



ITHACA

UUU Connections

2021 / 2022 Issue No. 5

January 1-31, 2022

Getting to Know Our Staff



Michelle Waffner, Congregational Administrator

Michelle Waffner is the Congregational Administrator and has worked with FUSIT since May 2021. Michelle handles all the general office items, updates the website, creates the Weekly Announce, makes the bank deposit, handles all HR functions, building rentals and building inspections. Michelle has also had the opportunity to work with Sara Catterall and Walt Peck in hiring the new Sexton!

In her free time, Michelle is working on a Masters in Consciousness Studies and is in her third year of the Hidden Treasure program at Light on the Hill in Van Etten.



Emily Richards, Director of Religious Exploration

Emily Richards has served as the Director of Religious Exploration since 2020 and, along with her family, is a proud member of the FUSIT Community. With a background in music education and many years of administrative experience she feels fortunate to be able to use her talents and expertise to help create community and connection for children, families, and members of all ages. Emily is also a homeschooling mom to two girls, a choral conductor and singer, and a lover of cooking, nature, and all things geeky.



Loretta Heimbuch, Administrative Assistant

A member of FUSIT since 1982, Loretta has been editing, producing and mailing the monthly FUSIT newsletter, *UUU Connections* for 14 years. She produces the Annual Report, Service Auction and Recycle Sale promotional materials, and other publications, brochures and posters in addition to helping the Congregational Administrator as needed. She enjoys hiking, gardening, pottery, watercolor painting and cooking. With her four year old grandson and six month old granddaughter living with their parents in California, and her daughter in Colorado, she is frequently airborne, flying across the country to see them.



Rachel Seymour, Sexton

Rachel replaced Sandy as the Sexton and started on December 20th. Rachel will be taking over general building care including keeping the sidewalks clean and safe, deep cleaning the many rooms at FUSIT after the building has been closed up for so long, making sure the building is ready for rentals and Sunday services, and day to day cleaning and building inspections. She likes to swim and bicycle, and enjoys painting "find me" rocks to leave on trails and gift people with. Rachel also cleans monuments at various cemeteries and likes photographing nature scenes.

In-Person Services Continue in January!

Register in advance, see instructions in Wednesday Announce for in-person January 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 7-8 for Phase 3 Updated Guidelines from the Way Forward Team.

Stephanie Ortolano, Music Director



Stephanie Ortolano has been employed at First Unitarian since 2012. Originally hired for 3 months after the unexpected departure of her predecessor, she hasn't left yet! Stephanie started playing piano at the age of 6 and organ at 12. Her first church job was at age 13 and she has played for a variety of denominations ever since. She is currently in the 2nd year of a 3 year Music Leadership Certification Program through the UUA. One of her favorite things is to collaborate with other musicians as an accompanist.

Religious Exploration News

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

Greetings from the DRE

Happy New Year! I hope that your holidays brought gifts of joy and connection in ways that felt safe for you and your family. This month our theme is Living With Intention and I wanted to share with you my own recent exploration of how I live my life with intentionality, and the practice of gratitude. During this time when everything we think we know and our expectations are constantly being upending, I have made the choice to live my life with gratitude. I do this with intention, starting each day by simply speaking aloud one thing that I am grateful for as I get out of bed. And some days it's little things, like the warmth of the blankets protecting me from the cold air, and some days it's weightier things, like the health and safety of loved ones. And I have found that this simple act, purposefully acknowledging my own gratitude for joys and comforts in my life, has spread beyond this short phrase that I speak every morning. The peace and contentment this small spiritual practice brings me has sparked the desire to expand that appreciation to more aspects of my life. And I find myself intentionally telling others how much I appreciate them, often daily, and maybe with more frequency than is strictly necessary, because giving voice, intentionally, to that feeling of gratitude that I have for others both creates more connection between us, and nourishes my soul.

As we begin this new year together, with hope for the future, let us do so with intention. Intention to be engaged, to create community, to lift one another up with gratitude and love. I am so grateful for each and every one of you.

Emily Richards, Director of Religious Exploration

RE Plans for January

Stuffy Sleepover

Saturday, January 29th - Sunday January 30th

We had so much fun with our sleepover last year we are inviting your stuffies back again for our second ever FUSIT Stuffy Sleepover. Whether you call them a stuffy, plushie, stuffed animal or just by their given names we are thrilled to be able to invite them to FUSIT for a night of fun and imagination.

Stuffies may be dropped off in the bin on the porch at any time on Friday or before noon on Saturday. Please make sure all stuffies are clearly marked with their name as well as the name of the special child to whom they belong.

Weekly RE Live Please join me each Tuesday in January at 5:30 pm for a brief live Facebook video where we will explore stories, crafts, and activities related to our monthly theme of Living With Intention.

Youth Movie Night for ages 12 and up will be held on Friday, **January 21st** at 7 pm. Movie TBA.

Volunteers Needed for February RE Programming

RE volunteers are needed to help lead youth and children's activities as well as to help with events. Please consider this opportunity as a way to reconnect with our community, give back, and make a profound difference in the lives of our young people and families.

[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.

The Religious Exploration is Seeking Team Members and Volunteers

The RE program is hopeful that we will be able to offer in-person gatherings in our building beginning in February. 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.

Let Us Begin Again in Love

By Lois Van Leer

Having let go,
Set our intentions,
Named our curiosity,
Committed our energies,
And given ourselves over to
lives of balance, purpose and
meaning,
Let us begin again
In love

Joys and Sorrows

Keep Mariah and Josh Prentiss and Michele Hochstetter in your thoughts after losing both of Mariah's parents - Bard and Gina Prentiss within 3 weeks of each other.

Joys and Sorrows are now shared during Sunday Service. Please send notices to the team at 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.

Thanks to...

...Board member Elton Hall for taking on the role of representative to the congregation.
...Board members Nancy Miller and John Gaines for supporting the staff at their weekly meetings.

New Sexton has been Hired

We are pleased to welcome Rachel Seymour as our new Sexton. Rachel started on December 20. If you have any questions for the Sexton, they can be directed to office@uuithaca.org for now. While we are sad to say goodbye to Sandy, it is our pleasure to welcome Rachel to the staff team!

Volunteers Needed to Prepare Lunches

Social Justice Council needs two more volunteers to make and deliver lunches to the Ithaca homeless shelter on **January 4th**.

You would buy supplies, make the lunches within 24 hours of delivery, and deliver them between 9:30 and 11:30 am to 618 W. State Street. Each lunch will include a sandwich, a piece of soft fruit, and a cookie or other small dessert. Deliveries are now made through a window on State Street, so no need to go inside.

Our congregation provides 60 lunches (usually four volunteers making 15 lunches each) on the first Tuesday of every month. SJC can reimburse your expenses, at your request.

To volunteer and/or ask questions, please contact Jackie Jablonski at jackiejab@me.com.

Two January Blood Drives

Thursday, **January 6**, 11:15-7:15 pm and
Wednesday, **January 26**, 9 am-4:15 pm
in the Parlor

*Help fuel our community!
Walk-ins welcome.*

January Worship Services

January 2, *Make a Joyful Noise!*

Stephanie Ortolano, Music Director

Join us for spontaneous, joyful music making. Bring instruments!

January 9, *Work, Play, Love: Living with Intention*

Speaker Edna Brown

Edna will share readings, stories and personal experiences of trying to bring intention into one's work, free time and relationships.

January 16, *Ministry in Pandemic Times*

Speaker Keith Kron

Rev. Keith Kron is the Director of the Transitions Office for the Unitarian Universalist Association. He will talk about the status of UU ministry in these times.

January 23, *Exploring Solitude and Community*

Speaker Andrew Quagliata

So many societal forces reinforce a state of perpetual dividedness. We turn to our faith community for space where we can listen to our deepest selves in community with others. Join Andrew Quagliata to reflect on how we can experience solitude and community simultaneously.

January 30, *Time, Religion and a Ford Econoline Van*

Speaker David Salomon

Some things take a while to sink in. Sometimes a long, slow journey is the fastest route to understanding. Somehow we neglect what we need to care for the most. These are a few of the lessons only recently recognized from a cross-country trip taken a long time ago in a big green van.

Sign ups are required in order to attend Sunday service. And everyone is invited to stream the services on our YouTube channel!

Soul Matters Material for January - *Living with Intention*

The Soul Matters theme for January is Living with Intention. 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/SoulMattersJanuary>.

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
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music@uuithaca.org*

*President, Board of Trustees
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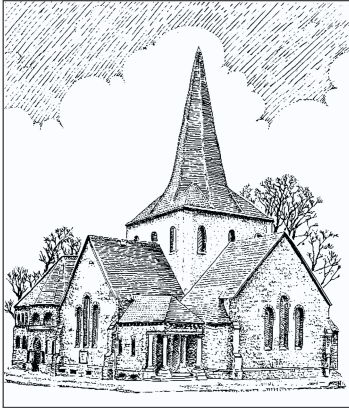
*Sexton
Rachel Seymour
office@uuithaca.org*

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Lauren Ponzoni
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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. One piece, or more.

The First Unitarian Society of Ithaca
306 North Aurora Street
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Visit our Website and get
your newsletter:
www.uuithaca.org

Possible Ponderings

The theme for January is Living with Intention.

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 with Intention shows up in your life.

January 1-9: What is your intention when you wake up? Some begin the day by asking “What do I have to get done?” Others ask “What do I want this day to be about?” Which are you?

January 10-16: Are you too intentional? Is it time to put down all the “doing” and pay a bit more attention to “being”? Has your long list of intentions left you feeling exhausted and even lost?

January 17-23 They say intention takes pause. So when was the last time you stopped, stepped back, and allowed yourself to ask, “Am I going in the right direction?”

January 24-31 Are you as good at assuming the good intentions of others as you are at defending your own?

Women's Circle - Monday, January 24

Women's Circle will meet via Zoom on Monday evening, **January 24**, 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 or 607 539 7733.

Zoom link Meeting ID: 819 4014 1421
Passcode: 874536

Men's Group - Monday, January 24

The Men's Group will meet once a month on the 4th Monday of the month. The November meeting is scheduled for **January 24** 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 or Kevin Moss at 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 and
Twitter, @IthacaUUs.

Living the Pledge

Will you...



The next FUSIT Living the Pledge workshop series ("LtP") will start Saturday, January 8. It will be on zoom each Saturday morning, 9:30-11:30, for six weeks. You need to be able to attend all six sessions.

To register, go to <https://fusit.breezechms.com/form/30539d6655>.

What is the Living the Pledge workshop?

The Pledge to End Racism is-

I BELIEVE that every person has worth as an individual.

I BELIEVE that every person is entitled to dignity and respect, regardless of race or color.

I BELIEVE that every thought and every act of racial prejudice is harmful; if it is my thought or act, then it is harmful to me as well as to others.

Therefore, from this day forward I WILL strive daily to eliminate racial prejudice from my thoughts and actions.

I WILL discourage racial prejudice by others at every opportunity.

I WILL treat all people with dignity and respect;

I WILL commit to working with others to transform the Greater Richmond region into a place that treats people of all races, ethnicities, and cultures with justice, equity, and compassion, and

I WILL strive daily to honor this pledge, knowing that the world will be a better place because of my effort.

The Living the Pledge Workshop is a 12-hour workshop designed to give participants confidence in their ability to talk about and confront racism wherever it lives.

It is designed to support participants learning and identifying how they will each Live the Pledge to End Racism. The workshop has both facilitated large group and small group components, where the small group remains the same across the six weeks, encouraging building community and openness. The program is enriching and helpful whether you are just beginning to explore anti-racism or if you have been working on it for years. This will be our 4th LtP series at FUSIT, and we hope you can join us. Contact the Office for more information.

From Your Board of Trustees

According to many pundits and therapists in the US, the pandemic life of the past 22 months has created a general behavior of criticism, complaint, and negativity. This comes partly from a barrage of social media stories and commentaries as well as social isolation and anxiety.

Your Board of Trustees has been pondering these notions of criticism and negativity and have discussed at length rekindling a culture of appreciation and kindness in our community. Recently, we adopted a new "Vision of Ministry" which speaks simply to prioritizing spiritual care and to developing tools to build a compassionate and generous community.

We have a core group of fabulous staff who have held fast during this pandemic and have been the glue holding together congregation, ministry, board, and each other. We have volunteers who have learned how to run the new sound board and do live-stream and recordings, have worked on buildings and grounds, have put on programs for children and youth and who are leading ministerial teams.

Our religious and spiritual community needs to offer comfort and sincere appreciation to each and every person especially now when folks might be feeling isolated, disengaged, tired and depressed or worried.

Your board has some ideas for crafting exercises, workshops, and services that could help to reignite the flames of appreciation and gratitude in our beloved community. We are hopeful to extinguish pettiness, and criticism of staff, board members, and volunteers. We are also reviewing and organizing the 140+ responses we received from the first "Open Question" as fodder for a culture of gratitude.

Take time to see the positive. Take time to thank one of our staff or volunteers. If you have ideas for activities, programs, or workshops that will enhance a culture of appreciation, please write board@uuihaca.org.

Therese O'Connor

Veterans and Peace

Warrior Writers is a veteran-focused arts organization that fosters artistic exploration and expression through casual, welcoming workshops and retreats. By reflecting and creating in a comfortable space, we encourage and support healing and community building. Discussion and writing to prompts become the creative tool through which we understand and transcend experiences of trauma and emotional disruptions that are not easily identified but constantly felt.

We currently will be meeting January 13 and 27 online and in person at Veterans Services, J.R. Clairborne, Director, 214 W. Martin Luther King, Jr./ State St., Ithaca, NY 14850 Phone: (607) 274-5920. Sponsored by the Social Justice Council of First Unitarian Society of Ithaca.

**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!**

January Book Discussion Group

The next Book Discussion Group meeting is scheduled for Friday, **January 7**, at 12:30 pm via Zoom. The book is *Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue.

The Book Discussion Group has chosen the following book for **February 4**: *House on the Lagoon* by Rosario Ferre

For further information contact Jennifer Streid-Mullen at streidmull@gmail.com.

Your Board is Listening - From John Gaines

Thank you, thank you, thank you! We have received almost 150 responses to the Board's Fall Open Question - "In these pandemic times and beyond, how can we as a congregation connect more deeply, inspire healing, and engage all our members?" If you want to see how you and others responded, [go here](#).

Trustees Margaret Nichols, Therese O'Connor, and Valerie Graves are sorting through the responses and getting them organized. Fall responses, and those from Winter and Spring Open Questions, will help the Board with planning for the future and developing next year's Vision of Ministry. The Winter Open Question will be coming soon! Watch for it and watch for new ways to share your responses.

Thank you for your assistance in this vital work!



Snow Plan

If inclement weather is forecasted and will impact our Sunday morning programming and worship service this is the process by which service will be cancelled:

1. Minister (or Worship Leader and Celebration Associate) and Congregational Administrator will be in contact on Saturday, keeping up to date on the forecast and discussing options.
2. Decision to cancel will be made by 8 am on Sunday.
3. Decision will be communicated to all:
 - a. Staff
 - b. Worship leaders
 - c. Guest musicians
4. Administrator and other staff will communicate the cancellation via:
 - a. Facebook
 - b. Announce email
 - c. Website

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.

January 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 December 15, 2021 meeting, held both in-person and via Zoom from 6:33-8:18 pm.

Ministerial Matters, 1: The Board has been in contact with the UUA to seek guidance on operating in a partnership governance structure without a minister. We are in discussion with Dan Hotchkiss (author of [Governance and Ministry](#)) about a potential training session in Ithaca.

Ministerial Matters, 2: The Board is working on Ministry plans for the 2022-23 year, and will announce them in February.

Personnel Committee: The Board authorized the Personnel Committee to review and update the employee handbook, church human resource policies, employment communications, and past employment practices on an ongoing basis.

Open Questions: The response period for the first Open Question has closed. Thank you to all who participated in the process! The Board is analyzing your responses and preparing a second Open Question. Your answers to these questions directly help shape our Vision of Ministry for the 2022-23 year!

Contingency Budget: In June, the congregation approved a budget with several contingency items that might be added if our finances allowed. Our expenses are significantly down from the projection due to Rev. Anthony Johnson's resignation, but at the recommendation of Treasurer Walt Peck and the Finance Committee, the Board has postponed any decision on the contingency items until we have a better idea of next year's projected expenses.

Communication: The Communication Committee presented draft procedures for responding to controversial communications and related issues. The committee is seeking feedback from staff, the Healthy Congregations Team, the Engagement & Outreach Team, etc., before presenting a final draft to the Board.

The Board went into Executive Session from 8:20pm to 9:02pm. No business is conducted during Executive Session and no minutes are kept.

The next regular Board meeting will be on **January 19, 2022**, from 6:30-8:15 pm. It will be a hybrid meeting held both in-person and via Zoom.

Library Notes

Our library continues to grow, despite the Pandemic. Now that the holiday season is behind us we will have more time to read. Here are some suggestions from new additions to the collection:

"A Black Women's History of the United States"; 2 copies of: "The Comstocks Of Cornell: the Definitive Autobiography", one copy donated by Kathy Hopkins; "Defund Fear: Safety Without Policing, Prisons, and Punishment" (the '20/21 UUA Common Read); "An Indigenous Peoples's History Of The United States: For Young People"; "Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You (a remix of "Stamped From The Beginning", by Ibram X. Kendi, for young people; "Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism"; "Widening The Circle Of Concern: Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change", several copies; "Breathe: a Letter To My Sons" (the 19/20 Common Read); "On Fire: The (Burning) Case for a Green New Deal", by the 2020 Ware lecturer, Naomi Klein.

If you would like to read any of these books, contact Barbara Shew, barbandy51@gmail.com, and she will place them with Michelle in the office for pickup.

Way Forward Team Guidance for Continued Re-opening Phase 3 - December 18th, 2021

As of December 18th, 2021 we will be making several small adjustments to Phase 3 of our re-opening plan, effective immediately.

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.
- **Everyone attending services will be required to have their temperature checked at the door. A temperature of 100.4 or higher will mean that individual will not be allowed to attend services or any activities inside the building that day.**
- 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.
- **Every person who will be leading Sunday worship service, i.e the RE leader, Celebrations Associate, all musicians, guest speakers etc., will need to provide a negative COVID rapid test the morning of the service.**
- 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, **or if you have a temperature of 100.4 degree or higher upon arrival**, 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.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/international-travel-during-covid19.html>

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.

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.

Closing Policy

FUSIT will be carefully following the guidance of local and state health officials, as well as monitoring other local agencies, such as schools, when deciding when and if to return to virtual-only gatherings. In addition, should there be evidence that spread of the COVID19 virus has happened in our spaces, at an official FUSIT event, we will temporarily move to virtual until we are assured that all transmission has been detected and contained.

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.

We will no longer produce a monthly paper calendar to accompany the newsletter. Please refer to the Breeze calendar in the website for the most up-to-date information about meetings and events.

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