

March 15-28, 2024

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News from Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church

The Exponent



Investing In Your Community

Shelaine Curd, Endowment Fund Committee

This week, the sun will cross the celestial equator on March 19th, and we will celebrate the vernal (spring) equinox. The days will slowly get longer; we will stretch from the slumber of winter and start new projects and beginnings. I hope each of you takes a few moments to be grateful for the lengthening of the days and time that will be vested in growth, whether gardening, flowers, or finishing the spring semester of school.

As you are considering ways to invest in your community and demonstrate UU principles, please consider submitting an Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist endowment fund grant application [see link]. The Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church Endowment Fund Charter was Adopted by the Congregation of the Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church at a Congregational meeting on June 17, 2001. Since then, the EF Committee has maintained its objective to make attractive, socially responsible investments that result in the

growth of the assets of the Endowment Fund. These investments and grant awards are shared during each of the Congregational Meetings.

The objective of the Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church Endowment Fund is to provide objects of enduring value to the church or support activities that promote, provide, or enhance the church experience of the members of ORUUC or ORUUC's reputation in the community. The Endowment Committee asks that requests for support not typically overlap existing church activities or operations. Proposals should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the church and positively affect the community.

We encourage ORUUC members to consider including ORUUC in their wills and estate planning to preserve these opportunities for the future of ORUUC. Please talk with any Endowment Fund Committee member for information on how to do that.

Endowment Fund Grant Applications are due by March 31 at 5 p.m. Submit your application online here: [Endowment Grant Application - 2024](#) or pick up a paper copy in the church office.

Consider including ORUUC in your estate planning. For more information, speak with an Endowment Fund Committee Member: Christina Elliott, Shelaine Curd, Brandon White, Allyson Rayfield, Janet Fryer, or Steve McAtee.



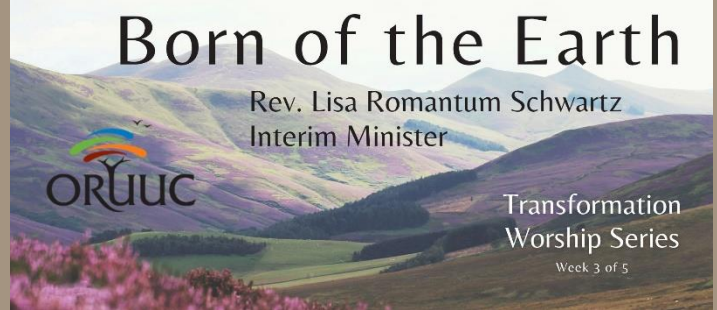
This Sunday, March 17

Born of the Earth

An interdependent world is like an immense web, and every action has consequences for the rest of the web. When we recognize the connections between the parts of the living earth it can restore a sense of balance and transform our lives. Cuban dancer Elier Estrada is a special guest as we celebrate the emergence of Spring!

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

March 17, 2024

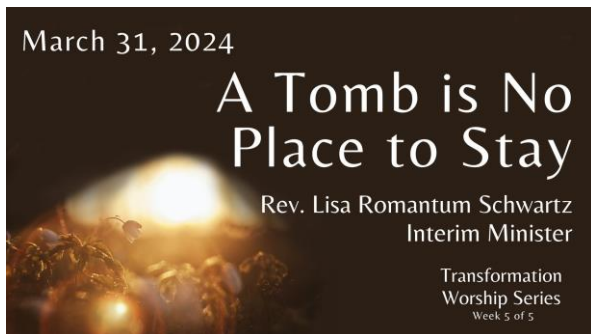


March Split the Plate Offering: [The Blossom Center for Childhood Excellence](#)

After worship, please stay for coffee and treats in the Social Hall, and a multigenerational Faith Formation hour—creative time with air dry clay for all ages. Regular Faith Formation classes are canceled for Spring Break.

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.

Looking ahead...



Easter tells a story of brokenness, rife with suffering and shame. It is the ancient story generations have told again and again, written in blood. Perhaps this tale of fragility and darkness and wide-open wonder is especially relevant today. Interim Minister, the Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz, leads worship on this final Sunday in March.

March Split the Plate Offering: Blossom Center for Childhood Excellence



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 Split the Plate offering goes to the Blossom Center for Childhood Excellence.

Blossom Center is a non-profit childcare facility serving approximately 80 children in Oak Ridge and surrounding areas. The Center's program is academically oriented, intended to bridge the gap between home and school in order to improve education outcomes, especially for underprivileged children.

Blossom Center is open during extended hours when other childcare facilities are closed, and allows children to attend based on a sliding tuition scale commensurate with family income, making it the premier facility of its sort in the area. They have also partnered with Alpha Kappa Alpha to pack backpacks of food for area children.

For more information, visit <https://www.blossomcenter.org/>.

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

March Worship Series

Transformation



March 3: ***Kindling the Power of Transformation*** Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

March 10: ***Be Like Water***

Rev. Laura Bogle, Guest Minister

No Faith Formation classes during Spring Break. Multi-Gen Faith Formation Hour: Watercolors in the Social Hall.

March 17: ***Born of the Earth***

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

No Faith Formation classes during Spring Break.
Multi-Gen Faith Formation Hour: Air dry clay.

March 24: ***The Colors of Spring***

Learn about the Hindu festival of Holi and enjoy the colors of spring in this Multi-Gen service.

March 31: ***A Tomb is No Place to Stay***

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

**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.*

Nursery is available during Worship and the FF hour.

Announcements



Photo courtesy Shelaine Curd from last game, March 12

The 2024 Winter Co-Ed Volleyball season has come to a close with a great final game this week. The ORUUC team appreciated the support! Next up— Softball season! Keep an eye on announcements here and in the ORUUC Facebook Group and get involved!

Tax Day is only a month away!



It's tax time! Need a tax statement detailing your charitable giving to ORUUC in 2023? **Call Jeannie in the church office at 865-483-6761 or email office@oruuc.org and she will print a copy and mail it to you. OR you can log into your Realm account and download the information.** Go to <https://onrealm.org/oruuc/Account/Start> Once you've logged in, select "Giving" and then on the right of your screen, click on the "2023 Contribution Statement" tab. Once the report is generated, you may choose to download or print a copy.



Contact Steven Albright for more information.
All are welcome!



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

Announcements



Can Artificial Intelligence Bridge Divides, Or Will it Separate Us Further? Oak Ridge Periodic Tables and the "Healing Starts Here" grant initiative from the New Pluralists combined forces last year to help get the "Secret City" talking again about issues that matter. On Sunday, March 17 at 5 p.m., join us for dinner, followed by a short demonstration of how ChatGPT works, then we'll generate a few questions and test the AI at our tables before coming back together as a large group to share what we've uncovered and how we feel about the conversations we had – both with AI and with each other.

To learn more about this event, visit [Oak Ridge Periodic Tables](https://www.oakridgeperiodictables.org).



Community Unitarian Universalist Church
2875 E. Parker Rd. Plano, Texas 75074-7503
(972) 424-8989 info@communityuuchurch.org
<https://www.communityuuchurch.org>

Feb. 22, 2024

Oak Ridge UUC
809 Oak Ridge Turnpike
Oak Ridge, TN 37830

Thank you so much for your support in our time of need last summer. Albeit with a bit more security now, we are going strong and have had no troubles since, except our Pride Flag keeps disappearing.

We are inviting any fellow UU's who might be interested to join us in person or in spirit for the total eclipse April 8th, 2024 as a fund-raiser to address our increased expenses. We have a large back lot that can be used for overnight stays for motor homes, trailers or other portable lodging. No hookups, but water is available from a garden hose, portable toilets will be provided, sites are available from Friday night 4/5 through Monday night 4/8. Two of our members who are amateur astronomers will be making short presentations, and will provide safe telescopic viewing of the eclipse. The eclipse starts at our location at 12:23 PM CDT Monday Apr. 8, totality 1:40-1:44 PM, ends 3:03 PM (e.g. <https://nationaleclipse.com/cities/dallas.texas.html>). An eclipse-themed service will be held Sunday Apr. 7th 10:30am-noon. Sites may be reserved at <https://cuucplano.breezechms.com/form/9ea51b>, \$55/night for up to 4 nights.

Please let your congregation know about this opportunity, and feel free to post the enclosed flyer at your church, but not on the open web. This is not a public event, but we welcome UU's and trusted associates. Thank you again for your previous support, and we hope we can gather a wonderful group for our "UU-clipse" celebration. If you cannot attend, but would like to support this effort, donations can be made through the reservation website. In any case "we love you to the moon and back..."

Sincerely,

Tom H. Brikowski
CUUC Eclipse Event Coordinator

For more information on the UU-clipse or how to support the Community Unitarian Universalist Church in Plano, Texas, visit <https://www.communityuuchurch.org/uua/>.

Stone Soup

FREE Community Meal!

DINE IN!
Take out meals available

Friday, March 29
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Or until supplies run out!

Ham and White Bean Spinach Soup
Fresh Fruit
Chocolate pretzel crinkle cookies

Come inside the Social Hall and share a meal with others, or pick up a take out meal. Bags of non-perishable groceries will also be available. All are welcome!

Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church (865) 483-6761
809 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Stoplight #2

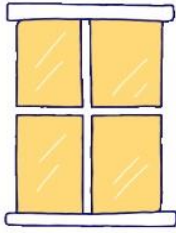
Special thanks to our Community Partners for making this Final Friday Monthly Meal possible:
Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge
Kroger Marketplace

Stone Soup volunteers will soon be getting ready for another delicious free community meal! Contact Jen Stark at jen.stark@hotmail.com if you'd like to help!



Thanks for the continuing donations to ORUUC's Non-Perishable Food Pantry! **This month's greatest needs are canned fruit, soups, and beans.** 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!

Caring for Each Other



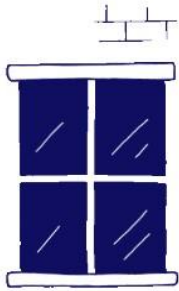
Are you going through a difficult time? Are you in a situation where support and caring are needed--someone to do grocery shopping, take you to a doctor's appointment, or provide a meal following an upcoming surgery? Contact the church office: (865) 483-6761 or office@oruuc.org or a Caring Coordinator!

Caring Coordinators for March

Mare Martell maremartell@gmail.com 616-826-9984

Rachel Smith-Jones smithnjones3@comcast.net 603-252-2295

Freddie Nechtow freddien123@gmail.com 865-599-4359



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.

Thank you from Jenna Lukis and Family



ORUUC,
Thank you so much for all of your support through my donation surgery! I am recovering well and my liver is growing back and doing its thing inside me and Josh.

You know you're amazing, right?

Every single meal, card, prayer, and kind word has been incredibly appreciated!

Thank you for everything

Jenna Lukis & family

We continue to hold in care Jenna Lukis and Josh Hicks, and their families, following Josh's liver transplant surgery at Vanderbilt on February 6. Both families are back home in Oak Ridge now and doing well.

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 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.



Ukulele Group

Our next scheduled meet-up is Saturday, March 23 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



Meets monthly at various churches in Oak Ridge. Visit

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

Anne Backus

backusanne@comcast.net for more information about PFLAG Oak Ridge.



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

Ecumenical Storehouse Pick Up Saturday, March 16, 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. It is an important part of our community. There are many ways you can help! **Please contact Martin Bauer at bauermlb@gmail.com for more information.**



Eggs and Pegs are 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.



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, March 25 starting at 12 noon.** Questions? Contact Coordinator Cara Weigel at 865-481-8108.



Bring your spare change to church every Sunday in March to donate to ORUUC's Split the Plate recipients! There will be a collection basket in the lobby. On Easter Sunday morning, March 31, middle and high school groups will fill plastic eggs with the change, then hide the eggs around the church grounds for the younger children to find during the egg hunt at 12:15. When all of the eggs have been discovered, the children will empty the change into their baskets, then choose which Split the Plate organization's bucket to donate to, while learning about each one as they decide. It's a wonderful tradition!



Spare Change to Make a Change
Bring coins to church beginning Sunday, March 3 to fill plastic eggs for our Egg Hunt Easter Sunday, March 31!

All change will be donated by the children to our Split the Plate recipients along the Bunny Trail following the Egg Hunt.



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
March 21!*

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

<https://mailchi.mp/oakridgetn/orplfeb24>



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!



Check out ORUUC's monthly Family newsletter, *Connecting in Spirit*, by visiting <https://www.oruuc.org/connectinginspirit>.

Community News



Community Invited to Brown Bag Lunch with the Legislators

Friday, March 15 at 12:00 pm in the Oak Ridge Public Library Auditorium, 1401 Oak Ridge Turnpike. Lieutenant Governor Randy McNally, Senator Ken Yager and Representatives John Ragan and Monty Fritz have been invited to bring us up to date on what's happening in the Tennessee Legislature. Members of the audience may ask questions and give opinions. The public is encouraged to attend. This is a Brown Bag Luncheon in which attendees can bring their lunch if they wish.



The League of Women Voters of Oak Ridge welcomes the community to Lunch with the League next Tuesday, March 19 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at ORUUC. All are welcome to bring their lunch or purchase a boxed lunch for a nominal fee. Coffee and tea will be served. The presentation will begin at noon. **Guest Speaker Randy Hemann, City Manager of Oak Ridge, will speak on the State of the City of Oak Ridge.** *This event is rescheduled from January 16.*

Lunch with the League welcomes League members and nonmembers alike to this informative presentation. The League of Women Voters of Oak Ridge is a nonpartisan political organization for men and women. It encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The SCARBORO 85
presents the
FISK JUBILEE SINGERS
Friday, March 29, 2024
6:00 p.m.
High Places Community Church · Historic Grove Theater
123 Randolph Road, Oak Ridge, TN

Tickets: \$25.00 Eventbrite Registration:

www.eventbrite.com/e/fisk-jubilee-singers-in-concert-tickets-779962668337?aff=oddttdcreator



Contact: John Spratling (865) 363-9759
jspratling@orn.edu

Make checks payable to: United Way of Anderson County Scarboro 85 Monument, P.O. Box 4158 Oak Ridge, TN 37831
Ticket sales begin January 31, 2024



The heroic Scarboro 85, the first Black students to desegregate a public school in the South, present the legendary Fisk Jubilee Singers to Oak Ridge for a night of joy and celebration, Friday, March 29 at 6 p.m. at the Historic Grove Theater. Ticket sales from this event will go toward the coming Scarboro 85 monument. To purchase tickets, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-scarboro-85-present-the-fisk-jubilee-singers-in-concert-tickets-779962668337>.

The Fisk Jubilee Singers are vocal artists and students at Fisk University in Nashville, who sing and travel worldwide. The original Jubilee Singers introduced 'slave songs' to the world in 1871 and were instrumental in preserving this unique American musical tradition known today as Negro spirituals. They broke racial barriers in the US and abroad in the late 19th century and entertained Kings and Queens in Europe. At the same time, they raised money in support of their beloved school.

For more information on efforts to honor the Scarboro 85, contact John Spratling at 865-363-9759 or jspratling@orn.edu, or visit <http://scarboro85.com/?fbclid=IwAR2dK5fdqSASw6dA4WsbHJhWZKxlrOf7VRKFnU3pKR5zwQv0pOXMCy9m0>.

This Week at ORUUUC



Friday, March 15

11am Tai Chi Practice

Saturday, March 16

9am Ecumenical Storehouse Pickup

9:30am Pathways to Deeper

Engagement

1:30am Safety Event

4pm Spring Brussels Sprouts

Convention

Sunday, March 17

10am Worship

11am High School (Canceled)

11am Together in Spirit (Canceled)

11:15am Circle of Trust I

11:15am Knitting & Crocheting
Group (Canceled)

11:15am Newcomers

11:15am Reflections (Canceled)

12:30pm Buddhism Study Group

12:30pm Circle of Trust IX

1:30pm Book Club

3pm Line Dancing

4pm Circle of Trust XI

5-7pm Zentangle Group

5:30pm Circle of Trust X

Monday, March 18

11am Tai Chi Practice

Tuesday, March 19

11:30am League of Women Voters

Lunch with the League

6pm Board Meeting

6pm Depression & Anxiety Group

Wednesday, March 20

6:30am Breakfast Rotary

11am Tai Chi Practice

11am Circle of Trust VIII

1:30pm Executive Team Meeting

7pm Choir Practice

7:45pm Band Rehearsal

Thursday, March 20

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 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

Whitney Cole (for Christine Rehder)

Amanda Fishel

Donna Maloney

Jeannie Cuevas, Office Administrator



There will be no Exponent next Friday, March 22 while staff is on Spring Break. The deadline to submit news for the next Exponent is Wednesday, March 27 at noon. Please send news, comments, and feedback to Rachel at communications@oruuc.org.



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



Coming up... Sunday, March 24 The Colors of Spring



In India, spring is celebrated with great joy and lots of color in the festival of Holi. We'll honor the Hindu culture by exploring this tradition. There will be a colorful blessing and special Indian treats!