2024/2025 Issue No. 2

October 2024

Our Spiritual Tourney

I was reminded at a recent board retreat how much I appreciate the practice of group work where each person is invited to answer a question with no response from other participants. Each person, in turn, was given the space to speak without interruption or comment. No words of understanding or stories shared in an attempt to illustrate how alike we are to one another because we had a similar experience.

Sunday Services in the Sanctuary at 10:30 am

Live-streamed on our YouTube channel

Nursery childcare and Religious Exploration classes for children

I find this type of interaction to be most meaningful when I am one of the people listening. For me, it releases me from the expectation that I will formulate a response. It frees me to simply be present and to listen deeply to what the other person is sharing.

I would guess that it comes as no surprise that I am a very verbally active person. I was always one of the first to raise my hand in class as a child, the first to volunteer to read out loud. Even as I'm listening to the information,, my brain is formulating a response to it, ready to jump in and spout off an answer or a comment or insight. And sometimes this mental workout can feel exhausting. And it can impede my ability to be fully present and to listen deeply.

This month, as we explore the love at the center of the practice of deep listening, I invite you to join me in imagining that every conversation is one in which no response is required. Allow yourself to be in that moment, giving the person who you are listening to your full attention so that you can hear the nuance that might otherwise be missed when we are focused on how to respond.

David Augsburger tells us that "Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person they are almost indistinguishable." Let us spread the love that is at the center of this faith with one another by truly hearing each other. With no agenda, no expectations, just an open and loving heart.

May it be so. Blessed Be.

Emily Richards, CRE

Supercharging Stewardship Next Steps Weekend October 4-6

Saturday, October 5

Potluck Lunch 12-1 pm, Annex Stewardship & Community Building Workshop 1-2:15 pm, Annex

Sunday, October 6 Congregational Conversation 11:50 am-12:50 pm

See page 8 for details.



Monday, October 14

Indigenous Peoples' Day is a holiday in the United States that celebrates and honors Indigenous American peoples and commemorates their histories and cultures. Celebrated across the United States on the second Monday in October, it is an official city and state holiday in various localities.

Newsletter of the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca (FUSIT), New York

Religious Exploration News

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

Greetings from Religious Exploration

As we settle into our often hectic fall routines of school, work, sports, extracurricular activities, and church, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed. Running from place to place we can feel like we don't have time to stop, and listen, and simply be.

I feel that so deeply and want you all to know that I see you. I see how much you are giving of yourself, to your work, your families, to this community. And how sometimes it can feel impossible to take the time to listen to your own needs in the midst of everyone else's.

This month we are invited to Live Love Through the Practice of Deep Listening. And that includes love for ourselves. It includes listening deeply to our own needs. It includes taking the time to open up and invite connection to the world around us. To the people in our lives. To the divine within us. Love is the center of this faith. And that love is you.

Emily Richards, Director of Religious Exploration

Classroom Sundays

Elementary: This month the elementary-aged children will be focusing on our monthly theme of Deep Listening through stories, activities, crafts, and games.

Middle School and High School: The youth will begin to explore what role they will play in "Building A Better World," an RPG-based curriculum that will lead youth and adults through the process of creating a game setting as a faith development and community-building exercise reflecting Unitarian Universalist values. Please have participants bring a set of gaming dice to each session if they have them.

Please register your children below for the 2024-2025 Religious Exploration program! This information helps us to plan for the upcoming year.

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca RE Registration Form 2024-2025

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.

DE Wichligt

We have so much appreciation for all of the community members who have volunteered to enrich our community through participating in our Religious Exploration programming. 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 2024-2025 RE Volunteer Sign Up

Please join our First UU Ithaca Parents Facebook Group!

Emily Richards CRE (Credentialed Religious Educator) - Director of Congregational Life

Madeline Natale - Religious Exploration Coordinator

Our Whole Lives (OWL) for 8th-9th and 10-12th Graders

The First Unitarian Society of Ithaca and the First Congregational

Church of Ithaca are excited to offer the Our Whole Lives comprehensive sexuality education program during the school year 2024-2025. Our 8th and 9th graders will do OWL this fall (register now!) and our 10th-12th graders will do OWL this spring (registration to come!).

The 8th & 9th grade program will run Sundays from 1 pm-3:30 pm October through January with one full-day OWL Con on Saturday, **November 2nd** from 10 am-9 pm.

All dates including the two required options for Parent Orientation can be found on the registration form. Register your 8th or 9th grader for OWL here:

8th-9th Grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) Registration 2024-2025

Listen for the beat of living things...

Rev. Darcey Laine

Listen for the beat of living things
for time's river grooving deep by flowing
Rock the world with gentle gratitude
for gifts given and received
Pound out the rhythm of community's heart
rushing with the blood of history,
throbbing the joy of connection
Sway with the breath of wind
harmonizing sky and leaf
Listen for the beat of holy things
for the shimmer of singing stars
swinging wide in the everything
Answer the pulse of your own life

as it invites you to dance

Blessed Be.

Religious Exploration Schedule for October

October 6th - Multi-Generational Service

October 13th - Classroom Sunday

October 20th - Classroom Sunday

October 27th - Creative Sunday and Halloween Party

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

Religious Exploration Events for October

All Things "Baby" Swap
Saturday, October 12th, 12 pm-5 pm
First Unitarian Society of Ithaca Annex
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!

Fall Fun at Moore Family Farm

Saturday, **October 19th**, 12 pm-3 pm Join us at Moore Family Farm for an opportunity to connect and explore their fall activities together. If the admission price is an obstacle please contact Emily Richards at dre@uuithaca.org.

Trick or Treat with (U)Us!

Thursday, **October 31st**, 5:30 pm-7 pm Meet us in front of the Parish House and then join us for trick or treating in the Fall Creek neighborhood. Children 5 years old or older may be dropped off. Children under 5 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Music for Little People

Wednesday, **October 2nd and 16th**10 am-10:45 am, Arch Room
Share in the joy of music in this class which is free and open to the public. Children 0-5 and their caregivers are welcome to meet us in the Arch Room each month. Sing, play, dance, explore instruments, and connect through music.

Small Group Ministry for Parents -Childcare Provided, Sunday, October 20

12 pm-1 pm, FUSIT Library

Our Small Group Ministry for individuals who are actively parenting will begin meeting again this month. 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 12 pm-1 pm, 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.

October Worship Services

The theme for October is "Deep Listening" 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, October 6 "Listening With A Generous Heart"

Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry and Emily Richards, CRE Join us for an interactive and engaging multi-generational worship service where we explore the many ways to listen to ourselves, one another, and the world, and the generosity that listening deeply can inspire. Special music by Stephanie Ortolano

Sunday, October 13 "Hope for the Past"

Rev. David Blanchard

"The past is never dead. It's not even past." It has something to teach us if we'd only pause to listen. $Special \ music \ TBA$

Sunday, October 20 "Listening Encompasses Much More"

Rev. Peaches Gillette

Listening is not a passive act. It is a vital part of communication and for communication to happen, there must be an exchange of thoughts and feelings

Special music TBA

Sunday, October 27 "What Was, and What May Be"

Emily Richards, CRE

During this time of growing darkness, as the veil between the physical and spiritual world grows thin, we join together in our annual Service of Remembrance. We will gather to remember those who have gone before us. What is remembered lives on in our hearts and souls. What message is your heart longing to hear? Special music by FUSIT Choir



Director of Congregational Life Emily Richards dre@uuithaca.org

Pastoral Care Associate Rev. Janet Shortall pastoralcare@uuithaca.org

Preacher and Program Associate Rev. Peaches Gillete assocdcl@uuithaca.org

Religious Exploration Coordinator Madeline Natale reasst@uuithaca.org

Childcare Coordinator Melissa Heslop childcare@uuithaca.org

Music Director Stephanie Ortolano music@uuithaca.org

Choir Director Jayne Demakos choir@uuithaca.org

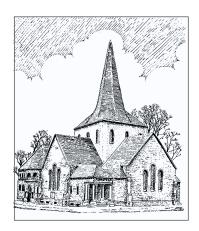
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Visit our Website and get your newsletter: www.uuithaca.org



Possible Ponderings

The theme for October is Deep Listening.

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

October 1-5: On a scale of 1-10, how good a listener are you? Why did you name the number you did?

October 6-12: Have you ever heard the ocean or the woods or the sky speak?

October 13-19: Do you believe our bodies carry a wisdom that our minds don't? Was there ever a time when you regret not listening to your body?

October 20-26: How have your wounds and losses altered the way you listen?

October 27-31: How good are you at listening compassionately to yourself?



All Church Fall Cleanup Saturday, October 26, 10:00-Noon

Join us at First Unitarian for our annual Fall Cleanup! We will mostly be working outside on our garden beds and buildings, so watch for a rain date! As always, bring your own gloves and garden tools. Contact Sara Catterall with any questions or suggestions.

sara.catterall@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!

Social Justice Leadership Team

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 silt@uuithaca.org for more information.

Side with Love October

In October we are collecting items for two organizations: The Village and Planting Seeds:

The Village

Assist in our ongoing effort to keep 30 families supported through donations of household items. We need 30 small liquid laundry detergent and 8 packs of 4 rolls of toilet paper. Donation box is in the parlor.

Planting Seeds

We will be collecting donations of winter clothing for Planting Seeds, a Recovery Community Organization working in the field of recovery and addiction. Planting Seeds works to unite the Recovery Community in Ithaca and help individuals navigate their way from the culture of addiction to the culture of recovery. Coats, hats, gloves, scarves, thermal wear and blankets are in need. Items can be left at the welcome table in the parlor.

8th Principle Action Ministry Wednesday, October 23

The 8th Principle Action Ministry (8PAM) meets via Zoom on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm. Look for future program offerings including book discussion and film viewing opportunities.

Contact joAnn kowalski for more information or to offer ideas or suggestions at jmkowalski10@gmail.com.

The Environmental Interest Circle (EIC) Meeting

Wednesday, October 2, at 7:00 pm in the Parlor and over Zoom

The Environmental Interest Circle meets to discuss/exchange ideas and actions that further sustainable living for each one of us, for the FUSIT congregation, and for our congregation's role in the greater community. This group meets the first Wednesday of the month in the parlor and over Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81644753524? pwd=SDBqaTN5elM3ejltbGdJeGhPa3QxQTo9

Meeting ID: 816 4475 3524

Passcode: 894885

Nametags

If you would like a nametag, please fill out the nametag request form at the Welcome Table or contact adminasst@uuithaca.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.).



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.

LGBTQ+Days of Rememberance

October is LGBTQ+ History Month

First celebrated in 1994, in October, it was declared a national history month by President Barack Obama in 2009.

October 11, National Coming Out Day

National Coming Out Day celebrates lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, and queer people's experiences and journeys.

October 26, Intersex Awareness Day

Celebrated in October to commemorate the first intersex protest in Boston, MA.

Women's Circle on October 28

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. 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.



Beacon on Aurora - An Evening with Kelly Hunt Sunday, October 13, doors open at 6:30 pm, concert begins at 7 pm

The daughter of an opera singer and a saxophonist, Hunt was raised in Memphis, TN amidst a motley mélange of musical influences ranging from Rachmaninov to Joni Mitchell to Mississippi John Hurt. She grew up singing in choirs, poring over poetry books, and writing her own music as a matter of course, first on piano then 5-string banjo. Her own improvised style of playing combines old-time picking styles with the percussive origins of the instrument. Her debut album "Even the Sparrow," was nominated for the International Folk Music Awards "2019 Album of the Year."

More information and registration.

Care Cafe

2nd and 4th Sunday of each month 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 Cafe will be 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 Gilette <u>assocdcl@uuithaca.org</u> Christine Kapral <u>christinekapral@yahoo.com</u>.

Soul Matters Material for October - Deep Listening

The Soul Matters theme for October is Deep Listening. 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/SoulMattersOct2024

Small Group Ministry opening!

Interested in a Small Group Ministry but you don't like to drive in the evening? Are you just open to zoom meetings? If so, our Monday SGM meets the first and third Monday evenings at 7 on zoom. It's a great chance to discuss important life topics and get to know others. We rotate leadership of the sessions, which can be fun, but if you're not comfortable leading, that's ok too. We frequently do the Soul Matters topic, as well as a mix of other things. We'd love to have 1-2 new members in this group! If you are interested or have questions, contact Jennifer Streid-Mullen at streid-mullegmail.com.

Joys and Sorrows

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

Tiffany Brown and her family are members of our community and regularly attend on Sunday mornings for services and RE. They could really use some help navigating extra challenges right now. Please consider providing a meal or other support if you are able.

https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/56nlky

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.

Adult RE

Pub Theology

Tuesday, **October 22**, 6:30 pm Liquid State Brewing, 620 W. Green Street

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 *Deep Listening*. 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.

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.

We Are All the Care Team

Michelle Obama spoke recently about creating a world where we take care of each other. As a congregation, we covenant to promote compassion

We seek to create and sustain a community of caring, in which we come together to do the work of kindness.

To this end, we ask for your help in providing care and support to each other in times of illness, bereavement, and other life challenges. We can do so much good when we work together. Whether you have time for an occasional task or long-term commitment, please contact the Care Team to volunteer!

The Care Team is a group of congregation members who act on behalf of the congregation to provide pastoral care, and support for members and friends. Our goal is to provide various kinds of short-term support. When volunteers are available we will provide meals, food shopping, rides to appointments, rides to church, friendly phone calls, cards and visits for those that are isolated, ill or needing support. For those who need referrals for health care, mental health or eldercare, we have lists of resources and members with experience with these community resources.

If you or any member or close friend of FUSIT need some assistance, please contact Kathy Hopkins at 607-592-3025 or Kathy1122@gmail.com. If you want to volunteer, contact Kathy.

In addition, Nancy Dolge, ndolge@gmail.com and Rita Barber, barber.rita@gmail.com, co-chair a team of volunteers who coordinate Memorial Service Receptions for FUSIT members. Contact them to bake or help with receptions.

We all are the Care Team. Sometimes it might be you that needs support, sometimes it might be me. There is enough love and care to go around if we come together. Join us!

Nancy Miller for the Care Team

Ways to Engage

Curious about events and happenings at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca? Check out our Facebook page and stay current with what's going on in the community!

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca Facebook Page

FUSIT Choir

The FUSIT Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7 - 8:30 pm in the Annex. Come one, come all! To this wonderful, joyful and important part of our community service. Questions: text Jayne at 607-256-9488.

Current Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering is a great way to meet others in the First Unitarian Community and give back at the same time! Current Volunteer Opportunities are available here.

Message from the Ministry Visioning Team (MVT)

Thank you so much to lay leaders joAnn Kowalski, Nancy Miller, and Don Rakow for being the first members of this community to serve on the Ministry Visioning Team (MVT). And thank you to Rev. Janet Shortall and Rev. Peaches Gillette for each serving for one year as representatives from our Congregational Leadership Team. Please join us in welcoming Betsy East and Therese O'Connor, who will be joining Director of Congregational Life, Emily Richards, to the team.

MVT is tasked by the Board of Trustees to guide and coordinate the work of the ministry and serve as partners with the Board to implement the goals articulated in the annual Vision of Ministry.

We are looking forward to supporting this community and helping to create a vibrant, thriving spiritual home that centers love as the foundation of this congregation, and the work that we do.

Emily Richards, CRE

Ithaca Community Red Cross Blood Drive

Proudly Sponsored by First Unitarian Society of Ithaca

Wednesday, **October 9**1:00 pm to 6:00 pm in the Parlor.
Enter through the Garden Entrance. **NEW DONORS NEEDED**

Please consider giving a power red cell donation if you are o-, o+, A- or B-!

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit RedCrossBlood.org to make your appointment.

Treat yourself! Come give blood in October for a \$10 Amazon.com Gift Card by email. Plus, automatically be entered for a chance to win a \$5,000 gift card, there will be three lucky winners!

Terms apply:

First Unitarian is a UUA-recognized (LGBTQ) Welcoming Congregation

Blast from the Board

Consultant Report and A Congregational Conversation

Dear Fellow Congregants,

"Pledge revenue vs. Society expenses." Early this year, we, as a congregation, were thinking and discussing this issue. We had a "Cabaret Night." And an on-line auction. We had congregational conversations. Based on input from these activities, Stewardship Chair Matt Hare researched consultants. He found a consulting group that has worked with UU churches & societies. He determined that these consultants work on the concept of being good stewards. That they would work with us and advise, not only on stewardship, but on the strengths, challenges, and opportunities ACROSS our Society. And they would report specifically on our overall health and capacities. So, working with the Board, Staff, and Partnership Teams, Matt contracted with Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry of the consultancy "Stewardship for Us". He gave us an excellent project overview last month in the September UU Connections.

You will be able to share in the consulting results in three ways:

- Attending a Congregational Conversation with Rev.
 Lydia on Sunday October 6th, after the Sunday Service. You can attend live or via Zoom.
- 2. Reviewing a video of the **October 6th** Congregational Conversation.
- 3. Attending a follow up Zoom meeting with Rev. Lydia later in October.

We, the Stewardship Committee, the Partnership Teams, and the Board, expect to emerge with ideas and directions and opportunities. And we look forward to you, the congregants, coming forward with your ideas and suggestions.

Take Good Care, Fred Balfour, Board President

October Board of Trustees Meeting

The Board will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, on **October 15**, at 6:30 pm. Board meetings are a hybrid format, taking place in the church parlor and through Zoom.

All FUSIT members are invited to attend these meetings. 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=VUxUTUMraVZDUFQzQndSVFRraFlPdzo9

Meeting ID: 882 5877 6990

Passcode: 602445

Our Mission

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

Connect. Inspire. Engage.



A Stewardship Consultant, Rev. Lydia
Ferrante-Roseberry, will be with us the weekend
of **October 4th**. She will meet with our board and
staff on Friday (open meetings), and most committees
and teams on Saturday to hear about our culture,
concerns, and our hopes and priorities for
the congregation. Rev. Lydia is looking at FUSIT from top
to bottom so that her recommendations about next steps
can account for many aspects of our current aspirations
and functioning.

You are invited to an all-congregation potluck lunch 12 – 1 pm, Saturday afternoon, **October 5**, in the Annex. After lunch Rev. Lydia will conduct a special workshop on Stewardship and Community Building, 1 pm – 2:15 pm in the Annex. A core focus of her visit is on identifying recommended next steps and practical information to help us successfully achieve our stewardship goals in support of the FUSIT mission.

On Sunday, **October 6**, after the service Lydia will present her initial observations and recommendations to the entire congregation, 11:50 – 12:50 in the Sanctuary. Rev. Lydia'a presentation after the Sunday service will follow a 20 min. coffee and snack social time in the Parlor. A follow-up meeting and report will be delivered within two weeks of the visit.

Snacks and childcare will be provided during Lydia's presentation after the Sunday service. Please make room in your schedule to participate so that we will get the most out of this visit.

Please fill out <u>this survey</u> from Rev. Lydia to help her learn more about our congregation in advance of the October 4 weekend.

Thank you!

Office Hours This Fall

The office is generally open 9 am - 4 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and 8 am - 3 pm on Sundays. Michelle works remotely on Wednesdays.

Check the Mid-week Announcements for changes and updates to this schedule.