



The Beacon

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF BINGHAMTON

SEPTEMBER 2026



Nourishing people. Building beloved community. ♥

SEPTEMBER SERVICES

Sundays at 10:30am

IN PERSON • ON ZOOM • ALL ARE WELCOME

SEPTEMBER

6

Empathy for the Devil

DJ Goldenberg

We are not as different as
we would like to believe.



SEPTEMBER

13

The Smallest Drop

Rev. Douglas Taylor

Join us for our annual Ingathering Sunday
with our beloved Water Ceremony. Through
story, song, and celebration, we will honor
the community we are building and consider
what we do to help heal the world.
(Remember to bring some water to
share for the ceremony!)



SEPTEMBER

20

Breaking the Cycle

Rev. Douglas Taylor

I heard a question recently asking how to be
a leader without perpetuating hierarchies of
harm. So many of us have only a patriarchal
version of leadership. So many have
experienced harm from those who claim to
be leaders. How do we lead in such a reality?



SEPTEMBER

27

Keep the Circle Unbroken

Rev. Douglas Taylor

Sometimes it is important to cross the line
and other times it is important to hold it.
When do we hold a boundary and when
do we reach across the border?



WE ARE A
**Welcoming
and Inclusive**
spiritual community



where you can **bring**
your whole self,



explore what matters,



build meaningful
connections,



and help **make**
our community
a better place.

Nourishing people. Building beloved community.



VISIT US

183 Riverside Drive
Binghamton, NY 13905



CALL US

607-729-1641



EMAIL US

office@uubinghamton.org



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

uubinghamton.org

Nourishing people. Building beloved community. ♥

Minister's Message

MINISTER'S MESSAGE



From Rev. Douglas Taylor

Rituals help us remember what matters most.

They ground us in love, remind us we are not alone, and renew our commitment to one another.

I look forward to sharing this meaningful tradition with you.

— Rev. Douglas Taylor

Our Annual UUCB Water Ceremony



This is an annual fall-time ritual among Unitarian Universalists that celebrates our interconnectedness and our support for one another's spiritual journeys. The origins of this ritual date back to a Women in Religion Conference in 1980s. UUCB has been doing this ritual for decades.



In this ceremony, everyone brings some water with them from a place that is sacred to them. Each person is invited to pour their water into a common bowl. The congregation and minister bless the water together. At the end of the ceremony, each person is invited to take some of the merged water back home.



The water represents our interconnectedness and our community. It represents the life we share, the contributions we make to this community as well as the replenishing source from which we all draw what we need.



Our Ingathering Sunday on **September 13th, 2026** will include our Water Ceremony. Everyone is encouraged to bring some water with them in a container. If you are not able to be with us in person (either because you'll be away or joining by zoom), you are welcome to stop by the building during the week before the 13th to pour some water into our 'starting' bowl. And in the following weeks, let Rev. Taylor know if you'd like a visit and he will bring a vial of the water to share with you.



Want to Sample Our Sunday Mornings?

It can be intimidating to attend a church you've never been in, especially if it's a denomination you are not familiar with.

If you'd like a safe and comfortable way to sample our Sunday services, **you may join us on a Zoom live stream.**

We stream all our Sunday services — the link is on our home page at uubinghamton.org — just click on the **"Join Us Sundays at 10:30 AM on Zoom"** button.

You'll get to hear and see all our wonderful live music, readings, sermons, and even participate in our Joys and Sorrows if you wish.

Even if you're familiar with us, our Zoom streaming gives you the opportunity to join us when you're not feeling your best or are out of town.

All are welcome.
All are valued.



JOIN US SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM ON ZOOM

Board Matters

UUCB BOARD GOALS FOR 2026–2027

➤ *Planning for Our Path Forward* ➤

- 1 Getting people to know each other more
- 2 Shepherding our congregation through social justice issues like ICE, trans issues, etc.
- 3 Making sure the overall Safety Policy is completed
- 4 Shepherding people to connect to their spirituality in a way that connects them to the community and to their god.
- 5 Paying attention to our Property Committee to see what support they need
- 6 Laying the groundwork for a committee who would create the next Long Range Plan

OUR BOARD MEMBERS

-  **PRESIDENT:** Debby Herman
-  **PRESIDENT ELECT:** Alex Compton-Monell
-  **TREASURER:** Gay Canough
-  **CLERK:** Andrea Palmeri
-  **TRUSTEE:** Shawn Steketee
-  **TRUSTEE:** Bob Neigh
-  **TRUSTEE:** Art Suggs
-  **TRUSTEE:** Becca Boerger

MEET THE BOARD

Learn. Ask. Share. Get Involved.

Curious about what the UUCB Board does? Interested in our goals for 2026–2027? Join us for a special opportunity to meet the current Board members, hear about their work, and ask questions.



DATE AND TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Members, friends, and newcomers.

The Board helps guide our congregation's vision and stewardship, working to strengthen our community, support our programs, and advance our shared values of love, justice, and inclusion.

This is a chance to put faces to the names, learn more about our priorities for the year ahead, and share your ideas.

YOUR QUESTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES MATTER!

Religious Education at UUCB

K–8TH GRADE PROGRAMMING

GRADES 1–4 • WORLD BLESSINGS

Children will learn about cultures and religions of the world through simple, engaging cooking activities.

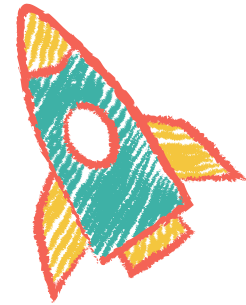
GRADES 5–8 • SOUL MATTERS

Youth will follow the themes explored by our wider congregation, viewing them through an age-appropriate Unitarian Universalist lens.



SEPTEMBER RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SUNDAYS

- 13** In-gathering Multigenerational Service
Children remain in the service.
- 20** Begin in the service, then leave for sidewalk chalk art.
- 27** Begin in the service, then leave for the first day of Religious Education for the congregational year.



SUNDAY • SEPTEMBER 6
AFTER SERVICE

Backpack Blessing

Bring your backpack, bookbag, or however else you bring your belongings to school or work. We'll offer a blessing as we move into the new congregational year!



SUNDAY • SEPTEMBER 20
DURING SERVICE

Teacher Dedication

Join us for a dedication ceremony honoring the adults who will work with our children during the 2026–2027 congregational year.



Children and Youth Programs at UUCB

How to Get Involved

A CALL FOR VOLUNTEER RE LEADERS

As our congregation grows, so does our need for Religious Education Leaders! Volunteers use a pre-written curriculum and spend the morning during service guiding children through the provided materials.

Both our Grades 1–4 and Grades 5–8 classrooms need two adults present each week to support the safety and education of our children and youth.



Varying levels of commitment are welcome—every helping hand matters!

FAMILY MINISTRY • RE LEADER TRAINING

SATURDAY • SEPTEMBER 12

Bagels & coffee at 10:00am • Training 10:30am–12:30pm



Have you ever considered working with our children? Would you like to learn more? Join Dylan Cooke, Rev. Douglas Taylor, Monika Fridrich, and Rebecca Rayne for a hands-on introduction to our Religious Education, Nursery, and Youth Group programs.

We'll explore how Sunday mornings run, review building safety and fire escape routes, and introduce the World Blessings curriculum for Grades 1–4. This exciting curriculum helps children understand cultures and religions of the world through simple cooking activities.

We are looking for volunteers in every area of Family Ministry. The more people who volunteer, the easier it is to schedule full programming throughout the congregational year—and the less strain falls on any one person.

Come learn, ask questions, and see where you might fit!

Interested or have questions?

Contact Dylan Cooke at DFM@uubinghamton.org

Children and Youth Programs

Our Whole Lives: *Lifelong Sexuality Education*



At UUCB, we believe that sexuality education is a vital part of supporting the well-being, dignity, and wholeness of every person. That's why we're proud to offer Our Whole Lives (OWL), a comprehensive sexuality education program created by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

OWL is a faith-based program that values the inherent worth and dignity of every person. It provides age-appropriate, inclusive, and accurate information to help people of all ages develop healthy attitudes and make informed choices about their bodies, relationships, and lives.

OWL programs are:

- **Lifespan-based:** Curriculum is designed for children, youth, and adults.
- **Inclusive and affirming:** OWL honors all family structures, gender identities, and sexual orientations.
- **Values-centered:** Rooted in UU values such as respect, compassion, equity, and justice.
- **Empowering:** Participants build skills for communication, consent, decision-making, and self-respect.

Through OWL, we strive to create a safe and supportive space where people can ask questions, reflect on their values, and grow in understanding—together.

For more information or upcoming OWL programs at UUCB, please contact the RE (Religious Education) Committee.



OUR WHOLE LIVES
Lifelong Sexuality Education

OWL is starting up soon! Contact Dylan Cooke at dfm@uubinghamton.org or owlcommittee@uubinghamton.org for more information.

Ongoing Adult Programs



You Are Invited!

Are you new to Unitarian Universalism (UUism)?
Or maybe you are simply looking for more connections.

You are invited to try our **ABC Soul Matters** Small Group Ministry

The ABC Soul Matters Small Group Ministry
is open to folks in all three UU congregations
in our partnership
(Athens, Binghamton, and Cortland)

Becca Boerger and Rev. Douglas Taylor
facilitate the group on zoom on
3rd Wednesdays
from 6:30 - 8:00pm
(from September through May)



We are always
accepting new members!
Contact Rev Taylor
for the zoom link
dtaylor@uubinghamton.org

Deepen your spirit. Share your story. Build community.

Growing Older, Growing Together:

A CONVERSATION CIRCLE *on Aging Well*

Life continues to bring new opportunities, questions, and transitions. This monthly discussion group offers a compassionate space to talk about topics such as health, caregiving, retirement, housing, grief, purpose, and finding joy in every stage of life. Whether you're planning ahead, caring for a loved one, or simply looking to connect with others, this group offers support, information, and community.



Beginning **October 11**,
we will meet **after worship** at 12
on the **second Sunday**
in the **Chapel**.

All are welcome.



Coordinators **Ann Foard** and **Ruth Blizard**
will be available on **September 13**
during the **Bagel Bash** in the Social Hall
to talk with anyone interested.

WELLNESS AT UUCB

Yoga for Body, Mind & Spirit

with *Dacia Legge*



Yoga instructor Dacia Legge is offering
a **free**, beginner and trauma-informed
yoga class on **Thursday evenings**
between 5–6:15pm at the Binghamton
Unitarian Universalist Church's Social Hall.



Sessions will incorporate Hatha Yoga,
Vinyasa Yoga, mindfulness, various breath
work and will end with a living kindness
meditation (Metta Meditation).
**Most postures demonstrated with
chair and other modifications, too.**



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



SEPTEMBER 2026 SCHEDULE



September 3, 2026:

Grounding for Change

This modality focuses on grounding postures
to help soothe your nervous system, enhances
balance and supports mental clarity. This
can foster a deeper connection with your
body, as it is today. All are welcome to
participate as their bodies allow.



September 10, 2026:

Warrior Work

This modality will focus on the 4 warrior
poses as we work on strength, resilience
and determination. Energetic music and
dynamic stretches are also incorporated.
All are welcome to participate as their
bodies allow.



September 17, 2026:

Yin Session

This modality is slow-paced YIN yoga where
poses are held up to 2 minutes and use
3-center breathing techniques. Benefits are
increasing flexibility, improving circulation,
enhancing joint mobility and reducing stress
and anxiety. Bring pillows or props to help
support your body through the poses. All are
welcome to participate as their bodies allow.



September 24, 2026: *Welcome Autumn* *Sun Salutation Session*

We will celebrate Autumn's arrival with our
108 poses (9 sun salutations with 12 poses
each) utilizing Sun Salutation A after our
traditional warm-ups. This is an energizing
yang session. All are welcome to participate
as their bodies allow.



FREE • BEGINNER FRIENDLY • TRAUMA-INFORMED

📅 Thursdays, 5:00–6:15 pm

📍 UUCB Social Hall

🤝 All are welcome!

Come as you are. Leave refreshed. ❤️ All are welcome!

September Adult Programs



TRUTH Pharm
A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO HEALTH, HOUSING & DIGNITY



PRESENTATION AT UUCB

 **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 | 9:00AM – NOON**

 **UUCB CHAPEL**
183 Riverside Drive, Binghamton, NY

 **SEE ME, HEAR ME, TREAT ME – UNHOUSED**

The discussion will be a **participant-guided systems review**, featuring panelists who share their lived experiences of navigating service systems while being unhoused, according to TRUTH Pharm.

PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

-  Understand what **leads to housing instability**
-  Develop a comprehension of the **realities of living unhoused**
-  Identify **systemic barriers** that perpetuate homelessness
-  Examine how **institutional practices** impact stability
-  Identify **policy-level reforms** that reduce homelessness and chronic homelessness

 There will be an opportunity for the audience to ask questions *after the presentation.*

 **UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF BINGHAMTON**

Have an idea?

Our adult programs committee is always looking for ideas for programs. If you would like to share an adult program idea, contact them at adultprograms@uubinghamton.org



Chalice CIRCLES
Small groups. Big connections.

Explore. Share. Grow. Together.

Different perspectives. A stronger community.

Chalice Circles are very small groups of people who meet 1/month in a welcoming space to explore meaningful topics together. Every group gets the same materials for discussion and the topics deal with values and ethics. It's a great way to get to know people!

 **6-10 PEOPLE** per circle

 **2 CO-FACILITATORS** lead each group

 **EVERY GROUP GETS** the same materials for discussion

 **TOPICS FOCUS ON** values, ethics and what matters in our lives

 **SIGNUPS BEGIN**
Sunday, Sept 13 ♥

 **CHALICE CIRCLES WILL START IN OCTOBER!**



Chapel Chat

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20
— After the Service —
IN THE CHAPEL

 Join Rev. Douglas Taylor for an informal conversation following Sunday's worship. Chapel Chat is a chance to continue the conversation, share your thoughts and questions, and connect with others in a relaxed setting.

Free Class

 **MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID®**

ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

Training Date
Sunday, September 27, 2026

Training Time
12:00 - 7:00pm
Lunch and snacks will be provided.

Training Location
Unitarian-Universalist
Congregation of Binghamton
183 Riverside Drive,
Binghamton, NY 13905

AFTER THE COURSE, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO:

- Recognize common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges.
- Recognize common signs and symptoms of substance use challenges.
- Understand how to interact with a person in crisis. Know how to connect a person with help.
- Use self-care tools and techniques.

Pre course, post course and Full day of training **MUST** be completed to receive certification.

*2 hour self paced pre course must be completed by 5:00pm Friday, September 25th.

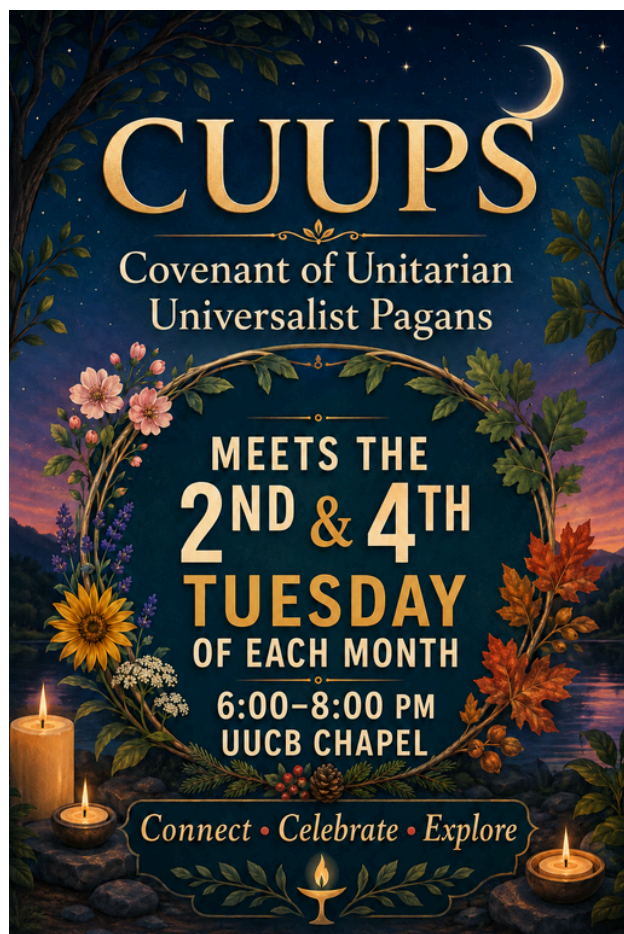
Adult Mental Health Training is recommended for those who regularly have contact with adults 18+. *Employees *First Responders *Helping Professionals *Family Members *Caregivers *Faith Leaders *Community Members *Caring Individuals *Supervisors/Managers

Registration
Contact Janice Fiore at janicefiore@gmail.com
Registration Deadline **September 15**

 **CHENANGO HEALTH NETWORK**

Funding for this training was made possible (in part) by SAMHSA. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Ongoing Groups



Fundraising

SAVE THE DATE: A NIGHT OF MUSICAL MAGIC WITH

CHERRY BOMB

An Improvised Musical

WE NEED YOUR HELP!



SCAN TO VOLUNTEER
 ★ Set-Up, ★ Greeting,
 ★ Donations, ★ Clean-Up

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
 FUN EVENING
 UUCB GREAT COMEDY

https://www.signupgenius.com/gt70
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The Cranberry Coffeehouse

Live Music. Community. Tradition.

The Cranberry Coffeehouse, founded in 1972, 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.

WHERE: Unitarian Universalist Congregation
 183 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY

WHEN: Third Saturday of each month
 (except June, July & August)
 Doors open at 6:30 pm • Show starts at 7:00 pm

ADMISSION: \$15 per person
 (free for children under 14 with accompanying adult)

 **Coffee, tea, and treats**
 are available for donation
 to benefit UUCB.

CRANBERRYCOFFEEHOUSE.ORG

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

SEPT 19

Davey O
 Dynamic singer-songwriter with a rich blend of folk, indie, and Americana.
 (Substituting for Doug Wilcox)

OCT 17

Alex Radus
 Thoughtful songs and captivating stories from an award-winning folk artist.

NOV 21

Jesse Terry
 Accomplished singer-songwriter blending folk, Americana, and country with heartfelt lyrics and a warm stage presence.

DEC 19

Bells & Motley
 Harmonies, humor, and heart from this vocal duo with songs that delight and inspire.



Annual

ICE CREAM Social

- SEPT 20 -

The Soul Sisters Small Group is hosting their annual Ice Cream Social on **Sunday, September 20** after service in the social hall.

 This is a **Dining for Dollars** Fundraiser, but you don't have to sign up ahead of time.

See you there!

\$5
 (or \$20 for a family)
 gets you
ice cream
 and all
 the toppings!

♥ Good friends. Sweet treats. Great cause! ♥

Fellowship



**Welcome Back
BAGEL BASH**

SUNDAY, SEPT 13
after the service

Join us for our first fellowship event of the year. We are looking for set up and clean up helpers as well as donations of bagels, toppings, donuts, danish, juice fruit and cheese.

Bring something to share if you can. if you aren't able to,
THERE IS ALWAYS ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE!

You Belong

Community Connection Fellowship



**FELLOWSHIP
TAKES ALL OF US!**

Everyone is invited—and expected—to lend a hand at our fellowship events. Many hands make light work!

WAYS TO HELP:

- Set up tables and chairs
- Put out food and drinks
- Carry dirty dishes to the kitchen
- Wash dishes and clean up
- Put tables and chairs away

Thank you for helping make fellowship warm, welcoming, and possible!



**Last Sunday
LUNCHES**

A THEMED POTLUCK

on the last Sunday of the month
in the Social Hall after the service.

Our first one:
October 25
Theme: *Fall Favorites*

Bring your best seasonal food items for
a cozy lunch full of fun and fellowship!

Good Food. Great People.
Stronger Community.

All are Welcome!



**SIGN UP
TO HELP!**

SignUpGenius

We use SignUpGenius to organize volunteers for our fellowship events. Use the online sign-up to choose how you would like to help.

NOT COMFORTABLE USING SIGNUPGENIUS?
Email or call Karen in the office, and she will be happy to sign you up!

EVERY HELPING HAND MATTERS!



**Do you want to be
a part of the
FELLOWSHIP TEAM?**

We are the people who
make all the
FUN
things happen at UUCB!

- BUILD CONNECTIONS
- SHARE GOOD FOOD
- CELEBRATE TOGETHER
- CREATE MEMORIES
- STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY

Let Karen know at office@uubinghamton.org

Get Involved



Got Snacks?

We always provide coffee and tea during Sunday social hour, but snacks we have at Sunday social hour are by donation. There is no formal sign-up to bring food for after services, but we welcome you to bring something to share if you are able to.



Help make our worship services more *meaningful* by creating a *Focal Point*!

The focal point is the decor on the table at the front of the sanctuary on Sunday.

It's a simple and creative way to share your gifts and enhance our worship experience.



Sign up and bring a fresh perspective to a Sunday service. If you would like assistance or have questions, text or call **Ron Clupper** at 607-727-8516



Blessing Box Donations Needed



Our **Blessing Box**, located by the sidewalk in front of the church, is often emptied daily as it serves neighbors experiencing **food insecurity**.



Donations of non-perishable foods such as granola bars, crackers, peanut butter, pull-top canned goods, shelf-stable meals, and fruit cups are always appreciated.



NO GLASS PLEASE.



Please place donations on the labeled **Blessing Box shelf** in the UUCB kitchen.

Thank you for helping care for our community!



Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Binghamton

Chalice Circles

a small group ministry at UUCB

WHY CHALICE CIRCLES?



It is a way for people to have opportunities for what James Luther Adams calls "**ultimacy and intimacy**" which means to have a safe place to explore the spiritual values at the heart of the topics or issues. As a group develops, the topics and level of sharing can grow deep and intimate.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

Each group agrees on how to be with each other in pursuing the topics or issues, with the facilitator keeping the process and the group on track. Groups develop at their own pace.



Each group opens the meeting with a chalice lighting, a reading, and a check-in before the topic or issue is pursued, to be followed by "**likes and wishes**" as a check-out and a closing reading.



HOW CAN YOU JOIN A GROUP?

Any time is a good time to sign up and join Small Group Ministry.



OCTOBER SIGN-UP: October is a particularly good (and easy) time to join. **Just sign up on the lists in the Fireside Lobby!** Groups then run from October through May.



Connect.
Share.
Grow together.

Come as you are. You are welcome here.

A different way of doing church

Our Chalice Circles are a form of 'Small Group Ministry' at UUCB. They are a way to help people connect at a deeper level within the congregation. Chalice Circle members typically meet monthly and focus on a topic of spiritual growth. Group members attend to the ministry of their fellow group members as they get to know and care for each other. Groups are a gathering of up to nine people focusing on a topic or issue, led by a trained facilitator, bound by a covenant.

Get Involved



UUCB Tuesday Outreach

UUCB is in coalition with local community organizers who do weekly homeless outreach on **Tuesday nights at 9pm** at the BC Junction! We collect donations and all folks are encouraged to come out and help at the bus station! If it's your first time, just be at the church at **8:30pm** and follow volunteers downtown!



You can help by **donating** the specific items that they have on the list on the **bulletin board** near the chapel.



There is also a list in the **coatroom** where the donations are collected.

♥ **Thank you** ♥ for your kindness and support!



Small gifts. Big impact. ♥ Together we care.



UUCB BUS PASS Project



Donations to buy bus passes can be given to **Jan Fiore** or **Joan Hebb**.

They will purchase the bus passes and get them to the people who need them.



Cold weather is coming –

and this is the only way some people have to get to where they need to go or just have a place to get in and stay warm.

