

First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

The Parkway Spire

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Deadline for next Spire submissions:
November 15, 2022



In Memoriam

Gordon King ~ died 3 June 2022, husband of Mary, father of Laura and Timothy.

Jean Ruth Wood ~ died 24 June 2022, wife of the late David, mother of Mark, Karen, Barb (Sandy).

Patricia (Pat) Banville Robertson Hill ~ died 27 July 2022, mother of Laura and Barbara, grandmother of Jenna; spouse of the late Prudence Craib; former wife of Richard Hill.

Marie Andrews ~ died Aug 29, 2022, aged 90; wife of Peter, mother of 4.



Caring Contacts

"We respond to your phone calls and emails when you wish to alert us to a need or concern, or when you want to celebrate a joy"

The Caring Network

September

Clea Derwent
clderwent@gmail.com
613-694-0505

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

October

Hélène Lamb
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613-829-7151

Carolyn McAndrew
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November

Marianne Wood
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Laurie Foster-MacLeod
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Facing Windows ~ Rev. Eric Meter



As many of you know, I've been a Unitarian Universalist my whole life.

My parents were active members of the congregations we were part of as we moved from the east coast of the U.S. to the Midwest, and then from one side of what is often called Chicagoland (akin to the GTA even though it sounds less sophisticated) to another. As a minister, I've been lucky to develop contacts with people across the continent and beyond.

Still, at the end of my vacation this summer I was surprised to find an email waiting for me from the treasurer of the congregation my family was part of when I was in my late childhood and early tweens.

That congregation, the UU Community Church in Park Forest, IL will be celebrating its 70th anniversary this coming year. The gist of the email was this, "Since there are so few of the early members who are still alive, I am reaching out to their children, who might have memories to share."

What a wonderful request. Even as it acknowledges what has been lost.

I've shared two stories from my participation in that community: the adults laughing with (not at) me when I said publicly that I went to the church because my parents made me – and how that response left me with the sense that these folks weren't so bad after all, and the time I heard my Sunday school teacher talk about having marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma.

These were pivotal experiences for me, and I am deeply grateful for them both. However, as I responded, I began to second-guess myself. What if my

memories were more fabrications than records of what actually took place? Well, there's no changing what I've said. And I have learned that at least I've remembered the name of my Sunday school teacher correctly.

I am looking forward to hearing more about Community Church's celebrations in the coming months. Perhaps I'll be able to connect with other Sunday school classmates, or even my teacher, though she moved away from the area some time ago.

The whole thing reminds me of that lovely quote from Goethe,

The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers & cities; but to know someone who thinks & feels with us, & who, though distant, is close to us in spirit, this makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.

This is very much what communities of faith do; they bring us into relationship with people we might not otherwise come to know. These relationships enrich our lives.

With this in mind, I was honoured that Vyda Ng, the executive director of the Canadian Unitarian Council, asked us to host the CUC's conference this coming May. Recently, our board of directors agreed to partner with the UU Fellowship of Ottawa to do just that.

We've helped host that event before. As one of the largest UU congregations in the country, this is something we will be asked to do from time to time. In the other congregations I've served, playing the role of host has helped us see what we have to offer in new, sometimes surprising ways.

I am very much looking forward to the CUC Symposium (a rather impressive title, wouldn't you say?), and have already begun thinking about how to craft that Sunday's worship experience.

As you'll see, Maury Prevost has written a column dedicated to the Symposium later in this issue. My thanks to him, Kathy Yach and Lisa Sharp for already committing to leadership roles as we prepare for the event.

While the CUC is taking a more active (and perfectly appropriate) planning role, hosting the Symposium will take planning, organization, and the efforts of many volunteers.

We have a full year ahead of us already, with the Campus Master Plan to craft amid continuing and likely new construction nearby. And we have ongoing and new projects of our own to look forward to, not alone, the return of regularly including children at the start of our worship services beginning Sept 11th.

All in all, I think this is going to be a great year. It certainly will be a full one. One that promises to create lasting memories we'll look back on with pride.

I can't wait. Join me, won't you?

In shared faith,
~ Rev. Eric



Musical Interludes ~ Jenn Berntson



Summer is nearly over, and I am looking forward to the return of all three FirstU choirs in the fall! In the meantime, I've been enjoying my work with the Summer Choir, which has been meeting at 9 a.m. before every service in August. It's also been wonderful to get back to congregational singing over the summer. Hopefully in the fall, the public health situation will continue allowing us the joy of hearing each other's voices.

Choir rehearsals will begin the week of September 12, starting with Fusion on the 12th. If you're interested in getting involved in our choral program, send me an email at music@firstunitarianottawa.ca!

If you sing or play an instrument and would like to be involved in providing music for a Sunday service I would love to hear from you. It could be a hymn, a prelude/postlude, or something else entirely! It is great to hear from the many talented members of our congregation.

With song,

Jenn

music@firstunitarianottawa.ca



At The Lake House

At the lake house
memories roll in,
high spiriting, wet bathing suits, huckleberry pies, fireflies

I see faces
of those who left
long ago,
architects of my world

By the home sewn kitchen curtains,
I hear grandma's laugh, A metal lawn chair, there's mom reading

Waves of joy and heartache roll in and out,
while as ever
the sun sets and rises,

the pine trees sway

These lake house past times sweep through me, centering me,
before rolling on,

out to the middle of the blue water to drop 180 feet down
into the wonder
of its spring-fed core

~ submitted by Kathryn Taylor



Meet a Member: Tarrel Armstrong



Tarrel, born in Calgary, was adopted at birth. As was the custom in those days, her parents did not tell her or her brother. Her adoptive mother gave her the name Tarrel, an old family name from the Highlands of Scotland.

After a family move to Montreal, Tarrel graduated from school at 16. She then attained her goal of going to the Montreal General Hospital which had the best nursing training. Not wanting to work in a big hospital, she joined the Victorian Order of Nurses and did a certificate in public health. She enjoyed the work very much: one-on-one nursing, interesting clients, some rich, some poor.

In 1975 she came to Ottawa with her first husband whom she had met in school. He became a lecturer in communication arts and later the director of the Vanier Institute. They

had one son, Michel (who still lives in Ottawa). Tarrel found work at a local community health centre in Aylmer. Though she really enjoyed working in the country, keeping up with French was hard so she moved to Ottawa and worked at Home Care for eleven years.

After her divorce, and while working at Home Care, Tarrel enlisted the help of a search counsellor to track down her birth mother. She found she had a lot in common with her birth family: the same sense of humour, the same body build. They have kept in touch ever since.

While attending a singles weekend at Algonquin, Tarrel met Bob during a class on flirting! Later that weekend they played bridge and they eventually became organizers of the bridge group. They went to a car rally, discovered they were both vegetarians, and Tarrel won Bob's heart when she offered to make vegetarian chili for them both!

They later married and in '98 went to the UK where Bob had been offered work in IT. While living in England they bought a house and settled near Birmingham. They found the English reticent and hard to get to know, but once they did, the friendships were solid.

After seven years they returned to Canada and have been in Ottawa ever since. Both Tarrel and Bob have become very active since joining the Unitarian congregation, with Tarrel taking on the position of Coordinator of Hospitality Hour for the last ten years. In addition to Sunday Hospitality Hour duties, her responsibilities include: purchasing supplies of coffee and tea for any other events taking place, e.g. Arts Night, choir parties, memorial services; coordinating Christmas Eve Soup Suppers and other special events. Both Tarrel and Bob remain an integral part of the UU community.

~ submitted by Margaret Zielinski

Summer Wanderings

It is mid-August and the final chapter of my summer's story approaches. In the past months, I have toured the pastoral lands of England's southern counties, enjoyed gourmet meals in the toney lifestyle of a California suburb, hiked in the Sierra Nevada mountains and visited a colonial mansion in the sultry heat of a Caribbean sugar plantation. Yet none of these foreign escapades increased my carbon footprint since they were vicariously experienced through the pages of novels.

Until this summer my literary preference was somewhat pretentiously restricted to non-fiction material related to philosophy and socio-political topics. But thanks to book-sharing between volunteers of the Meditation Gardens this summer, I was reintroduced to the benefits of reading a well-researched novel. The first book that seduced me to the now guiltless pleasure of fiction was part of a trilogy that described the lives,

over the course of five centuries, of occupants of a house in Sussex, England. The three volumes were absorbing, enjoyable reads and importantly they imbued lasting impressions of brief, impoverished, often brutish lives of ordinary folk. I reflect upon whether it is semantics to make distinctions between the lived realities of serfdom, indentured servitude, and slavery and I think the value of novels is how they can promote empathy by providing insight into the daily struggles of individuals. Before reading the novel, set in the nineteenth century plantation society of Barbados, I was unaware of the term 'Redleg', a derogatory term for poor, indentured labourers. Many were forced into servitude as political prisoners, notably from Ireland, in the seventeenth century and to this day, their ancestors are among the most disadvantaged in Barbados.

But it is a contemporary novel set in an affluent suburb that I recommend for an amusing, provocative, informative read. *Search* by Michelle Huneven is the story of a long-time member of a progressive Unitarian Universalist congregation in Southern California and her participation in the search committee for a new minister. The members are drawn from a mix of congregants whose task is to unify around the important decision of selecting a settled minister. In a compassionate portrayal of characters with varied reasons for joining a spiritual community, the novel demonstrates, in comic detail, human frailties and rivalries that make reaching a consensus difficult. The protagonist cares deeply for the fate of the congregation and the reader is treated to several of her inspirational meditations on the nature of Unitarian spirituality. Although fiction, I suspect the book will resonate with verity for many in our congregation.

~ submitted by Susan Mellor

The Seedling that is Ajashki

Tgawagin ashidi Pibòn 2021/22¹



Though the garden was silent for several months, the sticks planted there in the late fall to commemorate the 215 graves of children found in Kamloops stood starkly against the white snow. Ajashki employees and volunteers kept warm and busy inside, farming in a new way. Grow Towers, loaned to Ajashki by the Parkdale Food Centre, were installed in the volunteer room. Several crops of greens have been shared by participants and FirstU congregants.



The winter months provided time to explore Future Food Warriors' (FFW) artistic and technical talents as they created administration documents and greeting cards. Ajashki was honoured with a visit with Elder Albert Dumont who spoke to a Sharing Circle about reconciliation.

Sìgwan ashidi Nìbin 2022²

This year, the Ajashki Food Security and Climate Change project (think of it as a Food Security and Climate Change Learning Centre) has continued to employ Kayoki as Lead Educator and one FFW who is completing their second season with the program.

In addition, three First Nations youth and four Inuit youth have been hired. The youth garden has been expanded – two movable raised beds and three rain barrels have been added.



As you walk through the garden you will notice the new "Squirrel Protector 3000". Built over several days, the structure is intended to prevent a repeat of last year's loss of produce to small animals. Already we can see that it is working. The tomatoes are maturing and a good crop is anticipated.

You may also notice the rows of marigolds at the west end of the garden. 215 plants were tucked into the soil to continue the recognition of the many Indigenous children found in unmarked graves at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. In this way, Ajashki remains a "Heart Garden" registered with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society.



Ajashki has established partnerships with the Friends of the Meditation Garden to assist with composting and with the RE program to build another "Heart Garden" for the children and their families in the RE yard.



Twice a week food scraps from the Parkdale Food Centre grocery program are added to the Ajashki composters. The food harvested from the outside youth garden is shared through the community fridge (*Roadrunner*) at the Parkdale Food Centre. The Grow Towers continue to provide fresh leafy greens for Ajashki participants and FirstU congregants.



Ajashki has blossomed with the help of many people. Thank you to FirstU staff, working groups and individual congregants who have, through their actions, created opportunities for Ajashki to take root and grow. The sense of community that is being created around this project has helped Ajashki explore new paths that support Indigenous youth in their journey of becoming Future Food Warriors.

^{1,2}Algonquin words meaning Fall and Winter 2021/2022; Spring and Summer 2022

~ submitted by Lynn Kofmel-Preston





The 2023 Pledge Campaign: Important News



The 2023 pledge campaign is coming soon with a launch date of Oct 2nd. The planning and readiness is well underway. Once again, Terry Kimmel and Larry Jones will be leading this campaign.

Since this will be the 8th and last pledge campaign that Terry and Larry will lead, we are seeking two interested and skilled persons to shadow us to learn about the FirstU standard pledge campaign set of processes. These 'shadowers' are needed by September 22nd. Skills include project management, data management, analysis and reporting plus good Microsoft Excel knowledge and experience.

Other well-defined and limited effort pledge campaign roles include:

- Pledge calling (~Oct 24th to Dec 10th; approx. 3-5 hours of total effort)
- Organizing testimonials at services (Sept 15th to Nov 30th; 3-5 hours effort)
- Reviewing pledge campaign publications (letter, brochure, pledge form, periodic eUU campaign updates) – as needed from Sept 15th to Dec 15th (approx. 2-3 hours effort)
- Mailout envelope stuffing – single event in September (~3 hours)
- List vetting (knowledge of congregation is required) – single event(s) in September and possibly late October – maximum 2-hour effort for each event

The above listed roles do include having some fun!

To find out more about these roles, and the scope of effort, please contact Stewardship at:

stewardship@firstunitarianottawa.ca. Terry and Larry will be happy to answer your questions and address your concerns.

The 2023 Pledge Campaign: The Importance of Participation

The 2023 pledge campaign is coming to a place and time near you (Oct 2nd). You can expect to receive a 'Pledge Campaign 2023 Package' by postal mail no later than September 30th. Despite COVID-19, we remain active and connected, and our planning and financial needs to sustain FirstU's programs and services continue. Though our plans for 2023 may have some significant variability, we will carry on and thus our financial needs do so as well.

The percentage of our congregation that participates financially is a key and most readily measurable indicator of the congregation's vitality, diversity, sustainability, and potential for growth. To put it another way, it is a measure of how together we are as a community.

Just what amount you pledge and contribute is a personal matter, subject to the constraints of your own situation. That said, no amount is too small. If you are uncertain about what amount to pledge, there is an objective method and chart to help you decide at <https://tinyurl.com/Pledge-Contribution-Chart>.

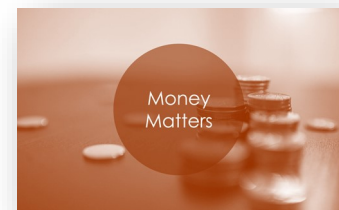
Every amount is appreciated and builds towards achieving our Vision to create a vibrant, transformational, multi-generational community that is known throughout Ottawa and the region as radically inclusive, spiritually grounded, actively engaged, and theologically alive – a leader in social justice and a beacon of hope. For details, roam through our web site: www.firstunitarianottawa.ca.

Of course, if you are experiencing difficulties, we would like to know (in confidence) how we can help. Please do contact us at stewardship@firstunitarianottawa.ca.

During the course of each Pledge Campaign, follow-up phone calls will be made to all non-pledgers/non-contributors to find out how you're doing, and what we can do to help.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Stewardship Committee stewardship@firstunitarianottawa.ca. We would be happy to answer your questions and address your concerns. Your pledge does matter!

~ both of the above articles submitted by Larry Jones, Stewardship & Pledge Campaign Data Management



Money Matters: Pledging & Contributing – The Connection

What is pledging all about? Basically, it is your commitment and plan to contribute financially over and only during the indicated fiscal year. Why is it so important? Since pledges historically represent ~ 70% of our revenue, it is a critical part of the budgeting process. The budget is created using the forecasted pledge revenue which then is presented to the congregation for member approval at the Fall Congregational Meeting. Without your pledge commitment, we cannot plan for FirstU's financial commitments, sustainability, and programming for the coming year.

All contributions are recorded in the year they are received as per Revenue Canada rules. Therefore, anyone who makes a contribution late in the year while also making a pledge for the upcoming year will have that contribution allocated to the current year's pledge, not the pledge for the upcoming year.

.... continued on page 7



Pledge Campaign

...continued from page 6

We understand that this type of contributor-pledger wants to associate their immediate contribution (a lump sum) with the provided pledge for the next fiscal year while at the same time being able to receive a tax receipt right away for the current year in order to minimize the time between contribution payment and making a donation tax claim. We also recognize that those types of contributor-pledgers often do so year after year. You can achieve the same result by submitting your fiscal year pledge and simply noting the contribution will be made late in the given fiscal year (we suggest by December 5th to permit accounting to capture it before the fiscal year end). Alternatively, you can effectively obtain the same result while avoiding yearly lump sum contributions by arranging for a monthly payment during the given pledge year (via a monthly Pre-Authorized Chequing withdrawal, monthly credit card payments, periodic e-transfers, or monthly post-dated cheques). These methods also provide a better cash flow for both the contributor-pledger and for FirstU.

Pledges are recorded only during the pledge campaign period (Oct to Dec 15th) for planning – budgeting reasons stated above. However, donations are gratefully received at any time and are tax receiptable. If a donation corresponds with your submitted pledge, please ensure that this connection is clearly noted.

We hope this brief article clarifies the pledging contributing relationship, while recognizing our Revenue Canada constraints and your given situation.

We would appreciate your comments and any concerns with the above.

~ submitted by Michelle Jackson, Finance & HR Manager fm@firstunitarianottawa.ca and Larry Jones, Stewardship & Pledge Campaign Data Management stewardship@firstunitarianottawa.ca

SRC News: Environmental Action Group

A First at FirstU: Heat Pumps!

For some time now there has been interest in installing air-conditioning in Fellowship Hall, and generous donations from congregants have helped make that happen. Air-conditioning will make Fellowship Hall much nicer for us, for OrH and for renters and prospective renters, especially in the summer, when we are often asked if our space is air-conditioned.

On its own, however, air-conditioning is a losing proposition for the climate. An air-conditioner uses power typically during peak periods when the province is burning natural gas to make electricity, so the air-conditioner is often being indirectly powered by natural gas.

The good news is that air-conditioners can be upgraded to do heating and cooling. An air-conditioner typically grabs heat in a building and sends it outside, using a process known as the Carnot cycle. A heat pump can do both; in the winter, the flow of refrigerant is reversed (via a reversing valve – that's the term in the trade) and the flow of heat is changed to place heat inside the building. In Fellowship Hall, the radiators in the room, heated by the building's boilers, will be retained for when it's very cold. There are heat pumps which will run in the -30's but they're quite a bit more expensive than the ones we purchased.

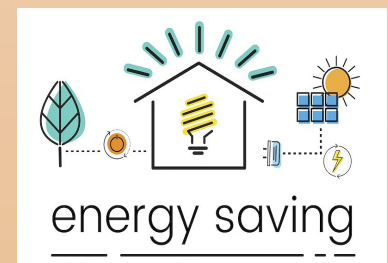
FirstU's decision to install a heat pump aligns with the city of Ottawa's climate plan, Energy Evolution. It calls for hundreds of thousands of heat pumps to be installed across the city by 2050. While natural gas can be obtained from carbon neutral biological sources, and the church buys such

biologically sourced gas, known as renewable natural gas to heat the church building, there are limitations. Renewable gas is defined as biologically sourced gas, such as from digested green bin waste or sewage sludge which may be blended with hydrogen produced from renewable electricity.

Limitations arise because the supplies of renewable natural gas are limited, and it's unlikely that renewable natural gas could ever supply more than 20% of the heating demand of Ottawa. This explains why our community's climate plan relies so heavily on other measures, such as heat pumps, in a transition to becoming a zero-emission community.

And there is good news. The heat pumps have arrived at the contractor's shop and the contractor has walked the job to be ready to install them, hopefully in late August. There may be the odd spell yet where we'll want them for cooling and this coming winter we'll take a noticeable bite out of FirstU's gas consumption. With the price of natural gas on the rise (23% in the last quarter for Ontario consumers), we'll be saving money. More importantly, we will have turned a potential environmental loss into a win.

~ submitted by Mike Fletcher



Mental Health First Aid Course



FirstU will offer a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course this fall. The Mental Health Support and Action Group (MHSAG) is sponsoring this event. It will be led by Geoff Pross, a certified instructor and highly respected expert in the mental health field. This course was first offered at FirstU in 2019 by Geoff and was very much appreciated, so much so that Rev. Pat recommended that MHSAG organize the course again.

The course will take place on Saturdays, October 22 and 29 (hours to be determined). Upon successful completion, participants will receive MHFA certification (basic) from the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Many in our community struggle with a decline in mental well-being or addiction challenges. A few endure a full-blown mental health crisis. These personal struggles have become even more apparent with the pandemic and the societal upheavals of the 2020s. While we know a lot about physical first aid, there is much less understanding about mental health and substance use emergencies. This leads to fear and negative attitudes. The ensuing stigma is a real barrier to accessing care. It prevents a person from seeking help and from providing support and encouragement so desperately needed by those struggling with mental health challenges.

MHFA is the help provided a person experiencing mental health challenges or who is in crisis. Just like physical first aid, MHFA is offered until appropriate professional support is found or until the crisis is resolved.



(Shutterstock / Chanintorn.v)

Individuals trained in MHFA:



- Increase their knowledge of signs, symptoms, and risk factors of mental health challenges
- Decrease the social distance between them and someone with a mental health challenge (decreased stigma)
- Increase their confidence to help someone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis
- Can identify professional and self-help resources
- Show increased mental wellness themselves

The training focuses on mental health disorders, including substance related, mood related, anxiety and trauma related, and psychotic disorders; and how to interact confidently about mental health with family, friends, communities and workplaces.

FirstU's MHSAG provides a listening presence and mutual support for each other at our monthly meetings. We also engage in actions and advocacy to address mental health challenges in the congregation and community. By sponsoring this course, we hope to enable participants to interact more confidently and compassionately in support of those struggling with mental health issues.

Are you interested in registering? Here's what you need to know:

Dates: Saturdays: October 22 and 29 (times to be determined)

Location: In-person at FirstU

Participants: Adults 18 and over

Cost: \$30 for required course book

\$30 suggested donation (or whatever you can give)

Childcare: Provided upon request

For registration and questions, please contact Rev. Linda Goonewardene and johnnie gall at: mhsag@firstunitarianottawa.ca

~ submitted by johnnie gall

UU Uncolonizing Focus Group

As a member of FirstU's Truth and Reconciliation Action Group for the past year, I've been asking what reconciliation means to me and how might I contribute to positive change in our spiritual community. With our innovative Ajashki Project and the new partnership with the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, I see we are *showing up* and taking time to learn more about one another. These social justice projects are a huge gift to bring us along the path of reconciliation. At the same time, it is up to us to honour this learning opportunity by reflecting deeply on how we are still affected by colonization. As Erin Horvath from the CUC says:

Colonization shatters everyone. Reconciliation is what happens within each of us so that we can be pieced back together guided by un-colonized values. Decolonization is the process of making things right by returning stolen land.

So how do we learn to identify our "colonized values" so that we can remove our blinders and be open to new ways of relating to and respecting each other? I believe we have a lot to learn from our Indigenous friends, for example, sharing circles can be powerful ways of coming together and sharing our understandings. TRAG hopes to offer sharing circles in the coming year - stay tuned!



Another opportunity to learn is by taking part in the **Uncolonizing Focus Group 2022** that Amber Bellemare and Erin Horvath, from the CUC have developed as part of their Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guide.

Claire Heistek (Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa) and I will co-facilitate these six monthly sessions beginning on Sunday, Oct 2nd, 1-3pm. Through readings, journaling and group discussion, we will invite conversations about how our faith and our actions intersect – to “intentionally challenge internal bias and to support one another while working through the materials.” (from CUC)

Some of the questions we will be exploring in the sessions are: What is the difference between “decolonizing” and “uncolonizing”? How has colonization impacted our world views and our spiritual communities? What are the similarities between an Indigenous World View and Unitarian principles? What does giving land back really mean?

The first and last session will be ‘in-person’ and the other four will be on Zoom. The group will start on Sunday October 2nd, 1:00pm-3:00pm (place TBA) with a maximum of 12 participants. (We will keep a waiting list for future sessions.)

Interested? Contact Jan (trag@firstunitarianottawa.ca) or Claire (cheistek@sympatico.ca) and we will be happy to tell you more.

~submitted by Jan Andrews

FirstU and OrH are Sponsoring a Syrian Refugee family!

FirstU was approached in 2021 by Mohammad Almasalmeh, a former Syrian refugee, requesting help with sponsoring his brother's family currently living in Jordan. The family includes Mohammad's mother, his brother and his wife and their six children. It was agreed that FirstU would sponsor the family, and the Or Haneshamah (OrH) Ottawa Reconstructionist Congregation was approached to be a co-sponsor.

In November/December 2021, under the auspices of the Poverty Action Group, a small group of people from FirstU and OrH met with Mohammad and formed a partnership to recruit a team to support the new family, complete the required paperwork and fundraise. In March 2022, we were told the application to come to Canada was successful, subject to the necessary health and security checks being completed in Jordan. The sponsorship group is now awaiting the family, who we anticipate will arrive within the next six months to a year.

Although our earlier fundraising was successful, an additional \$10K is required to offset the high cost of living in Ottawa. A new fundraiser, ***Swinging for the Syrians***, will be held on **Saturday, November 5th**, starting at 7:00 pm, in Worship and Fellowship Hall.

Highlights of the evening include:

- The Silver Swing Band, a group of enthusiastic amateur musicians playing dance music of the Big Band Era (1930's to 1950's) as well as more contemporary pieces.
- Rabbi Liz Bolton of OrH. Rabbi Bolton is a classically trained singer who performs songs from the Yiddish repertoire, as well as the Jewish liturgical tradition, and folk favourites.

The concert will be followed by a Silent Auction and Syrian refreshments.

Please join us and bring your friends and family! Tickets will be available on our website beginning the first week in September. Cost is \$30 per person, which includes an evening of music, Syrian delights and a one-of-a-kind silent auction. Check future eUUs for more information about this event.

~submitted by Kathy Yach



Update on Canadian Unitarian Council Activities: FirstU to host National CUC Conference in May 2023

At its August 17 meeting, our Board of Directors agreed to a request from the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) to serve as host congregation for an in-person national conference and youth gathering May 19-22, 2023 (the May long weekend).

Because of the pandemic, this will be the first in-person national conference since May 2018 in Hamilton. It will take place at a venue to be determined other than our campus. The annual conference for youth aged 14-19, known as "CanUUdle", will take place in the FirstU building.

The proposed program focus for the conference is enacting the 8th Principle approved in November 2021. CUC staff are responsible for organizing the conference program, along with online registration, site logistics including meeting space and meals, the CUC Annual General Meeting held on Friday, and tying all the pieces together.

Hosting these national events is an exciting opportunity to rally around and build community, similar to Fall Fair. People coming to the events from outside Ottawa will also be



asked to help with some of the volunteer roles.

We have already identified some key leadership: Maury Prevost as Host Team lead, Kathy Yach as conference Volunteer Coordinator, Lisa Sharp as CanUUdle lead, and Rev. Eric as Sunday Worship Team lead. Brandon Milk of the UU Fellowship of Ottawa (UUFO) is also already on board. People from UUFO have helped us to host several national and regional events during the last 20+ years. We could use a few more people as soon as possible to help with advance planning. To volunteer, or learn more, please contact Maury at:

uuconnections@firstunitarianottawa.ca

The conference will include an opening ceremony with banners, Sunday worship service, and social events, coordinated by a Gatherings Team. Volunteer needs for the conference include: home hospitality

organizer and hosts, drivers for errands, runners for on-site tasks, registration team, music coordinators and choir, welcome & information desk, AGM scrutineers, ushers, meal ticket takers, tech team (audio-visual, Zoom, livestream), children's program (ages 0-13), Gatherings Team lead, opening ceremony, banner event, social events, and off-site events such as city tours for interested visitors.

CanUUdle volunteer needs include: Food Coordinator, a kitchen team for shopping and meal prep, and overnight supervision.

Please start thinking about how you would like to participate and how you can help as a volunteer. There will be a lot more information coming in the months ahead leading up to the events. In the meantime, you can provide input and send questions to Maury Prevost (see email address above).

We look forward to having many of you involved in making the 2023 CUC national conference and youth gathering a big success.

~ submitted by Maury Prevost on behalf of the Host Team and FirstU Board



Published quarterly, **The Parkway Spire** welcomes unformatted articles (**maximum 450 words please**) along with photos (high resolution jpg format is preferred) of interest to the congregation. We also welcome one feature article for each issue of the Spire, **maximum 900 words**. Articles may be edited if necessary. Submissions should be sent to spire@firstunitarianottawa.ca no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication. Next submission deadline: **November 15, 2022**.



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