



Connecting In Spirit

Youth Faith Formation

Monthly News

May 2024

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Meet Lóre Stevens, our next Minister of ORUUC
Thanks to our YFF Staff and Volunteers for another great year
Congratulations to our Bridging Seniors
May Worship Series: Pluralism
and more!



We're Just Getting Started!

Attended at least one Meet and Greet with Ministerial Candidate Lóre Stevens. Check!

Attended the In-Person Confirmation Vote. Check!

Completed 2024/2025 Pledge Card. Check!

All done, right? Stewardship checklist complete. Where's my cake?

As much as I would like to stop writing right here and go outside and enjoy this beautiful day with the satisfaction of having done my obligatory membership duties, my inner consciousness is whispering, "you're just getting started."

Just getting started? Haven't we been at this for 3 years, actually 4 since the pandemic?

We have celebrated the long tenure of two cherished ministers and grieved the loss of their steady presence. We have worked with an interim minister in remembering our past and crafting a vision for our future. We met with Search Team members, told them our stories and shared our hopes and dreams for the future and even filled out a crazy long form detailing our opinions and direction moving forward.

Surely, we're done right?

And yet the voice in my head is still saying "you're just getting started."

As much as I try to deny it, now is the time to take a breath, stop for a bit and listen to this voice. I may need some quiet time and stillness to hear it, but this voice is trying to tell me something. It's a call to something deeper and richer in my own life. It's a call to connection and purpose in our congregation. It's a call to centering love, making meaning, and finding connection in a broken world.

The call is telling me that the journey we have been on over the past years has challenged and changed us. We are stronger and more resilient. And with this wisdom comes responsibility, and that is the essence of stewardship.

We stand on the precipice of a new era at ORUUC. And while I love to cross things off a list, and there is audible relief that much of the getting to this point work is completed and we can take a breath, we have a lot of work to do.

Right now, if you stop, I believe each of you are being called. Called to greater service, called to deeper connection, and called to live a life with greater meaning.

The coming year and years are an opportunity and a fresh start. A time for us to figure out who we are, where we have been, and where we are going. Now is the time and place to answer your call and understand its place in the mission of our church. Are you called to care for others? Are you called to help ensure fiscal security and responsibility of the church? Are you called to make coffee or run the dishwasher?

Whatever your unique calling may be, answer it and begin the work of transformation in yourself and in our church. Our faith compels us to answer the call of love and to act on it. It's time to get started!

And there will be cake at some point, I promise.

Christine

Christine Rehder (she/her/hers)

Youth Faith Formation Director

crehder@oruuc.org

Welcome, Lóre Stevens, ORUUC's Next Settled Minister, Beginning July 17!

On Sunday, April 28, after a week of small group meetings and larger all-church events with Ministerial Candidate Lóre Stevens, 122 members of ORUUC gathered in the Sanctuary to hear Lóre lead worship and to vote after the service to call her as our next minister. It was a resounding yes--118 affirmative



votes, 1 no, and three blank ballots.

Lóre begins her time at ORUUC on Wednesday, July 17. She will be ordained May 18th at First UU Nashville.

After three intense and successful pre-candidating weekends in February and March, the ORUUC Ministerial Search Team unanimously voted to make Lóre its first choice of ministerial candidate, and it turns out she chose us, too. That means that in a sea of hundreds of searching churches, and considerably fewer searching candidates, we managed to find (and choose) each other.

Lóre (rhymes with story) is originally from Powell, TN. She is of Mexican and European heritage and part of the LGBTQ+ community. After gaining two degrees from Eastern Michigan University, she worked part-time as First UU Nashville's Membership Coordinator, followed by a full-time role at the Nashville Public Library. After carefully deciding on ministry, Lóre graduated from Harvard Divinity School (HDS) in 2022. One faculty advisor said Lóre was one of the most gifted students they had ever had. She was the winner of the UU Office at the United Nations' Greeley Sermon Award, she has received the UU History & Heritage Society's Research Prize (for a paper on the UUA's evolving responses to ministerial misconduct), and received the Hopkins Award for Demonstrated Ministerial Promise given by the HDS faculty.

Lóre also brings experience with Unitarian Universalism on the national level, having served on the board of the Church of the Larger Fellowship and worked for both the UUA New England Region and UU Service Committee. After her internship at First Universalist Minneapolis, Lóre wished to return to East Tennessee, where she is currently the contract minister for Foothills UU Fellowship in Maryville. More personally, Lóre considers herself an atheist mystic, with a passion for transcending gaps: between spirituality and science, between races, between humanity and the natural world. She lives with her younger brother, Zachary, and two cats, Tezzy and Twinkle. She enjoys science fiction, illustrated journaling, and volunteering at the local cat shelter.

The Ministerial Search Team feels that Lóre is a living representation of what congregants wished for ORUUC in the survey and cottage meetings last fall: *A caring community where diversity is welcomed; an outward-looking community working to embody a just world; a liberal community that celebrates the earth and the interdependent web of all existence.*



Help us come Alive with Justice and Joy at ORUUC—make your pledge today! Visit <https://onrealm.org/oruuc/-/form/pledge/20242025pledge>, mail your yellow pledge card, or drop it off at ORUUC this Sunday. Thank you! Our Stewardship Campaign Kickoff was Sunday, April 7. So far, we've received about 22 percent of the pledge cards we sent out—keep them coming! Thanks for helping ORUUC plan for the coming year!





The Annual May Day Picnic is Sunday, May 5! Please bring a side dish or dessert that feeds at least 6 people. Hot dogs, buns, and condiments will be provided. If you're planning to sit outside, bring a chair or a blanket. For more information, contact Val Herd. ***There will be no Faith Formation classes or childcare during second hour (11:15-12:15) on Sunday, May 5. Enjoy food and fellowship with one another!***



May Worship Series

Pluralism

May 5: ***The End of Faith Formation***

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

Youth Faith Formation Leader Awards and the Bob Kernahan Award will be given out during worship. Stay for the annual May Day Picnic after the service! Bring a dish to share, and a blanket or chair if you plan to sit outside. There will be no Faith Formation classes or childcare second hour.

May 12: ***Arise, Women of This Day***

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

Last day of Youth Faith Formation classes! Have a wonderful summer! See you on August 4!

May 19: ***A Moment, A Process, A Lifelong Commitment***

Celebrate our Bridging Seniors and their families during worship and a luncheon reception afterward.

May 26: ***Memorial Day Remembrance***

A special service of readings and hymns.

Join us for Sunday Worship at 10 a.m. in person and on Zoom

Adult Faith Formation classes meet from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. every Sunday unless otherwise noted. Youth Faith Formation classes take a break for summer beginning May 19 and resume August 4. Nursery is available during Worship and the FF hour.





Youth Faith Formation Leaders and Volunteers



This Sunday, May 5, join us during morning worship as we thank our Youth Faith Formation leader and volunteers for a wonderful year!

Nursery: Susan Rosenbaum

Ashley Fee
Rob Cole

Preschool: Susan Rosenbaum

Margaret Durgin
Michael Raymond
Jimmy Groton
Christina Elliott

Spirit Play: Christine Rehder

Erin Read
Donna Maloney
Peter Scheffler
Jim Nutaro

Middle School: Whitney Cole

Melissa Bishop
Steven Barker
Aubrey Wick-Sebastian

High School: Jason Fishel

Jami Garner
Robyn Naughton
Becky Spain-Kaiser

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Join us for Bridging Sunday May 19
as we celebrate Laura Scott, Luke Stark,
and Kelsey Kaiser.



Congratulations to our Bridgers and the Class of 2024 at ORHS!

Graduation is Friday, May 17 at 7 p.m. at Blankenship Field.

**Join us for worship on Sunday, May 19 at 10 a.m. for
ORUUC's Bridging Service and Luncheon.**



**Join friends at Youth
Pride, Saturday, May
11 from noon to
4:30 p.m. at First
Presbyterian
Church, Oak Ridge,
for an afternoon of
fun for LGBTQ+
youth and their
allies. Activities are
aimed at middle and
high school kids.
The theme is
"Finding our Joy."
Parents and
caregivers are**

**welcome (we may put you to work!) For more information, visit
<https://fb.me/e/6JYnBYcZE>.**

**ORUUC is planning to host a booth at this year's Youth Pride event. Would you like
to help for an hour or two? Contact Kara Raymond at
kraymondlovesmath@gmail.com.**

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.

Looking for an interactive program designed to stimulate learning, introduce group activities, and encourage play? Mother Goose is the answer! Led by ORUUC's own Michael Raymond, the Mother Goose Program is a group experience for parents and their babies and young children. The program introduces adults and children to the pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs, and stories together.

Mother Goose meets May 2 and 16 this month --the First and Third Thursdays-- at 10:30 a.m. in the Oak Ridge Public Library Auditorium. It's free and open to the community.

View and sign up for the Oak Ridge Public Library's newsletter here:

<https://mailchi.mp/oakridgetn/orplapr24>

**Need
Childcare**
FOR A CHURCH MEETING OR EVENT?

SCAN THIS QR CODE!

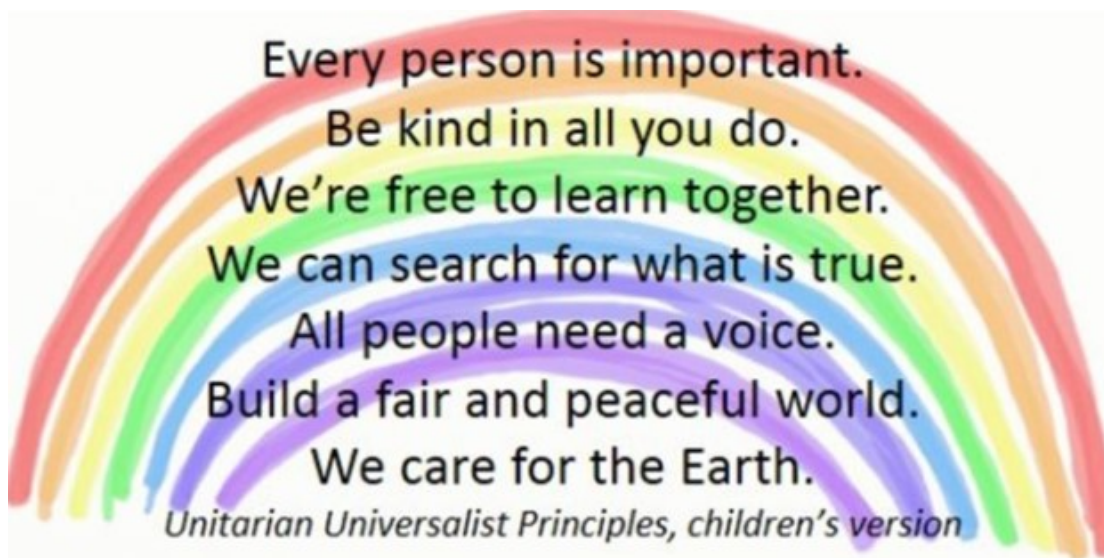
ORUUC

Need Childcare for a Church Meeting or Event?

If you or your group need childcare for a church meeting or event, please complete this form TWO WEEKS in advance: [ORUUC Childcare Request Form \(jotform.com\)](https://jotform.com) Childcare is provided for children ages 10 and under only. Once you click "Submit," the form will go directly to ORUUC's Multigenerational Coordinator Whitney Cole, who will work with Childcare Coordinator Laura Scott to arrange childcare for your church function. Thank you!

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz, Interim Minister

Rev. Lisa can be reached by email at Rev.Lisa@oruuc.org or by phone at 865-483-6761 ext. 102. *Rev. Lisa's last Sunday at ORUUC is June 9!*



*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 or Christine at crehder@oruuc.org.** To take a look at past issues of Connecting in Spirit, visit <http://www.oruuc.org/connectinginspirit>.*

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ORUUC | 809 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge, TN 37830 865-483-6761

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