The Beacon



November 2026

Sunday Services - Begin at 10:30 and last approximately 60-75 minutes and are available both in person and via Zoom.
Please see our website for the Zoom link.

November Theme: Healing

November 1 *A Mission of Courage*
Speaker: Rev. Beth Marshall
This morning's service explores Unitarian Universalism's often complex relationship with military service. If you or your family have a connection to the military, you are invited and encouraged to bring with you (or wear) something indicative of that commitment.

November 8 *Singing Resistance: The Power of Song*
Speaker: Shari Gross
The Singing Resistance movement started in Minneapolis after the death of Nicole Good. Organizers emphasize that the singing is not a performance, but a tool for channeling rage, emotional processing, and collective courage. Learn about Erie's Resistance Singers, how music can create safety and inspiration.

November 15 *Guided Meditation to Sort the Noise*
Speaker: Savannah Wilson
Just as the vast ocean can get churned up, our own minds, both conscious and unconscious, can get unsettled and unclear. Meditation is a way to calm oneself and focus on your internal world. Guided meditation offers a way for anyone to tap into their own wisdom. Experience and learn the power of a group meditative journey.

November 22 *Essential Wisdom for Getting Through the Storm*
Speakers: Members of the Living Worship Team
Can fear become an old friend, so familiar that it is no longer fear? We'll explore possibilities, approaches, and techniques for facing fear.

November 29 *Celebrating the "Glorious Impossible": A Reflection on the Art & Prayer-Content of the Christmas Crèche*
Speaker: Michael E. DeSanctis
This presentation will explain how the Christian crèche-building tradition embodies what writer Madeleine L'Engel once labeled the "Glorious Impossible" of the Jesus' birth. It will trace its history to the nature-embracing ministry of Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) and illustrate how it persists today in the presenter's work as an artist-educator.

UUErie Board of Trustees:

President: Kelly Armor

Vice President: Dixie Morrow

Secretary: Steve Sullivan

Michael Balsan

Chris Brown

Andrew Greene

Marcella Smith

Diane Guthrie, Treasurer

Mission
INSPIRE, CONNECT, ACT
We are a vibrant and inclusive religious community.

We:
**INSPIRE personal and spiritual growth;*
**CONNECT in fellowship and service;*
**ACT for peace and justice.*

Vision
We will:
**Share the wisdom of our guiding principles and nurture all who come seeking personal and spiritual growth.*
**Be a welcoming, inclusive, and expanding religious congregation with diverse ideas and beliefs reflected in our services and programs.*
**Establish ourselves as a strong presence in the region through greater community engagement.*

Covenant
*We: *Covenant to promote a culture of compassion and acceptance in our relations with each other.*
**Promise to listen with the intent to understand and to communicate in an honest and respectful manner, even when we disagree.*
**Acknowledge that conflict is an opportunity for growth.*



BIOGRAPHY OF OUR SPEAKER ON NOVEMBER 1

Rev. Beth Marshall is a life-long Unitarian Universalist, and no stranger to our pulpit. In addition to serving as a temporary, targeted position with our congregation before Covid, she has worked with congregations in Texas, Long Island, Michigan and Ohio. She lives with her husband Tony Wilgus in Oberlin, Ohio,. Together they are parents to five grown children scattered across the country and spend much of their time with their ten grandchildren.

BIOGRAPHY OF OUR SPEAKER ON NOVEMBER 8

Shari Gross has been a life-long musician and songwriter. A local earth-based spiritual leader, she leads others in song and ritual as an expression of shared values and community. When the events in the Twin Cities unfolded this past winter, Shari and Presque Isle Indivisible Leaders were impressed by their Singing Resistance as a response to grief, anger, and positive change. Shari started the Erie Singing Resistance in February, with the goal of building community through positive presence and song. Shari remains linked to the Twin Cities Singing Resistance group as well as those of the national Indivisible Organization.





BIOGRAPHY OF OUR SPEAKER ON NOVEMBER 15

Savannah Wilson is a filmmaker, digital college artist, DJ, public speaker, and community truth advocate. She has led guided meditation sessions in art galleries, FEED Media Art Center, and 10|20 Collective, where she currently does visual arts at a monthly ecstatic dance event she cofounded called TRINE. She is an alumna of the Jefferson Society Civic Leadership Academy and is currently pursuing a double major in communications and looking to pursue a double major in political science at Mercyhurst University.

BIOGRAPHY OF OUR SPEAKER ON NOVEMBER 29

Michael E. DeSanctis, Ph.D., is editor of Emmanuel Magazine and a Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts and Theology at Gannon University. He writes widely on both topics and serves internationally as a design consultant to religious communities of all stripes challenged to build or renovate a place of worship.





THE ALOHA SPIRIT

UUERIE SERVICE AUCTION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 5:30-8:30

Feel that Aloha spirit of good times and fellowship! Put on your flip flops and join us for our annual UUERIE Service Auction on Saturday, November 7th at 5:30! It is time to see what tremendous items and services have been offered by your fellow congregants. Hopefully, you have saved the date of November 7th for our UUERIE service auction. The fun will start at 5:30. You will have a chance to support our congregation by bidding on the variety of offerings. While bidding on the silent auction items, you can enjoy yummy appetizers and scrumptious desserts.

We do need your help supplying that good food. Please offer to supply an appetizer or dessert. Sign-up sheets are in the Olympia Brown room, or you can email Edie at edie_cultu@yahoo.com. You can also volunteer to help with the silent auction or work in the kitchen.

The catalog of offerings will be coming out about a week before the auction. If you are sadly unable to join us that evening, there will be information about making a pre-bid.

The UUERIE service auction is always a fun evening and a great opportunity to spend time together. It is also a major fund-raising event for our congregation.

Please ignore any cold winter weather that may be out there and transport yourself to the warm shores of UU Erie!



Welcome to Healing

Small Group Theme Discussion

Theme Discussion for Sunday, November 15 Noon--1:00 P.M.

Again this year we will be using the materials from *Soul Matters* for an Adult Education theme discussion on the third Sunday of the month, following the Sunday service and a brief coffee hour. The facilitator for the month will present a story, reading, or other introductory thought starter, followed by an opportunity for each participant to react. After everyone who wishes to speak has their chance, the discussion will open up for general participation.

Our goal with these discussions is to get to know each other better and challenge our thinking with each one of the themes. How can we better understand how our UU principles and values help us live in the world? What are those themes that speak directly to each of us? What makes a particular theme difficult for us to carry out? What would we like to concentrate on for personal improvement? What is important for our own spiritual journey?

Our circle will last for approximately one hour.
No signups or preparation is required and all are welcome!
See Leigh Kostis (Lwko@roadrunner.com) for any questions.

Questions for thought and discussion:

1. Have you made peace with self-inflicted wounds?

2. Are old stories telling you who you are?

3. What if painful experiences need to be thanked before they can heal?



THANKGIVING MASHED POTATOES

We are collecting boxes of mashed potatoes for the West Erie Food Bank.
The last Sunday to bring in donations is November 15.
Thanks again, Caring Team.

DATES FOR UPCOMING SUNDAY DINNERS AT THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 27, January 17, March 21, April 25, and June 6.
Several times a year we serve dinner to about 180 people at the Church of the Covenant, 250 West 7th Street from 4 until 5:45. We need volunteers to help serve the dinner. This is a good way for congregants to get involved and it is a rewarding experience.
Thank you in advance, contact Ginny Sabol at regeginny@gmail.com.





SARAH REED CHILDREN'S CENTER CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

On November 22, the Caring Team will put up the tree with Christmas wishes for the children at Sarah Reed.
Please choose a wish to purchase, wrap it with the tag from the tree attached, and return it to UUErie by Sunday, December 13th.

Thank you for practicing your UU Principles during the holiday season.

NOTE FROM KELLY ARMOR, BOARD PRESIDENT: WANT TO BE ON THE DREAM TEAM?

Our Congregational Meeting on October 25 was quite positive. We did not have any major decisions to vote on, but we did spend some time identifying what activities we are thankful for and our hopes for the future. We're tabulating the responses and will share the details in December's *Beacon*. Many cited our Sunday Services and particularly our music as a source of joy. Many people also responded that presence of young families was both appreciated and a hope for further growth. Not surprisingly, many identified that hiring a minister continues to be a priority.

There are many more UU congregations seeking ministers than there are ministers looking for work, so our chances of hiring one are slim. We are not giving up, but we need to be prepared to think broadly about ministry. We have funds ready to spend on the work a minister does. What other specialists could we hire to help inspire us? To help us connect to the wider community? To help us strengthen us as a community? I'm looking for a few people to join some trustees and me in brainstorming possibilities. Let me know if you are interested!



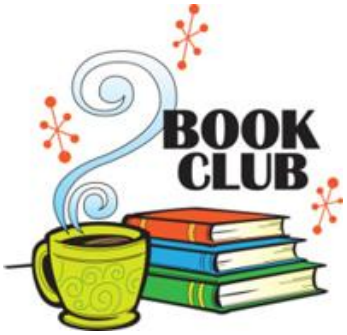
PLEASE JOIN US ON NOVEMBER 8 FOR OUR POTLUCK LUNCH AFTER THE SERVICE.

Please bring a generous dish to share if you can, but there is always plenty of food, so all are welcome!

Many thanks to our potluck hosts this month: Janet Krack, Israel Estrada and Mom, Mike Balsan, Bennett Strom and Cate Ludin.

UUERIE BOOK CLUB

We meet on the last Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the church library. We do not meet in November, please watch the Flame and Beacon for information about our next gathering.



UUERIE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY OCTOBER 15, 2026, 6:00 P.M. ON ZOOM
Attending: Kelly Armor, Dixie Morrow, Christine Brown, Andrew Greene, Marcella Smith, Mike Balsan, Steve Sullivan
Check-in: what is blooming for you? budding ? a thorn?
Chalice lighting and call to order: 6:20
Approval of September minutes: moved by Andrew, seconded by Chris, approved.

Finance Report (Kelly for Nanci Lorei)
It will be ready by the congregational meeting on October 25th, and the relevant packet by Monday the 19th. Overall we are in good shape, and Nanci has applied for a federal refund for the solar panels we installed.

Commissioned Lay Minister report (Kelly for Bobbie Colt)
Bobbie has started her graduate studies but will continue her work for us. And see New Business below.

Committee Reports covered in the October 11th Council meeting
Pastoral Care and Caring: clarification of the changes to these committees. Kelly will speak with Ginny Sabol about a name change for Caring; we can broach the matter at the congregational meeting (where Dixie, having written an article, will speak). A Pastoral Care update will happen next month; for now, Dixie comments on a recent meeting in which coverage spreadsheets were shared, and Mike talks about the nature of the calls that are made by committee members to congregational members.
How can we help the Spiritual Exploration and Education Committee, the greeters, and the Memory Café attract new members (or helpers, in the case of Hospitality)? One answer is a committee fair at which current members speak about why they do the work. Another is that we will ask a representative from each committee to speak about the reasons they do that work as a part of our Advent ritual at the beginning of the service on December 6, 13, and 20. Andrew will speak for Greeters. Kelly will ask Chris for SEEC and Michael for hospitality.
What should be done about the Social Justice Committee, which Chris notes is struggling to stay active? Dixie suggests using Mentameter to solicit feedback at the congregational meeting. Marcella suggests a way in which congregational members are encouraged to find ways to connect their own social-justice passions with possible Committee activities. Mike suggests that the Committee serve as an informational clearinghouse for community involvement. Finally, Kelly suggests Chris has one-on-one conversations with Committee members to see where they are at..

Old Business:
1. Reformat of the *Board Orientation Powerpoint*. Update and include the values. Action Step: Chris and Josh Brown are working to turn the powerpoint into a Google doc. She will then go through it and flag key concerns, as should the rest of us too.
2. Update on *Committee Descriptions*: Most committees have reviewed and edited them as needed. But the following committees still need to do so:

a. Caring: Kelly and Steve reached out to Ginny Sabol.
b. Hospitality: Marcella says no contact yet with Michael Long. Kelly suggests that it could be called the "Hospitality Hub", and that it cover little dinners and the corn roast (though these responsibilities should not be dumped on Michael).
c. Spiritual Exploration and Education: Chris says it's looking good.

New Business:

1. Kelly notes that Bobbie Colt is applying for an internship under the Clinical Pastoral Education program at the Sisters of Charity Hospital in Buffalo, NY and the Cleveland Clinic. The application requires a Letter of Good Standing from the Board president; Mike suggests including a board signoff page to indicate our support.

2. Kelly notes that we must set the agenda for the congregational meeting:
   a. Name change of Caring Committee.
   b. Pastoral Care Team checkins.
   c. Search Team checkin.
   d. Mentimeter questions: What is UU Erie doing that you really enjoy or appreciate? What are your hopes and dreams for UU Erie? And the new one (Chris reminds us): What social issues or causes are you active in?
   e. New item: concert-committee report from Mike? He and Kelly will talk.

3. Kelly brings up the idea of a *Strategic Planning and Visioning Committee* and asks who wants to work with her on that. (She hopes for three or four volunteers.)
   a. We need another focus besides finding a minister and have money for it.
   b. Several BOT members want to learn more about what the committee would do

Eventually it is agreed that the committee will not get off the ground until January, with a game plan being developed in November and December.

Next Board meeting: November 19, 6:00 p.m. on Zoom.
Next congregational meeting: October 25th at noon.
Motion to adjourn: Andrew. Seconded: Marcella.
Adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

RECURRING EVENTS

Worship Service in person and on Zoom. Go to uuerie.org for a Zoom link. ……...Sundays at 10:30 AM.
Sandwich preparation for the Upper Room Shelter…….……..... First Sunday of the month after the service.
Potluck lunch.……Second Sunday of the month after the service.
Theme Discussions…….…….…….. Third Sunday of the month at noon.
Buddhist Sangha…….Mondays at 7:00 PM (first Monday of the month Zoom only, in person the rest of the month).
Memory Café…….…….....…...First and Third Thursdays of the month at 1:00 PM.
UUErie Book Club…….…..….. Last Wednesday of the month at 7:00 in the church library.
Narcotics Anonymous…….……..……...Wednesdays at 7 PM.
Atheist and Agnostic Community……..…..…Fridays at 7:00 PM.
Alcoholics Anonymous……...……...……..Saturdays at 8:30 AM.
Game Day Afternoons……...……..……...…Third Saturday of each month 1-4 PM.

Administrator:
Joanne Davis
admin@uuerie.org
Office Hours:
Monday—Thursday
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Fridays
8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Please direct all mail to:
7180 Perry Highway,
Erie, PA
16509

Leave Voice Messages
814-864-9300

We're On The Web!
uuerie.org

Weekly Flame
Every Thursday an update of UUErie events and news for the week is sent out via email. If you would like to be included on the UUErie email mailing list, please contact admin@uuerie.org before 9:30 a.m. Wednesdays.

Find us on Facebook

Please join our Facebook page, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie! Here you can find Sunday Service announcements, upcoming events, conversations, words of inspiration and much more.

For additional information, please contact Kristin Maguire at kmaguire626@gmail.com.

November Birthdays

03 – Nanci Lorei

07 – Beth Kopay

12 – Bill Krack

16 – Kat Wolper

19 – Dan Tingley

21 – Steve Sullivan

We are now on Instagram. Just search for The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie.

The Beacon is published every month.
Have an announcement or event?
Submit it here
by the 15th of this month
to be included in the next issue.

Beacon Editor/Layout: Leigh Kostis and Joanne Davis.

To receive future newsletters via email link or through the mail, please register with Joanne at 814-864-9300 or admin@uuerie.org.

Remember, you must register to receive a newsletter.



Service Attendance:

October 4 – Stay Calm and Carry On – Dr. Rev. Elaine Strawn – 37 in person, 5 virtual.

October 11 – Monsters All Around – Kelly Armor, Chris Brown, Kat Wolper – 46 in person, 2 virtual.

October 18 – Spirit of Life – Bob Rhodes – 46 in person, 7 virtual.

October 25 – Healthcare and Courage Sharing – Mike Balsan and Chris Brown – 36 in person, 5 virtual.