

Journey Well Newsletter

UUSARATOGA

July 31, 2026



In this newsletter
you can expect:

Upcoming
Sunday Services

What's
Happening in RE

Upcoming
Events and
meetings

Nw Home
updates

Committees and
Teams News
Updates



Dear Friends,

A BIG thank you for such a wonderful send-off. It was a terrific morning.

Thank you to Sean Cohan for joining us as a musical guest. Thank you, Marian, for turning me into a carrot cake superfan, and to Juliana for creating the most incredible paper flower bouquet, filled with words from everyone that I will cherish forever.

We made many wonderful memories in seven months, and accomplished a LOT.

I wish you every good thing in all future endeavors. Thank you for our time together.

**With love,
Melissa**

**THE MONTHLY THEMES WILL
RESUME IN SEPTEMBER!**



**PLEASE REMEMBER OUR MAILING ADDRESS IS PO BOX 26,
SCHUYLERVILLE NY 12871.**

**IF YOU HAVEN'T NOTIFIED YOUR BANKS FOR YOUR AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS
PLEASE DO SO ASAP! OUR MAIL FORWARDING IS ENDING SOON!**

Spirit of Life

with Rev. Nikki Williams

Sunday, August 2, 2026 10am

"Spirit of Life" is a favorite UU hymn. How might we define this Spirit of Life? Can we access it? Let's explore what famous thinkers have to say.

Rev V. Abbitt, our new Minister will join us this Sunday, August 2. She will attend Services with us and this gives everyone an opportunity to introduce ourselves and welcome her before her first sermon on August 16.

Please take a moment to read her press release included in this edition of JW.



Recent Sermons

Did you miss a service? Or was there a sermon you particularly liked? [Click here for them.](#)

[Many of our services have been uploaded to our YouTube Channel.](#)

NEW HOME UPDATE

1. THERE IS A COFFEE CHAT PLANNED ON SUNDAY AUGUST 2 AFTER SERVICES TO LEARN ABOUT STARTING THE BUILD OF THE NEW HOME IN AUGUST. WE HAVE RAISED SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO MAKE A GREAT DEAL OF PROGRESS PRIOR TO THE SALE CLOSING OF THE PROPERTY AT 624 BROADWAY. STARTING NOW HELPS US REACH OUR GOAL OF OCCUPYING THE NEW HOME IN MID 2027.
2. BAST HATFIELD HAS AGREED TO START CONSTRUCTION AND A CONTINGENCY CONTRACT THAT WILL PROTECT US HAS BEEN DEVELOPED. JIM COX, OUR ATTORNEY HAS ADVISED US.
3. THE WILSON CHAPEL IS AVAILABLE TO US UNTIL MID-JUNE 2027.



Wayside Pulpit

The Wayside Pulpit provides messages of inspiration for those who pass by our door. These quotations are chosen biweekly from the collective wisdom of the ages to reflect the diverse and life-affirming beliefs of our congregation.

[Click here for the archive](#)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ARTHUR HOLMBERG

BOARD PRESIDENT

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(518) 584-1555

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SARATOGA SPRINGS WELCOMES REV. VIOLA ABBITT AS NEW MINISTER

DISTINGUISHED LEADER WITH EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND IN MINISTRY, LEGAL SERVICE, AND PUBLIC ADVOCACY TO LEAD LOCAL CONGREGATIONS

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. — THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SARATOGA SPRINGS (UUCSS) IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE APPOINTMENT OF REV. VIOLA ABBITT (SHE/THEY) AS ITS NEW MINISTER. IN ADDITION TO LEADING THE SARATOGA SPRINGS CONGREGATION, REV. VIOLA WILL ALSO SERVE AS MINISTER FOR THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF GLENS FALLS.

REV. VIOLA BRINGS A DEEP COMMITMENT TO FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY ACTION, SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP, AND PUBLIC SERVICE. MOST RECENTLY, SHE SERVED FOR SIX YEARS AS THE SETTLED MINISTER AT COASTAL VIRGINIA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS IN VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA. HER PRIOR MINISTRY INCLUDES CONGREGATIONS IN POUGHKEEPSIE AND WESTCHESTER, NEW YORK, AS WELL AS SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, ALONG WITH GUEST PREACHING ACROSS THE EAST COAST AND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS. "I LOVE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM AND HAVE GREAT FAITH IN ITS POTENTIAL AS A DRIVING FORCE IN MAKING A POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE AND IN THE WORLD AS A WHOLE," SAID REV. VIOLA ABBITT. PRIOR TO ENTERING ORDAINED MINISTRY, REV. VIOLA BUILT AN EXTENSIVE LEGAL AND PUBLIC ADVOCACY CAREER IN NEW YORK STATE. SHE SERVED AS DIRECTOR OF THE NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN, ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHTS OF YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM. HER LEGAL CAREER ALSO INCLUDES ROLES AS DEPUTY BUREAU CHIEF IN THE NEW YORK STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY IN BRONX COUNTY, AND DEPUTY COUNSEL FOR THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT OF THE BRONX.

REV. VIOLA HOLDS A MASTER OF DIVINITY FROM MEADVILLE LOMBARD THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL, A JURIS DOCTOR FROM FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, A MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LIBRARY SCIENCE FROM LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY, AND A BACHELOR OF ARTS FROM BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY.

BEYOND HER LOCAL MINISTRY, REV. VIOLA SERVES ON THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION (UUA), AS AN ADVOCATE IN THE UUA'S OFFICE OF ETHICS AND SAFETY, AND AS A GOOD OFFICER WITH THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MINISTERS ASSOCIATION. AN AVID LOVER OF NATURE, MUSIC, DANCE, AND SCIENCE FICTION, REV. VIOLA IS THE PROUD PARENT OF AN ADULT SON IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AND SHARES HER HOME WITH TWO RESCUE CATS, CRICKET AND FLUFFY.

ABOUT THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SARATOGA SPRINGS

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SARATOGA SPRINGS IS AN OPEN, WELCOMING SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO PERSONAL GROWTH, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND INCLUSIVE FELLOWSHIP. TO LEARN MORE ABOUT UPCOMING SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, VISIT THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SARATOGA SPRINGS.

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Event News
Click here for the Events
Calendar

Sunday August 2, 2026

10amWorship Service (In-Person
& Online)

COFFEE CHAT AFTER SERVICE
about our NEW HOME

Tuesday August 4, 2026

12pmUUCSS Ladies Luncheon
Off site

Thursday **August 6, 2026**

9amThe Men's Breakfast Group
Off site

Sunday **August 9, 2026**

10amWorship Service (In-Person
& Online)

A SPIRITUAL SALON
by Melissa O'Brien and chef Ben Niese

Soul Food

an evening of simple food and deep conversation

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
5:30 – 7:00 PM

110 SPRING STREET · THE GALLERY
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY

DONATION \$30

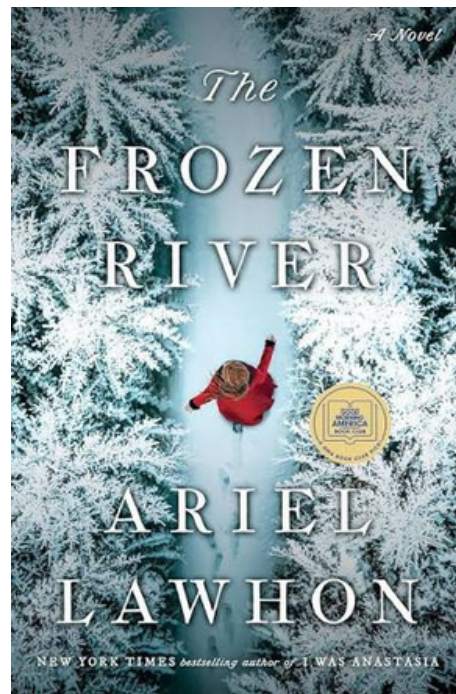


venmo

\$30 donation - confirms your seat

SOUL FOOD NO. 1 BRING YOUR SPIRITUAL APPETITE

BOOK GROUP



The next selection is *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawson.

The next meeting is on Monday August 17th, at 6pm.

All book lovers are welcome. For information, please contact Barbara Eggerman at begerman3@gmail.com, or Carolyn Lansberry at carlan55@gmail.com.

LADIES' LUNCHEON

HAPPY AUGUST! SUMMER IS HERE, AND IT IS TIME TO ENJOY THE LUSHNESS OF SARATOGA AND ITS SURROUNDING AREAS.

BECAUSE THE RACE SEASON IS IN FULL SWING, WE WILL WANDER DOWN TO MALTA AND MEET AT THE RIPE TOMATO FOR OUR MONTHLY LUNCHEON. JOIN US ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 4TH AT 12:00 NOON AND WE CAN RELAX AND SHARE A MEAL AND SOME SUMPTUOUS SUMMER STORIES TOGETHER.

PLEASE RSVP TARILEE@GMAIL.COM IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US FOR A PLEASANT AFTERNOON OF FRIENDS AND FOOD. I HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US!

NO NOO SHORT TERM RENTALS

“Putting Neighbors Back in Our Neighborhoods”

VRBO
Airbnb
booking.com
etc.

Neighbor & Community Campaign Info

The BIG Picture

Cities across the U.S. and the world are tackling the housing crisis caused by Non-Owner Occupied (NOO) Short Term Rentals (STRs). These investor-run properties reduce the number of long-term rentals, inflate housing prices, and disrupt the social fabric of neighborhoods.

Saratoga’s NO NOO STR Campaign is part of a growing global movement to prioritize homes for the people who live here.

What OTHER CITIES Are Already Doing

City	Approach	Key Ruling
New York City	Host-present only	Full-apartment STRs banned
Los Angeles	Annual cap	Max. 120 nights per year
Boston	Owner-occupied only	NO investor-owned STRs
Seattle	Limit per address	Max 2 units, one must be owner-occupied
Paris, France	Residency rule	Only primary residences can be STRs
Berlin, Germany	Night cap	120-night annual limit
Barcelona, Spain	Phasing out	All STRs banned by 2029

What SARATOGA SPRINGS Can Do

- ✓ Require owner-occupancy for all STRs.
- ✓ Ban investor-owned multi-unit portfolios.
- ✓ Create a transparent licensing & tax registry
- ✓ Limit rentals to 150 nights per year.
- ✓ Allow one secondary unit on-site (*ADU/carriage house).

Result: Residents keep the right to earn seasonal income, while protecting our city’s character, affordability, and sense of community.

Talking to YOUR Neighbors!

1. Saratoga’s neighborhoods thrive when neighbors live here full-time.
2. NOO STRs drive up housing costs, displace local renters, and, ultimately, weaken our local economies.
3. Cities worldwide are limiting absentee-run STRs — it’s time we do, too. This is doable and we can lead!
4. YES, we can protect residents *AND* welcome visitors with city-wide balance.
5. “NO NOO STRs” means homes for people, not investment portfolios.

OUR COMMUNITY Promise

This campaign isn’t about “*anti-tourism*.” It’s about *pro-neighbor*, *pro-balance*, and *pro-home*. We believe Saratoga Springs residential neighborhoods should remain places where people can know each other, where children can grow up safely and thrive, and where being neighbors in community still means something.



Join us. Speak up. Stand together.

Because the future of our neighborhoods belongs to the people who call them home. That’s US!



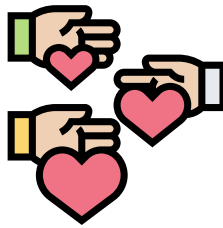
SHARE ME!!!

<https://gofund.me/15b1f07ad>

All it takes is a couple of clicks to send our Go Fund Me Link to everyone you know! The more it's shared the more donations we'll have toward our new home. Copy and paste the link in an email or text and share, share, share. Encourage those you send it to to also share it with everyone they know.



Social Justice Team news and events- Please check our UUSaratoga website for more info.



FUNDRAISING TEAM NEWS:
Taking a break for the summer!



Have You Thought About How To Donate Securities to UU Saratoga?? It's easy!

Transferring appreciated securities with long-term capital gains directly to UUCSS is a tax-efficient way to give. When you donate securities directly, you may avoid paying capital gains tax and may also qualify for a federal income tax deduction based on the full fair market value of the donated assets. For more information and instructions on donating securities, including stocks and mutual funds, please email uusaratoga@gmail.com



Give Away The Plate-for August is to our Minister's Discretionary Fund.

Provides funds which our minister can use to help congregants in need of emergency help with rent, food, utilities or other financial crises.



10 Smart Ways to Give—Without Writing a Check



Creative giving strategies that can strengthen
UUCSS's mission, ministries, and legacy beyond a cash donation.

1



Appreciated Investments

Donate long-term stocks, ETFs, or mutual funds to UUCSS instead of cash.

2



IRA QCDs (Age 70½+)

Send money directly from your IRA to UUCSS. This can help satisfy required distributions while supporting our work.

3



Donor-Advised Fund

Contribute appreciated assets to your DAF and recommend grants to UUCSS over time.

4



Beneficiary Designations

Name UUCSS as a beneficiary of your IRA, brokerage account, life insurance, or bank account.

5



Bequests in a Will or Trust

Leave a percentage, fixed amount, or the remainder of your estate to UUCSS. Your legacy can inspire generations to come.

6



Life Insurance Gifts

Name UUCSS as beneficiary of a policy, or in some cases, donate the policy itself to support our future.

7



Real Estate Gifts

Donate property—such as a home, vacation property, or land—to UUCSS to make a lasting impact.

8



Charitable Gift Annuity

Make a gift that provides you with fixed lifetime payments, with the remainder supporting UUCSS.

9



Charitable Trusts (CRT/CLT)

Use planned-giving trusts to balance income, taxes, and your charitable goals while supporting UUCSS.

10



In-Kind Gifts

Donate vehicles, equipment, art, or other assets UUCSS can use or sell to advance our mission.

Your generosity today helps build a more loving, just, and inclusive world—through the mission and ministries of UUCSS.

Source: Adapted for UUCSS from Kathleen Rehl's article "10 Ways to Give—Without Writing a Check" on HumbleDollar.com.



Questions? Contact
KathleenRehl@gmail.com

More Info About UUSaratoga

Joys & Sorrows

If you have a personal joy or sorrow in your personal life that you would like to make known to your fellow congregants, we encourage you to click on the link below to email the Care Team in a sentence or two what you would like us to read aloud during our Sunday worship. (Late entries may have to be included in the following week.) To share a Joy or Sorrow, please email the Care Team at careteam@uusaratoga.org.

Message from the Membership & Hospitality Team

In an effort to make visitors to UUSaratoga feel more welcome, the Membership & Hospitality Team asks everyone to be aware of newcomers and people you may not know who are sitting near you on Sunday morning or standing alone at coffee hour. Greet them warmly. Ask if they have any questions, thank them for coming, and tell them you hope to see them again.

Welcoming is a spiritual practice and a way of sharing the message of our UU faith.

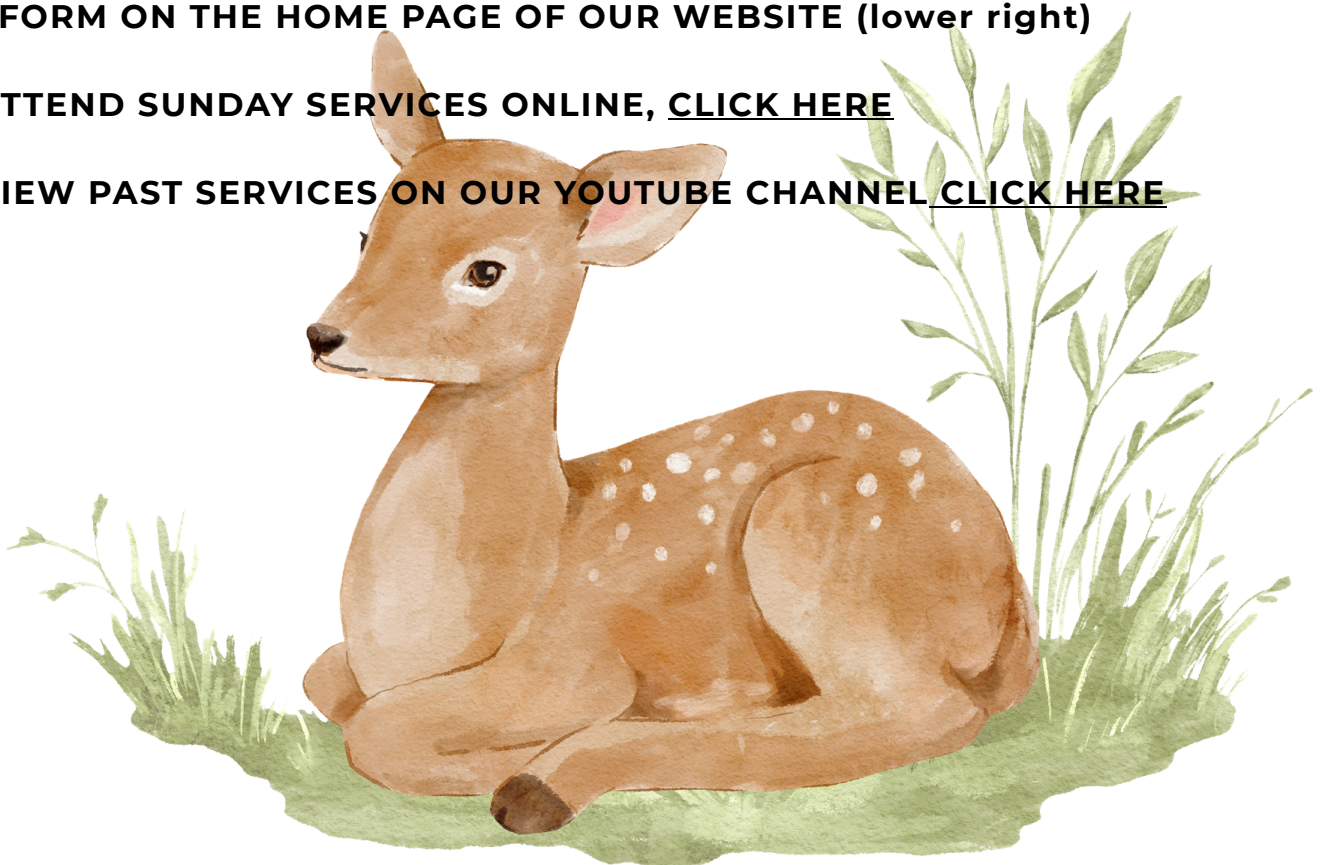
To become a member of the Congregation

If you would like to sign the book and become a member, please let Audrey Belt (beltaudrey@gmail.com) know and she will bring the Membership Book to a UU service for you to sign. Qualifications for membership per the UUCSS Bylaws: Anyone 18 years and older can sign the book. Signing the book indicates that you subscribe to the purposes of the Congregation and agree to participate in and support the Congregation's programs and activities, and to support the Congregation with an annual recorded financial contribution.

TO SIGN UP FOR *JOURNEY WELL*, OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER, PLEASE USE THE FORM ON THE HOME PAGE OF OUR WEBSITE (lower right)

TO ATTEND SUNDAY SERVICES ONLINE, [CLICK HERE](#)

TO VIEW PAST SERVICES ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL [CLICK HERE](#)



Sunday

UU Saratoga is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Sunday Worship Service

Time: 10:00am

Every week on Sun

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91704074305?pwd=7z4cyYIVOU3JfPLRS2gCoP1o0Tzqc8.1>

Meeting ID: 917 0407 4305

Passcode: 466653

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,91704074305# US

+16465588656,,91704074305# US (New York)



OFFICE HOURS Tues-Fri 9am-3pm We close early Fridays (around noon)	518-584-1555 uusaratoga.org
Meetinghouse 624 N. Broadway, Saratoga Springs NY 12866	Mailing Address PO Box 26, Schuylerville NY 12871