



ITHACA

UUU Connections

2023/2024 Issue No. 8

April 1-30, 2024

Our Shared Journey

Both the idea of Ubuntu, I am because you are, and the greeting Namaste, the light in me honors the light in you, speaks to the ancient knowledge and understanding of the deep interconnection between us all.

Our existence is dependent on, not just that of other human beings, but that of every living creature on this planet. Too often we think only in terms of the self, of our own needs and wants, our own personal hardships and joys.

The value of Interdependence, as currently written in the proposed changes to Article 2 of the UUA Bylaws, highlights our deep commitment as Unitarian Universalists to work to create a world which recognizes the sacredness of all beings. And whether you personally support the proposed revisions or not, we can all appreciate the truth in the statement below, that we are all dependent on one another and the earth. That our faith calls us to take care of one another. It calls to us with a love that encompasses all, a love that is the sacred center of our beings.

Proposed Article 2 Wording

Interdependence. We honor the interdependent web of all existence. With reverence for the great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it. We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships.

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life

What Happened to the Trees?

The trees in front of the church on Aurora Street were cut down in preparation for a major reconstruction of the sidewalk by the city, probably in June. They made this decision after our volunteers and the city sidewalk maintenance teams struggled for many years with the aggressive shallow roots which heaved up the sidewalk every year, creating tripping and slipping hazards. We tried to manage these problems by grinding down the edges and replacing bricks, but the surfaces kept getting more uneven, and the roots have been growing into our foundation as well. They were a popular urban tree species, but an unfortunate choice for this location. The city will replace them in the fall with a smaller species, possibly something flowering.

Sara Catterall, Buildings and Grounds

In-Person Sunday Services

10:30 am in the Sanctuary

Services are live-streamed and available on our YouTube channel.

Nursery childcare and Religious Exploration classes for children are open.



Save the Date!

Cabaret Night

April 12, 6-9 pm in the Parlor
A fun evening!

Your choice of **three** delicious entrees. **Three** talented musical groups from our own FUSIT community: Tim Ball, Kevin Moss, Valerie and Lloyd Graves. \$40 per person. Childcare available.

Sign up on Sunday, click the link in the website, or use this QR code:



Emergency Pastoral Care

In case of pastoral need, call Kathy Hopkins at 607-592-3025. She will direct pastoral needs for weddings, memorial services and emergency pastoral care to Rev. Janet Shortall.

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!

Religious Exploration News

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

Greetings from the DRE

Welcome Spring!

This month we will be exploring the Gifts of Interdependence through community, creatures, and creations, and how we have a give-and-take relationship with them all. We are excited to continue to create opportunities to have fun working together in a way that helps kids explore what interdependence means for us as Unitarian Universalists, the difference between independence and interdependence, and how our faith teaches us and lifts up the idea that we can't go it alone.

Our need for one another is part of what draws us into community and keeps us coming back. I hope that you will take part in the many opportunities, for all ages, that this community offers to experience that connection.

Emily Richards CRE, Director of Religious Exploration

Classroom Sundays

Elementary: This past month the elementary aged children explored the Gifts of Transformation with our Take Apart Party, an egg hunt, stories, oobleck and more! This month they will continue to explore our faith through the Gifts of Interdependence.

Middle School and High School: The youth will be continuing their Crossing Paths journey by exploring the teachings of Quakerism this month with a visit to Quaker Meeting House on Hector Street on Sunday, April 21st at 10:30am.

It is very important that all youth who are participating in these visits are also attending on Sunday mornings so that they have the foundation of understanding necessary to make this a meaningful experience. Please register your youth at the link below if they plan to attend.

[Crossing Paths Religious Society of Friends \(Quakers\) Permission Form](#)

If you are interested in driving youth and attending some of these trips to learn more about the diversity of faith traditions in our communities please email Emily Richards at dre@uuithaca.org.

RE Registration

If you haven't already done so, please register your children below for the 2023-2024 Religious Exploration program! This information helps us to plan for the upcoming year.

[First Unitarian Society of Ithaca RE Registration Form 2023-2024](#)

Religious Exploration Wishlist

If you are looking to support the RE program and would like to purchase a gift, here is a list of items that would be useful and deeply appreciated.

[RE Wishlist](#)

RE Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering for the RE program is a gift of welcome that we all have to give and I hope you will consider joining our amazing team of volunteers. This important programming can only happen with the support of the entire community.

[FUSIT 2023-2024 RE Volunteer Sign Up](#)

Please join our UU Ithaca Parents Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/fusitparents>

Religious Exploration Schedule for April

April 7th - Classroom Sunday

April 14th - Classroom Sunday

April 21st - Creative Sunday and Youth Trip to Quaker Meetinghouse

April 28th - Multigenerational Service

Nursery

The Nursery will be open every Sunday from 10am-12pm for young children between the ages of 0 and 4.

Volunteers are needed to help fill in for the Nursery. You can volunteer as little as once or twice a year, or as much as once a month! Please contact our Childcare Coordinator, Melissa Heslop at childcare@uuithaca.org to get your name on the list!

Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.

Anais Nin

(RE News continued from page 2)

Religious Exploration Events for April

April Movie Night

Friday, April 12th, 6 pm-8:30 pm
Arch Room

Drop your kids off, or stay and join us, for a movie night, complete with dinner and snacks, during the Cabaret!

[April Movie Night Registration](#)

NEW Small Group Ministry for Parents - Childcare Provided

Sunday, April 21st, 12 pm-1 pm, FUSIT Library

Beginning last month we are continuing to offer our Small Group Ministry for individuals who are actively parenting. The group will follow the Soul Matters themes with a focus on how they are related to the journey and experience of being a parent. Gatherings will take place monthly on the third Sunday of the month from 12pm-1pm, with childcare available. We invite you to join us for an opportunity for fellowship and community within our larger First UU community, in a safe, confidential and nurturing environment.

Music for Little People

Every Other Tuesday from 1 pm-1:45 pm
April 9th and 23rd, Arch Room

Share in the joy of music in this bi-weekly class which is free and open to the public. Children 0-5 and their caregivers are welcome to meet us in the Arch Room on two Tuesdays in April. Sing, play, dance, explore instruments, and connect through music.

MUUSIC for You and Me

Sunday, April 14th
12:00 pm-12:45 pm, Arch Room

Explore our UU values through the joy and connection that music can bring in this monthly class for parents, caregivers, and young people of all ages.

***See page 10 for information about a **NEW summer camp for children 5-12 years old.**



NEW! Intro to Mindfulness Meditation

A six week series on Thursdays, April 11 through May 16th, 6-7:00 pm in the Arch Room. Taught by Seema Mathur. Topics will include mindfulness of the body, emotions, thoughts and beliefs, and how to use compassion as a tool with mindfulness.

April Worship Services

The theme for April is "Interdependence" 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, April 7

"Independence and Community-Striking the Balance" Rev. Peaches Gillette

Independence and individuality are both vital pieces in the development of a thriving community, but we must strengthen our insight on how they work together.

Special music by Charlotte Greenspan and Carrie Regenstein, 4-hand piano

Sunday, April 14

"We Belong to Each Other"

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life
Douglas Steere, a Quaker teacher, says that the ancient question, "Who am I?" inevitably leads to a deeper one, "Whose am I?" To whom do we belong? And what do we owe to ourselves and one another in recognizing the interdependence of our existence?

Special music by Tim Ball, fiddle

Sunday, April 21

"From What Understanding of the World is YOUR Life Lived?"

Rev. Janet Shortall, Director of Pastoral Care
Physicist Fritjof Capra writes: "In ordinary life, we are not aware of the unity of all things but divide the world into separate objects and events. This division is useful and necessary to cope with our everyday environment, but it is not a fundamental feature of reality...To believe that our abstract concepts of separate 'things' and 'events' are realities of nature is an illusion."

Special music by Drake's Studio, violin

Sunday, April 28

"Songs of the Earth"

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life
Join us for a multigenerational celebration of the gifts of the earth and that which connects us all. Dance around the Maypole, lift your voice in song, and experience the joy of the turning of the seasons.



Director of Congregational
Life and Religious
Exploration
Emily Richards
dre@uuihaca.org

Director of Pastoral Care
Rev. Janet Shortall
pastoralcare@uuihaca.org

Preacher and Program
Associate
Rev. Peaches Gillette
assocdcl@uuihaca.org

Religious Exploration
Assistant
Madeline Natale
reasst@uuihaca.org

Music Director
Stephanie Ortolano
music@uuihaca.org

Choir Director
Jayne Demakos
choir@uuihaca.org

President, Board of Trustees
Fred Balfour
fred.balfour@gmail.com

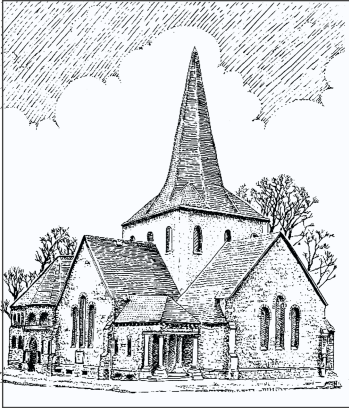
Congregational Administrator
Michelle Waffner
office@uuihaca.org

Administrative Assistant
Loretta Heimbuch
adminasst@uuihaca.org

Sexton
Rachel Seymour
sexton@uuihaca.org

Bookkeeper
Lauren Ponzoni
office@uuihaca.org

The First Unitarian Society of Ithaca
306 North Aurora Street
P.O. Box 6
Ithaca, NY 14851-0006



Visit our Website and get
your newsletter:
www.uuithaca.org

Possible Ponderings

The theme for April is The Gift of Interdependence

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 Gift of Interdependence shows up in your life.

April 1-6: Do you think age impacts the way we care for and connect with the interdependent web of life?

April 7-13: Do you feel that “sacrifice” has a central role to play in addressing the climate crisis?

April 14-20: How has the place you live shaped the way you understand and approach life? And yourself?

April 21-27: Some of us live in a place and some of us belong to a place. Have you found a place you belong to yet?

April 28-30: Has a tree ever spoken to you? How about a river? Or the ocean? Or the moon? What about a weed?

Pub Theology

Tuesday, **April 23**, 6:30 pm
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 *Intrderpendence*. Non-beer and non-alcoholic drinks 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.

April Board of Trustees Meeting

The April meeting will be held Tuesday, **April 16**, at 6:30 pm. The board meeting is a hybrid format, taking place in the church parlor and through Zoom. Monthly board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month. All FUSIT members are invited to attend this meeting. Ten minutes are set aside at the beginning of the meeting for congregation feedback. Please join us!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/88258776990pwd=VUxUTUMraVZDUFRQzQndSVFRraFIPdz09>

Meeting ID: 882 5877 6990

Passcode: 602445





Social Justice Leadership Team (SJLT) **Activities and Opportunities**

We hope you will consider joining us in our social justice efforts and encourage you to reach out and learn more about how you can get involved. Email sjlt@uuiithaca.org for more information.

Shared Plate in April

The shared plate for April will support Ithaca Mobile Pack, sponsor of the annual event for **Feed My Starving Children**. This international organization provides life-saving meals worldwide to people who need it the most. The local Ithaca Mobile Pack is sponsored by ACT (Area Congregations Together), of which we are a member. Last September the group raised over \$66,000 to pay for the food that Ithaca volunteers packed—over 240,00. Many of those were folks from FUSIT who worked together with hundreds of other volunteers at the National Guard Armory on Hanshaw Road.

Side with Love for April

The Alliance of Families for Justice will be the recipient of our Side with Love donations in April. Their mission is to support, empower and mobilize families and individuals impacted by the criminal justice system so they can marshal their collective power to create a just world.

8th Principle Action Ministry

The 8th Principle Action Ministry (formerly the Antiracism Ministry Team) meets every fourth Wednesday of the month, so they will meet via Zoom at 7 pm on **April 24**.

They will be continuing educational efforts so that we may as a congregation “accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

Environmental Interest Circle (EIC) - April 3 at 7 pm

We will organize next steps for each of us and the congregation to keep saving money and improve the sustainability of our lives. The meeting on **April 3** will take place both in person and via Zoom. Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month. All are welcome. Please join us. Contact Matt Franke-Singer at mfs@twcny.rr.com for further information.

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81644753524?](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81644753524?pwd=SDBqQTN5eIM3ejltbGdJcGhPa3QxQT09)
[pwd=SDBqQTN5eIM3ejltbGdJcGhPa3QxQT09](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81644753524?pwd=SDBqQTN5eIM3ejltbGdJcGhPa3QxQT09)

Meeting ID: 816 4475 3524. Passcode: 894885

Help Needed to Provide Lunches for the Homeless

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.

We are seeking two more volunteers for **April 2**. 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. Social Justice can reimburse your expenses, at your request. To volunteer and/or ask questions, please contact Jackie Jablonski at jackiejab@me.com.

Unirondack 2024!

Save the date: **August 30 to September 2**.

Registration will open Sunday **April 14** at 2 pm.

Hearing about Unirondack for the first time? Awesome! Every Labor Day weekend FUSIT goes to Unirondack, a marvelous inter-generational camp in the Adirondacks. We cook meals together, swim in the lake, laze, sing songs and tell tall stories over campfires, play capture the flag and gaga and run all over camp and so much more. The friendships and bonds formed are amazing, and truly serve to build community.

Questions? Email Sue Mann (susan.m.mann@gmail.com) or Michele Hochstetter

Thursday Choir Rehearsals

First Unitarian Choir rehearsals are every Thursday at 7 pm in the Annex and the choir performs on the last Sunday service of each month. Come sing with us! For more information, contact Choir Director, Jayne Demakos, choir@uuiithaca.org.

Soul Matters Material for April - The Gift of Interdependence

The Soul Matters theme for April is *The Gift of Interdependence*. 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/SoulMattersApr2024>

Care Cafes

Sunday, April 14th and 28th

12:15 - 1:45 pm in the FUSIT library

The Care Cafes provide an intimate, loving space for members to come together and share their thoughts and feelings, and their joys and sorrows as they navigate along their spiritual paths, both as individuals and as part of a community. The Care Cafes are facilitated by Rev. Peaches Gillette and Christine Kapral, both professionals trained in counseling, pastoral care and spiritual directions. Each gathering will focus on a loosely structured theme around spirituality, encouraging participants to freely explore all aspects of their spiritual journeys. Please contact Christine or Rev. Peaches with any questions.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the parlor on each scheduled day during coffee hour for those who plan to attend.

Rev. Peaches Gillette assocdcl@uuiithaca.org

Christine Kapral christinekapral@yahoo.com



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/ithacauu

Adult Religious Exploration (ARE) Programs

Adult Religious Exploration (ARE) programs are scheduled for **NOON IN THE ANNEX** after the close of the Sunday services. This offers enough time in the parlor to enjoy a cup of coffee or tea, a snack, and a bit of socializing before heading up to the annex for continued friendly learning and discussion. All are welcome.

Sunday, April 7 LGBTQ+ Allyship workshop

Please join Dr. Cortney Johnson (she/they) for a discussion about LGBTQ+ allyship. This conversation will focus on introductory information about gender, sex, sexuality, and romantic orientation. We will discuss terminology as well as best practices for supporting the LGBTQ+ community.

Dr. Cortney "CJ" Johnson (she/they) serves as Associate Dean of Students and the Director of the LGBT Resource Center at Cornell University. They provide strategic leadership for the Resource Center, which aims to support and empower LGBTQ+ students on campus. CJ has worked in Higher Education for over a decade, affording her the opportunity to gain a plethora of experience in providing college student support, facilitating diversity and inclusion trainings, and implementing LGBTQ+ competencies.

Sunday, April 21 "Looking Back", Nick Garin, FUSIT Member

Nick and Gayle Garin moved to Trumansburg about two years ago and became members of FUSIT. Born on a Navajo reservation and raised in the segregated South, Nick will trace his literal and spiritual journey to NYU Law School, his subsequent work in legal services for the NYC poor, and finally his work as a public advocate (consumer law attorney) with the NY Attorney General's office.

Nick and Gayle raised their three sons in Poughkeepsie and were members of the Poughkeepsie Unitarian Universalist Fellowship for 42 years. We look forward to hearing about their work fighting against immoral wars, poverty, injustice, and climate change. And it will be interesting to hear about their long-time membership in the Poughkeepsie UU congregation. The program will include an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Blue Zones - Movie Showing and Discussion

Sunday, April 7, 9:00-10:00 am in the Annex

Would you like to live a long, vibrant life? There are places around the world where a large population has lived active, vital lives past 100 years. These are called Blue Zones. Author Dan Buettner travelled around the world and discovered five unique communities where people live extraordinarily long and energetic lives. He documented what he has learned in a series called "Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones."

This is the last screening in a 4-part series. We invite you to join us to learn what these individuals, but more importantly their communities are doing to support their elders to remain vibrant centenarians. The session begins with a half hour video of the episode, then we discuss what we've observed.

This final chapter ties everything together, and will be a good chance to challenge ourselves. We hope that elders will be able to join us, but for those under 50, it is never too early to build the structures within your life. These centenarians are surrounded by younger generations that support and learn from them. We hope you will join us. *Don and Rita Barber*

Joys and Sorrows

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.

Lydia Pettis is in Rochester to begin the Deep Brain Stimulation surgical procedure to help her Parkinsons. Please send your light, prayers and good wishes for her as she takes on this journey.

Appreciations

As we nurture a culture of appreciation at FUSIT, let's sing praises to the many people who help make our community the wonderful place it is. 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. Send your submissions to joysandsorrows@uuihaca.org.

Many thanks to Matt Hare and the Stewardship Team for all their hard work planning and organizing the 2024-25 pledge campaign, which is off to a great start! And big thanks to everyone who has already pledged. *You are appreciated so much!*

Important Reminder for Committee/Team Leaders

The deadline for Committee/Team annual reports is **May 1, 2024**. Please be brief without losing any important information and if you have "measurable" facts, feel free to point those out. Please send your annual report to Loretta at adminasst@uuihaca.org by **May 1st**, so the FUSIT Annual Report is ready for the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, **May 21st**.



Summer Services

Preston Wilson will be the primary organizer and regular celebrations associate this year for the dozen or so summer services coming up soon. Jens Wennberg, who has done a wonderful job in this position in the past, will be taking a secondary role. These services traditionally have been much appreciated and have given people from both inside and outside the church a place to describe their personal thoughts and feelings on a wide range of topics within the context of UUism's principles and the decorum of our covenant. If you would like to give a sermon this summer (or just help out with ushering, setting up, etc.), please contact Preston at presbev1@gmail.com. Thank you.

Nametags

If you would like a nametag, please fill out the **nametag request form** at the Welcome Table or contact adminasst@uuihaca.org and we'll make one for you. Then look for your new nametag in the cabinet at the Narthex (corner of Aurora and Buffalo Sts.).

Office Schedule

The office will be open on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9 am - 4 pm. In cases of inclement weather, Michelle will work remotely. Please check the Mid-Week Announcements for the updated weekly schedule.

Important Office Deadlines:

- Weekly Announce Email Submissions: to Michelle by Monday at noon
- Order of Service Submissions: to Michelle by Monday at noon
- Tables in the parlor for Sunday's coffee hour: request from Michelle by Thursday at noon

Women's Circle on April 22

Women's Circle usually meets via Zoom on the 4th Monday of the month from 7-8:30 pm. 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: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/82169260621?pwd=ZDkyanRKMmo2czhqSWgrSVhmbGFqdz09>

Meeting ID: 821 6926 0621. Passcode: 015515

Expanding Community

For many the pandemic and our increasingly busy, digital world bring about heightened feelings of isolation and being cut off from others. 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 Unitarian Universalist faith can offer.



From the Music Team

Beacon on Aurora, our monthly concert series, continues on Sunday, **April 14**, for an evening with **House of Hamill**.

In the Sanctuary of First Unitarian at 7:00 pm

Pennsylvania-based House of Hamill is a fixture on festival stages across the US, and have shared their music and stories on the country's premier folk stages. Their version of "Pound a Week Rise" rose to #1 on the US Folk DJ charts, and the video for their all-violin cover of "Sweet Child O' Mine" amassed over 16 million views on Facebook, where it was shared over 400,000 times. A lively collection of original instrumentals, reimagined folk ballads, and new songs that showcase the trio's versatility, "Folk Hero" is the third House of Hamill album to be funded entirely by their fans.

Doors open at 6:30 and the concert starts at **7 pm**. \$20 suggested donation at the door. Cash preferred.

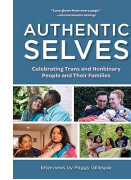
For more information and to reserve your ticket, go to <https://unitarian.ithaca.ny.us/index.php/beacon-on-aurora/>

Contact Music Director, Stephanie Ortolano, at music@uuihaca.org if you are interested in helping make this series a success! Bakers, coffee makers, and ushers needed!

LGBTQ+ Welcoming Renewal Identity Survey

As a part of our Welcoming Congregation Renewal process, we are reaching out to better understand our congregation, and our many held identities.

Please fill out our Identity Survey and help us to better serve this community: [Identity Survey](#)



LGBTQ+ Book Discussion Group

We will end our discussion of "Authentic Selves, Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families" on

April 8. The group meets from 7 - 8 pm via Zoom. All are invited to attend, even if you have not read the book or haven't read all the stories for that month, as we engage in lively and important conversations around this topic. The compelling 35 stories provide a glimpse into the real lives, both the challenges and triumphs, of these remarkable people and their families. In April we'll discuss the last 8 stories (which begin on page 279). Copies of the book can be found in our church library and at the Tompkins County Public Library. Loretta Heimbuch

adminasst@uuihaca.org will lead the discussion. This program is part of FUSIT's commitment to renewing our status as an LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation.

Join Zoom meeting: [https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/87206162355?pwd=QUhodUxrK2lFa3lXRTJaSVIIQmpvUT09)

[87206162355?](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/87206162355?pwd=QUhodUxrK2lFa3lXRTJaSVIIQmpvUT09)

[pwd=QUhodUxrK2lFa3lXRTJaSVIIQmpvUT09](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/87206162355?pwd=QUhodUxrK2lFa3lXRTJaSVIIQmpvUT09)

Meeting ID: 872 0616 2355 Passcode: 327155

LGBTQ+ Group Meets Monthly



This Small Group is especially for FUSIT's LGBTQ+ community and meets monthly. **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 and nurturing environment. Please reach out to Ely at eleanorwillard97@gmail.com for more information.



Day of Silence Friday, April 12

Observed annually by LGBTQ+ communities, the **Day of Silence** is the national and international day of action to spread awareness about the effects of the bullying and harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning students. In the United States, students in middle school, high school, college and universities take a day-long vow of silence to symbolically represent the silencing of LGBTQ+ students. Hundreds of thousands of students at more than 8,000 schools observe this event, which is traditionally held on the second Friday of April.



Message From the Board of Trustees

April is the heart of FUSIT Pledging. This year's theme is "Gifting Grows Connection". Pledging generates funds which are so important to maintain our facility, acquire program materials, and compensate staff who lead, coordinate, and plan programs. But most of the on the ground energy and action for FUSIT activities comes from our community members. Every FUSIT survey tells us the most important and valuable attribute that FUSIT provides is "community". Building on this recognition, a sure way to grow connections is to gift your time and energy to FUSIT activities: join a committee, team, choir, work parties, and affinity groups. All result in deeper relationships with the folks you sit near and see on Sunday mornings; building that community we value.

"The more you give, the more you receive." In April, we give our treasure. And every day we could choose to give of our time and skill. Everyone's gift is valued. Thank you!

Don Barber

Message From Stewardship

Gifting Grows Connections. That's our Stewardship theme this year, but of course it applies every year. Boy, did we feel the connections grow when pledge season was launched February 25 (still viewable on YouTube)! We heard about the great need that this congregation is filling by supporting Babies First. We heard about the Social Justice team and their multipronged efforts within FUSIT and in our Tompkins County community. We heard about the planned installation of a heat pump in the Annex, and the grant writing that made it possible for us to live closer to our earth-friendly values. And we heard about the positive impact our RE program, and the RE director, Emily, is having on our youth, our families, and our welcoming practice. After the service nearly 70 congregants enjoyed breaking bread together at the StewardSoup lunch.

Your financial gift, your pledge, is supporting operations for the next church year that starts July 1. Our pledges form the lion's share of next years' operating budget. The FUSIT endowment is important as a financial backstop, not for our operations, but they offer a small annual contribution to the operating budget. At the core of all the programming that brings us together and propels our mission, is a group of dedicated staff and a trio of impactful ministers; we want to continue paying them an Ithaca living wage. It is also important to recognize that much of the good work in this church, like getting grants to purchase a heat pump, and operating Babies First, is not funded from our operating budget. In these and many ways FUSIT is giving each of us gifts, or gifts in the community on our behalf. Will you reciprocate with a pledge?

On the FUSIT website homepage there is a "Pledge" button that you can use to make your pledge. If you prefer the old school pledge card, they were mailed to anyone not yet pledged by March 8. Please pledge as generously as you can, using the progressive Fair Share guidance on the back of the pledge card.

The Stewardship Team



Ministry Visioning Team Update

The Ministry Visioning Team (MVT) has been working diligently with plans for the upcoming year along with other ministry responsibilities. The team generally meets twice a month along with necessary scheduled meetings with the Board.

Much of our work has revolved around two areas recently – the budget and staffing for the upcoming year. Two MVT members sit on the Budget Team: Emily Richards and JoAnn Kowalski and we are working to fine tune the 2024-25 budget to ensure a successful and robust year for FUSIT.

In terms of staffing, MVT is working to accommodate the growing and changing needs of the congregation, which includes determining how best to manage the responsibilities of the Engagement and Outreach Coordinator as this position has been unfilled since the end of January. We are grateful for those folks who have signed up to be at the Welcome Table on Sundays! This is an important part of our weekly services

and key to welcoming and meeting new visitors.

MVT is pleased with the success of the Care Cafes which Rev. Peaches Gillette has been facilitating along with Christine Kapral. These are offered monthly on the second and fourth Sundays.

Our team has begun the work of developing the Vision of Ministry for '24-'25 by reviewing the many responses that have been submitted. There are several themes that are recurring, and we hope to incorporate those into developing the VOM for the upcoming year. Next step is to submit a draft to the Board.

MVT has spent the first part of the church year responding to many emergent issues and incorporating supervision of the senior ministry staff into what we do. This has resulted in a busy time with many activities to attend to while ensuring adequate communication with the Board.



Music at End-of-Life: A Care Giver's Guide

*Saturday, April 20, 9 am - 4 pm in the Annex
with pot luck lunch*

This free on site, one day workshop is an opportunity for caregivers and those interested in end-of-life care to explore the use of music in care for the critically ill, those on hospice, approaching the end-of-life, and actively dying. This workshop will provide tools and ways to be with loved ones using live music (singing) as a support, both for and with those who are ill, as well as loved ones gathered at the bedside.

Join Jayne Demakos, certified Music-Thanatologist, hospice musician and teacher in exploring her experience and teachings on the use of music and end of life care. There will be opportunities for discussion. Song material will be provided for participants to learn and to keep.

Please contact Jayne to register and ask questions at choir@uuithaca.org

2024 Annual FUNdraiser COMMUNITY-WIDE ONLINE AUCTION



April 26, 27, 28
Opens Friday, 4/26, 9 am
Closes, Sunday, 4/28, 9 pm
Goal: \$8,000



Throughout the month of March, over 65 vendors in our community have given generously to our fundraiser. Up for bid will be theatre tickets, airport travel vouchers, restaurant gift cards, baskets of goodies, museum memberships, fine wines, "staycations," and much, much more!

Now it's time for FUSIT members and friends to add their own treasures and services to the pile. So let's think about Spring cleaning out all the wonderful items and services that we are eager to share with others. Your donations, having a \$20 minimum value, will be accepted over the next few weeks, **April 1-19**. You will be submitting a donation form and photo for each item. Donation instructions are given on the welcome page of our Bidding Owl auction website which you can simply access by clicking the following link <https://new.biddingowl.com/FirstUnitarianSoelthaca> or use the QR code below.

Examples of hot auction items are: pottery, jewelry, coffee-table books, antiques, beautiful plants, dinner parties, and wall décor.

Contact Marie Benedetti with questions or concerns: marieben@tweny.rr.com.
So mark your calendars, let your donations come rolling in, and enjoy the fun of participating in our 2024 community-wide online auction!





NEW
Summer Program
 Aftercare Available

Adventure Camp
 June 27-28 \$130

Ages 5-12

CAMP AURORA
 Creating Connection and Community

3 Themed Weeks

Fostering self-expression, creativity, and belonging, art, music, movement, field trips, play

Building Connection
 July 1-5 \$260

Peace Village
 August 19-23 \$325

Be the Change
 August 25-30 \$325

For more information, contact us at:
 CampAurora@uulthaca.org
 unitarian.ithaca.ny.us/

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca
 306 N. Aurora Street

Camp Aurora is a new week-long summer day camp in the heart of Downtown Ithaca for kids ages 5-12 that is centered on community, connection, and engagement. With a focus on creating meaningful experiences through exploring our interconnectedness to one another and the world, each fun-filled week will include art, music, movement, field trips, story, and adventure. Campers will have an opportunity to learn and grow together with an emphasis on self-expression, creativity, and belonging, with lots of space for free play and building social skills and relationships.

Camp runs from 9 am-3 pm each day.
 Drop Off: 8:30 am-9 am
 Pick Up: 3:00 pm-3:30 pm
 Optional Aftercare: 3:30 pm-5:30 pm
 Scholarships Available

Adventure Camp - June 27th-28th

Start your summer break off with two days of fun and adventure! Campers will explore a world filled with magic as they take on various roles to overcome the challenges and tasks set before them. Create the unbreakable bonds that can only be forged as a member of an adventuring party. Come and discover where the journey might take you.
 Tuition \$130
 Aftercare \$20

Building Connections - July 1st-5th (no camp July 4th)

Connection begins with ourselves, and stretches out to include our friends and family, our community, and our world. This week we will discover the fun and meaning that can be made through building connections. We will focus on building relationships and life-long friendships through movement, games, activities, and field trips.
 Tuition \$260 ***\$240 for UU families**
 Aftercare \$40

Peace Village - August 19th-23rd

Peace Village offers a week filled with a variety of engaging, hands-on activities with a focus on generosity, transformation, interconnectedness, compassion, and empathy. Campers will engage in art, activities, and games for a healthy mind, body, and spirit. Together we will explore both inner peace and how we spread peace in the world.
 Tuition \$325 ***\$300 for UU families**
 Aftercare \$50

Be the Change - August 26th-30th

Find out how you can Be the Change as we discover how our passion for justice can make a positive impact in the world. Join us for a week of inspiring growth and building community that encourages each camper to become a changemaker. Be the light you want to shine in the world!
 Tuition \$325 ***\$300 for UU families**
 Aftercare \$50

Space is limited so please register today!

[Camp Aurora - First Unitarian Society of Ithaca](http://CampAurora-FirstUnitarianSocietyofIthaca.org)