

December 9-15,
2022

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News from Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church

The Exponent



Angel Tree Gifts are Due Back at Church This Sunday, Dec. 11

Thanks to all who took a name from the Angel Tree in the church lobby. This year, **42 local children will have a brighter Christmas because of your generosity!**

Wrapped and tagged gifts are due this Sunday, Dec. 11! Please attach the original ornament you took off the tree to your packages. If you have multiple gifts, please make sure the child's name is on each box or bag. Thank you!



Expectant Waiting...

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz, Interim Minister

I read a piece by Tracy Hartman recently that reminded me of one of my favorite children's book characters: Beverly Cleary's Ramona, who on her first day of school is told by the teacher to "wait here, for the present." What Ramona hears, of course, is "wait here for the gift," and it becomes hard to get her to move out of her assigned place as she



(with decreasing patience) waits (and waits) to be given a present.

This season is sometimes called "Advent," which means "expectant waiting." In the Christian tradition this fits well with the image of a pregnant Mary, whose due date rapidly approaches. Whether waiting for new birth or for anticipated gifts, waiting is hard. And with signs all around insisting, "'tis the season

to be JOLLY!" the forced merriment makes waiting even more difficult.

Axial tilt (the reason for the season, after all) makes darkness encroach, and maybe it brings on Seasonal Affective Disorder, or just the return of garden-variety

depression. The world is an increasingly complicated place, and waiting to see the return of a small spark of light can seem excruciating. And neuroscience tells us

that the human brain is hard wired for taking in negative and scary information, as a defense mechanism to keep us from danger.

I don't think there's a quick or easy fix. But I do think we can make some small shifts in

(continued on Page 6)

This Sunday, Dec. 11

Hanukkah: The Light Within

Hanukkah is the tale of a small community siding with love and light, resisting seemingly overwhelming odds. Though this story of liberation and rededication is ancient, it holds truths for today. ORUUC youth will enact the ancient story in a new way, and interim minister Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz will explore the miracles in everyday acts of courage.



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.



The Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge Sisterhood Invites you to a
Hanukah Open House and Gift Shop Sale
Sunday, Dec. 11
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
101 W. Madison Lane

Come and learn the history of Hanukah, listen to festive Hanukah music, join in Israeli dancing, or enjoy a Hanukah treat. Then browse the gift shop for beautiful gifts, including designer jewelry and holiday ornaments. Children will enjoy a Hanukah craft, learn to play dreidel, and hear a wonderful Hanukah story.

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.

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!**



Holiday Announcements

Cocoa and Caroling

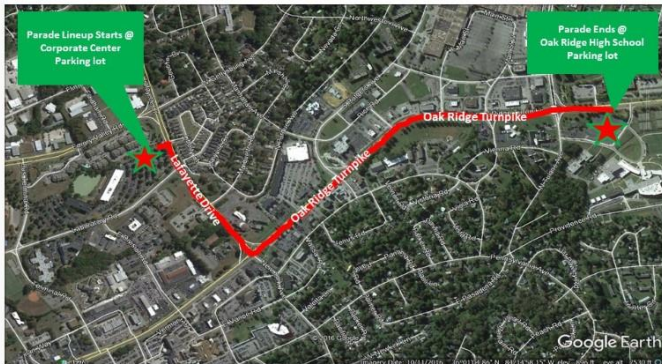
SATURDAY,
DEC. 10
2-4 P.M.



Join us tomorrow (Saturday, Dec. 10) at 2 p.m. at ORUUC for Cocoa and Caroling! Create your own holiday treat from the hot cocoa bar and sing songs of the season with friends. Then at 4 p.m., head over with **Multigenerational Coordinator Whitney Cole** to the Corporate Center on Lafayette to line up for the **Oak Ridge Christmas Parade!** ORUUC is participating in the Oak Ridge Christmas Parade again this year! **How can YOU help? Bring candy and walk with us!** It would be great to have at least a dozen people--the more, the merrier! Contact **at whit.cole79@gmail.com for more info!**

CHRISTMAS
PARADE ROUTE

DECEMBER 10th
AT 6 P.M.



Sending love to all who are:



GRIEVING A LOSS
DURING THE HOLIDAYS



FEELING LONELY



FACING FAMILY
TROUBLES



STUGGLING IN
SOME WAY



FEELING ANXIOUS



FEELING STRESSED
DURING THE HOLIDAYS



The Annual **Service of Memory and Hope** at First Presbyterian Church in Oak Ridge will be next **Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 6:30 p.m.** <http://www.fpcor.org/>



New Year's Eve COFFHOUSE TALENT SHOW

SATURDAY, DEC. 31
6:30 P.M. SUPPER AND SOCIAL
7 P.M. PROGRAM
AT
ORUUC

Start getting your act together for the New Year's Eve Coffehouse Talent Show! All are invited Saturday, Dec. 31 to a Supper and Social beginning at 6:30 p.m., followed by the 7 p.m. program. Any kind of rehearsed, presentational act is possible, from the silly to the sublime. All ages and all kinds of talent are encouraged. **Advance sign-up is required for all performers; the deadline is Monday, Dec. 26. To sign up, contact Nancy Starr, email starroakridge@gmail.com, mobile 865-742-9993.**



ORUUC is still accepting donations for the **Mitten Tree** in the Hearth Room, on behalf of the Blossom Center, a local nonprofit daycare in Oak Ridge. **Toddler to school-age sizes of new socks, knit hats, gloves and mittens are appreciated! The deadline to drop off items is December 14.** Questions? Contact Jason Fishel.

After the Coffehouse, stay for the



8 p.m. - midnight

Bring your games, finger food, and drinks to share. We will have our token bubbly at midnight while we watch the ball drop!

Community Outreach



PFLAG Winter Social at ORUUC

The nights may be long and dark, but lights will be bright at the PFLAG Winter Social on Dec. 12, 2022. All are welcome to come and enjoy the holidays this season brings.

The gathering will be held at the Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church, 809 Oak Ridge Turnpike. Oak Ridge, TN. We'll party from 6:45 - 8 pm. If you would like to share a favorite holiday finger food, please bring it ready to serve.

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, and the Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge.

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. For more information contact Anne Backus at backusanne@comcast.net.



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

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

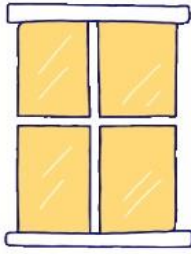
PASSIONATEPENNYPINCHER.COM

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!



ORUUC has KARM coat vouchers! Pick one up in the church office TODAY! Coat vouchers expire TOMORROW, Dec. 10!

Caring for Each Other

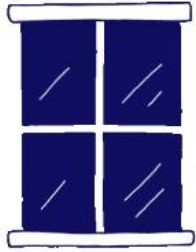


Are you going through a difficult time? Are you in a situation where support and caring are needed--someone to do grocery shopping, take you to a doctor's appointment, or provide a meal following an upcoming surgery? Contact the church office: (865) 483-6761 or office@oruuc.org or a Caring Coordinator!

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.

Expectant Waiting... (continued from Page 1)



practices and perspective that can help make it through the season. Connecting with a community, being in the company of other people even virtually, makes a measurable difference, psychologists say. (Check Pages 2 and 3 in this issue of *The Exponent* to be reminded of the many ways you can connect at ORUUC this season.)

Here's a practice I learned a couple of years ago that I've found very nourishing. In his book *Hardwiring Happiness*, neuropsychologist Rick Hanson recommends stopping and taking a moment (at least five to ten seconds a day) to let the positive in, to notice it and appreciate it. Hanson calls it "taking in the good."

Especially during this frantic and complicated time (call it Advent, or call it gloomy weather season) it's a good time to add this practice to your daily routine. Can you take five seconds to savor the first sip of morning coffee or tea? The feeling of the hot shower on the back of your neck? The beauty of Christmas lights, even reflected in the rain-splashed streets?

Of course it's also OK to feel sad at this time of year (or anytime), to feel mad or guilty or afraid. It's important to feel all the feels, as they say, and just let them be – not try to change them. Even if you're awash in those more challenging emotions (especially if that's where you are) practicing "taking in the good" is a step towards wholeness.

It only takes five seconds. But remember: It takes five seconds. Five seconds of full attention to small gifts. Five seconds of "taking in the good." Five seconds to appreciate your blessings, five seconds to practice humility, five seconds to shift your perspective. As one of my favorite Christmas songs says, "how silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given." May your waiting be rewarded by quiet joy in this season of revelation.

Rev. Lisa

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! Beginners and Teens welcome! Upcoming practices are scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 17 at 3 p.m. Please join us! Contact Abbie Moore abbie.moore@icloud.com or Linda Osborne lindadrlu@bellsouth.net for more information.



Save the Date!

eggs & pegs



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

ORUUC Social Hall

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.



It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like SpamBots..they're sending TEXTS, too!

Just a reminder that email scammers and bots work overtime during the holidays. *No one on the ORUUC staff will ever email OR text 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

TIME TO PICK UP YOUR TAMALES!



TOMORROW, SATURDAY, DEC. 10 DURING COCOA & CAROLING (2-4 P.M.)

OR

SUNDAY, DEC. 18 BEFORE AND AFTER THE NO REHEARSE PAGEANT

OR

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE TO MAKE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.

Mindfulness techniques are proven to reduce stress, relieve pain and increase our capacity to enjoy everyday life.

In this 90-minute workshop we will learn and practice a variety of mindfulness techniques and explore their applicability in our daily lives.



Who Should Attend

- ❖ Those curious about mindfulness or meditation
- ❖ Those wishing to refresh their existing practice
- ❖ Those who think:
 - "My mind wanders too much to meditate."
 - "I can't settle down enough to meditate."
 - "I try to meditate but I don't know if I'm doing it right."

December 19, 2022
7.00– 8.30 pm

Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church
Social Hall
809 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge

In-person (masks welcome)
Maximum 20 participants
Reserve your space at:

www.themomentcenter.com

The format is participatory in nature. Individuals are invited to interact as much or as little as feels comfortable.

Workshop Content

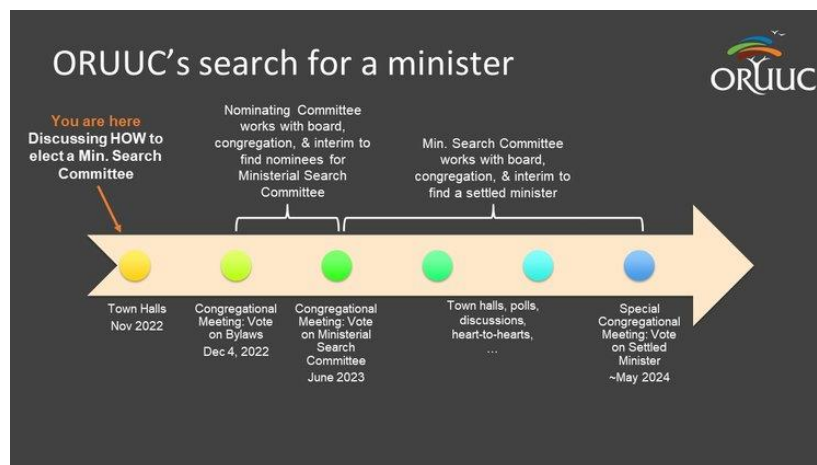
- What is Mindfulness?
- Common misconceptions
- Science of mindfulness
- Practicing movement meditation techniques
- Practicing focused attention techniques
- Dialogue
- Application to daily life
- Resources

About the Facilitator Joyce McLaren is an Oak Ridge native who now lives in Golden, Colorado, where she works at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Her teacher-training in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is from the Mindfulness Center at Brown University. Joyce is also a formal Zen student and board member at the Zen Center of Denver. She offers a variety of workshops to the public through The Moment Center. Her simple intent is to support the mindfulness practice of those who are interested, with the aim of easing suffering in all forms.

BROWN UNIVERSITY



This FREE, 90-minute workshop is hosted by Joyce McLaren. To register, go to [The Moment Center](http://www.themomentcenter.com). A portion of any donations will go to ORUUC.



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

BOARD UPDATE: Last Sunday, 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 will step 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 come to a Congregational Vote in June 2023.**

The Mountain

Retreat & Learning Center

ORUUC's High Schoolers are heading to SeniorCON this weekend—13 of them, plus two PALs!

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.



REMINDER: Unless it's raining, elementary age children go outside to play on Sunday mornings after the Story for All Ages. Please dress appropriately!



Join "Father Goose" Michael Raymond Thursday, Dec. 15 at 10:30 a.m. at the Oak Ridge Public Library Auditorium for this free program! For more information, go to [ORPL Children's Programming](#).

We promote positive parent/child interaction, as well as language and early brain development through traditional rhymes, circle games, musical activities, and simple play. We provide a meeting place and fellowship for caregivers of young children, especially those new to the community and far from home. Nothing is charged for Mother Goose; it is freely and lovingly offered to all.

Join us on the First and Third Thursdays each month at 10:30 a.m. with your baby, toddler, and/or preschooler for bouncing, tickling, clapping, and action rhymes, musical circle games, simple songs, and play.



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 for more information.

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

Announcements

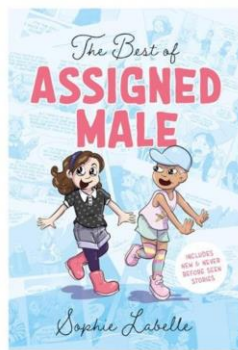


Oak Ridge UU's Improving Democracy Meets Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. at ORUUC

The Shared Ministry Group, ORUU's Improving Democracy, has been meeting throughout this year with the goal of obtaining a congregational resolution supporting the National Popular Vote movement. The group got enough signatures from church members to hold a special congregational meeting in October, but ended up being six members short of a quorum. ORUUC is now meeting with Board members who will be advising the group on creating an AIW: Action of Immediate Witness. Here's some information from the UUA about AIWs:

<https://www.uua.org/action/process/planning-aiw-ga>

Anyone is welcome to attend meetings and join the group. If you'd like more information, contact Tim Holt at timholt39@comcast.net.



See Sophie Labelle on her International Trans Agenda Speaking Tour Sunday, Jan. 29 at 2 p.m. at ORUUC

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.

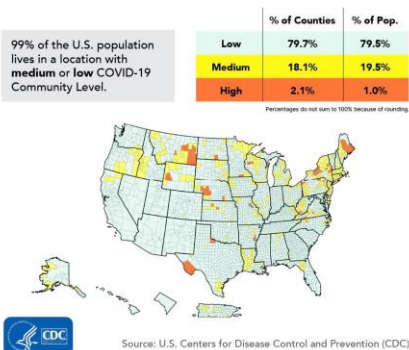
During her talk, she will speak about her art and activism, her artistic process, comic-making, community building and empowerment through art. She also has a bunch of great jokes about TERFs. She will answer questions from the audience and sign books at the end.

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

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>



Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

This Week at ORUUC



Friday, Dec. 9

Senior High Fall MountainCON

11am Tai Chi Practice
6-8pm Democratic Party Christmas Party (space reserved 4:30-9pm)

Saturday, Dec. 10

Senior High Fall MountainCON

2pm Tabletop Adventures Group
2-4pm Cocoa and Caroling (See Page 3.)
4:30pm Line up for Oak Ridge Christmas Parade (Parade starts at 6pm. See Page 3.)

Sunday, Dec. 11

Senior High Fall MountainCON

8:15am Circle of Trust VII
10am Worship Service
11am High School
11:15am Reflections
11am Together in Spirit
11:15am Circle of Trust IV
11:15am Newcomers
11:30pm Circle of Trust II
12pm Circle of Trust V
12:30pm Buddhism Study Group
1pm Circle of Trust VI
2pm(3-5pm) Line Dancing

Monday, Dec. 12

11am Tai Chi Practice
6:15pm Set up/Clean up PFLAG
6:45pm PFLAG (Winter Gathering. See Page 5.)
6:50pm Meditation Learning and Practice Group

Tuesday, Dec. 13

6pm Presidents' Council
6pm Depression & Anxiety Support Group
6:30pm Service of Memory and Hope at First Presbyterian Church
7pm Improving Democracy (See Page 10.)

Wednesday, Dec. 14

6:30am Breakfast Rotary
11am Tai Chi
5:15pm Circle of Trust III
6:45pm Choir Practice
7:45pm Band Rehearsal

Thursday, Dec. 15

1:30pm Executive Team Meeting
6pm Potluck (Canceled)
6:50pm Meditation Learning and Practice Group



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



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.

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. 18
No Rehearse Pageant

Sunday, Dec. 25
Christmas! (No Nursery during Worship)

No Faith Formation Dec. 18, 25 or Jan. 1.