

December 16-22,
2022

In this issue >>>

This Sunday (pg.2)

UPDATED Holiday Calendar (pg.3)

Covid Update (pg.10)

Church Calendar (pg. 11)



News from Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church

The Exponent



Winter Solstice and Christmas Eve Services Next Week

Wednesday, Dec. 21st 7 p.m. The Longest Night: A Solstice Celebration Celebrating the Winter Solstice may be the most ancient of human rituals. ORUUC has a long tradition of marking the turning of the year with a service that includes song and story, the lighting of a Yule Log, and acknowledging the blessings that emerge in the dawning light of a new year. **This service is in-person only.**

Saturday, Dec. 24th 6 p.m. Christmas Candlelight Service Step away from the talk of miracles and magic, the frantic busy-ness and forced merriment. Come into a calming celebration with music and story and candlelight, that just might wipe some of the tarnish off this season. Pre-service music begins at 5:45, and the service begins at 6. **This service is both in-person and on Zoom.**



Traditions That Sustain: Twenty Years of No Rehearse Pageants

Christine Rehder, Director of Faith Formation

The birth of Jesus is a story that's familiar to most people. His earthly parents, Joseph and Mary, are turned away from an inn and sent out in the cold to a barn. Jesus is born there, wrapped in rags, and placed in a manger. But something is special about this baby, he is adored by shepherds, animals, kings, and even celestial beings. On the surface, this is an ordinary event, but something deeper and more powerful has happened here, something extraordinary.

Given the ubiquity of this narrative, one could easily argue that we don't need to tell it, especially given that there are plenty of Jesus joints in this town.

And yet, for the last 20 years, ORUUC has told this story in our No Rehearse Pageant. Each year, with very little preparation, people attending our service that day put on a costume and become animals, stars, angels, and wise people. They

also become butterflies, a rainbow pony, and dragons (3 of them). It's silly, joyful, and lots of fun. For many in our congregation, it's one of the highlights of the year.

Over the course of about an hour, a group of people with little to no preparation come together to reenact one of the most iconic stories ever told. Usually a feat like this requires months of planning, hours of practice, and lots of repetition. The No Rehearse Pageant has none of these, and it shows. But what it does

offer is serendipity and joy in the midst of imperfection.

Over the years as I have participated and now organize this production, and despite the frivolity, I see the holy in this endeavor. Not because it depicts the birth of God, but because it makes the ordinary extraordinary.

I imagine it's what it feels like to go to a dirty, messy barn and then encounter the divine.



This Sunday, Dec. 18

No Rehearse Christmas Pageant

The traditions that sustain us include the ancient story of Christmas. With animals and poor shepherds mixing with kings (and maybe even the Divine) this tale is ripe for humor and frolic. Come jam with the fam and choose to watch, or participate in, the pageantry and poetry of the season.



Worship with us in person or on Zoom at 10:00 a.m.
Zoom door opens at 9:45 a.m.

Go to [Sunday Worship Info — ORUUC](#) for Zoom information.

The Order of Service may be found [here](#).

Email or Text Prayer Requests to prayers@oruuc.org
December Split the Plate: [Planned Parenthood of TN and Northern MS](#)

The CDC Covid-19 Community Levels are Low this week in Anderson, Knox, Roane, and Morgan counties. Masks are not required in the building; however, we encourage you to do what makes you feel comfortable.

Stars and Angels Needed on Zoom!



Zoom participants—would you like to be a star or angel this Sunday? Get creative and be ready to show your stars and angels on Zoom in the Gallery View when prompted!



**Don't forget to pick up
your tamales before
or after worship
Sunday!**

December Split the Plate: Planned Parenthood of TN and Northern MS



The first Planned Parenthood chapter in the state was formed in Oak Ridge in 1961, and many of the first volunteers and board members were from ORUUC. Not only does Planned Parenthood provide birth control, STD testing, cancer screenings, AIDS testing and wellness visits, they provide truthful, accurate information regarding human sexuality and reproduction. In this age of misinformation, the truth is a most valuable resource.

Since the Supreme Court decision to abolish Roe v. Wade, PPTMN has hired

Navigators to provide information about other states that will still provide abortions to their patients; they are also building a new clinic in southeast Illinois to serve Tennesseans in a state that is close to Tennessee that does not oppose abortions. For more information, visit <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-tennessee-and-north-mississippi>.

Please give as you are willing and able. [GIVE HERE](#) or text "ORUUC" to 73256.

Updated 2022 Holiday Calendar

Sunday, Dec. 18 The 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 (*No Zoom*). *Childcare provided.*

Saturday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service at 6 p.m.
in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. Come at 5:45 p.m. to sing!

Sunday, Dec. 25 Christmas Day! A mellow gathering in the Social Hall. We'll share music and readings to cheer our hearts, and enjoy fellowship to warm our spirits. Feel free (but not obligated) to bring a snack to share. ***This service is in-person only. No Zoom. No Nursery.***

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 for a delicious meal of Sausage and Potato Goulash, Fresh Fruit, and Red Velvet Cookie Bars.

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!** Ring in 2023 with friends! Bring games, finger food, and drinks to share.

Sunday, Jan. 1 Embracing Possibility in Times of Change
Watch this Sunday Service whenever you roll out of bed on New Year's Day! This pre-recorded service features UUA President, the Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, ORUUC staff, and ministers in this exploration of liminal space. ***This service will be available to be streamed anytime after 9 a.m. on New Year's Day at <http://www.oruuc.org/sunday-worship>. The church will be closed Sunday, Jan. 1.***



Holiday Announcements



Sign up this week for the **New Year's Eve Coffeehouse Talent Show!** The deadline is **Monday, Dec. 26.** Any kind of rehearsed, presentational act is possible, from the silly to the sublime. All ages and all kinds of talent are encouraged. To sign up, contact Nancy Starr: email starroakridge@gmail.com, mobile 865-742-9993.

All are invited Saturday, Dec. 31 to a Supper and Social beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Social Hall, followed by the 7 p.m. program.

After the Coffeehouse, stay for the **New Year's Eve party!**



Bring your games, finger food, and drinks to share. We will have our token bubbly at midnight while we watch the ball drop! For more information, contact Betsy Bauer or Susan Rosenbaum.

Here's a holiday message from our UUA President, Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqgtwthaFERS>



THANK YOU!



Thanks to everyone who helped with this year's **Angel Tree!** We are making a difference in a lot of children's lives! I love our church family! ~Susan Rosenbaum
Thank YOU, Susan, for coordinatng this effort each year!



So many wonderful, warm hats and mittens, socks and scarves, some handmade creations, and a few fun reindeer antlers, too, on the **Mitten Tree** this year! The children at the Blossom Center thank you!

Announcements



SOPHIE LABELLE

INTERNATIONAL TRANS AGENDA SPEAKING TOUR

SUNDAY, JAN. 29, 2023
2:00 PM IN THE SANCTUARY
AT



<https://www.serioustransvibes.com/>



**See Sophie Labelle at ORUUC
Sunday, Jan. 29 at 2 p.m.**

Sophie Labelle is a neurodivergent trans cartoonist and novelist from Montréal, in French Canada. She is the author of the webcomic *Assigned Male*, which has been running since 2014, and the Ciel novel series. She likes to collect rocks and lives in Finland with her Finnish husband. "The Best of Assigned Male" was recently published by Hachette UK.

During her talk, she will speak about her art and activism, her artistic process, comic-making, community building and empowerment through art. She also has a bunch of great jokes about TERFs (trans-exclusionary radical feminists). She will answer questions from the audience and sign books at the end. For digital books, children's books, novels, and more, check out

<https://www.serioustransvibes.com/>

Follow Sophie on Instagram at

<https://www.instagram.com/labellesophie/?hl=en>

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

PASSIONATEPENNYPINCHER.COM

Looking for a fun way to give back this month? Try this Reverse Advent Calendar! Once you've collected all of the non-perishable food items listed, drop them off at church for the pantry. You'll make a difference!

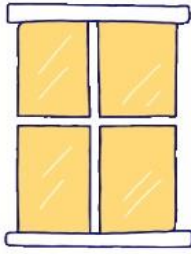


**Stone Soup
Friday, Dec. 30
5:30-6:30 p.m./
until supplies run out**

Menu

Sausage and Potato Goulash
Fresh Fruit
Red Velvet Cookie Bars

Caring for Each Other

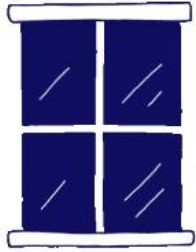


Are you going through a difficult time? Are you in a situation where support and caring are needed--someone to do grocery shopping, take you to a doctor's appointment, or provide a meal following an upcoming surgery? Contact the church office: (865) 483-6761 or office@oruuc.org or a Caring Coordinator!

Caring Coordinators for December

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

Christina Elliott Christina.r.elliott@gmail.com 865-214-0756



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.

Thoughts from The Mountain Sarah Gunter, CON advisor



This weekend I had great fun with Brandon White and Robyn Knouff Naughton taking the high schoolers up to "The Mountain" for the fall Mountain Con at The Mountain Learning and Retreat Center along with a huge group of 13 kids.

For those who do not know, The Mountain is a beautiful retreat, center composed of cabins, a large, and housing along with a huge community farm founded by Unitarian Universalists who bought the property originally built in the 30s as a retreat for girls to learn outdoor activities. The Southeast UUs bought the property in 1979 and envisioned as a UU retreat center where UUs from all over could come and be together. The property is on top of Ole Scaly Mountain in Highlands, NC.

The center offers Mountain Cons twice a year for second graders up to senior high and our church has always been a supporter by sending youth groups up there, along with trusted and responsible adults, who advise the kids during the weekend.

They also have family summer camps, farm camp, adventure camp, and even adult summer camp in the summers which fill up quickly.

They are currently looking for young adults to work this summer at the summer camps. They provide housing and pay. The Mountain is also known as a place that features some communal living for those who volunteer a certain amount of hours a week and don't mind living in quite minimal but beautiful surroundings. There will be a need for summer cooks, farmers, and other staff. It's a great opportunity and a way to connect with the wider UU community.

The magic that happens on the mountain has inspired me lately so much especially as our church is going through so many changes.

If your kids have never been and you are interested please reach out to me. ~Sarah Gunter

Weekly 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 Albright.



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.



Join the Ukulele Group!

We're performing at the ORUUC Coffeehouse New Year's Eve! We're planning to perform "City of New Orleans" which should be a great sing-a-long. Been thinking about joining in the fun? Now's a good time! Practice Saturday, Dec. 17 at 3:00 in the Sanctuary at ORUUC. Contact Abbie Moore abbie.moore@icloud.com or Linda Osborne lindadrlu@bellsouth.net for more information.

Coming Up at ORUUC



Minfulness Workshop Joyce McClaren, Facilitator

Monday, Dec. 19. 7:00– 8:30 p.m.

Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church

In-person (masks welcome), Maximum 20 participants

Reserve your space at:

www.themomentcenter.com

Mindfulness techniques are proven to reduce stress, relieve pain and increase our capacity to enjoy everyday life. **Workshop Content:** What is Mindfulness? Common misconceptions, Science of mindfulness, Practicing movement, Meditation techniques, Practicing focused attention techniques, Dialogue, Application to daily life, Resources

There are still a few spots left for this FREE, 90-minute workshop hosted by Joyce McLaren. To register, go to [The Moment Center](http://TheMomentCenter.com). A portion of any donations will go to ORUUC.

Save the Date!

eggs & pegs

breakfast cribbage meet-up
Sunday, January 8, 8:30AM

ORUUC Social Hall

The poster features a yellow background. On the left, there is an illustration of a hand pouring red liquid into a bowl with two yellow eggs. On the right, there is an illustration of a hand holding three playing cards: the Ace of Spades, the Ace of Hearts, and the Ace of Clubs.

Eggs and Pegs--A Cribbage Breakfast Meet Up! Sunday, Jan. 8 at 8:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome! It will be an opportunity for folks to learn cribbage rules and/or play with more experienced players. Breakfast will be provided, but feel free to bring a dish to share. *Questions? Talk to Brandon White, Christina Elliott, Jane Flanagan, or Shelaine Curd.*

Board of Trustees Update

ORUUC's 2022-2023 Board of Trustees



Michele Thornton
President

Board term expires in 2024



Jim Nutaro
Past-President

Board term expires in 2023



Jason Fishel
President-Elect



Brandon White
Treasurer



Nathaniel Bass
Secretary



Ethan Coon
Member-At-Large

Board term expires in 2023



Jami Garner
Member-At-Large



Freddie Nechtow
Member-At-Large

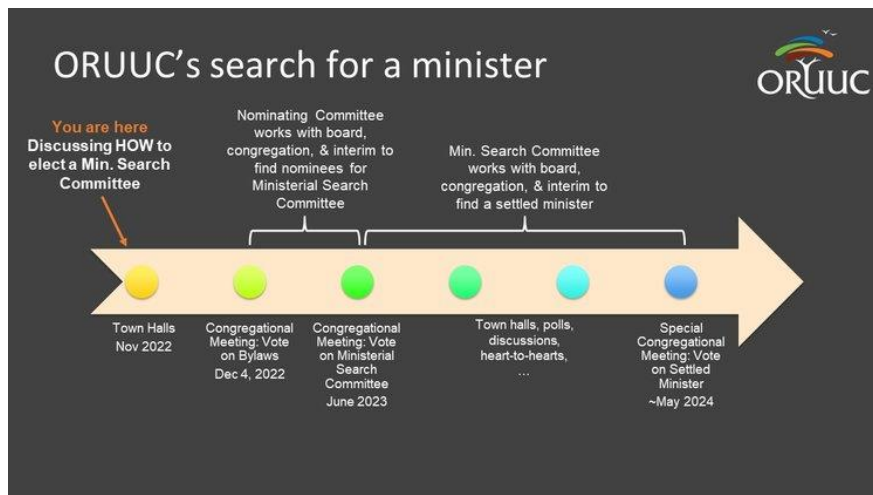
Board term expires in 2024



Charles Davis
Member-At-Large

Board term expires in 2024

On Sunday, Dec. 4, the Board held a special meeting to formalize the vacancy created by the resignation of President-Elect Sue Lasky last month. The result: **Jason Fishel has stepped in to fill the President-Elect vacancy. Nathaniel Bass will fill the role of Secretary. Jami Garner has agreed to fill the Member-At-Large vacancy created by Nathaniel's reposition.** Each of those positions will be part of the slate of nominees elected by ORUUC members during the June 2023 Congregational Meeting.



Worship Coordinator Gina Grubb created a new **Ministerial Search Information** page in the **Members Section** of our website, which will be updated regularly. <http://www.oruuc.org/min-search-hub> (Password ORUUC809)

The Mountain Retreat & Learning Center



Thanks to Mountain CON Advisors Robin Naughton and Sarah Gunter for sharing photos from last weekend's Fall High School CON.

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

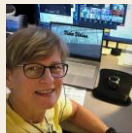
Interested in learning more about Mountain CON programs? Check out their website:

<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. Advisors are required to undergo a background check every two years.

No Rehearsal Necessary

by Gina Grubb, Worship Coordinator



I grew up with Methodist church traditions, including hearing (and later performing in) Handel's Messiah, a glorious classical story-telling of Jesus in music and verse. I've visited numerous nativity scenes, both artificial and live, and I've witnessed a variety of reenactments of Jesus's birth at various churches. They were all special and beautiful and meaningful to me in their own ways.

The story of Jesus's birth, however factual it may or may not be, is truly a story of strength and determination and faith and hope and love. It still inspires me to this day. And the songs we sing this time of year still fill my heart with joy.

But, if I'm being completely honest, the rendition of this story in ORUUC's No-Rehearse Pageant puts a whole new spin on things for me. After all, Mary and Joseph were winging it (with a little help from some angels), so it only makes sense that the characters in the story-telling wing it, too (with a little help from the narrators). Right?

And of course, there were all kinds of creatures in Bethlehem when Jesus was born, many that were never mentioned in the Bible. But ORUUC, being the inclusive community that we are and not wanting to leave anyone out, has been expanding the cast of characters for years. I had never considered all the possibilities! But, again, that only makes sense! We widen that circle to share the joy!

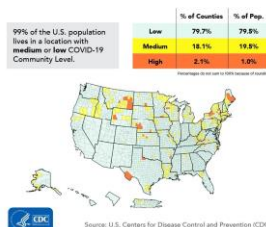
This Sunday morning is our annual No-Rehearse Pageant, a sustaining tradition at ORUUC that brings all ages together to embrace our diversity and share laughter and tears, all through the telling of one of humanity's most endearing stories...the birth of Jesus.

Anyone who wants to is invited to participate, even if you are joining us on Zoom. (We could use some stars and angels on Zoom!) However you show up, I know your spirit will be filled. No rehearsal necessary! I hope to see you Sunday morning!

ORUUC Covid-19 Update

Covid-19 Community Levels are a tool from the CDC to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be Low, Medium, or High, and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area. Take precautions to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 based on the COVID-19 Community Level in your area. [COVID-19 by County | CDC](#)

The CDC's Covid-19 Community Levels this week for Anderson, Knox, Morgan and Roane counties are LOW. Masks are not required at ORUUC in the building; eating and drinking is permitted indoors. For the entire report, check out our webpage: <http://www.oruuc.org/phased-reopening-plan>



This Week at ORUUUC



Friday, Dec. 16

11am Tai Chi Practice

Saturday, Dec. 17

12pm No Rehearse Pageant Setup

3pm Ukulele

Sunday, Dec. 18

No Rehearse Pageant

10am Worship Service

11am High School (Canceled)

11am Together in Spirit (Canceled)

11:15am Circle of Trust I

11:15am Newcomers (Canceled)

11:15am Reflections (Canceled)

12:30pm Buddhism Study Group

12:30pm Circle of Trust IX

2pm(3-5pm) Line Dancing

4pm Circle of Trust XI

5:30pm Circle of Trust X

Monday, Dec. 19

11am Tai Chi Practice

6:45pm Choir Practice

6:50pm Meditation Learning and Practice Group

7-8:30pm Mindfulness Meditation

Workshop with Joyce McClaren (advanced registration required:

www.themomentcenter.com.)

The deadline to submit news for next week's Exponent in Wednesday at noon! Please send news, comments, and feedback to Rachel at communications@oruuc.org.

Tuesday, Dec. 20

Staff Holiday Party

6pm Board Meeting

6pm Depression & Anxiety Support Group

Wednesday, Dec. 21

11am Tai Chi

11am Circle of Trust VIII

7pm Winter Solstice Service

7:45pm Band Rehearsal

Thursday, Dec. 22

12noon NWUUC & Launchpad Meeting

6pm Potluck (Canceled)

6:50pm Meditation Learning and Practice Group

Friday, Dec. 23

Last Day the Church Office is open until Tuesday, Jan. 3

11am Tai Chi

Circles of Trust: If you are planning to meet during the holiday week when the office is closed, please let the office know in advance. The church doors will be locked on Sundays at 11:30 a.m. starting this Sunday, Dec. 18 through Sunday, January 1.



809 Oak Ridge Turnpike
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
Contact us at 865-483-6761
<http://www.oruuc.org/>



The ORUUC Board of Trustees

President: Michele Thornton

Past President: Jim Nutaro

President-Elect: Jason Fishel

Secretary: Nathaniel Bass

Treasurer: Brandon White

Members-at-Large:

Freddie Nechtow

Charles Davis

Jami Garner

Ethan Coon

The ORUUC Executive Team

Rev. Lisa Schwartz

Christine Rehder

Christina Elliott

Amanda Fishel

Jeannie Cuevas, Office Administrator

Coming up...



Sunday, Dec. 25

A Christmas Unboxing Day Service

A mellow gathering in the Social Hall.

No Zoom. No Nursery. No Faith

Formation.

Sunday, Jan. 1

Embracing Possibility in Times of

Change Stream this service anytime

after 9 a.m. at [www.oruuc.org/sunday-](http://www.oruuc.org/sunday-worship)

[worship](http://www.oruuc.org/sunday-worship). The church will be closed.