Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

NEWSLETTER

November 2026

November 1, 10:30 am - The Welcoming Mat: Living Our Covenantal Faith
Carol Zimmerman
***Saying “welcome” isn’t the same as actually welcoming all. Through story, writing prompts and using the acronym WARM (Welcome, Accepted, Rooted and Matter), we will explore how it feels to make, keep, and be on the receiving end of covenant promises.

November 8, 10:30 am - Gratitude and Wonder
Jan DeWaters
***Gratitude helps us recognize that, even in these troubled times, we are surrounded by examples of life’s wondrous gifts. This participatory worship service celebrates our season of Thanksgiving by exploring gratitude and wonder through shared spiritual practice.

***Jan DeWaters joined our congregation shortly after moving to Potsdam in 1996 with her partner and 3 small children. Over the years she has engaged in many aspects of our church community, and currently is a member of the Worship Committee and the Our Whole Lives teaching team.

November 15, 10:30 am - Eat More Pie
Rev. Kimberley Debus
***There is something about pie that speaks to all of us – it is one of the few truly universal foods. We’ll explore what pie means, what we can learn from pie, and how taking time for pie feeds our souls as well as our bodies.

November 22, 10:30 am - Bicentennial Anniversary
Kim Bouchard
***"The 201st Birthday: Remembering Back, Engaging Now, Pondering Next
A year since our Big Bicentennial Bash, we'll take time for reflection; we'll acknowledge the change we're going through; we'll contemplate future directions. Kim Bouchard will share her thoughts and ruminations at the end of our 200th year and invite the congregation to share their ideas as we move into the 201st. And yes, there will be CAKE!!

***Kim Bouchard is celebrating her 31st year as a member of our beloved congregation. Now in retirement from 40 years of professional and educational theatre, she is relishing Time to pursue recreational and spiritual activities while living in the beauty of the North Country land and community.

November 29, 10:30 am - Gratitude
Rev. Barb Sanja
***Are we grateful? If so, what for? If not, why not?

Grace Notes

FROM THE MINISTER

Thanksgiving mornings in my house always began the same way: a slice of Mom's coffee cake, warm from the oven, a big glass of orange juice, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade on the television, and newspaper spread out on the dining room table so we could polish the silver. The scents of cinnamon and tarnish remover blended into an oddly comforting mélange of warm tininess, made more complex by the sautéing onions that would go into the stuffing, which would go into the bird. Even now, just thinking about it, I can smell that odd combination of scents and I am transported to a different time and place.

My memories of childhood Thanksgivings are positive – and I am grateful for them, because they remind me of my family and of experiences that shape who I am today. Yet not all of us are grateful for our memories of this time of year. We are entering a complex season, where messages of family and connection and tradition may bristle against memories of anger or scarcity or frustration. Some of us may encounter relatives whose ideologies are the antithesis of our Unitarian Universalist values. Some of us may struggle with loneliness or depression because of loss or simply distance. Others may overload their Thanksgiving tables to make up for all the years when there wasn't enough. Others still may have to work and may have always had to work, and so the day isn't a holiday at all.

But no matter how we view the day – with all its complexities – I want to remind us to find the space to be grateful.

Gratitude isn't an easy thing some days, I know. In our darkest times there seems to be nothing to be grateful for. But I want to challenge you to look around you right now and express gratitude for what is nearby. Perhaps it is the computer you're reading this on; you can be grateful for the computer, for eyes that work well enough to see it, for the electricity to power it. Perhaps it's the table and chair where you're sitting; you can be grateful for the hands that crafted them and their sturdiness. See? Things to be grateful for already! There's no limit to what you can be grateful for. It doesn't have to be big things; it can be the little things – the smile from someone across the pew on Sunday, the smell of the crisp fall day, the cup of coffee that fuels your morning tasks.

The key is not to stay stuck at the chair or the coffee – it is to then to be grateful for bigger things: the breaths we take, the thoughts we have, the tenderness and generosity we feel, the ability we have to help and serve others, the inspiration we get from truth and beauty, the comfort we draw from others, and the memories of places, people, and moments that make us who we are.

Let us be grateful for the abundance of gratitude. Let us give thanks.

One thing I am grateful for is my nearly monthly visits to Canton. November is chock full of opportunities for us to connect:

Friday, November 13 – One on One Conversations, Tea, and Cookies with me
To sign up, visit this link: https://calendly.com/kdebus/tea-with-the-minister

Saturday, November 14 – Sermon Writing Workshop
To sign up, visit OneChurch here: https://uucantonny.onechurchsoftware.com/public/events/3784

Sunday, November 15 – after worship – Pie Brunch

Sunday , November 15 – after pie – A Walk through Recent History: Interim Session

I hope I get to see most of you sometime while I'm in town!

Blessings,
Rev. Kimberley

Faith Engagement

Our is a covenantal faith! At the beginning of each year, our children are asked to create a covenant together that outlines the promises and expectations we have of each other while at church. This year our covenant includes: Have Empathy; Have Fun; Be Thoughtful; Be Friendly; Look for ways to be helpful; Listen when other are talking; keep an open mind; Be Respectful; Share what you know; Be Kind; Ask yourself and others, what kind of world do we want to live in; Clean up after ourselves; Assume good intent; and Play.

For the month of November, we will be exploring covenant through creative, multigenerational experiences that build community and belonging. We will reflect on being WARM (Welcome, Accepted, Rooted, and Matter) through a collaborative quilt during social hour, and during the interactive worship service on November 1st.

May we grow together in covenant. Blessed be.

~ Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

President's Message

November 2026

Getting Involved

We have fully embarked on a new church year, and this year is filled with ways you can be involved in our community. So, get involved by sharing your voice and showing your Commitment.

November has several one-off opportunities. Here are just some:

- **Join one of the Canvass Conversations.** These small groups are happening immediately before and after the Sunday service on November 1, 8, and 15.

- **Enjoy Tea with the Minister** on Friday, November 13 th . Sign up for a time to chat with Rev. Kimberley.

- **Walk Through Recent History** of our church with Rev. Kimberley on November 15 th , following the pie brunch This workshop is part of our interim work as we prepare to search for a settled minister.

The Small Wins Project provides another opportunity to be involved. Look on the wall of the Social Room for a large variety of small wins projects and find one that fits your time, talents, and interests. You can be one of the pieces that completes our puzzle!

*****Look for more information and how to sign up for the above opportunities elsewhere in this month's newsletter and in the News for UU that comes out every Thursday.*****

Finally, if you experienced the energy and excitement (and treats) of the Connections Fair in September, you know **we have many committees and teams that you can join**. Not sure about joining or not sure about which one? Talk with Robin Collen, our Vice President of Church Council, during social hour or drop Robin a note at vicepresident@uucantonny.org. She would be happy to talk with you about the possibilities.

Looking forward to seeing you around in November!

--Cathy Crosby, Church Council President

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.

November 4 : Dan Burton
November 13 : Judi Cohen, Arthur Freeheart, Dominic Grimberg
November 14 : Laura Foster
November 19 : Rebecca Pickens
November 22 : Cliff Westerling
November 25 : Barb Beekman
November 27 : Rajiv Narula
November 29 : Kate Cleary, Donna Smith-Raymond

November, a time for giving thanks!!

Small Wins

We've had some great Small Wins! Lots of folks are signing up for various tasks, and a few of them have been completed already, with many more in the works, and even more ready for you to say yes!

Want to spend a little more time contemplating what task you'll sign up for?

Find the complete list here! Please sign up in person (or ask a friend to help).

The 2027 Canvass Small Groups Campaign - "Change is Coming"

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 last month.

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.

Please follow this link to sign up for a conversion about the 2027 Canvass Small Groups Campaign.

Introduction to Shamanism Workshop - Saturday November 7 & 14, 10:00 - 12:00 pm

Come experience a classic shamanic drum/journey circle with sacred song, drumming, calling to the four directions and journeying to non-ordinary reality to meet one of your spirit animals/spirit teachers.
Day 1, on November 7, will focus on an introduction to Core Shamanism, what it is, basic principles and history. You will learn how to journey to meet one of your spirit animals.
Day 2, on November 14, will focus on journeying to meet one of your spirit teachers and as time permits learning some basic empowerment/self healing practices.

Registration is required. Click here to register. Space is limited to 12 people.

Please bring an eye covering (a scarf, bandana or Mindfold) and a notebook/pen to write in. Attendance for both days/sessions is recommended as they build upon one another.

About the Facilitator: Debra Mitchell, MSW, LCSW-R has over 36 years experience in the mental health field as a psychotherapist/healer. She is a Shamanic Practitioner trained with the Foundation for Core Shamanic Studies, a teacher of Transcendental Meditation, and a Reiki Master.

North Country CUUPs - Sunday, November 8, 1:00 - 3:30 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.

Community Labyrinth Walking - Wednesday, November 11, 7:00 - 8:00 pm

Starting Wednesday, November 11, the 7-circuit Chartres style portable labyrinth will be available to all for the spiritual practice of walking within community from 7-8pm. For those new to walking, an introduction will be offered before each session at 6:45pm.
Each month, we will rotate between walking in silence and walking with music.
November - Silent; December - Music; February - Silent; March - Music; May - Silent; June - Music
Look for special labyrinth events to be held in January and April.
To preserve the cloth labyrinth, please plan to walk in sock feet but if shoes are needed, cloth cover booties will be provided. For those unable to walk or prefer another option, lap labyrinths and labyrinth coloring pages will be available. All are welcome to enjoy this spiritual practice opportunity.

Game Night in the Social Room - Thursday, November 12, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Everyone is welcome to join our Community Board Game night.

Strategy and Party games will be provided or bring your favorites. A selection of board and card games will be available for all ages to play.

Tea with the Minister - Friday, November 13, available times between 10:30 and 5:00 pm in the Minister's Office

Let's get to know one another better! Plan to spend a half hour with Rev. Kimberley for tea, cookies, and conversation.

To sign up, visit this link: https://calendly.com/kdebus/tea-with-the-minister

If you have questions, please contact Rev. Kimberley at minister@uucantonny.org.

Sermon Writing Workshop - Saturday, November 14, 9:00 - 2:00 pm

Whether you have never offered a Sunday sermon and want to learn how, or you want to hone your skills, you are welcome at this workshop! We'll talk through the basics and accompany each other in the process of imagining, developing, writing, and delivering great sermons. NOTE: In addition to our workshop on November 14th, there will be opportunities for small group support as well as a final time of sharing and supporting one another - these additional times will be scheduled when we are together on the 14th.

To sign up, visit OneChurch here: https://uucantonny.onechurchsoftware.com/public/events/3784

If you have questions, please contact Rev. Kimberley at minister@uucantonny.org.

Community Drum and Dance Circles - Saturday, November 14, 1:00 - 2:30 pm

Please join us in Community Drum and Dance Circles! These ***monthly*** gatherings include playing all types of drums and percussion along with free-style dancing.

Drumming and dancing are facilitated by local belly dancer Leigh Safira Helvie, UU church members Dr. Joya Blondel and Dr. Caron Collins.

Admission is FREE and all ages and abilities are welcome. Drums provided or bring your own. Creative dress is encouraged. Scheduled on the second Saturday of EACH month from 1:00 to 2:30 pm beginning Saturday, November 14 th in the church Social Room. Invite a friend and share the joy of drumming and dancing!

History Circle, Coots Library,
Sunday, November 15 9:00 - 10:15 am

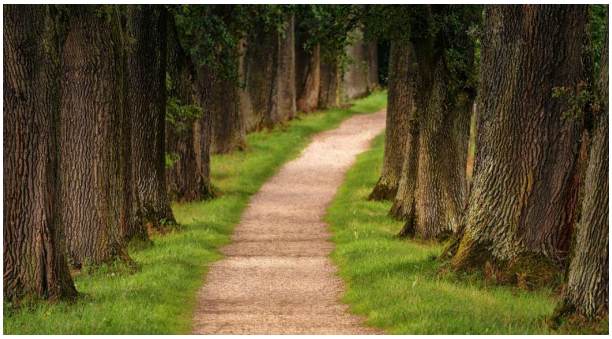
Those interested in our church history are invited to participate in the group. Members review archived documents, create history tidbits for the church newsletter and support other groups and committees who need historical information.

Pie Potluck Brunch - Sunday, November 15, 11:30 - 1:00 pm

Please bring a pie to share! After the service, we will have a potluck pie brunch. Please bring a sweet or savory pie – quiches, pizzas, shepherd's pies, pot pies, tarts, fruit pies, cream pies – whatever kind of pie tickles your fancy. Leftovers are welcome! After spending an hour talking about pie, we're going to want to eat some pie! And remember that after our hearts are warm and our bellies are full, we will tell stories of the congregation and build a timeline of more recent events and experiences of ministry.

A Walk Through Recent History: An Interim Workshop

Sunday, November 15, after Pie Potluck, for about 2 hours



Join Rev. Kimberley to help tell stories of the congregation and build a timeline of more recent events and experiences of ministry. We'll gather as social hour ends in the Social Room and start right after the Pie Potluck.

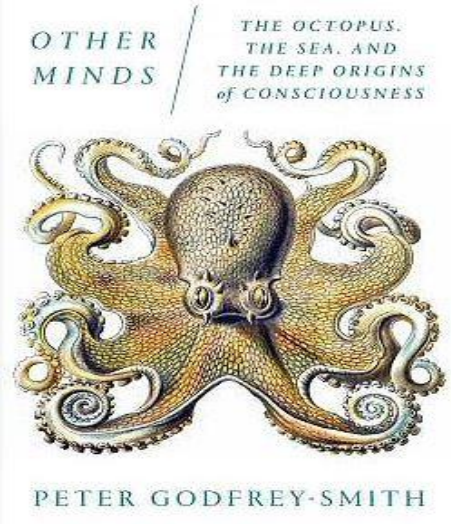
Third Thursday Soup - Thursday, November 19, 6:00 - 7:00 pm

Yummy! Cooler weather is approaching. What better way to stay warm and cozy than with a cup of soup and friendship!

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.

Science Book Club - Thursday, November 19, 7:00 - 8:30 pm - Zoom



The Science Book Club will be discussing Other Minds by Peter Godfrey-Smith.

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.

December's book is Sex is a Spectrum by Agustin Fuentes.

The Way of Music Workshop - Saturday, November 21, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Music has the power to move, connect, and awaken us to something beyond ourselves. Whether you're a lifelong musician, music lover, or curious spiritual seeker, you're invited to experience music not as something to master but as a spiritual practice rooted in presence, play, and holy attention - one that opens your heart to joy, connection, and mystery.
No expertise or experience required.

Registration recommended by clicking here to register.
Please bring a journal, writing utensil, curious mind, open heart and willingness to be delighted.

Our facilitator, Martha Gallagher, delights in supporting individuals and groups in revitalizing and growing their spiritual practices through engaging in music, dance, poetry creation, nature connection, and imagination exploration. She shares her joy and music ministry near and far as a guest musician, lay leader, retreat facilitator, performer, and worship music content creator for spiritual groups, churches, and conferences.

Shamanism Drum Circle - Monday, November 23, 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.

Frame Drum Group - Tuesday, November 24, 6:30 to 8:00 pm

Come Celebrate Native American Heritage Month with Drumming!

You are invited to join our special monthly Frame Drum Group on Tuesday the 24th in recognition of our Indigenous neighbors. Native American Heritage
Month is observed every November to honor the culture, history, and contributions of the nation's original inhabitants. Enjoy learning the history, social dances, and playing authentic Native American instruments such as the Mohawk water drum and bone rattle, Navajo leather rattle, Chilean rain stick, Tarahumara Pow-Wow Drum, Buffalo Drum, and various Native American flutes.

No experience necessary. All ages and abilities are welcome! For more information, contact Caron Collins at bandtchr1@hotmail.com.

Sing your hearts out!!!

Come Sing in the UU Choir for these Special Events!

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.

Rev. Kimberley's "Pie Service"

On **Sunday November 15th**, Rev. Kimberley will present one of her signature services, all about pie! Sing with us for this festive celebration.

Schedule:

- Sunday 11/08 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10 (in the Choir Room downstairs)
- Sunday 11/15 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10; perform during the Service, 10:30-11:30

News from the Social Action Team - *Get Involved!*

NYUUJ Justice Convocation

Join us *online* or in *Albany*
Saturday, November 7, 10:00 - 4:00 pm

- **Gather** with fellow justice-seekers from UU congregations across New York State,
  online or in Albany.
- **Ground** yourself with worship, music, inspiring and insightful words,
  and ideas and actions for your congregation,
- **Go forth** with hope, commitment and solidarity!
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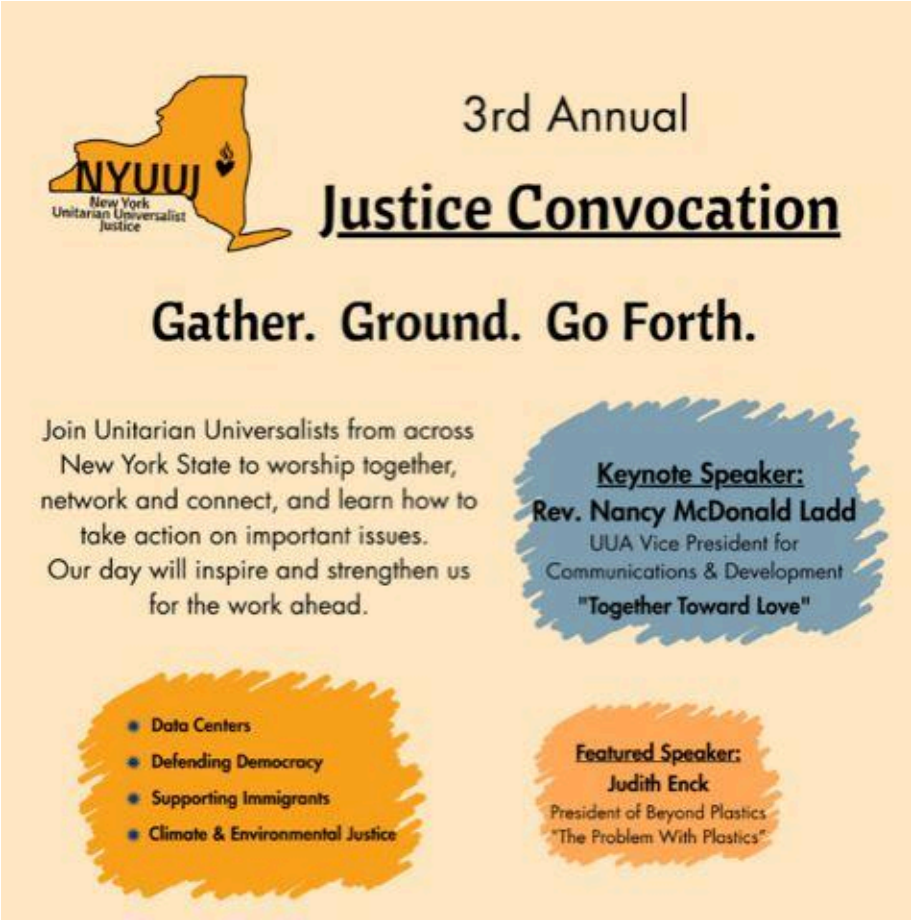
[Register for the Convocation]



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 November 10, 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

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.

Social Justice Initiative! - Tuesday November 24, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

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.

Everyone deserves a second chance, right?!?

Housing Needed for a Second Chance Scholar

Our congregation has been a long-time supporter of the Second Chance Scholars Program. The Second Chance Scholars Program provides support for recently-incarcerated men to complete a college degree and reenter back into the community. https://secondchancescholars.org/

Tedra Cobb from the Second Chance Scholars has reached out to us for some assistance. They are looking for temporary housing for one of their clients, starting in mid-November. He is a responsible person who enjoys cooking and likes to be helpful. The temporary housing can be either an apartment or a room in a house.

If you're able to offer assistance, or if you have any connections/leads that might be helpful, please contact: Paul Siskind 315-267-6102 socialaction@uucantonny.org

Future Events and Notices

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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