



# EOORC News

*Wednesday, August 6, 2025*

The bi-weekly newsletter of the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council

## QUICK LINKS

- [Pastoral Relations Minutes](#)\*New
- [Executive Minutes](#)\*New
- [Jobs](#)\*New - Minister with Rothwell United Church
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Submit an Event](#)

## IN THIS ISSUE

- EOORC Communities of Faith in the News
- Recognizing Scams and Phishing Emails
- News from MHI
- Upcoming Dates
- Reminder – Expenses and Accommodations at Regional Meetings
- And More!

### EOORC Communities of Faith in the News

**Grace United Church, Gananoque:** Edna's Café is a popular musical afternoon at Grace United Church for people with dementia or those who simply want to socialize and sing along. It brings joy, music and a chance to revisit old memories. The church has partnered with local musician Paul Harding to offer these musical afternoons. Through music and tea, community is created. This is an important way to love our neighbours. You can read more about Edna's Café in [The Gananoque Reporter](#).

**Wall Street United Church, Brockville:** Wall Street United Church and its minister the Rev. Dr. Kimberly Heath were honoured to receive an Accessibility Award from Brockville's Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee. Wall Street United Church has a long-standing commitment to improving accessibility. This includes removing physical barriers, and also creating a welcome space for people with mental illness, neurodiversity and different life experiences. Rev. Heath notes that churches often serve as important community hubs for those most in need, and that accessibility is part of "building a city that includes everyone." She thanked Mr. Matthew Wilson for contributing to this work, along with many others.

You can read more on [The Brockvilleist's website](#).

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## Recognizing Scams and Phishing Emails

Dear friends,

A United Church in Nakonha:ka Regional Council was recently targeted by a scam attempt. Someone impersonating the minister emailed the office administrator, using an email address very similar to the minister's and asking for a copy of the church directory. The office administrator noticed that something was off, and checked in with the minister and found that the whole interaction was a scam. The office administrator's careful actions helped to safeguard the contact data for the whole congregation, which could have been used by the scammers to target vulnerable people.

This kind of scam attempt happens all the time. In my former congregation, a scammer found email addresses for council members on some old online council minutes. The scammer used a fake email address to impersonate me, pretending that I needed urgent help to purchase a gift card for someone with cancer. This is a common scam. In other recent attempts, some scammers have impersonated a minister while emailing the congregation's treasurer or office administrator, pretending that the minister would like their pay deposited into a different bank account.

Here are a few things we can do to stay safe:

1. Be wary of "urgent" requests or requests which claim that the sender is in an important meeting.
2. Check email addresses to make sure that they match with the email address of the person you know. Note: this is an important step but not a foolproof test – some scammers can make it look like the email address is the same.
3. When in doubt, use another contact method to double check whether the message is genuine. (For example, phoning the person using a verified phone number.)
4. Use two-factor authentication.
5. Learn more at <https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/en>
6. If you do fall victim to a scam (it is very common) reach out to a colleague, friend or the police - ask for help.

We invite you to share this information with your office administrator, minister, treasurer, council members and others who have access to sensitive data.

Some congregations have offered cybersecurity workshops for the congregation and people in the wider community. This could be a project for autumn. Rothwell United Church did this a few years ago, and noted that it was widely appreciated by folks in their neighbourhood. The Ottawa Police Department was glad to come and share tips to help everyone identify scams and fraud.

Blessings,

Rev. Natalie Matkovsky, Communications Assistant

## Reminder - Expenses and Accommodations for Regional Council Meetings

When ministers or lay reps attend Regional Council meetings, EOORC reimburses travel costs. Accommodations and food are the responsibility of the congregation. Accommodations are encouraged when travel back and forth would significantly reduce the ability of the participants to be present and connected with one another. Regional meetings are a rare opportunity to connect with the wider church and with communities of faith and ministers who are facing similar challenges, so maximizing these opportunities is essential.

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## News from the Multifaith Housing Initiative

### Tulipathon

This signature fundraising event is held every year to remind everyone of the need for affordable housing and to support MHI's subsidies program, which provides over \$400,000 annually to give tenants some extra help with rent.

Tulipathon:

- Highlights Multifaith Housing Initiative in the Ottawa community.
- Demonstrates and celebrates all the significant 'multifaith' participation of so many faith groups via our faith community banners.
- Raises funds to subsidize tenant rents.

As the cost of living continues to rise, even affordable rents can be beyond the financial reach of low-income families and individuals. All Tulipathon donations are used to help our tenants bridge the gap between their resources and MHI's affordable rents.

This year's Tulipathon was held at Commissioners Park (across from Dow's Lake) on Sunday, May 25th. With MHI's recent amalgamation with Gloucester Housing Corporation, more residents than ever now qualify for rent subsidies. In response to this growing need, we set our most ambitious fundraising goal yet, \$125,000. The Tulipathon fundraising period ended on June 30th with \$106,688 raised. Just as we neared the finish line, longtime MHI supporter and member, Human Concern International generously stepped in with a donation of \$20,000 to bump us up over the top. As a result, of everyone's incredible support, this year's Tulipathon raised \$126,788!

Many thanks to all of you who participated in any way. Your dedication and generosity are making affordable housing happen!

### MHI Welcomes New Executive Director

**June 16, 2025 – OTTAWA:** Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI) is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Ala'a Shadid (Al) as the organization's incoming Executive Director. Shadid will officially assume the role on August 11, 2025. He brings more than a decade of senior leadership experience in the non-profit housing sector, with a strong track record in operational improvement, governance, strategic planning, and delivering tenant-centered solutions across the capital region.

Mr. Shadid joins MHI at a pivotal time, following a period of significant growth and transformation. Their leadership will help guide the organization through its next chapter as it continues to expand housing opportunities across the Ottawa region.

"Al brings incredible energy and a deep commitment to affordable housing. He's a strong champion of our mission, and I'm confident he'll honour our legacy while leading us into an exciting future." said Ishbel Solvason, President of MHI.

The new Executive Director succeeds Suzanne Le, who will conclude her tenure on August 18, 2025, after 12 years of exceptional service. Under her leadership, MHI grew from one housing community to nine (with a tenth underway), and successfully completed a major amalgamation with Gloucester Housing Corporation in 2024. Suzanne has been a steadfast advocate for affordable housing and an influential voice in the sector. MHI is deeply grateful for her dedication and lasting impact.

Please join us in welcoming Al to MHI and in recognizing Suzanne Le for her outstanding leadership.

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*United We Dream*

The EOORC Campaign for Dream LeBreton Flats

### **United We Dream Capital Campaign Update**

The MHI project of 133 units within the two towers currently being built at Lebreton Flats is now known as Odenak, named for the Algonquin Anishinàbe word for “community”.

#### **Over the past year, EOORC has made significant progress towards its goal:**

United We Dream Campaign Goal: \$150,000

Number of Contributing Communities of Faith to Date: 11

Contributions from Communities of Faith, as of June 2025: \$92,352.09 (62%)

United We Dream Achievement as of June 2026: \$ TBD!

MHI has been inspired by the congregational giving to the United We Dream Capital Campaign. To-date, 11 communities of faith have contributed \$92,352. We are hopeful that EOORC congregations will help us to raise the remaining \$57,648 to reach our \$150,000 goal by June 2026!

The Odenak project has also been extremely fortunate to receive two Seeds of Hope Grants from the United Church of Canada Foundation for a total of \$60,000. This support means a great deal to MHI, and they are honoured to partner with a foundation so deeply committed to building a more just and compassionate Canada.

### **Plans for Future Fundraisers**

Encourage fundraising by all congregations, whether a member of MHI – or – an EOORC congregation that wants to support the Indigenous individuals and families – righting relations.

Consider: concert series presentations, use of Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole’s Indigenous service, community dinners, trivia nights, movie nights, a dance night, a cabaret – the variety of fundraisers is enormous!

See <https://www.multifaithhousing.ca/united-we-dream.html> for Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole’s Indigenous Service, campaign information, and access to resources. National Day for Truth and Reconciliation/Orange Shirt Day in September would be an excellent time to reflect with Rev. Teresa’s meaningful service

Many thanks to Rev. Dr. Teresa Burnett-Cole for her dedicated support in creating the logo above and the Indigenous service that may be used at all United We Dream fundraisers.

## Upcoming Dates

**Celebration of Ministries** – Evening of September 19th, Southminster United Church, Ottawa

**Holding a Vision for the Future (Gathering of Lay Leaders and Ministry Personnel)** – A gathering for congregational leaders and ministry personnel to discuss our future as the United Church of Canada. Invitations and registration to come. There are two options: September 19th at Riverside United Church, Ottawa and October 4th at Trinity United Church, Smiths Falls. These events will have the same program, so please choose one to attend.

**Fall Meeting** – Sub-regional gatherings on November 1st, 2025. This year, we are trying something new. Instead of one big meeting, we will be gathering in smaller groups around the region. This is an opportunity to get to know our neighbours, growing and nourishing our local networks. In-person only.

### Choir Robes - Free

The Osgoode Baptist and Vernon United Church is doing some housecleaning. We have, free to a good home, 24 heavy choir robes in blue with gold trim and 16 lightweight Gold choir robes.

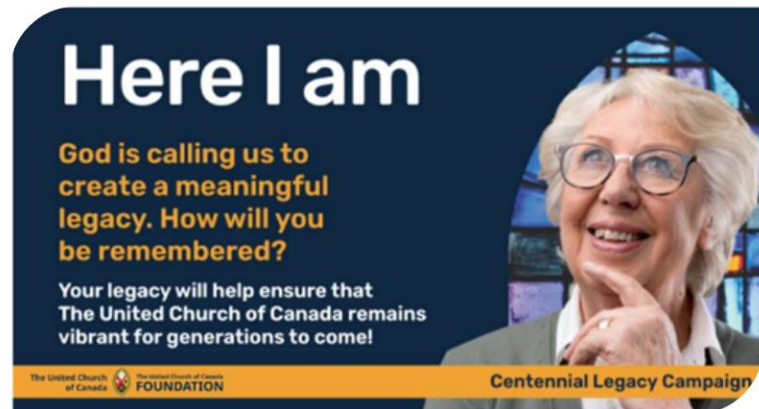
If your church is interested, please email [nmatkovsky@united-church.ca](mailto:nmatkovsky@united-church.ca).



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## Join the Centennial Legacy Campaign! A Message from The United Church of Canada Foundation

As we continue celebrating our centennial year, the Foundation invites all communities of faith across the church to take part in our most ambitious and impactful fundraising initiative yet. The **Centennial Legacy Campaign** encourages legacy gifts that honour the past 100 years while, ensuring a vibrant future for the next 100! To learn how your congregation can get involved, visit <https://unitedchurchfoundation.ca/centennialcampaign/>



The recording from the UNJPPI webinar about Justice *Proposals for Palestine* is now available for viewing: <https://youtu.be/OCRXD5uogF4> (1 hour 45minutes).

In this recording, you will hear about the rationale behind six proposals related to Palestine that are going to the United Church General Council from the people who created them. This webinar recording is for anyone interested in learning whether you are attending the GC meetings, involved in grassroots advocacy or just want to know more about the issues. If you have questions or would like more information, please feel free to reach out to [UNJPPI](#) - United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel.

### Hymn Books and Amplifiers/Speakers to Give

The Trustees of Église Unie de la Grace United Church have several boxes of Copies of *Voices United* and *More Voices* to be given to other churches or persons who might have a use for them. They also have some copies of *Songs for a Gospel People*.

There is also an amplifier and a pair of speakers from the Rupert Church for donation.

If you are interested, please contact Natalie Matkovsky ([nmatkovsky@united-church.ca](mailto:nmatkovsky@united-church.ca)) to be put in touch with Église Unie de la Grace United Church.



## Portable Communion Set

### Message from the Rev. Dr. Jamie Scott:

*I am writing to inquire as to whether you may know of anyone who might be interested in a small portable communion set that could be used by clergy to provide communion to shut-ins or hospital visits. I have one that was used many years ago by my father and I don't see a likelihood of needing it myself, so I thought I would see whether anyone uses them anymore or would like to have it. I am downsizing!*

If you are interested, please contact Natalie Matkovsky ([nmatkovsky@united-church.ca](mailto:nmatkovsky@united-church.ca)) to be put in touch with Jamie Scott.



## 2025 CARP BOOK FAIR



**St. Paul's United Church** will be holding the second annual **Carp Book Fair** in **August 2025**. The proceeds of the Book Fair will support the work of St. Paul's United Church and its charities.



The **Book Fair** will be held **August 14 – 23, 2025**, at **St. Paul's United Church**, located at **3760 Carp Road in Carp, ON** and will be open for booklovers to browse for good quality used books (fiction, non-fiction and children's books), vinyl LPs, DVDs, CDs and puzzles, as follows:

- Monday – Wednesday: 10am – 2pm
- Thursdays & Fridays: 2pm – 9pm
- Saturdays: 8am – 3pm
- **Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup> – CLOSED.**

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## Save-the-Date: Ottawa Redblacks Faith and Family Day, Sept. 20th

EOORC is participating in *Faith and Family Day* with the Ottawa Redblacks. More information to come – for now, we invite you to save the date!



## Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools Committee – Summer Meeting Photo

SCSS operates within the Ottawa Carleton District School Board to provide multi faith, emotional support and spiritual care for all secondary school students and staff.

[Spiritual Care in Secondary Schools](#)



Left to Right: Dana Ducette (UCC), Rev. Fred Demaray (Baptist Church), Rev. Doug Kendall (Presbyterian Church), Lorna Evans (OCDSB Teacher), Aisha Sherazi (Muslim Association of Ottawa), Fr. Marcos (St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church), Parmod Chhabra (Hindu Community in Ottawa), Riaz Mostaghim (Ottawa Bahá'í Community), absent Rabbi Menachem M. Blum (Ottawa Torah Centre Chabad).

## News from the Wider United Church

The June 24<sup>th</sup> edition of E-ssentials is available [here](#). It shares about Moderator nominees, the United Church condemning the US attack on Iran, and more.

The July 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of E-ssentials is available [here](#). It shares about GC 45, Pride Month, and an M&S story.

The July 8<sup>th</sup> edition of E-ssentials is available [here](#). It shares about the next Cross-Country Check-In, 100 Tables, Moderator Nominees and more.

The July edition of Living into Right Relations is available [here](#). It shares about Bill C-5: The One Canadian Economy Act, Orange Shirt Sunda and more.

The July 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of E-ssentials is available [here](#). It talks about the climate motivators, 40 Days of Anti-Racism, “Then Let Us Sing” and more.

The July 29<sup>th</sup> edition of E-ssentials is available [here](#). It shares about the apology to 2S and LGBTQIA+ communities, acting

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