

April 5-11, 2024

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News from Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church

The Exponent



**THE
MINISTERIAL
SEARCH
COMMITTEE**



**BIG NEWS!
Sunday, April 7!**

ORUUC

Help, Thanks, Wow

Christine Rehder, Youth Faith Formation Director

One of the deepest blessings of storytelling for me is how simplicity can bring deep insight and clarity to the complexity, uncertainty, and suffering life brings to us. I have always found comfort and sparks of divinity in figuring out how to explain these mysteries to a 5 year old.

Author and memoirist Ann Lamott writes that all prayers essentially consist of three parts: help, thanks, wow. As my mind wrestles with the big emotions of what was, what is, and what's to come, I'm grateful for the simple framework.

As I return from my leave of absence, I ask you for your help as I reintegrate into my role during this exciting and dynamic time for ORUUC. I ask that you give me grace as I learn and relearn about all the ways you have held and served one another and the community during my absence.



Thank you for giving me time to tend to my family when I needed it. I'm grateful to Reverend Lisa and my staff, Whitney Cole, Jason Fishel and Susan Rosenbaum, for willingly, capably, and lovingly tending to Youth Faith Formation. Also, to the many volunteers and staff who took on extra duties to keep programs like OWL and other

programming. You are all so close to my heart.

This brings me to WOW- I am awed by the dedication and graciousness in our Beloved Community. I am blessed to serve in a community that shows such loving kindness.

This April also marks a pivotal time for ORUUC in the search for our new minister.

Help us open our hearts and minds to the possibilities of service, meaning, and purpose this new leader has to offer. Help us extend loving kindness to

them as they begin this deep work of change and transformation.

Thanks to the Board, Rev. Lisa, and our Search Committee for preparing us for this new leader as they bring their vision of hope and inspiration in our broken world. And thanks to each and every one of you who have opened your hearts and minds to possibilities that a faith centered in love has to offer the future.

WOW-what a dynamic, passionate community we are! Through change, pain, and uncertainty, we come to this moment stronger and more united. We have so much to offer our new minister, Oak Ridge, and the world.

Your ORUUC Ministerial Search Team is pleased to announce something big...on April 7!

With your diligent support to our faithful service, we have made a mutual selection with our new ministerial candidate. This means that in a sea of prospective searching ministers and churches, we not only found each other, but were each other's number ONE choices.

There's still lots of work to do behind the scenes before we identify who our candidate is. We thank you for your patience and continued privacy during this final week before the announcement.

Please plan to tune in this Sunday, April 7, in person or online, when your Search Team will reveal the identity of our ministerial candidate. If you can't make it, that's okay! The announcement will be published on our website, on social media, and in *The Exponent*, including more information about candidating week and the congregational voting process. - Everyone is invited!

This Sunday, April 7

Giving Voice to Our Vision

What future do you see for ORUUC when you look ahead a few months, or a few years? This Sunday is a special day when the congregation will be (virtually) introduced to our candidate for settled ministry. Amidst this time of great excitement, we begin to cast our vision for who we want to be. Interim Minister Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz is in the pulpit today. And plan to stay afterwards for a catered lunch and visionary celebration!

Worship with us at 10 a.m. in person or on ZOOM. Zoom door opens at 9:45 a.m.

To Zoom: Please install the Zoom app on your device and use Zoom Worship Service Meeting ID: 946 8973 5846.

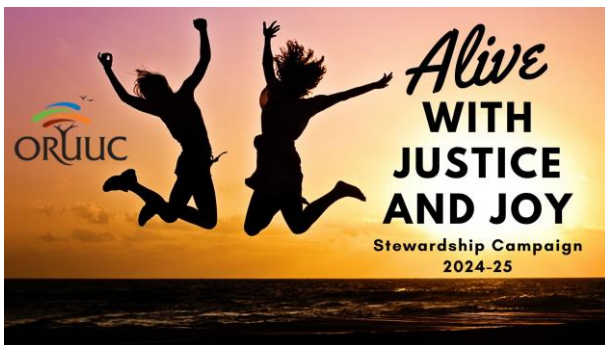
The Order of Service may be found [here](#). Email or Text Prayer Requests to prayers@oruuc.org



April Split the Plate Offering: [The Child Advocacy Center of Anderson County](#)

After worship, adults are invited to the Stewardship Kickoff Luncheon in the Social Hall; all Adult Faith Formation classes are canceled. Youth Faith Formation classes take place from 11:15 to 12:15. The Nursery is available during Worship and the Faith Formation Hour.

Covid-19 Update: Masks are not required in the building. We have masks and hand sanitizer available, and we encourage you to do what makes you feel comfortable.



What a difference our Church makes in the world. Generous and transformational giving makes our vital and vibrant community possible. As our church welcomes a new minister, let's ensure that ORUUC continues to have a role to play in shaping the larger community by giving boldly.

Join us this Sunday, April 7 after Worship for our Stewardship Kickoff Luncheon! We'll be serving lasagna and salad, drinks and dessert. If you can't stay, swing by the hallway outside the social hall to pick up your pledge packet. All packets that are not picked up will be mailed next week.

April Split the Plate Offering: The Child Advocacy Center of Anderson County



Every Sunday we share our offering 50/50 with a local agency chosen by our members during a vote at the Congregational Meeting each June. This month, the recipient is the Child Advocacy of Anderson County.

The mission of this organization is "Healing and Justice for Abused Children". It serves approximately 400-500 children annually. At the center, staff provide forensic interviews, forensic medicals, trauma focused - cognitive behavioral therapy, and other victim services including education and advocacy. CAC coordinates the

Anderson County Child Protective Investigative Team and are trained in diversity, inclusion, and equity for all clients. ORUUC's support of the Child Advocacy Center has helped many children heal and recover from traumatic abuse, thus supporting the dignity and worth of each child served. These are the most vulnerable members of our community. ORUUC's support makes a positive difference in their lives. Please [GIVE HERE](#) as you are willing and able, or text "ORUUC" to 73256.

April Worship Series

Interdependence



April 7: ***Giving Voice to Our Vision***

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

Stewardship Kickoff Luncheon to follow worship. Adult Faith Formation classes are canceled. Youth Faith Formation classes will take place as scheduled.

April 14: ***We Are the Earth***

Peter Thornton, Guest Speaker

April 21: ***Ministerial Candidate Week!***

Details coming soon!

April 28: ***Ministerial Candidate Week!***

Details coming soon!

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

*Youth and Adult Faith Formation classes meet from
11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. every Sunday unless.
Nursery is available during Worship and the FF hour.*

NEW! Board Corner

Each month, the ORUUC Board of Trustees will have a section of *The Exponent* to highlight recent Board action to help keep ORUUC informed. We are beginning with the first major action taken this past year, an ORUUC Gun Policy, along with the history and circumstances surrounding this decision.

First some history:

- Before July 2021, in Tennessee you needed to have a permit to carry a handgun, whether concealed or open carry. This permit required, among other items, an 8 hour gun safety course and a background check.
- Beginning In July 2021, Tennessee moved to allow open or concealed carry with no permit required. The only requirements to have a handgun in public are:
 - The subject is 21 or older (18+ if active military service or honorably discharged);
 - The subject is in lawful possession of the handgun; and
 - The subject is in a place where they are lawfully present.

In July 2023, the Safety Team requested permission to post “No Open Carry” signs for the September 2023 rummage sale. A Taskforce, made up of two people each from the Board, Safety Team, and Executive Team, met to research our options (including the requested "No Open Carry" signs, a complete gun ban, or continue to have no policy at all), and ultimately approved the use of “Concealed Carry by Permit Only” signs for the September rummage sale. The "Concealed Carry by Permit Only" sign not only requires a person to have a permit to conceal carry, but also forbids open carry of any handgun.

After the rummage sale, the Safety Team requested that the signs be posted permanently, but more research and stakeholder input was needed before the Board could make such a decision. The Taskforce held three town hall meetings in October and November (two in person and one virtual) to allow input from all stakeholders, and provided a summary of all discussions to the Board. The board shaped policy based on the feedback provided by the congregation.

A policy was approved by the ORUUC Board of Trustees in Nov 2023 which effectively provided the church with the same legal protections regarding the open carry of

ORUUC's 2023-24 Board of Trustees



Michele Thornton
Past-President
Board term expires in 2024



Jason Fishel
President
Board term expires in 2025



Kara Raymond
President-Elect
Board term expires in 2026



Brandon White
Treasurer



Nathaniel Bass
Secretary



Freddie Nechtow
Member-At-Large
Board term expires in 2024



Charles Davis
Member-At-Large
Board term expires in 2024



Jami Garner
Member-At-Large
Board term expires in 2025



Jen Stark
Member-At-Large
Board term expires in 2025

firearms as was present in Tennessee before July 2021.

The complete text of the policy is “Signage specifying ORUUC firearm policy will be posted at all main entrances. This display must include signage described by Tennessee law which states, ‘Concealed Carry By Permit Only’, and includes all required text, formatting, and graphics. Accompanying each legal notice, additional signage will be posted that clearly reads, ‘NO OPEN CARRY’”.

The Taskforce and Board are continuing to tackle other safety issues while working on the creation of a Comprehensive Safety Policy for the church.

Lastly, on the first Sunday of each month, a member of the Board will be available after worship to talk about issues of concern, answer questions, or help clarify recent actions. This Sunday, April 7, you may find Kara Raymond in the Social Hall.

ORUUC's 2023-24 Board of Trustees

Charles Davis wkusau@gmail.com

Freddie Nechtow freddien123@gmail.com

Jami Garner jamigarner@me.com

Jason Fishel solarmanj@gmail.com

Jen Stark jen.stark@hotmail.com

Kara Raymond kraymondlovesmath@gmail.com

Michele Thornton michele.thornton105@gmail.com

Nathaniel Bass nathaniel.k.bass@gmail.com

Brandon White brandonwhite9@comcast.net

Announcements



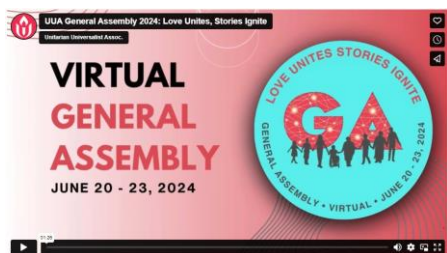
UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
VIRTUAL GA • JUNE 20 - 23, 2024

General Assembly Volunteers Needed

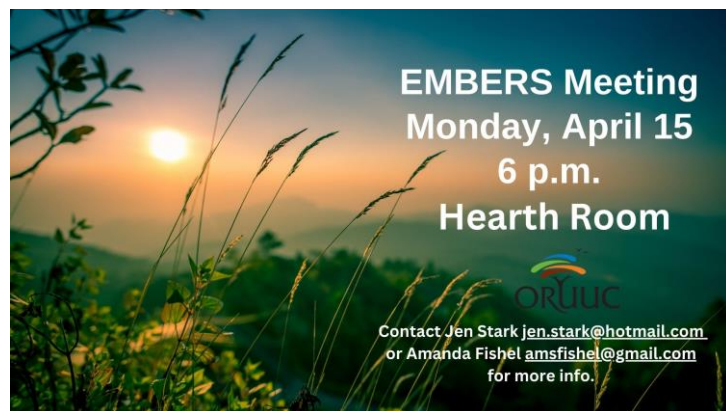
ORUUC has the opportunity to send, virtually, six voting delegates to the General Assembly this summer. The Board is looking for a few church members who are interested in listening to and reading about various things being voted on, including the Article II Study Commission's proposed change to Article II.

The date for GA is June 20-23 and this will be a completely virtual GA. You will attend from the comfort of your own home. Being a voting member is free (donation accepted), but this does not include the non-voting activities. Attending the conference and all other activities costs \$350 before May 15 and \$400 after that date.

ORUUC would like to send six (6) voting delegates. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the church office (office@oruuc.org or 865-483-6761) by April 12. The Board must vote and turn in the names of our delegates by April 15. Thank you!



Join Mare Martell for a presentation on the Labor of Dying during Faith Formation Hour on Sunday, April 14. This talk will include topics surrounding palliative care and hospice, the stages of dying, and grief. Mare is a caregiver, end-of-life doula, and UU lay chaplain. For more information, visit <https://lightoflove.net/> or reach out to Mare at maremartell@lightoflove.net.



EMBERS' (The Earth Mindfulness Based on Earth Religions and Spirituality) regular meeting scheduled for April 8 is cancelled to accommodate those traveling for the eclipse. The meeting will take place instead on Monday, April 15, 6-8 p.m., in the Hearth Room. For more information, please contact Jen Stark or Amanda Fishel.

Check it out! In partnership with the National Week of Conversation's Better Together Film Festival, **Oak Ridge Periodic Tables** is excited to host an opportunity to build a stronger community and enhance understanding through two films:
#1 "List(e)n," Friday, April 19 at 6:00 p.m. EVENT RSVP - <https://bridgealliance.app.neoncrm.com/.../eventRegistration...>
#2 "Black, White, and the Greys," Sunday April 21 at 5:00 PM (this film contains adult language and themes, 17+ strictly enforced) EVENT RSVP - <https://bridgealliance.app.neoncrm.com/.../eventRegistration...> Films will show at the Historic Grove Theater. Visit www.oakridgeperiodictables.com/film-festival for details!



Oak Ridge Co-ed Softball starts April 9! Please let **Christina Elliott** know if you'd like to play! christina.r.elliott@gmail.com Games will be Tuesday nights, with possible make up games on Thursdays.

Announcements



Now on Exhibit in the ORUUC Gallery: Photographs by David Kocher

David began his adventures in nature photography when he realized at age 44 that he needed a hobby. He especially wanted to photograph wildflowers. He joined camera clubs and entered their competitions, read books, magazines, and photo traveler newsletters, attended workshops, and pored over Sierra Club calendars. David's photographs showcase some of his favorite places: the Smokies and Blue Ridge Parkway, Colorado Rockies, Glacier National Park, Canadian Rockies, Oregon's Columbia River Gorge, and Denali National Park in Alaska. His photographs will be on display through the spring.

Stop by to view this free exhibit during church office hours, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., or on Sundays. All are welcome!

<http://www.oruuc.org/current-exhibit>



Interested in helping with this year's Auction?
Email Nancy Starr at starroakridge@gmail.com.



Thanks for the continuing donations to ORUUC's Non-Perishable Food Pantry! **This month's greatest needs are canned fruit, soups, pastas (mac n' cheese), and peanut butter.** Please bring your donations and leave them in the box in the church lobby, or in the box in the pantry, located in the kitchen. Thank you for helping us make this community resource possible!



Contact Steven Albright for more information. All are welcome!

Caring for Each Other



Are you going through a difficult time? Are you in a situation where support and caring are needed--someone to do grocery shopping, take you to a doctor's appointment, or provide a meal following an upcoming surgery? Contact the church office: (865) 483-6761 or office@oruuc.org or a Caring Coordinator!

Caring Coordinators for April

Amanda Fishel amsfishel@gmail.com 865-804-7033

Ellen Faby elfab418@gmail.com 865-363-1092

Please call at least two days in advance to allow time for Caring Coordinators to find a volunteer to provide the care that you need. Our ability to provide transportation is limited. If your appointment is routine and/or can wait, please reschedule it rather than call a Caring Coordinator. Thank you for reserving our Caring Volunteers for those situations that address serious needs that cannot wait.

Caring and Gratitude



Richard Martel moved recently and would love visitors, mail, or email/phone calls!

Richard Martel
Victorian Square
241 South Chamberlain Avenue
Rockwood, TN 37854
Phone(865) 314-6729
Where2beaware@proton.me

From Stone Soup Team Leader Jen Stark:

Stone Soup last Friday was a success thanks to a GREAT number of people!!! Thanks to all of you, wonderful Stone Soup team, we were able to make enough delicious split pea soup to serve about 150 people. 91 meals and 14 bags of groceries were distributed Friday with the rest of the soup being taken home by church members Sunday. (Thanks for taking those home so they didn't go bad in the church fridge!!) And thanks for your continued support of Stone Soup!!



Ongoing Activities at ORUUC



Line Dancing

Sundays at 3 p.m. We learn a variety of dances: country, jazz, waltz and cha-chas. Through our dancing, we bring together total strangers in the community and develop close friendships with the willingness to share individual talents with others. A donation of \$3 per session is suggested. For more information, contact Jo Curran or Steven Albricht.



Tai Chi

**Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays
11 a.m. – 12 noon**

We minister to health & stability through learning & practicing tai chi. Help maintain & improve balance, strength, and blood pressure, and reduce knee, arm, shoulder & back pain. For more information call Janet Hoegler at 865-963-5115.



Ukulele Group

Our scheduled meetups this month are Saturday, April 6 and 20 at 3 p.m. in the Sanctuary. We'd love to have you join us! Abbie Moore abbie.moore@icloud.com.

Social and Volunteer Opportunities



Zentangle Group Sundays 5 to 7 PM

Introductory and Continuing Classes \$10 including starter supplies (cash only)
For more information, contact Nancy Starr, Certified Zentangle Teacher
865-483-8684 (landline)
865-742-9993 (mobile/text)
starroakridge@gmail.com

Ecumenical Storehouse Pick Up Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m.-12 noon Volunteers needed!



Each month, ORUUC picks up donations for Ecumenical Storehouse, which supplies furniture and household goods to those in need. There are many ways you can help! Please contact Martin Bauer at bauermib@gmail.com for more information.



Eggs and Pegs is back! Play cribbage, eat breakfast, have fun **Sunday, April 7!** These get togethers will be held the first Sunday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the Social Hall. Questions? Talk to Brandon White, Christina Elliott, Jane Flanagan, or Shelaine Curd.



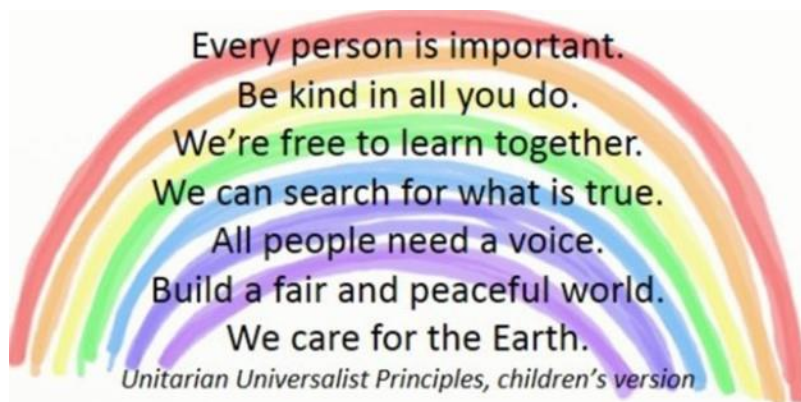
ORUUC is always looking for members to add to its Caring Team! **Contact Rachel in the church office (865-483-6761) or communications@oruuc.org** if you would be willing to be called upon occasionally to

- Provide transportation to Sunday services, evening events at church, or medical/dental appointments
- Run errands or grocery shop
- Provide/deliver meals
- Visit
- Perform minor home repairs
- Provide computer repair and support
- Haul items by truck
- Provide pet care
- Help with Memorial Service receptions
- Support new parents
- Perform yard work
- Sit with someone during Worship



Pack "Food for Kids" with Second Harvest at First United Methodist Church of Oak Ridge. This program provides backpacks with non-perishable foods for preschool and elementary students to take home on weekends. **The next packing date is Monday, April 15 starting at 12 noon.** Questions? Contact Coordinator Cara Weigel at 865-481-8108.

Family News



Mother Goose with ORUUC's own "Father Goose" Michael Raymond! Babies through preschoolers will have fun singing, clapping, dancing, and moving with their parents, grandparents, or other caregivers.

First and Third Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Oak Ridge Public Library Meeting Room

*Don't miss the next gathering
April 18!*

There are only six more Sundays left in our Youth Faith Formation schedule this school year! Don't miss out! Join us this Sunday, won't you?

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

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



ORUUC is starting a banned book library in the Middle School room! If you are willing to donate any banned books you already have, please leave them in that room or in the church office with a note specifying that they're for the banned book library. Questions? Contact Multigenerational Director Whitney Cole.



Childcare is provided for children ages 10 and under for church meetings and events. Please complete this form TWO WEEKS in advance:

<https://form.jotform.com/231284551294053>. Thanks!



Meets monthly at various churches in Oak Ridge. Visit

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/371268369619360> or email

Anne Backus backusanne@comcast.net.



Check out ORUUC's monthly Family newsletter, *Connecting in Spirit*, by visiting

<https://www.oruuc.org/connectinginspirit>.



PFLAG meets Monday, April 8 at Chapel on the Hill to talk about Mental Health

Toni Stephenson, Co-Chairperson of the Oak Ridge affiliate of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will speak at the next PFLAG meeting on April 8. The United Church, Chapel on the Hill, will host the meeting in the Activities Room, 85 Kentucky Ave., Oak Ridge.

All are welcome. The group gathers beginning at 6:45 p.m. for a short social time followed by the presentation starting at 7. The group adjourns at 8 p.m.

The presentation will cover the basics of what NAMI, the nation's largest grass-roots mental health organization, offers in general. The talk will also focus on what is now available for the LGBTQ+ community. Although a non-traditional sexuality is not a mental illness, because of stigma and misinformation many experience difficulties in their mental well-being. Participants will also be asked what additional things NAMI can do for them. Questions and feedback will be welcomed.

PFLAG (formerly known as an acronym for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) is the United States' largest organization uniting families and allies with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ). Its mission is to provide opportunities for dialogue about sexual orientation, gender identities, and to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

Oak Ridge has an active PFLAG group which meets monthly, rotating the venue among faith communities including the First Presbyterian, First United Methodist, and Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Churches, United Church Chapel on the Hill, and the Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge.

For additional information, contact PFLAG President Anne Backus at backusanne@comcast.net.



Free Meditation at Westside UU Saturday, May 18

We all want more well-being and comfort in our life, but the happiness we find is often elusive and disappointing. Buddhist teachings explain that real happiness stems from inside ourselves. By learning how to meditate, we enter the path to true happiness.

Join us for this special event and learn the meaning and practice of meditation from Lama Lobsang Samten, a Tibetan Buddhist monk and spiritual director of the Paramita Centers in Canada, France, and the US. During the conference, Lama Samten will share his deep knowledge of the meaning of meditation and guide you through simple but profound meditation practices that you can immediately apply. Discover how to start a path to inner peace and mindfulness in your daily life. This event is free but we are asking for donations to cover travel costs and expenses. So that we can know who is attending, please "purchase" tickets (the default price is \$0) [HERE!](#)

Our American Roots, An Exploration of Cultures: A Four-Part Series continues this month with Latino Immigration

Issues – Navigating Identities and Borders: The Evolution of Latino Immigration and U.S. Policy
Tuesday, April 9, 5 p.m.

CNS New Hope Center, 602 Scarboro Rd.
Speaker: Arléne Amarante, Assistant Professor of Law, Lincoln Memorial University

Our American Roots is based on the premise that an "us vs. them" mentality is inescapable. As members of the human race, we are all more alike than we are different; However, there are differences among us – culture, language, beliefs, and values. If we can understand, respect, and appreciate these differences, we can bridge the gap between "us and them." Our American Roots is designed to build these bridges. For more information, visit <https://www.roanestate.edu/?13391-Our-American-Roots-An-Exploration-of-Cultures-A-Four-Part-Series>

This Week at ORUUC



Friday, April 5

11am Tai Chi Practice

Saturday, April 6

12pm Rental (Wedding)

3pm Ukulele

Sunday, April 7

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

8:30am Eggs and Pegs

10am Worship

11am High School

11am Together in Spirit (Canceled)

11:15am Circle of Trust I

11:15am Knitting & Crocheting Group (Canceled)

11:15am Newcomers (Canceled)

11:15am Reflections (Canceled)

12:30pm Buddhism Study Group

12:30pm Circle of Trust IX

3pm Line Dancing

4pm Circle of Trust XI

5-7pm Zentangle Group

5:30pm Circle of Trust X

Monday, April 8

11am Tai Chi Practice

Tuesday, April 9

6pm Presidents Council

6pm Depression & Anxiety Group

Wednesday, April 10

6:30am Breakfast Rotary

11am Tai Chi Practice

5:15pm Circle of Trust III

7pm Choir Practice

7:45pm Band Rehearsal

Thursday, April 11

12pm NWUUC & Launchpad Meeting

12:30pm Lunch Bunch

To view the church calendar anytime, visit <https://www.oruuc.org/members-section> Need password help? Contact the church office!



ORUUC is still collecting plastic lids for a potential future project. Please leave donated bottle caps and lids in the yellow tub in the church lobby. Questions? Ask Steven Albright or April Dixon.

ORUUC Board of Trustees 2023-24

President: Jason Fishel

Past President: Michele Thornton

President-Elect: Kara Raymond

Secretary: Nathaniel Bass

Treasurer: Brandon White

Members-at-Large:

Freddie Nechtow

Charles Davis

Jami Garner

Jen Stark

ORUUC Executive Team

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

Christine Rehder

Amanda Fishel

Donna Maloney

Jeannie Cuevas, Office Administrator

Coming up...

Sunday, April 14

We Are the Earth

Dr. Peter Thornton, Guest Speaker

Welcome to The Gift of
Interdependence

ORUUC

April Worship Series
Sundays at 10 a.m.
In person and on Zoom

Is there a way for humanity to align our needs with the needs of our planet? Can we harness the power of our individual and collective imagination to forge a future where all life can live well on Earth? Our guest speaker is Dr. Peter Thornton, a scientist in the Climate Change Science Institute and the Environmental Sciences Division of ORNL, will help us find hope in the face of the climate crisis.

The deadline to submit news for the next *Exponent* is Wednesday, April 10 at noon. Please send news, comments, and feedback to Rachel at communications@oruuc.org.



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Contact us at 865-483-6761
<http://www.oruuc.org/>

