weeks were sitting in the familiar pews. We recognized a few faces, not many, but Lotta was there to greet us. The furnishings seemed unchanged. The landscaping was now attractive, the squirrels in the trees still entertained those in Worship Hall, and the extended parking lot was full on Sunday mornings.

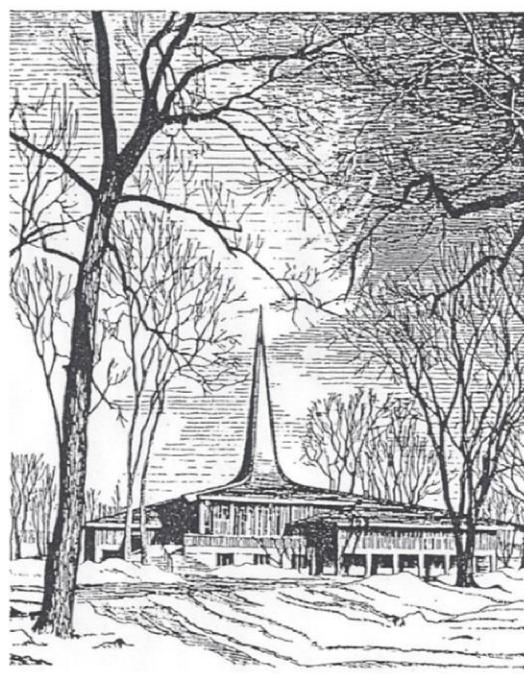
When proposals for the new church were first discussed one major issue was an organ—to be or not to be? It was decided that it would be wiser to invest in a top quality sound system and a piano. We were delighted when Jane

Perry enriched the music programs and funds were raised for the purchase of the Steinway. We remember that Jane encouraged us all to pound the keys but never, ever put a coffee cup on the piano. Today there are several choirs and music remains an integral part of the programs we enjoy.

The social outreach of the Unitarian community continues. In the 1960s we sponsored a young school teacher from Kenya to study at Carleton for two years and eventually brought his wife here for a summer. The church also supported two South Korean men to take courses in Ottawa. It seems to us that it is the social activism in all facets that has flourished in recent decades.

First Unitarian is now more than ever a vibrant component of the City of Ottawa.

~Pauline and Jack Ives



Artist: Unknown



Artist: Brian Kopke

Interior Design - Special Features

Bust of Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova

Don Saxon, then President of the Congregation, learned that Harold Pfeiffer had his original sculpture of Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova, founder of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC), in his basement. After a visit to Dr. Pfeiffer's, a bronze was commissioned and presented as a gift to the church on December 9, 1979 by Don and Renee Saxon and the sculptor.



Unitarian Congregation.

In recognition of her work she received awards from various governments, and Canada made her a Companion of the Order of Canada, the nation's highest award.

Members of this Congregation are proud to have helped at the beginning and now to have her bust as a reminder of our present obligation to help those in need - a reminder each time we enter this building.

-Excerpt from "Views from these Pews" by Rev. Brian Kopke

About Lotta Hitschmanova - Born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1909. Studied in Prague and Paris, obtaining a Doctorate in Philosophy and post-graduate diplomas in journalism and political science, and learning six languages. Fled to Belgium in 1938 because of the Nazis, then to France. In 1942 she was granted a Canadian visa by Order-in-Council, and worked as a clerk in the censorship department in Ottawa for the rest of the war years. In 1948 she became Executive Director of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC) of Canada. For 37 years she remained a leader in international development, initiating community development projects in remote areas of India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, South Korea, and Southern Africa. During her lifetime she received numerous awards both in Canada and from other grateful countries. She died on August 1, 1990. The bronze bust of Lotta Hitschmanova, created by sculptor Dr. Harold Pfeiffer and presented as a gift to the church by Don and Renee Saxon and the sculptor, can be seen on entering the front door of Worship Hall.

*-Excerpt from Joycelyn Loeffelholz-Rea's book: Looking Forward at the Past!
- A History of the Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa*



from www.usc-canada.org

Copper Enamel Plates

On the supporting beams at the front of Worship Hall are found 84 copper enamel dishes made by Church School children under the direction of Anne Orton shortly after the church was built.

She was teaching in the Church School at the time and brought her kiln and enamels to involve all the children. Anne describes it as "a way wherein each child could reach out in an embrace ... representing the love of all people". The plaques were placed on the wall, not as individual units, but as a complete work of art, for which Anne Orton was responsible.

As a result of this project, the children who took part have felt that they have roots in this church and since then have been able to return at any time and point to their contribution. The plates depict the ideas children had while they were encouraged to look up and around, seeing all things - sky, earth, water, people, and to reach out to them spiritually and physically.



Truly a labour of love with much meaning, this work of art complements the view to the hills, breaking up the vertical thrust of the support beams and helping them to blend with the outside world.



~Excerpt from "Views from these Pews" by Rev. Brian Kopke



Memorial Panels

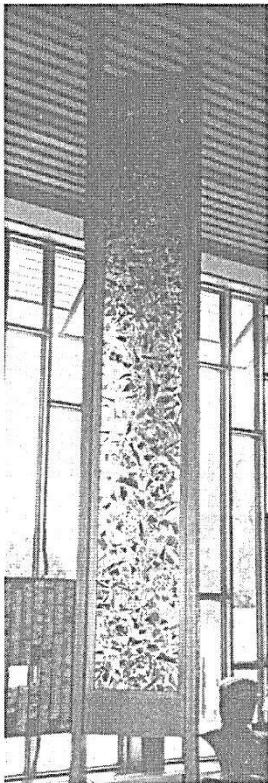
The original design for the Church called for an ornamental screen dividing the church seats from the cloak room. Due to cost pressures, this screen was not built.

In 1972, Tom Dougherty volunteered to construct two panels as a divider. Mr. Talback provided the lumber, the truck, and workmen to put the finished panels into place.

Tom issued a plea to church members to save broken glass and gathered other bits of brightly coloured glass provided by cooperative friends. Then, in his garage, he set the shards of broken glass into epoxy in a haphazard but pleasing fashion. Circular emblems in the panels represent all the religions of the worlds. After some two months of work, the panels were completed and raised into place.

A Memorial Committee, with Tom's direction, undertook to place small plaques on the sides of these panels whenever a memoriam donation was made - hence the name "memorial panels". A Memorial Fund was also established.

To Tom the panels symbolized the beauty and binding force of friendships and family and were a proud gift of labour to the church he loved.



~ Excerpt from "Views from these Pews" by Rev. Brian Kopke



Chalice

The story of the origin of the Flaming Chalice eloquently illustrates one of the touchstones of our particular faith - sacrifice and zealous effort in bettering the plight of those less fortunate than ourselves.



The Unitarian Service Committee (now the UUSC in Boston) came into being when a small group of Unitarians in 1939 decided that they had to give public witness to their deep convictions regarding human dignity. This witness manifested itself through the formation of an organization similar in dedication and principles to the American Friends Service Committee.

In dealing with refugees escaping the horrors of Nazi Germany from countless war-torn European nations, it was soon apparent that a symbol of some type which would easily identify the USC was needed to bridge the language gulf.

An Austrian refugee, Hans Deutsch, who lived in Paris until France was invaded in 1940, fled to Portugal and there joined the staff of the USC for a period of six months as Secretary and Assistant to Dr. Charles R. Joy, the Executive Director of the Unitarian Service Committee.

Dr. Joy asked Deutsch - a musician, craftsman and artist - to design an appropriate emblem for the Committee. Thus, the flaming chalice was born - a symbol that is frequently recognized throughout the world as the emblem of Unitarian Universalists.

The pewter chalice in this sanctuary was purchased from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee in 1986 so that the adults of the church would have the same symbol in their worship as the children had in theirs for many years. Each Sunday the chalice is lit for the services of the adults and the children, reminding us of our obligation to care for other people in this world.



Present day Chalice crafted and donated by Donna Bowen-Willer

~Excerpt from "Views from these Pews" by Rev. Brian Kopke



Dedication Week

And the building of concrete, cedar and glass said
 Use Me!
 Use my hall with the soaring beams,
 Use my small rooms, use my large rooms,
 For worship, for fun, for fellowship, for learning, for discussion;
 Where attitudes and ideas may germinate,
 So that a community, a nation and, who knows,
 All the world will feel,
 Something has happened here!

~Written by Andy Winn and presented at the choral concert during Dedication Week, 1967

Some of Rev. David Pohl's opening remarks at the beginning of this book bear repeating, and we expand on them to include the rest of his dedication to this award-winning building:

Here, in this house of cedar and glass, we shall seek to become whole persons. Here, beneath the arching northern sky, we shall build ties of community that welcome all and exclude none... And, even as this building will serve not only us but generations as yet unborn, let us be mindful of our ties with the future. May we keep before us a vision of the world as it ought to be, free from hatred and violence, duplicity and complacency, a world that shall be one and at peace... We have built this worship hall, then, so we might gather as a congregation to celebrate life, to measure ourselves against the very highest that we know, and to nurture here in the spirit of wonder, of brotherhood and of peace. Here, too, we shall dedicate our children, marry our sons and daughters, memorialize our friends and loved ones... We have built this church, then, that we might have a place to house a creative, liberating religious education program... This church shall nurture the arts of fellowship and friendship, of caring and concern. This church stands for responsibility as well as freedom; and our faith has a social as well as individual dimension... Let us keep in mind, then, that the church we have built here must be a socially responsible one, providing programs, activities, channels for congregational action on behalf of those principles commonly held among us.

David Pohl set a vision of what we are and what we could become which still resonates. We strive to be a church tolerant of all, accepting of everyone, active in our community, deep in our spiritual lives, inclusive and concerned. During the service this affirmation was stated by Rev. Pohl and the congregation:

*We believe in the freedom of the human spirit,
Its right to live and grow,
Its right to outward expression and inward solitude.
We believe in the oneness of the human spirit,
Its kinship with all things,
Its fellowship with all peoples.
We believe in the power of the human spirit,
Its escape from the tomb of ignorance,
Its flight to the stars.*

Building Improvements and Campus Planning

1988 - Official Opening of Elevator and Disabled Washroom



Bill Van Iterson: Opening Remarks



Bob Chiarelli, Ottawa West MPP addresses congregation



Chrissy Cameron:
Happy to have access

Handicapped Access

Handicapped access to this building was long a concern of members of this Congregation. Many years ago, a "loop system" was installed to aid the hearing-impaired during Sunday services. Today there is an FM broadcast system which can be tuned into with "walkmans."

Wheelchair access had long been a dream, and in 1985 the Congregation began to look more seriously at the possibility of providing such access to the upper and lower floors of the Church building, as well as a handicapped washroom. With the help of a grant from the Province of Ontario, this dream became a reality in September 1988. The project required substantial renovation and re-organization of the interior of the Church. Power assisted doors on the street level were added in 2000.



Excerpt from "Views from these Pews" by Brian Kopke

Other Building Improvements

After 20 years or so, things started to deteriorate and more than just a few renovations were necessary: replacement of cedar shingles, installation of proper ice-guards, remediation and renovation of the lower level after the relocation of the River Parkway Preschool Centre, to name just a few.



The 2004 Raise the Roof Fundraising Campaign, conducted by the Property Committee, included a Strawberry Social and a “Tux for Bucks” event.



Playing All my Friends and Neighbours

2008 - A generous bequest by Sue Van Iterson ensured the NOW room was transformed with a beautiful labyrinth mosaic floor and chalice motif, and a Sound and Light Project was completed.

2016 - An accessible ramp was added to the NOW Room, ensuring the building was completely accessible.



A much-needed AC unit was installed in the kitchen of Fellowship Hall (partially funded by the Seniors Program group).



Campus Planning Results

After much effort by the Campus Planning Committee (CPC), the City of Ottawa announced in 2016 that the Light Rail Transit (LRT) route would be altered to curve southwest just before Cleary Avenue and proceed west under Richmond Road, eliminating the need to go through the campus.



Fifty Years at a Glance



1967: We move to our new 'home' at 30 Cleary Avenue. Rev. David Pohl serves as Minister. Church membership is 464 with 353 "adherents" and 503 children registered in Sunday school. Frank Macintyre serves as President.

1968: River Parkway Pre-School Centre (now River Parkway Children's Centre) is opened in the building's lower level. Andrew Winn is President.

1969: Membership officially stands at 489. Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova receives Medal of Service from Order of Canada.

1970: Assistant Minister Rev. Tom Ahlburn resigns. Fred Finlay serves as President. Church picnic is held at the Todd's.

1971: Rev. David Pohl resigns and the congregation calls Rev. Vernon Nichols. A special newspaper and magazine drive collects over 9,000 lbs. of waste paper, saving an estimated 77 trees. Joan Kabayama serves as President.

1972: We host Temple Israel (1972-74) after a fire in the synagogue forced them to seek a new temporary home. Paper drives are discontinued when the City of Ottawa institutes citywide paper pick-up. David Broadbent serves as President.

1973: Margaret (Peg) Gooding becomes Director of Religious Education. A Thursday "Community Night" meal begins. Tom Williams serves as President until 1975.

1974: Membership is 464 with \$252/year average pledge. Amnesty International rents office space.

1975: Jim Burrows serves as President until 1977. We run a deficit of nearly \$20,000. We launch the Family Fair and Boutique fundraiser.

1976: Under Mona Bowles, Fall Fair raises \$1.5K. We hold our first Talent Auction Sale.

35 years of the Unitarian Fall Fair

A successful, well-organized community event

Story and photos by Judith van Berkum –

Friends, family, all ages, meet annually and eagerly line up for the opening of the Fall Fair at the Unitarian Church in the Kitchissippi ward. Located close to the Ottawa River, on Cleary Ave., Saturday, November 18, 2015 was the 35th anniversary of the Fall Fair. 350 people lined up and waited for doors to open at 9:30 a.m.



1977: Official membership is 523. Keith Dowd is President. We take a \$29K bank loan to cover accumulated operating costs.

1978: Fred Halang and Frances Morrison each serve as President. Sunday School enrollment is 162.

1979: Two new committees are formed: Publicity, and Professional Staff Relations. Frances Morrison continues as President.

1980: We vote to approve Unitarian House. A bust of Dr. Hitschmanova is given to First Unitarian Congregation Ottawa. John McNab is President.

1981: Peg Gooding and Doug Hadash are ordained. A Long Range Planning Committee is formed. Ruth Haythorne is President.

1982: Rev. Vernon Nichols seeks another position and goes on sabbatical. Ken Childs is President.

1983: We burn our mortgage. The Nichols leave Ottawa. There are seven neighbourhood groups. The Holtom Lecture Fund is established. Don Saxon is President.

1984: Unitarian House officially opens. Rev. Arthur B. Jellis becomes Interim Minister. Ann Jones serves as President.

1985: Rev. Brian Kopke is installed as Minister. The CUC-UUA "Fair Share" is \$14/person. Bill Van Iterson is President.

1986: Sandy Devine resigns as Office Administrator. Fall Fair makes over \$12,000. Charles Tod is President until 1988.

1987: Liz Benjamin joins us as Director of RE. Official membership is 551. We study accessibility issues.

1988: An accessibility elevator and washroom make their appearance in our building. Henry Muggah is President from May to October, when Joan Hill takes on the position.

1989: Rev. Liz Benjamin is ordained and installed. Lisa Presley starts a 10-month internship. Joan Hill is President.



1985: Easter Service



1990: Official membership is 526. A "Bridge-a-thon" raises \$672 for the elevator fund. Geoff Cliffe-Phillips is President until 1992.

1991: The Robert Hale Choir Music Fund is created. Dr. Lotta leaves \$70K to us in her will.

1992: The Refugee Committee sponsors 2 families. The first photo directory is published. Jim Burrows is President.

1993: The Refugee Committee sponsors a 3rd year medical student from Somalia. Don McDiarmid is President until 1995.

1994: The Welcoming Congregation Committee holds its first meeting.



1995: The Meditation Garden is dedicated. We study forming two new congregations. Dr. Jim Darragh is President until 1997.

1996: Joy May Williams is offered sanctuary. Volunteers give 46,690 hours this year. A seniors group is launched. UU Fellowship of Ottawa is formed.

1997: We plan for our Centennial Celebration, beginning with a Centennial Scroll to collect personal memories of the church. We set up our first website. Jack Wright serves as President until 1999.

1998: We become a Welcoming Congregation. We celebrate our 100th Anniversary and create a time capsule, which is buried in the Meditation Garden. Joycelyn Loeffelholz-Rae's book *Looking Forward at the Past! A History of the Unitarian Congregation* is published.

1999: We purchase adjoining land from the National Capital Commission. Bob Stevenson is President until 2001.

2000: The "Noble Bird", a metal sculpture by Brodie Shearer, is placed in our Meditation Garden.



Burying the time capsule



2001: A "Large Church" workshop is led here by Rev. Stefan Jonasson. Bill Van Iterson is President until 2005.

2002: Rev. Liz Benjamin retires. Samsu Mia is given sanctuary (2002-2004).

2003: Discussions are underway about calling an assistant or associate minister.

2004: Rev. Daniel Owens is ordained near the end of his intern ministry with us.

2005: Rev. Lee Devoe serves as our Associate Minister until 2006. Joan Hill is President until Joan Auden takes on the position later in the year.

2006: The "Parkway Spire" replaces the "Ottawa Unitarian" as our newsletter. Joan Auden is President.



2007: Music Director Jane Perry leads the effort to acquire a Steinway piano. Rev. Brian Kopke retires. Rev. Janet Newman serves as our Interim Minister. Shree Kumar Rai receives sanctuary in our building (2007-2009). Chuck Shields is President until 2009.

2008: Rev. Marcel Duhamel serves as our Interim Minister.

2009: Rev. John Marsh is called as our Settled Minister. Two children's choirs are formed. Kathy Yach serves as President until 2012.

2010: We create a photo directory of our membership. RE offers five services for all ages and the concept of Family Ministry Teams is introduced. Social Action Sundays are added to the RE program.

2011: We update our policies and bylaws.

2012: We develop a Social Responsibility Council Manual. Kim Elmer is President until 2014.

2013: We set up a new website. Fifty-four families, 79 children and 9 youth participate in Children's RE. The Lifespan Learning theme is "Everyone at the Table".

2014: We introduce "Theme Based Ministry" to our Sunday morning services. Maury Prevost serves as President until 2016.



2015: Deirdre Kellerman and Liz Roper join us as Music Director and Lifespan Learning Director, respectively.

2016: Rev. John Marsh resigns. Rev. Dr. Paula Gable joins us as Interim Minister. An accessibility ramp is installed in the NOW room. Maggie Sharp is President.



2017: We celebrate 50 years at 30 Cleary Avenue. A "Congregational Night" program is introduced. Ellen Bell is ordained into the ministry of First Unitarian and the Eastern Fellowship as a Community Minister.



Ottawa's
minority religions

Unitarians

Photostory by Christopher Hayman

Travelling west on the Ottawa River Parkway, you cannot help but notice an elegant ecclesiastical building with a widespread roof that reaches up to form a tall spire.

This is 2101 Algonquin Avenue, the home of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa.

The building was completed in 1967, to replace the original church on the corner of Elgin and Lewis Streets.

Inside as well as out, there is the same feeling of light and of space, provided by the huge windows and the red cedar wood of the walls.

The worship hall has seats for 330 persons, but they are so arranged that no member of the congregation is more than 45 feet from the minister on his platform.

Since Unitarianism first arrived in Ottawa in 1877, the church membership has expanded to rather more than 500 people.

Unitarians make no attempt to proselytize, but their strong emphasis on individual freedom of belief is at least one reason why their numbers are constantly growing.

Unitarians have no formal creed. There are humanists and agnostics to be found among them, rubbing shoulders with people whose religious ideas come very close to those of the orthodox Christian.

Students and teachers at their theology schools are not

required to subscribe to any particular doctrinal viewpoint. They are committed to a search for greater religious understanding.

★ ★ ★

One unifying factor is the almost universal acceptance among them of the idea that Jesus, although a remarkable teacher, was in no sense a supernatural being. Indeed the name Unitarian stems from their disavowal of the doctrine of the trinity.

Mostly they believe that orthodox Christians have substituted a Christ of "dogmatism, metaphysics, and pagan philosophy" for the real human Jesus of the Bible. There are, they say, elements of truth in such biblical ideas as the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, but only in the symbolic sense.

Generally, their attitude to the Bible is one of acceptance with reservations. They believe that it is not one book, but a library of books, all of which cannot be accepted as being of equal importance.

★ ★ ★

Unitarianism in something like its present form dates back to the Protestant Reformation.

However, they claim that their ideas about the trinity, and the oneness of God go back to the very earliest days of the Christian church. Sectarian groups with cosy household names such as the Eliotites and the Samosatenians held similar points of view no much less than 2,000 years ago.



In 1553, a man called Michael Servetus was burned in Calvin's Geneva for practicing the unitarian heresy.

The first known Unitarian church was founded in Hungary in 1568. Unitarianism reached England soon after. The first church in the United States was set up in 1794, and Canada in 1842.

In the United States, Unitarians are excluded from the National Council of the churches of Christ, because of a refusal on the part of many of them to acknowledge Jesus as "their Lord and God." About 50 per cent of all Unitarians would, however, regard themselves as Christians.

★ ★ ★
They may not be in complete agreement one with another on questions relating to God, and human destiny, but they are united in their feeling of respect for the fundamental worth of all men.

The famous Unitarian Wil-

liam Ellery Channing said that a man could only lose his membership in the church if he experienced the "death of goodness in his own breast."

Another unifying factor is their belief in congregational autonomy.

All major decisions are taken by the congregation voting democratically, at annual congregational meetings. Less important decisions are left to the executive board, a group of 12 members elected annually by the congregation.

The church belongs to the Canadian Unitarian Council and the Unitarian Universalist Associations, but these organizations have no power to dictate policy to their members.

★ ★ ★
Not surprisingly, the form of Unitarian services varies greatly.

A typical Sunday service at the Ottawa church might consist of three musical performances, either live or from record, a poetry reading, and a sermon by the minister,

Vernon Nichols. Services in the past have incorporated such assorted items as rock music, panel discussions, and one-act plays.

The social responsibility committee supervises the various community projects which the congregation undertakes. These too are widely varied, and have included such things as the submission of a brief to Parliament on the subject of abortion, and the

setting up of a Hungarian refugee family in Canada.

★ ★ ★
Dr. Charles Eliot, a former President of Harvard University, was perhaps right when he described Unitarianism as a "cheerful religion."

It represents, he said, the individual's victory over ignorance, superstition, fear, and uncertainty.

★ ★ ★
NEXT WEEK — The Sikhs.



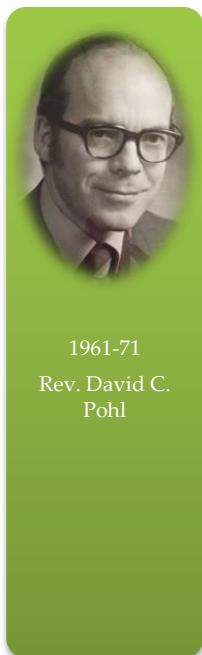
January 22, 1972: Ottawa Journal



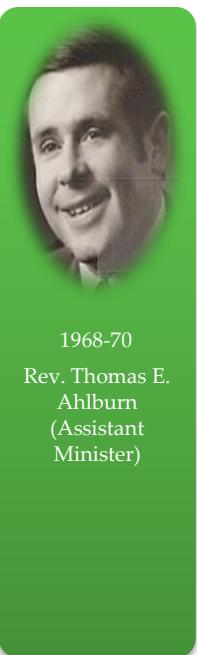
Worship through the Years

Ministers 1967-2017

Our ministers over the last 50 years have brought us many gifts, and challenged us to live out our Unitarian Universalist values while helping us explore life's questions. We have been blessed with a diverse group of people of different genders and sexualities, single or partnered, coming to us from many ages and stages of life.



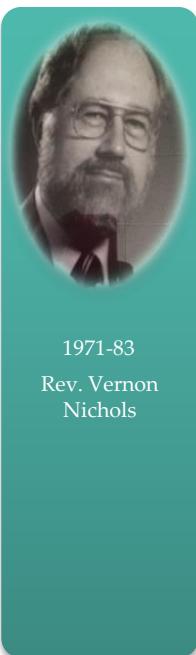
1961-71
Rev. David C.
Pohl



1968-70
Rev. Thomas E.
Ahlburn
(Assistant
Minister)



1971 Rev. Frank
LeGras, Minister
and hospital
chaplain



1971-83
Rev. Vernon
Nichols



1981-86
Rev. Margaret
(Peg) Gooding,
Minister of RE
(formerly Director
of RE, 1973-81)



1984
Rev. Arthur Jellis
(Interim Minister
January to
December)



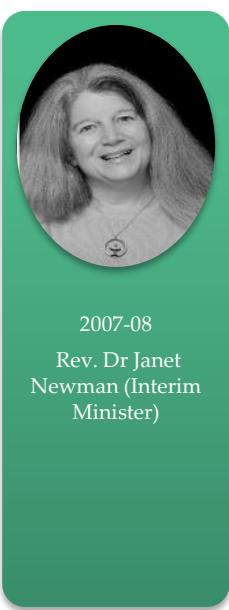
1985-2007
Rev. Brian S.
Kopke



1989-2002
Rev. Elizabeth
Benjamin, Minister of
Religious Education



2005-06
Rev. Lee Devoe
(Associate Minister)



2007-08
Rev. Dr Janet
Newman (Interim
Minister)



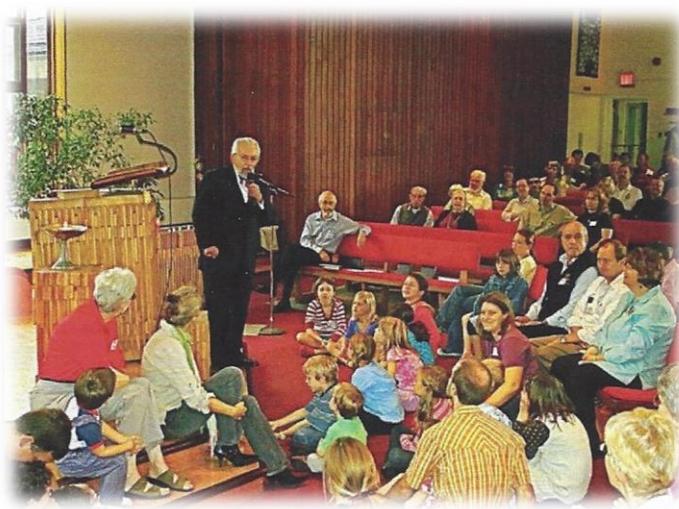
2008-09
Rev. Marcel
Duhamel (Interim
Minister)



2009-16
Rev. John Marsh



2016-2017
Rev. Dr. Paula Gable
(Interim Minister)



2008 Ingathering Service with Rev Marcel Duhamel



Rev. John Marsh and Tony Turner
at Pete Seeger Concert

THE OTTAWA UNITARIAN

FIRST UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF OTTAWA

2101 ALGONQUIN AVENUE,
OTTAWA, ONTARIO K2A 1T2
725-1066

Minister:
Vernon C. Nichols
725-1066

Director of Religious
Education:
Margaret K. Gooding
725-1512

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 1980, 10:30 A.M. (Prelude 10:20)
"VISE-LIKE GRIP OF CUSTOM"
Vernon Nichols

Summaries of the seventies abound. I cannot resist the temptation to say something about the decade just ended. In spite of all the surface changes which may come, more will remain the same during the eighties than will be different. Individuals as well as societies resist true change fiercely. In order to make any progress, we must understand this. Knowing it, we can retain roots in the midst of turmoil.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 1980, 10:30 A.M. (Prelude 10:20)
"TO RELEASE HUMAN POTENTIAL"
Vernon Nichols

ALSO - PRESENTATION OF MARGARET MORRIS MOVEMENT.

Unless we can put into practice more of what we already know about releasing our human potential, any other gains during this decade will only complicate the problems we experience already. This must be done to right the imbalances we suffer from: in access to the world's resources, in unbridled technological development, in subservience of human beings to profits or systems. We know much about what we must do and how to do it; what we lack is the will and the dedication to achieve it.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Rosemarie Newcombe
DEADLINE NEXT NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 10TH

Unitarian lectures

For the occasion, a Buddhist monk, Bhanta Punnaji of the Mahavihara Temple in Toronto, is visiting Ottawa. He will hold ceremonies at the new temple on Sunday morning and then repeat them at 3:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Church for members of the Ottawa Buddhist Association and interested members of the public. Afterwards, he will talk about Buddhism in the modern world.

But that will be only one part of a month long series of seminars, films and displays, which will be held at the Unitarian Church. Each spring over the past four years, the church has studied one of the world's religions as part of its belief that each religion has something to offer, said the church's minister, Rev. Vernon Nichols.

This year's series begins tomorrow at 10:30 a.m. when Nichols will talk about Buddha's life and philosophy. This will be followed by a vegetarian buffet, consisting of foods from cultures where Buddhism has a strong influence. At 1 p.m., the theme of the Buddhist life and philosophy will be taken up again by Rajju Rodriguez, a professor of religious studies at the University of Ottawa.

May 3, 1980: From article *Buddhism Gaining Ground in Ottawa* in The Ottawa Journal

October 28, 1978: The Ottawa Journal:

Unitarians — thinkers who stand alone together

By Theresa Peddle

"Unitarians, said Rev. Vernon Nichols of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, are thinkers who choose to stand alone, so they stand alone together!" It's not as paradoxical as it seems.

The Unitarian Church had its beginnings in Hungary and Romania during the Protestant Reformation, when people dared to question religious dogma.

It has no one creed or belief that must be taken on faith. Religious beliefs are expressions of the in-

dividual's life experiences and knowledge, arrived at rationally.

Perhaps it is due to the rational approach to religious experience that the Unitarians espouse, that the largest occupational group in the Ottawa congregation is research scientists, followed by teachers, said Nichols.

"Not only do we believe that God is one (as opposed to a Trinity) but also that *truth* is one. The split between religion and science did not affect the Unitarians because we believe that newly discov-

ered truths in science cannot fundamentally be in contradiction with religious or philosophical truth. Religion is seen as a human development rather than a matter of revelation," he said.

In 1961, the Unitarian Church merged with the Universalist Church to form the Unitarian Universalist Association. "The differences between the denominations were mostly sociological; Universalists were rural-based, while Unitarians were urban-based, said Nichols.

The Unitarian moral code "is a liberation ethics," explained Nichols. "The individual has to determine his personal ethical code in relation to what is best for himself and society. Individual religious beliefs change, evolve and mature with new experiences."

Because of their belief of freedom from dogma, and in improving society for its members, the Unitarians have spearheaded some remarkable charitable organizations.

Some grew to a size and scope that they were incorporated and run on their own without direct church intervention. The most famous one is the Unitarian Service Committee, a highly respected relief organization with an uncanny ability to get into countries where other relief organizations are barred.

The Unitarians are part of the International Association for Religious Freedom, a world council which includes Buddhists, Shinto, Hindu, and humanist groups. It meets every three years.

It's Still Happening!

Guest Speaker

Mrs. Lore Perron, president of ARCAL, the Association for the Repeal of Canadian Abortion Laws, will be the guest speaker at the Unitarian Church, Algonquin Avenue, tomorrow at the 9.30 a.m. and 11.15 a.m. services. Her topic will be "A Case for Repeal."

February 6, 1971: The Ottawa Journal

UK Unitarian leader speaks

Rev. Keith Gilley, minister of Golders Green Unitarian Congregation in London, England, will answer the question "Where is British Unitarianism going in 1980?" when he addresses the 10:30 a.m. service tomorrow at First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa church at 2101 Algonquin Ave.

Gilley has played a leading role in British liberal religious causes. He initiated Intergroup — an association of homosexuals and heterosexuals that meets regularly in his church to foster mutual understanding and acceptance. He is also a member of Amnesty International.

June 28, 1980: The Ottawa Journal

Leave For Rev. D. Pohl

Sabbatical leave for Rev. David C. Pohl for the period Feb. 1 to Sept. 1, 1970, was

ratified by the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa at their annual meeting.

At this meeting the following officers were elected: Fred Finlay, president; Jack Reeves, vice president; Norma Tener, secretary; John McRuer, treasurer. Elected to the executive board were: Douglas Adams, Riad Hanafi, Joan Kabayama, Ed Maltby, Douglas Munro, Anne O'Callaghan, Edith Ossherg, and Stewart Wiberg. Mary Hummel was elected to the Board of Trustees.

A 1969 budget of \$93,000 was adopted.

ALL WELCOME !!!

Sunday School 9.30 to 10.30 a.m. Scobie Memorial Free Methodist Church at Kondale Public School on Greenbank Road as phase one of our relocation program at Arlington Woods.

PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA

1970

February 22, 1969: The Ottawa Journal

Marriage seminar

By Peter Robb

Good marriages don't make news, only bad marriages.

Well, why not start a seminar stopping good marriages from becoming just another divorce statistic?

This is just what Muriel Axon and Clare Steele, two social workers, are attempting to do at the First Unitarian Congregation on Algonquin Street.

Steele said in an interview, she is trying to strengthen those marriages that are working.

"Marriage is like moving into a new house with a lot of rooms. After several years some of those rooms are blocked off. We hope to break down those barriers, so people can live in those rooms again."

Steele says, the First Unitarian Congregation is an ideal place to work out of because of an already interested congregation and a sympathetic minister, Rev. Vernon Nichols.

Nichols says the program fits nicely with the role of the church.

"It is natural for people to come to the church with their marital problems; much more so than a professional counsellor. It has been the church's traditional function."

Nichols says he supports the seminar because it helps couples to understand one another. He says the church is aware of the high rate of divorce and he supports any program that will ease this problem.

Steele says the program is not an effort in counselling or therapy, it is merely what she calls an enrichment program.

They are attempting to enrich the marriages of people. They hope to help people help themselves to understand their spouses. The seminars they are giving are structured around facilitating communication between married couples. They include conflict in a marriage situation, communication techniques, sex and communication and the last will discuss the setting of priorities and evaluating values in marriage.

Steele hopes these programs will help to regen-

erate a sense of newness in marriages that have grown stagnant over the years.

Steele has come by her position through several years in marriage work. She has worked with unwed mothers and with the Catholic Diocese's Family Life Centre.

Does

The great and late Christian Professor John Line told once of hearing a woman pray, 'Oh God, if there is a God, save my soul if I have a soul.' The ambiguities of that petition reflect the deeper ambiguities which beset the most devout Christians. And there may be an element of honest doubt and reverent agnosticism in the heart and mind of the most sincere Christian.

What, for example, does the priest say to a young wife and mother whose husband is dying of cancer who may ask for prayers for a miraculous healing?

October 29, 1977: The Ottawa Journal

Intern Ministers 1967-2017

Our intern ministers have come to us to gain practical experience while developing their skills, self-awareness, confidence, ease in relationships, and a sense of vocation. We have been fortunate to be offered the benefit of new perspectives and fresh ideas from the intern ministers we have welcomed here.



The First Visit

In February, 1967, I came to Canada as minister of Lakeshore Unitarian Church in Pointe Claire, QC. David Pohl, minister of Ottawa First, suggested a pulpit exchange later that year. If I am not mistaken, the Ottawa First building was brand new. I forgot what great pearls of wisdom with which I passionately exhorted the full house that day.

But during the Closing Words, I noticed everyone looking above me out the windows. This was in the glorious days before so many trees blocked the view. I heard later that thousands of geese were flying over, giving their own benediction to the service. I was the only one who didn't see them. But I was also the only one who saw some 250 Unitarians sitting there, mouths agape in soulful wonder.

~Fred Cappuccino, JBS



Memories of Involvement

My memories of First Unitarian of Ottawa are mostly related to aspects of my involvement in the life of the congregation. I became a member of First Unitarian of Ottawa in December 2003. I had been a "friend" for a couple of years and from the time I first started to come to the congregation I was impressed with the wonderful hospitality, and the full acceptance of my past religious background and experience, and the valuing of what I could offer.

Very soon, even before becoming a member, I was asked to be part of the Ministerial Support Team, which I chaired for a few years. Then, shortly before Rev. Brian Kopke retired, he began the Worship Associate program and asked me to be part of it. It was a great honour and privilege to be so deeply involved in the preparation and execution of well-planned worship experiences – something which I continued during the tenures of interim ministers Janet and Marcel and when John Marsh took over as settled minister. I was also very honoured to be able to preach from the pulpit on a number of occasions. I only stopped being a worship associate when I was appointed as a Lay Chaplain – a ministry I have thoroughly enjoyed for the past three years.

Involvement with the choirs – Chalice, Chamber, Jazz, SWAT, and now Fusion – under the directorship of talented musicians such as Jane, Sara, Jacob and Deirdre has been an absolute joy – not only making good music, but contributing to the worship-experiences of the community.

Three of my very special "memories of involvement" are: the installation of Associate Minister, the late Lee Devoe when I gave the Charge to the Congregation; the ordination of our intern minister, Daniel Owens, when I composed and prayed the Ordination Prayer; and the ordination of another intern minister, Debra Faulk, when I presented her with her ministerial stole. I had been chair of their two intern committees.

Involvement in "fun" events has also been very precious and memorable – whether they were attended in kilts; working at the "Holly and Lace" Fair every year; or attending various education sessions – on the Universe, on Spirituality, on Shakespeare, on the History of our movement. ...and, oh, so much more. All growth-filled, all enjoyable, all building community and making friendships to last.

~Alex Campbell

Critical Inquiry is Welcome Here

I joined the congregation in 1978. From an early age I have been philosophically inclined. This inclination occasioned some problems in the church community into which I was born and in which I grew up.

Most of the members within that community were well-intentioned, kindly, and leading lives of integrity, all of which – I readily and gratefully acknowledge – had a good influence on me. Difficulties arose, though, when I began to ask philosophically tinged questions about certain dogmas which were considered to be articles of faith and viewed as not amenable to critical inquiry.

In time I realized with concern that my questions were causing my co-religionists to feel uncomfortable. Their discomfort communicated itself to me, and I, too, became disquieted. In due course, and

not without considerable sadness, I departed from the denomination of my younger years, and found my way to Unitarian Universalism, first in Toronto and later here.

My years in this congregation have allowed me the freedom to deeply question and reflect on matters of ultimate concern. And out of this questioning and reflecting have come tentative conclusions of a philosophical/theological/ethical nature which I believe have been of help to me.

Here, within this church, I have learned a great deal from others, including from those with whom I may not entirely agree on this or that point. Indeed, I have found that it is a gratifying experience to be able to respectfully disagree on an issue without causing discomfort or being discomfited.

My sense is that to philosophize holistically and adequately in the twenty-first century requires at least a basic literacy in science. In this regard, I think, it is legitimate to say that, thanks to the patient labours of such researchers as our cosmologists and evolutionary scientists over recent centuries, it behooves us to look upon the cosmos as an evolving process and not just as a static thing.

If the starting point of someone's philosophizing includes the assumption that the universe, as well as the life-forms that populate it, are static and not evolving, I would worry that his or her outlook might not be as sound as it could be.

With these thoughts in mind, it is a great source of ongoing satisfaction to me that our congregation honours scientists, science and the scientific method.

~Brian Cowan



Artist: Bradley Ralph



Music through the Years

Over the last 50 years the Music Program at First has flourished with a wide variety of choral groups and events playing a vital role in the spiritual and social life of our community: These include adult, intergenerational, and children's choirs (Chalice, Fusion, Spirit Singers, Three Rivers Singers, Jazz, Chamber, and Gospel). A "Song Will Always Triumph" (SWAT) team of singers strove to live the seven principles through song by singing at rallies, protests, commemorations, and special community events.



Other Music Program activities have included: Song Circles, Elisabeth and Friends' fundraising series, The UU Folk Group (under the direction of Tony Turner), The Bell Ringers Group, concerts by UU musicians, a Jazz Improv Group, the Chamber Music Series (see Other Musical Happenings below), and a Music Lecture Series.

Music Directors



1986-2000
Michael
Cass-Beggs



2000-2011
Jane Perry



2011-2012
Sarah
Brooks



2012-2015
Jacob
Caines



2015-
Present
Deirdre
Kellerman

The Steinway

The new Steinway piano arrived in April 2007, raising considerable interest from local media, music groups, and individual performers. Concert rentals rose markedly in the 2007-08 season. And let's not forget those endeavours to finance the Steinway: volunteers baked \$16,000 worth of apple pies during the 'Steinway at First' campaign, the 'Buy-a-key' campaign sold eighty-eight keys, at \$500 apiece, and an anonymous donor contributed nearly \$11,000 to the campaign.



Delivering the Steinway



Setting up the Steinway



Finishing touches



Testing: Sweet Sound

The Steinway piano was inaugurated with a boisterous rendition of the UU hymn, "*Enter, Rejoice and Come in!*"



Choirs

In 1968, an attempt was made to improve congregational singing and live music increased during Sunday services, including performances by Angela Hewitt, Diane Loeb and Sister Edna as well as the Huggett Family Players.

Between 1997-2006, interest in the music program rose significantly, and there was an adult choir, an intergenerational choir, children's choir, the UU Folk Group (under the direction of Tony Turner), concerts by UU musicians, a Jazz Improv Group, a Music Lecture Series, and a Chamber Music Series.

In 2005, two new compositions by Music Director Jane Perry were premiered: *Lullaby Requiem* and *Big Momma Makes the World*. The Chamber Music at First U series completed its fifth season.

Quote from a 2007-08 Kitchissippi Times article: "First Unitarian feeds the spirit":

First Unitarian Church is becoming one of the corner stones of culture for Kitchissippi and the rest of Ottawa. Considered one of the city's finest small concert venues, the 330-seat worship hall hosts more than 75 concerts each year. As music director Jane Perry says 'This church has it absolutely right. In a world that's preoccupied with math, science, business and philosophy, we need that balance of art, music and theatre.'

In 2007-08 the Chalice choir grew to a record 52 singers, performing Schubert's *Mass in G*, the largest choral work that the Chalice Choir had ever undertaken. The Gospel Choir performed their rendition of *Big Momma Makes the World* (based on the book by Phyllis Root and music by Jane Perry). The BIUUes band made its debut performance at the 2007 December choir concert, and Sam Wilmott started the Bell Ringers group this season.





With five church choirs (and approximately 100 people singing in these choirs), live music was offered at all Sunday morning worship services from September 2009 through June 2010. We said goodbye in 2010-11 to Jane Perry, after eleven years as Director of Music.



Jane Perry and Chalice Choir circa 2008



Chalice Choir circa 2011

One of the highlights of the choral program in 2010-11 was the April 17 Sunday-morning service: “*The Refuge of Three Rivers*”, a multimedia production that included shape-note choral music, puppetry, and narration. The *Three Rivers Singers* made their debut at this service. The *Chamber Choir* also put in their first full season as an ensemble in 2010-11.



2015: Refuge of Three Rivers performed at CUC Conference

A second highlight was singing together under the direction of Maestro Laurence Ewashko at the “*Here’s to Jane*” Sunday morning service on June 5.

Chamber Music on Cleary Avenue



A lovely concert as part of the
2007-2008 Chamber Music Series



Due to financial constraints, *Chamber Music on Cleary Avenue* took its final bow at the end of its eleventh season in 2011. This series attracted classical musicians from as far away as Texas, Belgium and Germany, and, along with our now-famous Steinway grand piano, established our church as a musical destination in this city.



Choir Practice with Jacob



2016: Deirdre Kellerman and Chalice Choir



2015: Three Rivers Choir at GoGo Grannies event

Religious Education (RE) through the Years

Religious Education Program Directors (More Recently Known As Directors of Lifespan Learning)

						
1964-1967 Joanne Stutzman	1973-1986 Rev. Margaret K. Gooding	1987-2002 Rev. Elizabeth Benjamin	2002-2006 Caroline Balderston Parry	2006-2008 2011-2015 Susan McEwen	2009-2011 Nicky Duenkel	2015-Present Liz Roper

RE Programs and Activities

There have been a variety of RE groups including: a Thursday morning parents' group, the "You, You and Religion Group", and "Employing Your Total Self" Groups.

Program elements have involved: Kids Choice Days and Outdoor Classes, a drama component to the Growing Up Years curriculum, an RE Review, the "*Down By the Riverside*" summer program, and the World Religious Program - "*Project Travel*"



2015 Christmas Eve Service

Other activities have included: wine & cheese parties for church school teachers, Easter egg hunts, a Religion-Making workshop, a flower communion service, a "Death and Dying" seminar, a Spring Fling, a "Special Friends" event, the annual Teachers' Retreat, "*Solstice Is Coming*" and "*Christmas is Coming*" parties, RE Teacher Appreciation Breakfasts and "Secret Pals" and "Mystery Pals" to foster intergenerational connections.



Mystery Pals Breakfast:
Kathryn Kirkwood and child



Joanne Stutzman, religious education director for the Ottawa Unitarian Church, discusses a magazine article concerning the recent discovery of bloodstains on "The Shroud of Christ" with a class of 12 year olds at the school of religion attached to the church. According to the class, it was the ideas of Christ while alive that should be important—not those of Christ dead.



1967 saw a record number of children registered in church school, soaring to 503 and creating a waiting list that year.

Capital LRY (Liberal Religious Youth) was the largest active LRY group in Canada in 1969. Eight years later this group had just 10 members, but enthusiastically hosted a very successful LRY conference with help from the congregation.

2013: The children's Rainbow Principles and the Seven Principles Chorus was introduced in the RE programme.

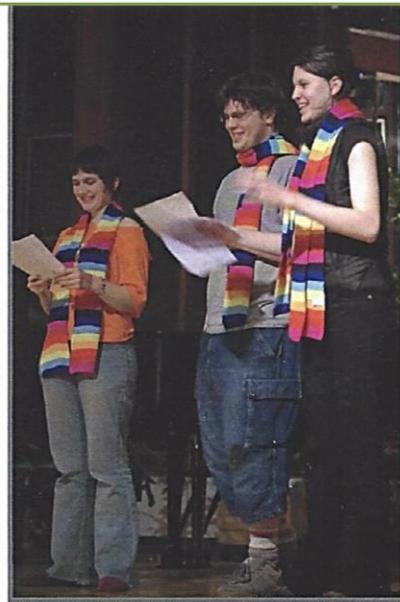
	RED; Respect all beings, for everyone is a gift. <i>All people are important.</i>
	ORANGE; Offer fair and kind treatment to all. <i>Be kind in all you do.</i>
	YELLOW; Yearn to learn. <i>We celebrate the spirit.</i>
	GREEN; Grow in spirit and mind. <i>And search for what is true.</i>
	BLUE; Believe in your ideas and act on them. <i>All people need a voice; give everyone a vote.</i>
	INDIGO; Insist on peace, freedom, and justice for all. <i>Build a fair and peaceful world.</i>
	VIOLET; Value the connections in all creation. <i>Take care of Earth's lifeboat.</i>

2008: Senior High O.W.L.



Poppy Pile

We offer four levels (Grades 1 & 2, Grade 5 & 6, Jr. High, and Sr. High) of O.W.L. These pictures are of our Senior High O.W.L. participants at a weekend workshop in our church. Participants were not only from our own congregation and the local community, but also from those of the Montreal and Peterborough churches and their communities.



Sr. O.W.L. Graduation



2015 Children's classes: Celebrating Me & My World:
Ages 0 to 3. Through free play, crafts, songs, games and stories, this program provides preschoolers with experiences and opportunities to grow in trust and caring and to develop their self-identity and sense of connectedness with all of life.

Heart Talk for Kids: Ages 4-12: This program focuses on helping children build healthy communication skills. It connects kids with their own power to create peaceful relationships. Sessions emphasize feelings, universal needs, making requests, understanding (empathy) for yourself and others, gratitude, transforming anger, conflict resolution, and active peacemaking.



First Steps



The day the Rainbows had a vote



2013 UU-UNO in New York City

In 2010, the number of intergenerational services was cut back to four (from seven). Themes and stories at these services included a USC service in October featuring the story "Toad's Garden", a Hanukkah service with the story of "The Latke that Could not Stop Screaming", the winter service telling the story of "Owl Moon" and finally an Earth Day service entitled "The Refuge of the Three Rivers".

The Youth Ministry has hosted many coffee hours, helped with the sale of UNICEF Christmas cards, travelled to the UN headquarters in New York City to participate in annual UU-UNO spring seminars, hosted CONS (conferences) for youth from the Eastern Region, and travelled to ACMs, taking part in CanUUdle.



2005: Young Religious Unitarian Universalists



1976 Ottawa Citizen article: Chinese dragon made by RE children



2007: The Rainbow Family



Youth Yoga



1984 RE Outside



1984 Roots with Visitors



1985 Overnight in the NOW room
Growing Up Years



1985 Rainbows "stone soup party" for families



Inside our clubhouse: In Search of My Church



Teachers play games too! Teacher
Retreat 1984

AT OTTAWA UNITARIAN CHURCH

A Sunday School With a Twist



A CRITICAL GLANCE

Brenda Hay gives a critical opinion of Elizabeth Hubley's painting at an art session in the four-year-old class of the Unitarian Church school of religion. Painting and talking are only two of the methods used to develop the children's critical ability.

(Journal Photo by Dominion Wide)



THE STATE OF THE WEATHER

A class of five-year-olds at the Unitarian Sunday School discuss a story on spring weather as part of their curriculum. The story concerned disappointment for a lost picnic because of rainy weather — un-

fortunately for the class nippy weather kept them inside when this picture was taken. Their teacher, Mrs. Robert Prittie, had originally planned to hold the lesson outside in Minto Square.

(Journal Photo by Dominion Wide)

**BY BRYAN HAY
of The Journal**

A Sunday School with a twist.

Where developing attitudes are more important than religion—and where the curriculum over 10 years of a child's growth ranges from the mysteries of science to the mythologies of the ancient world and a peek into the other major churches of the city.

That is the Sunday School attached to the 65-year-old Unitarian Church on Elgin Street that spills out from two converted old houses on Lewis Street and takes up part of the Canadian Mental Health Building on MacLaren Street.

GROWING RAPIDLY

And it is one of the more rapidly growing church schools in the Capital. Enrollment has doubled since 1958 from 240 to 460—a far jump from the 35 members of the original Sunday School that met in the basement of the church hall when the church was first built in 1900.

The curriculum—and the church itself—have evolved vastly from the turn of the century.

Then it considered itself a liberal Protestant church and the Sunday School course was strictly Bible study.

Now the Unitarian Church considers itself to be a liberal but non-Christian faith.

And high on the list of what it calls its "creedless creed" is the importance of man's free and questioning mind.

AIMS OF SCHOOL

Joanne Stutzman, the church's full-time American-born director of religious education, sums up the aims of the Unitarian Church School in a nutshell:

"We believe that religion can't be taught, but must be discovered, and it is the purpose of our school of religion to provide each child with the opportunity to discover for himself the truths upon which he may build his own religious philosophy."

This is done at different levels according to the age grouping of the children.

For tots of nursery school, kindergarten and grade one age it is done with creative play and use of a graded series of readers featuring the day to day experiences of a typical family.

This family with children the same age as those in the class face and ponder the problems that most children face at this age.

The family and its relationships, friends and enemies, even death.

The stories are read, occasionally acted-out, always discussed.

As the children grow older the courses change.

Children of seven and eight look at the world around them and are introduced to the wonders of science . . . of fire, of the stars, of day and night, of the rocks that make up the body of the earth and the other planets themselves.

Slowly then, they are led into the realm of religion itself.

PROBE INTO SCIENCE

For the next two years they look at the mythologies and religions of the ancient world and they discuss—using their probings into science as a basis for experience—how these mythologies could have grown.

At the age of 11 the children are brought into contact with the Bible. For that year they look at the stories and people of the Old Testament.

The following year they delve into the life of Christ, his teachings, and their spread over the first century following his death mainly through the influence of Paul.

At this age level they are encouraged to look upon these figures as being of importance because of the impact of their ideas on civilization and the way that the probable future of the world was changed by Christianity.

A side-trip into the world of the fantastic conjures up their ideas of what the world would be like if one of the ancient faiths had taken the predominant position in the western world.

Religious Education

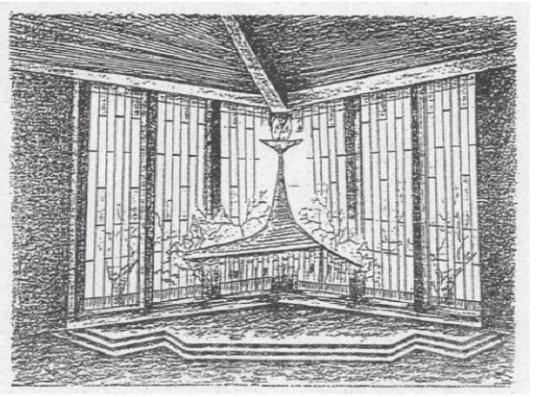
I grew up in the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, attended the church on Elgin Street as a child and made the move to the present church as a teenager. I have many wonderful memories from this building.

For one Religious Education class, we visited different churches in the Ottawa area during their services. We went to one evangelical service (the RE Leader always called ahead and got permission of the other institution) and the minister delivered his complete sermon, looking and pointing at our group, shouting how we were all destined for "hell-fire and damnation". It was very entertaining, unlike anything we had ever seen at First Unitarian and we asked to go back again but this request was denied by our RE leader.

I have very fond memories of weekly meetings with the Uniteens in the late 60's, with our wonderful leaders, a husband and wife team Ed and Darienne McAuley, assisted by the Assistant Minister Rev. Tom Ahlburn. One of the Uniteens, Mark Ziegler wrote a play that we performed one Sunday morning in the "new" church where we still have services.

While I left the church for almost 30 years, I happily returned to the congregation and the beautiful building on Cleary Ave., and have been here for the past decade.

~ Gord Baldwin



Artist: Joycelyn Loeffleholz-Rea

Looking for the "Right" Church

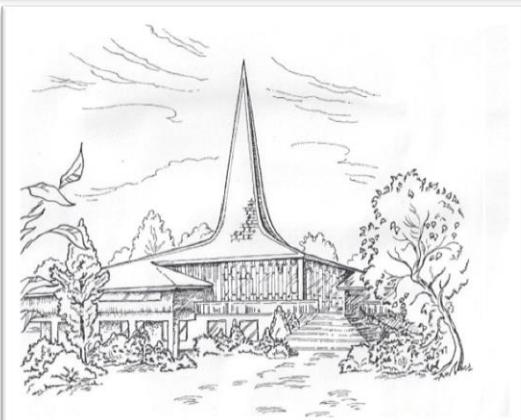
My earliest memories of the Unitarian Church date back to 1967, when I was just 12 years old. I strongly remember gazing at the beautiful bounty of leaves that graced the elegant dark branches creating a stained glass effect in the enormous windows. While visually saturated, I enjoyed an interesting discourse accompanied by a wonderful musical ceremony with the Huggett family, an Ottawa-based family well known for their medieval, renaissance, baroque, folk and pseudo-folk music.* It was almost surreal and serene. It was an especially calming relief from the recent loss of my brother, whose funeral had been celebrated in August of that year.

I also remember a ceremony, during which Minister Pohl referred to Charlie Brown, to illustrate a point in his sermon, which as a young person was most appealing.

During my first winter (1968) at the church, I was also struck by the casual wear, including ski clothing, worn by some to the service. It really impressed me that people attending this church were not hampered by the traditional external attire which I had observed at other churches and which seemingly reflected a similar rigidness in the sermons being preached there. During this search for the "right" church, I grasped early on that our church encourages tolerance, multi-faceted approaches to life, and a humanitarian approach, which ultimately I have carried through in my public service.

*They performed internationally and were musically active between 1966 and 1982.

~Judy Moser



Artist: MW

A Child's Unforgettable First Visit

The year was 1985. My daughter's first visit to First Unitarian was unforgettable, now a fond memory.

One snowy Sunday when Erika was only a year and a half, I decided to take the plunge and drive to church from our home in Burritts' Rapids an hour south of Ottawa. You have to know I was a first time mother, bushed and desperate for stimulating adult company.

I didn't ask my daughter if she wanted to go to church, we just went. I heard Reverend Kopke was speaking about nuclear disarmament. How could she not love that topic? Besides the RE downstairs was a good place for her to be while I was duly entertained upstairs. Or so I thought.

So off we went in the reliable, if somewhat body-filled Nova. I remember clearly bringing Erika downstairs and

trying so hard to leave her with a nice lady in the nursery. Her name was Lenore Moore. As I parked my daughter in Lenore's arms, Erika began to squawk and squirm. Lenore asked me to find a piece of my clothing to leave with Erika as an assurance that I would return soon. I left a mitten.

Upstairs I dashed to hobnob with the adults for a blissful hour. A little more than halfway through Rev. Kopke's talk the entire congregation was sharply interrupted by a screech from the back of the sanctuary. I'd recognize that voice anywhere.

The mitten had failed to calm my child and reassure her of my return. Poor Lenore had to bring her back up to me. At the

time I have to admit I was torn between the visceral desire to soothe my child and the universal desire to put an end to war. How could I do both?

In many ways being a Unitarian does do both. In many ways just bringing my daughter to this church gave her a head start on the wonderful human being she has become... an intelligent and beautiful woman, who is now a lawyer.

But as I hastened to the back of the church I was embarrassed that she had disturbed the quiet of our sanctuary and ruined my sacred hour.

Now that I look back I turn the incident into a charming story about parenting. A fond memory of a time when she loved me and wanted to be with me more than anyone else on earth.

~ Roxanne Merits



50 Years with the Unitarian Congregation at 30 Cleary Ave.

I have four family members who have been directly involved in the 50 years here at Cleary coming back to celebrate this month.

We arrived in Ottawa with three small children, who I soon took to the small but lovely stone Unitarian Church on Elgin St. Along with lots of other people including Sonya Dakers, I would walk the street trying to find the correct house for each child's class! There were lots of kids, but no room! Which was one of the main reasons we needed a bigger building.

Fifty years ago this month, we finally moved into this beautiful building and

David Pohl, the minister, started monthly group dedications for all the children. By this time we had a fourth child, so the two youngest, Robert and David, were dedicated along with Ian Dakers, Sonya's youngest. We had a party for them all at Sonya Dakers house afterwards.

They were all able to go through the children's program downstairs and Sonya and I taught or helped. It was a rare thing for us to be able to attend a service upstairs.

The joy is that Robert, the youngest, came back here to be married to another

Robert (or Bob) a few years ago by Jan Glyde, when she was a lay minister. They will both be here for the weekend, as well as my daughter Carol, who many of you know, has taken part in the OWL program here and is active in the Peterborough Unitarian Congregation. Leah, her daughter is hoping to come too, if her studies will allow. She was dedicated here by Liz Benjamin, took our OWL program, and was actually teaching it in Toronto last weekend!

*~Marie Andrews,
April 22, 2017*



June 11, 1967: In church after Rob and David were dedicated (with Michael and Carol)



Fundraising

Over the past 50 years, fundraisers have included:

- Parties to raise money for aid to draft resisters (1968)
- Sale of Canada Savings Bonds (with commissions from sale of bonds going to the church)
- Bridge marathons and monthly bridge groups
- Christmas tree sales
- A penny auction and a loonie auction
- “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner” events
- Collection of Campbell’s soup labels
- Bake sales and the sale of knitted goods made by the Crafty Crafters

We even raised a total of \$396.60 in 1967 from the sale of minister’s sermons!

Of course, the congregation’s biggest ongoing fundraisers are the Fall Fair and the Time and Talent Auction.

Fall Fair



Beginning in 1976, the Fall Fair aka the “Holly and Lace Bazaar” raised over \$1,500, mushrooming to more than \$48,000 by 2016! Some earlier booths even included: Candy / Popcorn / Fish Pond / Health Foods / Plants / Hot Dogs. After 30 plus years, the name “Holly and Lace Bazaar” was retired, replaced with simply “The Fall Fair”. As well as raising money, the Fall Fair builds community and shares with other community services outside the congregation, thus meeting our goal of reducing the environmental impact with a very active recycling team who ensure that unsold goods are distributed to community service organizations.

2008: Silent Auction

In 2016, an 8-person coordinating team worked throughout the year, guiding almost 40 convenors who managed the booths, rounded up the remaining volunteers (300+) who sort the myriad of goods for the week prior to the sale, and provide first aid, parking and food for workers and buyers.



1987 Lien Patel



2011: Baking sales



2012 Fall Fair Morning Lineup



2012 Fall Fair: Diane Van Oostdam, Evelyn Hope, Ellen Derry, Ellen Smith.



2013: A celebration tea party for the Fall Fair Women's Wear, Boutique and Accessories
Volunteers: Joyce Turnbull, Janet Clayton, Val Mercer, Trudy Kassner, Kathy Elliott, Sue Kassner, Judy Dunlop, Rohays Morgan, Joan Tutton, Angela Beale.
Photographer: Laurie Foster-Macleod

Time and Talent Auction

Held for the first time in 1976, the Time and Talent Auction has become the second-largest fundraiser for the Congregation. Early years saw an amount of \$1,500 raised, and 40 years later almost \$10,000 was allotted to the general fund of the congregation. The year 2016 saw 90 donated items of time, talent, goods and/or services from members and friends, allowing participants to enjoy an opportunity for fellowship within the congregation, where winning bidders meet and socialize with other congregants in a casual setting.



Marilyn Prevost, Hélène Lamb, Margaret Linton and Marilen Gerber enjoying cocktails in the garden at the T&T Thai Dinner.

Time and Talent Auction

"The ABCs of T&T, Time and Talent -- Afternoon tea, Bird-watching, Boat trips, Bridge lunches, Calligraphy lessons, Contra dancing, Cottage visits, Crokinole party, Delicious dinners, Fibrefest in Almonte, Film nights, Genealogy work...plus Storytelling sessions and Walking tours!

What a cornucopia of events I have enjoyed over the years with fellow congregants, socializing and learning things as we attended these Time and Talent offerings together....

~ Margot Clarke, 2013

We Are Social

Our current active social groups include:

- A Bridge Group
- The Crafty Crafters-Knitters Group, meeting weekly to learn new techniques, share experiences and raise money for the congregation through Mitten Tree sales, a booth at the Fall Fair, Unitarian House sales, and informal sales to each other and to friends.
- Men's Group #4
- The Ottawa South/Glebe/Centretown Neighbourhood Group
- Voyageurs Men's Group

Do you remember some of these social activities over the past 50 years?

- Annual dinner dances
- Church picnics and family fairs, BBQs and corn roasts
- Beer and pizza parties
- Punch parties after the candlelight Vesper Services
- Wine and cheese parties
- A Winter Doldrums party
- New Year's Eve parties
- Pot luck dinners
- Moveable Feasts / Dinners for Eight
- Family outings to cottages, to winter carnivals, and to sugar bushes
- Duplicate bridge
- Square dancing
- Hallowe'en parties (both children and adults)
- 'Bring 'n' Sing' (dinner and evening of Christmas carols)
- Congregational Christmas dinners
- Easter Sunday brunch
- Community Nights / Congregational Nights
- Ethnic potluck dinners
- A Caribbean Night
- Potluck desserts preceding congregational meetings



2015 Christmas Dinner



1970 Annual Church Picnic activities

Social Groups have included:

- A Young Married Couples Club and The Noble Birds Young Adults Group
- The “Singletarians” Social Group: Monthly activities for this group of 60 members in 1976 included: hiking, skating, museum visits, and theatre
- The Unitarian Men’s Club, which opened its doors to women in 1968, renamed themselves “Unitarian Men’s Club, Ladies Welcome”.
- An Outdoor Venture Group focused on seasonal outings - skating, skiing, canoeing, hiking, walking and swimming, but also included, on one occasion, lunch at Maxville followed by Helen McCuaig’s personal historical tour of Glengarry, where she was born and raised.
- The Empower Dance Group
- A 30s and 40s Group, created in 2010-11, allowed congregants within this age range to get to know one another better and foster each other’s spiritual growth within a social and family-friendly environment. They met once a month, generally for a potluck family-style meal followed by topic-specific discussion. The group also organized several outdoor activities.
- Three neighbourhood groups: Britannia, Riverside Park, and the Glebe/Centretown/Ottawa South Neighbourhood Group.



2008: A bonfire for Samhain or Halloween



2004: Down by the Riverside - Ecology Program for all ages



2007: T & T Tanner-Waller cottage



2000: T&T van Iterson's croquet party

Memories of Social Activities in the 70's and 80's

My memories of the 70's and 80's fondly include a lot more monthly social activities...organized by a very active Fellowship Committee.

There was always a corn roast in September and a picnic in June. The women's

group (UUWF) met twice a month on a Thursday morning with guest speakers and sometimes an outing. We often went out for lunch after our meetings. At one time, there was even a babysitter.

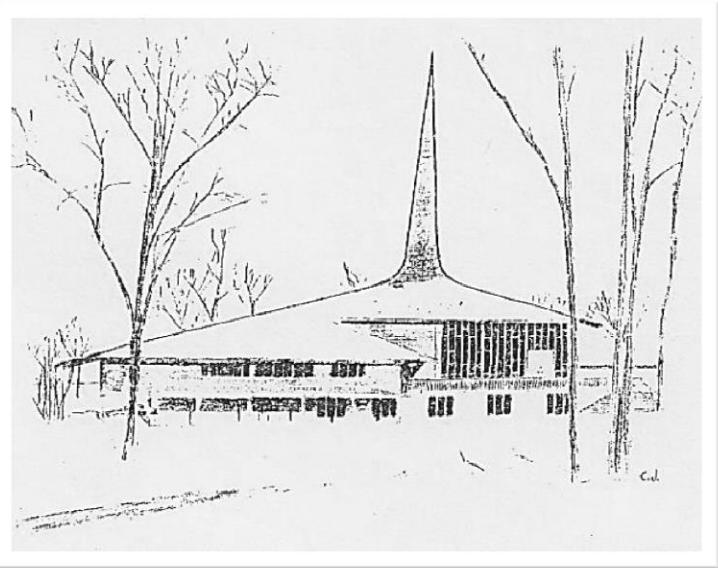
Other social events included Dinners for Eight

and Neighbourhood groups that met once a month. We even had a banquet in a local hotel with entertainment - once in the Eastview Hotel and another time in the El Mirador Hotel. Both these hotels have different names now.

~Elspeth Read



Artist: C.J.



Artist: J Burrows

We Make Statements

A Welcoming Congregation

A 'Welcoming Congregation' committee was formed in 1994, with a goal to help interested congregations become more welcoming to gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

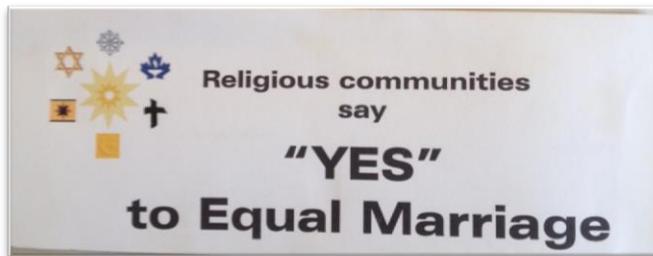
In 2008-09, after a congregational survey revealed that 15% of the respondents would still be uneasy having a transman or transwoman as a minister, the Welcoming Congregation Group identified the need for more education and understanding on transgender issues.

In October, 2010, First Unitarian was recertified as a Welcoming Congregation by the Canadian Unitarian Council (original certification was in 1998), and "transgender" was added to the certification plaque in recognition of consciousness-raising activities by the Welcoming Congregation Working Group.

In 2012, the Welcoming Congregation Working Group played a key role in establishing a partnership between the Canadian Unitarian Council and Capital Rainbow Refuge of Ottawa, to be the Sponsorship Agreement Holder for a UN-designated refugee lesbian couple from a Muslim community in South Asia. The women, who were in hiding, arrived safely in Ottawa and are now considered permanent residents of Canada.



Religious Communities say “YES” to Equal Marriage



The Fight for Equal Marriage

The Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) and the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa played a very important role in the five-year fight for equal marriage. I had the privilege of being at the helm as immediate Past President of the CUC at an important point in this fight, and I was so proud that Unitarians and Universalists here and across the country stood shoulder to shoulder with the LGBT community in the struggle for justice.

The one memory that really resonates for me is the Pride Rainbow Project, started in the Fall of 2003 by five youth of the Unitarian Church of Calgary. They became known as the "Calgary Five", and they decided to create a multi-coloured banner five feet wide and FIVE HUNDRED feet long! By the summer of 2005, Phase I of the Pride

Rainbow Project was complete, and the banner continued to travel the country, from weddings - both gay and straight - to AIDS Walks and Pride Parades. It was the longest rainbow banner in Canada. It was a marvel to see that 500 foot long Pride Rainbow, flowing and glorious, on Parliament Hill after parading the entire banner at the 2005 CUC Annual Conference and Meeting in Hamilton, and later that year at a service here at Ottawa First.

Eventually, some small keepsake pieces of the Banner were sent to major supporters of the project, and I, astounded, was one of the recipients of my very own piece!

On July 19, 2005, a wondrous thing happened: The Canadian senate passed Bill C-38, making marriage equality for same-sex couples

the law of the land. Canada was the 4th country in the world to do so.

On August 19, 2007, I had the pleasure of formally bestowing upon the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, the piece of the Rainbow Flag, which was entrusted to me by the Calgary Five. Ottawa First held a "*We're a Welcoming Congregation*" service and I remember thinking at the time what a great feeling of belonging comes with those few words "Welcome to the Family". But for those in the bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgendered community, that sense of being part of society at large, of being accepted as an equal at the table, had been a long time coming.

~Elizabeth Bowen



YEARS AT 30 CLEARY

Unitarian conference on violence

Unitarians from across Canada will meet in Ottawa for two days next week to discuss at length increasing violence in our society — and what to do about it.

The workshop session is sponsored and planned by the Social Responsibility Committee of the Canadian Unitarian Council, which every two years invites church members to Ottawa to participate in open discussions of topical social issues. The meetings will be held at the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, 2101 Algonquin Avenue, Oct. 23 and 24.

Among the panelists who are expected to attend are: Gordon Fairweather, MP (PC — Fundy-Royal); Frank Howard, MP (NDP — Skeena); Prof. John Hogarth, professor of sociology and criminology at Osgoode Hall law school; Const. Sidney Brown, president of the Canadian Police Association and an independent candidate in the Ontario election; Prof. Frank Blum, professor of psychology in Ottawa University's department of criminology; and Marie Marule, executive director of the National Indian Brotherhood. MP Lloyd Francis and George Haythorne will chair the two main panel discussions on "Forms of Violence," and "Coping with Violence," during the Saturday proceedings.

On Sunday, Leonard Mason, minister of Unitarian Church of Montreal, will report to the church during its regular service on the program the day before.

Oct 16, 1971: The Ottawa Journal

The Fellowship Committee of First Unitarian Congregation will hold a "Monte Carlo Night" on Saturday, Nov. 16, beginning at 8 p.m. The First Unitarian Congregation is located at 2101 Algonquin Ave.

Nov 8, 1974: The Ottawa Journal

Guest speaker at Unitarian congregation

Dr. Dorothy Spoerl will give two addresses at the First Unitarian Congregation tomorrow. The first address entitled "Implicit in the Present" will be given during the regular morning service at 10.30.

At 3 p.m., Dr. Spoerl will give a second address, entitled "Aberrant Rainbows" during the installation service of Peg Gooding, the congregation's new director of Religious Education.

Following the 3 p.m. service there will be a reception for Mrs. Gooding.

April 20, 1974: The Ottawa Journal

Annual Church Reports

First Unitarian

Members of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa have voted to guarantee a bank loan of \$15,000 to establish a proposed day care centre in the church building and play area outside.

Approval was given to an operating budget of \$78,088 and additional \$3,500 for capital expenditures.

It was announced that Thomas Ahlburn of Nashville, Tenn., will commence work with Rev. David C. Pohl, minister, in February. He has been appointed as assistant minister and director of religious education.

The 477-member congregation elected the following: Andrew E. Winn, president; Mary Hummel, vice-president; John D. McRuer, secretary; Donald A. Ridewood, treasurer and Fred J. Finlay, Riad Hanafi, Norman Hefler, Edward Maltby, Frank McGuire, Glen Pettinger, Mrs. Mark Simonyi and Mrs. John Tener, members of the executive board. Frank MacIntyre was elected to the Board of Trustees for a three-year period.

Jan 31, 1968: The Ottawa Journal

First Unitarian Congregation celebrating 150th anniversary

By CLAUDIA BASKERVILLE
Journal Reporter

The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa is celebrating its 150th anniversary. Although the church itself has only been in the Ottawa area since 1906 or 1907, the history of the church goes a long way back — its roots being in the reformation in Europe.

The 150th anniversary recognizes the founding of the formal organization of the Unitarian church in England and North America. In 1961 another landmark was made when the Unitarians merged with the Universalists.

The Unitarians and Univer-

salists are similar in their strong humanistic tradition. More specifically the Unitarians the oldest in terms of organization believe in the idea of the unity of God, as opposed to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is a basic premises of Christian churches. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity, according to Rev. Vernon Nichols, is not in the New Testament. "We regard Jesus more as a great religious leader or prophet, rather than a Deity," he said.

The Universalists, on the other hand, began as a reaction against the Calvinists and have as their basic premise the belief that uni-

versal salvation is for everyone.

Although the roots of the Unitarian-Universalist church are in Christianity, they do not consider themselves a Christian church, Mr. Nichols said. "Dogmatism is alien to our emphasis on a non-creedal posture. We are searchers after truth, rather than proclaimers," he said.

This aspect is reflected in the membership of the Ottawa congregation. Of the 500 members, many are from Christian or Judaic backgrounds, who for one reason or another, could not accept the dogma of their former churches.

There are certain basic assumptions, however, says Peg Gooding, director of religious education for the First Unitarian Congregation. "We believe in the right of dignity of human beings."

Although there are no sacraments such as baptism and confirmation, as in other Christian churches, there are child dedications, membership into the church and an ordained ministry — men and women. The church insists on a fully educated ministry, said Mr. Nichols.

Because there are no fixed elements of church history or tradition, the services at the Unitarian church can take various forms, said Mr. Nichols. Most services involve some kind of sermon, singing, readings, live music and perhaps workshops.

The anniversary service on the 25th of May is now in the process of being planned by a committee of lay persons.

The theme will be on the past, present and future of the church and to illustrate the theme, the planning committee will be using a multimedia effect with music, slides and readings by members of the congregation.

A member of the church will be performing one of her own musical compositions and other music may include some works by Beethoven, considered a great humanist by the Unitarians.

A unique part of the service will be the candles, said Mr. Nichols. All individual members are asked to bring a candle to the service. These will be melted down after and two large candles will be made. One will stay in Ottawa and the other one will go to Minneapolis for the meeting of the General Assembly in June.



We Create Calm

The Gardens



The Gardens were conceived in the early 1990s by a group of congregants. On request, a formal garden plan was drawn up by landscape architect Jack Wright. In 1993, the group began to create what is now called the North Meditation Garden, by deepening a natural depression into a pond and putting in a path and plantings.

Over the years, this garden has expanded, become less formal and more woodland in style, and grown into a valued place for meditation and reflection.

In 2003, congregants began work on the land facing Unitarian House, and the South Meditation Garden was brought into being over several years. A Narcotics Anonymous group meeting in the church provided much of the labour and some of the materials. Over the years, this part of the Gardens has also grown in complexity and beauty as plantings have been added, including memorial trees and shrubs, two arbours and various benches.

The Gardens have been developed with care, not only to preserve the environment already there, but to create much more than was originally present. The centre of our campus was mostly grass, with only a few trees; now it is lush with trees, shrubs and flowers.





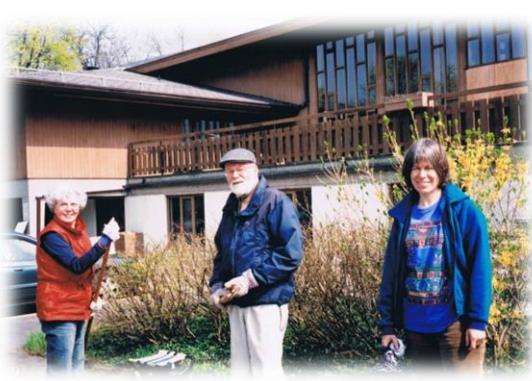
1993: Hard at Work



1993: Making Progress



1993: It's taking shape



2010: Still at it



1994: Pond Beginnings



2010: Thriving Pond



2012: Renee DeVry & Jack Wright



Circa 2003-2004



The Meditation Gardens were developed in 1994, with a pond created by digging out the creek, then shrubs and perennials planted. Bulbs were dug in for spring flowering, and a bench, built by Brian Kopke, was added.

On behalf of the congregation, Renée de Vry accepted the inaugural Communities in Bloom Award of Excellence (2007)

presented by Landscape Ontario during the Green Trade Expo at the Ottawa Civic Centre.

The Friends of the Meditation Gardens was formed in early 2008 to fill in for Renée De Vry who was on a one-year sabbatical. This group became permanent in 2009, with Renée returning on a part-time basis.



The *Friends of the Meditation Gardens* produced and sold 2012 Garden calendars, and held successful bake sales to raise funds for the solar-powered well project. To prepare for the project, trenches were dug for electric and water conduits, and the streambed was reshaped. A dam was built across the streambed to reduce flooding after heavy rains. Two structures were built: a south entrance arbour, with the solar array on top, and a pump house to protect the wellhead and pump. A new brick wall was built along the widened path beside the pond to facilitate visitors with walkers, and a display garden was created behind the wall. A small arbour was built beside the Noble Bird statue.

Over the years, the gardens have become an important native bee sanctuary, and many efforts have been made to develop habitat, educational materials and signage. After joining the Ottawa Garden Council in November 2014, our gardens received a Recognition Certificate from the Council the following June.



The Friends of the Meditation Gardens celebrated their twentieth anniversary in 2015, by offering several garden tours over three days in June. Fundraising efforts to support the gardens included the production and sale of a 2015 Garden calendar, and the ever-popular annual Halloween Treats sale.

After almost 20 years, 2015 was to be Renée de Vry's last year volunteering as our long-time head gardener. In preparing for her retirement, Renée held two plant sales to sell off the rare and delicate garden plants she had

accumulated over time, but which required full-time care. She then redesigned the gardens by planting hardy, drought-tolerant perennials and shrubs in newly mulched beds, to ease the transition to part-time care that the *Friends of the Meditation Gardens* will provide in the future.



2017: Friends of the Meditation Gardens

In the Meditation Garden

Colleen: Jan and I lived on a farm for 14 years where I grew oak trees from acorns. So now, the church garden - the arbour, the bridge, the trees - is an oasis in the city that reminds me of the beauty of our country life. I always find the variety of growing things and welcoming spirits around the garden extremely pleasurable.



Jan: I started working in the meditation garden, after my family had a beautiful iron bench installed in memory of my mother Joyce Andrews. She and my father were long time members of the Unitarian Congregation, back when it was on Elgin Street – so we knew she would be happy that we were honouring her in this

sacred space among the flowers, plants and trees. When I first began tending the garden, I was a bit worried that I'd pull out some rare plant that Renee had struggled to grow, or that I'd lop the top off something that was meant to go to seed...so I asked Renee to give me a tour and I made a map of the garden with notes on how to care for each special plant. Renee was very generous with her time and patiently explained all the plant names and their requirements.

Colleen: We started to come after work on a Friday evening in spring with our dog and a picnic. We'd spend a few hours weeding and eat a light dinner on the bench, then walk our dog, Pilgrim, along the parkway. We found it so enjoyable that we made it a date about once a month throughout the summer. It was also an opportunity to chat with a few of the Unitarian House folks who take their constitutional around the garden – they'd often express their joy and wonder in the garden's ever-changing sights and

smells. After my mom, Edla Glass, passed away in 2009, Renee found and planted a beautiful black locust. I imagine in the future, that Mom's tree will provide dappled shade and purple blossoms above Joyce's bench.



Jan: Tending the garden is a meditation – it is time to just be in the moment, enjoying the feel of the dark cool earth between my fingers and see the beauty of growing life. I am fully in my body as I dig and stretch to clip just one more spent flower head. And I feel in a way as if I'm still caring for my mother as I dig up the weeds and plant forget-me-nots around her bench.

~*Colleen Glass
and Jan Andrews*

We Reach Out

Social Responsibility Council (SRC): The SRC provides coordination across the various Social Responsibility Working Groups, and is made up of the Social Responsibility Steering Committee and representatives from each of the working groups. Over the decades, the SRC has played an active role in supporting the following causes:

- Ottawa Planned Parenthood
- AMICAL
- Kenya Scholarship
- International Red Cross (Vietnam)
- After Four Center
- Immigration and Draft Assistance
- Amnesty International
- Church of South Bend
- Theological student John Fraser
- Peace and Disarmament
- Third World Development - International Children's Village
- Child Haven International
- Refugees
- Multifaith Housing
- The Parkdale Food Centre
- The Environment
- UU. U.N.O.
- Public Education
- Denominational Resolutions
- Poverty Action
- Planned Parenthood and Population Control
- A monthly program for the handicapped
- Financial support to needy individuals and groups in local and greater communities
- All-Candidates Debates
- Elizabeth Fry Society
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- A search for foster homes for teenagers leaving training school (in cooperation with After Care Service of the Department for Corrections)
- Manning a check point during Miles for Millions Walks
- Silent vigils in front of Embassies of USA (protesting the escalation of the war) and USSR (for restraint in view of the dangers to world peace)
- Petitions protesting the atomic blast on Amchitka and supporting the repeal of abortion from the criminal code
- A letter-writing campaign to Children's Aid to facilitate entry to Canada of inter-cultural adopted children
- Paper and glass collections
- The welfare of our Native Peoples
- The Inmate Spiritual Support Group
- The Adopt-A-Riverbank group
- The Hospice Working Group
- The Minority Awareness Group
- Financial support to the Unitarian Service Committee and the CUC, the Native People's Fund, Interval House, Horizon House, Irish Women's Peace Movement, Amnesty International, Meadville Lombard Theological School, and West End Achievers



UU's at Supreme Court for Dying with Dignity

Aboriginal Issues Coordinating Group: A new Aboriginal Issues Coordinating Group was formed in 2014-15, and their first practical activity was support for the Odawa Native Friendship Centre's meal program at Shawenjeagamik (Centre 510), the Aboriginal drop-in on Rideau St.

In 2015-16, the following activities were planned to inform and educate members of the congregation on various Aboriginal issues along with continued support to Centre 510:

- Sunday services held with Aboriginal speakers, throat singers and a drummer
- Film presentations, including one about problems with drinking water on First Nation reserves
- A spiritual and teaching event about the experiences of Aboriginal people in jails and prisons
- Several other film presentations throughout the year. As a result of one of the presentations to the congregation by speaker Denise Anne Boissoneau, several individuals met with her to develop the outline of a plan to work towards establishing a healing lodge in the correctional system in the Ottawa area.



2016: Inuit dancers from Nunavut Sivuniksavut

Adopt-a-Riverbank Group has 'adopted' 3 kilometers of the Ottawa riverbank. An informal collection of volunteers take care of this section of the riverbank, helping with spring garbage cleanup.

Canada Nepal Working Group: The Canada Nepal Solidarity for Peace group sent \$4,000 to the Conference for Constitutional Building in Nepal in 2009-10. This conference for gender equality was a great success. The group also provides partnerships with Nepalese immigrants arriving in Ottawa, to help access various resources and assist with culture shock.

CITIZEN JANUARY 6 1996

THE ORDER OF CANADA

Praises in order for people who care

RED: Ten Ottawa-area residents listed for enormous contributions.

**By Julie Elliott
Ottawa Staff Writer**

Ben stomachs speak, David Smith listens. That's one reason why an Order of Canada was bestowed on the 60-year-old man who works 40 hours a week helping the needy "everywhere." ... "I work with Friday from 11 a.m. to midnight." ... "What it comes in is totally in tears, to think that people recognize what I do." ... And that's what it does. The community. And that's why he's back in the community. And that's why he's a member of another Order. ... That's the Order of Canada.

Jean O'Neill Condon and Jean Pigott are Ottawa Condominiums' Jean Pigott; its administrator Harvey Barkun; architect Maxwell; geologist Denis St-Onge; and Joseph Vlasi, William O'Neil for his

LIFETIME OF CARING: Bonnie and Fred Cappuccino with photo taken this summer of their 19 adopted children from 11 countries

HELPS NEEDY: Restaurateur Dan Smith has been dishing food for good causes for 30 years

CAPITAL BOOSTER: Former NOC chair Jean Pigott has for years worked to preserve and protect the nation's capital

John Major, Citizen

Photo: John Major, Citizen

Child Haven Working Group continues to organize fundraising and cultural events while promoting the work of Child Haven International, a local charity formed in 1985 by Bonnie and Fred Cappuccino, who received an Honorable Mention Prize from the United Nations at a UNESCO ceremony in Paris, France, in recognition of their teaching human rights and peace. After establishing 3 children's homes in India and one in Nepal, for destitute very young children, their Child Haven project was supported by many in the congregation. Bonnie and Fred won the Bahai's 1994 Race Unity Award. They had previously adopted 19 children from 11 different national and cultural backgrounds. In 1996, Bonnie and Fred received the Order of Canada award for their work as founders and directors of Child Haven International. They now operate nine homes for destitute children - six in India, and one each in Nepal, Tibet in China and Bangladesh.

Denominational Affairs Team has been very active throughout the years, recruiting delegates for various meetings and conferences, organizing meetings, and developing, reviewing and making recommendations on resolutions. In 2011-12, the Denominational Affairs Committee maintained a bulletin board in Fellowship Hall and prepared a series of articles and ads for the Parkway Spire and eUU throughout the year to help keep members informed about the activities of the Canadian Unitarian Council and its affiliated organizations.



Unitarians with Life Float at Ottawa's Climate March

Environmental Working Group (EWG): After a disappointing Copenhagen Climate Change Conference outcome in 2009-10, the EWG decided to focus on climate change that has already happened or is happening, e.g., global droughts, food shortages, and local actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change on our region.

In 2014, the congregation approved a motion by the EWG to divest from petroleum industry investments because they contribute to climate change.

EWG's request for Social Responsibility Council funding of a Bullfrog Power premium for a year of the congregation's energy (for heating), June 2015-June 2016 was approved. The premium pays for developing green natural gas to add to the grid an amount equal to the conventional natural gas used.

EWG has supported farmer Gord McGregor's Saffire Farms, which delivers fresh organic vegetables and herbs to subscribers. Working group members planted, tended, and harvested a third season's on-site vegetable plot, and distributed the produce to residents of Unitarian House and the fresh herbs to the Parkdale Food Centre.

Global Justice Working Group: During 2009-10, The Global Justice Committee contributed to the *Justice for Harkat Committee*, the *Pathways to Education* program (assisting high school students at risk of dropping out) and the *Ottawa Community Development Fund*, a local micro-credit organization that provides loans to Aboriginal women entrepreneurs, immigrants, and others in need of specific training to improve their employment possibilities.

In 2015-16, a Global Justice Committee of 20 arranged for film presentations and speakers covering First Nations environmental concerns and the Israeli-Palestinian situation, in addition to providing financial support to two local initiatives to assist high school students in leadership programs, all while keeping informed of the actions of the *Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice* national advocacy organization.

Lay Chaplaincy Team: Serving both our congregation and the UU Fellowship, this team is responsible for overseeing the Lay Chaplaincy program, which began in 1981. Since that time, we have been blessed with a number of Lay Chaplains.

Lay Chaplains

1981-1983: Joyce Gifford, George Wilson

1983-1992: Joyce Gifford, Keith Dowd

1992-1993: Joyce Gifford, Keith Dowd, Margaret Kopke

1993-1997: Joyce Gifford, Margaret Kopke, Ann Dunkley

1997-2001: George Buchanan, Ann Dunkley, Margaret Kopke

2001-2002: Ann Dunkley, Margaret Kopke, George Buchanan, Valerie Cousins

2002-2004: Margaret Kopke, George Buchanan, Valerie Cousins

2004-2007: Margaret Kopke, Jack Wright

2007-2008:

Jack Wright,

Bob Armstrong, Caroline Elson, Rodrigo Emilio Solano-Quesnel

2008-2009: Bob Armstrong, Caroline Elson, Rodrigo Emilio Solano-Quesnel

2009-2010: Bob Armstrong, Caroline Elson

2010-2013: Bob Armstrong, Caroline Elson, Jan Glyde

2013-2014: Bob Armstrong, Jan Glyde

2014-2017: Alex Campbell, Nicki Bridgland



Poverty Awareness Working Group (PAWG):

Over the years, PAWG has provided financial, volunteer and/or household goods and support for the following:

- The Multifaith Housing Initiative. With a goal to double the units of affordable housing in 2013-14, the campaign raised over \$11,500 from events like a “Werner Roast”, a “Big Soul Project” concert, the Tulipathon, and a “Tribute to Pete Seeger” concert.
- The Pinecrest Queensway Health and Community Services

- Pathways to Education
- Salus
- Minwashin Aboriginal Women’s Support Centre and its shelter, Oshi Kisis. Collecting donated furniture, household goods and appliances, for women leaving the shelter, the group has assisted with 176 moves!
- Centre 510 Aboriginal Drop-in Centre
- Unitarian House
- The Students Will All Graduate (SWAG) program



2016 Unloading furniture

PAWG also participated in various fundraising activities, organized letter-writing sessions on poverty-related issues, and liaised with and gave a small donation to Ottawa West Community Support, which provides services that allow seniors and handicapped persons to remain living at home.



Preparing Welcome Bags for women leaving the shelter

Other continued support by PAWG includes awareness sessions on issues such as social assistance, affordable housing, employment insurance and guaranteed annual income.

Mental Health Working Group (aka Ancoura Working Group): In 2008 the Ancoura Working Group was formed in support of Ottawa Ancoura, a faith-based initiative providing supportive housing and community for people living with mental illness. The hope is to remove the stigma associated with mental illness, by raising awareness in the church and the broader community concerning the challenges of mental illness for caregivers and their loved ones. The group later changed its name to The Mental Health Working Group (MHWG), to eliminate any confusion between this group and Ancoura proper, and to allow for expansion of the mandate to include other mental illness initiatives. Seven core members of the MHWG continued to support Ancoura in 2016.

Refugee Working Group: In the early years, this group sponsored the Najaros family from Guatemala, comprising a grandmother, Isabel, and three orphaned grandchildren, Kareema (16), Roberto (14), and Monica (12). Also sponsored were Nimo Bode from Ethiopia (joining her sister and family after 8 years of separation), the Mohamed family from Kenya (mother and three brothers), and Awil from Somalia (brother to Abdi Hersi and his sister Safia).

After almost four years of waiting, in 2010-11 the Refugee Working Group were finally able to sponsor two young Ethiopian men, who had spent over five years in a refugee camp in Uganda. One of these men is the brother of Tadyose, a refugee we sponsored in 2001-02, and who worked in our building as a custodian. He is now married, has two children and is presently working at a provincial government facility after securing his Heavy Equipment Mechanics License.

In 2013, the Refugee group applied to sponsor two Ethiopian women who have finally arrived after a four year wait. Abie is heading to Winnipeg to meet with a group of friends from Uganda. Furtuna will be living in Ottawa with Emebet who has hosted several other refugees. Our Refugee WG will be helping them with a monthly stipend while they are being resettled. Both women are very happy to be in Canada.

Syrian Refugee Sub-group: This group collected over \$155,000 in 2015-16 to support three refugee families. The first family of seven arrived in February 2016 and they are now completely independent with parents still attending daily ESL classes while the father has a part-time job. The three eldest children are in school, with the fourth starting JK next fall. The second family of four arrived in August 2016: Parents and two young children plus a new baby born in February 2017. They too are studying English and adjusting well to life in Canada. The third family is not expected to arrive before late 2017 or early 2018.



Feb 2017: Family 1 Anniversary Party



July 2016: Welcoming Second Family

Three more Syrian refugee families are being co-sponsored by First Unitarian. In collaboration with private outside groups, we submit their applications, administer their finances, and provide charitable tax receipts. Families of two of these groups arrived in November 2016 while the third group is still waiting. We are also a sponsor (without providing financial and settlement support) for the family of a Syrian Canadian woman who was forced to leave Syria because of severe bombing. Funds were also donated to another congregation to help sponsor a transgender Syrian woman.

Sanctuary Working Group: In 2003, a Sanctuary Working Group was formed to support Mr. Samsu Mia, who came to us for help after being mistreated by his employer. He spent almost 18 months in exile with us. In 2007, Shree Kumar Rai was ordered deported, after 10 years of struggle to obtain refugee status in Canada. We provided sanctuary to him for 26 months. Their stories are included in a separate section of this book: "In Sanctuary".

In 2010-11, the Sanctuary Committee continued to assist former refugees Samsu Mia and Shree Kumar Rai and their families with their settlement needs, particularly in the area of tutoring in English, Math, Accounting and Chemistry.



2015: UU-UNO spring seminar in NYC

United Nations (UN) Working Group: Over the years, The UN Working Group has actively supported human rights of women around the world, the status of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, global warming and human rights education, and provided financial support for youth and advisors attending the UU-UNO Spring Seminar.

In 2009-10, The Peace Watch Working Group continued to support the abolition of nuclear weapons, by involving the congregation in monthly meetings, writing articles in the Parkway Spire and Communiqué, signing petitions and organizing letter-writing campaigns to urge

government leaders to promote a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and making the *Peace and Environment News* available to the congregation.

Unitarian GoGos: In 2009-10, The Unitarian GoGos, 30 members strong, held their second African Marketplace, raising approximately \$4,600 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation's *Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign*. Monthly sales of homemade Granny Squares at the church brought in over \$2,800. The GoGos held petitions and advocacy campaigns urging MPs, our prime minister and senators to support the private members' bill promoting the Canadian Access to Medicines (CAMR).

The Unitarian GoGos have raised funds and awareness while standing in solidarity with grandmothers and orphans in sub-Saharan Africa, as they struggle to support their families, fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic and advocate for basic human rights for themselves and their grandchildren.

The group meets monthly, and since they began fundraising in 2006, as of 2016 they had raised over \$172,000 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation's *Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign!* They also give an annual donation of \$200 to the congregation.



2017: UU GoGo Grannies

It was my good fortune to join this Congregation almost thirty years ago. You have provided me with a religious community where as a secular humanist I have felt comfortable. Many people in our Congregation have been role models for me in trying to live our Seven Principles and I am glad to help carry on the work of the progressive group of people who founded our community in 1898.

From 1994 to 2001 I served on our Board of Directors. When Jack Wright was president he served as a mentor to me. He encouraged me to become president saying that we had a well-established staff who needed little supervision. However in my first year as president I chaired no less than five hiring teams. One memorable one was the selection of a new music director. One candidate, Jane Perry, had never conducted a full choir. However Elizabeth Morrison gave us good advice and we hired Jane Perry who did wonderful work for the next decade.

While serving on our Board, three committees caught my attention.

Recollections 1987-2016

In 1999 my wife, Linda and I joined the Refugee Committee. By 2015 the Committee had helped to resettle ten individuals or families. It was very satisfying work. The Syrian tragedy created a call for help that was too great for our small group. More individuals organized fund-raising with an astonishing \$150,000 from the Congregation. Trish Paul-Carson and Jan Andrews provided the leadership to plan for three families to settle here. The first family was introduced to the Congregation this spring.

When I retired from the Board in 2001 I selected the Property Committee as a place to continue serving. Ernie Criddle had been chair-person for many years and, with Bill Van Iterson, had provided the collective memory. One item helped me to assume the role of chair-person and that was the 113 page Maintenance Manual which Ernie wrote and Rosemary Bonyun typed. Committee members such as Renee DeVry and Albert Smith always contributed to lively meetings. It is very satisfying to work with other volunteers and employees, such as Carolyn

Turner, Lori Clarke and her staff, to keep our building safe, functional and beautiful.

Our Second Principle has encouraged me to work with the Global Justice Working Group for the past fourteen years. I was able to participate with the Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice at the same time. CUSJ was started by a small group in 1995. They felt that a group separate from our CUC would allow us to be independent. They predicted that the federal government would use the charitable status of our CUC to stop any criticism of government policies. Sure enough, in 2016 our CUC had to change our Mission Statement due to demands of the CRA following a costly audit. We know that they should be chasing the tax-dodgers but they concentrate on churches and NGO's.

Each Sunday we are inspired by the service including the sermon, the music, our RE program and our camaraderie. In addition, all of our programs help to advance our progressive faith here in Ottawa. Indeed I have been very fortunate to be part of this tradition.

~Bob Stevenson



Algonquins of Barriere Lake – Support Project 2003-2005

The village of Rapid Lake is startlingly remote – about half way between Maniwaki and Val d'Or and about four hours north of Ottawa. The Algonquins of Barriere Lake were forced off their traditional territory by a provincial hydro development 50 years ago to live on the reserve at Rapid Lake. The small and artificial community is home to about 500 who still identify very strongly with the land, producing many of the stresses common to Aboriginal communities everywhere. They worked through the 1990s to develop a Trilateral Agreement for forest management jointly with the province and the lumber industry. The community is now fighting to keep mining development from encroaching on its territory.

From 2003 to 2005, First Unitarian supported the elementary school in Rapid

Lake to expand the library and add working computers. Our book donation campaign added to the bright library room. But all the books didn't stay there! The principal, Bob Checkwitch, placed a mixture in each classroom, so that teachers always had them at hand, and the children became accustomed to reaching for them. Boxes of donated ice skates were a big hit as well.

The community has maintained its language, and children learn English and French as 2nd/3rd languages. A wonderful Sunday collection from First Unitarian enabled Principal Bob to renovate and furnish a Head Start classroom for the littlest people and fill it with supplies! In the computer lab that we set up, all the classes used language and arithmetic programs, and we gave computer training to the

teachers and teaching assistants.

In 2004, thanks to many in the Congregation, we took a furniture van full of household goods to Rapid Lake and were able to make a real dent in the need to furnish three replacements for fire-destroyed houses.

In 2005, Principal Bob and his predecessor Jonathan Robinson spoke at a Sunday service to tell us about the community and the short and long-term effects of our efforts. The video that Principal Bob made about our time at the school is in the church library, in the section *"Materials in Electronic Format"*.

Congregational volunteers on this project were: John Turnbull, Scott Drennan, Ingrid de Buda and Katherine Gunn.

~Katherine Gunn

Problems of native people

Seminar told Indian support of Chretien may be negative

By SUSAN RILEY

Some southern Alberta Indian Bands that recently asked that Jean Chretien be kept on as minister of Indian affairs may have done so for "negative reasons," an Ottawa workshop was told Saturday.

Marie Marule of the National Indian Brotherhood said, in reply to a question from the floor, that some bands might support Chretien, "others do not."

She said his support may spring from the fact that he is the only minister who has been on the job four years. And during that time there has been some progress.

Mr. Chretien "has begun to recognize us" and, while he may not implement any Indian

suggestions, "a rapport is beginning to develop," she said.

However not all Indians want him to stay on the job, she said.

Earlier, in her opening remarks to the predominantly white audience at the First Unitarian Congregation workshop, Miss Marule criticized the Indian affairs department for "token" efforts to involve Indian people.

"The government has given us some money; we are asked to make minor decisions — but in major decisions we are ignored," she said.

The department still has no long-term economic development scheme for native set-

tlements, just "projects," she said.

She would like to see a restructuring and reorganization of the department in terms of needs as seen by the native people."

In the long run, Indians may only achieve true integration into Canadian life by developing their own sense of Indian nationhood first, she said.

This might mean the formation of "domestic nations" within Canada, similar to the American approach.

Indians would not vote federally but, instead, for their own Indian or native government.

Tony Belcourt, president of the Native Council of Canada, representing Metis and non-stat-

us Indians, said whites could help the native cause through political parties.

He suggested impressing on the government and local MPs the problems native people face.

"Canadians are ignorant of what our situation is," he said.

Jim Aravluk, communications director of Inuit Tapirissat, an Eskimo organization, also took part in the panel discussion.

The workshop was organized by the Unitarian congregation to explore the problems of native people and attempt to produce plans of action to deal with them.

It included day-long discussion sessions, a lunch of native foods and displays of native art.



We Grow and Learn Together—in knowledge and understanding about ourselves, others, and the world around us.



Personal growth: In the early years, personal growth activities included:

- Beginners and Advanced Poetry Workshops
- Creative Drama for Children
- Orff and Recorder Workshops
- A bookstall
- A lecture series
- Adult discussion groups



Lifespan Learning Committee Circa 2012

Lifespan Learning Activities have included:

- Labyrinth walks
- After church picnics
- Moveable Feasts
- New Year's Eve cabaret
- Friends (or Quaker) Meeting for Worship
- Empower Dance
- Spiritual Karate
- Belly Dancing
- The New Cosmology
- Celsius 9/11
- Workshop on Public Speaking Tips
- Artists' Way Groups
- Dances of Universal Peace
- Ways to Meditate
- OWL programs
- Arts Nights

In 2009-10, the Canadian Unitarian Council recognized our congregation as a Lifespan Learning Community, the first in North America.

Popular and well-attended additions to the Adult Learning program in 2011-12 were Social Action movie nights, sessions on Buddhism and Mindfulness Meditation, reading groups focusing on *12 Steps to a Compassionate Life*, and evening yoga classes.

More recently, in 2015-16, a Lifespan Learning Guide was published in September and January, and the Adult Learning Program continued to support many ongoing programs, including:

- The Way of Mindfulness
- Compassionate Communication
- Learning Circles
- Gentle Yoga
- Arts Night
- Two "Reading for Growth" groups
- Painters' Circle
- Empower Dance
- Spirituality and Philosophy Discussion Group
- UU Writers Group
- Women's Personal Growth Group
- Crafty Crafters-Knitters



2009 Yoga Class

Meditation topic

Janice Tait will speak on "Meditation: A new insight into the nature of consciousness" tomorrow at the 11 a.m. service at the First Unitarian Congregation, 2101 Algonquin Ave.

July 12, 1980: Ottawa Journal article

Mindfulness Meditation: Following in the footsteps of JW Windland's *World Religions* overview, an *Introduction to Buddhism* course was offered to the congregation in 2012. A *Wednesday Evening Mindfulness Meditation Group* took root and continues today based on the original objective to practice mindfulness within a focused and caring community. Also in 2015 and 2016, an in-depth study course of the Buddha's *Noble Eightfold Path* was coordinated with the Ottawa Buddhist Society.

Reading Groups: In addition to the successful Monday and Friday Reading for Growth groups, a new Fiction Reading Group was started in 2010-11, with six members joining.

Women's Alliance: Meeting topics have included music, poetry reading, book reviews, film discussion, a patio pot-luck picnic, and sewing and assembling quilts for the Unitarian Service Committee. They temporarily dispensed with regular monthly meetings in the fall of 1969.

In the past, the **UU Women's Federation** (aka the Women's Adventure and Discovery Group) met for programs which varied from Family Law talks, assorted book discussions, information from the "Dying with Dignity" organization, slide presentations, presentations by the Rideauwood Addictions Centre, travel talks, a Wild Edible Walk, studio and museum tours, pot lucks, humour days, mystery tours, and various other social events. In the fourth decade of its existence the UUWF increased their involvement, by donating to Bruce House (a foundation that supports those suffering from HIV/AIDS) and the Youville Centre (for young, single mothers). They also obtain signatures in support of a more lenient sentence for Robert Latimer and in support of Lorne Nystrom's efforts to make Proportional Representation a reality in the federal electoral system.





Women's Personal Growth Group: Over the years, members of this group have developed a deep trust in one another, and are comfortable sharing their joys and concerns as they explore, grow and take care of their inner selves through various resources, experience-sharing and learning from one another. In 2015-16 there were six or more women nurturing each other's emotional and spiritual needs.

Men's Groups were very active by the fourth decade of their existence with five different groups involved in various activities and meetings. The 1994-95 annual report quoted: "*Most men were raised to work, not relate*". Apparently this doesn't apply to Unitarian men, judging by the high numbers participating in these groups.

Arts night was introduced in April of 2003. At the five-year mark, in 2007-08, they gave an average \$100/month to the general fund of the congregation. In 2016, after thirteen years, Arts Night is still going strong with an average of thirty-seven people attending monthly events, where 3 or 4 artists are invited, many from outside the church community, to present their work.



2016 Kitchissippi Times Article

"Last evening I was very pleased to attend Arts Night at the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa. Organized by Joycelyn Loeffelholz and hosted by Jodi McIntosh, Arts Nights are a unique way to bring local artists together in front of an audience to "share their particular art form, converse, and answer questions. Each event includes an appearance by an author, a visual artist, and a musician, who deliver a 20-minute presentation about their chosen medium, why it best suits their creative impulse, and any other related topics" ~ author Micheal J. McCann

The UU (Evening) Writers' Group was founded in the fall of 2003. As of 2016, this group continues to meet regularly. With radically different writing styles and life concerns in the group, each meeting provides an opportunity for critical feedback from other writers as they share new stories, poems, essays or memoirs they have written. Hearing how other writers engage the same topic fuels each other's creativity.

The Painters' Circle has been meeting for over 10 years, and in 2016, membership climbed to 11. The group serves as a community outreach group as many members come from outside the church. A weekly donation from painters provides some income, which is allocated to the Lifespan Learning budget.



2009 Painters' Circle

We Reach Inward



Caring Committee 2006-07

The Spiritual Care Council and Minister are informed when their visiting or phone calls are needed or might be especially appreciated.

The Lay Pastoral Care Visitor Program was renamed the Lay Spiritual Care Program in 2007-08, and Ellen Bell, as Lay Visitor and Supervisor of Volunteer Lay Visitors, completed her eighth year in this capacity.



2015: The Caring Network Executive honoured retiring members Christine Deane and Lyn Gerley at a "thank-you" lunch.

By 2016, Ellen Bell had been our Spiritual Care Visitor and Supervisor of Volunteer Lay Spiritual Care Visitors for 16 years, making many visits and holding frequent meetings with the volunteer visitors and the Spiritual Care Council. Ellen, as UU representative of the *Interfaith Council for Seniors*, a small group composed primarily of Christians from different denominations, one Muslim and herself, discusses and attempts to liaise with other groups working for seniors' well-being, especially with various departments of the City of Ottawa.

Unitarian Seniors Program: The Unitarian Seniors Program continued in its fourth decade, with 40-70 seniors meeting once a month for worship, lunch, and varied programs throughout the year. One program highlight was the Bobbie Burns celebration in 2001.

The program continues to be well attended, with about 35-40 per month coming out to enjoy a short service and a program of interesting topics, followed by a snack. Some of the presentations in 2015-16 included:

- Life and All that Jazz
- A book presentation about a secret agent in France in WWII
- Christmas music
- A presentation on 'Colour'
- The Art of Storytelling
- Senior Living Options
- A flute, violin and piano concert
- The Wonders of Ancient Syria...a Travelogue
- A talk about a trip through the Northwest Passage.

Adult Library



The Adult Library Committee happily reported that they had completed a database of adult library books that are housed in the Lounge, effective August, 2008.

By 2013-14, book resources for the congregation included a Religious Exploration Library, an Adult Library, and a small library Archive consisting of our very old, or antique, books (printed before 1920) and some heritage books of a scholarly nature. Among our oldest books is a set of three volumes containing some of the writings of, as well as a biography of, Hosea Ballou (1771-1852) who was a prominent Universalist minister and theologian. These volumes were printed between 1854 and 1856.



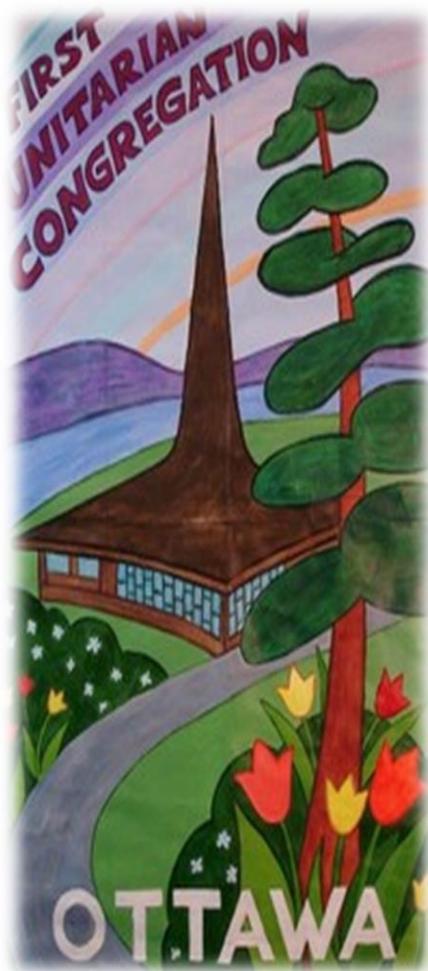
Brian Cowan in the Archives Room

Book of Gratitude

The Book of Gratitude was gifted to the congregation by Elinor Mueller and Mark Haythorne, in memory of their parents, George and Ruth Haythorne, who were long-time members of the congregation. George and Ruth were very involved in planning the building on Cleary Avenue, and were ongoing participants in many aspects of our faith.

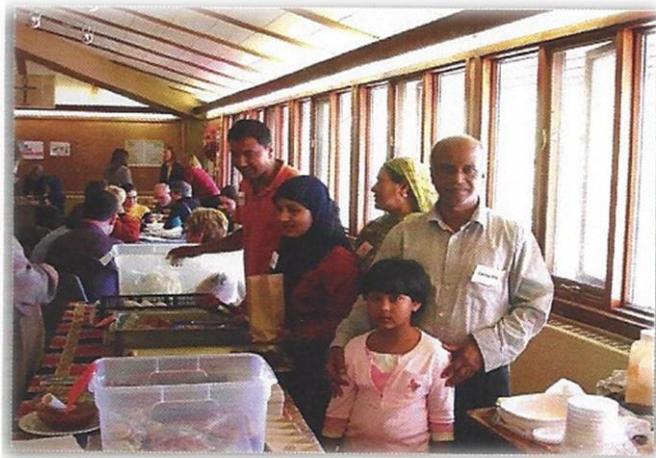
The book consists of archival pages memorializing names of people who have made significant donations to the congregation. Updated periodically, calligraphic inscriptions are hand-written, with the intention that the book will portray a living memory of donors both now and in the future. Protected under glass, one page of the book is turned each Sunday to allow everyone a glimpse, page-by-page, of the book's contents.

The Book of Gratitude was formally dedicated to the Congregation during the 50th Anniversary Celebratory Dinner on April 22, 2017.



In Sanctuary

Samsu Mia: July 2003 - December 2004



Mr. Mia came to Canada in 1995 to begin employment as a domestic servant for the Deputy High Commissioner for Bangladesh in Ottawa. He left behind his wife Dolli Akhter, 3 sons and a daughter.

He was supposed to have been one of three servants at the Commission. He was the only one. The hours were long, much longer than called for in his contract. However, having been raised under conditions much different than those in North America, he assumed that his lot was just the way life was. Contact with other embassy workers in Ottawa taught him differently.

Mr. Mia was paid at the Bangladeshi rate, not the contract rate, his employer pocketing the difference. Mr. Mia's hours were from dawn to after midnight. His shoes were taken away from him in the sub-zero months of the Canadian winter so that he could no longer meet with other embassy workers. He was severely beaten when he questioned his conditions.

After more than three years he decided he could no longer bear the abuse and hard work without pay. When he asked to be paid for his work he was refused and was assaulted. His employer was a very powerful person in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, Mr. Mia, in an act of great courage, left the embassy and went public with his treatment. He began to receive threats here in Canada, as did his family in Bangladesh.

Immigration Canada had consistently labeled Mr. Mia's treatment as a personal vendetta by another employee of the High Commission. After his first refusal for refugee status, a court order allowed another attempt and finally an attempt on humanitarian grounds. All failed to alter the opinion of the first judge whose determination was that the treatment was a personal vendetta and did not pass the standards for refugee status.

*"This is not a case of personal vendetta but the case of a highly placed rich person taking advantage of a poor uneducated man of a very low class.
Reframed in this way, Mr. Mia passes the bar with no trouble." ~Rev. Brian Kopke*

Mr. Mia's application for refugee protection was denied, and he was told he was not a person at risk should he return to Bangladesh, in spite of an affidavit sworn by Bonnie Cappuccino of Child Haven International, who had received information from Mr. Mia's family in Bangladesh with respect to their treatment there.

After leaving the high commission, Mr. Mia moved between rooms and apartments and worked to make money to send back to his family. When he was told he would be deported on July 15, 2003, he quit his job as a cook at two Indian restaurants in the Byward market, and on July 3 accepted sanctuary at the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa.



He occupied himself by helping out with chores, lending a hand in construction work going on at the congregation, and putting together jig saw puzzles with friends and members of the congregation, who offered him the opportunity to chat and improve his English skills. He also kept a photo album, which he proudly showed to anyone who asked about his family.

The church hosted fund-raising dinners with Bangladeshi food made by Mr. Mia, so that money could be sent back to Mr. Mia's family and help with the schooling of his children.

"Mr. Mia is a humble and gentle soul with great courage and unflagging love and devotion for his family. First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa will stand by Mr. Mia for as long as it takes to get justice and fair treatment for him and his family."

~Rev. Brian Kopke

On June 22, 2004 a rally was organized during which Fred Cappuccino went into voluntary Sanctuary in solidarity with Samsu Mia's cause. Fred pledged not to leave the First Unitarian premises until guarantee was given for Samsu's release. This meant the end of having members of the Congregation taking shifts (day and night) for stay in the church. In November, Fred decided he had accomplished what he intended to do and left Sanctuary.

After a letter was sent from First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa to the Canadian High Commission in Bangladesh, promising to sponsor Mr. Mia, his wife and four children for up to 10 years in Canada with no need for financial assistance from the government, Mr. Mia was finally given permission to stay in Canada. Mr. Mia had endured almost 18 months of in-house exile.

Over the next few months, a garden home in Bayshore was found and furnished, to which Samsu moved in March, 2005. His family arrived on April 9.

Mr. Mia now owns two very successful restaurants in Ottawa: *Mia's Indian Cuisine* on Richmond Road and *Mia's Indian Cuisine* on St. Laurent Blvd.



Shree Kumar Rai: February 27, 2007 - April, 2009



hiding in Nepal because of his political opinions. He settled in Montreal, apprenticing as a sushi chef in a Japanese restaurant.

"I had no place left in Nepal to live or hide. That is why I came to Canada."
~Shree Kumar Rai

After struggling for 10 years to win permanent refugee status in Canada, Shree was ordered deported by Feb. 27, 2007. He came to Ottawa, requesting sanctuary from the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa.

"I hope for better times in Nepal, but I fear for my life if I am deported and forced to return to my country."
~Shree Kumar Rai

The congregation arranged for an immigration consultant, used the heft of member Michael Cassidy (one-time Ontario NDP leader), and set up a 24-hour support team to help with supervision, company and support, meals, political lobbying and legal advice, which went on for months and months.

"It's a way of standing up and giving testimony. The system failed this particular refugee."
~Mike Cassidy

During Shree's 13-year absence from Nepal, he had lost contact with former friends and acquaintances, but had maintained almost weekly contact with his wife and son (left behind when he fled), by telephone and email.

"Every day I think about my family. I sometimes talk to my son and he asks, 'What are you doing? When are you coming back or when are we going to come to Canada?' I miss them and I feel guilty."
~Shree Kumar Rai

While in sanctuary at our Church, he learned to draw and paint, and became recognized as a talented artist. He was actively involved in several volunteer activities, including weekly sales of sushi in Fellowship Hall, involvement with the Fall Fair, public speaking at dinners and rallies, becoming an active member of the Nepal-Canada Solidarity for Peace (CNSP), and becoming a

Shree was a teacher and then a shopkeeper in Nepal. Politically he was a non-violent activist who stood for a fairer and more equal society. He was targeted by the Maoists because he rejected the violence of their People's War. He left his party, the United People's Front, when it decided to support the Maoists' campaign of violence.

Shree fled to Canada in June of 1996, after he had been arrested, jailed, tortured, and forced into

member of Art Lending of Ottawa. His main concern is that everyone may live in peace without violence regardless of birth and background.

Shree's case was finally resolved and he was given refugee status after 26 months in sanctuary. He and his family are now homeowners in Orleans, and Shree is a popular sushi chef at Wasabi Japanese Restaurant. The congregation continues to enjoy the sushi, Nepali soups, and momos that Shree and his wife Dikchhya make at home and bring to Fellowship Hour every Sunday.

The First Unitarian Church of Ottawa has offered sanctuary to another refugee—this one from Nepal—who had exhausted his appeals to stay in Canada and was about to be deported.



Shree Kumar Rei has lived at the First Unitarian Church of Ottawa since he was ordered deported on Feb. 27. ((CBC))

The church was successful in 2004 in helping a Bangladeshi refugee, Samsu Mia, get permission to stay in Canada after giving him sanctuary for more

Shree Kumar Rai entered the church Feb. 27, the date he had been ordered deported.

Rai left his home in Nepal more than 10 years ago, and has been working as a sushi chef in Montreal since then. He said he was arrested and tortured in Nepal because of his pro-democracy activism.

He said Thursday police still visit his wife and 15-year-old son in Nepal, looking for him.

He said he will be arrested and tortured again if he returns.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada told Rai in a letter it does not believe he faces substantial risk of torture.

A refugee-law expert at the University of Ottawa, Peter Showler, said the Immigration and Refugee Board has a poor record in assessing the risks deported people face.

He said the absence of an effective appeal process makes churches like this one step in to offer sanctuary.



March 2007: CBC News article



Shree's Sanctuary Painting

I came in this church about 25 months ago. Actually I would not expected to stay here that long and even I really do not know how long I have to stay more. It makes me more depressed.

I have learned a lot of things in here. I have trying to use my time. I have met with interesting people and they are very helpfull and generous. I am very appriciate for that.

Sanctuary Committee has been working hard on my case. I am getting strong even emotional support from them. I am greatefull with them. I believe my freedom is not tofar. Waiting is hard. I hope very soon my dreams come true.

- Shree Kumar Ray

Estimated date: 2009

Memories Are Made of This

Who remembers?

- Dinners for 8 or dances held in Fellowship Hall
- Belly dancing at First U (to help support women in distress at Harmony House) 2005
- Awil Hersi, a refugee we sponsored in 1993, who settled in Montreal, and was on his way to becoming a medical doctor
- Another sponsored family who settled in the Hunt Club area: the children were in school, learning English quickly, and the mother was helping relatives in a Somali confection business popular in their community
- Saida Jama Saidaris, a qualified doctor in Somalia, who was working as a nurse's aide in Ottawa after studying full time for her RN diploma – her parents and brother arrived safely from Pakistan
- A joint project with the Somerset Community Centre, which helped pay for the supervision of a

The Singletarians was founded in 1972 by attractive Sophia Smits, along with several members of the Unitarian Church, but approximately half the present group does not belong to the church.

With about 90 members, there is no annual fee. Most social gatherings are held in private homes and expenses are shared by those in attendance.

The Singletarians are primarily university-educated people who have gravitated together because of their common interests, the need for intellectual communication and their common denominator — that of being unattached adults.

- social worker student assisting a refugee mother and six children sort out their medical, school and housing needs
- The Refugee Committee that sponsored a one-day-a-month reception for the Citizenship Court, providing tea, coffee and cookies for 100 people at the ceremony that confirmed their new status in Canada
- Morning study groups
- Project Listening
- The PSI Study Group
- Collecting Campbell Soup Labels to support an education program at the School of the Deaf in Puerto Rico
- Volunteering at the Ottawa Clothing Depot and at head office of the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada
- The Adult Outdoor Venture Group, participating in outdoor swims, night skating on the canal, moonlight cross-country skiing in Gatineau Park followed by a fondue supper, visits to the Art Gallery, cross-country skiing outings at Mer-Bleu and Montebello,

- Forever Plaid at the NAC
- The UU Singles Outdoor Group
- The Circle of Traditions group, with the 'Cakes for the Queen of Heaven' and 'Rise up and Call Her Name' programs
- The War Toy Recycling Depot coming to the church in 1996
- Smoker's Clinics
- The Workshops "Three Approaches to Psychotherapy" and "Understanding Quebec"
- Bringing supplies to Inuit communities in 2002



- VSOPs or Volunteer Support Office Personnel
- The many Holtom lectures, seminars, and workshops that have been held within these walls over the last 50 years

Edith Holtom Memorial Lecture
This is one in a series, in memory of peace activist Edith Holtom
Tuesday, March 7, 2017 7 pm

Eliminating Violence in Our Homes and Streets:
An achievable peace for Canada?

Guest speaker:
Irvin Waller, Ph.D
Professor of Criminology
University of Ottawa

Question and Answer
Reception to follow.
First Unitarian Congregation
30 Cleary Ave, Ottawa
pmk@mindful.ca, ext. 01000
Bus route 2, & near OC Transpo parking - 613-725-1068

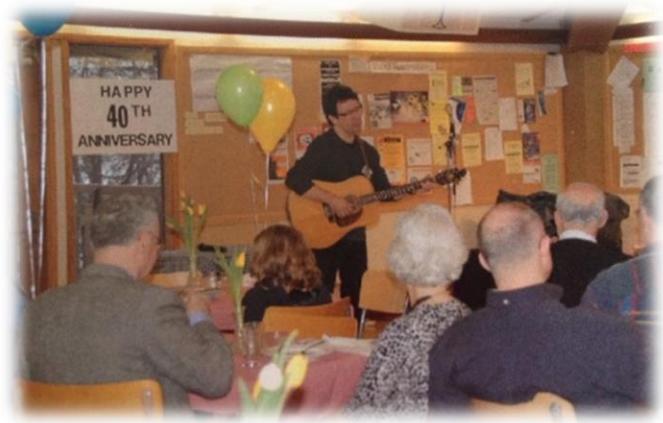


Did you know?

- The Unitarian Men's Club has been meeting for over 50 years!
- The Church was incorporated in 1972.
- The name of the church was changed in 1967, to "First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa" on the understanding that one day there may be another Unitarian church in Ottawa.
- In 1977, the swamp was filled in to extend parking space.
- Controversy arose with regard to clapping as a means of showing appreciation to guest artists, and the congregation was asked to refrain from this practice sometime in the first decade on Cleary Ave.
- An 8-week course in Belly Dancing was offered at the Time & Talent Auction in 1977.
- A long awaited choir was formed in 1983-84 under the direction of Cheryl Palmai. The choir consisted of a small but enthusiastic core of singers, who elicited many favourable comments about their positive effect on congregational hymn-singing!
- The Art Lending Society commenced a monthly art exhibition in 1978. Art Lending of Ottawa created an opportunity for rental (or purchase) of original art at reasonable prices. Monthly shows were hosted on Monday and Tuesday evenings in Fellowship Hall.
- In 1992, pew cushions were recovered, a cook book was produced, and the congregation's first photo directory was published in celebration of the building's 25th anniversary.



- In 1993, Hans Tonn retired as custodian after 31 years (1962-1993).
- In 1996, the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa was formed. Their first minister was Rev. Fred Cappuccino.
- The church purchased a telephone answering machine for the office in 1983.
- Sanctuary was offered to Joy Williams of Jamaica, but she was deported before she could move in.
- Bradley Ralph initiated 'Artspace' in the lounge in 1991, with a monthly exhibition of paintings for all to admire.
- In 1995 we established a partner church in Györ, Hungary and three of our members received a very warm welcome when they visited them in 1997. Later on, their minister and his wife charmed everyone with a visit to Ottawa, making their church come alive as a vibrant, striving small congregation, hampered by lack of a building but led by an exceptional and inspiring young minister. Unfortunately our relationship ended in 2008 when they failed to account for the funds sent.



We Celebrate 40 years on Cleary

Important Events in My Life at First Unitarian

First Unitarian Church on Cleary has been important at four major occasions in my life: marriage 1, marriage 2, and the memorials for my father and step-mother.

In my twenties I was not inclined to get married, did not aspire to having a family, did not frequent a church, did not have a permanent home. In fact I was rootless and fancy free, although worried about finding a meaningful direction. So when I was 25, I spent the year in Europe travelling with a friend. At the end of that time he proposed and I accepted, perhaps for all the wrong reasons, but it gave me a direction. Upon announcing my decision to marry, my father and step mother, Art and Mavis Stinson, set about planning my marriage at the Unitarian Church on Cleary.



What I remember about that ceremony was how intimate and quiet the church was, with the warm glow of the interior wood panelling. My new brother-in-law played the piano beautifully. Then we emerged out onto the terrace and took photos in the bright sunlight - a lovely moment. That marriage however, did not last forever.

My life transformed and I moved to a farm in Quebec, worked for government, learned about hobby farming, riding horses, having a son

and being a parent. After many years of wonderful family life, my dear father Art Stinson died (1995) and our family composure was shattered. There was a memorial service January 23, 1996, led by Reverend Elizabeth Benjamin. Many people attended and spoke of their love and respect for my Dad, including Alan Clarke (former husband of Margot Clarke), and Bert Curtis (and Mary Lou). We played/sang "What a wonderful world" in his honour.

Years later another memorial service was needed – this time for my step mother Mavis Stinson. Once again I turned to First Unitarian, and Ellen Bell helped me develop the service and came to the funeral home to deliver a sensitive and loving service.

Rather late in life (my mid-sixties) I met Orrin Kerr and moved into Ottawa to live with him in 2010—and I went looking for a church to attend. I visited First Unitarian and was hooked by the peaceful interior, the service that fosters reflection and meditation, and the wonderful music.



And I have stayed ever since, joining first one choir and eventually singing in all three choirs (under the direction of four Music Directors: Jane, Sara, Jacob and now Deirdre). That music has enriched my life.

After a couple of years of co-habitation with Orrin and not feeling any need to marry, one Valentine's Day, Rev John Marsh delivered a somewhat intellectual text reflecting on the nature of true love. He quoted from Rilke:

I hold this to be the highest task for a bond between two people: that each protects the solitude of the other... Love consists in this; that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other.

That talk set me on a path of reflection on the nature of my love for Orrin and I concluded that we had that kind of true love – not that we “need” each other, not that we “deserve” love, but that we recognize and give space to the other to be who they are and support them in that.

So I agreed to marry Orrin, and I asked Jan Glyde, to be the celebrant at our wedding in our home. Orrin and I stood up at “joys and sorrows” to announce our intention (with much finger waving after Orrin recounted the story of the first kiss!). Jan helped us design a very personal ceremony, and celebrated our marriage on a joyful May 24, 2013. She managed to restrain the laughter bubbling up when my son popped the champagne in the kitchen just a minute or two early. Then we all had a little laugh and finished the ceremony and got on with the kissing. It was a great day of happiness.

Thanks to First Unitarian Church on Cleary.

~Gay Stinson

Our Community Partners: Or Haneshamah (OrH)

Ottawa's Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation, has had a long and ever-growing relationship with the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa and its wonderful building.

The Ottawa Reconstructionist "Havurah" (circle of friends) first rented space from the FUCO in the mid-1990s for events that were too large for our regular space at the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) building in the Glebe. Beginning with our annual Kol Nidre observance, the evening service for the highest holy day of the year, Yom Kippur, we quickly fell in love with the beauty of Worship Hall. There is nothing quite like observing a solemn spiritual moment with a piano and cello playing a traditional musical theme while the sun sets through the windows at the front of your sanctuary.

One of the reasons that we had sought out the Unitarians was because several of our households had belonged to Temple Israel, the Reform Jewish congregation, and remembered your community's generous sharing of your space from the time that Temple's original building was destroyed by fire in 1972 until their new building was completed in 1976. Some of those members still belong to OrH 45 years later, creating a link back to shortly after the opening of your building in 1967.

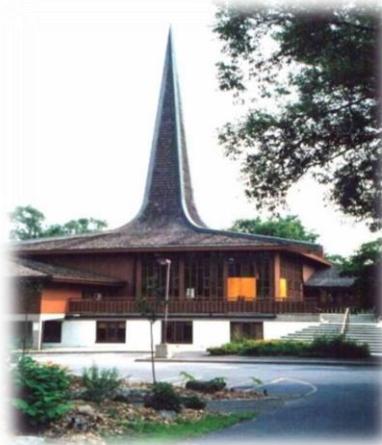
As OrH grew, an increasing number of our events required the larger spaces available on Cleary Ave. By 2003, we were holding all of our High Holy Day events in Worship and Fellowship Halls, soon adding our annual Hanukkah party, Passover seder and Shabbat services that include Bar/Bat Mitzvah coming-of-age ceremonies. With our former home in the Glebe becoming increasingly impractical, and with the warm encouragement of your congregation, we migrated all our events to your building in the summer of 2013. In just four years of benefitting from the attraction of your delightful space, our membership has increased from 82 to 106 households and our number of events has risen from approximately 35 to nearly 100, including primary and middle school education programs.

We at OrH deeply appreciated the opportunity to live out the core value of being good stewards of our environment by sharing this building with FUCO. As we often sing: Behold, how fine and how pleasant when kindred ones dwell together [Psalm 133:1]. May we enjoy the pleasure of many more years of worship, and kinship, in this wonderful building.

On behalf of OrH, the board, and membership,

~Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton

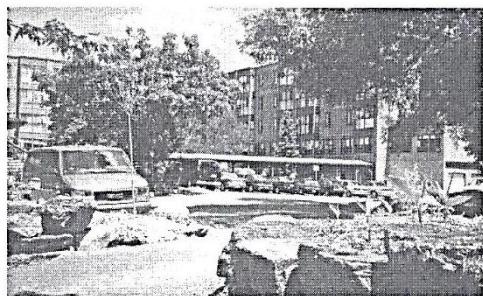
~Mark Dermer, Immediate Past President



Our Community Partners: Unitarian House

UNITARIAN HOUSE OF OTTAWA

In 1973, the Social Responsibility Committee of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa anticipated over the next two or three decades a need for shelter and care for senior citizens in the community. The Congregation agreed that top priority should be given to an outreach programme that would culminate in the building and operation of a senior citizens' complex wherein graduated medical and social care could be provided within affordable



accommodation for senior and handicapped citizens of the Ottawa- Carleton area.

To this end, in 1975 Unitarian House of Ottawa was incorporated under the Canada Corporations Act. At that time, all five members of the Board of Governors were members of the Congregation. The by-laws of the corporation made provision that all future Boards, regardless of size, would require that a majority of its members be voting members of the First Unitarian Congregation.

After almost a decade of planning, acquiring additional property and making applications to various government offices, on March 27, 1983, a sod-turning ceremony was held on land leased from the Church. The lease immediately provided revenue of over one quarter of a million dollars to the Church. These funds were used to pay off the mortgage, to effect the necessary work

of building the road and parking spaces, and to landscape the surrounding church property.

Phase One of the Unitarian House project consists of 26 two-bedroom apartments, 42 one-bedroom apartments and 47 personal care beds in single and double rooms and suites. Six apartments have been specially designed for people confined to wheelchairs. In September 1986, a modification to two washrooms enhanced the facilities for the handicapped by the addition of a wheelchair shower stall and a whirlpool bath with a special Hoyer lift to raise and lower bathers into and out of the pool.

In 1999 Unitarian house added additional parking to the south of its front door taking special care to leave the tall pines in the area and use materials which would blend with the natural grounds. Through the years, residents have added raised gardens to the courtyard and along Cleary Avenue. They spend many happy hours tending their flowers and vegetables, talking with each other, and getting good exercise.



In 2001 the House and the Unitarian Church were working with community groups to build on the new land, a project of lasting social value.

Excerpt from "Views from these Pews" by Brian Kopke



Breaking Ground (Claude Bennett & Lloyd Francis)



Unitarian House Construction 1984



Unitarian House of Ottawa

We call it home

Maison unitarienne d'Ottawa

C'est notre chez-nous

A message from Unitarian House, January 12, 2017

The First Unitarian Congregation moved from its Elgin Street location to 4½ acres overlooking the Ottawa River in the early 1960s and in 2017 they will be celebrating 50 years of Excellence. The church purchased plenty of land because their ultimate goal once the church was built was to use the excess land to fulfill social needs like the River Parkway Child Development Center and Unitarian House of Ottawa.

When I think of the First Unitarian Congregation I am reminded of the definition of “pioneer”. “To have a pioneering spirit means you take chances and try new and different things, whether they be related to work, leisure, home, or just life in general. A pioneering spirit lives by a different set of ideas and questions/challenges what appears to be impossible.”

Unitarian House is blessed to have such a strong foundation and we thank the First Unitarian Congregation for building walls that are strong, for their courage and for not giving up during the 10 years it took to give us our beginning.

Thank you,

Christina O’Neil
Executive Director



Scale model of Church and Unitarian House



Unitarian House today



YEARS AT 30 CLEARY

Community invited to meeting

Church seeks acceptance of senior citizen complex

By Julia Weston
Journal Reporter

Members of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa are trying to heal a breach with local residents caused by a plan to

build a \$5-million senior-citizen apartment and nursing-home complex on the church's West End property.

A one-day workshop at which plans for the complex will be discussed and to which both church members and local residents are invited will take place on Sept. 30, at the Algonquin Street church.

"We hope everyone who is interested in the question of senior citizens' welfare will come to this conference," says Werner Daeschel, chairman of the board of directors of Unitarian House, the church-affiliated group that plans to build the complex. "But we especially want local residents to come out and hear what we have to say."

However, Tom Barr, spokesman for the Woodroffe North Community Association is less than impressed by such an invitation. "The way it is phrased says nothing about the effects that such a complex will have on the neighborhood here," claims Barr. "And if we speak out against it, it will look like we're attacking a motherhood issue."

The proposal calls for 125 senior citizen apartment units and a 200-bed nursing home to be built on the four-acre lot surrounding the church on Algonquin Avenue.

"The idea of having a residential section in with the nursing home is so that the spouses of those people who require medical attention can stay close by them," said Daeschel, describing it as

a new concept in senior-citizen care.

Earlier this summer, however, local residents circulated a newsletter among the congregation in which they said the building of the complex could pose a threat to the neighborhood.

Their chief objections were that it would add to the already heavy flow of traffic that passes through the neighborhood and that it would be too large.

"One of the proposals was for a nine-storey building," admits Daeschel, "but it was only one of four designs put before our congregation for discussion. The indications are that the congregation itself would prefer a building that is only six-storeys high."

But Barr says that this is still too high. He says his community association has suggested that something smaller be built on the four-acre lot or an alternative use be found for it. He says that to the best of his knowledge the church members were not given the option of voting for an alternative use to the site although he claims the congregation itself is not 100 per cent in favor of the existing proposal.

Frederic Halang, president of the Unitarian congregation agrees that plans for building the complex on church property have not been unanimously approved, "but it is only a small minority who are arguing against it, mainly on the humanitarian grounds that they

believe senior citizens would be better off living amongst the community and not separated from it in a special home."

However, he said that by building the complex on land adjacent to the church, "we could encourage a sort of voluntary interaction between our members and the members of the surrounding community who would like to make the senior citizens feel at home."

But virtually the only agreement reached between the two opposing sides at present is that traffic through the community should be lessened by opening a new approach to the church property directly from Richmond Road. The church is surrounded on three sides by NCC land — part of the Ottawa River Parkway and on the fourth the road ends in a cul-de-sac. Church authorities have applied both to the NCC and regional planning board to see if some new arrangement with regard to road access can be made.

"Of course we have no wish to be at odds with the surrounding community," says Halang. "If they feel it is a burden to have our traffic passing through there we will certainly try to accommodate them on this question of street access."

"Certainly we would support them before any planning board on this question of access," says Barr. "As long as this does not interfere with our own further access to the park."

June 12, 1978: The Ottawa Journal

Woodroffe residents fear traffic crisis

By Trish Irvin
Journal Reporter

A good Samaritan gesture by the Woodroffe Unitarian Church, in the form of a \$5-million senior citizens apartment complex and nursing home, isn't appreciated by local residents says the neighborhood association's president.

Tom Barr, speaking on behalf of the Woodroffe North Community Association, says "the church wants to take more out of this neighborhood than it wants to put in. We're worried about the traffic and the impact this kind of a complex can have on our neighborhood."

The proposed complex would have 100 to 125 senior citizen apart-

ments as well as a 200-bed nursing home on the four-acre lot surrounding the church on Algonquin Avenue. Rev. Vernon Nichols, pastor of the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, says he doesn't like this proposal being referred to as a "business complex."

"We are not considering any kind of a business complex, we're building a senior citizens complex. We do not intend to make this just a business deal," says Nichols.

A newsletter circulated by Barr and some of his neighbors to church members on their way to last week's Sunday service says "the building of a large business complex in our neighborhood im-

poses a real threat.

"We find it difficult to live now in our cul de sac with the ever relentless traffic to and from the church through our community. We feel the community would change and disintegrate under the onslaught of commercial vans, trucks, visitors and the staff required for a 200-bed, 125 apartment and business complex."

Barr says his community association suggests something smaller be built on that four-acre lot or an alternative use be found for it. "If they put in 150 apartments, that'll be more than the number of households we have in this neighborhood."

Barr estimates there are about 135 households in Woodroffe north and only a handful of them attend the Unitarian church.

The residents, who have fought many long, hard battles in the past to keep highrise apartments out of the area, are concerned about the proposal for a nine-storey building.

"I really don't know what they're worrying about," says Nichols. "we have shown them four different proposals, and they're still only proposals mind you, with buildings ranging from four to nine stories.

"We have applied for a direct entrance to the complex from Richmond Road, that would get the traffic out of the neighborhood. I find this whole controversy quite puzzling. There's no final form for anything yet. A great deal remains to be done."

The newsletter, stating its case for preserving the neighborhood as it exists now, states that: "ours is a community with its own identity and history. It has been known affectionately for generations as 'the park'. It is certainly one of the older communities in Ottawa. Families move here and stay."

"Children return here to live and new residents quickly acquire the same attachment for the area as the oldtimers. We are proud of our community and we intend to do everything possible to preserve its identity."

Church officials and residents plan to meet within the next couple of weeks to try to sort out their differences.

Camp

By Paula McLaughlin
Journal Reporter

With a schedule of events that includes horseback riding, swimming — plus picnics in the great outdoors, Ottawa's Whistle Day Camp is shaping up to be one of the action-packed summer programs in the area.

But for the 30 young campers who will take part in the day camp, registered blind children, the program will be more than just a way to get away with their community.

The main purpose of the camp, says camp administrator David Street, is to "orient the children to the cultural and



Unitarian House
Maison Unitarienne

20 Cleary Ave., Box 6999, Stn. J
Ottawa, Ontario, K2A 3Z6
(613) 722-6690

**Non-Profit, Non-Denominational
Housing and Care
for Seniors**

**Occupancy
Phase I
Fall, 1983**

Our Community Partners: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa



The founding of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa began in 1967 when the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa moved from downtown Ottawa to the west end and agreed among themselves that eventually they would support the establishment of a Fellowship in the east end of the city. In 1994, Rev. Brian Kopke, Minister of First Congregation put a formal proposal to their Board proposing the establishment of a New Congregations Committee. Rev. Fred Cappuccino was asked to lead the east end Committee.

Rev. Fred pulled together a group of people who met for the first time in January, 1995. This group and others who joined it met more or less bi-weekly in people's homes. The group coalesced and more formal structures began to take shape. By December, 1995 a Planning Group had been formed and adopted a Consensus Vision of the way forward. Regular Sunday Services began on March 17, 1996 and by May 26, Charter Membership Sunday, 49 people had signed the Membership Book. Rev. Fred's leadership, enthusiasm, and expertise provided the necessary catalyst to move the UUFO into existence.

A UUFO Capital Campaign was launched in 2010 to raise funds for a building of their own. Knowing that there was strong financial support from the congregation, the Board decided to ask First Unitarian Congregation to revisit their promise to support the "eastern congregation" to acquire a home. A joint team of UUFO and First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa members created the "*Realizing a Dream*" Capital Campaign at First Congregation. By June 2012, these two outstanding Capital Campaigns resulted in a UUFO Building Fund of \$543,466!

In September of 2013 the Fellowship moved into their new home at 400 McArthur Ave. in Vanier. On Nov. 30, 2013 they gave a beautiful plaque entitled: *Leading Together* to First Unitarian in appreciation for their support.



Some of the Fundraising Team



Our Community Partners: River Parkway Children's Centre ...launched by the congregation in 1968

A message from River Parkway Children's Centre, January, 2017

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff and families of River Parkway and River Heights Children's Centres we would like to congratulate The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa on their fiftieth anniversary in the current building. River Parkway Children's Centre has been a proud partner of the First Unitarian Congregation for forty-nine years delivering high quality early learning and care for our community.

On July 1, 1967, a Memorandum of Intent was sent to the Congregation proposing the establishment of a Child Care Centre as an imaginative service project of the Congregation for the community. It stated *"If there is any motive for finding substitute care of children, then it is to the advantage of the child to have that care and to the advantage of the community to provide it".*

On October 2, 1968, River Parkway Children's Centre (initially named River Parkway Pre-School Centre) officially opened. Housed originally in the lower level of The First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa, the Centre shared the space weekdays with the Sunday Religious Education program. In 1975, the Centre expanded to provide early learning and care for children with special needs.

On September 3, 1991, The River Parkway Children's Centre Corporation expanded again, opening a satellite Child Care Centre in Orleans, River Heights Children's Centre.

On December 1, 2007, with the support of grants from the Province of Ontario and City of Ottawa, River Parkway Children's Centre opened the doors of its new purpose-built building on the campus of The First Unitarian Congregation. If it were not for the support of the members of the Congregation, the Centre could not have been built to serve the needs of our children and families in the Ottawa Community. Since 1968 River Parkway Children's Centre has served over three thousand children.

We wish the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa continued success for many years to come.

Caterina Pace
Executive Director
River Parkway & River Heights Children's Centre



Valuing Children and Support for Young Families

Shortly after moving from Toronto to Ottawa in the mid-sixties, I was searching for a church that my children could attend without being indoctrinated with beliefs that my husband and I did not adhere to.

I discovered that the Unitarian Congregation had just completed the construction of their new Church. Through my early childhood education connection I met Joan Brining, a Unitarian. I became immediately impressed with the strong Social Responsibility of the church, specifically as it pertained to the establishment of a day care centre on the lower level of the new church. This concrete commitment to

children and families in Ottawa persuaded me to become involved in the preschool program on Sunday mornings.

Under the guidance of Joan Brining I volunteered for three years before attending any of the church services. It was Minister David Pohl who so impressed me with his sermons that I decided that the Unitarian Congregation offered what I had been looking for.

Years later, it became evident that the demand for child care exceeded the capacity of the available space on the lower level. It was most fortunate and timely that the City of Ottawa offered capital grants to non-profit child care centres for the construction of new day care centres. River Parkway

Preschool Centre qualified for a major grant. When the Congregation endorsed the construction of a new child care facility on the Campus, my admiration for our Congregation was further strengthened. While there have been a few objections to the size of the building and the footprint required for an appropriate, purpose-built early child development centre, the commitment to children and families prevailed.

I am pleased and proud that the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa has consistently valued children in the Ottawa community and has provided a strong support for young families.

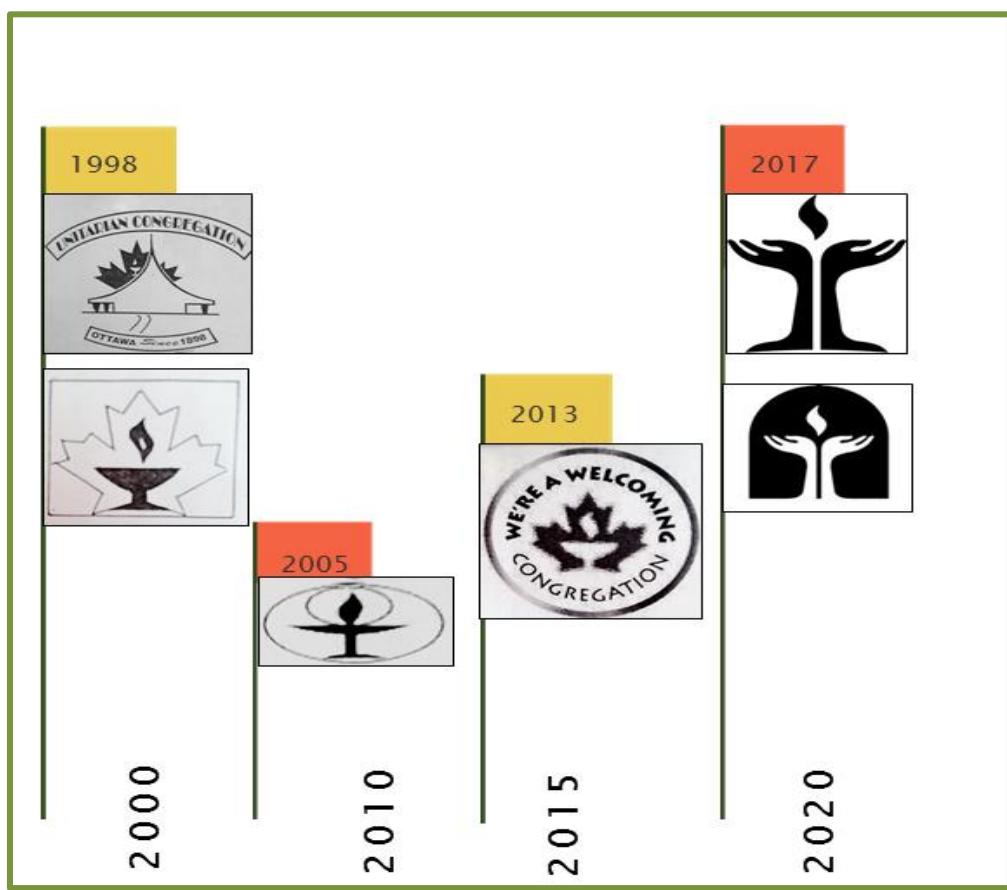
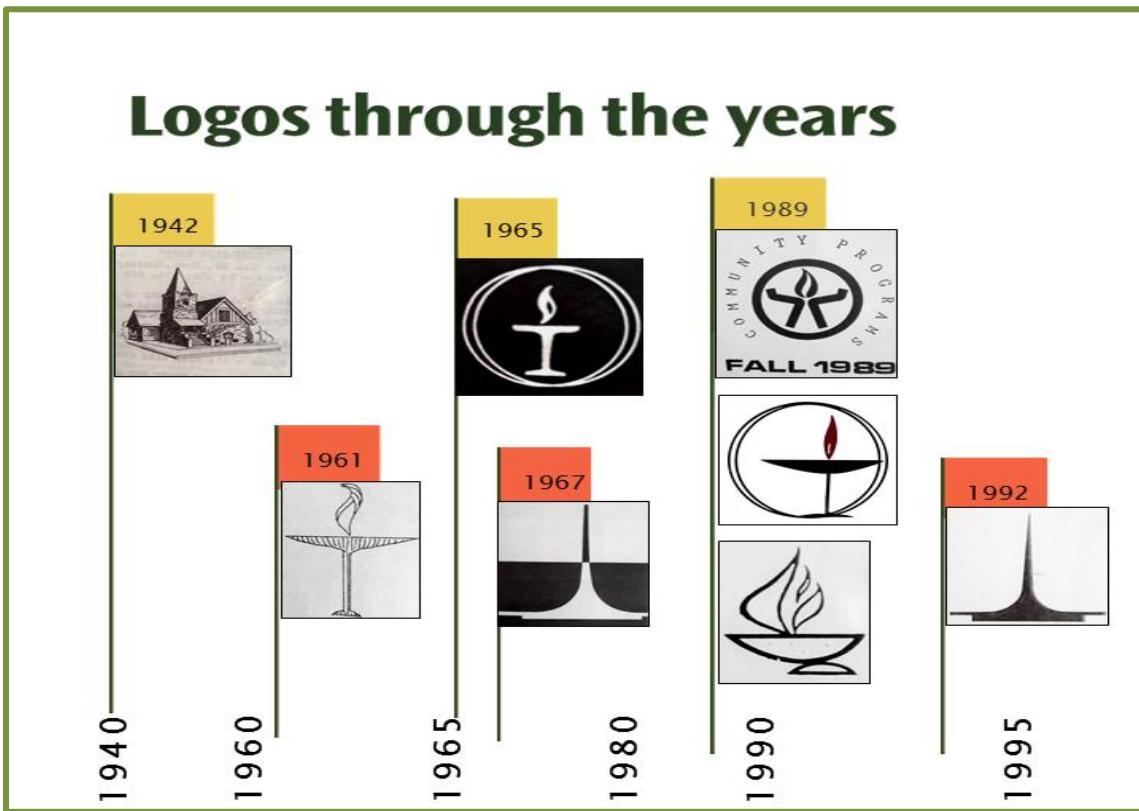
~Eleonore Benesch

RIVER PARKWAY CENTRE

ON SEPTEMBER 3. A NEW DAY nursery was opened in Ottawa's West End. This non-profit organization located in the beautiful new Unitarian Church offers warm and affectionate care of young children regardless of their faiths. A fully qualified staff and special pint-sized facilities are provided in a quiet park-like setting north of Richmond Road just east of Woodroffe. Applications from families needing financial assistance will be considered. Hours: 7.30 a.m.-6 p.m. Ages: 3-5. For information, phone 722-2802, 1-3 p.m.

September 11, 1968: The Ottawa Journal

Logos through the years





A Final Word

As we move forward, let us remember Rev. Dr. Paula Gable's charge to the congregation on May 7, 2017:

I charge you to live out your covenants: As UU's we are part of a covenantal faith; a faith that invites us to live out the promises we make to one another... I charge the congregation with supporting your Ordained and Lay Ministers in living up to the very high moral and ethical standards of this calling. – And I charge all of you to strive to live up to those standards as well... I charge you to simplify your congregational covenant. Make it so simple that it's easy to memorize the promises you made to each other. Rather than reviewing them every five years ... I charge you to review them daily, until they become such an integral part of you that you naturally live them out in your daily life.

I charge you to embrace your history – warts and all. This congregation has been a leader in social action and social justice – as well as progressive religious ideals -- for more than a century. I charge you to let that be the foundation you build on as you craft and begin to live out a compelling new vision for the future.

I charge you to be bold in your dreaming. Dare to dream about the ideal future for this Beloved Community. Go a little wild in your brainstorming. You can tame it later in the editing process. Get those wild and crazy dreams up on paper and use them to spark conversations and excitement about new possibilities... there is almost nothing, and I mean nothing you cannot do -- if you allow yourself to be guided by the Spirit of Life and Love. Listen deeply in the still, small silence and you will be guided to work wisely and boldly to cultivate wisdom and compassion in this bruised and aching world.

Out of the love that I will always hold for you, consider yourselves charged:

- *to live out your covenants;*
- *to embrace and build on your proud history;*
- *to dare to dream boldly as you work to foster greater justice, greater mercy, greater wisdom and greater compassion in your lives and in the world.*

Do you feel Charged? If so, may the people say Amen.

~ Rev. Dr. Paula Cannon Gable



Sources

Material for this document was compiled from several sources:

Looking Forward at the Past! - A History of the Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa by
Joycelyn Loeffelholz-Rea (1998)

Views from these Pews by Brian Kopke

So Far...So Good!: A Chronology of 100 Years of Unitarianism in Ottawa by Jean M.
Ahmed (1998)

Assorted Congregational Annual Reports and Newsletters

Information packets prepared by various Ministerial Search Committees

Archival documents and photos from the congregational archives

Members of the Congregation

Websites including: the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa, the CBC, Ottawa Citizen, The Ottawa Journal, and www.newspapers.com

While a strong effort was made to be accurate, full and absolute accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

2017 Staff

Interim Minister

Rev. Dr. Paula Cannon Gable

Community Minister

Ellen Bell

Director of Operations

Carolyn Turner

Office Manager

Jen Brennan

Finance Manager

Michelle Jackson

Facility Manager

Lori Clarke

Music Director

Deirdre Kellerman

Director of Lifespan Learning

Liz Roper

Lifespan Learning Assistant

Marie Gabe

Early Childhood Assistant

Karmen Walther

Sound and Lighting Coordinator

Gareth Auden-Hole

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Terry Kimmel

Vice-President

Guy Belleperche

Past President

Maggie Sharp

Treasurer

Margaret Linton

Secretary

Eva Berringer

Members at Large

Lisa Sharp

Jennifer Shaw-Read

Jill Whitford



May 2017: Some staff and a young guest

Our Unitarian Universalist Principles

As we have no official Unitarian Universalist creed, each of us is free to search for truth on many paths. Some of us believe in a God while others do not. Some of us believe that each person houses a divine spirit while others do not believe in any sort of divinity. Our common denominator is a belief in openness, tolerance, and compassion for others and our environment. Although each of us seeks an individual truth, Unitarian Universalists are bound together by the seven principles and spiritual sources of our religious faith.

The Seven Principles

To affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person

Justice, equality, and compassion in human relations

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth
in our congregations

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our
congregation and in society at large

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

