

First Unitarian
Congregation
of Ottawa



GETTING CONNECTED



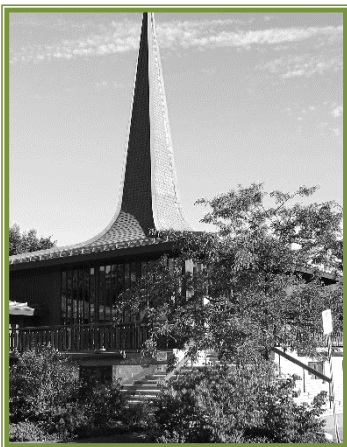
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First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

This document will help you connect with the groups and activities in our Congregation. You can always access the latest version on the FirstU website, <https://www.firstunitarianottawa.ca/get-connected.html>

Because meeting locations and times can change and some groups have restrictions on attendance, always make contact before you attend a meeting for the first time unless the description specifically suggests you can drop in anytime.



This document is prepared and maintained by volunteers like you. To give updates and corrections, please contact:

**gettingconnected@
firstunitarianottawa.ca**

An Activity for Everyone

Why might you consider volunteering or getting involved in groups or activities within our Congregation? Your motivations are as unique and personal as your spiritual beliefs and practices. But, one of the great strengths of our religion is that the diversity of member motivations is matched by the opportunities available for members to find what is valuable for them.

Your very personal needs or desires might lead you to look for groups or activities that foster:

- a sense of belonging,
- opportunities for spiritual growth,
- positive action to better our communities, country, and the world,
- personal sharing and close relationships with others,
- active sharing through music, work parties, or organization of events,
- intellectual growth through study, reading, discussion, meditation, or lectures,
- the development of new friendships, and/or
- chances to make a significant difference in the world we all share.

If any of these hit a chord, please look through the varied opportunities described in this document. You may be surprised at the depth and breadth of what goes on in our Congregation outside of Sunday worship. Don't hesitate to make contact and find out more – there's never any obligation and you may find a perfect match for your personal journey.



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Congregation Staff

Minister:

Rev Eric Meter x225
minister@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Community Minister:

Rev Linda Goonewardene
riverspirit888@gmail.com

Operations Manager:

Jen Brennan x221
omr@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Finance & HR Manager:

Michelle Jackson x222
fm@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Lead Custodian:

Dee Mollema x224
leadcustodian@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Custodians:

Eden Bigras, Julia Defalco
custodian cell: 613-890-1066

Music Director:

Jenn Berntson x230
music@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Director of Religious Exploration (RE):

Jodi McIntosh x234
dre@firstunitarianottawa.ca

RE Assistant

Susan MdEwen

Sound and Lighting Co-ordinator:

Julia Defalco x223
av@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Contacts: Church Office

uuoffice@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Adult Learning & Growth

The Adult Learning and Growth Team coordinates ongoing groups which foster connection and community building and offers workshops and courses to deepen understanding of Unitarian Universalism and foster spiritual growth.

Contacts: Eva Berringer & Jane Lindsay
adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Adult Library

The self-serve lending library in the Lounge contains roughly 900 books and other items on diverse subjects. In our basement archives there is also a small collection of older books (some printed in the nineteenth century).

Contacts: Jan Davis
jandeeiphone@gmail.com

Ajashki Food Security Project

Ajashki is a Food Security and Climate Change Learning Centre.

Contacts: Sharen Bowen
sharenajashki@gmail.com

Archives

Our Archives serve three purposes: 1. to help us locate our internal information more easily, 2. to have readily at hand documentation we are legally required to keep and to produce upon request, and 3. to preserve the main outlines of our history for future generations.

Contacts: tbd

Board of Directors

The Board (BoD) is elected annually by the Congregation to provide leadership in all aspects of the church community. The annual slate for the Board members is proposed by the Nominating Committee. Any Congregation Member may attend a Board meeting except for the portions of meetings that may be in-camera.

Contacts: Chuck Shields
president@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Book of Gratitude

The Book of Gratitude lists people who have made exceptional financial donations to First Unitarian Ottawa. It is displayed in a case in the office where members may peruse it.

Contacts: Bob Armstrong
bob@thearmstrongs.ca

BookShelf

The bookshelf sells a selection of fiction, non fiction and children's books in Fellowship Hall after Sunday services.

Contacts: Jan Davis
jandeeiphone@gmail.com

Bridge Group

All levels of players are welcome to this mentally stimulating fellowship activity. The format is multi-table rotational, Chicago scoring. We meet from 7:00-9:00 pm the first Friday of the month on Zoom and the third Sunday afternoon in person, from September to May. Contact us or see the e-UU newsletter for dates, location, and cost.

Contacts: Brent Nicolle & Barb Ryan
bridgehost@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Campus Planning Committee

The Committee assists the Board and the Congregation by studying, providing advice, and making recommendations for policies and plans related to campus planning. The committee includes non-voting representatives from our campus partners, RPCC, Or Haneshemah, and Unitarian House. The Board appoints the members representing our church.

Contacts: Terry Kimmel
campusplanning@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Caring Network*

We encourage and nurture a caring network in the Congregation. Our volunteers provide occasional transportation, phone or make personal visits to people who are ill or house bound, assist in emergencies, send caring cards, and help to organize memorial receptions for Members.

*Contacts: Carmen Contreras
caringvisitors@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Choir (Chalice)

Chalice Choir is a non-auditioned choir and everyone is welcome. Previous musical experience is helpful but not necessary.

*Contacts: Jenn Berntson
music@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Choir (Fusion)

Fusion is designed for experienced singers. Ability to sight-read and/or learn music quickly is an asset.

*Contacts: Jenn Berntson
music@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Choir (Three Rivers Singers)

Three Rivers Singers is a small women's ensemble that sings in a variety of styles, aiming to highlight female composers and themes of welcome, community, and empowerment.

*Contacts: Jenn Berntson
music@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Communications & Outreach Committee

This Committee assists the Board in ensuring effective communications both within and external to the Congregation. The Committee works closely with various groups in the Congregation to develop communications strategies. Committee members are appointed by the Board.

*Contacts: Carl Sonnen
communications@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Embracing Diversity Committee

We plan and oversee the implementation of educational, advocacy, outreach, and community-building activities to create awareness of current realities and to build attitudes, behaviours, and practices that embrace and respect diversity of all kinds.

*Contacts: Kris Cormier
diversity@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Empower Dance

Empower Dance is for people who wish to dance without instruction. We play many genres of music, use candlelight, and move according to our own feelings and abilities. Please make contact for more details.

*Contacts: Janet Clayton
jayclay2010@gmail.com*

Environmental Action Group

The EAG promotes awareness of environmental issues and encourages individual actions.

*Contacts: Mike Fletcher & Donna Bowen-Willer
EAWG@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Euchre Monthly Group

*Contacts: Lisa Sharp
lisasharp@rogers.com*

Fair Trade Chocolate Sub Group

On Sundays and on request, we sell La Siembra Coffee/Chocolate and ZATOUN products in support of small farmer co-ops in developing countries.

*Contacts: Gary Campbell
gary@web.ca*

Fall Fair

Fall Fair, our annual bazaar, in November, is FirstU's largest fundraiser. It is a satisfying experience for some 350 volunteers.

*Contacts: Catherine Pope
fallfair@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Finance Committee

Monitors, reviews, and proposes policies related to finance matters. The Committee members are chosen by the Board-appointed chair.

*Contacts: Phil Nagy
treasurer@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Governance Committee

Monitors, reviews, and proposes policies related to governance matters. The Committee members are chosen by the Board-appointed chair.

*Contacts: Guy Belleperche
governance@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Hospitality Hour (Sunday)

Volunteers are recruited for Hospitality Hour (a sign up schedule is posted in Fellowship Hall) and training is provided. On Sundays, volunteers prepare the tables and beverages and snacks in Fellowship Hall before services and serve refreshments following. Clean up includes washing of dishes.

*Contacts: Tarrel Armstrong
tarrel@theArmstrongs.ca*

Justice & Equality Action Group

We encourage our Congregation to deliberate on issues of social justice, advocate for social change, and join with other people of faith and goodwill. Individuals are encouraged to bring their social justice concerns to the group for discussion and action.

*Contacts: Lisa Sharp
SJAN@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Knitters Group

This group welcomes knitters and crocheters of any level, from beginner to expert, who enjoy creating hand-made items in a friendly, supportive setting. Using donated yarn we make a variety of goods to sell at Fall Fair, Mitten Tree, etc. or to donate to special community projects.

*Contacts: Denise Choquet
dchoquet613@gmail.com*

Lay Chaplaincy Team

The Ottawa Lay Chaplaincy Committee (aka FirstU Lay Chaplaincy Team) serves both our congregation and the UU Fellowship of Ottawa. Active members of FirstU or the UUFO may apply to be lay chaplains.

*Contacts: Sharmila Khare
chaplaincy@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Mapmaking

*Contacts: Eva Berringer
adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Meditation Garden Friends

This team cares for the meditation garden. Volunteers are cherished - our tasks vary from deadheading and weeding to plant research.

*Contacts: Susan Mellor & Margaret Linton
meditation@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Memorial Receptions

The Memorial Receptions Team will occasionally provide a reception after a Memorial Service for a member of our congregation. Volunteers help in setting up, serving, and cleaning up Fellowship Hall.

*Contacts: Evelyn Algar
evelyn.algar@rogers.com*

Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast Group is a social group open to any man, whether a member of FirstU or not. We meet for breakfast prepared by participants on the second and fourth Friday morning of each month during most of the year. The breakfast program usually consists of a speaker and the group also provides assistance for FirstU or Unitarian House events on request.

*Contacts: Chris Hughes
chris@thehughes.com*

Mental Health Support & Action Group

The MHSAG provides a listening presence and mutual support for each other. We engage in actions to address mental health challenges in the Congregation and in the broader society. Challenges include mental illness, addiction, dementia, and disaster anxiety, e.g., climate change, war, pandemics. We support Ancoura, a charity dedicated to providing stable, affordable housing within supportive communities for persons living with a mental illness.

*Contacts: johnnie gall & Rev Linda Goonewardene
mhsag@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Mindfulness Meditation Group

We meet weekly on Zoom. All interested in 'turning inward with patience' in a supportive and mostly silent community, are welcome to join in.

*Contacts: Colleen Glass
meditation@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Music Venue Volunteers

Help with music events at FirstU, circa 12 per year.

*Contacts: Terry Kimmel
terrykimmel@sympatico.ca*

Newcomers - Introducing Ourselves

*Contacts: Eva Berringer
adultlearning@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Nominating Committee*

The committee finds and nominates congregation members for Board positions and assists in recruiting members for major committees. Committee members are elected at the Fall Congregational Meeting for 2-year terms.

*Contacts: Mike Fletcher
nominating@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

OWL - Our Whole Lives

OWL is a positive, comprehensive, and age-appropriate educational program that promotes sexual health and provides accurate, developmentally appropriate information in the context of our Unitarian Universalist community. Programs for elementary aged children, youth, and adults are administered and coordinated through the Director of Religious Exploration and related groups.

*Contacts: Lisa Sharp
owl@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Personnel Committee

This committee assists the Board by helping to provide watchful and careful monitoring of personnel policies and general practices. It reviews/proposes policies and facilitates communication related to personnel policies and practices. Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Contacts: Chuck Shields

PersCom@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Poetry Sharing Group

This group meets every two months on Zoom to share poetry that we love. Members are welcome to share a poem they have written, but you don't have to write in order to join us.

Contacts: Clea Derwent

clderwent@gmail.com

Property Team*

We oversee the operation of the Major Maintenance Fund, which involves expenditures over \$1,000 as part of our mandate to keep our building and campus functional, safe, and beautiful.

Contacts: Jen Brennan

propertyteam@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Reading for Growth (Friday)

This group meets monthly on Zoom. The books cover a wide range of topics such as politics, social issues, spiritual and religious thought and current events.

Contacts: Clea Derwent

clderwent@gmail.com

Reading for Growth (non-fiction)

This is a nonfiction book club meeting monthly on Zoom. We read on a wide range of subjects choosing books that are readily available in the public library.

Contacts: Katharine Elliott

monrg@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Religious Exploration Children & Youth

Our religious exploration program caters to children aged 2-18. We offer year-round Sunday morning programming for children aged 2-12, providing creative and age-appropriate activities to explore their beliefs through stories, crafts and play. Additionally, our monthly youth group for ages 12-18 meets on Friday evenings. During these gatherings, the youth come together in community to share a meal and connect with others who share similar values.

Contacts: Jodi McIntosh

dre@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Right Relations Team

Members of the FirstU Right Relations Team (RRT) provide education in healthy relations and conflict management. Members of the RRT who have relevant training and experience may act as facilitators and coaches to assist congregants in resolving their issues in the spirit of the Relational Covenant.

Contacts: Lena Jones & Marilen Gerber

rightrelations@firstunitarianottawa.ca

River Parkway Children's Centre Liaison

RPCC currently serves 54 children and is located on the FirstU campus. See riverparkwaychildrenscentre.ca for more information.

Contacts: Alexandra Devine

Social Justice Action Network

The SJAN team co-ordinates the activities of the social responsibility groups.

Contacts: Justine De Jaeger

SJAN@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Sound & Light Team

The S+L Team operates audio-visual equipment for all Worship Hall events. New Operators are given technical training and shadow the Sound and Lighting Coordinator.

Contacts: Julia Defalco

av@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Spiritual Growth Circle*

This group meets monthly to seek ways to support our spiritual awakening. This group might be open to new participants at a future time.

Contacts: Lisa Boulay

Lboulay111@gmail.com

Spirituality & Philosophy Discussion Group

Usually, this group meets the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month. Check the e-UU for current information.

Contacts: Paula Theetge

paulath@rogers.com

Stewardship Committee

Stewardship is a year-round function focussed on recognizing and celebrating the generosity of our congregation and community towards enabling our covenant. We do so through both fundraising and fundraising events and activities. We develop and implement the annual pledge campaign, orchestrate special events, act as a resource for other congregational fundraising activities, and build upon the Planned Giving program.

Contacts: Terry Kimmel & Phil Nagy

stewardship@firstunitarianottawa.ca

Trivia Quiz Night

One Monday evening monthly on Zoom. Diverse questions. Play alone or with a team.

*Contacts: Andrew Drake
trivia@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Unitarian GoGos

We support the Stephen Lewis Foundation to Turn the Tide of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

*Contacts: Sheila Green
unitarianagogos@gmail.com*

Unitarian House Liaison

Unitarian House is the seniors' residence on our campus. One person from the Congregation serves on the Unitarian House Board of Governors.

*Contacts: Mary Ella Keblusek
maryellakeblusek@gmail.com*

UU Connections Team

We make members of the Congregation more aware of Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) and international Unitarian Universalist (UU) activities and issues by encouraging participation in webinars and other training, committees/task forces, and regional, national, and international conferences and meetings, and by recruiting delegates to represent FirstU at CUC meetings.

*Contacts: Guy Belleperche
uuconnections@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

UU Pride Group

Social & support group for 2SLGBTQ+ UUs. We meet once a month for structured discussions, fun activities, games, & socializing.

*Contacts: Kris Cormier
diversity@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Virtual Discussion Circle

Meets weekly on Zoom to discuss a topic. Thursdays 1:30-3:00 Go to the weekly eUU newsletter to get the Zoom link.

*Contacts: Andrew Drake
andrewdrake235@gmail.com*

Voyageurs Group*

A group for men focused on developing their full emotional and spiritual potential. We have bi-weekly three hour meetings and semi-annual weekend retreats. The group is small and new members are welcomed as current members move on.

*Contacts: Tom Rankin
loghouse49@gmail.com*

W&M1 Welcome & Membership Team

There are four W&M groups: Greeters, Membership, Newcomer Outreach & Engagement, and Welcome Table.

*Contacts: Jane Lindsay
welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

W&M2 Greeters

Greeters at each Sunday service prepare the handout materials, greet people as they arrive for worship, act as ushers, assist with the elevator, and serve at the Green Mug Table. Training is offered for new volunteers.

*Contacts: Barb Ryan
welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

W&M3 Membership

Handle the membership application process. Organize workshops to build connections with FirstU. Conduct welcome services. Report member status.

*Contacts: Jane Lindsay
welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

W&M4 Newcomer Outreach & Engagement

Follow up with visitors and inquiries. Organize newcomer workshops and events. Maintain relevant information on our website.

*Contacts: Kate Kirkwood
welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

W&M5 Welcome Table

Set up welcome table on Sundays and welcome newcomers.

*Contacts: Mary Jackson
welcome@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Women's Pagan Circle

We are an inclusive circle, and welcome Women+ for marginalized gender, including women, non-binary & gender non-conforming.

This space centers around women's experiences with spirituality. We meet on week nights but vary them to accommodate people's schedules.

We meet every 6 weeks to celebrate the Sabbats and cross-quarter days in ritual.

Gathering time: 7pm; Ritual start time: 7:30 pm
*Contacts: Laurie Foster-MacLeod & Katherine Gunn
lauren.fosterm@gmail.com*

Women's Personal Growth Group

The WPGG meets twice monthly - once in person, once on Zoom. The common theme is growth - spiritual, mental, emotional and learning more about each other in this "Sisterhood".

*Contacts: Evelyn Algar & Carmen Contreras
womenspg@firstunitarianottawa.ca*

Getting Connected

September 2024

Worship Team and Worship Associates

The Worship Associates work with the minister to develop and participate in Sunday services.

Contacts: Mary Jackson

worshipteam@firstunitarianottawa.ca