



ITHACA

UUU Connections

2023/2024 Issue No. 9

May 1-31, 2024

Our Spiritual Journey

Lately I have been pondering how I ended up where I am right now. I am closing in on my fourth year serving this congregation as a member of the staff team, and my second year in the role of Director of Congregational Life. In that time I have also become a Credentialed Religious Educator and started down a path towards ministry by enrolling in the Masters of Divinity Program at Starr King School for the Ministry.

And, if you had asked anyone who knew me five years ago if they could ever imagine me working for a church, even one that often shies away from that very word, I doubt anyone would have responded with an enthusiastic YES! I don't think I myself would have responded with any sort of affirmative, regardless of my deeply held identity as a UU that came from my years in youth group with this congregation.

I grew up in a family that was primarily secular. We celebrated Christmas and Easter the same way we did Halloween or birthdays. With treats and gifts and time together. I have very few memories of attending any sort of religious institute until my teenage years when I made the choice to be a part of this community after an introduction by friends. However, once I graduated from youth group I found myself once again unmoored spiritually and living a vastly secular life.

Yet, here I am. The winding road of my life has often taken me in unexpected directions, this being, perhaps, the most surprising so far. And I share this small snippet of my own story, simply to say, we have all come to this community with a multitude of experiences and from a diversity of backgrounds. We hold different beliefs, honor different traditions, and lift up different truths. And, whatever our own journey has been, we have found our way here, in an effort to find a spiritual home and a place to belong.

This faith that we are a part of, which recognizes more than one ultimate principle and truth, is one of our greatest strengths. This community is made whole by the weaving together of the many stories of our lives. We celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.

I am grateful that my path led me here. I am grateful that yours has, too.

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life



FUSIT Annual Meeting
Tuesday, May 21st
6:00 pm in the Sanctuary
(and via Zoom)

Please note that the June newsletter will be the last issue of the church year and will cover June through August 2024.



First UU at the Ithaca Festival

May 30th-June 2nd

Please join us as we march through the streets of Ithaca as a part of the Parade. Or visit us in Dewitt Park at our table for information and activities. Sign up to march in the parade or volunteer to table at the link below!

[Ithaca Festival Sign Up](#)

Religious Exploration News

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

Greetings from the DRE

This is the time of year that I, as both an educator and a parent, can see the end in sight. Over the horizon summer looms, drifting closer on the warm, floral-scented breezes of spring. And yet we still have almost two months before the school year is finished and summer is truly upon us, two months before swimming and lemonade and adventures.

Perhaps, for you, the arrival of summer instead heralds the annual difficulty of finding childcare, the challenge of scheduling different camps (come to Camp Aurora!) and trying to plug in the holes as you juggle work with children at home, while trying to squeeze in a fun trip or activity here and there.

This month we are exploring the gifts of pluralism, and we often speak of our religious pluralism, but honoring pluralism is also honoring our different lived experiences. It means lifting up the many stories that make up this beloved community. We see you and we value your family in its beautiful, unique, wholeness. Just the way you are.

Emily Richards CRE, Director of Religious Exploration

Classroom Sundays

Elementary: This past month the elementary aged children explored the Gifts of Interdependence through building communities together, making bug hotels, singing, sharing stories, and more! This month they will continue to explore our faith through the Gifts of Pluralism.

Middle School and High School: The youth will be continuing their Crossing Paths journey by exploring the teachings of Paganism this month with a visit to make Pagan Altars with local pagan practitioner Valerie Reine on Saturday, **May 18th** from 11 am-1 pm.

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 Pagan Altars Trip 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](#)

NEW RE Volunteer Opportunities for 2024-2025!

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. Now is the time to sign up to be a part of our Religious Exploration Program for Fall of 2024 and/or Spring of 2025! Sign up below to join one of our classrooms, lead a Creative Sunday, or fill in as a substitute. We need your help! [FUSIT 2024-2025 RE Volunteer Sign Up](#)

Please join our UU Ithaca Parents Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/fusitparents>

Religious Exploration Schedule for May

May 5th - Classroom Sunday

May 12th - Classroom Sunday

May 19th - Multigenerational Sunday

May 26th - End of the Year RE Celebration

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!

Come One, Come All

Rev. Ian W. Riddell

Come with your missing pieces and your extra screws

Come with your hard edges and your soft spots

Come with your bowed heads and upright spines...

Misfits and conformists and everyone in between...

Bring who you are

Bring where you've traveled

Bring what you long for...

(RE News continued from page 2)

Religious Exploration Events for May **All Things "Baby" Swap**

Saturday, **May 4**, 12 pm-5 pm in the Parlor
Come swap out the old for something new!
Maternity wear, Premie-5T Children's Clothing
and shoes, Baby gear/accessories, Children's
toys and books... You do not need to bring
anything to take what you need!

All items must be in gently-used condition
(no major rips/ stains). Not accepting cribs,
changing tables, pumps & pump parts/
accessories, or car seats at this time. Please
come browse and take what you could use!

Party in the Park, Stewart Park

Sunday, **May 26**, 1 pm-3 pm

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.

NEW! Small Group Ministry for Parents

Sunday, **May 19**, 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

May 7 and 21, 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 May.
Sing, play, dance, explore instruments, and
connect through music.



May Worship Services

The theme for May is "Pluralism" 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 5

"So Great a Cloud of Witnesses"

Guest speaker *Walt Peck*, longtime member of our
congregation and currently serving as a volunteer for
our *Babies First* program.

I am a heretic. And, maybe, so are you. Why
should we heretics come together?

Special music by *VOICES*

Sunday, May 12

"There Is Not One Truth"

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life
As Unitarian Universalists we lift up the wisdom
from many different faiths and belief systems.
An integral part of this living tradition that we
share is the understanding that no single story or
belief holds a monopoly on truth. What does it
mean to be a people who don't hold a shared creed
but who promise to join together on a journey that
honors everywhere we've been before?

Special music by *Aliza Proulx*, violin

Sunday, May 19

"We Hold Multitudes"

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life
Inside of each of us are rainbows and lights,
stars, galaxies and universes. Join us as we
explore the expansiveness of our beings through
stories, songs, and interactive and engaging
activities for all ages in this Multigenerational
Worship Service.

Special music by *Children's Chorus*

Sunday, May 26

"The Gift of Pluralism"

Rev. Peaches Gillette

A pluralistic community is one in which diverse
thinking, multiple traditions, and varied beliefs
are the bedrock of its structure.

But a progressive, pluralistic community is
one in which it's members feel free to express
their beliefs and have them truly respected by all.

Special music by *Southern Tier Singers Collective*

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

Director of Pastoral Care
Rev. Janet Sbordall
pastoralcare@uuiithaca.org

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

Religious Exploration
Assistant
Madeline Natale
reasst@uuiithaca.org

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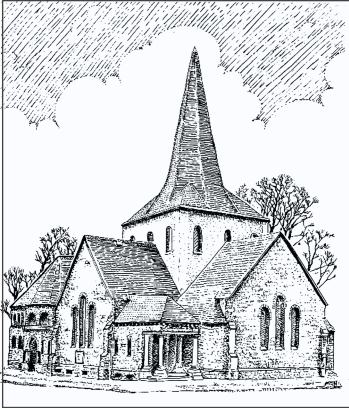
Sexton
Rachel Seymour
sexton@uuiithaca.org

Bookkeeper
Lauren Ponzoni
office@uuiithaca.org

June 2nd Pride Service

If you would like to be involved in
our **June 2nd** Pride Service please
email *Emily Richards* by no later
than **May 10th**.

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 May is The Gift of Pluralism

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 Pluralism shows up in your life.

May 1-11: What part of your pluralistic self do you have the hardest time acknowledging or embracing with compassion?

May 12-18: When it comes to age, our society is not as pluralistic as it thinks. Have you been ignored or cast out because of your age?

May 19-25: It's said that we exile the parts of ourselves that were once humiliated in our past. Which tender part of your younger self is whispering "please let me back in?"

May 26-31: Is it possible that the aspect that so annoys you about that other person echoes a similar part of yourself you deny?

Pub Theology

Tuesday, **May 28**, 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 *Pluralism*. 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.

May Board of Trustees Meeting

The May meeting will be held Tuesday, **May 14**, at 6:30 pm. The board meeting is a hybrid format, taking place in the church parlor and through Zoom. Monthly board meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month (note change of date for May due to Annual Meeting). 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=VUxUTUMraVZDUUFQzQndSVFRraFIPdz09>

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 May

The Alliance of Families for Justice will be the recipient of our Shared Plate in May. 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.

Side with Love for May

The Village of Ithaca will be the recipient of Side with Love for May. We will be collecting toilet paper (4-pack), toothpaste and toothbrushes.

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 **May 22**.

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

Towards this goal, the group will be offering a spring session of “Living the Pledge”, 6 Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30, **May 8 to June 12**. FUSIT committed to action on racism by adopting the 8th Principle two years ago. The Living the Pledge workshop is a perfect way for you to explore how you can get involved in anti-racism work. Worthwhile and challenging. For questions contact Nancy Miller, ananda7733@gmail.com.

Environmental Interest Circle (EIC) - May 1 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. Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month, in the parlor and over Zoom. 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=SDBqaTN5eIM3ejltbGdJeGhPa3QxQT09)
[pwd=SDBqaTN5eIM3ejltbGdJeGhPa3QxQT09](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81644753524?pwd=SDBqaTN5eIM3ejltbGdJeGhPa3QxQT09)

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 **May 7**. 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!

Join fellow congregants at Unirondack over the Labor Day weekend (Friday Aug 30 to Monday Sept 2) for our annual (interrupted only for pandemics) community building kick-off to the new church year. And for some fun, relaxation, swimming, hiking, playing, reading, singing, discussing and what-ever-else takes your fancy.

To register, [click here](#).

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

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 May - The Gift of Pluralism

The Soul Matters theme for May is *The Gift of Pluralism*. 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/SoulMattersMay2024>

Care Cafes

Sunday, May 12th and 26th

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/ithacauus

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, May 5

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia

This program covers the basics of Alzheimer's and dementia, explores their relationship, examines what happens in a brain affected by Alzheimer's, details the risk factors and three general stages of the disease, identifies FDA-approved treatments available for symptom management, looks ahead to what's on the horizon for Alzheimer's research, and offers helpful Alzheimer's Association resources.

NOTE: People do not need to register

Stephanie D'Amico Bio

Stephanie is a program manager for the Alzheimer's Association, Central New York Chapter. Her primary responsibility is to assure the expansion of quality caregiver programs throughout the southern tier region. In this role, Stephanie also oversees a team of community educator volunteers who assist in the delivery of programs both in-person and virtually. Stephanie is a trained community health professional with 15+ years-experience working in the non-for-profit sector. She holds a bachelor's degree from the State University of New York at Brockport, majoring in health sciences and minoring in biology.



Sunday, May 19

Black Women's Mental Health

Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, Ed.D. is the Executive Director of the Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC), and a lecturer at Ithaca College. She is also a recently retired 20-year member of the Tompkins County Legislature, where in 2020 and 2021, she was elected as Chairperson making her the first person of color to hold this position on the Legislature. She is a 30-year veteran facilitator, mediator, and a certified mediation trainer. She is also a trained actress who has graced the stage locally, nationally, and internationally since the age of 4. Leslyn hails from Guyana, South America and has lived in Ithaca for 34 years. She loves and lives for family – her husband J.R. Clairborne and children Julius, Kelsey, and Indira. She has lived her entire life on the premise that it is important to stay involved in organizing and advocacy and being committed to equity and systemic change. She will be presenting on her research related to Black women's mental health.

**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!**

Joys and Sorrows

Joys and Sorrows are now shared during Sunday Service. Please send notices to the team at joysandsorrows@uuithaca.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.

Dilmeran Akgoze is in Cayuga Medical Center with metastasized bone cancer. She would appreciate visitors, but please call first, 607-256-8515.

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@uuithaca.org.

Big thanks to all who made the Cabaret Night such a success: Rene Rogers, the Cabaret Committee, the wonderful FUSIT musicians and MC, set up and decorations crew, chefs, greeters, servers, bartenders, coffee makers, clean up crew, and all those who brought delicious desserts. What a fun evening! And such a memorable community-building fundraiser!

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@uuithaca.org by **May 1st**, so the FUSIT Annual Report is ready for the Annual Meeting on **May 21st**.



Summer Services

I will be the organizer and regular celebrations associate this year for the dozen summer services in the parlor starting **June 16** and running every Sunday morning at 9:30 **through September 1**. Matt Franke-Singer will be an assistant coordinator and celebrations associate as well. Magdalen Lindeberg and Sue Roenke will also be assisting. 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 read the transcripts of previous summer speakers, go to [Sermon Transcripts - First Unitarian Society of Ithaca](#). Then scroll to "Service Archives." And then to "Sermon Transcripts." If you would like to give a sermon this summer, please contact me at presbevi@gmail.com. We are each other's guides in our "free and responsible search for truth[s] and meaning[s]" which is the fifth principle of UUism. Thank you.

Preston Wilson, Coordinator of 2024 Summer Services

Office Schedule

The office will be open on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9 am - 4 pm. 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 May 27

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=ZDkyanRKMmo2czhqSWgrSVhmbGFqdzo9>

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, **May 19**, for an evening with **Hiroya Tsukamoto**

In the Sanctuary of First Unitarian at 7:00 pm

Hiroya is a one-of-a-kind guitarist and composer. Born and raised in Kyoto, Japan and in 2000, he received a scholarship to Berklee College of Music and came to the U.S. Since then, he has been performing internationally including United Nations, Blue Note in New York and Japanese National Television. Hiroya has released six albums. Most recently, he won 2nd place in the International Finger Style Guitar Championship in 2022.

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!

Spring Cleaning!

Our annual spring work day will be Saturday, **May 18**, from 9-12. If weather permits, there will be some outdoor work to do for all ages, but the majority will be cleaning out the Parish House attic and taking loads to recycling, ReUse, and donation sites. If you can help for any amount of time, please join us! Great conversations always happen at these work days, and if enough people are interested, we can order lunch at noon!

Any questions? Contact Sara Catterall sara.catterall@gmail.com

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+ 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.



International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia May 17

The main purpose of the **May 17** mobilizations is to raise awareness of violence, discrimination, and repression of LGBTQ+ communities worldwide.

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 Narthex nametag cabinet (corner of Buffalo and Aurora Sts.).

Thanks to Your Generosity

Thanks to your generosity for the Shared Plate, we were able to donate to the following:

- January - FUSIT Human Needs Fund \$1,463 (No Shared Plate in February)
- March - Planned Parenthood \$656



Message From the Board of Trustees

Spring is here, bringing the seasonal changes we long anticipate. This spring we've a lot to be grateful for: thanks to you the pledge drive has been a success, the FUSIT Cabaret was a blast, and the spring community-wide online auction was also a great success!

As a member of the Planning Committee for the Cabaret I've heard more than a few voices requesting a repeat of this event. Same for the online auction, as it's become an annual tradition. More community-building events and worthwhile social justice programs are continually enthusiastically welcomed and requested.

The reality is, here at FUSIT, these projects and events are fueled by volunteer power. In our pursuit of a shared ministry model, much of the work processes of the church are accomplished this way as well. FUSIT needs volunteers to fill

the roles which support the worthwhile projects and church function processes which benefit us all.

In response to our open questions this year one repeating theme has emerged: congregants are seeking a sense of community. The good news is that the relationship between volunteering and the development of a strong sense of community is symbiotic and reciprocal. There's nothing like working alongside others towards a purposeful common goal to help generate a true sense of purpose and belonging.

Then again, don't just take my word for it. Step up into a new role, take on a leadership position, support a worthwhile project. The work will change you as you work to change your community.

*Rene Rogers,
FUSIT Board of Trustees*

Ministry Visioning Team Spring Update

The Ministry Visioning Team (MVT) continues to meet twice a month. Our work this Spring has focused mostly on supervision and planning for Congregational Life staffing for the '24-'25 year. In addition, our focus has been on the upcoming year with two MVT members, Emily Richards and joAnn kowalski, participating in developing the budget. There are upcoming meetings with the Board of Trustees and the Governance Committee. Our work extends to encompass other teams, committees, and the Board, realizing the importance of collaboration and sharing of information in our shared governance structure.

We are grateful for those members who have volunteered to staff the Welcome Table on Sundays. This is an important function of our Sunday services and without an Engagement and Outreach Coordinator, volunteers are key to continuing to offer this connection to our newcomers. We will soon be looking for volunteers to help out at the FUSIT table at the Ithaca Festival in early June. Please reach out if you can help.

The MVT drafted a Vision of Ministry for the new year. The Board reviewed and finalized it.

Grow a culture where we are lifting up our UU Principles and Values by:

- Supporting each person so that they contribute what they can in time and energy to congregational endeavors while creating a culture where people can give and receive.
- Seeking to care for and connect with each other through living into our covenant.
- Creating multiple avenues for social justice that nourish connection and community outreach.
- Cultivating opportunities for spiritual enrichment and growth
- Embracing religious pluralism.

Based on a suggestion from the Social Justice Leadership Team, MVT will look at organizing a leadership skills training for those members who might be interested in joining teams, committees, or the Board. The training will be a series of workshops and is currently planned for Fall.

In consultation with the Board, MVT carried out a series of meetings and communication to implement a well-being initiative for staff. Supervisors will meet with staff to foster connection and a sense of gratitude.

The members of the MVT are Emily Richards, Rev. Janet Shortall, Nancy Miller, Don Rakow and joAnn kowalski. If you would like to reach out to the MVT, email us at mvt@uuthaca.org.

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca Annual Meeting

May 21st 2024 - 6:00 pm

*Sanctuary at 306 N. Aurora St, Ithaca and
Zoom (Check Weekly Announce for link)*

Annual Meeting Agenda

6:00 pm Call Meeting to Order

6:10 pm. Welcome and Chalice Lighting

6:15 pm. Year in Review
Vision of Ministry Evaluation

6:30 pm Hybrid Meeting Protocols (How to
participate both in-person & on Zoom)

6:40 pm Approval of May 24, 2023 Annual
Meeting Minutes

6:50 pm Adoption of 2024-2025 Budget

7:05 pm Election of Candidates for the
Board of Trustees and the Nominating
Committee.

7:15 pm One Year Report on last year's
Congregational Resolution:
"Welcoming and Inclusive
Congregations: Affirming LGBTQ
Individuals and Families"

7:30 pm Report: \$130,000 Grant - Annex
Heating & Cooling Upgrade

7:45 pm Closing Words and Adjourn

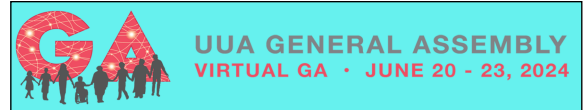
Successful 2024 Community-Wide Online Auction

On the 3-day weekend of April 26, 27, 28, up for bid was a wide array of over 200 bid items donated by our members and 71 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 & Ace Hardware	Ithacemade Gift Shop
American Crafts by Robbie Dein	Ithaca Sheepskin
Angry Mom Records	Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport
Argos Inn	Kitchen Theatre
Autumn Leaves Used Bookstore	LaTourelle Hotel & Bistro
Bool's Flower Shop	Liquid State Brewing Company
Brain Shoppe	Luna Inspired Street Food
Buffalo Street Books	Luna Love Hair Salon
Cat's Pajamas	Mama Goose/Jillian's Drawers
Cayuga Landscape Company	Maxie's Supper Club
Cinemapolis	Mary Durham Boutique
Deeply Devoted Massage	Mighty Yoga
Diamond's Indian Restaurant	Monks on the Commons
Diane's Downtown Automotive	Moosewood Restaurant
Discover Cayuga Lake	Multifaceted Minerals
Dolce Delight Cafe	Museum of the Earth
East Hill Antiques	Northside Wine & Spirits
East Shore Roadhouse	Odyssey Books
Fibers Boutique	One World Market
Fifteen Steps/Breathe Fashions	Pet Smart
Fontana's Shoes	Petrune
Gimme Coffee	Pizza Aroma
GreenStar Market	Purity Ice Cream
Hammerstone Carpentry	Rasa Spa
Handwork	Revelry Yards
Hangar Theatre	Sam Peter Furniture
History Center	Sangam Indian Restaurant
Home Green Home	Serendipity Boutique
Hopshire Brewery	Simeon's American Bistro
Hound & Mare Cafe	Six Mile Creek Vineyard
Hunt's Auto Service	State Theatre
Island Health & Fitness	Sunset Grill
Ithaca Ale House	Sunshine's Creative Design
Ithaca Bakery & Collegetown	Trader Joe's
Bagels	Wegmans
Ithaca Guitar Works	YMCA

Our Mission

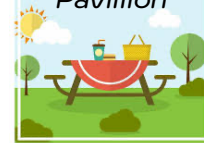
Our mission is to create connection, find inspiration and engage the world.
Connect. Inspire. Engage.



Join us **June 20 - 23** for an all-virtual General Assembly 2024. Full online registration includes access to GA 2024 in the Whova event app, as well as on-demand programming, featured speakers, and major worship services. [Summary Schedule Grid Document \(PDF\)](#). For more information contact meetingplanner@uua.org.

Save the Date!
**Annual End-of-the
Year Picnic and
Flower Communion**

Sunday, June 9,
10:30 am
Stewart Park, Large
Pavillion



Breeze "How To"

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca uses the Breeze Content Management System for our database. Breeze can be a useful tool for congregants in many ways, including accessing the event calendar, checking your giving history, finding out the members of the various teams and committees and more! [Click here](#) for some basic information on how to use Breeze.

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.

NEW Summer Program **Aftercare Available**

Adventure Camp June 27-28 \$130 **Ages 5-12**

CAMP AURORA

Creating Connection and Community
Downtown Ithaca

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 | 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](#)