



ITHACA

UUU Connections

2022/2023 Issue No.9

May 1-31, 2023

Our Spiritual Journey

In 2017, my 89 year old mother declared with panic, "There's something wrong with my brain!". A scan showed what she feared most: a Dementia diagnosis. I went with her to a therapist who specialized in elder care. A very nice and well meaning therapist suggested coloring as a way to calm her fears. I could read my mother's mind instantly: "I'm staring down a rabbit hole of Dementia and you are suggesting I take up coloring?!" She was silent and sullen and we didn't go back.

Fast forward a few years. My brother and I are caring for my mother while we work full time. She is well into her Dementia and on weekday mornings is going to an elder daycare where they often do crafts. My mother comes home with various colored and sparkly paper plates, things made from pipe cleaners, etc.

One day my mother came home with a painting of my brother's house, the house where we were caring for her, with such stunning artistic rendering that we were all amazed. My mother, if she wanted to draw, say, by making us a homemade card (a creative act in itself) it would be on the level of a stick drawing. Where did this painting come from?!

I think of creativity on two levels (at least two). One comes alive in our basic need for expression, like my mother's love generating a greeting card, or the quilt she made me completely hand stitched (how many thousands of stitches are there in this quilt?), or even, say, when we veer from a recipe. So many small creative acts every day that make life better, wider, deeper, fuller and worthwhile. And it always involves some risk, smaller or greater, because in creativity there may be a prompt but there is no real script.

Then there is a creativity born of necessity. Etty Hillesum wrote, "We left for the camps singing" as they boarded the train to Auschwitz. Creativity as an act of the human spirit, an act of defiance. My mother could not express herself but she feared abandonment the most, because, in fact, she was abandoned as a child in Germany before the war. Her painting shows her defiant spirit declaring something of home, family and love. It was all we could hope for because before Dementia, she would not have believed she would have this. Yet here it was and we knew, through her painting, that she received these things we all offered her. Creativity born of necessity is the need for the human spirit to reach out beyond itself to proclaim something fundamental, deep and true that can not be expressed in any other way then the art it chooses.

Jayne Demakos, Choir Director



Save the Date! May 24, 2023

Annual Meeting of First Unitarian Society of Ithaca

The FUSIT Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, **May 24**, at 6 pm. This meeting will be held in the sanctuary and over Zoom. All FUSIT members are invited to attend and vote on important church matters for the upcoming church year including the budget and new board members.

Pre-meeting pizza and salad at 5:30 pm. Childcare will be available (keep an eye on the Weekly Announce email for details).



**Please note
that the June newsletter
will be the last issue of the
church year and will cover
June through August 2023.**

Religious Exploration News

For information about Religious Exploration, please contact Emily Richards at dre@uuihaca.org.

Greetings from the DRE

May has arrived and with it the beginning of a time of winding down and wrapping up our year together. A time to appreciate the creative ways in which we came together and grew during a year filled with challenges and changes. A time where our thoughts turn not only to the successes of this past year and how we brought forth new and innovative ways of connecting and making meaning, but also to the future and the new possibilities and growth that we can create together.

This is also a time for gratitude. A time to lift up the many people in this community who have given their time, effort, and love to helping our Religious Exploration program begin to bloom once more. A special thanks to: Madonna Stallman, Sue Roenke, Rita Rosenberg, Wren Tuatha, Beth Mudge, Juliana Garcia, Amy Garbincus, Michelle Hochstetter, Melissa Heslop, Jess Brown, Phoebe Nolder, Gareth Richards, Sara Catterall, Audrey Hopkins, Valerie Graves, Andy Adams, Robin Cisne, Keith Perry, Lynn Staack, Carrie Lang, Loretta Heimbuch, Julianne Schultz, and Rachel Seymour. It takes a village.

Emily Richards, Director of Religious Exploration

RE Plans for May

Religious Exploration for children and youth will continue to be offered three Sundays this month, please see the below schedule for details. In addition we are so thrilled to have our Nursery open every Sunday from 10am-12pm for all children ages 4 and under. Childcare for any age can be requested for congregational events such as the Annual Meeting or Adult RE, please contact Madeline at REAsst@uuihaca.org if you would like to request care for your child for an upcoming event.

This month we are excited to bring back our annual Take Apart Party on April 21st during our regular class time. In addition to our Sunday morning programming we are offering a Drop Off Game Night, a Playdate at the Park, a continuation of our Spiritual Yoga Series, and finishing up our Music For Little People class for the year.

We are also excited to start our RE Volunteer Campaign for next year, Share Your Wisdom! We are looking for volunteers to commit to two Sundays in a classroom for half of the year, to lead one all-ages Creative Sunday, and/or join the RE Team. Look for our Share Your Wisdom tree in the Parlor and find out how you can add your own owl and fill your need for connection while supporting our children, youth, and families.

Everyone with kids ages birth through 12th grade should register their kids at the link below. This helps us with planning, and also helps to keep kids safe when they are participating in programming at church. [2022-2023 RE Registration](#)

Upcoming Sunday Morning Religious Exploration Schedule

May 7th: RE Sunday - Creativity, Arch Room immediately following a Time for Wonder

May 14th: RE Sunday - Creativity, Arch Room immediately following a Time for Wonder

May 21st: RE Sunday -Take Apart Party, Arch Room immediately following a Time for Wonder

May 28th: Multigenerational Sunday

RE Volunteers Needed!

We need every member of this community to show our families and young people that they are a priority. Please contact Emily Richards at dre@uuihaca.org if you are interested in supporting our Religious Exploration programming.

Please sign up by putting your name anywhere you see an empty square.

[RE Volunteer Sign-Up](#)

Blessed are the Makers

Rev. Marcus Liefert

Oh you who are makers;
Makers of beauty,
Of paintings and pottery and sculpture,
Blessed is the making.
You who make with hands and hearts and minds,
Who make out of breath and bones and blood human lives,
Blessed are the makers.
Blessed are those who make us laugh,
Who make jokes and faces and toys.
Blessed are those who make messes,
Who make trouble and friends, and when needed, make up.
Blessed are those who make do,
Who make it last, make it work, make beds and make time
for others.
Blessed are those who make love,
Who make out and make more and make mistakes.
Blessed are those who make coffee and tea,
Who make conversation, who make meaning in the face
of tragedy;
who make merriment and awaken joy.
Blessed are those who make peace
For they shall inherit the earth.

May Religious Exploration Events

Drop Off Game Night, Friday, May 12th, 5:30pm -7:30pm FUSIT Parlor

Drop your kids off, or stay and join us, for a game night complete with board games and card games, a play space, snacks, and drinks. Additional snacks and drinks to share are always welcome.

Playdate at the Park, Stewart Park Sunday, May 28th 12:30pm-2:30pm

Join us at Stewart park after services for a family playdate in the park celebrating a year of togetherness and connection. Lunch will be provided and additional snacks and drinks to share are always welcome and appreciated.

Music for Little People Thursdays from 12:30 pm-1:15 pm May 4th, 11th, and 18th

Our final session of the year is free and open to the public and will run the first three Thursdays in May. Emily Richards will offer weekly music classes for children 0-5 years of age with parents. We will meet upstairs in the Arch Room. Sing, play, dance, explore instruments, and connect through music.

Nametags

Our tradition is to wear nametags for Sunday services. If you need a nametag (or need a new nametag), please fill out a name-tag request form at the Welcome Table on Sunday. Indicate your preferred pronouns (she/her, he/him, they/them). We'll get it ready for you to pick up at the Welcome Table the following week.



May Worship Services

The theme for May is *The Path of Creativity and the Celebrations Team is looking forward to speakers whose voices can help us to explore this theme as individuals and as a community:*

Sunday, May 7 "The Creativity of Words of Love"

Rev. Peaches Gillette, Associate Director of Congregational Life

Words of love are all around us. They come to us in beautiful forms, like song, poetry, dreams, and our own musing with family and dear friends. Love itself, uplifts us, energizes us, cradles our sense of worth, and gives us a metaphorical place to call home. Our expressions of love are brilliant, a testimony to the emotional creativity of our design. Let us embrace this truth and celebrate it together. *Special music by Children's Chorus of Ithaca*

Sunday, May 14 "Creating Care"

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life and Religious Exploration

We are all caregivers in some way; mothers, fathers, parents, caretakers, partners, and children. How can we allow ourselves the deep appreciation for the care of others, while also acknowledging the care that we give, and the love and care that we owe to ourselves?

Special music by Kate Wylly

Sunday, May 21 "Resisting the Enemies of Creativity"

Rev. Janet Shortall

Psychiatrist Norman Rosenthal, MD, defines creativity as "having the ability to make unexpected connections, to see commonplace things in new ways or usual things that escape the attention of others." Embracing creativity matters more now than ever.

Special music by Roberta Crawford

Sunday, May 28 "Building a Way Together"

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life and Religious Exploration

Please join us for an all-ages service where we will explore how we can use our creativity to build the world that we dream about. With interactive elements, stories, and music that will engage all members of our community, this will be a time for discovering what it means to be a transformational people, lifting up love as the center of who we are. *Special music TBA*

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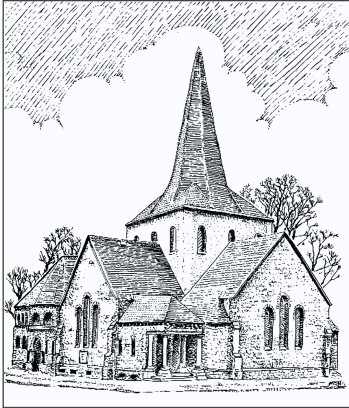
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your newsletter:
www.uuithaca.org

Possible Ponderings

The theme for May is the The Path of Creativity

Possible Ponderings is an offering of ways you might consider engaging more deeply with the theme or reflecting on the ways the idea of The Path of Creativity shows up in your life.

May 1-6 : Has creativity ever gotten you in trouble? Has anyone ever reacted to your creativity as a threat?

May 7-13: Has creativity ever healed or saved you?

May 14-20: Ralph Waldo Emerson said that two things prevent most of us from creative living: fear of public opinion and undue reverence for one's own consistency. Might either of those be true for you?

May 21-27: Could that restless or sour feeling in your gut be your "unused creativity"?

May 28-31: Which artistic metaphor best describes what life feels like to you right now? A blank canvas? A 1,000 piece puzzle? A detective novel? A garden? A writer's block? A work in progress? Something else?

Wanting to officially join FUSIT?

If you are interested in officially "signing the book" to join FUSIT, contact Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life, dre@uuithaca.org. The process is simple - signing the book witnessed by Emily, Rev. Peaches Gillette, or a Board member. Once an Engagement & Outreach Coordinator is hired, a newcomers' series of informational classes will be offered.

The Benefits of Singing Together

"When you sing in a group, whether it's a large choir or a smaller group, the act of collective singing causes your body to release endorphins. This hormone can help promote positive feelings". Do you know that a scientific study showed that 30 minutes of singing increases your immune system function....no side effects and full of pleasure and meaning. (<https://www.healthline.com/health/benefits-of-singing>)

Come sing with the FUSIT choir. We are warm, friendly and joyful and dedicated to bringing the FUSIT community the best and most moving and relevant choir music possible.

Social Media Connections

You can find out about events happening in our congregation, see pictures of past events and connect with other UUs. Like and follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/FUSofI/> and Instagram www.instagram.com/ithacaus

Joys and Sorrows

Congratulations to our bookkeeper, Lauren Ponzoni who gave birth to son Calvin on April 14. Calvin joins older sister Naomi. Lauren will be on maternity leave until mid-June. In lieu of flowers, a Meal Train for Lauren's family has been set up. <https://mealtrain.com/o9o79d>

Joys and Sorrows are now shared during Sunday Service. Please send notices to the team at joysandsorrows@uuihaca.org. When considering what is shared in Joys and Sorrows, please note, these services are live streamed and available to the public on our YouTube Channel.

Joys and Sorrows reflect what has happened during the past month. For the most up-to-date information, please check the Weekly Announce.

Soul Matters Material for May - The Path of Creativity

The Soul Matters theme for May is *The Path of Creativity*. This month's packet includes a few short readings, spiritual exercises, and discussion questions for you to consider. The material can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/SoulMattersMay2023>

FUSIT Listserv

The new FUSIT listerv is now operational. If you would like to join, please fill out [this form](#) and you will be added to the list. If you have any questions, let Michelle know at: office@uuihaca.org.

New Intercom System

We have installed a new intercom system on the Parish House door. To gain entry during business hours, just press the intercom button and you will be buzzed in. Please note, Michelle does have a number of tasks outside the building/her office so you are welcome to make an appointment to ensure that the office will be open.

Archived Sermon Transcripts

Written transcripts of last summer's services (and select other sermons) are now available [on the website](#).

If you missed these sermons or would like to revisit them, please check out the link above! We will be adding sermons to the page periodically.

Emergency Pastoral Care

In case of pastoral need, call Kathy Hopkins 607-592-3025. She will direct pastoral needs for weddings, memorial services and emergencies .

LGBTQ+ Welcoming Renewal Congregational Conversation

Thank you to everyone who showed up to the congregational conversation on Sunday, April 23rd, to discuss FUSIT's intention to participate in the LGBTQ+ Renewal Process in the upcoming church year. FUSIT became a welcoming congregation in 2000 and has not yet renewed that status, which the UUA recommends doing every five years. The five steps recommended by the UUA are: Become a Welcoming Congregation, Welcoming Worship Services, Welcoming Days of Observance, Welcoming Religious Education, Support a Welcoming Project. A vote of affirmation will be held at the Annual Meeting on **May 24th** to move forward with this process.

With gratitude to the newly formed team who will be leading this initiative, Kevin Moss, Loretta Heimbuch, Tom Coakley, Elisa Collins-Zinda, and Emily Richards.

Art in the Parlor

The AITP committee has put up a new exhibit in the parlor that we hope you'll enjoy. The art pieces have been created by members of the Quilt Divas of Central New York. The Divas include members from Ithaca, Manlius, Syracuse and Trumansburg, and Homer.

The pieces are considered "Art Quilts" or "Fabric Art". They are not the kind of quilts your grandmother made. Many of the quilts are for sale as well, so there is information about how to contact each artist to purchase a quilt. What a pleasure it has been to re-open the Art in the Parlor program again post-pandemic!

Two of the members of the Quilt Divas are UU congregants Donna Faivre-Roberts and Therese O'Connor. If you have questions, you can contact either of them. And any feedback is always welcomed. This will be the last exhibit of the church year, so if you have ideas for next year, please contact any committee member: Helen Ann Yunis, Barbara Shew, Therese or Donna.

How to Access the Annex by Elevator

To access the Annex by elevator for Adult RE and other FUSIT events, please use the door at 208 E. Buffalo St. Take the elevator to the second floor.

Anti-Racism Ministry Team

The May ARMT meeting will take place on **May 24** at 7:00 pm. The ARMT meets on the 4th Wednesday of every month. Contact joAnn kowalski: jmkowalskiro@gmail.com.

Did you know you can text in your donations to the offering plate on Sundays? Simply text 607-260-6616 with the amount + offering (eg: \$5 offering) to donate by phone. It's super easy!

Our Mission

Our mission is to create connection, find inspiration and engage the world.
Connect. Inspire. Engage.

Successful Spring 2023 Community-Wide Online Auction

On the 3-day weekend of April 28, 29, 30, up for bid was a wide array of over 200 bid items donated by our members and 70 local merchants.

This was a great outreach event, connecting FUSIT with the wider Ithaca community. So, whenever possible, let's personally thank these merchants for their wonderful support!

Agway Gardening Center	Ithaca Beer Company
American Crafts by Robbie Dien	Ithaca Guitar Works
Angry Mom Records	Ithaca Made Gift Shop
Argos Inn	Ithaca Sheepskin
Autumn Leaves Used Bookstore	Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport
Bool's Flower Shop	Kitchen Theatre
Brain Shoppe	LaTourelle Hotel & Bistro
Buffalo Street Books	Liquid State Brewing Company
Cafe DeWitt	Luna Inspired Street Food
Cat's Pajamas	Luna Love Hair Salon
Cayuga Landscape Company	Mama Goose/Jillian's Drawers
Cinemapolis	Mighty Yoga
Crossroads Bar & Grill	Mockingbird Paperie
Deeply Devoted Massage	Monks on the Commons
Diamond's Indian Restaurant	Moosewood Restaurant
Diane's Downtown Automotive	Museum of the Earth
Dolce Delight Cafe	Northside Wine & Spirits
East Hill Antiques	One World Market
East Shore Roadhouse	Pet Smart
Eddydale Farms	Petrune
Fibers Boutique	Rasa Spa
Fifteen Steps/Breathe Fashions	RoseBarb Farm Cottage
Foster Custom Kitchens	Sam Peter Furniture
Gimme Coffee	Sangam Indian Restaurant
Gourdlandia	Sciencenter
GreenStar Market	Serendipity Boutique
Handwork	Simeon's American Bistro
Hangar Theatre	Six Mile Creek Vineyard
History Center	State Theatre
Home Green Home	Sunset Grill
Hopshire Brewery	Sunshine's Creative Design
Hound & Mare Cafe	Trader Joe's
Hunt's Auto Service	Uncle Joe's Saddlery and Forge
Island Health & Fitness	Wegmans
Ithaca Ale House	YMCA
Ithaca Bakery	

**First Unitarian is a UUA-recognized
LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation**

Message From the Board of Trustees

The FUSIT membership Annual Meeting is Wednesday, **May 24th**, at 6:00 pm. Childcare will be available. The meeting will be in hybrid format like last year's meeting. We are bringing back a past pre-meeting activity of a meal together - pizza and salad at 5:30 pm. This option is in keeping with our goal of nurturing connections with the bonus of encouraging in-person attendance. But we fully recognize that there are valid reasons to remain socially distanced, so we will continue to offer zoom connection to the meeting.

Please plan to come a little early as there is a check-in process to get your ballot slips and agenda. This year's agenda will include approval of the minutes from last year's meeting, presentation and adoption of next year's budget, election of Trustee candidates, as well as election of Nominations Committee members, and a resolution re-affirming FUSIT as an LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation.

In the coming days please stay alert to postings on Weekly Announce about Congregational Conversations regarding proposed 23-24 Budget, Nomination Committee Report, and LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation resolution.

Don Barber, President

May Board of Trustees Meeting

The May meeting will be held **May 17** at 6:30 pm. The board meeting is a hybrid format, taking place in the church parlor and through Zoom. All FUSIT members are invited to attend this meeting. Ten minutes are set aside at the beginning of the meeting for congregation feedback. Email office@uuithaca.org or check the Weekly Announce email for the Zoom link.

Congregational Administrator Hours

In May, the office will be open **Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 am - 4 pm** and Michelle will be working remotely on Wednesdays from 9 am - 4 pm. This schedule does change occasionally so feel free to make an appointment with office@uuithaca.org if you have church business. The office will be closed on **Monday, May 29**, in observance of Memorial Day. Michelle can be reached at office@uuithaca.org or 607-273-7521 ext. 21.

*The deadline for submissions to the Wednesday Weekly Announce email and Sunday's Order of Service is **Monday at noon**.*

Women's Circle, Monday, May 22

Women's Circle will meet via Zoom on Monday evening, **May 22**, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. We are now generally meeting on the 4th Monday of the month. All who identify as women are welcome. This is a drop-in group, so no need to sign up; just come. Anyone is welcome to bring a poem or a reading. For information or questions contact Nancy Miller at ananda7733@gmail.com or 607-539-7733. Zoom link Meeting ID: 819 4014 1421 Passcode: 874536

Men's Group May Meeting

The Men's Group will gather for discussion and pizza on **May 22**, at 5:30 in the Arch Room. All who identify as men are welcome to join. Contact Jens Wennberg: jens207@gmail.com

Appreciations

- We have new lower coat hooks in the Foyer! Thanks to Amelia Habicht for the idea and to Sara Catterall for the implementation.

- The Social Justice Leadership Team would like to express gratitude to the following for their help in making Social Justice Sunday a success:

Rachel Seymour for setting up tables and clean up. Michelle Waffner for her help in organizing the set up. The Hospitality Team for the extensive dish washing and dish carting that was involved in feeding a crowd. To Amie Hamlin, representing Demonstrating Our Values Through Eating (DOVE), for preparing the delicious and plentiful salads that were available for all to enjoy. For all the individuals and groups who were represented for their continued good work and outreach in the community. And finally to those who attended and signed up to volunteer!! Thank you all for contributing to the successful day!

- Therese O'Connor "would like to recognize Nancy Dolge for her work on writing and editing a Memorial Service Policy that was really needed for our ongoing service to the community". She would also like to thank Fred Balfour "for being the indefatigable champion of the Hospitality Team system, along with his helpers, Andy Turner, Jack Zinda, and Cheryl Botts. Fred has walked with that Hospitality Teams banner held high for months."

- The Social Justice Leadership Team would like to extend appreciation to all those who contributed to the Side with Love collection during April for St. John's Shelter and Food Pantry. Numerous bags and boxes of items will be delivered. A message from the Community Engagement person at St. John's -- "thanks so much for thinking about our shelter guests and community members who rely on our food pantry".

In an effort to nurture a culture of appreciation at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca, we would like to add "Appreciations". Who here at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca have you noticed doing something above and beyond, who has been a quiet unsung hero, or who is doing an exceptional job! It can be a member or staff or friend to our community. Let's sing praises to the many people who help make our community the wonderful place it is. Send your submissions to joysandsorrows@uuthaca.org.



LGBTQ+ Group Wednesday, May 17 from 6:30-8 pm

This Small Group is especially for FUSIT's LGBTQ+ community. Meetings typically follow the same general format and structure as other Small Group Ministries at FUSIT. Gatherings take place on the third Wednesday of each month, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. **All who identify on the LGBTQ+ continuum are welcome.**

Come enjoy this opportunity for fellowship and community within our larger FUSIT community, in a safe, confidential, nurturing environment. For more information, please contact Kevin Moss, kevinm607@hotmail.com.

Buildings and Grounds Volunteer Opportunity!

We will be repainting the walls and installing a new floor in the main upstairs room of the annex in June! This is a big job that we can't afford to hire labor for, and many hands make light work! All tools and supplies provided, plus food and conversation--working together is a great way to get to know each other.

If you might be willing and able to help with any aspect of this -- painting prep, painting, vinyl floor installation -- please contact Sara Catterall sara.catterall@gmail.com to get on the list to plan times!



Pub Theology

Tuesday, **May 23**, 6:30 pm at Liquid State Brewing

Join us at Liquid State Brewing for an evening of good fellowship and conversation at our favorite local brewery (owned by FUSIT members!). We will gather at 6:30 pm and reflect together on our monthly theme of *The Path of Creativity*. Non-beer and non-alcoholic drink options available! 21 and over please. Bring your friends! Hope to see you there! Pub Theology takes place on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 620 West Green Street, Ithaca.

How to Access the Annex by Elevator

To access the Annex by elevator for Adult RE and other FUSIT events, please use the door at 208 E. Buffalo St. Take the elevator to the second floor.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Thursday, **May 12**, from 10:00 am-6:00 pm.
The blood drive will be held in the church parlor.
Enter through the garden entrance on Aurora Street.
Walk-ins welcome, appointments appreciated.
Call 1-800 RED CROSS or visit redcrossblood.org to make your appointment.

Help Needed to Provide Lunches for the Homeless Shelter in May

As a member of Area Congregations Together (ACT), FUSIT finds four volunteers to provide fifteen lunches apiece to the Ithaca homeless shelter on the first Tuesday of each month.

At this time we are currently seeking one more volunteer for **May 2nd**. Can you be that one volunteer? You would buy supplies, make the lunches within 24 hours of delivery, and deliver them between 9:30 and 11:30 am to SJCS Day Center at 618 W. State Street. Deliveries are made through a window on State Street.

Each lunch should include a sandwich, a piece of soft fruit, and a cookie or other small dessert. Remember you can be reimbursed, in full or in part, for your expenses. Just let Jackie Jablonski know. To volunteer and/or ask questions, contact Jackie at jackiejab@me.com.

Do You Want to Give a Sermon?

FUSIT's Summer Services will be **June 18th though September 3rd** at 9:30 am. Church members and other people from the community will lead the services. So if you would like to give a sermon this summer, please contact us.

We will also need people to help run the services setting up the equipment, being ushers, helping with snacks and cleaning up. If you are interested, contact Jens Wennberg (Jens207@gmail.com) or Preston Wilson (presbev1@gmail.com).

Thanks to Your Generosity

Thanks to the generosity of those who contributed to the shared plate on March 26, we were able to donate \$313 to Second Wind Cottages, a non-profit organization, located in Newfield, which provides homes and hope to the homeless.

FUSIT Library

Did you know... the FUSIT Library (located upstairs in the Parish House) has over 800 books available to check out. Visit [our online catalog](#) or stop in and browse the shelves.

FUSIT Choir Every Thursday

Our choir meets every Thursday from 7-8:30 pm in the Annex. All are welcome! For more information, contact Choir Director Jayne Demakos (choir@uuithaca.org).

Adult Religious Exploration

The Adult Religious Education (ARE) Team offers pre-service presentations held on the first and third Sundays of each month of the church year in the Annex, unless indicated otherwise in the Order of the Service, the Weekly Announce, and/or the monthly newsletter. Coffee and treats are served starting from 8:45 am, with the presentation (including discussion and Q&A) running from 9:00-10:15 am. The Annex can be accessed through the garden entrance to the church on Aurora St.

● **May 7**, 9:00 am in the Annex, coffee at 8:45

Cheryl Botts has studied in one way, shape, or form (literally) SUFISM, since 1984. It all began in the early 1980s when she was seeking new traditions outside of her Presbyterian/Protestant upbringing. This seeking possibly began in her last year of college when she took a philosophy class. One day in Rochester NY she went to a circle dance called then "Sufi Dancing". This began her search for what Sufism was all about. Within 2 years she had found her way to the original Sufi Order (Chishti Order) of the US based at the "Abode of the Message" in New Lebanon, NY. It was 1986 that she went to do a silent retreat and was clear to become an "Initiate" or a "student" of this Sufi Order which was then run by Hazrat Inayat's son, Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan. Hazrat Inayat Khan brought Sufism to the West in the 1920s.

Cheryl is a member of 2 Sufi Orders (the Chishti and the Mevlevi) and is a Certified leader of the Dances of Universal Peace, one of the many main practices within the Chishti Order.

In her talk she will cover the origins of Sufism and its relationship to Islam. She will cover what Orders do and what their focuses and pillars are. Using poetry, music, pictures, quotes from the Masters and Mystics and meditation, she'll present a tiny taste of what Sufis experience.

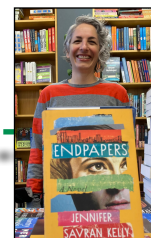
● **May 21**, 9:00 am in the Annex, coffee at 8:45

Jennifer Savran Kelly (she/they) is an author and bookbinder based in Ithaca. She writes primarily fiction, with a focus on sexuality and gender, including gender roles and identity. Her debut novel, *Endpapers*, has been recently published by Algonquin Books. Jennifer also works as a production editor at Cornell University Press.

"The kernel of the idea for *Endpapers* came from a fascinating bit of trivia she learned in a bookbinding workshop. Binders used to sometimes find personal letters hidden under the endpapers of books, where they could never be found unless the book was destroyed. I'd also been wanting to write a queer story, so eventually I put these two ideas together."

Partial summary

One day, Dawn discovers something hidden under the endpapers of an old book: the torn-off cover of a mid-century lesbian pulp novel, with an illustration of a woman looking into a mirror and seeing a man's face. On the back is a queer love letter. Dawn becomes obsessed with tracking down who wrote it, convinced the mysterious writer can help her find her place in the world.



Deadline for Committee/Team Annual Reports is May 1, 2023

Please be as brief as possible, limiting your report to no more than 300-500 words, highlighting important facts with bullets, including photos or graphics (please send these as jpegs).

Send your annual reports to Loretta at adminasst@uuithaca.org by **May 1st**, since it takes several weeks to compile this report to be presented at the FUSIT Annual Meeting on Wednesday, **May 24th**.



Summer Services Are Back!!

Summer Services will be held again in the parlor at 9:30 am **June 19 through September 4**.

Help us create these more informal services or volunteer to present a sermon. Be part of bringing our congregation back together in person over the summer.

Contact Jens Wennberg at jens207@gmail.com to let us know how you can help.

The Religious Exploration is Seeking Team Members and Volunteers

The **RE Team** needs new enthusiastic members to help guide our programming. If you have been looking for a way to make a huge impact on this community please consider the RE Team. **Volunteers** to be mentors to our children and young people, as well as leading adult programming for parents is needed. Commitment can be as little as a single one hour program up to weekly regular meetings for youth.



Beacon on Aurora - An Evening with Garnet Rogers Sunday, May 21, 7:00 pm

Garnet Rogers is a Canadian folk musician, singer, songwriter, and composer. Roger's style utilizes influences from blues, rock, country/bluegrass, and classical. Rogers' instruments include the guitar, mandolin, violin, and flute. His songs range from slices of life to mild social commentary and humour.

*Doors open at 6:30 pm. Shows at 7:00 pm.
\$20 suggested donation. Cash preferred.*

Spiritual Yoga Series

**Sunday, May 7th & Sunday, May 21st
12:15 pm-1:15 pm, Arch Room**

This Kundalini Fusion Series is guided by Madeline Natale. You can expect Asana (pose), Mantra, Meditation, and Pranayama (breath). Each class will aim to move energy that we have stored in our bodies and create a deeper sense of awareness. This class is accessible to all bodies. Bring a yoga mat and a blanket for your comfort. Chairs will be provided for anyone who needs one. Email reasst@uuithaca.org if you have any questions.

Annual Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

6:00 pm in the Sanctuary and Zoom

(email office@uuithaca.org or check Weekly Announce for link)

6:00 pm - Call Meeting to Order

6:10 pm - Welcome and Chalice Lighting

**6:15 pm - Year in Review
Vision of Ministry 2022-23 evaluation**

6:30 pm - Hybrid Meeting Protocols

6:40 pm - Approval of May 25, 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes

6:50 pm - Adoption of 23-24 Budget

**7:05 pm - Election of Candidates for the Board of Trustees and the Nominating Committee
Nominating Committee presents the slate of candidates.**

7:15 pm - Renewal of LGBT^{Q+} Welcoming Congregation Resolution

7:45 pm - Adjourn and Closing Words

*Come join us at 5:30 for
pizza and salad before the
meeting. Childcare available
by emailing
office@uuithaca.org.*

History of FUSIT Book

The book *A Liberal Church* is the illustrated history of the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca from 1865 to 1945. It was written by Carol Kammen, the Tompkins County Historian, and aided greatly by FUSIT member Beverly Henderson West. Read about being a liberal congregation in the midst of orthodoxy, and discover how and why FUSIT was planted in Ithaca and how it grew.

The book is available for a \$15 donation in the church office anytime the office is open.



Ithaca Festival Parade

FUSIT will be participating in the 2023 Ithaca Festival Parade, which will be held on Thursday, June 1, starting at 6:00 pm. This year's theme is "Planet Ithaca". More information to come on how you can participate.

You've Been Flocked! Brighten Someone's Day!

Interested in "flocking" the yard of one of your friends, neighbors, or co-workers? You can rent our rainbow colored lawn flamingos from the office and place them in someone's yard to add a little color to their day. This is a great way of bringing joy to each other, and raising some money for our congregation in the process! Suggested donation: \$20. Email office@uuthaca.org to rent the flamingos today!



Save the Date!

**Annual End-of-the-Year Picnic
and Flower Communion
Sunday, June 12, 10:30 am
Stewart Park (large pavillion)**



Expanding Community

For many this pandemic has brought increased feelings of isolation and being cut off from others that continue to linger. ***We always welcome new members to our community and faith and hope to provide a safe space of connection and learning for all during this time of physical distancing.*** Please continue to invite any and all people that you know that you believe could find meaning by exploring what the FUSIT community and Unitarian Universalist faith can offer.

Welcome New Members

Please extend a warm welcome to those who joined our community by signing the membership book on April 30th: Wren Tuatha, Joanne Trutko, Friede Sanders and Mary Clabby.

Become a Member of FUSIT

New to our church? Or have been coming for a while but now seems like the right time to join as we are emerging into spring? If you would like to officially join First Unitarian Society of Ithaca contact Emily Richards dre@uuthaca.org or any member of the Board to sign the membership book.

Parking on Sundays

While we are still not allowed to park in the lot next to the church on Aurora Street, we did confirm that it is ok to park in the Town Hall parking lot on Sundays (on the corner of Buffalo and Aurora) as long as the gate is open.

UUA General Assembly June 21 - 25, 2023

Join fellow UU's, **June 21 - 25, 2023** online or in-person in **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**. General Assembly 2023 will be a multiplatform event, with registration options for in-person and/or virtual participation. In-person registration includes access to events scheduled to take place in Pittsburgh, as well as everything available to virtual registrants.

Full virtual registration includes access to the GA app, as well as all on-demand programming, live webinars, and live-streamed events.

In-person registration rates will increase on May 1.

[Register Here.](#)