



ITHACA

UU Connections

2018/19 Issue No. 4

December 2018

Sunday Celebrations at 10:30 am

Sunday, December 2: What is a Miracle? Rev. Margaret Weis

In this Hanukkah-themed service we will reflect together on the story of a miracle that comes from the Jewish tradition. Join us for a service of music, word, and reflection on an ancient story of a miracle and what that means for our lives today.

Special music by FUSIT Choir and Klezmer Band

Sunday, December 9: The Choice of Kindness Rev. Margaret Weis

It has been said that we should always, always, choose kindness. Many times that choice is easy, but other times it is difficult. Together we will reflect on how we can bring more kindness into the world, even when it's hard.

Special music by Zachary Sweet, cello

Sunday, December 16: Vulnerability and Wonder, and New Member Welcome Rev. Margaret Weis

They say that growth is only possible outside our comfort zone. What does this mean as we reflect on wonder and how we open ourselves to it? Is vulnerability a requirement to be part of, and experience, wonder?

Special music by Finger Lakes Flutes

Sunday, December 16 at 7pm: Quiet Christmas Service Rev. Margaret Weis, Jennifer Streid-Mullen

In a service of candlelight, silence, reflection, and quiet community you are welcome to bring your burdens and lay them down. Enter into this place of comfort and community during an otherwise busy holiday season.

Special music by Stephanie Ortolano

Friday, December 21: Winter Solstice Service at 6:30 pm

Our celebration is an interactive, non-traditional, and creative celebration to mark the turn of the year and the beginning of a new one.

Sunday, December 23: Wonder-Filled Chaos – Multigenerational “No Rehearsal” Christmas Pageant Rev. Margaret Weis

Sometimes approaching life with wonder means letting go of control. In this service about the wonder spontaneity, we will retell the story of a baby born in a chaotic time and the ways that love shows up when we least expect it.

Special Music: by Barry Low, accordion

Monday, December 24 at 5:15 and 8:00 pm: Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, Sage Chapel

Join us as we celebrate the possibility of love and hope overcoming fear and violence. In this Christmas Eve service of music, story, candlelight, and gratitude we lift up our hearts in celebration.

Special music at 5:15 by FUSIT Choir and at 8:00 by Shuhan Family

Sunday, December 30: Participative Carol Sing

Special music by Stephanie Ortolano

Ministerial Musings

Life can feel so full and the holiday season can add to our feelings of fullness - sometimes in a good way and sometimes in ways that feel not-so-good.

For some of us, gathering with family and friends, attending holiday parties, and buying gifts can feel like a nourishing and love-filled experience. And for others of us, these things can cause anxiety, worry, or even shame. If you are struggling with addiction, family challenges, illness, or otherwise are feeling down, please know that you have a place here at First Unitarian, and we are glad you're part of our community. And please join us at our annual Quiet Christmas service in the evening on December 16th. It really is a service focused on holding space for difficult things and emotions during the winter months.

When we are feeling so full – in both good and bad ways – it can be difficult to find the time or energy to make room for anything more. I'm working on finding extra time and space in my VERY busy December schedule for self-care, rest, and renewal with family and friends. I bet you are trying to make room as well. I'd invite you to check out the calendar in this month's newsletter that offers daily opportunities to engage with this idea of making room in our lives. It also includes weekly challenges to try, by yourself or with family. I hope you'll try some of these things, reflect with others from FUSIT, and engage with some of the opportunities along with your children, partner, or friends.

And finally, for those of you who are struggling in these cold months to keep the heat on, the fridge stocked, or otherwise need some temporary help, please be in touch with me. I may be able to help on a temporary, time-limited basis for things like this using the Human Needs Fund. And, if you are feel like your pocketbook is full these days, please consider making a donation to this fund.

This December, as we find nourishment and comfort in the darkness, as we gather together for warmth and community, be good to yourselves and each other.

*Take good care,
Rev. Margaret*

Religious Exploration News

Sunday, December 9th RE Visioning Kickoff! From 12-2pm

Join our RE Visioning Task Force for lunch and a congregational conversation about our hopes and visions for Religious Exploration at FUSIT in the Pedersen Arch Room.



Friday-Sunday, January 4-6 RE VISIONING RETREAT with Kim Sweeney, Courageous Faith Consulting!

Kim Sweeney is a credentialed Religious Educator and independent consultant who worked for seven years as the Lead for Faith Formation and Safe Congregations on the UUA's New England Regional staff team. She is the author of The Death of Sunday School and The Future of Faith Formation and the founder of Courageous Faith Consulting.

Join us in community as we explore big ideas, hopes, and the meaning we find in faith formation and religious exploration at FUSIT.

Friday, January 4th from 6-9pm (all ages welcome, childcare provided): We will gather as a whole community for some time of spiritual deepening, discussion, and activity to wonder together about what religious exploration is and what it means for us along our lifespan.
Pizza available for \$1 per slice.

Saturday, January 5th: Kim will meet with various leadership groups (Team Leader Council, Board, Staff, RE Team and RE Visioning Task Force) to explore religious exploration and how it aligns with our vision of ministry and goals as a congregation.

Sunday, January 6th: A multigenerational worship experience that affirms our life-long need for exploration, wonder, and community-building (led by Rev. Weis and Kim Sweeney). Then, stick around for a conversation with Kim to help us bring these ideas forward together, in community.

For information about Religious Exploration, please contact Susanne Quagliata at drefusit@gmail.com or 607-273-7521, ext. 23.

December 1 - 31

Excitement around our Religious Exploration programs continues to build. Youth participating in our Crossing Paths program visited Temple Beth El and First Presbyterian in November. This month they will visit St. Catherines of Siena to explore Catholicism. Our teens held their first "Teen Team" meeting following the All Church Night dinner in November. The next Teen Team meeting will be Wednesday, **December 12** in the Fulgence Ndagijimana room (dinner at 5:30 pm followed by a meeting at 6:30 pm). For more information, contact Youth Leaders Lyn Staack or Trudy Pantalia.

Multigenerational Services

We've planned for one Multigenerational Service per month this year. These services help your children develop a stronger sense of their identity as Unitarian Universalists by participating in the ritual practices of our church. Knowing how to participate is something that takes time to learn. That learning process can be challenging for our children, pushing them and us outside of our comfort zones. All of our children are at different stages of development, and capable of different levels of engaging with services. Families in our church, particularly those with the youngest children, have told me multigenerational services are working out great, and for some it has been difficult, and many are somewhere in between.

Many of us, particularly those with young children, find it challenging keeping children quiet and still for the whole service. Some of us come from childhood experiences where those were the expectations for children in church, and are mortified if our children are not behaving this way. I want to reassure you that that is not the expectation or the goal at FUSIT.

There have been a few occasions when my kids have not been still or quiet. Positive comments from others about how much joy they get from seeing my kids in service have helped me let go of the expectation that my children be perfect – now every time my kids are acting up in service I try to tell myself that they are helping reassure all of you that it is okay if your kids aren't perfect! And I want to tell you how often in the last few months people have told me how much having the children's energy and joy in the services has renewed their spirit. The church culture we are trying to create is one that is warm, energetic, and family friendly. Thank you all for contributing to that!

Gingerbread House Decorating Party

Come and join the sticky celebration! The tradition continues on Sunday, **December 16** from noon to 1 pm in the Susan Frederick Gray Room (Annex). Reserve your house: <https://tinyurl.com/FUSIT-Gingerbread>

Religious Exploration Schedule

December 2: Classroom Sunday

December 9: Creative Sunday

December 16: Classroom Sunday

December 23: Multigenerational

December 30: No RE Programming

-Susanne Quagliata. Acting Director, Religious Exploration

Joys and Sorrows

Our thoughts are with Marsha Kardon as she recovers from hip surgery and John Gaines as he recovers from shoulder surgery!

Thanks to...

...Quick work by Sara Catterall who got Dick Kurtz on the case to repair the broken snowblower that was being used to clear 8" of snow after the first snowstorm. Dick took the snowblower and replaced the belt, returning it to the church on Saturday morning, saving us hundreds of dollars and repair delays. Thanks Sara and Dick!

...Rod Howe for donating some of Mark's house plants to help beautify our Sanctuary and church building

...Fred Balfour, Sam and Simon Catterall, and John Gaines who helped dispose of the broken Care Team freezer after Nancy Miller cleaned it out. And many thanks to Susanne and Andrew Quagliata for generously donating a new one.

...Team 2, under Coordinators Donna Faivre-Roberts and Tom Roberts for greeting, ushering, snack providing, coffee prepping and cleaning up after the Sunday services on October 21 and 28, and to Team 3 under Coordinators Sharon Beltaine and Jesse Koennecke for completing those tasks on November 4 and 11.

Snack providers, please remember to provide a list of potentially sensitive ingredients.

If you are not currently part of a Hospitality Team, please see Pat Evans or John Gaines on Sunday or get in touch with Pat at patevans46@gmail.com or John at (607) 898-3943 or at jag222@cornell.edu.

Weekly Food Collection

Every week we collect dry or canned food for delivery to a local food pantry. Please bring non-perishable items to the basket which is located in the Garden Entrance.

Our Vision

As the Unitarian Universalist presence in Ithaca, we envision ourselves as a vibrant, dynamic community. We cherish fellow seekers, nurture open dialogue and spiritual growth, and inspire action on matters of conscience, serving as a beacon of reason and hope in our interconnected world.



Please Note Change in Times

All Church Night December 12th!

On the second Wednesday of each month, we will gather for a **Potluck Dinner at 5:30 pm in the Parlor & many teams will have their meetings.**

We will be offering free childcare!

A great opportunity for multi-team collaboration, welcoming of newcomers and families, and engaging together in community. We hope you'll join us!

Please bring a dish to share.

The following teams will participate in our All Church Night on **December 12th!**

If you'd like YOUR ministry team to participate in the All Church Night, have your team leader speak with Rev. Margaret.

Team/Committee	Time Slot
Aesthetics Team	6:30-7:30 pm
Music Team	6:30-7:30 pm
Religious Exploration Team	6:30-7:30 pm
Environmental Interest Circle	6:30-7:30 pm
Teen Team (HS Youth Group)	6:30-7:30 pm
Finance and Endowment	6:30-7:30 pm
Membership Team	7:30-9:00 pm
Care Team	7:30-9:00 pm
Buildings and Grounds	7:30-9:00 pm

Social Justice Council Meeting

The Social Justice Council will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, **December 10th**, from 5:30-7:00 pm in Room 122. Come to learn what our various action teams are doing, and participate in choosing the recipient of each month's "Sharing Sunday." Everyone is welcome!

December 2-30:

Side With Love Collection

For the month of December we will be gathering new and gently-used and freshly laundered hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves during our first hymn each Sunday. These donations will be shared with those in our community who need some extra warmth this winter season. Thank you for giving generously to this collection.

Minister

Rev. Margaret Weis
273-7521, ext. 22
minister@uuithaca.org

Religious Exploration

Susanne Quagliata, Acting Director, 273-7521, ext. 23
drefusit@gmail.com

Sexton

Sandy Soule, 272-4475

Bookkeeper

Lauren Ponzone
bookkeeper@uuithaca.org

Music Director

Stephanie Ortolano
607-708-8088
fusitmusic@gmail.com

Adult Choir Director

Jennifer Lawrence Birnbaum,
fusitchoir@gmail.com

Community Engagement and Outreach Coordinator

Sarah Buckser, 273-7521, ext 24
memcoord@uuithaca.org

President, Board of Trustees

Angela Zhang
angela.jibong@gmail.com
607-216-7162

Care Team

Molly Robbins
robbinsmolly18@gmail.com

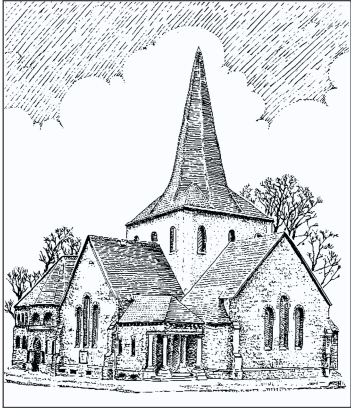
Church office 273-7521 ext 21

cadmin@uuithaca.org

Administrative Assistant

Loretta Heimbuch, 273-7521
ext 28, adminasst@uuithaca.org

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P.O. Box 6
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Visit our Website and get
your newsletter:
www.uuithaca.org

Annual Christmas UU Book BoUtiqUe December 2 & 9 In the Parlor after Sunday Service

UU Book BoUtiqUe will be open and ready to provide you with choice books for your life, your holiday pleasure, and gift giving. We feature the best of Beacon and Skinner Presses. As you may know, Beacon Press is a few years older than this church and has a remarkable history in itself as a UU cornerstone and provider of excellent UU literature.

So purchases from the BoutiqUe not only support our church library, currently rehoused and being reorganized, but also our own Beacon Press. Why Beacon Press? It has received rave reviews from folks as diverse as Cornell West, Howard Zinn, Albert Einstein and Daniel Ellsberg. Want to know what they said? You've got some reading to do and we've got just what you need.

Sunday Service CDs

Sunday Service CDs are available about 10 minutes after the Sunday Celebration from Sandy Soule, the church Sexton, and any extras are left in the boxes on top of the staff mailboxes in the Parish House. Please return any CDs you have finished listening to, to the box on top of the mailboxes outside the church office.

Did you know... *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/> Instagram www.instagram.com/ithacauus and Twitter, @IthacaUUs.*

Invitation to Share Flowers

*It is time again to deliver a poinsettia to someone in our congregation who has experienced a loss, an illness, is unable to be present with us, or is celebrating the joy of a new child. You'll find the wreath in the Parlor on Sundays beginning **December 2nd**, and each paper holly leaf has an address showing, with the name and phone number on the back, for each intended recipient. Just remove the leaf and select a poinsettia to deliver. A Care Team member will be near the board to answer your questions about deliveries and pertinent recipient information.*



Church Office Will Close

at 4:00 pm on Friday, **December 21**,
and will reopen on Wednesday,
January 2 at 9:00 am.

Handshakes, Hugs, and Greetings!

We are entering into cold and flu season.

This is a special reminder that some in our congregation have compromised immune systems due to illness, chemotherapy treatments, or other reasons. So, please be especially careful about coming to services or activities if you are ill, and always wash your hands frequently throughout the day. If you aren't feeling your best, or otherwise don't want to share germs, feel free to hold your hand to your chest when greeting others, rather than shaking hands.

And, as always, its best to ask a person before presuming to hug them – not just when colds and flus are among us!

Thanks for doing your part to keep FUSIT and its people healthy and happy this winter!

Soul Matters Material for December on "Wonder"

Our December worship theme at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca is Wonder. This month's packet includes a few short readings, spiritual exercises, and discussion questions for you to consider. Here is the link:

<https://tinyurl.com/Ithaca-Wonder>

Book Discussion Group

The group will meet on **December 7th**, at 12:30 pm in the Library, to discuss *And There was Light* by J. Lusseyran. Contact Jennifer Streid-Mullen at 351-3087 or streidmull@gmail.com.

Women's Circle

The Women's Circle will meet Sunday, **December 23**, from 12-1:30 in the Arch Room. All who identify as women are welcome at the Women's Circle. For more information please contact Carol Whitlow at whitlowcarol@gmail.com.

Men's Group

The Men's Group meeting for December will be held on Monday, **December 17th** (please note change of date due to the holiday). All those who identify as male are invited to join us 5:30-7:30 pm in the Arch Room to share stories and eat some pizza. Newcomers welcome.

Please contact Jens Wennberg jens207@gmail.com or Mark Piechota markpiechota45@gmail.com for more information.

Possible Ponderings

The theme for December is Wonder.

Possible Ponderings is an offering of ways you might consider engaging more deeply with the theme or reflecting on the ways the idea of Wonder shows up in your life. These will also be printed in the order of service each week.

December 2-8: Where have you seen or experienced a miracle this week? What feels like it has come as a welcomed surprise to you lately?

December 9-15: Perform three random acts of kindness this week. What did that feel like?

December 16-22: What is one thing you could try that would push you outside your comfort zone this week?

December 23-30: How are you making room for love to enter in?

Board of Trustees December Meeting

The Board of Trustees will hold their monthly meeting on Tuesday, **December 13th**, at 6 pm in the Parlor. All interested persons are invited to attend.

FUSIT Has Joined Community Solar!

After many years of consideration, and research and guidance FUSIT member Marie McRae, Rev. Weis and the Board have decided to have FUSIT join the community solar movement!!!

We will now be able to offset our energy costs by being members of a community solar farm located in Newfield, New York. If you are interested in learning more about community solar, visit: <https://fingerlakes.nexamp.com>

Pastoral Emergencies

In case of a pastoral emergency (death or hospitalization), the Rev. Margaret Weis can be reached at 607-218-4281 (cell) if you need to speak with her.

For non-emergency pastoral care, please contact the Chair of the Care Team,, Molly Robbins at robbinsmolly18@gmail.com or you can call or text her at 914-357-1972.

Additionally, if you need a ride to any event at church, please contact Molly at the numbers listed above as early as possible, so that she can contact a member who is willing to help. If you are willing to provide occasional rides for others, contact Molly to give her your name and contact information.

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

Choir News

Please contact Jennifer Lawrence Birnbaum at FUSITCHOIR@gmail.com if you are interested in joining the holiday choir for Christmas Eve, Monday, **December 24th**.

Book Discussion Group

The group meets on the first Friday of the month and will next meet on **December 7**, at 12:30 pm in the Beatrix Potter Library Room, to discuss *And There was Light* by J. Lusseyran.

Please contact Jennifer Streid-Mullen at 351-3087 or streidmull@gmail.com for further information.

Parking Notice!

Please be aware that the First Unitarian Society **does not have ANY parking** available during the week and only by the generosity of the folks next door do we have parking for our Sunday services. Even if you're only running in for a minute, please park on the street.

Are You Interested in Having Christmas Dinner at the Church?

We'd like to schedule a dish-to-pass Christmas dinner on **December 25th**, but we need someone to coordinate the event. Please contact the office at cadmin@uuithaca.org or 273-7521, ext. 21, to let us know if you'd like come and if you would like to organize the dinner.

2019 Finger Lakes Calendars

Available in the Parlor from Liz Einstein for \$13 of which \$8 is profit. These gorgeous calendars by artist Dewey Neild make wonderful holiday or hostess gifts, which can be easily mailed. This year the proceeds will go to Golden Opportunity (GO), a local non-profit tutoring program for at-risk children living in low-income families. Sale dates are **December 2 and 9**.

Fragrance Free Consideration

Some members of our congregation experience serious allergic reactions to strong fragrances and scents. Please refrain from using them when attending events at the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca.

Interested in Small Group Ministry?

Now is a great time to sign up for a small group! Most groups meet once per month and this is a great way to meet new people and explore our monthly themes. Sign up sheets are available at the Welcome Table or by email through Community Engagement and Outreach Coordinator Sarah Buckser, memcoord@uuithaca.org. We will be holding an information session on Small Group Ministry on Sunday, **December 16th** at 12:15 pm. Come learn more! Location: TBD.

Blood Drive Success!

The Red Cross Blood Drive on November 6 registered 25 donors and collected 21 pints of blood, above our goal of 19 pints. Thanks to both congregants and community members who contributed! Our next Blood Drive will be Friday, **January 3, 2019**.

Two Christmas Eve Traditional Candlelight Services

Bring your family and friends and join us in one of our festive and glorious services filled with readings and fellowship, candlelight and song, with the Rev. Margaret Weis.

Sunday, December 24 at 5:15 and 8:00 pm

Sage Chapel at Cornell

Please join the greater-Ithaca community in one of these traditional candlelight services at Sage Chapel on the Cornell Campus. There will be TWO services - one at 5:15 pm which will feature the Unitarian Choir led by Jennifer Lawrence Birnbaum, and the Ithaca High School Brass, and the 8:00 pm which will feature the Shuhan family.



Need a Ride to Sage Chapel on Christmas Eve?

If you need a ride to either the 5:15 or 8:00 pm Christmas Eve services or can provide a ride for others, please contact Molly Robbins robbinsmolly18@gmail.com as early as possible, so that she can contact a member who is willing to help or add your name and contact information.

Library Notes

The Library Committee is busy attaching color labels to match fourteen subject categories. Look for our new bookmarks which list the subject areas in our library.

We are fortunate to have recent book donations from these members: Carol Whitlow; Kathy and Elton Hall; Marie Kautz; Pat Evans; Carl and Kathy Hopkins; and Barbara Shew. There may be others who have dropped off gifts but without giving their names. We now have a gift basket with note paper to insure we know who to thank. We are anxious to add material that relates to our UU mission, history, social and environmental justice issues, poetry, world religions and the other subjects listed in the library.

We now have a library budget and have several new books which will be highlighted each month. The Denominational Common Read for 2016-17 was: "The Third Reconstruction: How a Moral Movement is Overcoming the Politics of Division and Fear", by the Rev. Dr. William Barber II. Rev. Barber spoke at Dorothy Cotton's Memorial at Cornell and is the charismatic leader of the Poor People's Campaign. His life story is amazing! Come and enjoy our library!

The library is located on the second floor of the Parish House; the easiest way to reach it is to enter through the front door and go up the winding staircase; the Beatrix Potter Room is directly in front of you at the top of the stairs. The library is available whenever there are office hours as well as Sundays.

Your library team includes Barb Shew, Flo Smith, Carol Whitlow, Joann Kowalski and Carol Nickerson. If you have questions, feel free to e-mail Barb at barbrandy51@gmail.com or speak to one of us during the Social Hour.

Extra Note:

The TGIF Small Group Ministry is sponsoring it's annual "UU Book BoUtique", after the church service on **December 2nd and 9th**. Proceeds benefit the library so come prepared.



From the Care Team

The Care Team will hold its monthly meeting on All Church Night, **December 12th**, from 7:30-9:00 pm, after the potluck dinner.

The Care Team is looking for individuals who would like to be added to the following lists: those who can provide rides, make meals, assist with receptions, and do one-time manual labor tasks. These lists will not be made public to the whole church but will instead be a reference for the Care Team when needs arise. If you'd like to be added to any these lists, please email Molly at robbinsmolly18@gmail.com.

If you have questions about the Care Team, feel free to contact Molly Robbins at robbinsmolly18@gmail.com.

Outreach and Engagement

The Community Outreach and Engagement Team (formerly the Membership Team) is looking for new members! Our team's goal is to expand outreach to the Ithaca community and to provide a welcoming church environment for newcomers and lifelong members alike. In these troubled times our team wants help to spread the message that this congregation is a safe and supportive home for all. We spread this message by providing events, welcome table greeters, and publicity to our congregation. Members of the COE Team work to plan and carry out events like Sunday Sunday, work on publicizing different church events, and hold 4 breakfasts a year to welcome those becoming members in the service to follow. If you have an interest in participating in this ministry to spread our message and welcome new members, publicize events, or help to create outreach events like Sunday Sundae or Ithaca Festival, please contact Sarah Buckser at memcoord@uuithaca.org or come to All Church Night on **December 12th**, at 5:00 pm. We hope to meet you soon!

Nametags:

If you've filled out a nametag form, please pick up your new nametag at the Welcome Table after the Sunday service.

You may have noticed that your nametag at First Unitarian has a space for your preferred pronouns. We invite you to write in the pronouns you'd like us to use when referring to you. If you're cisgender (your gender identity matches the sex you were assigned at birth), this may seem like an obvious and unnecessary thing to do. It really is an issue of welcoming – by indicating your preferred pronouns, you are opening space for those who do not identify as cisgender, and/or identify as trans* or gender queer, or other gender identities.

As Unitarian Universalists we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all persons and believe that all genders are worthy and sacred. So, let's all do our part to welcome EVERY person as they are.

If your nametag doesn't have a space for pronouns, head over to the Welcome Table and grab a sticker. Or, let Sarah Buckser know that you'd like a new nametag with a space to indicate your preferred pronouns!

Search for new Congregational Administrator

Our Hiring Team has been very busy these past few weeks! We posted the position at the end of October, casting a wide net – receiving 25 applications from folks near and far. Rev. Weis, Jennifer Streid-Mullen, and Mark Piechota have been interviewing and following up on references for multiple candidates and hope to have a person hired soon. Stay tuned!

Ushers needed for Monday, December 24, Christmas Eve (TWO SERVICES)

We are looking for individuals/couples/families who are willing to usher at EITHER the 5:15 pm or 8:00 pm service at Sage Chapel. Ushering involves not only helping folks find seats and collecting the offering but also helping with the candle lighting ceremony. Please contact Steve Hand shand35@gmail.com or 275-7008 or Geoff Dunn gdunn@frontier.com or 280-5953.

2018 Gala Auction Report

From auction co-chairs, Camila Faraday and Amelia Habicht

This year's auction was a smashing success, beginning with the scrumptious hors d'oeuvres and live music by Molly MacMillan, and thanks to the efforts of many. Missing from our side this year was our beloved Mark Pedersen, who worked tirelessly to help make each auction a success. We have exceeded our auction budget of \$14,000, and have raised \$16,657 to support First Unitarian Society in its mission to create connections, find inspiration and engage the world.

Here is a shout out of recognition and thanks to those who helped, many in several ways, and for many hours before, during and after the auction: Loretta Heimbuch, Alice Churchill, Jennifer Streid-Mullen, Wendy, Ben, and Emma Salomon, Joann Kowalski, Russ Charif, Beth Howard, Whitney Wiggins, Jeff Gerbracht, Kathy and Carl Hopkins, Donna Faive-Roberts, Tom Roberts, Maureen Cowen, Jane Koestler, Jim Karpinski, Pat Gaines, Liz Einstein, Stephanie Ortolano, Joan and Auggie Doria, Norm Culver, Karl Fitzke, Emily, Marshall and Mary Hopkins, Laura Free, Lucy Woll, Dawn, Scott, and Lily Grover, Lyn Staack, Lori Yelensky, Aurelia Faraday, Barbara Need, Pam Crosby, Will Chimento, Nico Botts, Sue Rakow, Jane McArthur, Marie Benedetti, Sadie Hays, Evan Wray, Juri Hwang, Sharon Balfour, Lydia Pettis, Rita Rosenberg, Wendy Wolfe, Sandy Soule, Cady Habicht, Ben Brotman, Robin Cisne, Luke Mann, Earl Rose and Margaret Nichols. An apology to anyone who we overlooked!

Besides the above friends a heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed their generous donations and to our wonderful bidders! We could not have done this without you!

Let's talk about who supplies your electricity and why that matters.

Do you know where the power comes from to run the appliances in your home? Do you know how it is generated? Have you switched from NYSEG to another ESCO as your supplier? What is an ESCO, anyhow? What about community solar and how does that fit into the equation? What companies offer community solar and how do you sign up? Why do these things matter?

On **December 2nd**, in the Pedersen (Arch) Room at 9 am, join Marie McRae for a conversation about energy. Marie has spent the last 10 years as a volunteer energy activist; she's a leader in the local anti-fracking fight, founding member of Solar Tompkins and HeatSmart Tompkins, and member of Co-op Extension's Energy Navigator group. She can help you make energy choices that are good for your comfort, your pocketbook, and for the planet. Please join us.

Winter Solstice Celebration

On Friday, December 21st at 6:30 pm in the Annex all are welcome to a celebration of the Winter Solstice.

Our celebration is an interactive, non-traditional, and creative celebration to mark the turn of the year and the beginning of a new one. We hope you'll join us.

We also need readers and facilitators during the celebration, as well as snack providers, set-up and clean-up crews. If you'd like to help or have questions, email or phone Susanne Quagliata at susanneq14@gmail.com or 585-919-9199.



"Babies First" Annual Ornament Exchange

The "Babies First" Christmas tree will be in the South Parlor **through the month of December**. We invite you to take an ornament from the tree and return a gift for a baby to our basket there. We will be encouraging all of the children to participate in this exchange but also hope that all of you will help us make life easier for babies and their families. We can use donations of good used or new baby clothes and blankets, diapers, and dollars to buy car seats! All gifts should be unwrapped. Celebrate the birth of a baby this year. Questions? Call Jane McArthur 216-2151.



Ornaments Needed for "Babies First" Holiday Tree

Do you have ornaments that you are no longer using or extra ornaments you have crafted? We can use them to decorate our Holiday Gift Exchange tree. It will be in the Garden Entrance on **December 2nd**. Please bring ornaments that day. Questions? Call Jane McArthur 216-2151.