

THE BEACON

A Publication of The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton

March 2025



service. love. justice

THIS MONTH'S SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30AM

March 2 Berries of Abundance Taylor and Cooke

Dr. Kimmerer's latest book *The Serviceberry* describes a natural world of abundance and reciprocity. What might that look like in our congregational microcosm? How might we be like a berry bush in full season?

March 8 The Chrysalis Space Rev. Douglas Taylor

The threshold of change is a time of uncertainty and unknowing. We have not arrived; we are not done – but we are close. The caterpillar in the chrysalis does not just sprout wings, it must completely dissolve and reform. It can be hard to trust the change as it is happening.

March 16 Jeff Donahue

March 23 Spending Your Privilege

Rev. Douglas Taylor

What can we each do regularly to build a more inclusive and diverse society? What actions can we offer to live into the values we espouse? Can we even talk about them as 'spiritual practices' that make us better people and the world a better place? (And we revive our Annual Social Justice Sunday!)

March 30 Defiant Joy: Hope as an Act of Courage

Rev. Jo VonRue

This Sunday we host a Pulpit Exchange with May Memorial UU Society in Syracuse, NY. Rev. Jo has served that congregation for several years and had done her internship here in Binghamton, NY.

STAFF:

Minister: Reverend Douglas Taylor
Board President: Kate Thorpe
Director of Family Ministry:
Dylan Cooke
Music Director: Vicky Gordon
Commissioned Lay Minister:
Jeff Donahue
Office Administrator and
Membership Coordinator :
Karen Manzer
Childcare Coordinator: Rebecca Rayne

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
First Sunday of the Month:
Worship service at 10:30am followed by
workshops for all at 11:30am

HOW TO CONTACT US:

183 Riverside Drive
Binghamton, NY 13905
Phone: 607.729.1641
Fax: 607.729.1899
Email: office@uubinghamton.org
www.uubinghamton.org
Beacon Newsletter Deadline: Noon on
the last Friday of each month.



Adult Choir is Seeking New Members

There is nothing more uplifting than being part of a vocal community, and the choir's contribution is a vital part of our Sunday worship together.

We are a welcoming group of enthusiastic and welcoming people who join in our love of music and desire to express ourselves through song. We embrace a variety of musical styles (e.g. spirituals, show music, classical, folk), and encompass a range of musical backgrounds. You need not have a "trained" voice to participate. The ability to sight-read is also not required.

Rehearsals are weekly from 6:30 – 8 on Thursday evenings in the sanctuary.

The choir typically sings twice a month. However, there is great flexibility. If you are only able to join us for one song or a few months, that is fine. You needn't feel that you have to make a long-term commitment (although that would please me!).

If you have any questions or just want to know more about the choir, please call or text me at 607-222-5836 or e-mail me at vgordon2763@gmail.com.

First Sundays at UUCB

On the first Sunday of each month, our multi-generational worship service offers innovation in the Sunday Service experience. Designed to increase opportunities for connection and explore many different ways to tap into our intellectual, creative and spiritual depths, we gather for a shorter service in the Sanctuary and then spread out for different workshops. The hardest part is often deciding which experience to choose!

1st Sunday Workshops for March 2nd

"What is Your Favorite Story from UU History?" with Rev. Taylor in the Chapel. Join Douglas Taylor in the chapel to hear a few of his favorite stories from our Unitarian Universalist history and perhaps share your own favorite story as well.

"Faith in Action: Making Spring Wreaths for Nursing Home Residents" with Julie Boyd in the Social Hall. All ages are invited to make spring wreaths to brighten the doors of our neighbors in the Susquehanna Nursing Home.

"Pagan Ritual: An Order of Service" with DJ Goldenberg, 3rd Degree Witch, in the Rainbow Room. One objective of any ritual is to do something the same way every time. Find a format that works for you and go for it. This workshop will provide the knowledge you need for ONE way of performing rituals. DJ was taught primarily within an eclectic, Alexandrian system of Wiccan; but she has pulled many aspects of her rituals from experiences and other teachings, expanding it from just being Alexandrian. She is looking forward to facilitating rituals at UUCB; and this workshop may be used as a primer for those rituals, as well as a resource you can use to help you create your own ritual structure. There will be plenty of time for questions. Please feel free to bring questions on anything pagan or pagan adjacent.



SUMMARY

Southern Door Community Land Trust (SDCLT), founded in 2019, is the only Community Land Trust in our area, and only community-led effort to develop **deeply affordable housing** that will be **affordable in perpetuity**. SDCLT centers marginalized communities using a **racial and social justice lens** for BIPOC and vulnerable communities.

Funds secured for their 6-unit Apartment Building are **reimbursement based** (meaning they have to have money to spend first). We aim to raise \$6,000 at UUCB, leverage that with other local churches, to provide SDCLT with no-strings attached funds to get their project started!

Learn more at **Social Justice Sunday, March 23 from 12-1PM** in the Sanctuary and on zoom.

Attend Social Justice Sunday, March 23 12-1PM to learn more!

GOAL

RAISE \$6,000

- Special Collection March 9
- Social Justice Sunday March 23

LEVERAGE MATCH

- Challenge other local churches to match UUCB's funds
- Overall Goal of \$60,000
- Rationale: Reach 70% of funds committed on 6 UNIT, unlocking American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated through the City of Binghamton.

PROJECT DETAILS

6 UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING (2, 3, 4 BEDS)

- Given building by Broome County
- \$1.2 million Proforma for rehabilitation
- \$872,000 funds promised, all reimbursement model
 - ARPA funds will be unlocked once 70% of funds are committed, a **difference of \$60,000**.

KEY FACTS

PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE IN PERPETUITY

Community Land Trusts fill a gap in the housing continuum by creating deeply affordable housing.

FUNDING HURDLES

A) Government grants are often reimbursement models, meaning non-profits need to have money to spend first to be able to submit receipts for reimbursement.

B) Community Land Trusts do not turn a profit, therefore should not take on debt early in their formation.

CENTERS MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

Broome County has the lowest rate of black and/or brown homeownership in New York State. SDCLT's mission is to develop housing stability and ultimately increase black and/or brown homeownership.



LEARN MORE: WWW.SOUTHERNDOORCLT.COM

UUCB Family Ministry



At UUCB, we offer progressive programming for children and youth of all ages,

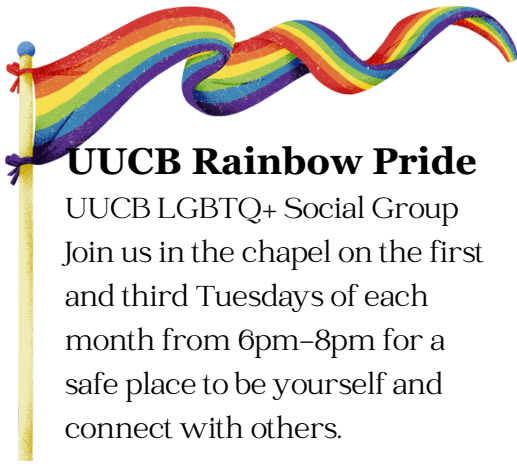
Nursery care is offered every Sunday morning unless specified otherwise. Our youngest kiddos can expect structured and unstructured time with our qualified staff.

Elementary and Middle School classes use the Soul Matters Curriculum. Children will get to explore their curiosity with a dive into our newly voted in values and how that interacts with our greater communities as we live out our mission. There will be stories, experience-based learning activities, song ideas, mindfulness practices, body practices, games, crafts, skits, videos, and more.

Youth Group meets about once a month, but times and days vary. Please contact Christine McWhirter at ccmwhirter@gmail.com to find out when the next gathering will be.

For more information about our children and youth programs, contact Dylan Cooke at dfm@uubinghamton.org





UUCB Rainbow Pride

UUCB LGBTQ+ Social Group
Join us in the chapel on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 6pm-8pm for a safe place to be yourself and connect with others.

Cranberry Coffeehouse

Saturday, March 15 at 7pm

Michael Jerling

Illinois-born (now Saratoga Springs, NY resident) Michael Jerling is a songwriter extraordinaire. Winner of the prestigious “New Folk” competition at the Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas, Michael has been a noted artist on the club, college and festival circuits of North America since 1975, with 10 albums to his name. Performer web page: michaeljerling.com

The Cranberry Coffeehouse is the longest continuously-running showplace for traditional folk and acoustic music in New York’s Southern Tier. We present a wide variety of American music, as well as folk and traditional music from around the world. *The concerts have been hosted at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton church for over 30 years.*



UUCB hosts a delicious and nutritious home cooked meal for a very affordable price on the second Saturday of each month. Thank you to Nancy Knipscher and Lisa Sienkiewicz for cooking these meal as a fundraiser for UUCB.

Format/prices will remain the same- \$6 main dish, \$3 side dish, \$3 dessert. Folks are encouraged to eat in or bring own containers for take out. Cash is preferred.

Saturday, March 8 will be a Mardi Gras theme - Jambalaya, King cake and more!

This will continue to be a general fund fundraiser.



Last Sunday Lunch - March 30

On the last Sunday of every month, we have a themed potluch lunch after the service. Bring something to share for our **GOING GREEN** theme on Sunday, March 30 after the service. You can wear green that day too!



2025-2026 Stewardship Campaign News!

This year's stewardship campaign theme is 'Lighting the Way'. Our nation's once clarion call to freedom seekers is, at best, muted and being actively replaced with a darkening cloud of repression and greed. UUCB is a sanctuary for open minded, open hearted realists. Our actions and generosity can provide some of the light and love to weather the storm ahead.

Pledging is an act of faith and partnership. It's a tangible expression of our trust in each other. By pledging, you are declaring that you believe in the work we do here, that you want to be part of something greater than yourself, something that will have a lasting impact on countless lives.

Let us approach this stewardship campaign with the principle that no gift is too small, and every commitment helps illuminate the path forward. An event that we hope crystallizes the essence of our campaign theme will be after service, March 16th

Please mark your calendars. Lunch will be provided. If you have any questions, you can contact Tim Wolcott, Stewardship Chair, at twolcott@stny.rr.com.



Social Justice Sunday: Housing Focus
Sunday, March 23 12-1PM in the Sanctuary & on Zoom
(see flyer on page 3 for more details)

Hear from the leadership of the Southern Door Community Land Trust (SDCLT), the only community-led effort to develop deeply affordable housing that will be affordable in perpetuity. SDCLT centers marginalized communities using a racial and social justice lens for BIPOC and vulnerable communities.

Representatives from the HUUB and Social Justice Teams will also be on hand to provide details on the work they are doing. Questions: Contact Emily Hotchkiss-Plowe or Lynne Theophanis.

Items Listed Below can put into the Giving Box in the Coatroom at UUCB Houseless Outreach



This Week's Needs:
hand warmers
duffle bags/suitcases
winter gloves/winter hats
Men's sweatpants



Bring to UUCB'S Giving Box in the coat room! Big Items leave next to box and have them labeled.



Email Shawn Steketeer with more questions at stek@aol.com



DINING FOR DOLLARS BIDDING IS OPEN

Bid sheets will be posted in the social hall until noon on March 9th, so stop by the Social Hall soon and place your bids - and check back often to ensure that you're one of the winning bidders. Bidding is in-person only, but you may place your bid anytime during church business hours - or ask a friend to write in a bid for you. Please contact Debby Herman or Tammy Nist for more information. Many thanks to all of our hosts for donating their time, talent, and treasure – we appreciate you! Now let the bidding begin!

Resisting Fascism - a three-session multi-congregation ZOOM class for adults

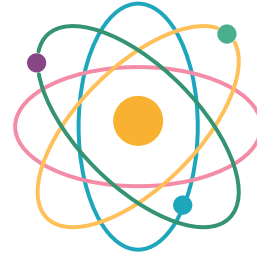
**(Curriculum by Rev. Monical Dobbins,
adapted by Rev. Jo VonRue)**

April 8th, April 22nd, May 6th 7-8:30pm

Inspired by Rev. Cecilia Kingman's 2023 Berry Street Essay "My Little Pony Was Right: Fascisms Without and Within", and the popular work of Dr. Jason Stanley and Dr. Timothy Snyder, both of Yale University, this class seeks to help adult students make connections between the rise of fascism and the institution of the church, and develop practical strategies for living a life that resists the habits of mind that allow fascism to take root in society.

Join congregations in Syracuse, Binghamton, Oneonta, Cortland, and Utica in a multi congregation opportunity to resist fascism together.

Registration is required, please contact Teri Coon at office@mmuus.org to register.



"A Psychedelic Journey to the Quantum Realm" with Gay Canough Saturday March 8 and 15 10:00am to noon

Come with me on a spiritual quest into the quantum realm! We'll dip into some fundamentals of quantum mechanics and get into some mind-bending implications, like superposition and entanglement. Journey into the subatomic world, where the behavior of matter on this tiny scale seems truly bizarre and even miraculous. There are real, measurable, phenomena that call into question some of our dearly held beliefs, such as free will and realism. With a simple set of equipment, we'll be able to do the Experiment that Broke Reality, right in our classroom!

Braver Angels

Braver Angels is a volunteer citizens organization that seeks to unite people of diverse political views and to create a working alliance to depolarize America.

Overcome the mindset of division: Join our Braver Angels group from 7 to 8 p.m. March 4 in the Vestal Public Library.

Our focus for this next meeting is "Bridging the Divide." Check out a free e-learning course here: <https://braverangels.org/what-we-do/take-an-ecourse/>



Taking Action!

"Here at UUCB, social action is the congregation's work!

The Social Action HUUB exists to support the creation and maintenance of social action teams.

You can either brainstorm an idea for a social action project and then fill out an application on the HUUB bulletin board or sign up to be on someone else's team. The teams are listed on the bulletin board. If you have any requests, thoughts, or questions, please get in touch with the HUUB at huub@uubinghamton.org.

Please do not offer ideas or request things from HUUB members individually. Please email the whole HUUB. "

Building Bridges Periodical

Do you want updates on what is happening in our greater community? Do you like sharing your thoughts and opinions on social justice? Do you enjoy reading other people's thoughts and opinions about social justice?

The Social Action HUUB publishes a monthly periodical called **Building Bridges Periodical**. To subscribe and get the Submission Guidelines, email buildingbridgesmonthly@uubinghamton.org

Stewardship Campaign and Reception

The February second Saturday supper was a big success with about 30 attendees. UUCB friends ate shepherd's pie, played games and had fun.

The Carle Irish Dance School used our space for classes for the month.

About 120 people came to the Vigil for Trans Lives that was held at UUCB on Friday, February 21.

Thank you to all who made it happen.

Church in the Wild met on Sundays at 4pm in the chapel.

About 130 people came to the family and friends service and chili cook-off which was held at UUCB on Sunday, February 23. What a great day it was!

PARKING AT UUCB

As you know, we have had large numbers of people attending services on Sundays, which is wonderful!

We have also had some folks who need closer parking spots say they haven't found any on Sundays.

If you do not have physical limitations, please park in the back parking lot, or, better yet, park in the Lourdes parking lot. We have their permission to park there on Sundays.

Let's try and save the "good" parking spots for folks who need them and our Sunday visitors.

Ongoing Events

UUCB Community Drum Circle

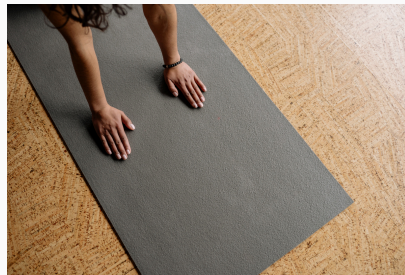
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12 6:30PM

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 Jenne Micale at Jennemicale@gmail.com 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) for ages 12 and up with Dungeon Master Peter Steketee. We meet in the classroom at the end of the hallway.

You can find our complete calendar of events at <https://74087865.view-events.com>

If you have an event to add to the calendar, contact Karen Manzer at 607-729-1641 or office@uubinghamton.org



UU Pagans

UU Pagans 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 from 6-8pm

Depression Support Group

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



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Rachel Samiani 3/1
Rebecca Sienkiewicz 3/2
Marilyn Angelo 3/15

If you aren't on the birthday list and want to be, please contact Karen Manzer at office@uubinghamton.org



What Are You Reading?

You are invited to share what you've been reading in the "What Are You Reading and or Listening to This Week?" page and want to recommend to others on the UUCB Facebook page. It's another way of connecting similar interests and finding new sources of ideas among us. I read for enjoyment as well as for learning. Sometimes it's a welcome distraction from the news and other times a means of going deeper into what's happening in the world. I encourage you to check it out! Contact Jan Fiore for more information.

UUCentral East Region of the UUA offers “Learning, Transformation and Community Networking Days: Leading with Love at the Center”. Our UUA regional staff is offering an exciting day of leadership development and networking, both streaming online on April 5th, and in-person at May Memorial UU Church in Syracuse on May 3rd. Registration for both is on a sliding scale. , For details, see CER Learning, Transformation and Community Networking Days: Leading with Love at the Center | Central East Region | UUA.org. Child care is available with 2 weeks advance notice. Here is a brief description of the goals for the day: “2025 is calling; how will Unitarian Universalists respond? In a world marked by political oppression and escalating crises, centering love is a radical and transformative act—one that calls for all of us to move into collective spiritual -person. What grounding and skills do we need to practice Unitarian Universalism, offering this faith to ourselves, to one another, and to the world that needs us?”. For more information, or financial assistance to attend, please contact UUCB’s Leader Development and Resource Committee at LDR@uubinghamton.org, or speak with 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.

Bring a snack to share for social hour on Sunday.

Social Action: Our Social Action HUUB is looking for your interest and talent! Contact the social action HUUB at huub@uubinghamton.org to be on the UUCB social action mailing list.

Friendly Faces Wanted: We are looking for people who can greet visitors one Sunday per month (even less if we get enough volunteers) from 10-10:30am. Let Karen Manzer know at office@uubinghamton.org if you can help with this

Social Hour Team: Talk to Ron Clupper after service on Sundays or call him at 607-727-8516 if you would like to be a part of the team that hosts social hour on Sunday mornings after the service.

Join the Sunshine Circle: Meet monthly to craft and create cards to send to folks in our UUCB community. Reach out to Traci Pena at gettickledpink2015@gmail.com for more information.

Sunday Morning Welcome Team: Be on hand on Sunday mornings to welcome visitors, show folks where the coffee is, and more. Reach out to Karen Manzer at office@uubinghamton.org to be a part of this team.

Make your own group or event: Do you have an interest that you would like to share with others? Would you like to start up a monthly crafting group, discussion, dance party, movie night? Talk to Douglas Taylor about your idea and how it can get added to the UUCB calendar.

Find out about all that is happening at UUCB! Watch for twice a week emails, check out our Facebook group (UUCB Members and Friends) and our public Facebook page. There is a monthly newsletter, The Beacon, available too. There are printed copies of the newsletter in the wall file outside the office and at the info desk, or you can request that a copy be mailed to you at home by asking Karen in the office. Also, check out our calendar of events by clicking the “News and Events” button on our website.