



**FIRST UNITARIAN
CONGREGATION OF OTTAWA**

This document will help you connect with any of the groups and activities in our Congregation.

Please Note: Most groups/activities invite you to drop in to see if they might be right for you. However, some (**marked with ***) have prior requirements or need pre-registration. They ask you to call the contact before you attend.

This document is prepared and maintained by volunteers like you. To request an electronic copy or 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,
- chances to make a significant difference in the world we all share.

If any of these hit a chord, please look through the wide and 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.

How to Find a Group or Activity

Our groups and activities fall into eight general categories. Although any group may, in fact, fit well into more than one category, we've chosen what we believe is the best fit to simplify this listing.

The categories are:

Fundraising	Internal Service	Liaison
Music	Operations	Outreach
Self-improvement	Social	

On Page 2 is an **index** of all the groups and activities within each of the **categories**. The **descriptions** of the groups and activities are listed alphabetically within each category starting on Page 3. At the end of the document, the **contacts** are listed in alphabetical order of the group/activity names. To make contact during COVID, members can get the contact details in the members' page of the website. If you are not a member, please send your coordinates to the Getting Connected address in the left column of this page and we will have the contact person get in touch with you.

Contents

Contents	2	Stewardship Committee	6
Congregation Staff	3	Welcome & Membership Team	6
Fundraising	3	Zoom Team Volunteers	6
Fall Fair	3	Outreach	6
Time and Talent Auction	3	Child Haven Working Group	6
Internal Service	3	Communications & Outreach Committee	6
Book of Gratitude.....	3	Enviromental Action Group.....	6
BookShelf	3	Fair Trade Co-op Sales	6
Caring Network*	3	Global Justice Action Group	6
Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM).....	3	Indigenous Relations Working Group	6
FirstU 55+ Program	3	Lay Chaplaincy Team	6
Friends of the Meditation Gardens.....	3	Mental Health Support & Action Group.....	6
Greeters (Sunday)	3	Poverty Awareness Action Group	6
Hospitality Hour (Sunday)	4	Social Responsibility Coordinating Team	7
Leadership Council	4	Social Responsibility Council	7
Memorial Receptions.....	4	Unitarian GoGos Action Group.....	7
Our Whole Lives (OWL).....	4	Self-Improvement	7
Right Relations Team	4	Arts Night.....	7
Spiritual Care Council*	4	Mindfulness Meditation Group	7
Spiritual Care Visitors*	4	Painters' Circle	7
Worship Team and Worship Associates	4	Poetry Group	7
Liaison	4	Reading for Growth (Friday).....	7
River Parkway Children's Centre	4	Reading for Growth (Monday)	7
Unitarian House Liaison	4	Spiritual Growth Group	7
Music	4	Spirituality & Philosophy Discussion Group	7
Chalice Choir	4	Sunday Forum - Earth Speaks.....	7
Fusion Choir	4	Sunday Forums	7
Three Rivers Singers.....	4	UU Writers' Group.....	7
Operations	4	Women's Personal Growth Group	8
Adult Learning Team	4	Social	8
Adult Library.....	4	Bridge Group	8
Archives.....	5	Knitters Group	8
Audit Committee.....	5	Voyageurs Group*	8
Board of Directors.....	5		
Campus Planning Committee.....	5		
Denominational Affairs Team	5		
Embracing Diversity Committee	5		
Finance Committee.....	5		
Governance Committee.....	5		
Internship Committee.....	5		
Nominating Committee*	5		
Personnel Committee	5		
Property Team*	5		
Sound & Light Team.....	5		

Congregation Staff

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Fundraising

Fall Fair

For 2020, Fall Fair has been limited to an online auction involving a small number of volunteers working with a professional auctioneer. Donations are pre-approved and received at the church by arrangement. The annual Fall Fair is traditionally our congregation's largest single fundraiser. Some 350 volunteers come together to organize the bazaar, by sorting and selling donated items, making and serving food, cleaning up after the sale and distributing leftover goods in the community.

Time and Talent Auction

Members of the Congregation and others offer their time, talent, or interests in an annual auction to raise money for the Congregation.

Internal Service

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 at the back of the pews in Worship Hall. When the church reopens, volunteers will advance the pages on display each week.

BookShelf

The bookshelf usually sells books on Sundays after the church service. It is, of course, not operational during COVID.

Caring Network*

We encourage and nurture a caring network in the Congregation. We recruit volunteers to provide occasional transportation, phone or make personal visits to people who are ill or house-bound, and to assist people, as necessary and when possible, in emergencies; we send caring cards; and we help to organize memorial receptions for Members when requested.

Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM)

The Committee on Shared Ministry acts as an advisory committee to the Board, the Minister and the congregation, with the goal of supporting and coordinating our ministries for greatest effectiveness.

FirstU 55+ Program

Due to COVID-19 the program has been inactive since March 2020. Before Covid: once a month, seniors meet in the early afternoon for a time of fellowship and informal conversation. We begin with a short worship service, followed by a program and light refreshments.

Friends of the Meditation Gardens

We recruit members and friends to participate in caring for the Meditation Gardens during the growing season, to help with digging, watering, weeding, planting, fertilizing and fundraising. The Friends are funded by donations and fund-raising activities.

Greeters (Sunday)

The Greeters Team is inactive during the Covid shutdown.

Hospitality Hour (Sunday)

During the shutdown for Covid, Hospitality is on Zoom from 11:30 am on Sunday mornings. The link is in each week's e-UU.

Leadership Council

Allows leaders to share and coordinate activities in support of our ministry.

Memorial Receptions

Memorial Receptions Team occasionally provide a reception for a Member of our congregation.

Our Whole Lives (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.

Right Relations Team

tbc

Spiritual Care Council*

tbc

Spiritual Care Visitors*

Volunteer Spiritual Care Visitors visit members of the Congregation who ask for or who are thought to need support. They help people to make their own decisions and clarify their own choices. They are not professional counsellors but may make referrals to the Spiritual Care Visitor and to the ministerial staff. Volunteer Lay Spiritual Care Visitors are members of the Congregation who have completed the Lay Spiritual Care training.

Worship Team and Worship Associates

The Worship Associates work with the minister to develop and participate in several Sunday services during the church year. Worship Associates' participation during Sunday worship is a testimony to our community's commitment to direct congregational involvement in the worship and the liturgy of the church.

Liaison

River Parkway Children's Centre

RPCC has been a proud partner of FirstU for approximately 50 years delivering high quality early learning and care for our community. The Child Care Centre currently serves 72 children

and is located on the FirstU campus. See riverparkwaychildrenscentre.ca for more information.

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.

Music

Chalice Choir

Chalice Choir meets Thursday evenings from 7:00-9:00 and is our largest group. Our repertoire covers it all, from pop arrangements to hymns; folk tunes to choral standards. We value community building, dedication to musical development, laughter and learning. We sing in services approximately twice a month. This is a non-auditioned choir and everyone is welcome. Previous musical experience is helpful but not necessary.

Fusion Choir

Fusion (formally called Jazz Choir) rehearses on Monday afternoons from 1:00-3:00pm. We like to sing music that has lush harmonies and funky rhythms and we work on blend and ensemble development. Fusion sings in services on a monthly basis and is designed for experienced singers. Ability to sight-read and/or learn music quickly is an asset.

Three Rivers Singers

Three Rivers Singers meet on Wednesdays from 1:00-3:00pm. We are a small women's ensemble that sings in a variety of styles, aiming to highlight female composers and themes of welcome, community and empowerment. Three Rivers sings in services on a monthly basis and regularly sings for Unitarian GoGo events.

Operations

Adult Learning Team

We consider proposals for courses, speakers and workshops. We plan, implement, promote and evaluate adult learning programs.

Adult Library

A collection, in the Lounge, of about 900 books and other items dealing with Unitarian-Universalism, general religion/spirituality, as well as social responsibility, and other miscellaneous topics. Library material may be borrowed and renewed on

a self-serve basis. Among our basement archives there are a few books printed in the nineteenth century. The library is not functioning during the pandemic.

Archives

Our Archives serve three main purposes: to help us locate our internal information more easily, to assist us to have readily at hand documentation we are legally required to keep and perhaps produce upon request, and to preserve the main outlines of our history for future generations of congregants. Some limited archival work continues during the pandemic.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee provides oversight of the integrity of financial information and reporting, and internal control risk. The committee chair reports directly to the Board. Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Board of Directors

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

Campus Planning Committee

The Committee focuses on issues affecting the planning and development of the Church campus and environs. New members with knowledge or interest in planning, architecture, landscape design or engineering are welcome to participate on the Committee. The work of the committee involves Community Design Plans, land development, campus plans, zoning, site planning, engineering, and finance. Meetings are held on an ad hoc basis depending on need. One could generally expect a two hour meeting in the evening every second month. The Board appoints committee members.

Denominational Affairs Team

The Denominational Affairs Team promotes awareness in our congregation of Canadian Unitarian Council and Unitarian Universalist activities and events in Canada and beyond.

Embracing Diversity Committee

The Embracing Diversity Committee provides this assistance by: planning and overseeing the implementation of an annual plan of educational,

advocacy, outreach, and community-building activities intended to create awareness of current realities and to build attitudes, behaviours and practices that embrace and respect diversity of all kinds; recommending policy, procedural and/or structural changes in the operations of the Congregation; and creating platforms to promote inclusion.

Finance Committee

The committee chair reports directly to the Board. Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Governance Committee

Governance is a committee of the Board, responsible for maintaining the Governance structure and supporting Governance Manual, reviewing and recommending administrative and other policies, and ensuring that FirstU foundational documents are updated as needed. All Committee work is subject to Board oversight and approval.

Internship Committee

tbc

Nominating Committee*

Find and nominate congregation members for Board positions and assist in recruiting members for major committees. Facilitate leadership development. Committee members, elected at the Fall Congregational Meeting, serve 2-year terms.

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. The committee chair reports directly to the Board. Committee members are appointed by the Board.

Property Team*

We oversee the maintenance of our building and grounds and the expenditure of funds from our Major Projects Fund and Maintenance Reserve Fund for that purpose. We welcome new members. Meetings: Every two months.

Sound & Light Team

The S+L Team operates Audio-Visual equipment for all Worship Hall events with a monthly Volunteer rotation for Sundays and congregational events plus paid opportunities for rites of passage and other rental events. New Operators are offered

mandatory technical training and shadowing with our staff Sound and Lighting Coordinator.

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 fun-raising 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 (e.g.; promoting bequests to the congregation).

Welcome & Membership Team

We welcome everyone to our services, help people get connected to the Congregation, guide new member applicants through the membership process, and support members' engagement with us. We staff the Welcome Table on Sunday mornings, help maintain membership records, host programs for people interested in learning about us, organize New Member Welcome services several times per year, and contact members to facilitate their connection with the congregation. We meet as needed.

Zoom Team Volunteers

Volunteers receive training to provide assistance with Zoom meetings and events such as Sunday forums, Hospitality Hour, and congregational events.

Outreach

Child Haven Working Group

We promote the work of Child Haven International (CHI). For information, see childhaven.ca.

Communications & Outreach Committee

Communications & Outreach is a committee of the Board, responsible for facilitating effective communication within the Congregation and raising the profile of FirstU, and our mission, in our city and the broader UU community. The Committee works closely with teams, groups and other committees to ensure a coordinated FirstU message to the outside world. A focus for the coming year will be enhancing our Social Media presence.

Environmental Action Group

tbc

Fair Trade Co-op Sales

A subgroup within the Global Justice Working Group, we sell La Siembra Coffee/Chocolate and ZATOUN products in support of small farmer co-ops in developing countries. During Covid, orders can be picked up at Unitarian House.

Global Justice 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.

Indigenous Relations Working Group

In service to reconciliation, we seek and support relationship building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Lay Chaplaincy Team

The Lay Chaplaincy Team serves both our congregation and the UU Fellowship. The team is responsible for overseeing the Lay Chaplaincy program; serving as the selection team for lay chaplains; maintaining communication with the CUC regarding our Lay Chaplaincy program; ensuring that an annual review of chaplains is conducted; ensuring that chaplains reflect UU principles in their contact with the public; and providing support to the Lay Chaplains.

Mental Health Support & Action Group

Our group sponsors congregational activities and provides information and education to increase awareness about mental illness. We support Ancoura, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to establishing stable, affordable housing within supportive communities for persons living with a mental illness. Ancoura is supported by local faith communities. We promote healthy attitudes to remove the stigma of mental illness and advocate for specific actions that promote societal change on mental health issues. We hope to sponsor the opening of an apartment for three residents in the coming year.

Poverty Awareness Action Group

We create awareness in the Congregation and take action to promote poverty alleviation and increase affordable housing. Specific actions include fundraising and volunteer involvement with: the Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI), support programs for low-income

secondary school students such as Students Will All Graduate, local food banks, and programs supporting urban indigenous people through Minwaashin Aboriginal Women's Support Centre and the Odawa Native Friendship Centre. PAWG cooperates with the Mental Health Working Group on issues and programs of mutual interest.

Social Responsibility Coordinating Team

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

Social Responsibility Council

The Council evaluates funding requests from the social responsibility working groups and awards funds. Any group of persons in the Congregation, at least six in number, may propose a new group to pursue activities in keeping with the principles and aims of social responsibility. If approved by the SRC, the new working group becomes part of the SRC family.

Unitarian GoGos Action Group

Unitarian GoGos are a dynamic group of about 30 congregants and community members, who work to Turn the Tide of HIV/AIDS in Africa through the Stephen Lewis Foundation. We are part of a regional network of 20 Granny groups.

Self-Improvement

Arts Night

Arts Night is suspended until the church reopens after Covid. Normally, Arts Night is held on the last Friday of each month from September to June, except for December. Three invited guest artists from the literary, visual, and musical arts speak and demonstrate or perform for about twenty minutes each. They showcase their art and share a meaningful description of the art, science, and spirit and passion of their particular art form, and what has brought them to this place in their lives. There is time for audience participation, discussion with the guest artists, and socializing.

Mindfulness Meditation Group

The Wednesday Evening Mindfulness Meditation Group sits together mid-week from 7-8:30 pm. All welcome. During the shut-down, we meet on Zoom. Please contact us for the link.

Painters' Circle

We are a very friendly group of varied talents in different media, meeting Tuesday mornings. We paint, look at each other's work and encourage, no heavy critiquing, but if advice is asked for, we discuss and come up with ideas. Some people have a lot of experience and exhibit, others are beginners. This isn't a class. It is for community building and for you to make time in your week for expressing your spiritual connection with the world through painting.

Poetry Group

tbc

Reading for Growth (Friday)

There are two Reading for Growth Groups. Both meet monthly in the afternoon - one on the second Monday, the other on the last Friday. Each group chooses its own book to review for each month. The books cover a wide range of topics such as politics, social issues, spiritual and religious thought and current events. The discussions are lively and informative.

Reading for Growth (Monday)

There are two Reading for Growth Groups. Both meet monthly in the afternoon - one on the second Monday, the other on the last Friday. Each group chooses its own book to review for each month. The books cover a wide range of topics such as politics, social issues, spiritual and religious thought and current events. The discussions are lively and informative.

Spiritual Growth Group

This group grew out of the "Enneagram workshop" offered at First U in 2018. We meet monthly to continue seeking ways to support our spiritual awakening and growth. This group might be open to new participants at a future time. During this time of Covid the group is meeting via Zoom.

Spirituality & Philosophy Discussion Group

tbc

Sunday Forum - Earth Speaks

tbc

Sunday Forums

tbc

UU Writers' Group

This group provides a forum for writers to share their work with other writers, encouraging each other to write with praise and insightful,

constructive criticism. The group meets on alternate Tuesdays on Zoom.

Women's Personal Growth Group

Taking care of the inner self, to nurture the emotional and spiritual growth of participants. We explore resources related to topics of interest, share our own experience and learn from one another. An informal group with trust that anything shared stays within our group. Meetings on Zoom start at 7:00 p.m. generally on the first Monday of each month all year.

Social

Bridge Group

All skill levels are welcome, and guests are welcome too. We play virtually, using Zoom for casual chat, and using BridgeBase.com for online play. Reservations are required a day in advance to organize tables. Contact us or see the e-UU newsletter for dates, location, and cost.

Knitters Group

This group welcomes knitters and crocheters of any level; using donated yarn we create a variety of items to sell at Fall Fair, Mitten Tree, etc. or to donate to special community projects. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we are unable to meet in person, but a weekly email newsletter "Greetings and Salutations" keeps us in touch with each other. We hope to resume our weekly Wednesday meetings when the church is open again.

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.

Adult Learning Team

Wendy Doyle
Rozanne Lepine

Adult Library

Brian Cowan

Archives

Brian Cowan

Arts Night

Joycelyn Loeffelholz-Rea

Audit Committee

Paula Theetge

Board of Directors

Lisa Sharp

Book of Gratitude

Bob Armstrong

BookShelf

Margaret Zielinski

Bridge Group

Brent Nicolle

Campus Planning Committee

Terry Kimmel

Caring Network*

Alexandra Devine

Chalice Choir

Deirdre Kellerman¹

Child Haven Working Group

Leslie Baird

Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM)

Eva Berringer

Communications & Outreach

Committee
Guy Belleperche

Congregation Staff

Church Office¹

Denominational Affairs Team

Maury Prevost

Embracing Diversity Committee

Tara Paterson

EnviroNmental Action Group

Mike Fletcher

Fair Trade Co-op Sales

Ria Heynen
Gary Campbell

Fall Fair

Carol Card

Finance Committee

Justine De Jaeger

FirstU 55+ Program

Maureen Sly
Paula Theetge

Friends of the Meditation Gardens

Lori Snyder

Fusion Choir

Deirdre Kellerman¹

Global Justice Action Group

Anita MacLean

Governance Committee

Guy Belleperche

Greeters (Sunday)

Jane Lindsay

Hospitality Hour (Sunday)

Tarrel Armstrong

Indigenous Relations Working Group

Carmen Contreras
Jane Lindsay

Internship Committee

Jan Andrews

Knitters Group

Rosemary Bonyun
Coral Sato

Lay Chaplaincy Team

Bob Armstrong

Leadership Council

Eva Berringer

Memorial Receptions

Evelyn Algar
Sandy Devine

Mental Health Support & Action Group

Paul McGinnis
Linda Goonewardene

Mindfulness Meditation Group

Colleen Glass

Nominating Committee*

Sharmila Khare

Our Whole Lives (OWL)

Neo Yaxley¹

Painters' Circle

Clea Derwent

Personnel Committee

Chuck Shields

Poetry Group

Andrew Drake

Poverty Awareness Action Group

Kathy Yach

Property Team*

Ron Doyle

Reading for Growth (Friday)

Andrew Drake
Colleen Glass

Reading for Growth (Monday)

Katharine Elliott

Right Relations Team

Marilen Gerber
Lisa Boulay

River Parkway Children's Centre

Alexandra Devine

Social Responsibility

Coordinating Team

Sherri Watson
David Hudson

Social Responsibility Council

Ed Willer
David Hudson

Sound & Light Team

Gareth Auden-Hole

Spiritual Care Council*

Rev. Ellen Bell

Spiritual Care Visitors*

Rev. Ellen Bell

Spiritual Growth Group

Lisa Boulay
Donna Bowen-Willer

Spirituality & Philosophy

Discussion Group
Paula Theetge

Stewardship Committee

Larry Jones

Sunday Forum - Earth Speaks

Donna Bowen-Willer

Sunday Forums

Anita MacLean

Three Rivers Singers

Deirdre Kellerman¹

Time and Talent Auction

Bob Armstrong

Unitarian GoGos Action Group

Sheila Green
Wendy Doyle

Unitarian House Liaison

Blair Erskine

UU Writers' Group

Ian Shields

Voyageurs Group*

Tom Rankin
Jim Reil

Welcome & Membership Team

Carol Card
Jane Lindsay

Women's Personal Growth

Group

Evelyn Algar
Carmen Contreras

Worship Team and Worship

Associates

Mary Jackson

Zoom Team Volunteers

Carl Sonnen