



ITHACA

UUU Connections

2019 / 2020 Issue No. 11

Summer 2020

Ministerial Musings

Dear FUSIT members and friends,

As we prepare for another Ithaca summer, I hope you and your family are staying safe and well. I realize that, for many of us, this summer will look different. Trips may be postponed, gatherings to celebrate cancelled or changed, and usual rituals of hiking or exploring local areas impacted by social distancing. Different doesn't have to be bad, particularly if we approach these changes with curiosity and gratitude that we are able to keep one another safe and healthy by staying vigilant.

Here at FUSIT, we are planning a summer of renewal, hope, and journey. Our theme for Sunday worship services is journey – personal journey, physical journey, inward journey, and more. We hope you'll tune in for our services at 9:30am on Sunday mornings and join coffee hour afterwards for conversation, community, and reflection. Connection and community are always important, and especially now as we are all isolated from those we love.

This summer we will be offering some programming via zoom – Pub Theology, a UUA Common Read book group, and Small Group Ministry. We hope that you will continue to engage with your virtual friend groups from FUSIT, and calling/emailing to check in on friends and others. If you are interested in engaging as part of our Care Team, please contact Madonna Stallman at madonnaoftheprairie@gmail.com. As always, I am here for any pastoral concerns that might arise. I'll be sure to keep you all apprised of any changes in our programming at FUSIT and the new and exciting ways we can engage with one another during this time of physical distancing.

*May we all be well, May we all be safe,
May we all have enough,
May we all feel connected,*

May we all remember to breathe, to notice, to be amazed, and to be kind – to one another and to ourselves.

*Be well,
Rev. Margaret*

Starting the week of June 15th, the office will be closed, except for Wednesdays, for the remainder of the summer until August 17th, when the office will reopen for full time hours again. Leave a message for Jessica or other FUSIT staff by calling the Google voicemail number at (607) 218-2088 and she will pass any information along or call you back.

Please note :

The Annual Meeting has been moved to June 17th at 5:00 pm via Zoom.

The agenda will include a discussion about the "Moving Forward" task force.

Religious Exploration News

For information about Religious Exploration, please contact dre@gmail.com.

From Susanne Quagliata, Acting Director, Religious Exploration

The Future of RE In Our Church

This is my final newsletter as your Acting Director of Religious Exploration. Serving in this role has been an honor, and I appreciate the support and positive encouragement our church community has provided me in the last two years. The next time you see me I will not be a staff member. I will be Susanne - a FUSIT member, a parent with two children in the church, and a UU trying to find my way in this beautiful and broken world. Like you, I will have religious education needs from our church.

The summer newsletter is usually a time to tell you about all of our exciting plans for the upcoming church year. However, as I write this column in June, there is great uncertainty about what church will look like in the year ahead.

Last month I shared one of the lessons I learned in the last year: What we create together on Sundays can be magical, but the most important religious education that we do happens outside the walls of our church. It happens in our homes every day.

Another important lesson I've come to realize is that no matter who serves this church as minister or DRE, the most important person in your spiritual journey is YOU. I once read that across denominations, ministers serve an average of seven years. The tenure for DREs is even shorter. The constant in our congregation is you. Our religious exploration program will be what you make it.

What will you make of it?

One of the many wonderful things about our church community is that we are open to suggestions. Sometimes it might seem like we have a "this is how we've always done things" attitude, but more often than not, if someone comes forward with a good idea and the energy to make it happen, our church is supportive.

Don't wait for the staff to present their grand vision of religious exploration. Share your needs and the needs of your family. Then get involved. A healthy RE program needs at least two things: time and talent. If you don't feel like you have a talent to share, then please share your time. If everyone shared their time and talents then we can all learn from each other.

Regardless if you are new to the congregation or if you have been a member for decades, there is a place for you in our RE program. If you are part of a young family, if your children now have children of their own, or if you were once a child yourself you will find volunteering in our RE program to be as soul enriching as it is an act of service.

Our Religious Education Team has helped carry us through a period of transition but needs new energy. Please step forward if you can attend a monthly meeting and have ideas about how our RE program can represent the interests and needs of the congregation.

As we explore ways to remain connected online, consider volunteering to lead an interactive activity on Zoom. If you love to read children's stories, volunteer to read a book on our Facebook Live storytime series. If you have ideas about how to live our UU values, don't keep them a secret.

Our RE program will be what you make it.

**Join the FUSIT
(internal) Facebook
Page: [https://
www.facebook.com/
groups/
171869686459/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/171869686459/)**

Saying Goodbye to Some of Our FUSIT family

As we wrap up another church program year here at FUSIT, we are also saying goodbye to two of our beloved staff members.

Susanne Quagliata has served for the last two years as our Acting DRE, and has helped to create a solid foundation of community and energy in our RE program. She will be dearly missed! But don't worry, Susanne isn't going anywhere. She will continue to be an active participant as a member at FUSIT. We're so grateful for her time on our staff team.

Sandy Soule has served as the Sexton at FUSIT for over 30 years! He is retiring after a long, long time as our building's caretaker. In his time here, Sandy has served alongside numerous ministers and staff, witnessed members of the congregation be born, die, come and go.

Sandy has been an invaluable source of institutional memory and care during his time on our staff team. We will miss him dearly and hope you'll go visit him at his jewelry stand in the Ithaca Farmers Market, where he often brings his cat in a stroller.

Our Mission

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

Joys and Sorrows

Our condolences go out to Jan and John Pfeiderer on the passing of Jan's youngest sister, Karuna Fedorschak, 63 years young, on May 30th, from cancer, in Prescott, Arizona.

Our thoughts are with Norma Helsper who is currently at the Hospicare residency. She would appreciate receiving cards, which can be sent to 172 East King Road, Ithaca. She also would appreciate cards or messages of love sent to her daughter Lena, whose address is 104 Tracy Road, Waverly, NY 14892.

Thanks to...

...all who "Shared the Plate" on May 31st. We collected \$905 for Mutual Aid Tompkins.

Mutual Aid Tompkins is a grassroots effort that came together in response to COVID-19. They are prioritizing those most affected: the sick, elderly, disabled, undocumented, single parents, queer, Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color, those quarantined without pay, and those limited in work. Through the organization of Neighborhood Pods, they are matching neighbors who need aid with neighbors able to support (especially supporting access to groceries, medicine, and supplies).

The organization is volunteer run, with no paid staff, and their aid comes directly from the community.

Contact information email:
contact@mutualaidtompkins.com
Phone: (607) 288-3252 (for immediate needs)
Website: mutualaidtompkins.com



Green Tip From the Environmental Interests Circle

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County runs a Master Gardener Growline by phone and email, answering questions and offering guidance on growing and maintaining gardens, lawns, trees, houseplants, and more. The Growline's contact information is at <http://ccetompkins.org/gardening/ask-the-growline>

You've Been Flocked! Join in the FUN!

We are trying out a new way of bringing joy to each other, and raising some money for our congregation in the process! Interested in having the yard of one of your friends, neighbors, or co-workers "flocked" this summer? Send an email to the office to find out more information, and we will deliver a flock of rainbow-colored lawn flamingos to their yard and stick them in their grass for the day - completely out of the blue!

Details:

What's the point? To have fun!

What's the cost? Sliding scale between \$20-\$100

Why? Why not?



Thank you!

We began our spring pledge campaign cheerfully celebrating the magic of ministry. Who knew that Broadway would soon be dark and our church's doors closed for the first time in many years.

As we retreated to our homes and learned to meet, to teach, to exercise and to worship via Zoom, a wonderful thing happened. You, our members and friends, continued to pledge your support of our First Unitarian Society of Ithaca for 2020-21. Despite the shock of the country closing down and many losing their livelihoods, you voted for hope. You pledged to be here so our beloved community would be here. You truly sparked magic this spring, and we are grateful.

Thank you!

To date, we have received 187 pledges totaling \$324, 240! That's a little less than last year's record totals, but very generous. Ten of those were first-time pledges. Thank you for joining us in this venture. It takes all of us to connect, inspire and engage.

We have not yet heard from a few of you. Know that you can make a pledge of support at any time, perhaps when your own financial situation is clearer. Make your pledge online, by text, phone (607-273-7521) mail or our website: uuithaca.org Simply click on the Spark Magic button to find your way.

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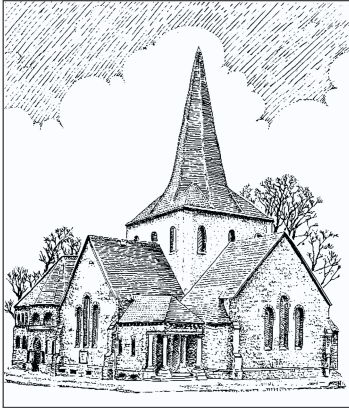
President, Board of Trustees
Andy Turner
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Congregational Administrator
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Administrative Assistant
Loretta Heimbuch
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**Did you know
you can text in 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!**

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

Budget Discussion: Congregational Conversation **June 7**

Join Jennifer Streid-Mullen, Treasurer, and other FUSIT congregants for the second discussion of the budget proposal for 2020-21. Our fiscal year starts **July 1st**, and an important task for members at our Annual Meeting on **June 17** is to approve a budget for next year. Join us to hear about next year, including plans to hire a full time DRE, and discuss your questions and concerns. The meeting will be on Zoom at 12:15 pm, with the link to be provided closer to the day. We hope to also demo the voting process we will use at the **June 17th Annual Meeting**.

Summer Office Hours

*The office will be closed, except for Wednesdays, for the remainder of the summer, starting the week of **June 15th**. On **August 17th** the office will reopen for full time hours again.*

Rev. Margaret will be on a combination of study leave and vacation during the month of July. She can be reached for pastoral emergencies on her cell phone at 607-218-4281 if you need to speak with her.

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/> Instagram www.instagram.com/ithacauus and Twitter, @IthacaUUs.



Possible Ponderings

The theme for June is Beauty

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

June 4-13: When were you first healed by beauty?

June 14-20: What makes a beautiful soul? What do you do to beautify your own soul?

June 21-27: When did beauty first teach you something?

June 28-July 4: When was beauty a doorway to the divine?



2020 Summer Services and Guest Speakers

We have an exciting group of people who will be leading our summer worship services. These services will be streamed at 9:30 am on Sundays **between June 21 and Labor Day**. The Order of Service, which includes special musicians, will be posted on the website and sent in the weekly announcements. This summer's theme is **Journeys**: physical, emotional, and life adventures. We are also hoping to continue our summer service experience of listeners interacting with each other and the presenter, after the sermon, to share what they are taking away from that morning. Hope you can join us for some of these Sundays.

June 21 “*So Great a Cloud of Witnesses*” - Walt Peck

June 28 UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY -begins at 10:00 am

July 5 “*Title TBA*” - Cheryl Botts

July 12 “*Reorienting What We Prize*” - Jim Antal

July 19 “*4500 Journeys*” - John Gaines

July 26 “*What I Hope I Will Remember From This Time*” - Janet Shortall

Please join us in welcoming our three neighboring congregations this morning. From Pennsylvania, the UU Church of Athens and Sheshequin, and from New York, the UU Fellowship of Big Flats and the UU Church of Cortland. Welcome! We are delighted that you have chosen to worship with us.

August 2 “*Title TBA*” - Amie Hamlin

August 9 “*Exploring Solitude and Community*” - Andrew Quagliata

August 16 “*A HIV Journey to Harlem, Africa, and Home*” - Jens Wennberg

August 23 “*Healing in the Time of Pandemic*” - David Schwartz

August 30 “*The Inward Journey*” - Rev. Margaret Weis

September 6 “*Journey to the Center of the Earth*” - Rebecca Schillenback

Annual Meeting **June 17, 2020, at 5:00 pm**

Meeting ID: 899 4720 0292
Password: 736454

Join us for our Annual Meeting - this year on Zoom! We will elect a new slate of board and nominating committee members, approve the annual budget, and reflect on our time together this past year. More info to come on how to vote and the Annual Report (which will be sent electronically unless you request a paper copy from Jessica at office@uuithaca.org). If you have questions about your membership status, or how to log on to Zoom, please contact Jessica or Rev. Margaret for guidance.

Invitation to Join a Small Group Ministry

New Small Group

Lexa Liepe will be facilitating a new small group every last Monday of the month at 7:00 pm via Zoom (Zoom details will be provided when you join). The group will follow the Soul Matters materials for the month. There is room for 8-10 participants.

Current Small Groups with room for new participants

—Jennifer Streid-Mullen facilitates a Soul Matters structured meeting. The group meets on Sundays at 9:00 am twice monthly. There is room for ONE more to join.

—Sue Rakow facilitates a Soul Matters structured meeting. The group meets on the first Sunday at 9:00 am. There is room for ONE to join.

—Mike Mann/Jennifer Streid-Mullen facilitate a group that meets in the evening on the 1st and 3rd Monday. There is room for ONE more to join.

—Judy Jones facilitates a group that meets on Tuesdays at 6:30 pm every two weeks. There is room for ONE to join.

—Marsha Kardon and her group meet every Thursday at 9:00 am. Their meetings sometimes have a Soul Matters structure. There is room for ONE to join.

—Sue Maloy/June Locke and their group meet every other Friday at 10:30 am. There is room for ONE to join.

Please email Marsha Kardon at mfkardon@gmail.com if you are interested in joining a group or if you have any questions. Space is limited and you will be added to a waiting list if the spots are filled.

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

Summer Events

Pub Theology (Zoom ID 186 399 999)

3rd Wednesday: **July 15 and August 19 @ 6:30pm**

Common Read Book Group

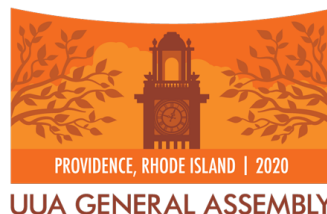
Each year, the UUA suggests a book for members and friends of our congregations to read together. The books that have been read are listed at www.uua.org/read. Often, these books focus on a particular social justice or other spiritually-grounded issue. Join Rev. Margaret this summer for a monthly book group meeting. The schedule is below, as well as the books and links to where to purchase them. We hope you'll take part in this new tradition of engaging our minds about issues that are important to Unitarian Universalists and the world we so deeply love.

Discussions will take place on the **first Wednesday of each month from 6-8pm on zoom**. Please pre-register by emailing Rev. Weis. Once registered, you will receive the zoom information.

July 1: *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz (Beacon Press, 2015) and *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People* adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese (Beacon Press, 2019)

August 5: *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson (2014, Spiegel & Grau, an imprint of Random House)

September 2: *Daring Democracy: Igniting Power, Meaning, and Connection for the America We Want*, by Frances Moore Lappé and Adam Eichen, (Beacon Press, 2017)



General Assembly June 24-28, 2020 – Rooted, Inspired, and Ready!
Schedule:

https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/2020_grid_east.pdf

Join Rev. Margaret, staff, and other FUSIT members for a week of learning, engagement, and deepening into UU identity. Virtual General Assembly (VGA) 2020 offers Unitarian Universalists an opportunity to gather and deepen our connections with each other and our faith. In addition to the General Sessions, Synergy, Service of the Living Tradition and Sunday worship, registered attendees can also enjoy daily morning worship, Welcoming celebrations, live workshops, an on-demand library of programming, presentations by featured speakers and special events such as coffee hours, worship reflection time, and evening entertainment.

Soul Matters Material for June on Beauty

Our June worship theme at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca is Beauty. This month's packet includes a few short readings, spiritual exercises, and discussion questions for you to consider.

Here is the link: tinyurl.com/ithaca-beauty