



# ITHACA

## UUU Connections

2021 / 2022 Issue No. 4

December 1-31, 2021

### *Message from Board Member Elton Hall*

Our beloved community is facing challenging conditions at the moment, and the response of its members has been gratifyingly positive and forward-looking. Together, we are holding our vision, maintaining our mission, and living our Seven Principles. The bumps and hiccups that we are encountering as we move ahead have not daunted this congregation.

The Board of Trustees at FUSIT have been working double overtime to meet the challenges of our beloved community. Having lost a minister and the resignation of our interim minister, in addition to all the difficulties of nurturing the congregation during the Covid-19 pandemic, we all are laboring to do our best in a time of transition. The staff has done a remarkable job of keeping the administrative services on track; small group ministries have been thriving; committees and teams are reconfiguring themselves to perform their tasks under unanticipated and changing conditions. They all are doing impressive service for our beloved community in these trying conditions.

Worship continues with both limited in person attendance and through YouTube live streaming, an innovation that will doubtless continue into the future. Thanks to the technology team, we are now doing something we have not done before.

The Board works within a partnership governance model, which means, among other things, that committees work under and report to the Board while ministry teams are accountable to the minister. Since we have no minister at present, the Board is working with staff and ministry teams to provide the support they require. Within this model, the Board does not tell committees or teams what to do; it sets out the scope of work and leaves it to the wisdom of the committees and teams to proceed as they see best. Since teams and staff are accountable to the minister and not the Board, the Board is currently consulting with both staff and teams to discern how best to support their activities in ways that do not interfere with their work.

Communication and openness are very high priorities for the Board at this time, and it is deeply involved in developing ways to improve both—with the congregation, with the staff and with committees and teams. This effort requires some significant rethinking of how we do things at FUSIT, and so it will take time to resolve issues and answer some questions.

One step forward is the open questions that will be asked of the congregation throughout the year. Your responses are important to helping us all discern the best direction to move in the immediate and longer future.

#### **Our Mission**

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

Even now as we seek to rethink the ways we work together, we see the warmth, vitality and resilience of this beloved community. Thanking each person who has stepped forward and contributed to this vitality would take more space than the length of this newsletter affords. You all have the gratitude of this faith family for all you do in thought, word and deed. Although various ways of doing things are a bit up in the air, we as a beloved community are doing just fine and will do even better in the coming weeks and months. Again, thank you for all you do.

#### **In-Person Services Continue in December!**

**Register in advance, see  
instructions in  
Wednesday announce for in-  
person December Sunday  
services at 10:30 am.**

**Maximum of 30 pods of  
participants. No RE classes.  
Services will also be live  
streamed.**

**Masks and social distancing  
are required.**

**See page 8 for Phase 3 December  
Guidelines from the  
Way Forward Team.**

# Religious Exploration News

*For information about Religious Exploration, please contact Emily Richards at [dre@uuithaca.org](mailto:dre@uuithaca.org).*

## **Greetings from the DRE**

This past month seems to have brought with it more of the same as this pandemic drags on, and yet monumental change as our children who are between the ages of 5 and 11 have been finally approved for vaccination. It has also brought the welcome change of opening our doors once again for in-person worship. A slow and steady move back towards a place of togetherness and community. A place where we allow ourselves to look towards the future and open ourselves up to the possibility of joy. And yet our children who are under five remain unprotected from this virus. Our community is without an active minister. As cold weather sets in, positive COVID case numbers are rising yet again. We are still facing challenges and figuring out together how to best meet them while keeping everyone safe and holding one another and this community in love and care. And through all of this we parents have had to navigate uncharted waters, moving from the storm tossed seas of fear and uncertainty, to calmer waters, and then back again.

So as we move into December with the lights and joys of the holiday season on the horizon I want to offer you these words by Katharine Kline celebrating this important milestone. For all of the parents who have waited for this moment, and for those who are still waiting. For the grandparents whose worry for their own safety has shifted to worry for their children and grandchildren. For the kids who were brave and did not cry out when they received their first shot, and for those, like my youngest, who were just as brave but cried, and kicked, and yelled. For everyone who has been working to combat this disease. For this community and the world community.

*Emily Richards, Director of Religious Exploration*

## **RE Plans for December**

This December families registered for and received a packet of physical activities, a UU Crate, to help to bring joy into their lives. Included in those packets are three dated packets to be opened during Sunday services, whether you are at home or in the sanctuary with us. And if you are planning on attending services please bring your small dated packet with you for the weeks you are attending.

We will have a Solstice Celebration on **December 21**, in addition to the Christmas Eve Holiday Pageant and All-Ages Service on Friday, **December 24th** at 4 pm. If you would like to participate but are not able to attend in person you are invited to send a stuffy to be a part of our holiday pageant in your stead. You can also bring a stuffy with you even if you do come in person. Roles will be found for everyone, human and stuffy alike, who wishes to participate.

Youth Group for ages 12 and up will be held on **December 5th and 19th** from 10:30-11:30 am in the Annex. No sign-ups are required.

## **Volunteers Needed for January RE Programming**

We are already making plans for a return to our RE programs in our building beginning in January. We will need volunteers to both lead and assist with programming for school age children for two Sundays in January. We will also need a Childcare Coordinator. Please consider these opportunities as a way to reconnect with our community, give back, and make a profound difference in the lives of our young people and families.

Please click on the sign up below and go to the January tab at the bottom of the sheet.

[RE Volunteer Sign Up](#)

## **Expanding Community**

For many this pandemic has brought increased feelings of isolation and being cut off from others. We always welcome new members to our community and faith and hope to provide a safe space of connection and learning for all during this time of physical distancing. Please continue to invite any and all people that you know that you believe could find meaning by exploring what the FUSIT community and Unitarian Universalist faith can offer.

### ***A Prayer on a Child's Vaccination Day***

*By Katharine Kline*

*For this moment that we've waited for;  
For getting through this together;  
For each child who holds out an arm and says, "I'm ready."*

*A child, wearing a mask and sitting on their parent's lap, is given a vaccine by a health care provider in mask and gloves.*

*For the caregivers who sustain us;  
For the scientists who made this day possible;  
For the teachers who will breathe easier.*

*For the frontline workers who keep things running;  
For the doctors and nurses who work through exhaustion;  
For our elders, the keepers of knowledge.*

*For the makers of masks;  
For the bakers of bread;  
For the words that soothed when hugs weren't possible.*

*For finding new ways;  
For making it through;  
For those who didn't make it through.*

*For all that we've learned;  
For all that we've lost;  
For the healing we need.*

*For the tears of relief;  
For the fears we still hold;  
For the journey ahead.*

*For the future.  
For hope.  
For each other.*

## Religious Exploration Seeking Team Members and Volunteers

The RE program is excited to begin to offer in-person gatherings in our building beginning in January. That means we need volunteers to lead and assist with these weekly activities.

The **RE Team** needs new enthusiastic members to help guide our programming. If you have been looking for a way to make a huge impact on this community please consider the RE Team.

**Volunteers** to be mentors to our children and young people, as well as leading adult programming for parents is needed. Commitment can be as little as a single one hour program up to weekly regular meetings for youth.

## Joys and Sorrows

We celebrate with Jennifer Streid-Mullen whose first grandchild, granddaughter Sophia Rose Mullen, arrived on November 13th, born to Andrew and Meghan Mullen, in Michigan. Jennifer is in the process of relocating over the next six months to live near them in mid-Michigan.

Our condolences go out to Carl and Kathy Hopkins upon the death of Carl's sister Nancy Merritt, on November 1 in North Carolina, after many years of Alzheimer's Disease.

Our thoughts are with the family of Don and Rita Barber after their daughter Megan's home was lost due to fire on November 4. She and her family are staying with Don and Rita until a new home is completed.

Our condolences go out to Kathy McHugh and her family upon the death of her husband, Tom, from pancreatic cancer, on November 4.

Our condolences go out to the family of Jean Jordanek, who passed away on November 9. Jean was a long-time member of FUSIT who had served as RE Director and Chair of Babies First. She was a quiet, effective leader, teacher and friend to many.

We are joyful that children 5 years and older are now eligible to receive COVID vaccinations.

*Joys and Sorrows are now shared during Sunday Service. Please send notices to the team at [joysandsorrows@uuithaca.org](mailto:joysandsorrows@uuithaca.org). When considering what is shared in Joys and Sorrows, please note, these services are live streamed and available to the public on our YouTube Channel.*

## December Worship Services

### December 5, TBA

*Jeff Collins, special music by Roberta Crawford*

### December 12, *This is Water: Some Thoughts About Living a Compassionate Life*

*Mike Mann*

### December 19, *Kindling the Light Within*

*Presenter Jyoti Kessler*

As increasing darkness draws us toward the longest night of the year, how do we cultivate the inner light that does not wax and wane with the seasons? Through inspirational teachings and songs from many of the world's spiritual traditions, inner reflection and meditation, Rev. Jyoti Kessler invites us to remember our own inherent radiance.

### Tuesday, December 21: *Winter Solstice and Yule Celebration at 5:30 pm* *Mullstein Winter Garden, Cornell Botanic Gardens*

Please join us for a celebration of the longest night and the return of the sun with ritual, light, and song. Dress warmly and bring an LED candle if you have one. All ages welcome. [Please register here.](#)

### Friday, December 24: Christmas Eve Services

#### —4:00 pm *No Rehearsal Holiday Pageant*

Join in the fun as we take on the roles of important figures in many of the holiday celebrations that occur at this time of year, sing carols, and share the joy of the season with one another. If you would like to participate but are unable to attend in person you can send in a stuffy to take part in the merriment.

#### —9:00 pm *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

Our evening service will feature traditional readings, a short homily, holiday music and candlelight. Homily by Walt Peck.

*Sign ups will be required in order to attend either service. And everyone is invited to stream the services on our YouTube channel!*

### *Soul Matters Material for December*

The Soul Matters theme for December is Opening to Joy. 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/SoulMattersDecember>

Join the  
**FUSIT**  
(internal)

Facebook Page:

[https://  
www.facebook.com/  
groups/  
171869686459/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/171869686459/)

*Leave a message for  
FUSIT staff by calling  
the Google voicemail  
number at  
(607) 218-2088*

*Religious Exploration  
Emily Richards, Director  
[dre@uuithaca.org](mailto:dre@uuithaca.org)*

*Music Director  
Stephanie Ortolano  
[music@uuithaca.org](mailto:music@uuithaca.org)*

*President, Board of Trustees  
Don Barber  
[sunnybrk@gmail.com](mailto:sunnybrk@gmail.com)*

*Congregational Administrator  
Michelle Waffner  
[office@uuithaca.org](mailto:office@uuithaca.org)*

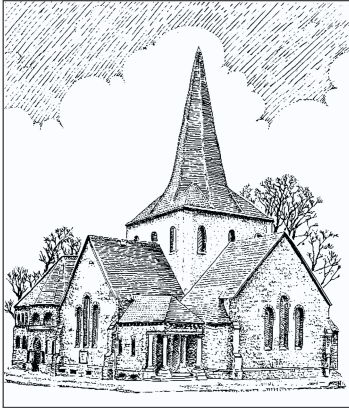
*Administrative Assistant  
Loretta Heimbuch  
[adminasst@uuithaca.org](mailto:adminasst@uuithaca.org)*

## CALLING ALL MUSICIANS!

If you are interested in sharing your music at a Sunday service, please contact our Music Director, Stephanie Ortolano at [music@uuithaca.org](mailto:music@uuithaca.org). One piece, or more. We are also looking for people interested in playing at our Christmas Eve service. All ages welcome!



The First Unitarian Society of Ithaca  
306 North Aurora Street  
P.O. Box 6  
Ithaca, NY 14851-0006



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Visit our Website and get  
your newsletter:  
[www.uuithaca.org](http://www.uuithaca.org)

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## Possible Ponderings

### *The theme for December is Opening to Joy*

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

**December 1-4:** Who helps you see the joy in front of you? How has joy surprised you during Covid?

**December 5-11:** How has your definition of joy changed as you've grown older? Did you grow up in a "happy family"?

**December 12-18:** Are you mostly a creator of joy, receiver of joy, notice-er of joy or spreader of joy?

**December 19-25:** What needs to be removed from your life in order for joy to expand, or return?

**December 26-31:** Are you too responsible to let joy in? When was the last time you did something "useless"? Might joy be waiting for you there?

### **Women's Circle - Monday, December 27**

Women's Circle will meet via Zoom on Monday evening, **December 27**, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. We are now generally meeting on the 4th Monday of the month. 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](mailto:ananda7733@gmail.com) or 607 539 7733.

**Zoom link is: Meeting ID: 819 4014 1421**  
Passcode: 874536

### **Men's Group - Monday, December 27**

The Men's Group will meet once a month on the 4th Monday of the month. The November meeting is scheduled for **December 27** at 7:00 pm in the Parlor. All who identify as male are invited to join us. For further information please contact Carsten Hess at [carsten@hess.net](mailto:carsten@hess.net) or Kevin Moss at [kevinm607@hotmail.com](mailto:kevinm607@hotmail.com).

### **Social Media Connections**

You can find out about events happening in our congregation, see pictures of past events and connect with other UUs. Like and follow us on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/FUSofI/>  
Instagram [www.instagram.com/ithacaus](https://www.instagram.com/ithacaus) and  
Twitter, @IthacaUUs.

### ***Living the Pledge to End Racism Workshop***

We are running another of our highly-regarded Living the Pledge to End Racism workshops on Saturday mornings starting **January 8**. The sessions will be on zoom, 9:30-11:30 am, for six weeks, and you need to commit to attend all six. There are large and small group facilitated sessions, as well as prep work between sessions.

The goals of the workshop are to:

- Recognize and challenge systemic racism
- Confront racism and bias in our everyday lives, and
- Take leadership in ending racism in our community, our culture, and our lives

As part of the workshop, participants develop a community of support and an understanding of how to use support in deepening our work in building a just and equitable multicultural world.

To register, fill out the form <https://fusit.breezechms.com/form/30539d6655> on our website. If you have questions about the workshop material, contact Jennifer Streid-Mullen or Arthur Woll to discuss. If you are interested but these winter dates do not work for you, contact the office to be put on a waiting list for future sessions.

### ***You Are Invited! -Looking for January Participants***

Our Living the Pledge to End Racism workshops continue steadily at FUSIT. We have just finished our third cohort, bringing the total number of workshop participants so far to 66, and we have a fourth workshop scheduled to begin in early January (see above for registration information). We have heard from the folks in Richmond that parts of the workshop have been revised and updated, and we hope to get the new curriculum for our use as we renew our contract with Richmond. We're excited about the response to the Pledge and the workshop at FUSIT.

We continue to use a "leaderful" model for guiding the pledge workshops, and our most recent series was led by a team of eleven! Our team of leaders has grown and changed over time, which has been the intention since the beginning. We hope to bring new leaders into the process with each workshop.

### ***Congregational Administrator Hours***

In order to meet more of the congregants and get a better feel for the nuts and bolts of FUSIT, Michelle will begin working some Sundays. This will necessitate some flexibility with her schedule. As much as possible Michelle's schedule for the week will be posted in the weekly announce.

On Sundays when Michelle is in, she will be in her office before and after services and available for congregant questions.

**The office will be closed December 27 - 31.**

***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!***

### ***December Book Discussion Group***

The next Book Discussion Group meeting is scheduled for Friday, **December 3**, at 12:30 pm via Zoom. The book is *Guns Germs and Steel* by Jared Diamond.

The Book Discussion Group has chosen the following books for upcoming months:

**January 7:** Behold the Dreamers by Imbolo Mbue

**February 4:** House on the Lagoon by Rosario Ferre

For further information contact Jennifer Streid-Mullen at [streidmull@gmail.com](mailto:streidmull@gmail.com).

### ***Thanks to Your Generosity for the Shared Plate***

On October 31st and on November 14th the Shared Plate Offering collected \$350 and \$596 respectively for donation to Mutual Aid Tompkins. MAT is a volunteer run organization of neighbors concerned about their communities and helping to make sure that those most vulnerable and affected by COVID get the support they need. By sharing resources and information with one another, they are able to match neighbors who need aid with those able to support them (especially supporting access to groceries, medicine and supplies).

### ***Anti-Racism in the Outdoors***

*A Presentation to the Membership of  
First Unitarian Society of Ithaca*

**December 1, from 7 - 8 pm via Zoom**

*Speaker, Dr. Don Rakow*

The many benefits of spending time in nature have been very well documented in recent years. Those who spend more time in natural sites are likely to show reduced levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, and to demonstrate improved ability to concentrate, memory recall, and sleep patterns.

Unfortunately, a number of national surveys have revealed that BIPOC individuals, and especially Black youth, engage with parks and green spaces at much lower rates than do their white counterparts. In this presentation, Don Rakow will provide the historical framework for this disparity; discuss current conditions that serve as barriers to greater use; and reveal various initiative underway to make natural spaces more open, inviting, and responsive to expressed needs. He will discuss his own research as well as efforts by colleagues across the US.

## *November Update from the Board of Trustees*

The FUSIT Board of Trustees will be providing a brief "Sense of the Board Meeting" report and sharing it through the weekly newsletter the week after a Board of Trustees meeting. The full meeting minutes will continue to be made available, but this brief meeting summary is intended to keep the congregation tuned in to the activities and priorities of the Board.

Here is the "Sense of the Meeting" from the **October 20, 2021** meeting, held both in-person and via Zoom from 6:35-8:45 pm.

**Governance Work, 1:** The Board passed motions to: —Officially appoint members of the Finance Committee (a standing committee of the Board) and appoint Matt Hare as chair of the Stewardship Committee —Appoint members to the new Communications Policy Committee —Board received reports from Minister, Treasurer, and four teams and committees

**Governance Work, 2:** The Board has begun exploring the idea of hiring a FUSIT attorney to assist the Board and Administrator as needed.

**Leadership Opportunities:** On Wednesday, November 3, the Nominating Committee will host a 6:30 pm leadership training session with a local attorney who specializes in nonprofits. This session will focus on responsibilities and expectations for nonprofit Boards. All FUSIT members are welcome to attend!

**Volunteer Engagement:** The Nominating Committee and the Engagement and Outreach Team are exploring options to increase volunteer participation and volunteer recognition among members and friends of FUSIT. Watch this space for more detailed announcements!

**Open Questions:** The first Open Question of the year is, "In these pandemic times and beyond, how can we as a congregation connect more deeply, inspire healing, and engage all our members?" Board members and visitors participated in answering this question at the meeting. Please join us in submitting short answers (12 words or fewer) to John Gaines at [jagivjagiv@gmail.com](mailto:jagivjagiv@gmail.com).

**Goals for 2022-23:** The FUSIT Espresso Meeting, held via Zoom on Saturday, October 16, produced a list of wishes and priorities from congregational leadership. The Board has summarized this as three goals: 1) Find ways to gather safely in person, 2) Prioritize pastoral care, and 3) Build a covenantal community.

The next Board meeting will take place on November 17, 2021, from 6:30-8:15 pm. It will be a hybrid meeting held both in-person and via Zoom.

## *December Update from the Board of Trustees*

The FUSIT Board of Trustees will be providing a brief "Sense of the Board Meeting" report and sharing it through the weekly newsletter the week after a Board of Trustees meeting. The full meeting minutes will continue to be made available, but this brief meeting summary is intended to keep the congregation tuned in to the activities and priorities of the Board.

Here is the "Sense of the Meeting" from the **November 17, 2021** meeting, held both in-person and via Zoom from 6:34-8:10 pm.

**Listening Circles:** The Healthy Congregation Team and the Board will host seven Listening Circles from December 4 to December 9, to help members and friends of FUSIT process our responses to the events of the past year. Watch your email for links to sign up for a Circle!

**Pastoral Care, 1:** The Board authorized Don Barber to sign a contract with the Rev. Janet Shortall to provide pastoral care to FUSIT.

**Pastoral Care, 2:** The Board passed a motion determining how the Human Needs Fund will work in the absence of a minister. The Care Team will appoint a member to serve as the contact point for those in need of aid, and the Treasurer will disburse funds.

**Leadership Opportunities:** The Board and Nominating Committee will host a leadership training session every 1st Wednesday of the month, starting on December 1. The first speaker is Carrie Pollak, a local lawyer with Hancock and Estabrook, speaking on nonprofit Board issues. This session will be held in-person in the parlor at 6:30 pm.

**Open Questions:** The first Open Question of the year is, "**In these pandemic times and beyond, how can we as a congregation connect more deeply, inspire healing, and engage all our members?**" Please join us in submitting short answers (12 words or fewer) to John Gaines at [jagivjagiv@gmail.com](mailto:jagivjagiv@gmail.com) -- your answers to these questions help shape our Vision of Ministry for 2022-23! The deadline for answers to the first Open Question is **December 15, 2021**.

**Vision of Ministry:** The Board approved the following Vision of Ministry: **1) Find ways for all who want to gather safely in person. 2) Prioritize Spiritual Care as a hallmark of FUSIT. 3) Develop tools to build a compassionate, generous community.**

The next regular Board meeting will be on **December 15, 2021, from 6:30-8:15 pm**. It will be a hybrid meeting held both in-person and via Zoom.

### ***Your Board is Listening - From John Gaines***

To date we have received over 100 responses to your Board's Fall Open Question, but have we heard from **YOU**? As a reminder, the Open Question is, "**In these pandemic times and beyond, how can we as a congregation connect more deeply, inspire healing, and engage all our members?**"

How do **YOU** respond to that question? You may have many responses, but we are asking that each response be limited to 12 words or fewer. If you have already sent a response, do you now have a different one? If you have not responded, please consider doing so before **December 15th**. All responses will be considered by the Board as we plan for our future.

Please email your responses(s) to me at [jagivjagiv@gmail.com](mailto:jagivjagiv@gmail.com). If you would like to see all of the responses, also email me and I will share them with you. Thank you for your assistance in this vital work!

## Care Team News – December 2021

We are really pleased to announce that **Rev. Janet Shortall** has agreed to do Pastoral Care for FUSIT during this time when we have no minister. Janet has long been a member here while working in various capacities at Cornell. She has been involved in RE when her kids were small, spoken in our pulpit, and frequently filled in for Pastoral Care in the past. Her contact information (607 227-5074 or [Janet.mshortall@gmail.com](mailto:Janet.mshortall@gmail.com)) will be available on our website, in the Weekly Announce, and on the minister's answering machine at the church. She will be available for weddings, memorial services, and pastoral emergencies. If you have questions, **Madonna Stallmann** (607 216-5083 or [madonnaoftheprairie@gmail.com](mailto:madonnaoftheprairie@gmail.com)) continues to be our Care Team contact person.

While COVID moves into its 20 month now, the Care Team wants to acknowledge that it has affected and stressed all of us – families juggling children and working perhaps more than the rest of us. The Care Team is here to support anyone in our congregation in need. Rides to church, rides to appointments, meals, grocery delivery, calls and visits (when we can) to those isolated and needing support and for information about local resources. The Human Needs Fund, formerly the Minister's Discretionary Fund can now be accessed for confidential, one-time financial aid for those in our FUSIT community through the Care Team while we have no minister. Contact Madonna for information.

Last but not least, **we need everyone who is able to step up and help!**

Whether you can do small good things or want to take on a bigger commitment or have ideas about what else we can do for our Beloved Community, we would love to have you join us! Be in touch with us!!

**We on the Care Team wish you Joyful and Safe Holidays**, whatever you may celebrate!!

### ***The UUA 8th Principle: Coming to FUSIT***

The proposed UUA 8th Principle reads: *"We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."*

Paula Cole Jones, of the UUA, realized that a person can believe they are being a "good UU" and following the 7 Principles without thinking about or dealing with racism and other oppressions at the systemic level. She helped draft the 8th Principle which brings the action steps required for UUAs to live into their values.

For people who identify as white, it is too easy to ignore racism, both individual and systemic, which is exactly what keeps the system of racism in our society alive and in fact worsening right now. We need to de-center whiteness and other dominant cultures in UUism. The 8th Principle came from a feeling that we need something to renew our commitment to this work, to hold ourselves accountable, and to fulfill the potential of our existing principles.

The Black Lives of UU (BLUU) Organizing Collective encourages all Unitarian Universalists to advocate for the formal adoption of an 8th principle, articulating a commitment to the dismantling of white supremacy, within the stated principles of our faith. So far, over 130 UU congregations have adopted the 8th Principle.

During the coming months, we will provide additional resources about the 8th Principle and opportunities to discuss it and its potential impacts on our community. We would like to see a vote at the FUSIT May Annual Meeting in favor of FUSIT's adoption of the 8th Principle. More information will follow in the coming weeks, but if you want more information now, contact Jennifer Streid-Mullen, [streidmull@gmail.com](mailto:streidmull@gmail.com).

### ***Help Needed Clearing FUSIT Sidewalks***

The Sexton search is taking longer than anticipated, which puts us in need of volunteers to clear the sidewalks. Help us avoid fines and keep the sidewalks safe. If you are able to sign up for a snow blowing shift, please email [office@uuithaca.org](mailto:office@uuithaca.org)

### **Emergency Pastoral Care**

In case of pastoral need, call Madonna Stallman 607-216-5083. She will direct pastoral needs for weddings, memorial services and emergency pastoral care to Rev. Janet Shortall.

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



## **Way Forward Team Guidance for continued re-opening Phase 3 - December 1st, 2021**

*As of December 1st, 2021 we will be expanding Phase 3 of our reopening plan.*

**We are excited to continue to welcome members of our congregation back into our sanctuary for our Sunday morning worship services with the following guidelines:**

- A maximum of 30 individuals or groups of people (family groups, pods etc.) or combination thereof, up to five total within each group, who are comfortable being within six feet of one another, not including those people who are a part of the service, will be welcomed into our sanctuary each Sunday morning starting in December, 2021.
- One participant must register in advance for all members of their group through our registration forms in Breeze and check in at either the Narthex or Garden entrance when they arrive.
- Physical distancing between groups will be required in the sanctuary during all services, with designated spaces clearly marked.
- Everyone must be masked at all times while in the building, save for anyone who is actively speaking at the podium. Masks will be available as needed.
- A social hour will follow each service but no food or drink will be served and we ask that people not bring their own to limit the amount of time people are not in masks.

**We are opening up our building use outside of Sunday worship to all FUSIT groups including, but not limited to, the following:**

FUSIT Board / Staff / Small Group Ministry / Team and Committee Meetings / Other small FUSIT groups such as Women's Group, Men's Group, Book Club etc. / Individuals or small groups who wish to utilize our physical resources, such as the library or organ / Listening Circles / Other official FUSIT gatherings / Memorial Services, Wedding, and other celebrations.

**Approved spaces include: the Sanctuary, the Annex, the Parlor, the Arch Room (Mark Pedersen Room), the Library, and the Conference Room (122 Ellen Watkins Harper Room).**

- Library and Conference: Maximum of 10 people
- Parlor, and Annex: Maximum of 40 people
- Arch Room: Maximum of 15 people
- Sanctuary: Maximum of 100 people
- Everyone must use the sign in/out sheet placed at one of the five entrances to the building: Annex, Parlor, Front, Garden and Parish House. This must be done each and every time, even if it is a brief visit.

**In addition we will be expanding rentals of our spaces beginning on December 1st, 2021 under the following guidelines:**

- Rentals to outside groups may resume following FUSIT safety guidelines on December 1st as long as a Sexton is active and employed by FUSIT. If a Sexton is not active by December 1st rentals may resume as soon as this requirement has been fulfilled.
- All renters must continue to practice COVID safety precautions including masking, social distancing, and contact tracing, as well as any other requirements stipulated by their specific rental agreement.
- All groups must adhere to the number of participants per each space listed above.
- No food or drink may be served at any events inside the FUSIT building.

***All individuals, even those who are fully vaccinated, must wear a mask and practice social distancing guidelines while inside the building.***

**If the answer to any of the below three questions is yes we ask that you please refrain from using the building for any reason.**

1. Have you had any COVID-19 symptoms in the past 14 days, including fever/chills, cough, shortness of breath, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell? EXCEPTION: If you had a negative COVID test while experiencing these symptoms or after these symptoms subside, you may use the building, following FUSIT's masking guidelines as usual.
2. Have you had a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test in the past 14 days?
3. Have you had close contact with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in the past 14 days? EXCEPTION: Fully vaccinated people may get tested 3 - 5 days after exposure and quarantine until they receive a negative test result, then may use the building following FUSIT's masking guidelines.

**Please follow current CDC guidelines for domestic and international travel.**

**All room requests must be made at least one week in advance. All use must be reserved through the office, not Breeze. Please email Michelle at [office@uuithaca.org](mailto:office@uuithaca.org).**

**Food may be brought into and consumed in the building with the following guidelines:**

- 1.. Only consume food you personally brought for yourself and place your mask back on as soon as you have finished eating
2. Plan on removing all garbage/leftovers, please do not leave anything in the building
3. No shared food or potlucks at this time
4. Food may not be brought in for Sunday services.
5. Food or drink may not be served at any event whether it is a FUSIT event or a rental event.
6. All surfaces must be wiped down before and after eating

All groups must clean up after themselves.

There must be a minimum of one hour between the end of one gathering and the beginning of the next in each space.

All other groups may meet indoors at any location of their choosing, complying with all of the guidelines by NYS for unvaccinated people.

### **Outdoor gatherings**

For outdoor gatherings social distancing is highly recommended, in the case that social distancing cannot be maintained, masks are recommended, even for vaccinated individuals.