

First Glance

June 2021

(613) 232-1016 office@firstunitedchurchottawa.org

www.firstunitedchurchottawa.org

Congratulations to our **Rite 14 youth group...as they become J2A**

...for raising \$2,025 for MultiFaith Housing Initiative Tulip-a-thon through their Zoom trivia contest! Thank you for your support of this important event and in helping address homelessness and affordable housing in Ottawa

...for embracing a unique third year of Rite 13, quickly renamed Rite 14, with gusto and imagination and now a one-year **J2A journey** begins with the leadership of Jillian Buckie, Jane Sly and Robert VanderBerg.

Update on First's Initiative **Intergenerational, Youth and Children's Programming**

While Covid-19 delayed the immediate implementation of the March 2020 congregational embrace of forging ahead with an intergenerational vision, Church Council has been moving this vision forward. At the June 1st meeting of Council, the terms of reference for a Committee of Intergenerational, Youth and Children's programming was adopted and the Executive is recruiting members for this Committee. This Committee will serve as the keeper of the vision, a vision which

- recognizes that people of all ages are an important and integral part of our community.
- maximizes the development of relationships across generations.
- unleashes the authentic leadership of all generations allowing all voices to be heard.
- creates safe space that nurtures a context for all ages to share their gifts.
- attends to age-specific programming that understands stages of developments, stages not limited to childhood and youth, but which continue through the decades of adulthood.
- celebrates rituals to mark the transitions through the ages and stages of life.

In addition, Church Council is updating a job description for a three-year contract to help us realize this vision in exciting ways. The Council will bring this plan to a congregational meeting sometime early in the Fall of 2021.

Diversity Rainbow Flags

First United received diversity rainbow flags this month. Included in the flags are additional colours of black, brown, baby blue, pink and white as a wider representation of our commitment to being a rainbow church. Our Pride Celebration will be Sunday, August 29th.

Services to Celebrate the Lives of Beloved Members of First United

Diane Potvin
Enid Kirkhope

Friday, June 25th at 2:00 p.m.
Friday, July 30th at 1:00 p.m.

Update on plan for First United given Ontario's Step One and Step Two Reopening Plan

On June 1st, Church Council adopted a plan in response to the Province of Ontario three step program for reopening. The Ontario plan keeps shifting, and so the Council wanted to develop an approach for First United that provided clarity for ourselves while still operating within the Provincial guidelines and timelines.

Step One (Implemented by Ontario on June 11th)

Step one continues the existing guideline that indoor religious services and ceremonies are limited to 10 people and recently shifted to 15%. Beginning Sunday June 13th until Sunday July 25th, First will resume having a leadership team in the sanctuary as we continue Zoom services. Those participating on Sundays will have received one vaccination dose. Singers will be wearing singer masks. Staff will be taking the bulk of their holidays in this time so that they are able to be present as we welcome in-person participation in August.

Outdoor ceremonies are possible in Step One, with no number limit, as long as there is room for physical distancing of two meters.

Step Two (will likely be implemented in Ontario sometime in early July)

Step Two of Ontario public health guidelines will allow indoor religious ceremonies and will shift the capacity from 25% as long as physical distancing and masking protocols are followed.

Beginning Sunday August 1st, First will begin offering a hybrid service that is primarily Zoom but with an option of welcoming in-person participation. ***The Covid-19 taskgroup will communicate logistical details about in-person participation in the middle of July.***

Outdoor religious ceremonies can continue as in Step One.

Preparing for Congregational Life after Step Two

At the June 1st meeting of the Church Council, the Council established a committee that will meet during the summer months to prepare for Step Three in Ontario's reopening plan. We recognize that there are many aspects of Step Three that require further clarification. This committee, working alongside the Covid-19 taskgroup, will communicate with the congregation in early August as we prepare for congregational life beyond Step Two.

Staff Holiday Schedule

Throughout the summer, either Brian or Marg will be present each Sunday with both of them present in early August as we embrace reopening.

Marg Away

Monday, June 21 to Sunday July 4 (two weeks)

Monday, July 19 to Sunday July 25 (one week)

Monday, Aug 23 to Sunday Aug 29 (one week) total of four weeks

Brian away

Monday, July 5 to Wednesday July 21 (17 days)

Monday, Aug 16 to Thursday Aug 26 (11 days) total of four weeks

Cindy away

Friday, July 23 to Tuesday August 2 (12 days)

Friday, August 6 to Sunday August 15 (10 days) total of three weeks

On-going Spirit Support at First United

Soul Space

Soul Space, an initiative to support frontline workers in Ottawa, involves many from First United (Danielle Rolfe, Claire Savage, Pat Mayberry and others) where street health workers from Ottawa Inner City Health and from the Somerset West community in Ottawa have recently collaborated with singer/songwriter Pat Mayberry (who has composed several hymns for the United Church) to produce a song/video entitled "Rise Up Strong". The work of **Soul Space** and the energies behind the creation of this video are featured on our website under *Breaking News*.

Healing Pathway Spiritual Care Package (available on the First United website)

The Healing Pathway ministry at First United has prepared a spiritual care package. While we may not be able to meet face to face, we can connect heart to heart and be proactive in nurturing our spirits and connecting with the Divine through meditation, prayer, long walks, and reaching out safely to one another and to those who are vulnerable and isolated. **Distance Healing Pathway sessions** are available by contacting healingpathway2010@gmail.com

Mental Health Strategies During Covid-19 (available on the First United website)

The "Let's Talk About Mental Health" group has developed resources to support mental health through the winter of Covid-19. Please reach out for pastoral support when needed. The **Let's Talk About Mental Health** Zoom discussion is led by Jessica Ward-King and Zachary Houle and will meet on Sunday June 13th and June 27th at 12:30 p.m. To register contact j.ward-king@hotmail.com

Small Groups at First United

Monday Morning Living into Right Relations on-line Book Club:

For years, a book club has met to read and discuss living into right relations with the First Peoples of Canada. On Mondays, from 9:30 - 11:30 am, the group is reading "Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Issues". The group welcomes new members. To get the Zoom connection or more information, contact Cindy at office@firstunitedchurchottawa.org

Monday Evening On-line Christian Meditation, occurs at 5:30 every Monday evening on Zoom and is led by Joyce Hardman, Cathy Nobleman, and Liz Tyrwhitt. This gathering is connected with the World Community for Christian Meditation based on the leadership of Laurence Freeman. Contact Joyce at jhardman@rogers.com to register and get more resources on Christian Meditation.

Saturday - A stitch in time (On-line gathering on Saturday at 10:00 a.m.):

Have you been knitting or sewing in pandemic days? Have you been musing about metaphors and the symbolic nature of these activities? If you crave a chance to get together both physically present while safely distanced, you might be interested in joining with up to 6 people to share and show. If you are interested, please contact Jane Sly at janeelizsly@gmail.com

Friday Afternoon TGIF Gathering, occurs at 1:00 every Friday afternoon, through a creative confluence of Zoom, telephone calls, and email conversations. If you are interested in being included contact Ruth Stewart-Verger at ruth.stewartverger@gmail.com.

Creating new cloths for the Communion Table

Those who plan our Sunday Gatherings are updating our cloths for the Communion Table that celebrate our liturgical church year. We welcome donations of fabrics and designs that represent diverse communities from around the globe as well as a diversity of images and colours. Jane Sly is coordinating this project, and if you have fabrics that might work, please contact her at janeelizsly@gmail.com

Social and Ecological Justice

From our Friends from Citizens for Public Justice.

Thank you for the support in ensuring the passage of **Bill C-15 *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration)***. Presently, it is important that **Bill C-12, "*Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*"** will also make it to the Senate in the coming days. While significant questions remain about the strength of the legislation being put forward, it is here that accountability is necessary to achieve meaningful progress towards the Paris temperature goals.

From United In Learning

United in Learning provides distance learning for the people of the United Church of Canada. Google "United in Learning" to connect and you can learn of the many interesting offerings from across the country. **On June 16th**, the Rev. Dr. Cheri DiNovo—United Church minister, lifelong social justice advocate, member of the Order of Canada, and former MPP—will be joining United in Learning for a special interview, where the main topic of discussion will be what it takes to be a Christian activist. It promises to be a very lively discussion.

From Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council

Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council Book Study, on June 24th at 7:00 p.m. focuses on the book ***We All Go Back to the Land: The Who, Why and How of Land Acknowledgements***. All are welcome to join in this conversation to share what your community of faith is doing in the work of right relations, learn from others, and generate ideas for Indigenous History Month (June). For more information and to register, please visit:
<https://eoorc.ca/event/eoorc-relations-network-summer-online-book-study/>

From the Indigenous Ministries of the United Church of Canada

An Evening of Remembering, AIDS Candle Light Vigil on Sunday, June 27th at 7:00 p.m. EDT
Join Indigenous Ministries Circle and Justice's Executive Minister, Murray Pruden for an evening of remembering, honouring and celebrating those lost to and those who live with HIV/AIDS. Bring light or candle and hosted on the Indigenous Ministries Facebook page