

Need to talk?

FUUSA Pastoral Care Associates are here to listen!

Our Pastoral Care Associates have been trained in compassionate listening skills and are available to all members and friends of our congregation.

To contact a Pastoral Care Associate, email listeners@AlbanyUU.groups.io, contact Reverend Ann Kadlecsek, the Albany UU office at 518-463-7135, or one of our PCAs personally.



Getting to know our Pastoral Care Associate volunteers

Sharon Babala

Sharon has attended Albany UU for about 25 years and has taught RE, volunteered at many functions and Sunday services and chaired the Caring Network. She also has 33 years of management experience, mostly operating a small paralegal service company. What really matters to Sharon regarding the PCA program is her training as a yoga and meditation teacher and yoga therapist. What she loves is providing deep listening so that every person can be heard, cared for and healed.



Jim Chicoine

Jim and wife, Joyce, started attending Albany UU services in 2019 after deciding that they wanted to find a more socially outward reaching community. They have been involved with the Albany UU community in several ways, including attending Wellspring and Meaning Matters study groups and Circle Dinners. Jim has also been on the Finance Committee for several years and worked on two recent fundraisers. Given his desire to assist and connect with people, s and continues to help neighbors and be a volunteer for a number of different Capital District organizations. Surprisingly, he even was a religious education teacher for 20 years. As a PCA, Jim looks forward to connecting with more Albany UU members and providing a listening ear when needed.



Ruth Russell

Ruth is honored to join the Pastoral Care Team at the congregation. A lifelong Unitarian Universalist, Ruth has been shaped by the core values of compassion, community, and spiritual growth since childhood. She brings a rich professional background as a trained research scientist and lifelong educator—experiences that have cultivated her deep sense of curiosity, respect for individual journeys, and a strong commitment to service. She is known for her caring nature, empathetic presence, and ability to truly listen. As a Pastoral Care Associate, Ruth looks forward to offering support to fellow congregants with warmth, openness, and understanding. She sees this role as a meaningful opportunity to walk alongside others in times of need, celebration, and reflection.



Frank Traynor

Laura has been a UU since the 1990s, first joining the Schenectady Unitarian Society and later joining Albany UU after moving to Guilderland in 2011. Laura has served on Social Justice Committees in both congregations. She frequently ushers at Sunday services, and has participated in the Meaning Matters and Wellspring programs. Before retiring in 2012, she taught special education in preschool programs in the Capital District and administered teacher training programs for the State Education Department. After learning about caregiving as a volunteer for the Community Caregivers program, Laura was the primary caregiver for her life partner, Rodger Fink for several years until his death in 2021. She is honored to have been asked to serve as a Pastoral Care Associate at Albany UU. She has created several gardens in her yard, with a special interest in native plants, and volunteers for the Landis Arboretum in Esperance, New York.



Debbie Rodriguez

After attending a wedding at her sister-in-law's church in Hartford, CT, Debbie Rodriguez realized she needed a similar spiritual home. She looked for quite a while and, upon the recommendation of a co-worker, checked out and joined Albany UU in 2009. Subsequently, she found out that the church in Hartford she had attended the wedding at so long ago was a UU congregation. She has been singing with the choir since she joined Albany UU. She is active with the Rensselaer County Medical Reserve Corp where she helped with the COVID vaccine effort at Hudson Valley Community College and with the Southern Rensselaer County Rotary Club. She is an RN. She worked for the Office of Mental Health earlier in her career and has retired after 23 years from the New York State Health Department. She is grateful for the opportunity to provide support to the UU congregation as a Pastoral Care Associate.



Randy Rosette

Randy and husband, Chris, have been part of the Albany UU community since 1992 when they were looking for a spiritual and ethical home for their future family. A year later, they adopted three teenage boys. Randy became active with numerous religious education programs, teaching elementary through Youth group classes, and has been privileged to mentor three Rite of Passage youngsters. During her tenure at Albany UU, Randy has also appreciated the opportunity to be on the Board, Religious Service Team, Personnel and Finance Committees, and is involved with numerous activities including UU Weekend, fundraisers, and the choir. Working in the community health care field for over thirty years, Randy strives to treat each person in need with compassion and care. She is honored to serve our community as a PCA and hope to help whenever called upon.

