

What the Heck is a Service Auction?

Every year the church hosts a service auction to raise money and provide a great party for the congregation. This year's auction is on Saturday, April 7th. The basic idea behind the auction is a simple one: members and friends of the church offer services for sale to each other, and these services are sold to the highest bidder (by a real live auctioneer!). All the proceeds of the sale go to the church.

Our service auction started many years ago as a supplemental fundraiser intended to help us raise the extra money that we needed to make our "[Fair Share](#)" contribution to the UUA. It was a small gathering, the participants occupying the first few rows of pews in the sanctuary, but it was also a tremendous success. We have had a service auction every year since then, and in the intervening decades it has grown and grown to the point that it is now includes drinks and dinner and is our biggest fundraiser and social event of the year.

In addition to the "classic" auction we have also added silent and fixed-price auctions. A silent auction operates under the same principle as a normal auction, but instead of calling out their bids to an auctioneer, bidders instead write their bids on a sheet of paper that accompanies each item. When the silent auction ends (after the intermission of the main auction), the person with the highest bid wins the item. The fixed-price auction is just what it sounds like: items are offered for a single price, and every person who signs up gets it, until they are all sold.

The evening starts at 4:00 with appetizers, drinks and live music in the sanctuary. In the back of the sanctuary attendees can peruse the silent and fixed-price auctions and bid for those items that they want. At 6:00 dinner is served in the Fellowship Hall, and at 7:00 the main auction begins, helmed by our longtime professional auctioneer and friend of the church Don Denney. About halfway through the main auction there is an intermission, during which time folks can take one last look at the silent and fixed-price auctions to make sure they are the high bidder on the items they want. After the intermission, the rest of the live auction items are sold, and the event usually ends around 8:30 (though people generally remain for a bit to help with cleanup). Childcare (with activities) is available for the duration of the event.

It is an absolutely fabulous evening for everybody and last year raised about \$23,000 for our church home. Its success of course hinges on the donations that people make, as well as the help they provide on the evening of the auction itself. Look elsewhere in this publication or at the [auction website](#) for details about what kinds of things you can donate and how you can help make this event a success!