



# Connecting In Spirit

## Youth Faith Formation

### Monthly News

November 2023

#### *In this Issue...*

Introducing our new Music Director, Alexandra Engle  
November Worship Series: Generosity  
Fall Mountain CON dates  
TAMALES  
Trunk or Treat highlights  
and More!



## **It's Time for a Tune- Up, ORUUC!**

This November, my mind is consumed with going places and what it takes to get there. Recently,

Ted and I have been consumed with vehicle maintenance and repair. One of our goals over Fall Break and my Study Leave was getting tune-ups and oil changes for our vehicles. What began as items to cross off our To Do List soon became a tedious, expensive, and expansive inventory of the changing needs of ourselves and our family.

Gone are the days with three children in the backseat, placated with fish crackers and juice (though the stains remain). We are now finding travel back and forth to Memphis for our oldest long and mind-numbing. Our younger son turns 16 in two months and will be driving as well. And though our anxiety and our car insurance rates have soared, their independence gives us both more time for ourselves and each other. And watching them navigate their adventures on the open road of their lives ahead is poignant and inspiring.

With this in mind, our aging fleet of vehicles got tune ups, some new tires, brake fluid, and whatever else was needed to keep them running. They are not shiny or perfect, but they still run ok and they hold many memories, ranging from tender to tragic, within their four doors. And we are adding a new one as well to accommodate our changing needs so each family member can reach their chosen destinations.

As we went through this process, I kept thinking of ORUUC during this pivotal moment. As we search for a settled minister, we are opening up the hood and taking a hard look at the repairs needed. We are also reflecting on the journeys this vessel has taken us, and the toll that has taken on both it and us. And most importantly, we are imagining and visioning about our next destination. Our collective hearts and minds are filled with hope and inspiration about where the journey will take us.

Like any road trip, it's going to have bumps and detours. It's probably going to cost more than we thought, and definitely going to include some heated disagreement along the way. But when we reach our final destination, the shared experiences will bring us closer together and we ourselves will be transformed in the process.

Right now at ORUUC, we are preparing for the next leg of the journey. We are identifying our needs and equipping ourselves to meet them. This Saturday from 10-1 is our appointment for a tune-up. At this time, experienced technicians from the UUA will help us diagnose and suggest some needed repairs (some urgent, some recommended and some we will probably just roll our eyes at and view as a shameless cash grab). Whatever we learn from this experience, we will leave it knowing we are better prepared for the journey than when we went in, and that gives us confidence and peace of mind for the road ahead.

One of the joys of being Director of Youth Faith Formation is going on the long haul with your family. It's quite a trip, and it takes all of us to get there. Happy travels.

In Care and Faith,

**Christine**

Christine Rehder (she/her/hers)

Director of Faith Formation

It's with great pleasure that I share some exciting news with you: **ORUUC has a new Music Director!** Many ORUUCians already know **Alexandra Engle** from her work with the Pride Festival chorus and some vocal workshops that she has led in our church. Some of ORUUC members have had private voice lessons with Alexandra, too; she's been a busy vocal teacher since 2016.

Alexandra has been serving as the Music Director at the Church of the Savior in Knoxville since 2015, and has a lot of experience selecting a diverse body of music in a wide range of styles. She and her husband



attended ORUUC for a while before she got that “Sunday gig,” so she’s well acquainted with the Unitarian Universalist hymnals and with how our musical preferences align with our deeper values.

Alexandra has a Bachelor of Music in Classical Vocal Performance from Belmont University in Nashville, and a Master of Music in Voice from UT Knoxville. She spent six years as a professional opera singer.

Our interview team (thanks, Kara Raymond and Heidi Brenner!) asked Alexandra to lead the ORUUC choir as part of the interview process, and the group had fun and learned a lot. The choir and music team, as well as the Worship Planning Team, look forward to working with Alexandra.

We won’t see Alexandra on Sundays just yet as she’s transitioning from her role at Church of the Savior. But if you’ve been thinking about joining (or coming back to) the choir, now’s a great time!

**Rev. Lisa**

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# November Worship Series

## Generosity

November 5:

***Think of a Minister. Don't Think of an Elephant.*** Rev. Keith Kron, UUA

November 12:

***Cosmic Glory, Earthly Splendor***

November 19:

***Practicing Gratitude/ Bread Communion***

November 26:

***The Gift of Our Whole Lives***

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

*Youth and Faith  
Formation classes  
are from 11:15 a.m.  
to 12:15 p.m.*

*Nursery is available  
during the FF hour.*



# Congregational Conversations on Safety

- Wednesday, Oct. 18 at 5 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. (ZOOM ONLY)
- Sunday, Nov. 5 after worship

JOIN US




Safety at ORUUC ~ Please plan to attend one of the upcoming discussions on safety at ORUUC, either by Zoom on Thursday, Nov. 2 at this link:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/682663607?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/682663607?pwd=OEFGN1VsemkrZrZ0UyY3FnVGJTZz09)

[pwd=OEFGN1VsemkrZrZ0UyY3FnVGJTZz09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/682663607?pwd=OEFGN1VsemkrZrZ0UyY3FnVGJTZz09) or in person Sunday, Nov. 5 during 2<sup>nd</sup> hour. The Board will be considering the congregation's recommendations about a policy for guns and other weapons at ORUUC at their meeting on November 14. Now is the time to weigh in! (If you attended the discussion Wednesday, Oct. 18, the Task Force has recorded your responses. Thank you!)

## Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop

Saturday, Nov. 4  
10 a. m. to 1 p.m.

at  ORUUC and on Zoom

Inclusion is  
not a trend.

It's a way of  
life.

Register here:



Have you registered for the Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop yet? There's still time! Please register for the workshop by filling out this form:

<https://forms.gle/WU4nMarxcRnYuqME8>. Our UUA presenter, Keith Kron, has asked us to fill out his survey before we meet on November 4 and submit as indicated. **Concerns & Benefits Form**. Finally: Here is the Zoom link for the November 4 workshop: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81134913549>. Meeting ID: 811 3491 3549

Thank you,  
The Ministerial Search Committee

Carol Beene  
Michael Bjerke  
Dave Dunkirk  
Patton Fishel  
Sarah Gunter  
Beth Meyer  
Christy White

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# The Mountain

## Retreat & Learning Center



**Registration for Fall Mountain CONs is **OPEN!****

November 3-5 - Elementary (Grades 3-5) (Registration has closed.)  
November 17-19 - **Intermediate (Grades 6-8)** (Registration closes Friday, Nov. 3.)  
December 1-3 - **Senior High (Grades 9-12)** (Registration closes Friday, Nov. 17.)

**Registration closes two weeks prior to each CON.**  
**Please email Christine Rehder at [crehder@oruuc.org](mailto:crehder@oruuc.org) when you register to let her know so that she can plan for advisors and transportation.**

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# Our Whole Lives



**Adult OWL  
Classes  
Sundays at  
11:15 a.m.**

at   
**ORUUC**

**Lifespan Sexuality Education**

**Adult OWL classes meet each Sunday during Faith Formation Hour through December 3--attend one, or a few, or all of them--it's up to you!**

- 10/23 Language and Anatomy
- 10/29 Sexuality and Gender Identity (SEIO Model)
- 11/5 Cultural Attitudes about Sexuality
- 11/12 Cultural Communication (Mass Media, Social Media, Pornography)
- 11/19 Body Image
- 11/26 Sexual Consent and Boundaries
- 12/3 Healthy Relationships
- 12/10 Aging, Change, and Sexuality (Meet at 12:15 following the Congregational Meeting and includes possible celebration)

For more information on these classes, contact Christine Rehder at [crehder@oruuc.org](mailto:crehder@oruuc.org).

## Middle & High School Youth Hikes

**Sunday, Sept. 24**

**Sunday, Oct. 8**

**Sunday, Nov. 5**

**Sunday, Dec. 10**



# Monthly Hikes For Middle and High School Youth This Fall at ORUUC!

Middle and high school youth are invited to hike together each month. Details on the November hike are coming soon! Keep an eye on the [ORUUC Facebook Group](#) and [The Exponent](#). Parents: Please make sure that you fill out and turn in a release form before the hike. Forms will be available at drop off. Parents are welcome to join the hike! Thanks to Jim Nutaro, Aubrey Wick Sebastian, Jimmy Groton, and Whitney Cole for organizing these monthly hikes!

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## ORUUC Auction

Thank you!

We raised more than  
\$8,000, thanks to you!



*The Auction Team: Michael Bjerke, Charlene Luther, Janet Fryer, Jim Nutaro, Christy White, Brandon White, Peter Scheffler, Maureen Hoyt, Nancy Starr, Rachel Smith-Jones*

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### October Highlights: Trunk or Treat!





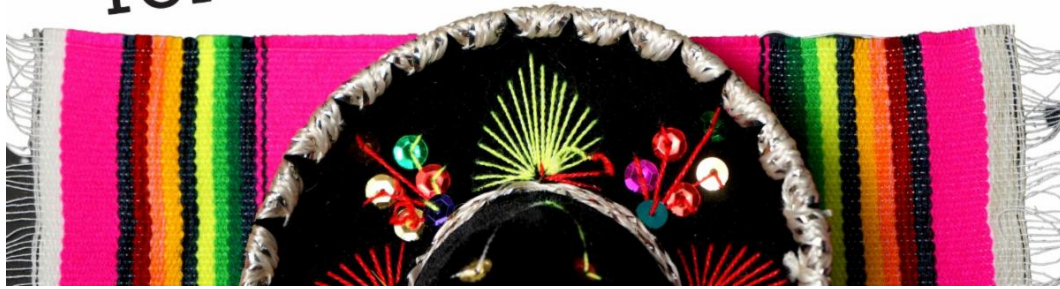




***It's never too late to join Youth Faith Formation! Bring a friend!***  
Check out our updated programming at  
<http://www.oruuc.org/religious-education>

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# It's almost time for Tamales at ORUUC



Tamales! They're one of our biggest youth fundraisers--we sell dozens of these handmade delectables every fall! **The van wheels won't roll unless the corn husks do! Youth who wish to travel with the group need to participate in this fundraiser.** Others who want to help are welcome to join in the fun and camaraderie. Taste- testers are appreciated.

## Important dates:

**Wednesday, Nov. 8 at 6 p.m. in the Social Hall: Tamale Talk!** Find out how tamales are made, what our mission is, and how you can help!

**Sunday, Nov. 12 Noon to 5 p.m.** Tamale Making

**Sunday, Nov. 19 Noon to 5 p.m.** Tamale Making

December Tamale Making Dates: *To Be Determined*

Please put these dates on your calendar. We look forward to seeing you in the kitchen!

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## Gratitude Corner



**THANK YOU to Multigenerational Coordinator Whitney Cole**, who planned and organized the Chili Cookoff and Trunk or Treat, and to all of the Youth Faith Formation family volunteers who helped make this fun annual event possible!

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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. 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 additional information, contact PFLAG President Anne Backus at [backusanne@comcast.net](mailto:backusanne@comcast.net).

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Mother Goose



Join us with your baby, toddler and/or preschooler for bouncing, tickling, touching, clapping and action rhymes, musical circle games, simple songs, and play.

of Oak Ridge

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

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

**View and sign up for the Oak Ridge Public Library's newsletter here:**  
<https://mailchi.mp/oakridgetn/orplnov23>.

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## Youth Faith Formation Save the Dates

August 6 – First Day of Youth Faith Formation

September 15-16 - Rummage Sale (Teens who volunteer during Rummage Week

December Tamale Making dates - To Be Determined

December 3 - Cocoa and Caroling

December 10 - 5th/6th OWL Parent Orientation

January 7 - 5th/6th OWL Begins

can earn money for the Youth Trip Fund!}

September 30 - October 16 - OR Schools Fall Break

October 1 - Church Potluck (No Faith Formation)

October 13-15 - All Church Retreat (Harrison Bay State Park) (No Faith Formation)

October 29 - Trunk or Treat

November 3-5 - **Elementary Fall Mountain CON**, Highlands, NC  
<https://www.themountainrlc.org/cons>

November 12 - 12-5 p.m. Tamale Making

November 17-19 - **Intermediate Fall Mountain CON**, Highlands, NC  
<https://www.themountainrlc.org/cons>

November 19 - 12-5 p.m. Tamale Making

December 1-3 - **Senior High Fall Mountain CON**, Highlands, NC  
<https://www.themountainrlc.org/cons>

February 11 - Hugs and Quiches

February 23-25 - Spring Elementary CON

March 1-3 - Spring Intermediate CON, Rummage Sale

March 9-25 - OR Spring Break (Special Programming)

March 15-17 - Senior High Mountain CON

March 31 - Easter Egg Hunt

April TBD - Ministerial Visits

April TCAP Test Break TBD

May 12 - Last Day of Youth Faith Formation

May 19 - Bridging/Reception

June 24-28 - Rainbow Camp



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

SCAN THIS QR CODE!



ORUUC

## Need Childcare for a Church Meeting or Event?

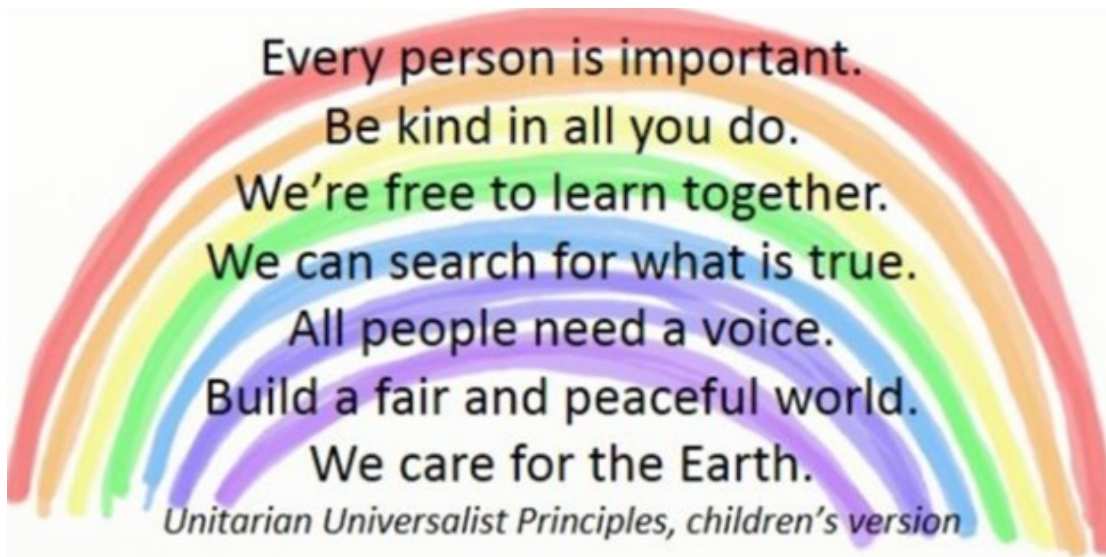
If you or your group need childcare for a church meeting or event, please complete this form TWO WEEKS in advance: [ORUUC Childcare Request Form \(jotform.com\)](https://www.jotform.com) Childcare is provided for children ages 10 and under only. Once you click "Submit," the form will go directly to ORUUC's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



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**Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz,  
Interim Minister**

Rev. Lisa can be reached by email at  
[Rev.Lisa@oruuc.org](mailto:Rev.Lisa@oruuc.org) or by phone at 865-483-6761  
ext. 102.



*Connecting in Spirit: Youth Faith Formation Monthly News is a digital publication designed to serve ORUUC families with children from birth through high school. **If you have ideas or suggestions for content, or would like to add someone to the mailing list, please email Rachel at [communications@oruuc.org](mailto:communications@oruuc.org) or Christine at [crehder@oruuc.org](mailto:crehder@oruuc.org).** To take a look at past issues of Connecting in Spirit, visit <http://www.oruuc.org/connectinginspirit>.*

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