



# The Spark

The Newsletter of  
the Chalice Lighter  
Program Committee  
**Spring 2024**

In this edition of the Spark, we are featuring another CER congregation whose dreams are unlocked by a Chalice Lighter Grant, made possible by your generous contributions and the changes that make the CER Chalice Lighter Grant program more responsive to the needs of our congregations, covenanting communities, and groups of congregations, regardless of size or location and help more of them thrive.

The UU Church of Utica, in Utica New York, is a 90 member congregation in the Mohawk Valley of New York. They have found a way to embody their support for the Seventh Principle by eliminating the burning of fossil fuel to heat their building, while at the same time making their space more inviting by being warm in the winter and cool in the summer. They will do this by replacing their gas fired heating system with a geothermal system that will both heat and cool their building efficiently using the consistent ground temperatures and electricity provided by solar power.



“UU Utica is very thankful for receiving a grant from Chalice Lighters to help us in achieving our goal of carbon neutrality. We currently obtain our electricity from community solar but our heat comes from a gas fired hot water system. Replacing our heating system with geothermal will make us essentially carbon neutral. We hope our project will be an inspiration to other faith communities and the general population. We want to demonstrate our commitment to the Eight Principles and especially the seventh. Living our values is our Congregations goal.”

The grant made possible by your donations will be combined with grants from New York State and money provided by the congregation to pay for the system and new ductwork. While your generosity will help them eliminate the flame of their gas boiler, it will keep the spark of Unitarian Universalism burning more brightly than ever.

**Your continued generosity keeps the spark lit.** Thank you, on behalf of the CER Chalice Lighter Program Committee and staff. If your congregation has a project that could benefit from a grant, you can get further information at <https://tinyurl.com/CERchalicelighter>.