

THE BEACON



Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Binghamton

November 2025



UUCB is a progressive, multi faith community of independent thinkers and doers. With over 100 members, our congregation embraces and supports all ages.

We strive to make the world a better place and to reconnect to a life that is rich in meaning and purpose. To fulfill our mission, we are creating an inclusive space that nurtures the mind, inspires the spirit and connects us in care.

Sunday Services at 10:30am

November 2

Memory Jars

Taylor and Cooke

Join us for our First Sunday Worship and Workshops on the theme of Nurturing Gratitude. We often feel protective of the good things in our lives. We might want to wrap up the things we love in a thick layer of gauze or bubble wrap. But does that ever really work?

November 9

To Preserve What is Sacred

Douglas Taylor

Despite the troubles around us, we must throw our lot in with those who "reconstitute the world" as Adrienne Rich put it. How do we do this? We love one another and share out joy, we protect freedoms and stop harm, and we practice the change we long to see in the world.

November 16

"And that's why we go to church."

Douglas Taylor

This is a sermon about exactly that: why you are part of this congregation. UUCB. This Sunday is a collaboration with all of you – bring your stories, your reasons for showing up, your 'testimonials' even,

November 23

The Queen's Loaves

Taylor and Cooke

"We are the flour. We are the salt. We are the dough punched down and rising. We are the fire of the oven and the cool of the breeze." These words by Becky Brooks humbly invite us into the season of gratitude and communion and community.

November 30

Grateful for it All

Emily Richards

Rev. Janet Parsons reminds us that "we cannot wait until everything is going well to practice gratitude." In times of struggle and hardship it is more important than ever to find appreciation for both the gifts and the challenges that life brings.

Contact us:

✉ office@uubinghamton.org

☎ 607-729-1641

📘 Unitarian Universalist Congregation of
Binghamton

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton
183 Riverside Drive, Binghamton, NY 13905
uubinghamton.org

Minister: Reverend Douglas Taylor

**Our Congregation's Social Action
Focus for this year...
Here is what we are doing!**

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Bus Pass Project

UUCB has collected and donated \$450 to bus passes given out by Houseless Outreach Team at the bus station and an additional \$500 has been donated to Family Enrichment Network (FEN).

Systemic Housing

Grants & Loans for Southern Door Community Land Trust (SDCLT):

- helped secure an interest free loan of \$100,000 from NYSCU;
- helped write a NYSDEC grant;
- helped write a City of Binghamton - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application;
- working to consider a NYS Homes & Community Renewal grant.

Housebanks

Distributed Sept. 7; Collected Oct 26.

Total Amt. Raised for *Southern Door Community Land Trust* so far this year is \$5354.11

Education

Hosted Hajra Aziz, Executive Director SDCLT for a summer service.

Exploring educational opportunities through Southern Tier Food Bank in Elmira.

Houseless Outreach Team

Volunteers go out every Tuesday evening to hand out donations to our houseless community members. While it varies quite a bit depending on weather, law enforcement actions, and other factors, there are generally 12 to 25 people that we help each week. In addition, we often have individuals dropped off at the bus station after hours by the BC Sheriff's office after their arraignments. These individuals are often in need of warm clothing and food.

HOUSING CRISIS
UUCB

For the 2025-2026 Church Year, UUCB endeavors to focus our Social Justice efforts on the Housing Crisis. We are supporting the immediate needs of houseless individuals and working to address the systemic issue of inadequate, permanent, affordable housing.

Houseless Outreach:

- Support community activists
- Collect donated items in the Giving Box
- Distribute items to the community
- Collect money for single day & monthly bus passes.
- Connect individuals to resources
- Co-host community meals with the Beloved Community

Housing is a Human Right

Systemic Issues:

- Raise funds for SDCLT
- Invite local religious groups to join
- Identify & write grants/loans with SDCLT

Scan to donate to Southern Door Community Land Trust (SDCLT)

Southern Door Community Land Trust
Housing is a Human Right.
"...Lets do the work!"

Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Binghamton

The congregation has been very generous in putting donations into the Giving Box and making use of the Amazon Wish List, using it to directly order donation items or as inspiration for purchasing donations from other resources. If the two boxes are cleaned out on a Tuesday night, invariably there will be new items in the box on Wednesday.

Our October First Sunday workshop provided bagged meals to distribute and Blessing Bags with socks and other needed items for distribution. The Blessing Bags are being used as a springboard to expand houseless outreach to a second location in Endicott.

Emily Hotchkiss-Plowe
607-206-0595

UUCB Mutual Aid Grocery Buddy System: November & December

We are excited to launch a confidential, short-term initiative rooted in our values of community care and mutual support: the UUCB Mutual Aid Grocery Buddy System.

This system allows congregants to confidentially offer grocery support to fellow congregants who need it during the coming holiday months.

👉 How It Works

This initiative operates as a completely confidential buddy system:

Register: Congregants register as either a Giver or a Recipient using the appropriate Google Form.

Donate: Givers purchase a set, bi-weekly amount on a Visa or Mastercard gift card (details below).

Submit: Givers give the gift card(s) to Catherine Magdala.

Match: Catherine confidentially matches Givers and Recipients and distributes the funds.

Privacy: Givers and Recipients will not know each other's identities. Only Douglas Taylor and Catherine Magdala will have access to the names and amounts

? Recipient Instructions

If you are a UUCB congregant needing temporary grocery support for November and December:

Registration: Complete the Recipient Google Form. [CLICK HERE:](https://forms.gle/tGa9JwCc3ZmfhA9R9)

<https://forms.gle/tGa9JwCc3ZmfhA9R9>

Prioritization: You do not need to be a SNAP recipient to receive support. However, to ensure the funds go to those with the most critical need, SNAP recipients will be prioritized during the matching process. After SNAP recipients have been taken care of, matches are prioritized based on intersectionality.

Catherine Magdala will confidentially contact you and arrange the bi-weekly distribution of the matched gift cards.

If you wish to register as a Giver, please follow these strict guidelines:

👉 Giver Instructions & Key Rules

Eligibility: Participation (giving or receiving) is strictly limited to UUCB congregants only.

Required Payment: Only Visa or Mastercard gift cards are accepted.

NO grocery store cards, Amazon cards, online payments, cash, or checks.

Marking Cards: Do not write any names on the gift card. Only write the dollar amount clearly on the card.

Submission: Submit the gift card(s) directly to Catherine Magdala. She will provide you with a receipt at the time of your donation.

Registration: Complete the Giver Google Form to specify your set bi-weekly donation amount. [CLICK HERE:](https://forms.gle/eKTs8jYFCECAMupaA) <https://forms.gle/eKTs8jYFCECAMupaA>

✉ Questions and Submissions

Please email Catherine Magdala at catherinemagdala613@gmail.com to arrange the submission of gift cards or if you have any questions.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Douglas Taylor and Catherine Magdala will NEVER email you or text you a request for gift cards or money!

First Sunday Workshops Sunday, November 2, 2025

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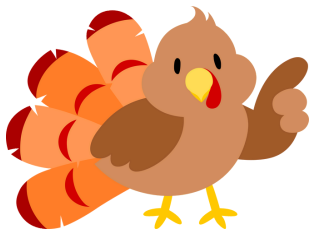
Two “Faith in Action” workshops will be held in the Social Hall, so participate in both if you like – all ages are encouraged to lend a hand!

“Bean Soup Prep” with Julie Boyd in the Social Hall. Join us in preparing our traditional wine bottle soup kits, to again be sold as a fund-raiser for the Sponsor-A-Family holiday program. All ages are welcome!

“Holiday Cards for our Home-bound Members” with Monika Fridrich in the Social Hall: All ages are invited to join in making festive cards to be included with this year's holiday cookie deliveries.

“Endowment Fund? Susquehanna Society? What's that all about?” with members of the Endowment Committee in the Rainbow Room. What is the UUCB Endowment fund? What is the Susquehanna Society? Why are those names on the plaque in the hall? If you have ever wanted to know more about the UUCB's endowment and the Susquehanna Society, join us in the Rainbow Room to learn more. P.S. Eric Cotts is providing cookies!

“Coffee and Conversation with the Minister (or ... with a UUCB Leader)” with Rev. Taylor in the Chapel. Grab a hot beverage and join us in the Chapel to learn a little more about our congregation and ask any questions. This monthly offering is aimed for newcomers, but open to anyone!



Annual Thanksgiving Dinner at UUCB 3pm Thursday, November 27 3pm

Bring a dish to share and your family and friends.

Check out the weekly emails for the sign-up link



Pie Social Hour Sunday, November 30 after service.

For our last Sunday lunch bring a pie or dessert to share.

Interfaith Broome County is hosting an “Interfaith Thanksgiving Meet & Greet”

You are invited to join us for a time of conversation around gratitude and a time for interfaith community building. Snacks will be provided.

Sunday, November 16th at 2:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 183 Riverside Drive, Binghamton, NY 13905.

Visit our website interfaithbroomecounty.org



Rupert Wates

Saturday November 15 7pm

Rupert's music is an eclectic mix of acoustic, melodic art/folk, with flavors of jazz, vaudeville and cabaret.

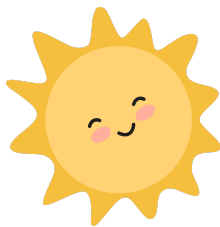
UUCB hosts the coffeehouse and also sells coffee, tea, desserts and other treats as a fundraiser. Visit cranberrycoffeeshouse.org for more info.



Memorial Service at UUCB for Peter Herman

We will have a memorial service for Debby Herman's husband Peter on Saturday, November 15 at 2pm in the sanctuary.

A reception will be held immediately after in the social hall. All are welcome to attend.



Friendly People Wanted

We are looking for some folks to be greeters on Sunday mornings before the service. If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact Carl Cohen at carlroycohen@gmail.com

Second Saturday Supper Ends



There will be no Second Saturday Suppers in for the foreseeable future. Thank you for being a part of this fundraiser.

See you in January!



New to UU Workshop

Saturday, November 8, 2025

10:00 am – 1:00 pm (Lunch included) Bagels and coffee at 9:45

Are you curious about Unitarian Universalism? Are you new to the community and want to learn more? Come to our half-day workshop to learn about our history, values, theology, and activities as a congregation

Led by Rev. Douglas Taylor and Membership Coordinator, Karen Manzer



Holiday Art and Gift Sale! Mark your holiday calendars for one of the most festive weekends of the year! Our Holiday art and gift sale features handmade gifts from local artisans as well as delicious food and more. You won't want to miss it.



HeaRT Facilitated Listening Circle November 16th at 12pm

The congregation has had recent conversations about how to engage, or not engage, with police. It is a complex issue, and we have heard some conflicting views and feelings about it. It is time we spoke openly about this together.

The Healthy Relations Team (HeaRT), invites the congregation to a listening circle to express and hear our different perspectives and experiences with respect and understanding. We will host this on Sunday, November 16th immediately following worship at 11:45 in the chapel. After this listening circle, HeaRT will be offering future opportunities for listening and restoration.

The members of HeaRT are: Christine McWhirter (chair), Becca Boerger, Jan Fiore, Vicky Gordon (staff liaison), and Lynne Theophanis.

APPLICATIONs for 2026 ENDOWMENT GRANTs are Now Available

The Endowment Committee of UUCB is charged with the raising, administration, and the disbursement of money raised from funds given to the Congregation for its endowment, in a sustainable fashion, to support of the mission of our congregation. Our disbursements, as codified in our bylaws, focus on 1. Capital improvements to Congregation property. 2. Community outreach programs, such as local non-profit organizations. 3. Educational grants, such as developing Congregation leadership and student activities, and 4. Wider mission, such as the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. These are accomplished through annual requests for grant proposals from the UUCB congregation. Our latest call for proposals may be found at the following link: <https://uubinghamton.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/2026-Endowment-Application.pdf> Applications are due on January 5, 2026.

Zoom Discussion Series in November with Alex Compton An Introduction to Transformative Justice

**November 5, 12, 18
On Zoom, 7:00-8:30**

Congregations across the US are looking at Abolition and Faith Formation as a part of our current Congregation Study and Action Issue. This three part discussion will provide a foundation for understanding Transformative Justice which is at the root of abolition.

Mia Mingus says that “Transformative Justice is a political framework and approach for responding to violence, harm and abuse. At its most basic, it seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence and/or engaging in harm reduction to lessen the violence.”

Discussion one will take a look at adrienne maree brown’s Emergent Strategies (selections will be provided for those who do not wish to read the whole book)

Discussion two will discuss Mia Mingus’s “Transformative Justice: A Brief Description”
https://transformharm.org/tj_resource/transformative-justice-a-brief-description/

Discussion three will close us out with brown’s We Will Not Cancel Us which brings the conversation around TJ and abolition to the small group/interpersonal level



Our choir is a wonderful way to become part of our community. If you are interested in joining the choir, talk to our music director Vicky Gordon on a Sunday or email her at vgordon2763@gmail.com

Yoga Mondays & Thursdays 5pm in the social hall

Yoga instructors Irina Trubnikov (Mondays) and Dacia Legge (Thursdays) offer free, yoga classes in the social hall at 5pm.

All are welcome and please bring a yoga mat or blanket to work on.

“You Belong” A UUCB outreach video project

Why do you come to church? Why do you keep returning to this congregation? Do you have a story to share about it? Can you articulate it in a brief (less than a minute) video or a few written sentences?

Is it the justice work, the music, the sermons? Is it the intellectual honesty or the joyful community? Perhaps it is the rituals or the great coffee? Do you have a story to share about why you keep showing up or about what hooked you in the first place?

Over the first half of November, we will be collecting stories and statements to weave into a UUCB promotional video (among other ideas) that can live on our website to promote our congregation to seekers and interested people. Contact Rev Taylor directly or stop into the chapel after service on November 9 to make your recording.

Free Yoga; Meets at 5pm every Monday and Thursday in the social hall.

Moss House Forest Preschool: Mon, Wed, Fri mornings and afternoons. Not a drop-in program. You must register before attending. mosshouseny@gmail.com Not a UUCB event.

UU Pagans: Meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 6-8pm in the chapel Contact: Adee Wilson just80w@gmail.com .

LGBTQ Social group: Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month in the social hall from 6-8pm. Contact uucb-rainbow@googlegroups.com.

Depression Support Group: Meets on Monday evenings at 7pm if there is interest, Please contact Chris Petroski at chrisp-34@hotmail.com for more info or to express interest in meeting.

Buddhist Meditation: Tuesdays at 7pm-8:30pm in room 7 Contact: Steven Roussel. No registration is necessary. Fee is \$10 per week. education@kadampanewyork.org

NoNameCollective Activist Meeting: Every other Wednesday in the social hall. Contact Shawn at stek@aol.com for more info. Not a UUCB event.

AA: Fridays, 9am in the Rainbow room Not a UUCB event.

Role-Playing Tabletop Games with Peter Steketee: Saturdays from 4pm-7pm in the RE Classroom. More info: stek@aol.com

Westside Neighborhood Meeting 6:30pm Thursday, Nov. 20

Come meet with your Binghamton City Council representatives about your neighborhood.