

Fellowship News

Infolettre UUFO



Summer Issue | June 2026



Why do we take a Summer Break?

By Pat Lucey and Sarah Baxter

At UUFO our Sunday services run weekly from September to June, giving us a break from about the summer solstice through Labour Day. But why?

Like many other small, lay-led congregations, we rely heavily on volunteers – the community of members, friends, and folks who participate – to organize, manage, and produce our weekly worship services. We love the quality of our services, the variety, and the opportunity for anyone who is interested to step up and take part, by leading the service, offering a reading, making music, or even speaking to a topic that is important to them! But it is a lot of work!



UUFO Summer BBQ 2025

As much as we love our Fellowship, many of our volunteers are more than ready for a two-month break by the time summer rolls around!

Plus, many of our members and friends spend time away from home during the summer months - short trips, cottages, foreign travel, camping, and other summertime adventures take them far away to other places.

It sometimes feels like our Sunday services can't compete with everything summer weekends have to offer. Nor would we want to! And yet, there are still plenty of Fellowship activities to enjoy: UUFO Film Club, and both monthly pub nights continue all year. Summer opens space in our calendar for some different types of gatherings - from BBQs, to outdoor walking meditations, to a memoir-writing workshop, and more.

Never fear that your UUFO connection may drop off completely. Keep an eye on Friday Notes for opportunities to gather!

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Want to create / host a summer gathering for fellowship friends?

Ideas such as: Sunday coffee hour featuring a TED Talk & discussion; games day; music gathering; brunch; film screening; ... are welcome!

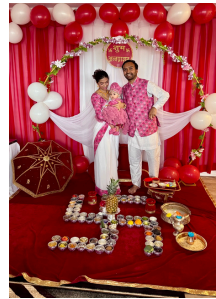
Contact Sarah to set up events on our UUFO Calendar!

Caring and Sharing

Nanci attended a Rice Ceremony to welcome and celebrate Prisha Basnet, now 5 months old. The family was dressed in traditional clothing brought from Nepal. This Hindu tradition is a rite of passage marking not only an infant’s first taste of food but a community welcome and chance to bless the child with hopes of health and prosperity, hence all the dishes that surround her. Prisha is the daughter of Saraswoti and Hari.



Connections evolved during their stays in Child Haven and they welcomed them when they arrived in Canada, several years ago. Nanci was honoured to put tika on Prisha’s forehead and offer her a bite of rice cereal. You will notice the dishes are arranged in the shape of a Swastika. For 10,000 years, Hindus have used this as a symbol of auspiciousness, good luck and prosperity. Each dish was filled with meaningful substance.



Phyllis “Phyl” Rhoda Robbins (née Shapiro) *January 10, 1931 — May 18, 2026*

Phyllis joined our fellowship as a new member just last month. She was eager and enthusiastic to have found a new UU community in her neighbourhood when she moved to Ottawa, and our hearts are heavy that she was with us for such a short time.

Her obituary begins:

Phyllis was the very definition of “a force of nature.” Strong-minded, blunt-spoken and fiercely independent. She embraced life right up until the end, dying peacefully on May 18, 2026 in The Ottawa Hospital’s Civic Campus. She was 95 years old.

Phyllis had not lived in Ottawa for long. She moved from Kingston, Ontario in December 2025 and immediately engaged in her new life, from taking up pétanque to taking long walks to explore her neighbourhood. Most significantly, she joined the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa, one of the many Unitarian fellowships she belonged to during her lifetime — Unitarianism reflected her values of freedom of belief and social justice. It seems fitting she had just attended a Unitarian service when she suffered the stroke that ultimately led to her death, as she was surrounded by caring members of the UUFO community... [[Read Phyllis’ full obituary here](#)]



Story for all ages

Children come forward for our story for all ages on Sunday. On the first Sunday of the month they join Danie and a volunteer in the community room for our new monthly Children’s Circle! (meet Danie on p. 7)

Board Walk

by Laura Evans

Let it be dance we do
May I have this dance with you?
Through the good times and the bad times, too,
Let it be a dance.

This year, the Fellowship and hence the Board has tried a number of dance tunes, learning new dance steps and trying out new dance partners. It's been a whorl and now it's time to stop for a cool glass of lemonade.

At the AGM in June, our annual report, now in an easy to skim format, will show that we are a strong committed congregation. The Board is the oversight, maybe the DJ if I can add one more dance reference.

The Board members, the treasurer, the bookkeeper. We are all Fellowship members who step forward for a few years. This June we will see Nick LePan and Nanci Burns step back after actively participating in Board activities. We are enriched by each person who brings their insight and perspective to Board deliberations. Nick and Nanci each leave their mark.


The congregation is each of us. Those who join in meditation. Those who attend a Sunday service and even help make coffee and tea for after service social discussion. There are those who organize activities, be it a monthly games night or a walk to the sugarbush. Being lay-led is valued and it takes all of us to make it work.

Laura Evans, board chair



The Board agenda has been as diverse as ever. Celebrating our 30th Anniversary and Rev Fred Cappuccino's 100th birthday. A loan to First U for their affordable housing apartment building. Re-starting up a children's RE program. A well attended Let's Talk open discussion. And a follow-up meeting with members and friends where we agreed to undertake sponsorship of an Afghan family, headed by the mother, a documentary filmmaker. The Refugee Sponsorship team is already moving ahead with substantial fundraising as the next order of business.

Je veux aussi saluer notre Rassemblement, une groupe très engagé. Leurs célébrations francophones mensuelles suivent les mêmes thèmes que les services en anglais, avec une approche personnelle et significative.

This summer, enjoy the lemonade. There's more dancing to come! 

NOTICE!! FROM THE WELCOME AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Are you friendly?
Do you like to welcome new people?
Are you an organizer?

We are looking for one or two people to join our little Welcome and Membership Committee!!

What do we do?

Help to welcome newcomers

Manage name tags

Contact newcomers who have signed our Guest Book with a welcome message

Report activities to the board

Plan 1-2 Newcomers' Sessions

Organize New Member Ceremony

Collaborate with office to manage contact lists and documents

Add notices and info to Friday Notes and Newsletter about our activities

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Hoppy Roy

Nourishing Our Spirit

by Evangeline Danseco

There seems to be no end to terrible news in our world today. Political conflicts, wars, the climate crisis, the lack of affordable housing, increasing incidence of mental illnesses and drug overdoses are just some of the issues grabbing our attention and breaking our hearts. What do you do when faced with all these? How do you cope with all the suffering and challenges? Where do you find strength, energy and optimism to move beyond flight, fight or freeze, beyond despair and into hope, wise action and welcoming grace?

If you are like me, I try to go find action within my sphere of influence that is meaningful. Yet there are times when I feel impotent, frustrated and burnt-out. When I sense this despair and hopelessness begin to creep in, I have learned that it is usually time to reconnect with my compass and with others. It is time to nourish my spirit.

Spirituality to me is a core compass to living, an integral part of our identity and a dynamic influence for our actions (or inaction). Spirituality for me is an attitude that pulls me beyond myself and includes practices that reconnect me to others, to nature or a perspective greater than my own narrow life.

Meditation practices help in this regard. It is a way of breaking our cognitive distortions and expanding our sense of reality. Every first and third Saturday of the month, from September to June, we meet to meditate together. Our sessions often include reading and listening to poetry, listening to guided or silent meditation (Tara Brach is our current favourite), walking meditation, and mindful sharing. We also read texts from Buddhist teachers like Pema Chodron or Thich Nhat Hahn.



Healing Circle Labyrinth

This summer, like many activities in the Fellowship we will pause from our Saturday meditation sessions. We will be enjoying the outdoors and we'll have weekly Friday walking meditations (10 to 11 am) from June 19th to August 28th. Please contact Marie-Claire to be added to the mailing list for the reminders and the venue for our walks. On Friday, July 10th, we are going to visit the Healing Centre Labyrinth at Johnston, ON and plan to carpool. Contact Evangeline or Marie-Claire if you want to join us and if you'll need a ride.

Strong and Steady

Heartwood House & UUFO have partnered with the African, Caribbean & Black Wellness Resource Centre to provide The Strong and Steady program. This is a **free**, 10-week fall prevention exercise program, supported by Ottawa Public Health and designed to help the older population improve their strength, balance, and mobility. Falls pose a major health risk for older adults, but the right exercises can help you stay active and prevent fall. Please register with your information to help us plan and provide the best experience.

- Location: Unitarian Sanctuary
- Program date: 13th July - 2nd October
- Time: Mondays & Fridays 9AM -10AM

⚠ [no classes Aug 17, Aug 21, Sep 7, Sep 11]

Summer Stories

My Story Begins: Memoir writing retreat, space for 10, at 400 McArthur with allison calvern, four mornings in the third week of August, 2026. Each participant brings: a letter (email/card) that has moved them; or a letter they have been moved to write; or an imaginary letter they wish they had received or written. This letter will act as a prompt for the exercise at hand: memoir writing.

- **Monday, August 17**

- **Tuesday, August 18**

(No session on Wednesday)

- **Thursday, August 20**

- **Friday, August 21**



Participants will be invited to write every day, and to share their thoughts and their texts; respectful discussion will ensue. Contact allison: acalvern@gmail.com.

What's the Deal with Listening Circles?

Are you wondering what the point of a listening circle is...since we're already listening all the time...right?

In a **Listening Circle** we give our full presence to what is alive in another person. To be fully present requires avoiding giving advice, reassurance, corrections, explanations or searching for solutions. Our intent is to connect with what the person is currently feeling and needing. We stay with them until they feel fully heard and understood.

People are mostly seeking to process their own experiences. In a sense they are looking for us to witness their reality...in stillness, without judgement, without advice, with compassion and empathy. That's what helps each of us find our own answers.

This is the gift we give and receive in our Listening Circles.

Laurie-Anne and Fran have been leading Listening Circles since Christmas and hope to continue into the fall. Watch Friday Notes for dates and times.

PUB NIGHT

Fun, food, and good conversation with Fellowship friends!

<p>TUESDAY</p> <p>The Clocktower 422 MacKay St. 4:00 pm</p> <p>June 2nd July 7th Aug. 4th</p>	<p>THURSDAY</p> <p>Patty's Pub 1186 Bank St. 5:30 pm</p> <p>June 18th July 16th Aug. 20th</p>
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Everyone Welcome!

Summer Pub Nights!

We continue to meet through summer, moving to the patio when the weather and space allow!

Keep an eye on Friday Notes for any unforeseen changes or adjustments

Worship Cluster Notes

by Pat Lucey




"Creativity is a way of living life, no matter our vocation or how we earn our living. Creativity is not limited to the arts, or having some kind of important career."

-- Madeleine L'Engle

The mission of our Worship Cluster is pretty straightforward: we take the lead in planning and organizing a year's worth of Sunday morning services. To be honest, the words "planning" and "organizing" aren't all that inspiring for many of us, and the whole job may sound like one big chore, right? But this fundamental description of our core purpose fails to convey how creative an endeavour it really is to produce a year's worth of spiritually and intellectually enriching Sunday morning programming, with perhaps some lively, engaging, and thought-provoking content, including some appropriate and artistically pleasing musical selections, and perhaps some gentle humour here and there as well.

To understand what it takes to create and produce our Sunday morning services, consider an analogy to the world of live theatre. The Board is our production company (i.e., they give us our budget), and the members of the Worship Cluster are the lead producers, who gather the talent and the resources to make our Sunday services happen. Each Sunday morning, the service leaders, speakers, musicians, readers and translators, and the program support and tech volunteers, all become members of a large creative team dedicated to that day's celebration of our values and our community. Every time you take on one of these roles on a Sunday morning, you're part of a highly valued talent pool!

Worship Cluster Team: Sarah Baxter (Worship Coordinator), Allison Calvern, Lucie-Marie Castonguay-Bower, Laura Evans, Claire Heistek, Pat Lucey (Cluster Contact, Tech Team Coordinator), Martha Nabatian

We all have our own forms of creative energy, and our lay-led Fellowship depends on our individual and collective efforts to express and live out our values and our mission together as a community. So if you're a member or friend who would like to work with a creative team of planners and organizers, and add your own thoughts, reflections and ideas to the Sunday morning mix, our Worship Cluster warmly welcomes you to join us! If you're intrigued by the opportunity to help us plan for the Fellowship's 2026-2027 program year, keep an eye on the Friday Notes during the summer for more details. 

You're Invited to Join the Worship Cluster for Dinner!

What does worship at UUFO mean to you?

The Worship Cluster warmly invites you to join us for dinner on Monday August 17 at 5:30 in the Sanctuary! This will be an opportunity to gather in community during our summer break, and a chance to share thoughts and feelings about worship. Our lay-led services are created lovingly by and for us - the members and friends of UUFO. We create this place together, and would love for everyone to have even a small say in what we do together on Sundays! We invite you to join us to share thoughts, feedback, and insights into how we worship at UUFO. What do you love? What do you connect with most? What do you wish there could be more of? How do you secretly wish you could get involved (but are too afraid to ask)? Worship cluster members look forward to hosting you and collecting ideas, energy, and direction to take into the fall worship season.

SAVE THE DATE: Monday August 17 5:30 - 7:30pm

Spring, or what should have been spring, was kinder to the UUFO movie discussion group than it was to the weather, starting with "Best in Show" and "A Mighty Wind" in March. The theme for March was mockumentaries and Catherine O'Hara, as she had recently passed away. Both mockumentaries starred Catherine O'Hara and also Eugene Levy, and both films were directed by Christopher Guest. "Best in Show" was a satirical look at competitive dog shows, and "A Mighty Wind" was about a folk singer's reunion performance. They featured a number of the best of Canadian comedic talent. Everyone liked both films.

In April we discussed "Great Expectations" with Michael York and Sarah Miles, and "The Man Who Invented Christmas". People liked both films and the theme was obviously Charles Dickens. In "The Man Who Invented Christmas", Dickens is having a writer's block trying to come up with a new book by Christmas, and in "Great Expectations" Michael York plays Pip who is a blacksmith's son, but comes into an unexpected fortune and goes off to London to learn to be a gentleman. Everyone liked both films, though some people preferred the 1940s version of "Great Expectations."



In May we discussed "Dogville" by Lars von Trier. We discussed only one film because it was three hours long, so we didn't discuss a second one. Everyone loved "Dogville" and did not find the three hours too long. It is filmed on a stage with no walls to the houses, just white outlines on the stage. When people open or shut a door, there is the sound of that, but no visible door. This allows one to concentrate on the acting and the characters, as well as it represents how in a small town like Dogville everyone knows everything about everyone else. The film stars Nicole Kidman as a young woman on the run who runs into Dogville, and the townspeople accept to allow her to stay with them in exchange for her doing jobs for them. John Hurt narrates allowing us, the viewers, to get insights into the character's motives, interests, problems and so on.

We will continue to hold a movie discussion group meeting throughout the summer and welcome anyone who wants to join the discussions. They are held the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm on Zoom, and the link to the meeting and to the movies to be discussed are provided in Friday notes.

I hope to see you at our next meeting - you are most welcome!



Welcome Danie! Our New Children's Circle Leader!

Hi everyone. My name is Danie McLarty and I'm honoured to be stepping into the role of Children's Circle teacher for our Religious Exploration program. I deeply value compassion, curiosity, and spiritual growth, and I love creating meaningful experiences for children that encourage both imagination and self-expression. I'm excited to become part of the children's journey within our fellowship and to help nurture a space where they feel seen, welcomed, and inspired.

uufu.org/events/childrens-circle-sunday
to register your kids online!



Coin Français

Rassemblement unitarien universaliste d'Ottawa

Une brève réflexion sur les défis spirituels pour prendre son envol en 2026

Texte de Christian Alou

Aujourd'hui nous allons continuer d'explorer le thème de l'année : "Nos racines et notre envol" en interrogeant les défis spirituels à surmonter pour grandir et assurer notre envol. Au regard des nombreux défis auxquels font face notre société, n'est-il pas opportun en cette période particulière de l'année de questionner les faiblesses de notre foi pour les renforcer afin de porter une plus grande lumière pour traverser les ténèbres?

Quels sont ces défis et comment les adresser pour prendre notre envol en 2026?

Non dogmatique, historiquement centré sur la raison et la recherche de la vérité, la foi unitarienne s'exprime aujourd'hui par une forte alliance avec la science et l'inclusion du pluralisme spirituel. Quel équilibre entre la raison et le mysticisme? Quel équilibre entre l'individualisme spirituel et la communauté? Quel équilibre entre nos besoins matériels et le respect de l'environnement? La croyance en un Dieu d'amour universel s'exprime aujourd'hui en un engagement pour la justice sociale et l'inclusion des différentes identités comme en témoigne nos 8 valeurs partagées.

Pour rendre le monde meilleur chaque jour, l'unitarien universaliste se réinvente, fortifie sa foi en s'appuyant sur ses racines pour jouer un rôle d'action de premier plan en apportant, grâce aux actions, des solutions aux problèmes de notre société sur fonds du respect de la dignité humaine et des droits de la personne.

Dans une dimension plus personnelle, identifie un défi sur lequel tu travailles et réfléchit aux différentes questions ci-dessus pour prendre ton envol.



Le cercle de croissance spirituelle

Cercle de croissance spirituelle, c'est aussi un cercle de croissance personnelle puisque nous pratiquons « l'écoute profonde et le partage ». Le tout dans un format très simple avec un thème spirituel. C'est un complément à notre Célébration francophone mensuelle tout comme le « cercle de méditation » l'est pour notre « Sunday Service ». Le cercle est ouvert à tous, même à vos ami(es) de l'extérieur.

Nos rencontres sont mensuelles. Pour le moment c'est le dernier lundi du mois à 13h. Il peut arriver que nous devions changer le jour, la date et l'endroit. Voilà pourquoi il est important de nous contacter quelques jours avant. (CCS@ufo.org)

Notre prochaine rencontre se tiendra le 29 juin à 13h. Veuillez vérifier les notes du vendredi pour en connaître le thème et l'endroit. Bienvenue!

Célébrations francophones

Nos célébrations francophones nous sont toujours bien précieuses; l'effet de pouvoir partager en français nous permet d'approfondir nos rituels et notre partage.

Pour terminer l'année en beauté, que dirais-tu de venir célébrer avec nous, « dans une rencontre sociale » remplie de joie et de partages spontanés? Aussi il serait peut-être bon de profiter du moment pour revoir notre action passée et exprimer vos suggestions de thème pour l'année à venir? Si le cœur t'en dit, tu peux apporter une légère collation.

Une invitation spéciale : notre Équipe de planification aurait vraiment besoin de nouveaux membres. Si cela t'interpelle n'hésite pas à nous contacter. (rassemblement@uufo.org)

Comme tu le sais, à chacune de nos célébrations nous avons une très courte présentation (environ 5 minutes) suivit d'un partage. Cette partie qui est le cœur de notre célébration, demande une personne pour animer. Aimerais-tu être cette personne? Si cela t'intéresse n'hésite pas à nous contacter. Si non, est-ce que tu aurais une personne à nous suggérer?

Grand merci de ton attention et collaboration.



Global Impact: UUFO Refugee Project

Our Fellowship has recently taken on the commitment to sponsor an Afghan family of six. This initiative is being spearheaded by a dedicated team of 10 of our members as well as our partnership with OCRA (Ottawa Central Refugee Action), that has considerable experience and resources. We hope to proceed hand-in-hand in a unified community effort. We hope everyone will share the passion and commitment to extend a lifeline to this family. A concerted effort on our part could mean averting a life/death situation for this family currently in hiding. The female head of the family has done much to draw attention to the plight of women in Afghanistan and is an important voice for the world to hear. Our hope is she will soon once again have an opportunity to speak by moving to Canada.

Right now perhaps our greatest need is fundraising. (They originally fled to Pakistan in the fall of 2021 where they were waiting for a country of asylum. They were forcibly deported to Afghanistan in December 2025; the CUC offer of six refugee spots came through in March 2026.) Money will be used to help them relocate from Afghanistan and eventually re-settle here. We will be drawing on everyone to help as much as they can and hopefully you may have connections that are interested in this cause. Please reach out to any on this planning group to offer your help in any way.

- Oversight committee (Laura Evans, Evangeline Danseco, Frances Cosstick)
- Sponsorship money/Treasurer (Gary Weinhold, Evangeline, Bill Woodley)
- Communications (Hoppy Roy, Nanci Burns, Allison Calvern)
- Fundraising (Nick LePan, Helmut Kuhn, Nancy Rubenstein)

Climate Connection

by Pat Lucey



Food security has long been a worldwide problem, even in economically developed nations like ours, where those who are living on insufficient incomes are unable to regularly obtain enough nourishing food to feed themselves and their families. And with the challenges of rapid climate change now upon us, food scarcity is becoming worse and more widespread, leading to desperate circumstances among many populations.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: "Climate change has both direct and indirect impacts on agrifood systems due to shifting and unpredictable rainfall patterns and temperatures, a higher incidence of extreme weather events and disasters such as drought, floods, outbreaks of pests and disease and ocean acidification."

The FAO offers a number of solutions for agricultural entities to consider, and if you want to learn more about their recommendations, visit their website at <https://www.fao.org/climate-change/en>

If you're wondering **what you can do as an individual** to help address the food security issues we are all facing, you can become involved locally in a number of ways. For myself, I'm a longtime volunteer for Transition Cornwall+, a grassroots community group helping to build resilience and sustainability in Cornwall and the surrounding rural area, in preparation for the combined challenges of peak oil, climate change, and global economic instability. As a member of the TC+ Food Action Group, I help organize and host several yearly public events in support of food security in our local food economy, and through home food growing and permaculture practices.

And Ottawa is home to Just Food, a thriving grassroots non-profit organization dedicated to building vibrant, just and sustainable food and farming systems in the Ottawa region. The bulk of their work is in the City of Ottawa, and they partner with other groups to include our local region (Eastern Ontario/Western Quebec), and beyond. Their mandate is to enhance ongoing access to healthful food, for everyone in the Ottawa region, recognizing the diverse barriers that restrict food security. As well, they promote sustainable agricultural systems that include food grown, harvested, raised, processed and distributed in ways that preserve or enhance ecological benefits, while protecting and improving the social and economic conditions of farmers, their employees and local communities. Just Food is based at their farm in Blackburn Hamlet - practically a neighbour of the Fellowship! -- and you can learn about their amazing work and projects, and how you can get involved in promoting food security, by checking out their website at <https://justfood.ca/about/>.



Shop Local, Eat Local

You never know who you'll run into at one of the many Ottawa farmer's markets in the summer! Nanci shared this photo of Mark B from the Beechwood farmer's market in 2025

Focus on: ReconciliAction

Meet our neighbour - Isaruit Inuit Arts!

by Marilynn Kuhn and claire heistek

The Isaruit Inuit Art Centre is in the Rideau Hub – the old Rideau High School on St. Laurent Blvd. Their focus is support and skill development of Inuit Arts. Claire spoke with Beverly Illauq, Centre Coordinator and Kat Townsend, Programs Facilitator, about possible support through the UUFO 2026 charitable funds budget. The discussion revealed two opportunities to support our neighbour: a \$400 donation to start an “Accordion Fund” and the gifting of the old UUFO electronic piano. Marilynn and claire brought the piano to the centre and saw a vibrant community enjoying poutine topped with seal meat. The piano was warmly welcomed!

As we chatted, Beverly mentioned how much the UU principles had in common with basic Inuit principles and the centrality of music to the Inuit arts and culture. The next day, Kat sent the following message to claire which we are sharing with her permission:

Isaruit Inuit Arts is an Inuit-led, community-based organization dedicated to advancing Inuktitut language revitalization, cultural continuity, and community wellbeing. Through year-round programming, Isaruit delivers over 200 program days annually, engaging an average of 35 participants per day—reaching approximately 7,000+ annual engagement points. This includes more than 200 immersive Inuktitut language and cultural activities, over 9,000 mentor–apprentice interactions, and more than 200 language learning engagements. Programs bring together Inuit artists, youth, families, and Elders through land-based and urban-adapted cultural learning, strengthening identity, belonging, and intergenerational knowledge transfer grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles.

At the heart of Isaruit’s work are the eight IQ principles, which emphasize respect (Inuuqatigiitsiarniq), collaboration (Piliriqatigiinniq), consensus decision-making (Aajiqatigiinniq), service to others (Pijitsirniq), skills development (Pilimmaksarniq), innovation (Qanuqtuurniq), environmental stewardship (Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq), and knowledge grounded in lived experience (Qaujimajatuqangit). These principles closely align with Unitarian covenantal values such as the inherent worth and dignity of every person, justice and equity in human relations, shared responsibility, and care for the interconnected web of life. Together, they reflect a shared ethical foundation rooted in relationship, accountability, and collective wellbeing.



Beverly trying out the piano



Elder Meeka and her accordion

As neighbours in the same ward, Isaruit and the Unitarian church share a meaningful

opportunity to deepen this alignment through action. Supporting Isaruit contributes directly to reconciliation by investing in Inuit-led language and cultural revitalization, creating space for healing, and strengthening community connections. It is a tangible way to live our shared values—honouring Indigenous knowledge systems, supporting intergenerational learning, and building a more just and compassionate community together.

Music holds a powerful place in Inuit cultural expression, storytelling, and healing, offering a pathway for connection across generations and communities. Instruments such as the accordion and keyboard are especially important in supporting Inuit artists, as they are widely used in contemporary Inuit music for gatherings, performances, and cultural events. These instruments help sustain both traditional and evolving musical practices, creating spaces where language, rhythm, and identity come together. In the context of reconciliation, music serves as a bridge—bringing people into relationship through shared experience, emotion, and celebration. Donations of instruments directly support performing artists by increasing access, reducing barriers, and strengthening opportunities for mentorship, creativity, and cultural continuity.

Who are the People in our Neighbourhood?

by Nanci Burns, roving reporter

Under our Roof:

Heartwood House has received preliminary approval for 2 grants from the City of Ottawa to upgrade both the murals and out-front landscaping.

The following are 3 new neighbours/renters in our building. We are still at a full capacity.

Karis Disability Services

Works with people who experience disabilities to accomplish their goals and nurture communities where everybody belongs. (Karis.org)

Kids and Parents Well-Being - KAPWB

Provides mental-health and relationship support for all ages of caregivers and those under their care. Educates on healthy family dynamics, and aids in the restoration of parent-child bonds. Currently running 2 pilot programs to assist families, friends and professionals tending to people with dementia, and those facing depression and suicidal risk (kapwb.ca)

Ottawa Blin Community - OBC

Made up of Eritrean Canadians of Blin heritage committed to empowering community through culturally rooted, community-led programs that support students, families, newcomers and refugees. By fostering intercultural understanding and resilience, OBC creates pathways to growth and opportunity, strengthening connections and building an inclusive and vibrant community. (blincommunity.org)

Tom, Nanci, and Nick
UUFO Golfers in 2025



Other Heartwood News:

1) Heartwood Community Thrift Shop - every Thursday from 12:00p.m. to 2:00p.m. Featuring unclaimed items from the OC Transpo Lost and Found.

The Heartwood House Thrift Shop is on a knick-knack hunt for unique treasures.

If you have unwanted and in good shape trinkets, ornaments or small items that may be of interest to shoppers, please drop them off at the front desk.

2) Shambhala Meditation Centre. They have a variety of courses and workshops that may be of interest, including a 5 week course titled "The Practice of Kindness". Check out their website or request their newsletter at www.Ottawa.shambhala.org

3) For the 4th year, ALSO (Alternative Learning Styles and Outlooks) did a Banned Books Fundraiser and 10 members of our Fellowship attended. It is not an event to be missed. Humour, diversity, music, good food and many connections filled the evening. Plan to attend next year?

4) Heartwood House Charity Golf Tournament - Friday September 11th - Shotgun start at 11:00a.m. Reserve the date! And of course start practicing. Will you join a UUFO Fellowship Team? Last year Nick, Tom and I took on the challenge but we're sure Helmut will be back this year. Will you please join us? It is lots of fun!!

In Our Neighbourhood

Carty House continues to add joy and purpose to our members concerned with social justice issues. Ten of us joined residents at the Sugar Shack in Vanier. Maple syrup seems to be a universally enjoyed taste treat, in addition to enjoying a winter walk and learning more about the production of maple syrup. Here are a few pictures. First at the home and then at the Sugar Shack.



Here is Michelle Miller, Community Outreach Coordinator, sharing our enthusiasm and answering questions before we leave. We hope to entice Michelle to speak at the Fellowship soon!

Carty House is also benefitting from our gardening efforts last summer and Fall. However, they are not alone. The rabbits are hungry!

UUFO Social Justice Funds approved by the board May 4

- \$500 to Odawa Native Friendship Centre - Summer Camp
- \$500 to RRCRC Youth Group summer project / Carson House
- \$500 to MHI Housing support
- \$500 to Carty House holiday meal
- \$400 to Isaruit Inuit Arts to start an Accordion fund
- \$400 to ACORN Ottawa advocacy work
- \$200 to grassroots project to support homeless

Total: \$3000 pledged for social justice outreach in our community in 2026



Opportunities coming soon!

Two years ago, some of us got enthused when the Peace Train rolled into Ottawa and we joined them at the Train Station and Parliament Hill.

Peace Train Canada (PTC) is a citizen led effort to reclaim and renew our solidarity and Canadian identity as a culture of peace. The purpose is to get PEACE back on track. They are calling on our government to commit to a culture of peace by establishing and funding an integrated, independent Canadian Centre for Peace and Justice.

If you are interested in travelling with them to Ottawa on the train or meeting them there in October 2026, please let me know and I will forward your name for more information. They plan to be in Ottawa October 28 to October 31.

--from Keith and Bernadette Wyton "Peace Train Invitation"

wyton@shaw.ca (British Columbia)

poetry slant

by allison calvern

Sometimes one poem can contain a whole mouthful of juicy flavour, a whole season, a whole philosophy of life. Here is a poem by Li-Young Lee, a poet of the highest order, which means he is a lover, a philosopher, and a keen observer. In an interview with Tina Chang (Academy of American Poets) Lee speaks of interconnectedness, a concept close to UU hearts:

“If you rigorously dissect it, you realize that everything is a shape of the totality of causes. What’s another name for the totality of causes? The Cosmos. So everything is a shape of Cosmos or God. It feels like something bigger than me—that I can’t possibly fathom but am embedded in.”



Spring Literary Salon



Prompt & Circumstance, our UUFO inspired writing group, will be holding its first annual Spring Literary Salon on Saturday, June 20th, 2026, in the sanctuary. As with our previous Fall Salons, our spring version will offer wine and chocolate, as well as readings by members of the group. Join us in the sanctuary, on June 20th, from 7 to 9 pm, for real people with real stories. Donations towards costs will be accepted and appreciated, though they are not required. Contact allison calvern: acalvern@gmail.com

From Blossoms

—by Li-Young Lee

From blossoms comes
this brown paper bag of peaches
we bought from the boy
at the bend in the road where we turned toward
signs painted, Peaches.

From laden boughs, from hands,
from sweet fellowship in the bins,
comes nectar at the roadside, succulent
peaches we devour, dusty skin and all,
comes the familiar dust of summer, dust we eat.

O, to take what we love inside,
to carry within us an orchard, to eat
not only the skin, but the shade,
not only the sugar, but the days, to hold
the fruit in our hands, adore it, then bite into
the round jubilation of peach.

There are days we live
as if death were nowhere
in the background; from joy
to joy to joy, from wing to wing,
from blossom to blossom to
impossible blossom, to sweet impossible
blossom.

Welcome and Membership

by Hoppy Roy



The Welcome and Membership Committee would like to say an enormous Thank You to Carolle Séguin who is stepping down from the committee after many years. Carolle has been a friendly face greeting newcomers (one of many, of course!) and has played a key role in running the Newcomers' Sessions we hold once or twice a year. The rest of us on the committee, Casey Callahan, Andrea Young and myself will miss her!

Five newcomers attended our Newcomers' Session on April 12, 2026. Most of those who attended had some knowledge or experience with Unitarian Universalism. As well as sharing a bit about the history of Unitarianism and of our own Fellowship, there was time for questions and discussions as well.

One interesting question was about Friends vs. Members in our UU Fellowship. They wondered if one is expected to become a Member, and are there limitations in one's ability to participate if one is not a Member? Good questions!

First of all, some current numbers. At the present time, we have 61 Members, but we also have about 40 people who are categorized as Friends. Of this group, about 14 attend on a regular basis and are active in various ways within the Fellowship. Another half dozen or so attend fairly frequently, and the remainder are more casual, but still familiar and welcome faces.

Cottage Gathering: Invitation from Elinor & Mark

on Thursday, July 23 (Rain date July 24)

Details to come in Friday Notes

Summer BBQ at Dave and Carolle's!
Tuesday, August 11 (rain date Aug 12)

Format: everyone brings their own main to bbq and an appetizer, salad or dessert to share. BYOB.
Plates, glasses, and utensils provided

Some of our Friends have been with us for years! They participate in our Sunday services, join committees, come to weekly events, donate by pledges or otherwise, support special projects, help on set-up teams and offer their expertise and skills in a variety of ways. They support and enrich us!

Friends fully participate in our Fellowship with only two exceptions:

1. One must be a Member to vote at key Members' Meetings such as the AGM, the Preliminary Budget meeting or other General Meetings that are required by our By-Laws.
2. One must be a Member to serve on the Board of Directors.

Becoming a UUFO Member is one of personal choice. Aside from the two reasons mentioned above, becoming a Member also means you wish to make a statement to the rest of the Fellowship that you feel you have found your spiritual home. This is celebrated at a New Member Ceremony held once or twice a year.

Anyone interested in Membership can speak to someone on the Welcome and Membership Committee, or on the Board of Directors.

PS: WE WELCOME NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO THIS LITTLE WELCOME AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE!!

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa

Everyone Welcome | Bienvenue à tous

The Unitarian Fellowship of Ottawa is a spiritual community of people with shared values and diverse beliefs.

We are guided by the warmth of love, the light of reason, and the call of justice.

We come together to nurture meaning, hope, and reverence for the earth as we pursue a more just and compassionate world.

Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Ottawa

400 McArthur Ave
Ottawa, ON
K1K 1G8

613-421-8360
uufo@uufo.org



We're online at: uufo.org



@UUFellowshipOttawa



@uu_fellowship_ottawa

Fellowship News

is published quarterly by
UUFO

Send submissions, comments,
or letters to the editors to:

newsletter@uufo.org

Submissions for the Fall Issue
are due August 15th

Many thanks to our
contributors and editors!

Editorial Team:

Allison, Nanci, Pat & Sarah

Summer at UUFO

Fridays at 10 Weekly Walking Meditation
Mon & Fri at 9 Strong and Steady Exercise Program

Monthly

1st Tuesday: East End Pub Night
2nd Thursday: Film Club
3rd Thursday: Patty's Pub Night
4th Monday: *Cercle de Croissance Spirituelle (français)*

Coming Up in June

Fri, Jun 5 Springtime Music Night
Sun, Jun 7 UUFO Annual General Meeting
Sat, Jun 20 Spring Literary Salon
Sun, Jun 21 Summer Solstice Potluck Celebration!

Dim, 28 juin *Célébration francophone*

Coming up in July & August

Thu, Jul 23 Cottage Gathering - with Elinor & Mark
Tue, Aug 11 Summer BBQ - at Dave & Carolle's
Mon, Aug 17 Fellowship dinner hosted by Worship Cluster

Mon, Aug 17
Tue, Aug 18 *My story begins...* memoir-writing workshop
Thu, Aug 20
Fri, Aug 21

Keep an eye on Friday Notes for...

Summer time gatherings:
Games day, Film Screening(s) etc!

Weekly event info & Zoom links come to your inbox in our [Friday Notes!](#)