

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton
NEWSLETTER
October 2024 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Wednesday, October 2

8:00 a.m., Building & Grounds Committee
6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Saturday, October 5

10:00 a.m., Shamanism Workshop (part 2 of 2)

Sunday, October 6

The First Twenty Minutes Can Be a Slog

The Rev. James Galasinski

The first 20 minutes of cardio exercise is the most difficult. It's a struggle. I got off the couch, but it is not feeling good. The dopamine, serotonin, and noradrenaline have not kicked in yet. Eventually the feel-good hormones will kick in. The disruption of the pandemic was not that long ago. Perhaps we are still in those first 20 slobby minutes as a congregation and a nation.

Annual Congregational Meeting and Potluck

Tuesday, October 8

9:30 a.m., Sacred Texts and Coffee
1:00 p.m., CommComm Meeting

Wednesday, October 9

7:00 p.m., Panel Discussion for NY Prop 1

Thursday, October 10

6:00 p.m., Second Thursday Listening Circle

Friday, October 11

12:30 p.m., Second Friday Listening Circle
6:30 p.m., Jazz & Coffee Night

Sunday, October 13

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

My Spiritual Journey: What Life Has Taught Me About Myself and God *Andy Fagan, Pulpit Guest*

What do we know about ourselves and the divine? How do we come to this understanding? Upon reaching his 60th birthday, Mr. Fagan reflects on what his life experiences have taught him about himself and his connection to the divine. Our journeys are different, but often there are similarities that resonate and connect us all.

Tuesday, October 15

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 16

10:00 a.m., Outreach Team Meeting

Thursday, October 17

6:00 p.m., Third Thursday Soup
7:00 p.m., Stewardship Meeting
7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Saturday, October 19

8:30 a.m., Bicentennial Team Meeting

Sunday, October 20

9:00 a.m., History Circle
9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

Sukkot and the Mystical Cycles

The Rev. James Galasinski

The ancient Jewish holiday of Sukkot originally commemorated a harvest festival where booths were set out in the fields to harvest. It later was interpreted to commemorate the Exodus. Human interpretations change over time, but the mystical cycles of life remain.

Monday, October 21

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 22

9:30 a.m., Sacred Texts and Coffee

Friday, October 25

6:30 p.m., Jazz & Coffee Night

Saturday, October 26

10:00 a.m., UUGeos Outing
6:00 p.m., Fall Campfire at the Wyckoff's

Sunday, October 27

Slightly Haunted *The Rev. James Galasinski*

Our deceased ancestors and loved ones never quite leave us. We will look at how Halloween, Dia de los Muertos, and Samheim intersect. Along the way, we will honor the ancestors of our faith and our congregation. Remember to bring a picture or artifact of a loved one who has passed.

Monday, October 28

7:00 p.m., UU Men's Group

Wednesday, October 30

Noon, Budget & Finance Meeting



JAMES' JOURNAL Reasons to Pledge

This year's canvass theme is **Remembering Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Securing Our Future**. In 2025 we will celebrate 200 years of **loving the hell out of this world!** Can you imagine Canton without our congregation? No St. Lawrence University and most likely no SUNY Canton. We have a proud history, but the past doesn't give us a great reason to pledge.

We have a lot of exciting ministries happening now, like the weekday Summer Program for children in the last week of August. We touched the lives of 9 children! Or in June when I led a workshop Navigating the Spiritual Journey where 10 non-UU's got a taste of what Unitarian Universalism is all about, and we regularly have inspiring Sunday Worship. There is the World Spiritual Practices Project, and UU the Vote. Programs, staff, and caring for a building give us a reason to pledge but I think there are deeper reasons to pledge.

I have had the privilege to introduce many people to Unitarian Universalism in my ministry. What I hear often goes something like this: *I didn't know a place like this existed. A religion that is truly about love where I can bring my questions, be my authentic self, my doubts, and my hopes!* Think back to when you first discovered UUism or UUism discovered you. This is one of the best reasons to pledge to our congregation, so people can find their home and grow in spirit. Our faith changes people's lives. We are bringing more peace and justice into the world not just through programs of the past or present but through one human heart at a time.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Galasinski".

The Rev. James Galasinski

P.S. I need your help with sermon themes and topics in the coming year. What are the spiritual, religious, ethical, and justice concerns and ideas that you would like me to address from the pulpit? Are there timeless UU theological themes that need to be repeated? Please let me know by filling out [this form](#).



FROM OUR PRESIDENT Welcome to Our New Tenants

At this year's September 4 Church Council meeting a 2-year lease agreement was approved between our Church and the Family Counseling Service of NNY, Inc. and the Resolution Center of Jefferson & Lewis Counties, Inc. For simplicity, I will henceforth refer

to these entities as the Resolution Center. The organization is expanding their counseling and mediation services into St. Lawrence County and our space is in an optimal location for them.

The Resolution Center will occupy two basement rooms during 5 weekdays as offices and one room on Mondays as a counseling room. This arrangement is compatible with the RE program. Appointments will be scheduled and there will not be "walk-ins". Signage will direct people to these rooms. I feel that this will be a great partnership. The Resolution Center performs valuable work that supports our values and we can provide them space in which to operate while deriving rent. Many thanks to Rev. James who first explored this arrangement with the Resolution Center's Executive Director Jennifer Huttemann-Kall, and Carol Zimmerman and Sara Trimm for working with me on several details in the lease agreement.

We fulfill our mission in a variety of ways, some direct, some indirect, some collective, some singular. Regardless, each way arises from our individual actions as Unitarian Universalists. You are part of this picture!

Happy Autumn,
Jon Montan, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT

Our religious education program strives to create an accepting environment that empowers children and youth to explore their spirituality, celebrate diversity, and live our Unitarian Universalist values. During the recent RE Teaching Ministry Orientation, teaching teams, RE committee members and I worked together to create an outline for this year's program. I am proud to share the plan for religious education this year.



Using the [new UU Values](#) as the overall theme for the year, each month we will focus on a value. With love at the center, we will explore the values of Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence and Generosity. With approximately 25 teachers/assistants now (we had over 65 pre-COVID), we determined that providing religious education for (5) different classes every Sunday wasn't feasible. Except for the nursery, we determined that we could provide different age classes approximately twice a month, host all ages Living Our Values Every Day (L.O.V.E.D.) Activities on the other Sundays and four Fun Days on holiday weekends. Our classes will include Nursery for infants to 3-year-olds, Spirit Play for 4-year-olds to 1st grade, Lego ValUUES for 2nd-4th grade, Makerspace for 5th-7th grade, Coming of Age for 8th-9th grade and Youth Group for 8th-12th grade.

Even with this plan, we still need (2) assistants for the 2nd-4th grade class, (2) teachers for Coming of Age and (1) advisor for youth group and will we need folx to lead some of the L.O.V.E.D. activities. If you are interested in learning more and helping with this vital ministry for our children and youth, please contact me via email at dre@uucantonny.org.

The teaching teams, RE Committee and I are excited for this new year of exploring our values together through fun, experiential activities. Check out the [religious education page](#) of our website to see the schedule for this year!

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

JOYS & SORROWS

- ♥ Mark Berninghausen and his wife Barbara celebrated the marriage of their son, Marshall, to Kaylyn in August, followed by a recent visit from the newlyweds. It was wonderful to have them join us in worship on Sunday!
- ♥ Larissa Fawkner's recent surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital was a success, and she is feeling positive and hopeful about the path forward.
- ♥ Janice Westerling reports that Cliff is managing his treatment as well as can be hoped and that the outreach they have received has been uplifting.



UU BIRTHDAYS

If you see someone at church or out and about, wish them Happy Birthday! If you're inclined to send a card, addresses can be found in the [church directory online](#). You can ask Sara in the office for the password to access it. And if you'd like to *support* the [Caring Circle](#), fill out [this form](#) and join us in supporting members in a variety of ways! Notice that we're missing someone on the list? Email caringcircle@uucantonny.org to get them added!

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

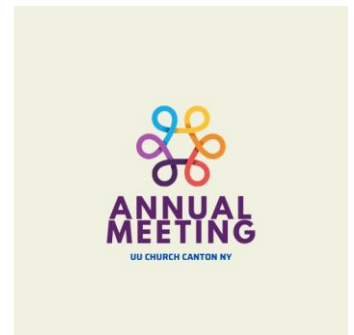
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the congregation will be held on **Sunday, October 6**, immediately after the service. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on the [2024 Church Council Slate](#). Everyone is welcome, but only members may vote.

After the meeting there will be an all-church potluck to which everyone is also invited! Please bring dishes to share according to your last name:

A – G: Dessert
H – S: Salad
T – Z: Main Dish/Side Dish

And don't forget your potluck packs!



FROM THE WORSHIP TEAM

The start of our year of bicentennial celebration is almost upon us. How would you like to see this celebration incorporated into our weekly services? Let us know! Click here [or use the QR code] to go to a survey to share your thoughts with us: [Bicentennial Survey](#).



Comfortable with technology and looking for a way to contribute to our Sunday morning services? Consider being one of our tech operators. The tech operators make it possible for individuals who cannot come to the sanctuary for whatever reason to still be a part of our Sunday morning worship. We provide a modest stipend for this work. If you are interested, please contact Rev. James (minister@uucantonny.org).

2025 CANVASS: Remembering Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Securing Our Future.

The friends and members' pledges to our congregation is by far the largest revenue stream we have. We could not be a congregation without your pledge. This year's canvass will involve one-to-one meetings with trained canvassers. Expect a letter in the mail explaining the process and a phone call to schedule a time to get together. These are conversations where we get to know each other better and find out why we love this congregation.

While our canvass team would love to meet with all members and friends living in the North Country, it's not possible given the number of canvassers.

The 2025 Canvass goal is \$254,000, which is about \$10k more than what we raised last year. The Canvass will begin on Sunday October 6, 2024, with a goal to be finished by November. It is very important to get your pledges in by November so the Budget and Finance Committee can prepare the final budget for 2025.

I JUST READ...

ONE SUNNY DAY by Hideko Tumura Snider is a revelation of the Hiroshima atomic bomb impact on one Life. Hideko came to the US after WW II for college and graduate school in the midwestern United States, later marrying an American and obtaining citizenship. Her memories were first written for therapy and to educate her children. This expanded edition of the book, published in 2021, describes the lifelong effects of the atomic bomb blast. It is a deeply personal and insightful story. Hideko speaks publicly to promote Peace throughout the world. The [One Sunny Day Foundation](#) encourages a planting of Peace Trees worldwide. Our UU Church will participate in this endeavor by planting a Peace Tree in late October. A copy of this book is available in the UU Church Library and at the Canton Public Library.

- Arliene Oey

MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH TEAM

Are you interested in offering an event for our church community? The Membership and Outreach team is here to help you! Fill out the [Event Proposal Form](#) and someone from Membership and Outreach will be in touch.

A link to the form can always be found at the [Events and Activities tab](#) on our website.

MEDIA RELEASE FORM

The church is formalizing our Photo Release process to be in alignment with UUA best practices for internal and external communications. We ask that each member of the congregation sign a release waiver so we may share our photos and videos with the broader community. We will be circulating a Photo and Video Release form developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association for UU congregations and their members. We ask that you take 5 minutes at social hour, or at the Annual Congregational Meeting and Potluck on Sunday, October 6th to sign. The release allows our congregation to use photos or videos that have you in them to promote our congregation and invite new people to join us. Your signature will allow us to spread our UU faith to a broader community. Thank you in advance for your participation!

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/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. The Choir rehearses from 9-10 a.m. on the Sunday the week before the performance service, as well as 9:00-10:00 a.m. on the day of the performance service.

The next few events are listed below. *To sign up to sing for any of these events, please e-mail Paul at paul@paulsiskind.com, and he'll add you to our choir info email list; please sign up 3-4 weeks ahead of the event date, so that Carol and Paul can select music that's appropriate for the roster.* Thanks!

Sunday, October 20: Simchat Torah (new beginnings), featuring Yiddish Klezmer music
Rehearsals: Sundays 10/13 and 10/20 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Sunday, November 3: Positivity and Hope before the Election
Rehearsals: Sundays 10/28 and 11/3 9:00-10:00 a.m.

FROM YOUR SOCIAL ACTION TEAM:

Social Action Team invites your ideas and engagement

Our Social Action Team recently discussed ways to invite and encourage engagement with the important social justice work our congregation does in our communities. We've renamed ourselves as our Social Action Team, which reflects that our congregation works together as individuals and in groups to support the values and principles of UUism. We don't just talk the talk; we promote active participation in a wide variety of events and projects for social justice.

Please thank Pat Alden for her leadership of SA over the past few years. Paul Siskind will be the new Team Coordinator.

Our evolution from a “committee” to a “team” reflects our role in our congregation: We are the nexus point for helping to organize our individual and collective work. We’re reframing our mission to focus on providing support for specific issues, events, and projects for the congregation to engage with. Our SA Team will help you gather and share information and resources to help you develop, organize, and implement your ideas. When appropriate, we will make connections with other committees within our church and/or outside organizations in our communities. In other words, the SA Team will be a resource to help us all “walk the walk” and “do the work” of social justice, both individually and collectively.

Thus, we invite all congregants to bring us your ideas for issues, events, and projects that you think people in our congregation might be interested in engaging with. We welcome ideas and projects ranging in scope from specific requests like “I work with Organization X, and we’re looking for volunteers to help us with Event Y on date Z,” to broader ideas like “I think our congregation might like to know more about Issue X, so I’d like to organize a series of films and discussions about it. How do we do this?”

And as before, the SA Team will continue to coordinate our Church’s ongoing projects such as our Social Action Shared Offerings (SASOs), our Social Justice Initiative (SJI), and the Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award.

Please bring your ideas for social justice issues/events/projects (and for SASOs) to the SA Team by e-mailing Paul at socialaction@uucantonny.org.

In October, the SA Team will continue working on issues at play in the upcoming election:

- *Encouraging voter engagement (and fighting voter suppression) in “battleground” states.*
- *Support for NY Proposal 1, aka the NY Equal Rights Amendment.*

Please join us for the following event:

**Panel Discussion about NY Proposal 1 (the NYS Equal Rights Amendment)
presented by the League of Women Voters
Wednesday, October 9, 7:00 p.m. in the Romer Room**

Before you vote this fall, join us for a panel discussion of Proposal 1, also known as the “New York Equal Rights Amendment.” Proposal 1 will appear on the back of your ballot and if passed it would add to the existing protections against discrimination based on race and religion. Prop 1 would explicitly prohibit discrimination by the government based on a person’s ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex—including pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes (including abortion), sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. The amendment would explicitly safeguard reproductive autonomy and access to reproductive health care in the state constitution.

The panel will include representatives from Planned Parenthood of the North Country NY, ACR Health’s Q Center, and the Statewide Senior Action Council. The panel will be sponsored by the St. Lawrence County League of Women Voters.

Zen Garden Tour at St. Lawrence University (WiSPP)

As part of the World Spiritual Practices Project, Mark McWilliams, St. Lawrence University Professor Religious Studies and Co-Director of the North Country Japanese Garden will host a garden tour on **Thursday, October 10, 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.** in the Sykes Courtyard at St. Lawrence University.

There will be a tour of the history and elements of the garden, with an explanation of the different religious elements within the design, and how one might see the garden in the context of Buddhist practice. The second half of the tour is a hands-on activity where participants will make their own ema or votive tablet which they can leave in the garden to elicit good luck. The Japanese Zen Garden tour is a chance to extend your understanding of Buddhism and is part of the year-long World Spiritual Practices Project (WiSPP) grant from the Unitarian Universalist Association funding program (UUFP). Garden tour participants will meet at 12:50 p.m. on the St. Lawrence University campus at the flag-pole outside the Sykes Courtyard. The garden tour is free and open to all, a voluntary contribution of \$5 is suggested to pay for your votive prayer tablets that can be left in the garden or taken home as a souvenir. Registration suggested: <https://forms.gle/KFS9f2S8nzSxc6SB9>

MacWilliams studied Buddhism as an undergraduate student at Syracuse University and practiced sitting meditation under a variety of Zen teachers from Korea and Japan. He began his life-long interest in the bodhisattvas Kannon and Jizo, beings of mercy and compassion who are a major focus of devotion throughout East Asia. MacWilliams dedicated the North Country Japanese Garden to Manabi Jizo, a form of the bodhisattva who is dedicated to helping those who are studying and learning.

THIRD THURSDAY SOUP

Come enjoy dinner with fellow UUs on **Thursday, October 17 at 6 p.m.** 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 for any of the meals.

UU AND ME: HOW TO INTERVIEW PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR LIVES

As part of our church's Bicentennial Celebration next year, we're tapping into the power of personal stories. Everyone has a unique journey to UUism. Our voices and stories can connect, teach, and inspire us. But how do we start the process? Join Todd Moe at **noon on Sunday, October 20th** in the Romer Room (right after Social Hour) for his advice on interviewing church members. We're looking for volunteers to conduct interviews over the next few months about family histories, faith journeys, and what our lives in the North Country in the 21st century are all about! These stories, memories, and connections will be shared on social media and across other platforms during the Bicentennial year. Let us know by **Tuesday, October 15th** if you're interested in helping with our own UU Canton StoryCorps for 2025! There are limited numbers for the workshop so please register by emailing: bicentennial@uucantonny.org before October 15.

NEW YORK STATE CONVENTION OF UNIVERSALISTS (NYSCU) ANNUAL CONFERENCE October 25 and 26, 2024 in Amherst NY

For more information about the NY State Convention of Universalists you can check their website, but basically the NYSCU is an organization that started 199 years ago and today uses its endowment to promote Universalist Principles by annually giving loans and grants to UU fellowships, congregations, and other organizations across the country who apply for a loan or a grant. Our church applied for a grant last year and we are using it to get the word out to folks who live nearby that we exist and welcome them to be with us.

Next year when we celebrate our 200th Anniversary as the Universalist Society in Canton, NY the NYSCU will also be celebrating their 200th Anniversary by having their annual meeting at our church in Canton.

In the past Eileen Raymond, Stevie Michaelson, the Reverend James Galasinski, and I have attended NYSCUs' Annual Meetings in several places in NY State.

I would love it if someone else would attend the meeting, either in person or remotely via Zoom. I have met the Reverend Julian Jamaica Soto at General Assembly meetings in a couple of different cities. Theirs' is a voice worth listening to. We have a poster on a cork board in the Social Room advertising the meeting. [Click here](#) for a video invitation to the 2024 meeting.

-Mark Berninghausen

OGDENSBURG WITH THE UUGEOS

You are invited to enjoy the crisp Autumn air with a stroll on the Maple City Trail in Ogdensburg with our geocaching team on **Saturday, October 26th at 10:00 am**. We will seek 2 geocaches along this easy walking path, then tour Ogdensburg to find up to 3 more hidden geocaches.



Wear your walking shoes and meet us in the UU Church Parking Lot at 10:00 am. We will also stop for lunch in Ogdensburg then return back to the church mid-afternoon. This is one of your last chances to enjoy this fun outdoor activity of finding hidden "treasures" with the UUGeos team, so don't miss out! For more information, contact Caron Collins at bandtchr1@hotmail.com

FALL CAMPFIRE

Pete and Kathy Wyckoff will host a campfire on **Saturday October 26 from 6-8:30 p.m.** Some lawn chairs are available but bring your own if possible. Cider and donuts will be provided. Bring your Halloween spirit and maybe a spooky story to tell!

JAZZ AND COFFEE NIGHTS

Fall/Winter 2024

Our Jazz and Coffee Nights have met with such enthusiasm and success that we have written and received a grant to expand the offerings of artists who will be playing. This month we have 2 nights planned:

Friday, October 11, 2024: Paul Meyers and Matt Dunne Duo

Growing up in Potsdam, Paul has played all around the jazz world, and while living in New York City and made a name for himself as one of the best jazz guitarists in the country.

Friday, October 25, 2024: Sam Bailey and Friends

Sam grew up in this congregation and is currently the jazz band director at Canton Central.

This project is made possible with funds from the Statewide Community Re grants Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by the St. Lawrence County Arts Council.

Staff Schedules for the Church Year:

The Rev. James Galasinski: Available [by email](#) and by appointment **Monday – Thursday**
Carol Zimmerman, DRE: Available [by email](#) **Sunday–Thursday** and by appointment on **Tuesdays & Wednesdays.**
Sara Trimm, Administrator: Available [by email](#) **Monday – Thursday** and **in the office Tuesday & Thursday from 9a.m. – 2p.m.**

The church office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9a.m. until 2p.m.
You can always check [the calendar on our website](#) for details.

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

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

The Rev. James Galasinski, Minister
Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education
Sara Trimm, Congregational Administrator
Betsy Kepes, Music Coordinator
The Revs. Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti
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