Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

NEWSLETTER

October 2026

October 4, 10:30 am - Resentment
Reverend Barbara Sajna
***Reverend Barbara Sajna will explore the causes, corrosive effects and possible cures of resentment.

October 11, 10:30 am - Small Wins
Reverend Kimberley Debus - Remote
***Octavia Butler once wrote "everything is change" - which should be comforting but sometimes is overwhelming. We'll talk about this time of transition and consider the whys and hows of changing ourselves, our congregation, and our world, one small win at a time."

October 18, 10:30 am - Do We Really Have to Love Our Enemies?
Laura Rediehs
***The divisiveness in our world has now sharpened to the point that many people regard those on "the other side" as enemies. One precept of Christianity is that we must "love our enemies." Even if we don't think we have enemies, if others regard us as enemies and do terrible harm, is it possible to love them? So, is this precept true, and if so, what could it possibly mean?

***Laura Rediehs is recently retired from teaching philosophy and peace studies at St. Lawrence University, and is currently writing a book on truth and meaning-making. She is hoping that addressing today's crisis of truth can help us create a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world. She also loves music and bicycling, and is a Quaker.

October 25, 10:30 am - The Meaning(s) of Music in Worship
Paul Siskind
***Music has played an integral role in worship within many spiritual traditions throughout human history. However, the ways that music is used within worship, and the ways that it impacts the worshipper, vary greatly between different traditions and contexts. This experiential service will explore some of the different uses and meanings of music in worship.

***Paul Siskind has worked as a composer, conductor, and teacher of music. He has been a member of our congregation since 1998, and has been active with the Social Action Team, the renovation of the Memorial Garden, and the Pastoral Care Team.

Grace Notes

FROM THE MINISTER

Rev. Kimberley's Weekends with Us!

Rev. Kimberley Debus, our interim minister, will be with us in Canton on 10 weekends over the next year as well as in the pulpit via Zoom on 6 more Sundays. She will also lead our Christmas Eve service in person!

Here is a list of Rev. Kimberley's weekends in Canton and Sundays on Zoom:

Weekends in Canton:

- August 20-24
- September 24-27
- November 12-15
- December 10-13
- December 24 (Christmas Eve)
- January 21-24
- March 18-21
- April 8-11
- May 13-16
- Two weekends in July TBD

Sundays on Zoom:

- October 11
- January 10
- February 14
- March 14
- April 18
- June 20

In addition to leading worship, Rev. Kimberley will help us think about change and transitions and what the next chapter of our faithful ministry to the North Country might look like. She is based in the Washington DC Metro area and consults with congregations and religious professionals throughout the denomination. In addition to her consulting ministry, she also serves the Cedarhurst UUs in the greater Baltimore area, and writes about congregational life, worship, and other shenanigans on her weekly newsletter, *Hold My Chalice*.

Faith Engagement

Our UU Value of Transformation calls us to “adapt to the changing world and collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically.” Being open to change is fundamental to our Unitarian and Universalist heritages. We are never complete and never perfect.

During this interim year, we will be offering different whole church faith development opportunities that invite us to grow and change. First, we will be offering six whole church worship services led by me. These experiential services for all ages offer spiritual depth from being in community together and being inspired by our collective wisdom.

Secondly, we will have opportunities to engage in fun activities during social hour using the UUA’s Woven Faith theme-based curriculum. For October, the theme is “Living the Questions,” inviting us to stay curious, embrace uncertainty, and be open to mystery. Look for tables in the Romer Room to explore our faith values together.

Being open to change and growing together in community are vital to being a Unitarian Universalist. May the year ahead provide us many opportunities to learn and thrive. Blessed be.

~ Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

President's Message

October 2026

Annual Congregational Meeting – Sunday, October 18, 2026

During the next church year, you will have the opportunity to participate in the life of our congregation in a variety of ways—contributing to the Small Wins project, taking part in meetings hosted by Rev. Kimberley and our Transition Team, and providing input on the behavioral covenant and conflict resolution policy in January, to name a few.

And on October 18th, you have one more way to demonstrate your commitment to our church community: attending and voting in our congregational meeting.

The meeting will take place immediately after the service on October 18th. All interested individuals are invited to attend, and members are able to vote. A church-wide potluck will be held following the meeting in the Social Room.

The main agenda item for the congregational meeting is voting on our slate of candidates for Church Council as well as our new chair of the Nominating Committee. In addition, we often have some other business—such as bylaw changes—to conduct, which we do this fall.

Below you will find a link to the agenda for the meeting. It includes the slate of candidates for Church Council and their bios as well as some changes to the bylaws that Church Council is bringing forward.

If you have any questions or concerns about any part of the agenda, please reach out to me during social hour or by emailing me at president@uucantonny.org.

See you on October 18th!

--Cathy Crosby, Church Council President

Congregational Meeting Agenda

You're Invited: UU Canton Presidents' Dinner

Join us for a special evening of good food, fellowship, and fun at the UU Canton Presidents' Dinner, on **Saturday, October 17th at 6:00 p.m.** in the church Social Room.

This special dinner is a fundraiser to support our church. Your hosts are the current and former Council presidents - Cathy Crosby, Doug Rubio, Pete Beekman, Barb Beekman, Jenn Whittaker and Jon Montan. We hope you'll join us for an evening of delicious food and wonderful company. Tickets are $75 per person. You can sign up during Social Hour this Sunday!

The Menu

Appetizers

Cheese, red pepper dip, and crackers, accompanied by festive mocktails

First Course

Seasonal tossed green salad

Main Course — your choice of:

- Mushroom risotto
- Roasted chicken thighs

Both entrées will be served with roasted root vegetables.

Dessert — your choice of:

- Flourless chocolate cake
- Pumpkin cheesecake
- Citrus tart

Come celebrate our UU Canton community while enjoying an elegant dinner and helping support the church. We look forward to sharing this special evening with you!

UU BIRTHDAYS

If you're inclined to send a birthday card, addresses can be found in the church directory online. If you'd like to support the Caring Circle, or to add any birthday names that are missing, email

caringcircle@uucantonny.org.

October 1 : Ashley Clover
October 3 : Jonathan Carls
October 5 : Jessie Coffin
October 6 : Desireé LeBoeuf
October 6 : Roger Hutchinson
October 7 : Kiley Frank
October 11 : Galen Oey-Langen
October 13 : Gretchen Koehler
October 21 : Claire Rousell, Maddie Rousell, Grace Rousell
October 24 : Helen Hutchinson
October 27 : Erika Barthelmess
October 27 : Braden Whittaker, Tom Frank?
October 29 : Nancy Alessi
October 30 : Margaret Mauch

Oh, October!!

River Woods CUUPs

Sunday, October 4, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

CUUPS stands for the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans. It is an organization dedicated to networking Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalists, educating people about Paganism, promoting interfaith dialogue, and supporting Pagan-identified UU religious professionals.

We will discuss starting a CUUPS chapter at Canton UU and propose a potential events/celebrations calendar.

Fire Drill Evacuations

Sunday, October 11

In the hope of addressing a need we will never have, and to ensure the health and safety of the entire congregation, the Church Council will be conducting an EMERGENCY EVACUATION.

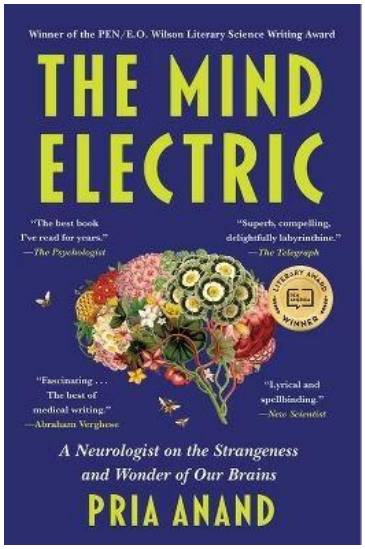
Walk, don't run to the nearest exit.

Science Book Club

Thursday, October 15, 7:00 pm - Zoom

The Science Book Club will be discussing The Mind Electric by Pria Anand - the stories we tell ourselves about our brains, and the stories our brains tell about us.

All meetings are by Zoom at 7:00 pm, except for June 17, which is at 1:00 pm. To join, email Brian Gardam at bdgardam@icloud.com. The club's November book will be The Black Death by Thomas Abridge.



Soup's on!!

Thursday, October 15th from 6:00 - 7:00 pm

Say it isn't so! Cooler weather is approaching. And there is no better way to stay warm and cozy than with a cup of soup!

Third Thursday Soup is on! Come enjoy dinner with fellow UUs! We will share a simple meal of soup and bread on the third Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. in the Social Room.

Email: outreach@uucantonny.org with questions or to sign up to make soup or bread for the meals.

History Circle - Coots Library

Sunday, October 18 9:00 - 10:15 am

Those interested in our church history are invited to participate in the group. Members review archived documents, create history tidbits for the church newsletter and support other groups and committees who need historical information.

Shamanism Drum Circle

Monday, October 26 9:30 to 11:00

Shamanism is an ancient healing practice where the student learns to journey to non-ordinary reality in the upper and lower worlds to meet and develop deep loving relationships with their trusting, compassionate, helping spirits, power animals and teachers. By creating a portal and through rhythmic drumming the practitioner moves easily from one reality to another expanding consciousness, receiving support, insight and healing. Joining in the collective spirit of the circle, allows us to share profound spiritual experience, song, and nature based ceremony. The Shamanic worldview is everything is alive. While having journeying knowledge and skills are helpful to participate in the circle, all are welcome. Please contact Debra Mitchell at dmitchell317@twcny.rr.com beforehand. There will be several opportunities in the future to learn how to journey.

Youth Out Loud
Monday, October 26 5:30 - 7:00 pm
Potsdam Pride X The Q Center - LGBTQ+ Youth Meetup, Ages: 12-18, 4th Mondays, 5:30-7:00 pm

Evening of Samhain Frame Drumming
Tuesday, October 27th from **6:30 to 8:00 pm** in the **Social Room**

In the late Fall on the agricultural calendar, as the leaves fall from the trees, the earth's brilliance is fading, and temperatures get colder, there is time to settle in and honor those who have passed away during the early part of the year. Many in earth-centered and today's Pagan communities call their holiday Samhain (sow-in). The word means "summer's end". This name comes dominantly from Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man. Calan Gaeaf is a similar holiday from Wales. It falls halfway between the autumnal equinox and winter solstice." (https://cuups.org/Samhain-for-UUs)

You are invited to come celebrate Samhain with our **Frame Drumming Group** on **Tuesday, October 27th from 6:30 to 8:00 pm** in the Social Room. Bring a photograph or memento of a deceased loved one to honor them on this special day. Drums provided or bring your own. All ages and abilities are welcome! Contact Caron Collins at bandtchr1@hotmail.com for more information.

Sing your hearts out!!!

<u>Come Sing in the UU Choir for these Special Events!</u>
Carol Strome and Paul Siskind invite new and returning singers to sing with our UU Church Choir for special themed services and events throughout the year. Along with being "in the choir" on a regular basis, *we're also inviting new singers to join for individual services / events / themes which particularly interest you*. This year, many of these special themed services will coincide with weekends when Rev. Kimberley will be preaching live from our pulpit. The Choir generally *rehearses at 9:00-10:10 am on the Sunday the week before* the performance service, *as well as 9:00-10:10 am on the day of the performance* service.

The Meaning(s) of Music in Worship
On Sunday **October 25th**, Paul Siskind will present an experiential service which will explore some of the different uses and meanings of music in a variety of worship traditions and contexts. The Choir will be an integral part of the service, which will include a mix of familiar hymns, chants from the Jewish tradition, and musical settings of The Lord Bless You and Keep You.

Schedule:
- Sunday 10/18 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10 (in the Choir Room downstairs)
- Sunday 10/25 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10; perform during the Service, 10:30-11:30

<u>News from the Social Action Team - *Get Involved!*</u>

Help us plan our next Social Justice Initiative!
Our next SJI will focus on the topic of ***Overcoming Isolation***, and will be held during Spring of 2027. We invite members of the congregation to be part of the planning team for this important event. Over the next few months, we will be organizing movie screenings, book discussions, guest speakers, and a variety of engaging events for our congregation and the wider community. If you're interested in being part of the planning team, please speak with or e-mail our SJI Coordinator, Alyse Millikan: sjcoordinator@uucantonny.org. The SJI planning team meets both along with and separately from the Social Action Team, to give flexibility for people with different schedules to participate.

Helping immigrant communities:
Our Church's Social Action Team works closely with the *Immigrant Resources Volunteer Network of St. Lawrence County* to provide information, support, and resources to the variety of immigrant communities in our region. If you are interested in learning more about the important work of *IRVN-SLC*, please send an email to paul@paulsiskind.com, and Paul will add you to the *IRVN-SLC* email list.

Protecting voting rights, and get-out-the-vote activities:
Protecting voting rights is going to be an important issue this Fall, and the UUA has organized two programs to help congregants and congregations engage with the issues: *Side With Love, and UU the Vote*. Here are links to information about these projects:

https://www.sidewithlove.org/democracy
https://secure.everyaction.com/3rWCPg0Dukm8xuBs5nV_mQ2
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fgMvc2C0aYtft5hA4Fzn_QOeJHE5lyBs/edit
https://www.sidewithlove.org/solidarity-summits?emci=2a5cb16b-e491-f111-9b33-000d3a11fa30&emdi=a9c52461-9e92-f111-9b33-000d3a11fa30&ceid=20403
https://www.centerforcommonground.org/postcards?emci=2a5cb16b-e491-f111-9b33-000d3a11fa30&emdi=a9c52461-9e92-f111-9b33-000d3a11fa30&ceid=20403
https://votefwd.org/get-involved?emci=2a5cb16b-e491-f111-9b33-000d3a11fa30&emdi=a9c52461-9e92-f111-9b33-000d3a11fa30&ceid=20403

Upcoming Social Action Team meetings:
The Social Action Team invites all congregants to bring us your ideas for social justice issues, events, and projects that you think our congregation might be interested in engaging with. We will work with you to develop and implement your ideas. Please bring your ideas to the SA Team by e-mailing socialaction@uucantonny.org, or by attending our upcoming meeting (please let us know ahead of time if you want to add an item onto our agenda). The SA Team generally meets on the second Tuesday of each month (but check the Church Calendar and newsletters to confirm). We meet in person (in the Romer Room), with a hybrid/Zoom option available:

Social Action Meeting - Tuesday October 13, 7:00-8:30 pm
In the Romer Room, with Zoom option:
https://zoom.us/j/99736094441?pwd=3bpHAb6Rv1fCLVskAta2t5jxb5BtLJ.1
Meeting ID: 997 3609 4441
Passcode: 450380

Committee Focus

Pastoral Care Team - Members of the Pastoral Care Team (Paul Siskind, Sara Hutcheson, Dave Nelson, Leo Burger, Helen Hutchinson, Tom Van de Water, Peter Wyckoff) are available to support you as we welcome Reverend Kimberley into our church and gear up for the new church year.

Members assist the minister in visiting congregants who cannot make it to church, reaching out to congregants whom we have not seen in awhile, and being a listening presence to anyone who is in need. When our minister is unavailable the Pastoral Care Team handles any pastoral care concerns that may arise.

This fall we are trying out a new system, where individual team members will be taking the lead on any pastoral care issues that emerge during a specific month. The individuals listed below will be coordinating requests for support from congregation members, but people seeking attention should feel free to contact any PCT member with whom they might feel comfortable.

October - Sara Hutcheson (315-261-8009)
November - Leo Burger (315-212-4382)
December - Paul Siskind (315-353-2389)

If you have a concern you may also call the church office at 315-386-2498, or contact the minister at minister@uucantonny.org

If it is an emergency situation, please dial 911.

What it is:
Support when you need it. Someone with an open heart and listening ear can provide you a confidential space to help process your thoughts and feelings. Times to contact the Pastoral Care Team may include the death of a loved one, the challenges associated with being a caregiver, health issues, making important life decisions, carrying a burden, or experiencing a heavy heart.

What it is not:
Emergency and crisis management, licensed counseling, or therapy. While our pastoral care team is trained and willing to help in any way they can, they are not equipped to handle emergency situations or urgent crises that require the knowledge of licensed professionals. They can guide you to resources that will be of help, though.

~ putting our house in order ~

Be a Pulpit Guest! - Do you have an idea for a sermon budding inside of you? Have you experienced something magical, transformative, or inspiring that you would love to share with the congregation? Are you interested in sharing your connection to our church and/or religion but haven't thought it was the right time? Consider this your invitation to be a guest in our pulpit!
If you have the seeds, the first buds, or a fully bloomed sermon, please contact Mary Michalek at worship@uucantonny.org. The Worship Committee would love to hear from you!

Wanted: Technicians - Do you know someone who is tech-savvy and interested in earning a little cash on Sunday morning? The Worship Committee is looking for technicians to operate the Zoom feed for worship services.

Photographers Needed - Are you good with photography and people? The Communication Committee needs help with taking pictures of our church events and activities. You would also need to be comfortable asking if we can use this photo for church publications.
If this is you and you want to learn more, please contact the Communication Committee via email at commcomm@uucantonny.org.

Future Events and Notices

This Fall: Host a Gourmet Dining for a Great Cause Dinner!

One of the most enjoyable traditions at our church is returning this fall — *Gourmet Dining for a Great Cause!* We are looking for hosts to open their homes, share a meal, and help raise funds for the church in a fun and welcoming way.

Hosting is simple: choose a theme, plan a dinner or brunch, and invite fellow congregants to sign up by making a donation to the church. Past events have included everything from gourmet pizza dinners, international cuisine nights, and seasonal celebrations.

You do not need to be a professional chef to host. The heart of Gourmet Dining is hospitality, creativity, and community. Co-hosting with friends is also encouraged. Not enough space in your dining room? Reserve the church's Social Room for your dinner!

To volunteer as a host or ask questions, please contact Todd Moe, at toddamoe@gmail.com, or a member of the Stewardship team. We'll have more information and a schedule of dinners in our autumn newsletters. We hope to make this year's Gourmet Dining season our best yet!

The 2027 Canvass Small Groups Campaign

This fall's Canvass Campaign will offer an opportunity to connect with one another in meaningful conversation and community. The Canvass is our annual invitation to every member and friend of the church to make a financial pledge for the coming year. Instead of traditional one-on-one visits, we will be gathering in small groups both at church and in members' homes starting in October.

These gatherings will give us a chance to reflect together on the future of our church, share hopes and ideas, and support the mission and ministries of our congregation. Stewardship facilitators will guide each meeting, so hosts can simply focus on providing a welcoming space for conversation and fellowship.

We are currently looking for volunteers willing to serve as hosts. Hosting is easy — all you need to do is open your home to a small group of church members for an evening or afternoon gathering. Meetings will be modest in size, and light refreshments are more than enough

If you are interested in hosting a gathering or would like more information, please contact the Stewardship Committee or the church office.

Trash to Treasure to a Church Donation

Spring/summer cleaning? Too few items for a yard sale? Don't forget about UUBay — a creative way to turn unwanted items and services into support for our church! That clutter in your attic, extra garden produce, unused theater tickets, or even your skills and hobbies can become a donation to the church. Help transform "trash into treasure" for our congregation. Every contribution helps support our church while building community in fun and unexpected ways. Contact the church office to find out more about UUBay and sign up to receive email updates.

Staff Schedules for the Church Year:

Carol Zimmerman, DRE:
Available by email **Sunday–Wednesday** and by appointment on **Tuesday & Wednesday.**

Paula Sturge, Congregational Administrator:
Available by email, office hours **Monday - Thursday 9 am - 3 pm**

You can always check the calendar on our website for details.

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

Creating a welcoming, compassionate faith community,
committed to social justice and open to wonder.

Together we strive to:

- Foster a spirit of inclusion and connection
- Encourage exploration of truth and meaning
- Nurture respect for all life and the environment
- Live our values in the North Country and in the wider world

For online giving, please click HERE or scan the QR code below:

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton
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Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education
Paula Sturge, Congregational Administrator
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