



ITHACA

UU Connections

2024/2025 Issue No. 3

November 2024

Our Spiritual Journey

How are you feeling? How are you *really* feeling?

I have observed how this election season has brought heightened feelings of anxiety. I have heard the increase in criticism towards one another. I have seen how the stress and trepidation have sharpened our words and shortened our ability to temper our responses.

I am feeling it too. We all are.

Breathe.

Just breathe.

In the midst of the worry that we are all feeling for this beautiful and broken world, remember that there is a love holding us. A love that calls to us to repair that which is broken. Starting with the wounds inside of ourselves, and expanding to include our relationships with one another, to this community, and the world.

What we need right now is to return to that love. To come together. And in doing so we begin to repair that which is broken.

So, I invite you to soften your words. Lean into one another instead of pulling away. Meet each other with curiosity instead of judgment.

Whatever the outcome of this election, it's going to be ok. You are going to be ok. We are holding you in love. There is a love holding all. May we rest in that love.

"...Then it hits me. Maybe we're the pieces... Maybe that's it. With what you were talking about before. The world being broken. Maybe it isn't that we're supposed to find the pieces and put them back together. Maybe we're the pieces...Maybe, what we're supposed to do is come together. That's how we stop the breaking."
David Levithan

Emily Richards, CRE

Expanding Community

For many this charged political time can bring about increased feelings of isolation and division. 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.

Sunday Services in the Sanctuary at 10:30 am

Live-streamed on our YouTube channel

**Nursery childcare and Religious
Exploration classes for children**

For those of us who are struggling during this election season...

Election Meditation and Gentle Movement

Monday, **November 4th**

5:30 pm-7:30 pm in the Parlor

Mediation and gentle movement will be offered to anyone struggling with anxiety about the upcoming election. You may join, or leave, at any time during the offering.

Post Election Vigil

Wednesday, **November 6th**

10 am-12 pm and 7 pm-9 pm
in the Sanctuary

We invite you to come together in community to light a candle, share a reading, prayer, or song, or simply sit in silence as we reflect in joy or sorrow on the results of the election.

Light refreshments and pastoral care will be available for all election offerings.

**Reminder:
Daylight Saving Time Ends
on November 3**

Religious Exploration News

For information about Religious Exploration, please contact Emily Richards at CongregationalLife@uuitbaca.org.

Greetings from Religious Exploration

This month we are *Living Love Through the Practice of Repair*.

As a part of this practice we are lifting up our long-loved UU commitment to “deeds, not creeds.” We are invited to heal each other and the world. There are many ways of going about healing and repair and each one matters, regardless of how supposedly “large” or “small” they may be.

Engaging with the Practice of Repair offers us the chance to explore and celebrate what I see as the point of faith and religious exploration: helping each other live the best versions of ourselves.

So, this month I hope you experience a reminder that you are a work in progress, with no expectations of perfection. We are all beautiful and broken and constantly in a state of transformation and repair.

Rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion.
- bell hooks

Emily Richards, Director of Congregational Life

Classroom Sundays

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

Middle School and High School: The youth will continue 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.

[RE Wishlist](#)

We have so much appreciation for all of the community members who enrich our community through participating in our Religious Exploration programming. Being a part of the lives of our young people is deeply meaningful and the effects last a lifetime. 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 offering Our Whole Lives comprehensive sexuality education program during the school year 2024-2025. The 8th-9th graders will continue their program through January and our 10th-12th graders will have the opportunity to participate in OWL this spring.

Religious Exploration Schedule for November

November 3rd - Classroom Sunday

November 10th - Classroom Sunday

November 17th - Creative Sunday

November 24th - Multigenerational
Service with Cider and Cornbread
Communion

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

Religious Exploration Events for November

November Movie Night

Friday, November 8th

5:30 pm-8:00 pm

Arch Room

Drop your kids off, or stay and join us, for a movie night, complete with dinner and snacks.

[November Movie Night Registration](#)

Music for Little People

Wednesday, November 6th and 20th

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, November 17

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.

Adult RE

Pub Theology

Tuesday, November 26, 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 *Repair*. 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.

November Worship Services

The theme for November is "Repair" 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, November 3, "There is a Love Holding Us" Emily Richards, CRE

Even in these times of increased anxiety from the uncertain political climate, there is a love holding us. A love that invites curiosity and kindness. A love that can offer reassurance and even repair for this beautiful and broken world in which we live. What do you need to hold you?

Special music by Russell Posegate

Sunday, November 10, "Repair" Rev. Peaches Gillette

We are worn and threadbare by our experiences with our own serratedness, emotionally frayed as we witness the splitting and tragic disrepair of the world around us.

Our love of life has equipped us with the tools and the skills to mend one another. Together, we can weave a tapestry of hope; we can begin to repair, even if only by one stitch at a time.

Special music by Ana Florencia

Sunday, November 17, "Deep Roots, Strong Roots: Individual Action to Build and Repair"

Members of the congregation will share some of their grassroots work on behalf of families, community, and connection.

Special music by VOICES Multicultural Choir

Sunday, November 24, "May We Be Nourished" Emily Richards, CRE

Let us come together in celebration of the season, taking part in the nourishment of our annual Cider and Cornbread Communion. Join us for a service that will engage all ages, filled with story, song, and connection. Please stay for our chili and cornbread lunch to follow.

Special music by Ithaca Children and Youth Chorus



RE October fun at Moore Family Farm



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CongregationalLife@uuithaca.org

Pastoral Care Associate

Rev. Janet Shortall

pastoralcare@uuithaca.org

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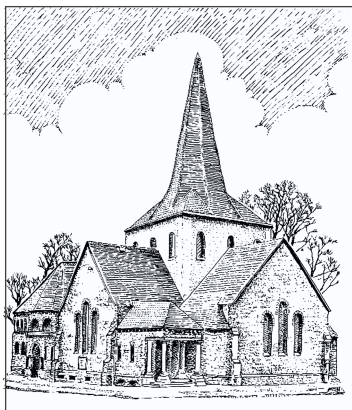
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Visit our Website and get
your newsletter:
www.uuithaca.org

Possible Ponderings

***The theme for November is Living Love
Through the Practice of Repair.***

*Possible Ponderings is an offering of ways you might consider
engaging more deeply with the theme or reflecting on the ways the
idea of **Living Love Through the Practice of Repair**
shows up in your life.*

November 1-9: How might your efforts to repair a
social ill or injustice be trying to repair you?

November 10-16: Think back to a time when
someone repaired you by reconnecting you to pleasure
and/or play. If you were to thank them, what would
you say?

November 17-23: Are some things better left broken?
Does everything need to be repaired?

November 24-30: Nature repairs us. What part of the
healing earth is calling you to come back?

UUA Disaster Relief Fund

This fund allows the UUA to respond flexibly to current
disaster needs as well as to new emergency situations as
they arise.

The Disaster Relief Fund disburses grants to UU
congregations and recognized UU non-profit entities.

The Fund is part of a covenant between the UUA and
congregations, between congregations who give generously
and those in need, and with our community partners. Through
this work, we are able to embody our faith and values.

Donations can be made online at www.uua.org or
checks made payable to UUA Disaster Relief Fund, can be
mailed to UUA Gift Processing, 24 Farnsworth St, Boston,
MA 02210.

***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

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. Find more information about various teams on our website.

The November **Shared Plate** and **Side with Love** will go to Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard.

Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard is a local food pantry that provides emergency food to local families in need daily, feeding thousands of people a year. Demand at the Cupboard has increased significantly in recent years so they are in need of donations of time, money and nonperishable items.

FUSIT will be collecting toilet paper (individually wrapped is best), zip-top storage bags, peanut butter, pastas, cereals and snacks at each Sunday service in November. These will be delivered to Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard at the end of the month.

If you are able to volunteer time, please call 607-273-6532. Cash and donated items are also very welcome.

Pantry usage (number of people served) has increased 12% over last year. They are going through more cash for nonperishable pantry staples, and using up financial reserves at an unsustainable pace.

8th Principle Action Ministry Wednesday, November 27

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 jmkowalskiro@gmail.com.

The Environmental Interest Circle (EIC) Meeting Wednesday, November 6, 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://us02web.zoom.us/j/81644753524?pwd=SDBqaTN5elM3ejltbGdJeGhPa3QxQT09>

Meeting ID: 816 4475 3524

Passcode: 894885



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.

LGBTQ+ Days of Remembrance

Transgender Awareness Month

November 1-30 is a time to celebrate the trans community and their history, while also advocating for their rights.

Transgender Parent Day

November 2 is a day to honor transgender parents and parents of transgender children.



A day to honor all those transgender people whose lives were lost to anti-transgender violence during the year, and learning about the violence affecting the transgender community.

Women's Circle on November 25

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://us02web.zoom.us/j/82169260621?pwd=ZDkyanRKMmo2czhqSWgrSVhmbGFqdzo9>

Meeting ID: 821 6926 0621. Passcode: 015515

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.



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.).



Beacon on Aurora - An Evening with Moonfruits, Sunday, November 17, doors open at 6:30 pm, concert begins at 7 pm

Beacon on Aurora is our monthly concert series featuring folk music in all its forms, with an emphasis on rising non-traditional artists. This concert series is only as strong as we make it together. You can help make it a success by helping with publicity, baking treats for intermission, arriving early to set up tea, helping at the door, and joining Music Director Stephanie in the kitchen afterwards to clean up. Right now, 100% of the ticket sales are going to the artists.

Our November Beacon on Aurora concert will feature Moonfruits—led by Ottawa-based partners Alex Millaire and Kaitlin Milroy—who craft contemporary folk, organically alternating between French and English, that addresses our collective humanity with heart, wit, and wonder. Join us on Sunday, **November 17th** to be inspired! Doors open at 6:30 and the show starts at 7 pm. Learn more about the band and listen to some of their music here: <https://moonfruits.ca/>.

Sage Chapel Christmas Choir Rehearsals Begin!

I have poured over hours of music to find us the most beautiful and moving choral music for the December Candlelight Service. Please join us as we prepare for this beautiful community event (service details forthcoming). It is such a beautiful way to usher in the season. Rehearsals begin on: **Thursday, November 7, 7:00 - 8:30 pm** in the Annex, continuing every Thursday thereafter (except Thanksgiving) leading up to the service.

Registering is helpful with a text to Jayne at 607-256-9488. But you can just show up if you find you have not registered and you want to come. Don't hesitate to reach out with questions. All choral parts will be recorded for singers to practice at home.

See you at rehearsal!

Jayne Demakos, Choir Director

Care Cafe - November 10 and 24

2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the FUSIT Library

Rev. Peaches Gillette and Christine Kapral invite you to the Care Cafe. During our time in the 'cafe', we openly express our thoughts, reaching into ourselves and deeply touching upon and sharing what it means to be fully human in a complicated world.

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. Past groups have been excellent and enriching, as the flow of participants from week to week has created perfect cross-currents of relationships, broadening and securing FUSIT's sense of community. Time together in the Care Cafe allows many of us to meet and know one another more intimately.

Rev. Peaches Gillette pgfreedom09@gmail.com
Christine Kapral christinekapral@yahoo.com

People of Color Affinity Group

Are you a person of color looking to connect with other UUs of color? Please consider joining a newly formed group dedicated to growing a multicultural community and promoting diversity here at FUSIT. For more information, please contact poc@uuihaca.org.

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.

-Steve Richter died in his home in Barton with family on Friday October 4th. Our condolences to Veronica and the boys.

-A joy from Kathy Hopkins for all of the new railings installed by Sara Catterall and the Buildings and Grounds team.

-Walt and Barb Peck welcomed Penelope to this world on September 24th. The glow of grandparenting is evident.

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.

-Thank you to Madonna Stallman for her efforts in making the garden in front of the Parish House look so beautiful with native and pollinator friendly plants. Such an improvement!

-Thank you to Matt Hare for planning and organizing the Stewardship Weekend on October 4-6. A very valuable evaluation of our society to propel FUSIT towards a thriving future.

-Much appreciation to the Hospitality Team for all they do on Sunday mornings, making coffee, providing snacks, cleaning up after coffee hour, ushering, greeting and welcoming people into our beloved community.

-Thank you to Dick Kurtz for all the hours he has devoted to the building upkeep these past few months - being the main point of contact with the contractors installing the heat pumps, fixing leaky pipes, repairing the floor in Stepping Stones and countless other building projects.

Soul Matters Material for November - Repair

The Soul Matters theme for November is *Living Love Through the Practice of Repair*. 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/SoulMattersNov2024>





Chili and Cornbread Lunch

Sunday, **November 24th**,

11:45am -1pm in the Annex

Please join us for the return of our annual Cornbread Communion during Sunday service followed by a shared meal of chili and cornbread in the Annex.

Cooks Needed

Do you have an amazing chili or cornbread recipe that you would love to share? We need volunteers to make a pot of chili for our **November 24th** Cornbread Communion and Chili event. Options that are gluten free, vegan, and allergen friendly are especially welcome. Please [sign up here](#) or reach out to Emily Richards at dre@uuithaca.org.

Hearing Loop

The sanctuary has a Hearing Loop System which is an ADA approved technology that transmits sound wirelessly directly to hearing aids. If you wear hearing aids and your T-coil is activated, you can pick up the signal from the sound system (if you have hearing aids, but your T-coil is not activated, please speak with your audiologist). There are also sound amplifying headphones (available on the credenza in the Parlor or from one of the ushers) if you do not have hearing aids but could benefit from amplified sound.

New Volunteer Opportunity Bulletin Board

Take a look at our new volunteer opportunity "hub"! This self-serve volunteer board (to the right of the great doors) is intended for Teams and Committees to pin sign up sheets and event posters anytime they need community support. Everyone is encouraged to keep an eye on this board, and remember our values of Love, Generosity, and Interdependence. Gifting your time back to our beloved community can be a meaningful way to live out these values. If any questions arise, feel welcome to email Madeline Natale, Religious Exploration Coordinator (reasst@uuithaca.org).

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!

<https://www.facebook.com/FUSofI>

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 <https://unitarian.ithaca.ny.us/index.php/connection/volunteer/>

Ministry Visioning Team (MVT)

The Ministry Visioning Team works in partnership with the Board of Trustees and is here to serve this community, help to guide our ministry programs, and encourage living out our Vision of Ministry.

2024 – 2025 Vision of Ministry

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.

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.



Ithaca Community Red Cross Blood Drive

Proudly Sponsored by First Unitarian Society of Ithaca

Friday, **November 29** 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.

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

View from the Board

What's New? We've Been Audited! And the results are POSITIVE!

Audited? What do you mean? This sounds ominous.

Well, in this case, it's not ominous. Led by our Stewardship Committee, we invited a consultant, Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry, to take a close look at FUSIT and give a report back to us on several dimensions with an overview of "What is the overall health and the capacities of FUSIT." Rev. Lydia is a seasoned minister with over 20 years of parish ministry experience in three churches. She is part of a group of consultants: "Stewardship For Us!"

When did this "auditing" or consulting take place? Rev. Lydia visited us over the weekend of October 4th. And during that packed three days:

- 30 FUSITers met with her in one-on-one meetings including: Board, Ministry and Operations Teams, Staff, and several committees and teams.
- A group joined her for a pot-luck lunch where she asked and recorded:
 - What's special about the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca?
 - What are some stories and reflections about generous people
 - How Should FUSIT talk about MONEY?
- In the weeks leading up to October 4th:
 - We supplied her with 31 different documents describing FUSIT;
 - 76 FUSITers filled out her 5-minute survey asking for specific FUSIT strengths, challenges, and mission priorities.

When will we know the "results" of this consulting? In other words, when will Rev. Lydia report back about FUSIT's "overall health and capacities"?

- October 28th will bring the final written report plus PowerPoint slides.
- October 6th Sunday Service, was a two-person sermon. She and Emily dynamically presented the topic "Listening with a Generous Heart". (available on FUSIT's archived Sunday services, see our website).
- October 6th, Rev. Lydia led an after-service Congregation Conversation summarizing her initial findings and answering several questions. (available as a Zoom video)

Is there a "leak" of the final report?

Well, yes. A peek at the draft tells us that that Rev. Lydia provides:

- Five FUSIT "Gifts"
- Four Challenges
- Five Recommendations (four on money and 1 on welcoming)

Plus a resounding **"YOU CAN DO IT"**.

Stay tuned.

Fred Balfour, Board President

November Board of Trustees Meeting

The Board will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, on **November 19**, at 6:30 pm. Board meetings are a hybrid format, taking place in the Sophia Lyon Fahs Room 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=VUxUTUMRaVZDUFRQzQndSVFRraFIPdz09>

Meeting ID: 882 5877 6990

Passcode: 602445

Our Mission

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



November 10, 2024

***You're invited to
a celebration!***

FUSIT's capital project to cut greenhouse gas emissions from the Annex building is complete. The building has been converted from burning methane to using air-source electric heat pumps with heat-recovery exchangers. The potentially dangerous and polluting gas lines have been eliminated. The entire building is now efficiently heated AND cooled by modern, safe, and efficient heat pumps. As a bonus, our project fits with Ithaca's overall plan to electrify many downtown buildings.

On **November 10th** we will serve coffee hour on the second floor of the Annex, where you will be able to see and feel the new ceiling units delivering warm air. There will be information available about how to make this change in your own home, and people available to answer your questions.