

SERVICE AUCTION FAQ

2026 • BEWITCHED AT NORTHWOODS

Raise your wand for Northwoods



WHAT IS THE SERVICE AUCTION EVENT (SAE)?

Service Auction is an annual event made up of a live auction, silent auction and sign-ups. SAE is, after the pledges, the largest fundraising opportunity for Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Church. But just as importantly, it is a FUN-raiser, helping to bring Northwoods people together all year long. When you sign up for dinners, parties, classes, hikes, or contests, you get to know others in small groups and informal settings. SAEs are part of the SECRET SAUCE of friendships at Northwoods!

WHO IS INVITED TO SERVICE AUCTION?

Everyone is invited! And childcare is provided (just tell us how many children you'll need care for).

WHO DONATES THE ITEMS IN SERVICE AUCTION?

Most items/sign-ups sold at SAE are donated by Northwoods members and friends, although local businesses also contribute generously.

WHAT ITEMS ARE SOLD IN SERVICE AUCTION?

The items sold in SAE generally fall into three categories, with the emphasis on SERVICE.

- A. SIGN-UPS** - Events hosted by Northwoods folks, sold at a set price per attendee. These may be parties, classes, contests, outings, dinners or services.
- B. LIVE AUCTION** - Items and special experiences are sold to the highest bidder during the live auction.
- C. SILENT AUCTION** - Donated goods, gift cards or services may be sold by silent auction at the discretion of the Service Auction Committee. Items will be listed in the catalog before the event.

WHAT IF I DON'T PLAN TO BUY ANYTHING AT SERVICE AUCTION?

Please come anyway! There is dinner (potluck style at each table, coordinated by the table leader), fun with friends, entertainment, costumes if you want them, and plenty of ways to volunteer.

WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE FOR SERVICE AUCTION?

For 2026, the detailed Service Auction evening schedule will be announced and posted as the event gets closer in Beacon Bits and on the Service Auction website.

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

KICK-OFF - Sunday, September 20, 2026 after church: Service Auction Kick-Off Party, Chili Cook-Off & Kids Bake-Off.

DO I NEED A TICKET TO ATTEND SERVICE AUCTION?

YES - You need to preregister on Auctria and pay the \$7 ticket price to claim a spot at a table. Attendance is limited by the number of spaces available and we often sell out.

WHAT SHALL I WEAR TO SERVICE AUCTION?

There is no dress code. For 2026, the theme is BEWITCHED! Some people will dress in witchy, magical, colorful or whimsical costumes; some will come casually; some will dress to the nines. Wear whatever makes you comfortable.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO SERVICE AUCTION?

- A.** A dish to share - coordinated through your table leader. If you want to sit with certain people, reach out to the table coordinator - Hillary Valor
- B.** Beverages, if you want something other than water.
- C.** A sense of fun. This is the most fun you will have giving!
- D.** A form of payment - cash, check or credit card. Payment is due at the end of the night.

IS ALCOHOL SERVED?

Alcohol is BYOB. You are welcome to bring your own, but alcohol is not served by the Service Auction Committee. Please drink responsibly. Per church policy, no one under 21 may consume alcohol on church property. Anyone bringing alcohol is responsible for supervising it at all times; unattended alcohol will be disposed of and containers recycled appropriately.

WHAT IF I CAN'T ATTEND BUT WANT TO BUY SOMETHING?

- A.** Attend the event via Zoom, you do not need a ticket to attend via zoom..
- B.** View silent auction items and sign-ups and purchase them through Auctria.

WHEN DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR THE THINGS I BUY?

Payment is due at the close of Service Auction. Cashiers will be available, and we accept cash, checks, MasterCard and Visa. If you pay by credit card, we ask that you cover the credit card processing fee.

HOW DO I CHECK OUT AND PAY?

At the end of the evening, total your purchases and see the cashiers. They will verify totals and take your payment. You can also pay for sign-ups and silent auction purchases through Auctria. If paying by credit card, please cover the credit card processing fee.

WHAT SHOULD I DONATE?

We prefer new or like-new items. Examples include gift cards, bottled spirits, paintings, sports tickets, game sets, concert tickets, camp stays, fishing trips, memorabilia, sculptures, art and other fun experiences. Hosting a sign-up event is also a great way to donate!

NEED IDEAS FOR A DONATION?

The Service Auction Committee is glad to help brainstorm. You can visit the Service Auction information table before or after Sunday service beginning September 20, 2026, or email serviceauction@northwoodsuu.org.

IS MY DONATION TOO SMALL?

Tell us about it! A batch of cookies, a bottle of wine, a small gift card - practically anything can be combined with other donations to make a great gift basket or auction item.

WHAT ARE SIGN-UPS?

Sign-ups are events - parties, classes, dinners, crafts, hobbies, lessons, outings and more - hosted by Northwoods members, friends or groups at their expense. Sign-ups are generally sold at a fixed price per attendee, and Northwoods receives the proceeds.

EXAMPLE - Someone who loves geocaching offers a three-hour class for 10 people at \$10 each. The host organizes the event and provides any snacks or supplies. If all 10 spots sell, Northwoods raises \$100.

PAST IDEAS - Wine tastings, nature walks, murder mystery dinners, Scrabble tournaments, cooking classes, art tours, beer making and many more.

WHO CAN ATTEND? - Events may be intended for adults, families, children, or any combination.

HOW ARE SIGN-UPS SOLD?

Offered events are listed in the Service Auction catalog. At the announced time, purchasing opens in Auctria and you can claim available spots. Many events fill quickly. Sign-up events are private parties hosted by the donor, not official Northwoods events. Hosts are encouraged to choose a date when donating. Life happens, and plans occasionally change; neither Northwoods nor the host is responsible for refunding a contribution to Northwoods.

HOW DO I MAKE A DONATION?

Donations of goods or sign-ups may be made by completing a donation contract electronically. Please use a separate contract for each donation. The word “contract” emphasizes that you are making a commitment to provide the item or host the event described. Complete all fields and be creative with your description - you are helping sell your service or event! You can also contact the team at serviceauction@northwoodsuu.org.

HOW DO I FILL OUT A CONTRACT?

Talk with us at the Service Auction table before or after service beginning September 20, 2026, or use the electronic form when it is released.

WHAT RESTRICTIONS SHOULD I INCLUDE?

Please include anything participants need to know, such as supply requirements (for example, participants must bring their own paint and canvas) and the date for your event. Check the Service Auction calendar to help avoid conflicts.

WHY DO YOU WANT ME TO SET A DATE FOR MY EVENT?

Experience! Without a date, people are often more reluctant to sign up, and finding a later date that works for everyone can be difficult. Setting the date up front eliminates a lot of frustration.

CAN I HAVE AN EVENT ON THE SAME DAY AS ANOTHER EVENT?

There is no rule against it. With 80+ events to schedule and a busy church calendar, some conflicts are inevitable. Please consider the type and size of your event compared with potential conflicts. The Service Auction Committee maintains a calendar and is happy to help.

I AM WILLING TO HOST AN EVENT BUT I DON'T HAVE ROOM AT MY HOME. WHAT CAN I DO?

The church building may be available at no charge for Service Auction events. Be sure to check with the church office to confirm space availability.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHO SIGNED UP FOR MY PARTY OR BOUGHT MY SERVICE?

Within two weeks after the Service Auction, you should receive an email with contact information for your buyers. Please retain it. If you do not receive the email, contact the Service Auction Committee at serviceauction@northwoodsuu.org for another copy.

WHO MOVED MY CHEESE?

The Service Auction Committee reserves the right to assign an item to an auction category (for example, live auction, silent auction or raffle) or combine donations as needed to best serve the church. We will contact you if we have questions.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I SIGN UP AND CAN'T ATTEND AN EVENT?

If you cannot attend an event, you may offer or sell your place to another person, but please inform the host. There are no refunds for unattended events.

CAN I VOLUNTEER?

Always! We have jobs big and small. Contact the Service Auction team and we will find a way for you to help.

DOES SERVICE AUCTION USE ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION?

YES. The donation contract and calendar will be available online. Keep up with Service Auction announcements in Beacon Bits, on the Service Auction website, in the Northwoods Facebook group and in the church Discord channel. After Service Auction, sign-ups with open spaces may be announced in Beacon Bits throughout the year.

MORE QUESTIONS?

Contact the Service Auction Committee at serviceauction@northwoodsuu.org.