



# Connecting In Spirit

## Youth Faith Formation

### Monthly News

December 2022

#### *In this Issue...*

Tamale Pickup Dates  
Mountain Con Recap  
Holiday Calendar  
and More!

***There will be no Youth Faith Formation Hour Sunday, Dec. 18, 25, or January 1.  
There will be no Nursery during worship on Sunday, Dec. 25 or Sunday, Jan. 1.***

### **Traditions That Sustain**

In Spirit Play, after hearing a story and seeing the materials the storyteller uses in the telling, the group gathers together to Wonder. One of the most common questions is "If you took something away from this story, what could you take away and still have all the story you need?" As 2022 comes to a close, I find myself asking this question a lot.

Professionally, the pandemic moved from virtual to in person and hybrid, which shifted so many elements in the story it was hard to know whether this story was live action or



recorded (whichever the format, it was improv, for sure), let alone follow the plot. And saying goodbye to two beloved mentors inextricably tied to how I see both our UU faith as a whole and my own personal faith is a plot twist I'm still trying to figure out.

Personally, 2023 marks the departure of one of the main characters in my story into a spin-off. While I can't wait to see how this story unfolds, my role is much smaller in that one, and I have a big plot hole to fill. And now I'm stuck with a main character who is a bit unmoored and self-absorbed, in a not very interesting way. It's been done before and is getting pretty boring.

With all this change, what parts of my story are all that I need? And how to connect with them? I have no easy or quick answers. The

beauty of wondering is that it's more about the questions than the answers, and in thinking about what I really need in my story, I'm drawn to December's Worship theme, Traditions that Sustain.

In the holiday season, I'm reminded of the core elements of my story, the themes that emerge in it over and over: community, resilience, hope, and joy. Through the familiar sights, sounds, and rituals of holiday traditions, I reconnect with the main idea of the story, both mine and everyone else's where I'm fortunate to have a role. Traditions tell a much bigger story than just our own, and they help us muster the courage to develop some new storylines for ourselves.

So go ahead and embrace our familiar traditions this month, singing carols at Cocoa and Caroling (we changed that story a bit), being silly at the No Rehearse Pageant, or walking in the Christmas Parade. And tell a new story by starting a new tradition in Chalica. Whichever tradition you chose, know that you are sustained by all the story you need.

In Care and Faith,  
**Christine**

Christine Rehder (she/her/hers)  
Director of Faith Formation

## ***Countdown to Tamales!*** **Last Chance to Help in the Kitchen and Place an Order!**

**This Saturday, ORUUC teens and parents will be making tamales! Sign up on Discord or show up in**

the kitchen beginning at 9 a.m. to lend a hand!  
*This is the final opportunity to help!*

**TAMALE ORDERS ARE DUE TOMORROW (Friday, Dec. 2)! Don't miss out on this delicious treat!**



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ILYqmWbOaoUQDZUrrTAbM-Zlsa57ZylzAIAEndXWwRE/edit>

**Tamales are \$20 per dozen. Options are CHICKEN or VEGETARIAN (please note: both selections contain cheese).** Text "ORUUC Tamales" to 73256 to pay using your mobile device, or go to <https://onrealm.org/oruuc/give/tamales>.

**Orders will be distributed in the Social Hall on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 2 to 4 p.m.** to coincide with Cocoa and Caroling, **and on Sunday, Dec. 18**, before and after the No Rehearse Pageant.

Tamales are a major fundraiser for Youth Trips, and participation in their preparation is required for trip eligibility. 8th Graders are encouraged to sign up so they have hours put in for future trips. Parents are welcome and encouraged to help as well, either in place of or, preferably, with their Youth. It's really fun!

Thanks again to the Endowment Committee this year for covering the purchase costs of our tamale making supplies so that all of the proceeds from our sales will go into the Youth Trip Fund!

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**The Angel Tree: Gifts due Sunday, Dec. 11**



The Angel Tree is great way to share a lesson in giving with children at Christmastime. This year's tree started out with 42 names of children in need; there are still 16 names to choose from! **Wrapped and tagged gifts are due back to church by Sunday, Dec. 11.** Questions? Contact Susan at 865-591-4037, or see her in the nursery on Sunday. Thanks to all those who have already signed up to fulfill the needs and wants of children in our area this Christmas!



**The Oak Ridge Christmas Parade is next Saturday, Dec. 10!**

ORUUC is participating in the Oak Ridge Christmas Parade again this year!

**When? Saturday, Dec. 10 at 6 p.m.** This year's theme is Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree!

**How can you help?**

- **Donate candy** to be handed out during the parade! Donations may be dropped off in the bin in the church lobby.
- **Donate decorations!** Have any spare garland? Vinyl albums? Lights?

- **Walk with us! It would be great to have at least a dozen people--the more, the merrier!** The Parade forms at the Corporate Center on Lafayette at 5 p.m. It turns west on Oak Ridge Turnpike, disbanding in the parking lot of Oak Ridge High School.
- If there are enough volunteers, we could use a **lowboy flatbed trailer** for folks to ride on.

If you'd like to help in any way or have questions, **Contact Multigenerational Coordinator Whitney Cole at [whit.cole79@gmail.com](mailto:whit.cole79@gmail.com) or the Church Office at 865-483-6761.**

## Fall Youth CONferences at **The Mountain** Highlands, North Carolina



ORUUC's Middle Schoolers had a blast at The Mountain earlier this month. They even got to see some familiar faces from ORUUC who are now PALs! The Elementary Group will be traveling to The Mountain this weekend, followed by the High Schoolers next weekend.

**Already looking forward to Spring? Reserve these Spring CON dates on your calendar now!** Registration will open a month or so before the event:  
**Elementary CON (Grades 3-5) February 17-19, 2023**  
**Intermediate CON (Grades 6-8) March 3-5, 2023**  
**Senior High CON (Grades 9-12) March 17-19, 2023**

**Interested in learning more about Mountain CON programs? Check out their website:**  
**<https://www.themountainrlc.org/cons>**

Thank you to all the adults who have served as advisors this fall. If you are interested in being an advisor for the spring, please contact Christine at **[crehder@oruuc.org](mailto:crehder@oruuc.org)**.



*ORUUC Middle School Youth at MountainCON, November 18-20  
Thank you to Sarah Gunter for serving as an advisor and sharing photos!*

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# 2022 Holiday Calendar

**Sunday, Dec. 4 Chalica: A Principled Celebration!**  
**Congregational Meeting at 11:15 a.m.** in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. *No Faith Formation.* **Holiday Craft Party** for Youth in the Social Hall. Nursery available.

**Saturday, Dec. 10 Cocoa & Caroling at 2 p.m.** in the Pavilion and Portico. Later, join **ORUUC in the Oak Ridge Christmas Parade!** Line up by 5 p.m. at the Corporate Center on Lafayette Drive.

**Sunday, Dec. 11 Hanukkah-themed Worship.** Youth and Adult Faith Formation as scheduled. **Deadline for dropping off Angel Tree gifts!**

**Sunday, Dec. 18 No Rehearse Christmas Pageant at 10 a.m.** in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. *No Faith Formation.*  
**Faith Formation resumes January 8.**

**Wednesday, Dec. 21 Winter Solstice Service at 7 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. *Childcare provided.*

**Saturday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service at 6 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. Come at 5:45 p.m. to enjoy pre-service singing!

**Sunday, Dec. 25 Christmas Day!** *No Nursery during Worship.*

**Monday, Dec. 26-Friday, Dec. 30 and Monday, Jan. 2 Church Office Closed** *Happy Holidays!*

**Friday, Dec. 30 Stone Soup. 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Drive thru!**

**Saturday, Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Coffeehouse Talent Show** in the Social Hall. Supper and Social begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by the 7 p.m. program. After the Coffeehouse, stay for the **New Year's Eve Party, beginning around 8 p.m., and ring in 2023 at ORUUC!**



**OWL Meeting Sunday, Jan. 8  
for 5th and 6th Grade Parents**



Do you have a fifth or sixth grader, or know someone who does, who might be interested in participating in the Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education program? You're invited to attend a Parent Meeting on Sunday, Jan. 8 at 3 p.m. in the Sanctuary. **There are still spots available!** Contact Christine at [crehder@oruuc.org](mailto:crehder@oruuc.org) for more information.

For an overview of the OWL program, visit <https://www.uua.org/re/owl>.



## Hiring Childcare Workers

- Must be 14+ years old and reliable
- Experience and/or certification required
- Pay is \$10 an hour

Please contact Childcare Coordinator,  
Laura Scott, at **(865)-591-8550**  
with any questions or applications.



Mother Goose



of Oak Ridge

Join us with your baby, toddler and/or preschooler for bouncing, tickling, touching, clapping and action rhymes, musical circle games, simple songs, and play.

Mother Goose meets the **First and Third Thursdays of each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Oak Ridge Public Library Auditorium** with "Father Goose" Michael Raymond.



# REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.  
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A  
FOOD BANK.

- December 1 - box of cereal
- December 2 - peanut butter
- December 3 - stuffing mix
- December 4 - boxed potatoes
- December 5 - macaroni and cheese
- December 6 - canned fruit
- December 7 - canned tomatoes
- December 8 - canned tuna
- December 9 - dessert mix
- December 10 - jar of applesauce
- December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
- December 12 - cranberry sauce
- December 13 - canned beans
- December 14 - box of crackers
- December 15 - package of rice
- December 16 - package of oatmeal
- December 17 - package pasta
- December 18 - spaghetti sauce
- December 19 - chicken noodle soup
- December 20 - tomato soup
- December 21 - can corn
- December 22 - can mixed vegetables
- December 23 - can carrots
- December 24 - can green beans

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Looking for a way to give back this season? This Reverse Advent Calendar would be a great help to the church's food pantry! Once you've filled your box of non-perishables, drop it off at the church on Sunday or during office hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thank you!

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**Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz,  
Interim Minister**

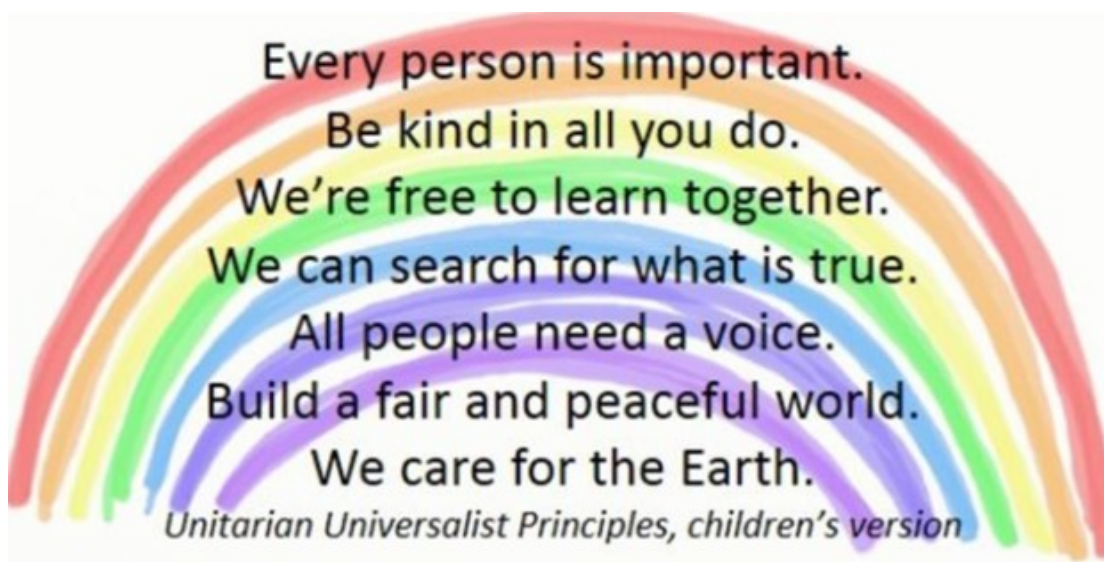
Rev. Lisa can be reached by email at [Rev.Lisa@oruuc.org](mailto:Rev.Lisa@oruuc.org) or by phone at 865-483-6761 ext. 102.



### **It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like SpamBots**

Just a reminder that email scammers and bots work overtime during the holidays. No one on the ORUUC staff will ever email you requesting that you purchase gift cards or urgently transfer cash. These spammy scams are the bane of modern ministry, with clergy of all faiths reporting an uptick during seasons of gracious generosity. Thanks for continuing to direct your financial gifts to the needy, not the greedy! ~Rev. Lisa

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*Connecting in Spirit: Youth Faith Formation Monthly News is a digital publication designed to serve ORUUC families with children from birth through high school. If you have ideas or suggestions for content, or would like to add someone to the mailing list, please email Rachel at [communications@oruuc.org](mailto:communications@oruuc.org) or Christine at [crehder@oruuc.org](mailto:crehder@oruuc.org). To take a look at past issues of Connecting in Spirit, visit <http://www.oruuc.org/connectinginspirit>.*

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