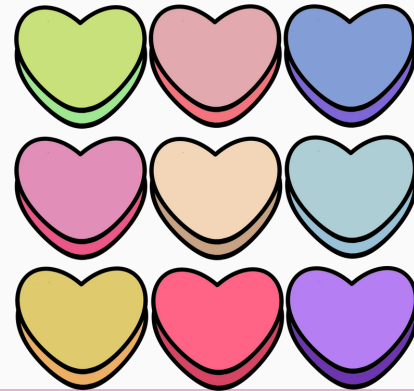


# THE BEACON

Newsletter of Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton



## February's Sunday Services

ALL SERVICES BEGIN AT 10:30AM

February 4      The Equality State      Taylor and Cooke

Join us for a First Sunday worship and workshop on the monthly theme of Justice and Equity. Through story and song, we will explore these key values of Unitarian Universalism together.

February 11      Rest Is Resistance      Douglas Taylor

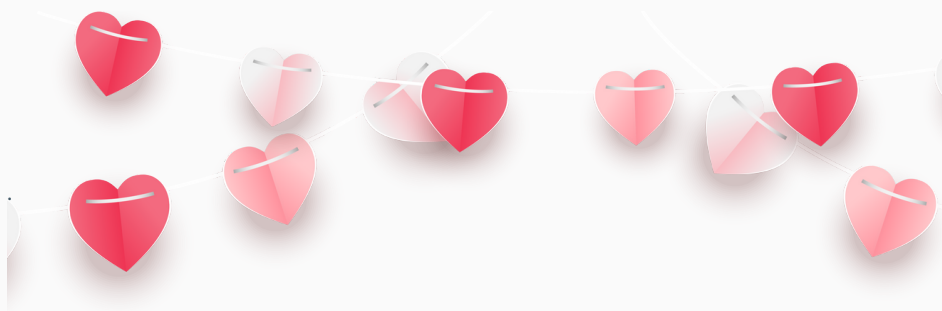
There is a lot of attention on Self-Care in our society. Exhaustion is seen as a mark of status, and being busy is a sign of success. But should rest and renewal be a luxury allowed to only those who can afford it?

February 18      Trauma to Gratitude: Seconds to Year  
Jeff Donahue

After traumatic events, gratitude can follow with increased awareness and empathy. Sometimes gratitude comes quickly and other times it takes years. Regardless of timing, spirituality helps ease this transition

February 25      The Distortion of Our Best Values  
Douglas Taylor

Hope, Tolerance, Peace, Self-Respect and even Love. At times we are fed a message that these important, guiding values of our liberal faith are dangerous and bad for society. And some of the arguments make a lot of sense! It makes me think there is a cruel game afoot in which we grow complicit in our own destruction.



### STAFF:

Minister: Reverend Douglas Taylor

Board President:

Kate Thorpe

Director of Family Ministry:

Dylan Cooke

Music Director: Vicky Gordon

Office Administrator and

Membership Coordinator:

Karen Manzer

### HOURS:

Office Hours: 9:00am to 1:00pm M-F closed on Wed

Worship Services: Sundays at 10:30am

Children and Youth

Programs: Sundays at 10:30am

Nursery Care during services

### HOW TO CONTACT US:

183 Riverside Drive

Binghamton, NY 13905

Phone: 607.729.1641

Email:

[office@uubinghamton.org](mailto:office@uubinghamton.org)

[www.uubinghamton.org](http://www.uubinghamton.org)

Beacon Newsletter Deadline:  
Noon on the last Friday of each month.

## WORDS FROM OUR MINISTER

Reverend Douglas Taylor  
can be reached at  
[dtaylor@uubinghamton.org](mailto:dtaylor@uubinghamton.org)  
or by calling 607.729.1641  
during congregation office  
hours



Back in November, when the Soul Matters theme was ‘generosity,’ Dylan and I launched the “UUCB Family Generosity Challenge.” We found 8 families regularly participating in UUCB to take part in the challenge. Each family was then given an envelope with some instructions and a hundred dollar bill. The instructions were simple: “How can you help make the world a better place? Use this \$100 as a resource to help you answer that question. Other resources include your creativity and imagination.”

We also told the families that the \$100 came from the Minister’s Discretionary Fund, and that they were invited to participate in the work of using that fund as intended – to support those in need. Finally, we told them they had two months to work on the challenge and that they needed to write up a few paragraphs about what they did with the money and why. We planned to use those reports as the basis for our January 7th worship service.

The families each chose a focus and got to work. One family sought to support Haitian children and families, another decided to back the Mothers and Babies perinatal network. A few focused on supporting the local animal shelter. And a few others found ways to help the families of incarcerated people. And another supported NoMa community center. Many families found ways to double and even triple the money they were donating. Some made and sold food, another put together and raffled a gift basket, and yet another made and sold original art to raise more money for their challenge.

All of the families were grateful to take part in the challenge, they valued the conversations sparked by the project and the outcomes they accomplished. I am grateful for the generosity and creativity of our young families. If anyone would like, this is an opportunity open to all! If you have your own \$100 to start with or need to call on me to get that seed money – consider how you can make the world a better place.

-DOUGLAS  
DOUGLAS TAYLOR, MINISTER  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION  
BINGHAMTON, NY



## 1st Sunday Workshops for February 4th

“Faith in Action – Making wreaths for nursing home residents” with Julie Boyd in the Social Hall: All ages are invited to make Valentine wreaths to brighten the doors of our neighbors in the Susquehanna Nursing Home.

“Light the Way With Love” with Shawn Steketee and Nicole Olivo in the Social Hall. Find your inner light and join us in making love-themed luminaries. All ages welcome!

“Culture Toss” with Rev. Douglas Taylor in the Chapel and on Zoom. “Everybody else has an accent, not me. The way I talk is just normal.” In this engaging activity we explore concepts at the heart of culture together. We will question how oppression impacts our thinking and our experience of the world. We can grow in empathy toward the differences among us.

### UUCB CAPITAL CAMPAIGN OFFICIALLY ENDS

The Capital Campaign Steering Committee is pleased to announce the official ending of the capital campaign. We are moved by the incredible generosity of our congregation. There was a total of \$1,107,627.00 in pledges made during our fundraising efforts.

We were told by our campaign consultant to expect an approximate shortfall of 10% of pledges made. Instead of a shortfall, we received a total of \$1,160,796.00. That represents 105% of the amount of the total pledges. WOW!!!

When we started talking about raising money for significant renovations for our facilities, there were likely very few congregants that would even dare to imagine the funds we would raise and the renovations we would complete.

The end of our capital campaign is not only a cause for celebration but an incredible triumph and demonstrates that when we have the passion, pride and love for our beloved community we can accomplish incredible things. The results of the capital campaign give us great hope that we can reach the goals of what is probably our most important stewardship campaign in decades.



## Children and Youth this Month

### Theme Based Curriculum

What is “Soul Matters”? Each month, our services and children’s Faith Development activities are devoted to a theme, like “Cultivating Relationship” or “Opening to Joy” or “Healing.” We approach these general themes from several lenses and angles throughout the month. And we explore the themes in Sharing Circles, small groups of adults committed to deeper exploration with regular companions.

These groups offer the gift of spiritual connection, where we listen to each other, to our lives, and to our deepest selves. We are encouraged to experience the themes, not just analyze them, and to offer each other the gift of listening.

Our UUCB Youth group is for our high-school age members and currently meets once a month for meeting and activities.

Contact Lynne Theophanis or Christine McWhirter for more information.



### UUCB Nursery

Our nursery is open on Sunday mornings during the worship service for our youngest members.

Contact our Director of Family Ministry  
Dylan Cooke  
at  
[dfm@uubinghamton.org](mailto:dfm@uubinghamton.org)  
for more information  
about our programs, or to  
find out how you can  
become involved with  
this ministry.

### 2024 Themes: The Gift of...

**February: Justice & Equity**

**March: Transformation**

**April: Interdependence**

**May: Pluralism**

**June: Renewal**

# It Happened in January



## YOUNG ADULT CON

About 50 young adults from UUCB and beyond spent the weekend of January 5-7 at UUCB learning, socializing and building community.

## TOOLS FOR MANAGING STRESS, ANXIETY, AND DEPRESSION WORKSHOP

18 People met for three Saturday mornings in January to learn helpful tools for managing stress led by holistic practitioner Jan Fiore.

## BEGINNING YOGA

5-7 people meet regularly for this free yoga class on Mondays from 5-6 pm. There is room for more!

## PROGRAM COUNCIL MEETING

Representatives from each of our committees and group at UUCB met on January 3 to network, plan for the future and find ways that they can support each other with their work.

## JANUARY'S SPECIAL COLLECTION

We raised \$477.00 for the Big brothers and Big sisters of the twin Tiers

## CLEAN UP DAY

Several folks cleaned and organized at UUCB under the guidance of our custodian Rebecca Rayne.

## CRANBERRY COFFEEHOUSE

It was a record turn out for John Kirk and Trish Miller's concert on January 20.





## UUCB News and Info

### NEW DOOR CODE

We change our congregational door code every January. Talk to Karen Manzer if you need the new one.

### CALENDAR

You can find our complete calendar of events by visiting our website at [uubinghamton.org](http://uubinghamton.org) and clicking on the heading "News and Events"

### NEWSLETTER

You can request a printed copy of the UUCB Beacon newsletter be mailed to your home by calling or emailing Karen Manzer at [office@uubinghamton.org](mailto:office@uubinghamton.org) or 607-729-1641.

## THE CHURCH MOUSE KNOWS



That **Shawn Steketee** headed up the collection of boots and gloves for RISE.

That **Lisa Sienkiewicz** and **Nancy Knipscher** cooked for our first Saturday Supper.

**Ron Clupper** has been changing the sign each week and keeping the flags out front current.

**Ann Foard**, **Tim Wolcott**, and **Hope Post** have been welcoming visitors on Sundays.

**Moe Manzer** cleans the sidewalks and fills the birdfeeders on Sunday mornings.

**Emily Hotchkiss-Plowe** prepared for and facilitated our town hall meeting in January. And also was patient when answering our many questions about UUCB finances.

Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped cook meals for the young adult con.



# Ongoing Events

## UUCB Community Drum Circle

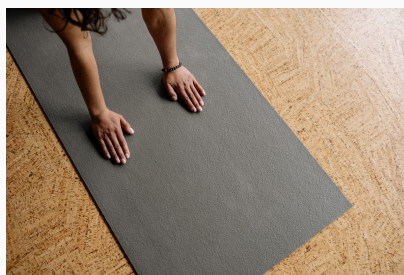
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 14, 6:30PM

Create a sense of community by joining in our all ages drum circle. The drum circle offers equality because there is no head or tail. It includes people of all ages. The main objective is to share rhythm and get in tune with each other and themselves. Bring your own drum or borrow one of ours. Contact Jim Dwyer for more information.

## Beginner Yoga

MONDAYS 5PM

Yoga instructor Irena Trubnikov leads us in a yoga class each Monday. All are welcome. Bring a mat or towel, a water bottle and wear loose comfortable clothing.



## Role-Playing Tabletop Games

SATURDAYS 4-7PM

Join us for exciting and fun role-playing games (similar to Dungeons and Dragons) with Dungeon Master Peter Steketee. We meet in the classroom at the end of the hallway.

## Belly Dance with Pixie and Bonita

SUNDAYS 5:30- 6:30PM

Belly Dance is exercise for the body and mind which is enjoyable for all ages, body types, and abilities.

Students should dress comfortably and consider wearing clothing that hugs the body to show subtle movements. Hip scarves are optional and will be available for purchase. Water is recommended.

Cost is \$15 per class and cash, venmo, PayPal, cashapp are accepted  
Contact Bonita Graham [bgraham@wesleyan.edu](mailto:bgraham@wesleyan.edu) for more information



The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) is an organization dedicated to networking Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalists (UUs), educating people about Paganism, promoting interfaith dialogue, developing Pagan liturgies and theologies.

Meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at UUCB at 6:30pm.

## Depression Support Group

Mondays at 6pm  
Anyone who is affected by depression is welcome to join us.

## Last Sunday Lunch

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25 11:45AM  
Bring a dish to share and your friends and family for our February theme "Salad Bar"



## Cranberry Coffeehouse

Steve Strauss

Saturday February 17 2024

Steve Strauss is a local singer/songwriter whose body of work spans thirty years. His songs are both poetic and pointed, a collection of thoughts and stories that have a timeless relevance with a wry sense of hope. Strauss is a recording artist with German audiophile label Stockfisch Records, who released A Very Thin Wire, his fourth album, in April of 2020. His music can be found on most streaming services.

More info at  
[cranberrycoffeehouse.org](http://cranberrycoffeehouse.org)

## February Events



## ON REPENTANCE AND REPAIR

The UUA Common Read Book Discussion

Facilitated by Douglas Taylor  
February 27 6:30-8pm

The UU Common Read of On Repentance and Repair explores the writings of the 12th century Jewish physician and scholar, Maimonides. Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg offers a contemporary, lively interpretation of the ancient text, inviting people of any and all faiths toward accountability practices that can transform our relationships and help to make us whole. Part 2 will be March 26 at the same time.

J



## Get Involved - Poor People's Campaign

Tim Wolcott and the UUCB Social Action Huub Team are planning to support the Poor People's Campaign ([www.poorpeoplescampaign.org](http://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org)).

A couple of foundational principles include:

1. We are committed to lifting and deepening the leadership of those most affected by systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, and ecological devastation and to building unity across lines of division.
2. We do our work in a nonpartisan way- no elected officials serve on the State Organizing Committee of the Campaign. If you are interested in helping me create a team in UUCB Huub or want more information about the PPC, please contact me at [twolcott@stny.rr.com](mailto:twolcott@stny.rr.com)

## Need Tech Advisors

Our Tech Committee has been in hibernation for a few years so I've decided to reconstitute it. My focus as our Commissioned Lay Minister shifted last year to technology primarily to support our streaming and sound systems. The Tech Committee is charged with overseeing all UUCB's technology, including our streaming system, computers and networks, sound and video systems. We will decide when new staff computers, microphones, and software are needed and manage the Tech Committee's budget. A few people have already agreed to serve, but we need a couple more. If you're interested see me, Jeff Donahue, [CLM@uubinghamton.org](mailto:CLM@uubinghamton.org).



DINING FOR DOLLARS IS BACK! Would you love to support UUCB's budget and fund-raising efforts, while enjoying a fun social time with fellow congregants? Hosting a Dining For Dollars event will fit the bill! There are so many ways to participate!

Consider hosting a dinner, cocktail party, picnic, guided hike or any other fun social activity you can think of – in your home, at the church, at a park – let your imagination be your guide!

This is a great opportunity to enjoy each other's company while supporting the church and our mission. Contact Debby Herman or Tammy Nist for more information or to offer to host an event.



## Bring a Friend Sunday February 25

Let's fill the sanctuary on Sunday, February 25th! Invite a friend to join you for service, The Sum of Us book discussion with Dr. Marguerite Wilson and our last Sunday lunch.

Let's show off our beautiful space, our warm hospitality and UUCB community to our friends. Spread the word!



### First Sunday Workshop Leader Opportunities

Do you have a passion or a skill or a fun idea that you'd like to share with other congregants as a workshop on one of our 1st Sundays?

Multi-generational workshops are encouraged, but workshops targeted for adults or mainly for children are also welcome.

They can be, but need not be, related to our monthly Soul Matters themes – upcoming themes are March: Transformation, April: Interdependence, May: Pluralism. For more information, or to discuss or offer to lead a workshop, please contact Debby Herman.

# Get Connected

## Easy Ways to Get Involved at UUCB

Help the outreach committee do their job! Share info about UUCB and our events on Facebook, in your social circles, and out in the community. Bring a friend to an event or to a UUCB service.

**Dressing the Chancel Table** Each week, the Chancel Table displays the beautiful Chalice that symbolizes our faith. The chalice is the focal point. Over the years, it has become a tradition to enhance the chalice with a table cover, candles, and other items that speak to the theme of the day. If you would like to volunteer to continue this focal point tradition, please put your name on the sign up sheet for the Sunday of your choice. You may use items and table covers found in the focal point closet and/or bring items from your home. Your arrangement is your expression and can be simple or elaborate. If you have questions, text Hope Post (607 727-1956) or contact members of the Worship Committee.

**Social Action:** Our Social Action HUUB is looking for your interest and talent! Contact Catherine Magdala at [catheriner1312@gmail.com](mailto:catheriner1312@gmail.com) to be on the UUCB social action mailing list.

**Aesthetics Team:** Do you like decorating for holidays and making sure things look their best? Join our new aesthetics committee! Ask Hope Post or Renee Taft for more details. We could use fresh ideas!

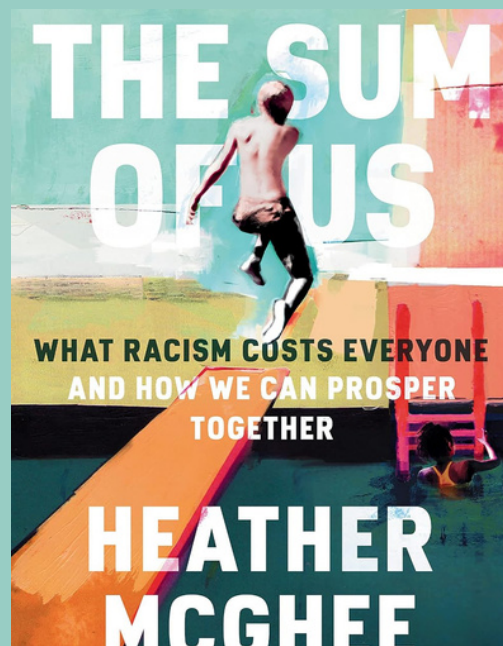
**Sunday Service Associates:** We always need new folks to help make the worship service run smoothly. Talk to Kate Thorpe if you would like to help out on a Sunday morning.

**Social Hour Hosts:** Do you like coffee and getting the snacks first? Then you may be the perfect person to help with the social hour on a Sunday! Ask Carl Cohen or Ron Clupper for more info.

# Why Anti-Racism Matters for Everyone

## “The Sum of Us Book” Discussion

Sunday, February 25 12–1:30PM



Why should white people care about anti-racism?

In what ways do white people stand to benefit from doing anti-racism work?

When we talk about anti-racism in the US, the assumption is usually that because of white privilege, white people have to give something up in order to work for racial justice. Is this really true?

In her New York Times bestselling book, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, economist Heather McGhee details the ways racism harms everyone.

Join Dr. Marguerite Wilson for an interactive discussion of the book. All are welcome.

Please read as much of the book as you can, and be ready to discuss what you learned from it—though nobody will be shamed or turned away if they haven't.

