



NUUSLETTER

The Newsletter of Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church
always available online at www.hvuuc.org

The mission of Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church is to promote spiritual growth, religious freedom, and ethical action.

April 2021

PO Box 8383 Johnson City, Tennessee 37615 (423) 477-7661

Headlines

- All in person Worship Services and Religious Education classes have been suspended until June 30
- Religious Education Kits for Kids are available! See page 4 for info.
- Kitchen of Hope April 5
- Kids Coffee Hour April 25 at 10:30AM
- Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday, April 25
- Board of Trustee Special '21-'22 Budget Reconciliation Meeting Wednesday, March 31 at 7PM
- Online Game Group 2nd & 4th Saturdays at 7PM

Up to date church info is always available at www.hvuuc.org

Would You Like to Join Our Church?

There will be a Zoom Path to Membership class on Sunday, May 16 from 11:45 AM-1:45 PM.

What is Path to Membership? It's a class that helps prospective members learn more about our church and the opportunities for involvement. The class does not commit you to membership, but is a necessary precursor for joining our church. The class also lets you get to know a small group of people on a more personal level. If interested, please register using the link below.

Here's the registration link:

[Welcome! You are invited to join a meeting: Path to Membership. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the meeting.](#)

Upcoming Virtual Church Services

11:00AM Sundays at [HVVUUC YouTube](#)

April 4 - *Out of the Darkness, Into the Light*, Rev. Briere
Easter is a game changer. What game in your life needs to change?

April 11 - *Simplicity Ain't so Simple*, Rev. Jeff Briere
Have you ever tried to simplify your life? How'd did that work?

April 18 - Candidating Week

April 25 - Candidating Week and Annual Meeting

2021-2022 Proposed Slate of Officers

The Nominating Committee is pleased to propose the following slate of leaders for Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church for the year 2021-22. We are confident these well-qualified nominees will serve us well in their respective positions. We thank ALL the nominees for their selfless willingness to serve our church community.

The congregation will vote on this slate at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 25. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please email us at Nomcom@hvuuc.org.

President - Ann Livengood

Vice President - Ann Johnson

Past President - Dana York

Programs Trustee - Bryan Kleske

Stewardship Trustee - Charlie Miller

Secretary/Historian - Dottie Blades

Nominating Committee (2 yrs) - Joy Boyd

Nominating Committee (2 yrs) - Cynthia Goodman

Nominating Committee (2 yrs) - Tish Kashdan

Nominating Committee (1 yr) - Lance Klosterman

Let's Check In

Dana York, HVUUC Board of Trustees President

As we look forward to the selection of a new Minister, our 2021-22 Budget, Annual Meeting, and new Board of Trustees, I wanted to take a moment to tell you about some of the big decisions the Board has made this year.

Unexpected Expenses:

Hopefully you have sent in your pledge cards and remember that no amount is too small to commit to HVUUC to help with our ongoing ministry to our members and our region. We did have some big expenses this year. I wanted to share some information with you, so you would have some context for next year's budget and your pledge considerations.

Greg Kramer, our Facilities Trustee, as detailed in previous newsletters, has repaired our septic sump pump system that was not operational and painted and sheet rocked the main church (which looks great!). These capital repairs have cost us \$17,568 to date and we are still working on other building repairs.

We found out that we were not following a 2013 HVUUC commitment for our employee's retirement system, so we have made a retirement account fund adjustment of \$11,114 to date and may need to provide a few more dollars once the UUA analyzes our account. The church repairs and retirement account adjustments were above our approved budget for this year, and we are very lucky that these unexpected costs were able to be funded by the Board's Designated and Working Capital accounts due to your generous support in the past and the fund management of the current and previous Boards.

New Staff Leadership Model:

The Board decided that we would move to a minister lead staff leadership model with our new minister's arrival. What does this mean? It means that the use of the Personnel Committee structure, that changes each year, will not be used to supervise the staff of the church in the future, but that processes will be put in place for the minister to supervise our church staff with input from the Board of Trustees. Since the Personnel Committee is currently made up of the Past President, the Vice President and the current President (which changes each year) we have found that several issues have been lost in the transition of committee members annually, and we feel we may have not been fair to our employees or timely in informing them of their benefits, annual reviews, and training. A minister led leadership model and the establishment of a HVUUC Personnel Manual and policies, hiring, and employee appraisal documents will be standardized, allowing us to be more consistent with our current and future employees. Our goal is to have all the details worked out for this new leadership model in coordination with the new minister by December 2021.

When will We Meet in Person for Church?

The Board will continue to have a review monthly of our pandemic responses and, in coordination with the new minister and religious services committee, we will be looking at alternatives to meet together in person or virtually, or some combination in the future. This decision will be scientifically informed by guidelines from our state, local counties, the UUA-- and You! We are currently looking at guidance documents shared by the UUA for future church activities and we will keep you up to date on what we feel is appropriate for our church. However, I do want to quote Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray, our UUA President, when she recently talked about what we should do in consideration of reopening during this "in between time":

"Navigating this "in-between time" will be even more challenging than dealing with the early days of the pandemic. Those who are vaccinated may wish to start gathering in person sooner. Each person and family will have different levels of risk and risk tolerance. As leaders, we have to navigate complex decisions taking into account care for the whole of our communities—within and beyond our congregations. Our priority continues to be abiding care for the most vulnerable, within and beyond our congregations."

To help us continue our pandemic planning, look for another church-wide survey in May or June to help us gather information about what you think is appropriate for our church meetings in the future and to offer some ideas we have come up with for your consideration. Please take a moment to fill out this survey when it goes out - we want to hear from you!!

Your Board of Trustees are always available for your input. Feel free to contact me or any of the Trustees with your ideas, comments and concerns. Dana York, President@hvuuc.org

Kitchen of Hope Monday, April 5

No volunteers are needed for Kitchen of Hope this month, but we are still serving meals.

The Kitchen of Hope is still serving meals to folks in need. In fact, the numbers have risen to 200+ a day. In an effort to keep volunteers and guests as safe as possible, the logistics have changed. Instead of a sit-down community meal, we now must serve to-go meals only, at the door, one at a time. We have adapted to this situation. And we, too, want to limit potential exposure for you.

Until things get back to normal, if you would like to help, please consider donating either money or food items that can go in a lunch bag. We serve once a month, but the Kitchen of Hope serves 6 nights a week.

Thanks for all you do! Our community is infinitely better for your caring and commitment!

To donate money:

Mail a check to - HVUUC PO Box 8383, Gray, TN 37615 memo: Kitchen of Hope

Via Paypal - <https://hvuuc.org/donate> please indicate it is for Kitchen of Hope

To donate food: Contact Kim at KOH@hvuuc.org



All Church Picnic Saturday, August 7

Everyone is invited to Shelters #28 and 30 at the Eastman Recreation Area at Bays Mountain, after 4:30pm.

Bring a dish to share and whatever you wish to grill, a drink, and a chair. Paper plates, napkins etc will be on hand.

Play, chat and chill together and meet our new minister (we hope!!)

Religious Education RE Kits and Kids Coffee Hour

We are so excited to be offering RE Kits. The kits are delivered monthly until we are meeting in person again. To register for the kits go to <https://hvuuc.org/religious-education-registration-form>

Please send me photos of your children and youth enjoying the activities!

I am also host a Kids Coffee Hour on Zoom on the 4th Sundays from 10:00-10:30AM to chat with your children. I want to connect with them and get their feedback on the kits and see what they created. There is an extra level of privacy to these Zoom chats.

Sarah White, Director of Religious Education
DRE@hvuuc.org

Work Day—Saturday, April 3

Several projects that will be tackled during this work day are:

- Weed and Mulch Playground: 3 Adults
- Burn Pile: 1 Adult
- Rake Leaves: 3-4 people
- Put LED lights back around stairs: 1 Adult
- I have some electrical projects that don't have to be done on the workday: replace three lights in Sanctuary and remove ballasts in FBR fluorescent lights.

There's more!

Greg Kramer facilities@hvuuc.org

The Caring Team is Here to Help



When you face troubles or sorrows, your friends at the HVUUC Caring Team are on call and ready to offer confidential help. We organize meal trains for meal deliveries, arrange grocery and medicine delivery, help you find community organizations for specific needs, and more! As well as always offering a friendly ear, ready to listen.

Your Caring Team, Cynthia, Joy, Joseph, Alicia, Lynn, Freda, and Brandi. You can contact us via email at caring@hvuuc.org or by phone 423-477-7661 (press 1).

Treasurer's Corner

As we begin the fourth quarter of our 2020/2021 fiscal year, our income is currently \$13,000 ahead of our spending, thanks to your continued support and the conscientious use of our funds. The summary table of our finances for the first three quarters is shown below.

Treasurer Summary Report – Through Third Quarter 2020 - 2021

	Totals through Third Quarter	Budgeted amounts through Third Quarter	Totals through Third Quarter Actual minus Budgeted
Income	132972	134667	-1695
Expenses	119690	134667	-14977
Income minus Expenses	13282	-	13282

Distinct from the budgeted finances, we have designated funds that are raised separately and used for unbudgeted expenses. Our Capital Repairs Fund started the fiscal year at \$18,000 and is now at less than \$100 due to septic system repair and sanctuary updates. The Board Discretionary Fund started the fiscal year at \$19,000 and is now at \$7,500 after an \$11,000 payment was made to fulfill our contractual agreement with the UUA, as described in the President's report.

The full treasurer's financial spreadsheet is in the member's section of the church website. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact me at treasurer@hvuuc.org. - Deb Helmer.

Direct donations to the church from your bank – it's easy!

Sending a donation the church directly from your bank is the same as setting up on-line BillPay. Using this function incurs no fees, compared to the 3% paid to PayPal.

There are two ways to set this up and both work fine.

- You can enter the church name and address as a payee, and the bank will send a check to the church.
- You can get the church's account number by emailing treasurer@hvuuc.org and enter this along with the name and address of the church. This will send your donation directly to our account. This makes it easier on our end since we don't have to submit the check to our bank.

That's it! No envelopes, no stamps, and no fees involved. Don't hesitate to email the treasurer at treasurer@hvuuc.org if you have any questions.

References (The information above is based on the section listed "Go through your bank")
<https://www.moneyunder30.com/automatic-payments-explained>
<https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/banking/online-bill-pay-what-it-is-why-you-should-use-it>

New IRS Charitable Deduction Provision

The Internal Revenue Service has a special new provision that will allow people to easily [deduct up to \\$300 in donations to qualifying charities this year](#), even if they don't itemize. Taxpayers are encouraged to take advantage of this provision.

If you need a tax statement of your donation for year 2020, please contact Ramesh at pledge@hvuuc.org

Improving Financial Wellness for You and the Region

Monday, April 5 from 7-8pm

Appalachian Opportunity Fund will be presenting their mission on how to nurture your financial health and stimulate our community wealth in Central Appalachia. They will be sharing stories of their client's life-changing financial success, how they are able to provide access to capital to community members who are facing economic injustice, and how you can personally free yourself from financial stress. This event is open to all who want to learn more about economic issues facing our community and how to decrease your financial distress and increase your financial health. Please join us to learn more about how this passionate organization is providing an incredible trusted resource for you and our community.

Workshop to Cover:

Regional and Personal Financial Stress
Appalachian Opportunity Fund Overview
Wise Money Management
Improving Credit Scores
Avoiding High Interest Debt
Purchasing Vehicles & Homes
Local Opportunities

Please use the following link to register for the Zoom meeting:

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMof-ytrz8oHdQR4VefRIR_ig63dIXB9v17

For information about Appalachian Opportunity Fund, please see their website at <https://appalachianopportunityfund.com/>.

WETS-FM Spring Fund Drive

Visitors have told us that they heard our past underwriting messages on WETS-FM. Thank you to all who have made them possible. Due to Covid, we took a hiatus from underwriting, but would like to start again when we have our new minister in place.

We have been able to pay for several months of underwriting in past years because we bundled donations from members and friends of the church who normally donate to WETS.

WETS started their Spring Fund Drive this past weekend. If you usually donate to WETS or plan on donating this year, consider allowing your donation help the church as well. We can continue to be an underwriter for programming which allows us to get our message out in the community. WETS gets 100% of the money, you still get the tax benefits, and HVUUC gets our name out in the community. You can help two great organizations!

If you would like to donate to WETS and help fund HVUUC underwriting, mail your check to the church (address below). Checks made out to HVUUC and please be sure to write "WETS" on the memo line.

Contact Ann L. (wets@hvuuc.org) if you have any questions.

Church mailing address:
HVUUC
PO Box 8383
Gray, TN 37615

Grocery Cards Still Available for Purchase

Food City and Ingles grocery cards are available and can be mailed or delivered to you!

The cards we currently have in our possession were purchased well over 8 weeks ago. They are kept in ziplock bags and are not exposed to anything.

Cards can be delivered to mailboxes in the Johnson City or Kingsport area, and possibly to others areas. Of course, the cards could also be mailed.

We will happily accommodate your needs so that we can continue to generate a wee bit of income for the church.

If you are interested, please contact Dottie and Richard at grocerycards@hvuuc.org.

Thank you for continuing to participate!

Gathering Guidelines

The Board of Trustees (BoT) voted to continue to hold virtual services and to continue the previously advertised facilities usage guidelines until **June 30, 2021**.

We are watching the Covid-19 cases in our area and will reevaluate at our June BoT meeting about extending this decision further.

The following Gathering Guidelines for small groups at our facilities (inside and outside of buildings) continue to apply.

Gathering Guidelines for Inside and Outside Church Facilities

We strongly recommend continuing to use online forums for small group/committee/team meetings. However, the HVUUC Board has voted to allow people on site for activities that must be held in person, e.g. work groups.

Only 1 group may meet at a time inside the church building. To schedule your meeting or workgroup and make sure other groups aren't already scheduled, please contact Karyn at office@hvuuc.org to reserve your group on the church calendar. You can check the calendar to make sure there aren't conflicts at: <https://localendar.com/public/hvuuchurch>

To locate the church calendar from the church website (hvuuc.org), go to the "News & Events" menu and select the 4th item, "Church Calendar of Events and Meetings," from the drop-down menu.

Additional Guidance

- No children's activities allowed at this time.
- Please do not bring children to any activity happening at the church.
- Groups of 10 people and less
- No more than 1 meeting of 10 people or less inside the church building.
- No more than 10 people in any 1 area of the outside property for workdays. For example, the entrance garden.
- Whenever practical, work projects should be divided into small groups or individuals.
- The Fred Ball room (fellowship hall), sanctuary, and deck are the only meeting areas that are open for use. The REZ is still off limits for meetings.
- People doing work projects may enter other locations, but must maintain at least 6 feet of distance while inside.
- Must wear a face mask (please bring your own)
- When working alone outside a face mask is not required. Face masks are required when working in groups of 2 or more.
- Anyone in the building must wear a mask.
- Must wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds upon entering buildings, or use hand sanitizer and let air dry. Hand sanitizer is in several locations (foyer, kitchen, REZ), to be used as needed.
- Continue keeping a distance of 6 feet between people of different households.
- This is especially for inside activities but should also be adhered to when outside as much as possible.
- Whenever possible do not share work tools. If sharing occurs, wipe down handles with disinfecting wipes before returning the tool.
- Meals should be sack or box lunches, no family style meals, ie pizza. No water coolers or other communal drinking, ie punch. Maintain 6 feet of distance during meals.
- If you are ill, have a fever/cough, are someone who is at increased risk, or traveled to endemic areas infected with COVID-19, please stay home and enjoy online content and fellowship.
- Must clean commonly touched hard surfaces like door handles, light switches, counter tops, metal surfaces (chair backs), etc., when finished.
- Please use the cleaning wipes and/or bleach solution and paper towels in the foyer, kitchen, and REZ for cleaning/disinfecting after each visit.

Online Sunday services (on YouTube) will continue during this time. Virtual Religious Education (RE) activities for preschool through 12th grade will continue. Please register your children at [RE Reg form](#)

To schedule a Zoom Meeting

If your small group/committee/team would like to use Zoom, fill out the form here and on the website under the New & Events tab. <https://hvuuc.org/schedule-a-zoom-meeting>

Membership

Caring Team

The Caring Team coordinator for April is Cynthia Goodman. Contact Cynthia at caring@hvuuc.org or 423-477-7661 Press 1.

Thank You to our March coordinator Joseph Viola!

Website Member Log In

There is information on the website that you need to log in to see. Scroll to bottom of the home page and click on "Members Area". If you need the password, email office@hvuuc.org.

Once you log in, you can get a recent member directory, read the board policies and procedures and board meeting minutes, and get a reimbursement form or our tax exempt certificate.

2020-2021 Board of Trustees

President: Dana York president@hvuuc.org

Vice President: Ann Livengood vp@hvuuc.org

Past President: Tom Burns pastpresident@hvuuc.org

Treasurer: Deb Helmer treasurer@hvuuc.org

Stewardship Trustee: Charlie Miller stewardshiptrustee@hvuuc.org

Programs Trustee: Wendy Hearl programs@hvuuc.org

Facilities Trustee: Greg Kramer facilities@hvuuc.org

Secretary/Historian: William Kauffman boardsecretary@hvuuc.org

Membership Trustee: Michelle Markstrom-Frisch membership@hvuuc.org

Minister

Rev. Jeff Briere: 477-7661 (office) minister@hvuuc.org

Director of Religious Education

Sarah White DRE@hvuuc.org

Music Director

Charis Carter musicdirector@hvuuc.org

Church Secretary

Karyn Cross office@hvuuc.org

Submissions for each month's newsletter are due by the last day of month to newsletter@hvuuc.org.

Up to date information can always be found at www.hvuuc.org