



**ITHACA**

# *UUU Connections*

2024/2025 Issue No. 7

March 2025

## *Our Spiritual Journey*

Maybe, like me, you have suddenly found yourself living in a world full of doubt, unending questions swirling through your head as every day we are inundated with seemingly endless news of unprecedented changes, a tactic meant to confuse and overwhelm us.

And I can't help but wonder, who can we trust? How do we continue to live our lives in a world where we are bombarded with all of the ways that the government is breaking faith with us every day? How do we even trust that the information that we are receiving is accurate?

Maybe you also, like I do, feel as if you are living in an alternate reality where your entire understanding of the world, of human goodness, has been turned upside down. And it could be easy to give into fear, to give into anger. It's harder to keep choosing love. We have always lived in a beautiful and broken world, and it has always been part of our responsibility, as people of faith, to work to repair it.

Because isn't that what faith is? Trust in the belief that there is a love that is holding us? Trust that together our voices are more powerful than they ever could be alone? Trust in one another?

In this dark hour let ours be a house of peace. A sanctuary for healing. A haven for freedom and truth. A place of rest for our hearts so that we can rise up and be what we need to be: the change we want to see in the world.

*Emily Richards, CRE*



### **Ministry Team Fair**

Sunday, **March 30th**

During coffee hour in the Parlor

Enjoy a cup of coffee and snacks while learning about the many and varying ways you can get involved here at the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca. We want to learn about you!

What are you passionate about? What brings you joy?

What are your gifts and talents? Explore our many teams and ministries and find out how engaging can deepen your connection to this community.

*A complete list of Teams and Committees can be found on the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca website along with a description of the group and the group leader. Group members can be found in Breeze under Tags.*

*We are extremely grateful for all Team and Committee leaders and members! If you would like to join one of the Teams, email [office@uuitithaca.org](mailto:office@uuitithaca.org).*

### **Sunday Services in the Sanctuary at 10:30 am**

*Live-streamed on our YouTube channel*

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

### **Emergency Pastoral Care**

In case of pastoral need, call Kathy Hopkins at 607-592-3025. She will direct pastoral needs for weddings, memorial services and emergency pastoral care to Rev. Janet Shortall.

### **FUSIT Listserv**

If you would like to be added to the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca listserv, please fill out the form at <https://fusit.breezechms.com/form/oe48af>. If you have any questions, email Michelle at [office@uuitithaca.org](mailto:office@uuitithaca.org).

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

# Religious Exploration News

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

## Greetings from Religious Exploration

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

Trust is at the core of our faith, even if we don't always notice it. When we covenant with one another we are offering our trust. Trust that we will meet one another with love. That we will have open and generous hearts.

Talking about and exploring the theme of trust may bring up lots of feelings for all of us, children and adults alike. So we will trust one another to be gentle with ourselves and each other and leave space to process things as they come up, especially during group conversations.

*When times are dark  
the way becomes clear.  
Trust in your breath.  
Rest in your heart.  
Bow to the stranger.  
This is the gospel of astonishment.  
If we are completely lost  
we come home  
to each other. - Fred LaMotte*

### **Religious Exploration Schedule for March**

**March 2** - Classroom Sunday

**March 9** - Creative Sunday Take Apart Sunday

**March 16** - Multigenerational Service

**March 23** - Classroom Sunday

**March 30** - Creative Sunday

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

## Classroom Sundays

*Elementary:* This month the upper elementary aged children will be focusing on our monthly theme of Trust through stories, activities, crafts, and games. The younger elementary students will be exploring our UU Values with Legos.

*Middle School and High School:* The youth will continue to explore what role they will play in "Building A Better World," an RPG-based curriculum that will lead youth and adults through the process of creating a game setting as a faith development and community-building exercise reflecting Unitarian Universalist values. Please have participants bring a set of gaming dice to each session if they have them.

Please register your children below for the 2024-2025 Religious Exploration program! This information helps us to plan for the upcoming year.

[First Unitarian Society of Ithaca RE Registration Form 2024-2025](#)

## Sunday Snack Sign-up Help

[RE Snack Sign Up Spring 2025](#)

## Religious Exploration Wishlist

If you are looking to support the RE program and would like to purchase a gift, here is a list of items that would be useful and deeply appreciated.

[RE Wishlist](#)

Welcome to our Spring Classroom teachers: Jess Brown, Brisa Teutli, Megan McCormick, Brooks Cressman, Lora Timonin, and Mike Timonin. Being a part of the lives of our young people is deeply meaningful and the effects last a lifetime. This important programming can only happen with the support of the entire community.

[FUSIT 2024-2025 RE Volunteer Sign Up](#)

Please join our [First UU Ithaca Parents Facebook Group!](#)

*Emily Richards CRE (Credentialed Religious Educator) - Director of Congregational Life  
Madeline Natale - Religious Exploration Coordinator*

## Religious Exploration Events for March

### **Creative Sunday -Take Apart Party!** Sunday, **March 9**

During our Creative Sunday on March 9th children and youth will be participating in a Take Apart Party. We will explore the innards of computers, electronics and machines as a part of our monthly theme of Trust.

And we need your help! If you have any broken or obsolete electronics (hair dryer, keyboard, telephone) that you are happy to part with in the name of exploration please bring them to First UU by March 2nd and contact Emily Richards at dre@uuihaca.

Are you an engineer or just really knowledgeable of the innards of technology? Please let us know if you'd like to help us learn about the things we take apart.

### **March Movie Night**

Friday, **March 14**, 5:30 pm - 8 pm, Arch Room  
Drop your kids off, or stay and join us, for a movie night, complete with dinner and snacks! Drop off is available for children ages 4 and up. Children 3 and under must have a caregiver attend with them.

### [Movie Night Registration](#)

### **Music for Little People**

Wednesday, **March 5 and 19**

10 am-10:45 am in the Arch Room

Share in the joy of music in this class which is free and open to the public. Children 0-5 and their caregivers are welcome to meet us in the Arch Room each month. Sing, play, dance, explore instruments, and connect through music.

### **Connection Circle for Parents - Childcare Provided**

Sunday, **March 16**

12 pm-1 pm in the FUSIT Library

A Connection Circle for individuals who are actively parenting. The group will follow the Soul Matters themes with a focus on how they are related to the journey and experience of being a parent. Gatherings will take place monthly on the third Sunday of the month from 12 pm-1 pm, with childcare available. We invite you to join us for an opportunity for connection and community within our larger First UU community, in a safe, confidential and nurturing environment.



## March Worship Services

The theme for March is "Living Love Through the Practice of Trust" and the Celebrations Team is looking forward to speakers whose voices can help us to explore this theme as individuals and as a community.

### **Sunday, March 2, "Trust and Truthfulness"**

Rev. Peaches Gillette

Trust and truthfulness are the foundation of all meaningful relationships. Together, they enrich the soil that nourishes our growth and aids in our development as moral people.

Special music by FUSIT Choir

### **Sunday, March 9, "The Substance of Trusting... Truly Trusting Self and Others"**

Rev. Janet Shortall

The Substance of Trusting is about both the inner and outer dimensions of trust—trust in ourselves to navigate challenging times, and trust in others to create a shared sense of responsibility and community. It's not about having all the answers, but rather about having faith in our ability to engage with the world and each other in meaningful, compassionate ways.

Special music by Lydia Knecht, viola

### **Sunday, March 16, "Trust in Love"**

Emily Richards, CRE

In this joyful and interactive all-ages worship we will explore what it means to trust one another and to spread love and acceptance in the world.

Special music by Stephanie Ortolano

### **Sunday, March 23, "Trusting Others and Trusting Ourselves"**

Rev. Peaches Gillette

Often we rely on our trust of others to give us confidence, but when we learn to trust ourselves, our sense of assurance is strengthened.

Special music by Roberta Crawford, viola

### **Sunday, March 30, "Faith Within Brokenness"**

Emily Richards, CRE

How do we find a way to trust when everything seems broken? How do we reconcile our belief in love and goodness with the current reality of the world around us? And, in the midst of all of the anxiety we are feeling, how do we reach out to one another in kindness and compassion, and trust that we will hold each other gently?

Special music by FUSIT Choir

Director of Congregational Life  
Emily Richards  
[CongregationalLife@uuihaca.org](mailto:CongregationalLife@uuihaca.org)

Pastoral Care Associate  
Rev. Janet Shortall  
[pastoralcare@uuihaca.org](mailto:pastoralcare@uuihaca.org)

Preacher and Program Associate  
Rev. Peaches Gillette  
[pgfreedom09@gmail.com](mailto:pgfreedom09@gmail.com)

Religious Exploration Coordinator  
Madeline Natale  
[reasst@uuihaca.org](mailto:reasst@uuihaca.org)

Childcare Coordinator  
Melissa Heslop  
[childcare@uuihaca.org](mailto:childcare@uuihaca.org)

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

Choir Director  
Jayne Demakos  
[choir@uuihaca.org](mailto:choir@uuihaca.org)

President, Board of Trustees  
Fred Balfour  
[fred.balfour@gmail.com](mailto:fred.balfour@gmail.com)

Director of Congregation Administration  
Michelle Waffner  
[office@uuihaca.org](mailto:office@uuihaca.org)

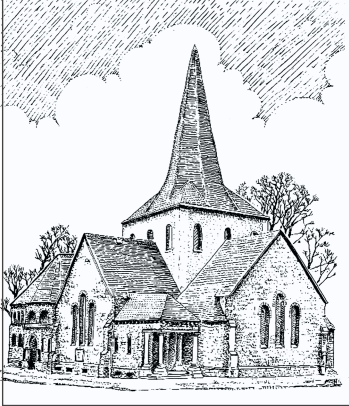
Administrative Assistant  
Loretta Heimbuch  
[adminasst@uuihaca.org](mailto:adminasst@uuihaca.org)

Engagement and Outreach Coordinator  
Elizabeth Buckley  
[membership@uuihaca.org](mailto:membership@uuihaca.org)

Sexton  
Rachel Seymour  
[sexton@uuihaca.org](mailto:sexton@uuihaca.org)

Bookkeeper  
Lauren Ponzoni  
[office@uuihaca.org](mailto:office@uuihaca.org)

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 March is Living Love Through the Practice of Trust*

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

**March 1-8:** What have you trusted since childhood and never lost faith in?

**March 9-15:** When did trust in the Divine show up in your life? Is there anything about that moment that might help you navigate your life right now? When did trust in the Divine leave your life? Do you ever feel a longing for it to return?

**March 16-22:** Have you done more battling with your body than trusting it? What would happen if you trusted life enough to let go?

**March 23-31:** Are you upset because you were lied to or because, from now on, you can't believe the one who lied?

### **Learn About Natural Burial at Greensprings, March 9 at noon in the Annex**

Ever wondered about natural burial? Did you know that one of the first natural burial cemeteries in the country is just 15 minutes south of Ithaca? Come learn about Greensprings Natural Cemetery Preserve. Hear burial stories, details about what a natural burial is like, how it's different from conventional burial, info on pre-planning, our land stewardship work, the wind phone, our hiking trails and more. There will be plenty of time for Q & A after the slide presentation which will be held in the Annex starting at noon.

*The presenter is Michelle Menter, a long-time FUSIT member and the Executive Director of Greensprings. She'll be joined by board member Patti Jacobson.*

**Did you know you can text  
in your donations to the offering plate on  
Sundays? Simply text 607-260-6616  
with the amount + offering  
(eg: \$5 offering) to donate by phone.  
It's super easy!**

## **Social Justice**

We hope you will consider joining us in our social justice efforts and encourage you to reach out and learn more about how you can get involved. Find more information about various teams on our website.

### **Side with Love and Shared Plate**

Teams, Committees, and Small Groups are invited to sponsor a month for our Side with Love and Shared Plate Collections. The group would be responsible for choosing the organization, communicating with that organization about needed items for Side with Love, delivering goods, and communicating any pertinent information to Michelle and Loretta for the Newsletter, Weekly Announce, and Order of Service.

This is a wonderful opportunity to lift up and support local or national organizations that do work that is meaningful to your team or group. Sign up information can be found below.

#### [Side With Love and Shared Plate 2024-2025](#)

For the month of March, the Code Blue Emergency Shelter has been chosen by the FUSIT lunch team, led by Jackie Jablonski, to be the recipient of the Side with Love collection and the Shared Plate. Once or twice a month this team makes a hot meal and delivers it to the Code Blue shelter. Items that you can provide to help the shelter offer a warm and safe space include:

- individually wrapped breakfast bars
- instant oatmeal packets
- hot cocoa packets
- juice boxes
- hand warmers
- pocket size packs of hand wipes
- individual packets of hot chocolate (or boxes of them)

### **8Th Principle Action Ministry Meets the 4th Wednesday**

The 8th Principle Action Ministry meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month on Zoom to discuss ways to live out our UU values, especially justice and equity. Anyone who is interested in discussion and sharing of ideas for action is welcome.

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/84035815856?pwd=aHdwYVpoYldBVnRQNXdHazZDUDlrUT09>

Meeting ID: 840 3581 5856  
Passcode: 989761

### **The Environmental Interest Circle (EIC) Meets March 5th** at 7:00 pm in the Parlor and over Zoom

The Environmental Interest Circle meets to discuss/exchange ideas and actions that further sustainable living for each one of us, for the FUSIT congregation, and for our congregation's role in the greater community. This group usually meets the first Wednesday of the month in the parlor and over Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81644753524?pwd=SDBqaTN5eIM3ejltbGdJeGhPa3QxQT09>

Meeting ID: 816 4475 3524 Passcode: 894885



## **LGBTQ+ Group Meets Monthly**

This Small Group is especially for FUSIT's LGBTQ+ community and meets monthly. **All who identify on the LGBTQ+ continuum are welcome.**

Come enjoy this opportunity for fellowship and community within our larger FUSIT community, in a safe, confidential and nurturing environment. Please reach out to Ely at [eleanorwillard97@gmail.com](mailto:eleanorwillard97@gmail.com) for more information.

### **March 31 - International Transgender Day of Visibility**

Celebrated to bring awareness to transgender people and their identities as well as recognize those that helped fight for rights for transgender people.

### **Women's Circle Meets on March 24**

Women's Circle usually meets via Zoom on the 4th Monday of the month from 7-8:30 pm. All who identify as women are welcome. This is a drop-in group, so no need to sign up; just come. Anyone is welcome to bring a poem or a reading. For information or questions contact Nancy Miller at [ananda7733@gmail.com](mailto:ananda7733@gmail.com) or 607-539-7733.

Zoom Link: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/82169260621?pwd=ZDkyaRKMmo2czhqSWgrSVhmbGFqdzo9>

Meeting ID: 821 6926 0621. Passcode: 015515

### **Pub Theology**

Tuesday, **March 25th** 6:30 pm  
Liquid State Brewing

Join us at Liquid State Brewing for an evening of good fellowship and conversation at our favorite local brewery (owned by FUSIT members!). We will gather at 6:30 pm and reflect together on our monthly theme of *Living Love Through the Practice of Trust*. Non-beer and non-alcoholic drinks options available! 21 and over please. Bring your friends! Hope to see you there! Pub Theology takes place on the 4th Tuesday of every month. 620 W. Green St., Ithaca.

### **Spiritual Yoga Class - March 21**

Please join our FUSIT exclusive free of charge Spiritual Yoga class with Madeline Natale. Yoga will be held at Yoga Farm Ithaca (509 N. Meadow St., Ithaca) on the 3rd Friday of the month from 5:30-6:30 pm with tea to follow! Bring your own mug, and maybe a snack to share. For further information, contact Madeline at [reasst@uuithaca.org](mailto:reasst@uuithaca.org).

### **Crochet and Knitting Circle**

Are you looking to join a tight knit group? Meet us in the Annex Youth Room from 12-1 pm every Sunday to exchange blissful stitches. This is an unstructured crochet and knitting circle. All ages are welcome, children under 12 years old must be accompanied by a designated adult.



**Beacon on Aurora - An Evening with *Damn Tall Buildings*, Sunday, March 30, doors open at 6:30 pm, concert begins at 7 pm**

Witty & engaging, Damn Tall Buildings' energizing music finds beauty and glory in the mundane workaday struggle of everyday life: time keeps passing and the seasons come and go, you scroll too much, you smoke too much, you lose yourself, only to sit with yourself & find yourself again, you laugh with your friends, and you look out the window & dream about what else might be out there. It all keeps coming around. You carry on, intent on flourishing and thriving. This is what Damn Tall Buildings sings about, what they seek to share with their audience.

In their early days, Damn Tall Buildings didn't rehearse – they busked. Now, whether live or on record, the trio still radiates the energy of a crew of best friends playing bluegrass on the street. Anchoring that energy is their instrumental chops, their strong songwriting, and their varied influences that stretch beyond bluegrass, even beyond American roots music altogether. Whether sharing lead vocals and instrumental solos or blending their voices into high-spirited harmony, Damn Tall Buildings is a tight unit that contains more than the sum of its parts.

*\$20 suggested donation at the door. Cash preferred. Electronic payment options (direct to artist) will also be available.*

### **FUSIT Choir**

Come sing with us! The FUSIT Choir rehearses on Thursdays, from 7-8:30 pm in the Annex. Join in this wonderful, joyful and important part of our community service. Text Jayne at 607-256-9488.

### **Care Cafe - March 9th and 23rd**

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

Rev. Peaches Gillette invites you to the Care Cafe. During our time in the 'cafe', we openly express our thoughts, reaching into ourselves and deeply touching upon and sharing what it means to be fully human in a complicated world. Each gathering will focus on a loosely structured theme around spirituality, encouraging participants to freely explore all aspects of their spiritual journeys. Past groups have been excellent and enriching, as the flow of participants from week to week has created perfect cross-currents of relationships, broadening and securing FUSIT's sense of community. Time together in the Care Cafe allows many of us to meet and know one another more intimately.

Rev. Peaches Gillette [pgfreedom09@gmail.com](mailto:pgfreedom09@gmail.com)

### **Soul Matters Material for March - Trust**

The Soul Matters theme for March is *Living Love Through The Practice of Trust*. 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/SoulMattersMarch2025>

## Joys and Sorrows

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

### **Appreciations**

*As we nurture a culture of appreciation at FUSIT, let's sing praises to the many people who help make our community the wonderful place it is. Who here at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca have you noticed doing something above and beyond, who has been a quiet unsung hero, or who is doing an exceptional job? It can be a member or staff or friend to our community. Send your submissions to [joysandsorrows@uuihaca.org](mailto:joysandsorrows@uuihaca.org).*

*From Madonna Stallmann-*

"Rachael Behling, RN directly involved with patient care and our guest Planned Parenthood representative on February 16, asked me to express her gratitude to you all for selecting Planned Parenthood of Ithaca as the shared plate for February." A total of \$961 was collected and donated to this organization.

*From Rita Barber and Nancy Dolge-*

"Many heartfelt thanks to the Memorial Reception Team members who helped with Dick Cogger's memorial reception on February 15. Brenda Golden graciously agreed to oversee our team with both coordinators out-of-town. Madonna Stallman, Keith Perry, Jackie Jablonski, Diana Nier and MJ Eger-Erickson volunteered to help on site and bake cookies. With you folks on board, our minds were at ease."

Thank you to Madonna Stallmann and Paul Weidhaas for their support of the Beacon on Aurora concerts. And a special thank you for shoveling the sidewalk last Sunday when Rachel was sick unexpectedly. We appreciate your help making the entrance safe!

### **A Heartfelt Reminder-**

The Care Team provides pastoral care and support for congregants who are going through challenging times. If you or any member or close friend of FUSIT need some assistance, contact Kathy Hopkins at 607-582-3025 or [Kathy1122@gmail.com](mailto:Kathy1122@gmail.com). At coffee hour, visit our table and look for folks with pink name tags for more information.

### **Nametags**

If you would like a nametag, please fill out the **nametag request form** at the Welcome Table or email [membership@uuihaca.org](mailto:membership@uuihaca.org) and we'll make one for you. Then look for your new nametag at the Welcome Table the following week.



*Everybody loves butterflies.  
But I trust the caterpillars more.  
I trust the ones who know they aren't done.*

*Andrea Gibson*



“Stewardship” at FUSIT has become inextricably linked with the annual campaign to ask for your pledge. Stewarding, however, denotes the responsibility each of us has to keep FUSIT strong in many different ways besides financial. At its core, FUSIT’s strength comes from our network of relationships that create connections, find inspiration, and engage the world.

This year we are trying something new. With the help of our “Stewardship for Us” consultant, Reverend Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry, and the volunteer contributions of 20 FUSIT Stewards who got trained in February, we are personally reaching out to many of you during March to ask for 30 minutes of your time. We are not coming to twist your arm or beg for money. Our goal is to connect with you on a personal level, and hear about your hopes and dreams for FUSIT. We don’t have the capacity to meet with everyone in one year, but our plan is that over the next few years we will include every active member and friend. Why? Because **“Together We Rise”!** Making personal connections with you, one-on-one or in cottage meetings, will enrich our congregation and help us keep Rising toward our FUSIT mission! Leveraging our inherent strengths, we have come so far since our pandemic low: increasing numbers at Sunday Service, increasing staff and staff pay to make programs stronger and more sustainable, and increasing FUSIT spirit. This doesn’t happen by chance – our staff are excellent and dedicated, our members are engaged, and our trio of ministers plus guests inspire us with diverse perspectives.

If you got a pledge letter in the mail with a pledge card and return envelope, then please be generous with your pledge and look forward to a Steward visit next year. If your pledge letter did not include a return envelope then you likely got a phone call or email from a Steward wanting to schedule a visit. Please respond and welcome their effort to connect with you. Your Steward will provide an envelope for your confidential pledge at the end of the visit.

Every pledge matters, large and small. The pledge card has suggestions in the form of the Fair Share table, but what matters most is that you give something within your means, and lean into the UU values of generosity and gratitude. This is only one part of our Stewarding responsibility, and an important part!

*Matt Hare & the Stewardship Team*

*Jeanette Knapp, Margaret Nichols, Wendy Schearer*

### **Openings in Small Group Ministry**

Small Group Ministry (SGM) is a great way to form significant connections within FUSIT and in the wider Ithaca community for both new and long-time members and friends. US Surgeon General Murthy has described the epidemic of isolation and loneliness in the US, and he calls on us to strengthen our own connections and to help others and our communities to do so. Below is a list of our small groups, their meeting times and their current openings. We hope you join us! If you have any questions or would like to join a small group, call or email Marsha Kardon at (607) 592-2520 or [mfkardon@gmail.com](mailto:mfkardon@gmail.com).

-**Sunday** once or twice a month at 7 pm on Zoom (3 openings)

-Second and fourth **Sunday** of the month at FUSIT from 9-10:15 am (currently full)

-**Sunday** monthly from noon - 1 pm at FUSIT, for those actively parenting, childcare available (new members welcome)

-First and third **Monday** of the month on Zoom at 7 pm (1 opening)

-First **Tuesday** at 6:30 pm either outside in member’s backyard or on Zoom, monthly (1 opening)

-**Wednesday** 6 pm at FUSIT, LGBTQ+ associated group (2 openings)

-First and third **Friday**, one in person, one on zoom at 10:30 am (2 openings)

### **UUs of Color Affinity Group - March 3**

If you are a UU of Color, please join us Monday, **March 3**, from 6 - 7 pm for community, resource sharing, and activity planning. Please contact [poc@uuithaca.org](mailto:poc@uuithaca.org) for online meeting details.

### **Ways to Engage**

Curious about events and happenings at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca? Check out our Facebook page and stay current with what's going on in the community!

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

### **Current Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteering is a great way to meet others in the First Unitarian Community and give back at the same time! Current

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

### **Office Hours in March**

The office is generally open 9 am - 4 pm Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and 8 am - 3 pm Sundays. Michelle works remotely Wednesdays.

## **March Board Reflections**

I sit and write this on a Sunday afternoon, having been inspired by what I felt in community with you all this morning. I believe Emily once did a sermon on interconnectedness, binding our congregation with actual yarn across the sanctuary, in that wonderfully experiential way she does. Similarly, there's a children's book called Invisible Strings that I sometimes read to my kids. It speaks to the unseen connection we have with those we love, even when we're apart. My first born, a literal-thinking skeptic (and UU) at heart, thinks the idea of invisible strings is pure crap, but I'm here to declare that they're as real as the nose on your face.

There are people in this congregation that I feel connected to every day. Amazingly, most of these people I have only known for a relatively short time and only see on Sundays. Sometimes we talk and share a hug, other times we exchange a quick squeeze of the hand or a smile, and many times I just know they are there, their kinship radiating from across the room. These heart strings are a result of our shared hearts and minds, our shared hopes for the world, and they stay with me even as I get pulled into the rest of my week. They (you) are there every day, reminding me that I'm surrounded by love.

I remember when I didn't have this feeling. A few years ago we started attending services, and I longed for these invisible strings that I now have. To be able to walk in and feel like FUSIT was home. After getting involved, giving it time, and having a few wonderful people reach out to us, these connections started to materialize into what they are today. But even now, it's easy for me to forget how it felt without those strings.

We're in a challenging yet exciting time, where more and more people are coming through our doors seeking safety and connection. They want their own invisible strings with our congregation, to come in and feel seen and known, and to leave and still feel the strong pull of love as they face the challenges of their lives. But we have to be vigilant and responsive to them, to actively cultivate the strings between them and us.

It's easy for me to get caught up in the activity of Sunday services and forget to look outside of myself. So I try to ground myself during the service, stopping to notice those around me, to feel their needs, to see them for who they are. It allows me to touch people the way so many of you have touched me and my family. As we look to live our Covenant in this trying era, think back and remember a time when you didn't have the invisible strings you do today with our congregation. Go into Sundays with strategies to be mindful and conscious of those - familiar and new - who need a smile, touch, or conversation. Because even if all you do is say "Hey, I see you, and I'm glad you're here," you'll have made our sanctuary what it is supposed to be for our community.

*Megan L. McCormick, Board of Trustees*

## **March Board of Trustees Meeting**

The Board will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, on **March 18th**, at 6:30 pm. Board meetings are a hybrid format, taking place in the Parlor and through Zoom.

All FUSIT members are invited to attend these meetings.

Ten minutes are set aside at the beginning of the meeting for congregation feedback. Please join us!

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/88258776990pwd=VUxUTUMraVZDUfQzQndSVFRraFlPdz09>

Meeting ID: 882 5877 6990 Passcode: 602445

## **Ready to make a difference as a Trustee?**

As one of nine dedicated board members, the Trustee plays a pivotal role in shaping the church's future. This team's mission? To dream big, set inspiring goals, keep an eye on our programs, and build partnerships within the congregation to bring our shared vision to life. Together, they'll ensure that church leaders- and even each other- stay on track, accountable, and energized to make a meaningful impact. If interested, please contact Elizabeth Bixler at [ebixler45@gmail.com](mailto:ebixler45@gmail.com).

## **Thanks to Your Generosity**

Thanks to your generosity, these organizations received the following in the monthly shared plate offering:

January - *Advocacy Center* \$400

February - *Planned Parenthood, Ithaca* \$961

## **Stay Connected**

Curious about events and happenings at First Unitarian Society of Ithaca? Check out our Facebook page and stay current with what's going on in the community!

[First Unitarian Society of Ithaca Facebook Page](#)

## **Expanding Community**

For many this charged political time can bring about increased feelings of isolation and division. We always welcome new members to our community and faith and hope to provide a safe space of connection and learning for all. Please continue to invite any and all people that you know that you believe could find meaning by exploring what the Unitarian Universalist faith can offer.

## **Our Mission**

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



**Exciting Newly  
Revised Version!**



## **2025 Community-Wide Spring Online Auction**

**3-Day Weekend - April 25, 26, 27**

**Local community vendor donations ONLY -**

**FUSIT member donations will be welcomed later  
in our **Fall LIVE Service Auction.****



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**Yet to come - Mark your calendar for...**

**Our FUSIT **Fall LIVE Service Auction** on  
**November 8**, with donations **ONLY** from the  
**FUSIT community, their friends and family.****

*Contact [adminasst@uuithaca.org](mailto:adminasst@uuithaca.org).*



First Unitarian is seeking donations for our Spring

## **All Things “Baby” Swap on March 29th!**

To donate, please email [childcare@uuithaca.org](mailto:childcare@uuithaca.org)

We are also in need of volunteers! If you are interested in volunteering with us for this event, please email [reasst@uuithaca.org](mailto:reasst@uuithaca.org)

### **All Things “Baby” Swap**

Saturday, **March 29th**

12 pm-5 pm

In the FUSIT Parlor

Our third All Things “Baby” Swap is right around the corner! If you have infant & baby care items, baby equipment, maternity wear, baby and child clothing (premie to 5 T), shoes, books, games, and/or toys that you’d like to re-home, consider bringing them to our swap! Everyone is welcome and you don’t need to bring anything to come browse and take things you could use! Sign up to volunteer here:

All items must be in gently-used condition (no major rips/ stains). Not accepting cribs, changing tables, pumps & pump parts/ accessories, or car seats at this time.



**NEW**

# Summer Program

Small group size

\$325 per week  
Scholarships Available

Ages 5-12

## CAMP AURORA

Creating Connection and Community

Downtown Ithaca

Three Weeks of fun!

Fostering self-expression, creativity, and belonging, art, music, movement, field trips, play



Week One  
August 11-15



Week Two  
August 18-22



Week Three  
August 25-29

For more information, contact us at: [CampAurora@uuithaca.org](mailto:CampAurora@uuithaca.org)

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca  
306 N. Aurora Street

### **Camp Aurora**

Camp Aurora is a week-long summer day camp in the heart of Downtown Ithaca for kids ages 5-12 that is centered on community, connection, and engagement. With a focus on creating meaningful experiences through exploring our interconnected-ness to one another and the world, each fun-filled week will include art, music, movement, field trips, story, and adventure. Campers will have an opportunity to learn and grow together with an emphasis on self-expression, creativity, and belonging, with lots of space for free play and building social skills and relationships.

Camp runs from 9 am-3 pm each day.

Weekly Camp Fee: \$325

Scholarships Available

**Week One: August 11th-15th**

**Week Two: August 18th-22nd**

**Week Three: August 25th-29th**

Register Today:

[Camp Aurora Registration](#)