

January 5-11, 2024

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## News from Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church

# The Exponent




**ORUUC Leadership InFormation Seminar**  
 Sunday, Jan. 21  
 12:15-2:15 p.m.  
 Lunch provided  
led by Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz and ORUUC leaders. Hosted by the Nominating Committee.  
 Register by January 18!

## New Beginnings

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz, Interim Minister

“In the beginning...” It’s a terrific way to start a fresh chapter, even a great book (or at least a Good Book). Not that there aren’t opportunities to begin again throughout the year, but the start of a new year—that somewhat arbitrary shift of numbers—always encourages reflections on changes we might make or new things we might begin.

Beginnings can be challenging, of course. For one thing, beginnings always imply an ending. A couple might be thrilled at the new beginning represented by a new baby, for example. Yet most couples underestimate how many things about their lives as a couple will end when a child comes into the relationship.



There are plenty of examples of this beginning/ending phenomenon, transformational moments that bring lots of changes in their wake. This month, with the search process in full swing, we’re anticipating a new

beginning that will bring much joy and a fresh store of energy to ORUUC. Yet I hope you also pay attention to the moments when you’re still feeling a pinch around losses and endings that herald this new relationship.

However your life is going in this time of transition, I hope you’ll feel comfortable bringing your struggles

and your triumphs, your joys and your sorrows, to the supportive community here at the church. Ours is a community that strives to respect and encourage every friend and member on the journey that is life. I’m available with a listening ear and a helping hand if you need me.

Rev. Lisa

[Rev.Lisa@oruuc.org](mailto:Rev.Lisa@oruuc.org)

Are you interested in church leadership, but feel unsure about your qualifications? Want to get more involved in leadership, but not "right now"? Are you an "old pro" looking to help train a new generation of leaders so you can take a break? **The Nominating Committee invites you to an informational workshop on long-term leadership development on January 21, 2024, from 12:15 to 2:15 p.m. in the Social Hall. Lunch will be provided. Please register [HERE](#) before Thursday, Jan. 18 to reserve a meal.** Let's make 2024 the year of leadership growth and community connection at ORUUC!

Nominating Committee 2023-24

Nancy Highfill

Steven Barker

Sue Lasky

Amanda Branche

Cara Jordan

# This Sunday, Jan. 7

## Plumbing the Depths of Spirit

Unitarian Universalists are spiritually diverse, yet we strive to find unity in essential values. Sometimes it's challenging for UUs to figure out how to communicate our liberating love to anyone outside our "tribe." How do we honor the breadth of our tradition, while standing in the depth of love? Interim Minister Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz leads us in this first service of the New Year.

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](mailto:prayers@oruuc.org)



January Split the Plate Offering: [Tornado Relief in Middle and West Tennessee](#)

After worship, please stay for coffee and treats in the Social Hall. Faith Formation classes for all ages meet from 11:15 to 12:15.

*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.*

## ORUUC Weather Closure Policy Reminders



Weekdays: If Oak Ridge Schools are closed, the church office will be closed.

Sundays: A decision will be made by 9 a.m. whether to have in-person worship. Please check your email and the [ORUUC Facebook group](#) for updates.

Weeknight and Saturday events: A decision will be made one hour prior. Check email and [Facebook](#).

## January Split the Plate Offering: Tornado Relief in Middle and West Tennessee

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. Each year, members chose nine organizations, leaving three months open for emergency needs. The Executive Team recently voted to direct the January Split the Plate offering to Tornado Relief in Middle and West Tennessee, specifically YAIPak Outreach's Tornado Relief. This organization was chosen by the [Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clarksville](#) Board to be the recipient of its relief donations.



YAIPak's work includes a "shopping" warehouse (similar to Ecumenical), outreach to unhoused persons, support for children entering foster care, collection of household items for persons transitioning to housing, and relief response to natural disasters. They are currently active in the Clarksville area's tornado relief distributing household items, food, toiletries, shoes, heaters, holiday items, etc. If you'd like to learn more, visit [YAIPak Facebook](#), [#ProjectRebuildHope](#), [Info from ClarksvilleStrong](#), [Reviews](#)

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

# January Worship Series

## Liberating Love



January 7: ***Plumbing the Depths of Spirit***

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

Happy New Year! Faith Formation classes for all ages resume.

January 14: ***Ministry in the Margins***

Guest Minister Rev. Chris Battle,  
Battlefield Farms, Knoxville

January 21: ***How to Hypnotize a Chicken***

Rev. Lisa Romantum Schwartz

January 28: ***If You See a Good Fight,  
Get In It***

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



## PFLAG to Discuss Those Who Identify as Non-Binary

**Monday, Jan. 8 at 6:45 p.m.  
Chapel on the Hill**

Laura Zepeda will tackle defining nonbinary, and understanding how it relates to individuals who identify as nonbinary, from their own personal experience at the PFLAG meeting on January 8.

The United Church, Chapel-on-the-Hill, will host the meeting in the Activities Room, 85 Kentucky Ave., in 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 7:00 p.m. The group adjourns at 8 p.m.

Laura, an artist, comedian, and a mental health professional with the Children's Crisis Stabilization Unit in Knoxville, will bring humor as a segue into the topic. They will also explain how to understand, be affirming and comfortable using the preferred pronouns. There will be time for questions.

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).

HAPPY NEW YEAR Food for Kids Volunteers – This new year is starting with Food for Kids on **Monday, Jan. 8** starting at 12 noon in the multipurpose room at FUMC. Delivery of the bins is **Tuesday, Jan. 9** at 8:30 a.m. We only have 1,228 bags to pack on Monday so we should complete them quickly.

The 2024 schedule is:

- January 8 & 9
- January 29 & 30
- February 19 & 20
- March 25 & 26
- April 15 & 16
- May 6 & 7

Hope to see you there!

Cara Weigel  
865-806-7544

Thank you for  
your support, ORUUC!



There are still a few dozen tamales in the church kitchen freezer--If you ordered tamales in the fall and haven't picked yours up yet, please stop by the church office weekdays between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., or on Sunday (please see Jason Fishel). Thank you!

# Announcements

Stone Soup Thank You's from Team Leader  
Jen Stark (shared from [Facebook](#))

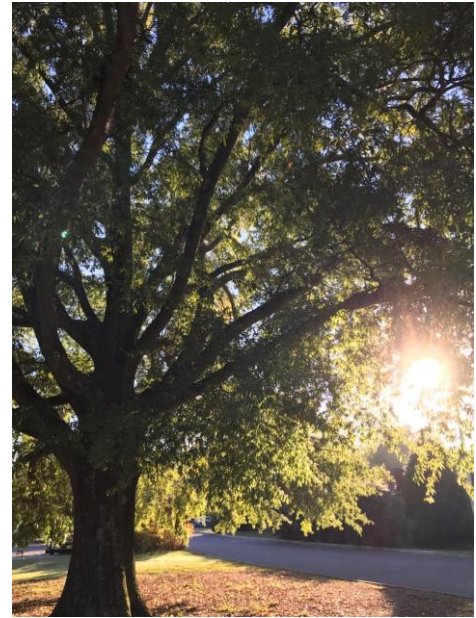


December Stone Soup went well! Volunteers cooked up some delicious Santa Fe Chili on Friday, Dec. 29. We served 100 meals and distributed 8 bags of groceries to those in need. Thanks to all those who helped and all those who support this ministry!



The next Stone Soup meal is Friday, Jan. 26.  
Interested in helping? Contact Stone Soup Leader Jen Stark at [jen.stark@hotmail.com](mailto:jen.stark@hotmail.com) to help!

*We're grateful to our volunteers, and our community partners, the Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge and Kroger Marketplace, for making these monthly FREE meals possible for 13 years...and counting!*



**The EMBERS (Earth Mindfulness Based on Earth Religions and Spirituality) Group meets Monday, Jan. 8 from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Hearth Room. All are welcome!**



**The Spring Rummage sale is coming up fast! Rummage Week begins Saturday, Feb. 24.** Many volunteers are needed to help with various tasks throughout the week and during the sale. Youth who volunteer their time get hourly credit that's applied toward their Youth Trip Fund. And you get first dibs on lots of cool stuff! For more information, including a list of items to donate, visit <https://www.oruuc.org/rummage>. Start cleaning out those closets!

# 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](mailto:office@oruuc.org) or a Caring Coordinator!

## Caring Coordinators for January

Freddie Nechtow [freddien123@gmail.com](mailto:freddien123@gmail.com) 865-599-4359

Jami Garner [jamigarner@me.com](mailto:jamigarner@me.com) 865-250-5505

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.

*Carole Yust has moved to NHC Oak Ridge*

*Thank You, ORUUC, from Ecumenical Storehouse*



(Photo courtesy of Through the Looking Glass Antiques and Collectibles in Jackson Square.)

A Caring Update on Carole Yust: On Wednesday, Jan. 3, Carole moved to NHC Healthcare here in Oak Ridge (300 Laboratory Road) to begin rehab following hip surgery. She is in Room 130 and welcomes visits. The direct phone line in Carole's room is 865-535-0249. We continue to send healing wishes to Carole, and thank all those who have supported her and cared for her during the last couple of weeks.



**During 2023, ORUUC members and friends donated \$3,062 to Ecumenical Storehouse through two months of Split the Plate offerings.**

Ecumenical Storehouse sent a thank you letter with a some year-end stats:

- In 2023, Ecumenical Storehouse volunteers picked up and distributed an estimated \$180,000 worth of used furniture, household goods, and appliances to 316 families in need. The families we helped consisted of 437 children and 482 adults. Families served live in Anderson, Roane, Morgan, Campbell, and Scott counties.
- Volunteers worked an esimated 3,150 hours to serve clients and pick up used furniture.
- For every \$1 spent on our operations, we were able to distribute an estimated \$4 worth of furniture, household goods, and appliances.

*Interested in getting involved on the volunteering side? Join us on Saturday, Jan. 20 from 9 to noon! Contact Martin Bauer at [bauermlb@gmail.com](mailto:bauermlb@gmail.com).*

## 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

We had a fantastic time at the NYE Coffeehouse! We're scheduled to meet this month on Saturday, Jan. Saturday, Jan. 13 and 27. We'd love to have you join us! Abbie Moore [abbie.moore@icloud.com](mailto: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](mailto:backusanne@comcast.net) for more information about PFLAG Oak Ridge.

### Ecumenical Storehouse Pick Up Saturday, Jan. 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. It is an important part of our community. There are many ways you can help! Please contact Martin Bauer at [bauermlb@gmail.com](mailto:bauermlb@gmail.com) for more information.



Eggs and Pegs are back! Play cribbage, eat breakfast, have fun **Sunday, Jan. 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](mailto: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. **Packing this month takes place January 8 and 29 starting at 12 noon.** Questions? Contact Coordinator Cara Weigel at 865-481-8108.



## 5th/6th Grade Classes Begin January 7!

Sessions will take place from 4 to 5:30 p.m. each Sunday for 10 weeks. The cost of the class is \$50 for members and \$75 for nonmembers; please make your payment to ORUUC if you have not already done so. Financial assistance is available. **Parent orientation has taken place, and registration has closed.**

### 5th/6th Grade OWL 2024 Class Topics

- 1/7 Sexuality and Values
- 1/14 Images in Popular Culture
- 1/21 Body Images
- 1/28 Changes in Puberty
- 2/4 Gender
- 2/11 Feelings and Attraction
- 2/18 Reproduction and Staying Healthy
- 2/25 Decisions and Actions
- 3/3 Consent and Peer Pressure
- 3/10 Healthy Relationships/Family Celebration

Questions or concerns? Contact Whitney Cole, Multigenerational Director at ORUUC, at (865) 394-0626 or [whit.cole79@gmail.com](mailto:whit.cole79@gmail.com).



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!



Middle and high school youth are invited to hike together each month. **The January hike is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 14 on the Delaware Loop of the North Ridge Trail.** We'll meet at church at 2 p.m. to carpool, and return by 4 p.m. Keep an eye on the [ORUUC Facebook Group](#) and weekly emails for updates. **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!



**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  
January 18!*

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

<https://mailchi.mp/oakridgetn/orpljan24>



# Community News



It Starts With Me:  
Creating a Beloved  
Community

Oak Valley Baptist Church  
January 15, 2024, 1 p.m.

**Lift Every Voice and Sing** by James Weldon Johnson

Lift every voice and sing  
Till earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past,  
Till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who hast by Thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,  
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand,  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.

**Monday, Jan. 15 at 1 p.m.**

**Oak Valley Baptist Church**

**194 Hampton Rd.**

**Oak Ridge, TN**

*Presented by Oak Ridge Solutions on Racism*

All are invited to join in celebrating the legacy of Dr. King’s vision of nonviolent transformation into a beloved community. We will hear from area choirs, and community members including: Pastor and City Council member Derrick Hammond, City Manager Randy Hemann, Author Al Chambles, the Rev. David Allred, NAACP President Annette Flynn, and Rabbi Ahuvah Loewenthal. Reception to follow.

**SCARBORO 85 MLK DAY**  
*A day on, not a day off*  
**January 15, 2024**  
Robertsville Middle School  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

**BASKETBALL BENEFIT**

<b>\$5</b> FIVE DOLLARS ADMISSION	<b>ROBERTSVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>	GJV 4:00
	<b>VS</b>	BJV 5:00
	<b>CHEROKEE MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>	GV 6:00
		BV 7:00

Money raised will go toward Scarboro 85 Monument project.

**For more information:**  
<https://scarboro85monument.com>  
John Spratling (865) 363-9759, jspratling@ortn.edu

## Scarboro 85 MLK Day Basketball Benefit

You're invited to a fundraising event on January 15, 2024 from 4 to 8 p.m., benefiting the Scarboro 85 Monument Project, a partnership between Scarboro Community Alumni Association, Robertsville and Cherokee Middle Schools, and the Scarboro 85 Monument Committee. For more information, visit <https://scarboro85monument.com/>.



Join Westside UU Minister Rev. Carol Bodeau for an earth-centered gathering on Sunday, Jan. 21 from 3 to 6 p.m. at Westside UU. We will sit in a sacred circle, share experiences of inspiration in nature, create ritual together, and set intentions for the coming month. Then we'll have time for food and fellowship. Meetings outdoors (weather permitting) at Westside each month on third Sundays. <https://fb.me/e/bK9hRhITh>

# This Week at ORUUUC

## Friday, Jan. 5

11am Tai Chi Practice

## Saturday, Jan. 6

## Sunday, Jan. 7

8:30am Eggs & Pegs

### **10am Worship**

11am High School

11am Together in Spirit

11:15am Circle of Trust I

11:15am Knitting and Crocheting Group

11:15am Newcomers

11:15am Reflections

12:15pm Safety Team Meeting

12:30pm Buddhism Study Group

12:30pm Circle of Trust IX

1:30pm Book Club

3pm Line Dancing

4pm 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade OWL

4pm Circle of Trust IX

5-7pm Zentangle Group

5:30pm Circle of Trust X

## Monday, Jan. 8

11am Tai Chi Practice

12pm Pack Food for Kids (Second Harvest, FUMCOR)

6pm EMBERS

## Tuesday, Jan. 9

6pm Presidents Council

6pm Depression and Anxiety Group

## Wednesday, Jan. 10

6:30am Breakfast Rotary

11am Tai Chi Practice

5:15pm Circle of Trust III

7pm Choir Practice

7:45pm Band Rehearsal

## Thursday, Jan. 11

12pm NWUUC & Launchpad Meeting

12:30pm Lunch Bunch

To view the church calendar anytime, log into the Members' Section of the ORUUC website: <https://www.oruuc.org/members-section> Need password help? Contact the church office!



Check out the ORUUC History Timeline [ORUUC History \(tiki-toki.com\)](https://www.oruuc.org/members-section)

This new interactive site includes memories and personal stories shared during the January 2023 Timeline Event and recollections captured in church historical publications.



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



## **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*

## **Sunday, Jan. 14 Ministry in the Margins**



One of the most ancient exhortations about living a moral life commands us to care for the poor and the immigrant. Does prophetic wisdom have relevance for our church today? Our guest speaker on this Martin Luther King Sunday is the Rev. Chris Battle of Battlefield Farms in Knoxville. Rev. Battle has spent much of his ministry addressing food deserts.

**The deadline to submit news for  
*The Exponent* is  
Wednesday at noon.  
Please send news, comments, and  
feedback to Rachel at  
[communications@oruuc.org](mailto:communications@oruuc.org).**