

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

NEWSLETTER

November 2024 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Saturday, November 2

10:00 a.m., Shamanism Workshop (part 1 of 2)

Sunday, November 3 – DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

The Political Issues of Our Day

The Rev. James Galasinski

The Pew Research Center recently said that the top ten issues for the election are the economy, health care, supreme court appointments, foreign policy, violent crime, immigration, gun policy, abortion, racial inequality, and climate change. I don't know if I will have the time for all of them, but I will do my best to give a UU perspective on the political issue of our day.

12:15 p.m., First Sunday Listening Circle

Wednesday, November 6

8:00 a.m., Building & Grounds Committee

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Thursday, November 7

5:00 p.m., Game Night

Friday, November 8

12:30 p.m., Second Friday Listening Circle

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

Saturday, November 9

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

Sunday, November 10

Democracy in a Polarized World

The Rev. James Galasinski

What do the results from the most recent election say about our democracy? What will the future look like when truth seems less and less apparent?

Tuesday, November 12

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

7:00 p.m., Social Action Team Meeting

Wednesday, November 13

7:00 p.m., UU 101: Worship & Theology

Thursday, November 14

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

Friday, November 15

5:30 p.m., Together at the Table

Sunday, November 17

9:00 a.m., History Circle

What Happens After You Die?

The Rev. James Galasinski

The traditional UU stance is that we don't know. Since we don't know let's stop speculating about the next life and focus on this one. But most if not, all religions have some teaching on what happens after death and there is archeological evidence that our earliest ancestors did indeed believe something happens. 11:30 a.m., Bicentennial Birthday Celebration

1:30 p.m., CPR & AED Training

Monday, November 18

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, November 19

1:00 p.m., Membership & Outreach Team Meeting

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

Wednesday, November 20

7:00 p.m., UU101: Social Justice

Thursday, November 21

6:00 p.m., Third Thursday Soup

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Sunday, November 24

Gratitude

John Danis, Mary Michalek, & Doug Rubio

Sometimes an experience impacts us so greatly that we are left with an overwhelming sense of gratitude. Other times we need to search to identify the things in our lives for which we are grateful. No matter how we get there, viewing life through a lens of gratitude can lead to a stronger sense of well-being.

Monday, November 25

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

Tuesday, November 26

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

11:00 a.m., CommComm Meeting

Friday, November 29

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

JAMES' JOURNAL Election Anxiety



Every day I check the polls. The margins in all the swing states are close, too close to call. I want the candidates that are most closely aligned with our UU values to win. I want to know who will win so I can prepare in some way. I am worried about the future of our country. One problem is the polls themselves. They are just a stamp in time. Polls are also flawed. I am sure we all remember 2016.

The bigger spiritual issue is the uncertainty of the future. We would all like to know what will happen. But we can't. We can only control what we can control. Though it is good to be prepared for the future, worrying about it won't really help us to do that. In fact, worry and anxiety limit the ability of our brains to function. It is only natural to be worried and to have concerns about the election. Believe me, I am very concerned. But I am not sure what good worry does. Jesus gave some pretty sound advice 2,000 years ago when he said, "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today."

Here is what I tell myself: Whoever gets elected, we will get through it together. Throughout this time of worry, we can breathe deeply and remind ourselves to stay in this day. We are part of a community that will get through whatever the future throws at us.

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

The Rev. James Galasinski

FROM OUR PRESIDENT A Big Month

November marks the denouement of the gardening season. This is certainly true for the frost-sensitive crops, but the hardy, frost-tolerant crops hang on tenaciously until...? And then there are the root crops that sustain us through the winter.



The late Reverend Max Coats described friends as varieties of garden crops in his famous grace *Let Us Give Thanks*, from his book, *View From a Tree*. Whether you think of yourself as a feisty, tart, apple friend, a continuous cucumber or scallion friend who can't help reminding us that we have you, or an old friend, nodding like a sunflower in the evening time, we all feed each other.

This month our Nation will make a collective decision that will affect us all for many years to come. Passions are running high and there is a pervasive undercurrent of fear. Regardless of the outcome, we will need to feed each other with kindness and compassion. As a religious community we must be the antidote to the poison. If tyranny comes, we are called to peacefully resist and seek justice. We must continue to feed each other. We must be a refuge for those who are persecuted and disenfranchised.

As in Rev. Coots' *Let Us Give Thanks* grace, we feed each other's needs in our own metaphorically vegetable way. As we approach our Bicentennial year, let us open our cornucopia and show the larger community what we have to offer!

In a spirit of joy and gratitude,
Jon Montan, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT

Are you a parent, guardian or caregiver of children? Are you feeling the pressure of raising children and preparing them for the world we live in? Are you feeling totally stressed to the max? Would you like a time and space to talk with others who share this journey? Would you like an opportunity to not cook for a night? Our church sees you and wants to help.



In August of this year, the Department of Health and Human Services published ["Parents Under Pressure: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Parents"](#). This public announcement calls the public's attention to this urgent public health issue and provides recommendations on how it can be addressed. According to the report, 41% of parents say that most days they are so stressed they cannot function and 48% say that most days their stress is completely overwhelming compared to other adults (20% and 26%, respectively). It highlights financial strain, time demands, children's health and safety, parental isolation, social media and cultural pressures as the top stressors. Our parents are stressed out!

One of the many suggestions for community organizations is "to create opportunities to cultivate supportive social connections among parents and caregivers." To this end, the religious education program will be offering (3) "Together at the Table" events for families with children on the following Fridays: November 15, January 24 and April 4 from 5:30-7:00pm. No need to bring anything, come as you are. If your children are busy, parents are welcome to come on their own. This will be a time to come together for a prepared meal, cozy connection, fun and spiritual nurturing. Look for more details on our website and social media pages and plan to RSVP.

As the report states, "Raising children is sacred work. It should matter to all of us." It matters to our church. We want to be one of the places for this sacred work. May it be so.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

JOYS & SORROWS

- ♥ Our hearts go out to Theresa Witmer and Carol Strome and their family as they mourn the death of Theresa's mother.
- ♥ Laura Foster's mother died this past week under hospice care in her home. Please keep Laura and all of Selma's loved ones in your thoughts.



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!

November 3: Becky Van de Water

November 4: James Galasinski, Dan Burton

November 13: Judi Cohen, Arthur Freeheart, Dominic Grimberg, Scott Shipley

November 14: Laura Foster

November 19: Albert Glover, Rebecca Pickens

November 22: Cliff Westerling, Fiona Hunkins

November 25: Barb Beekman

November 27: Rajiv Narula

November 29: Kate Cleary, Donna Smith-Raymond

FROM THE WORSHIP TEAM

Worship Committee Membership

As the leaves change their color, so too does the membership on the Worship Committee. Here is an update on those changes:

- Doug Rubio returned to the worship team this fall after a hiatus for a couple of years. We are excited to have Doug's experience and talent back on the team!
- Alison Almasian, a new member of our community but not new to Unitarian Universalism or the North Country, has joined the team. When you see Alison, please thank her for jumping into our church community with both feet!
- Finally, Mary Michalek will become the new chair of the worship team in January, when Cathy Crosby leaves the committee to become Church Council President. Please congratulate Mary when you see her and thank her for taking on this leadership role!

Bicentennial Moments

On November 17th, our church will celebrate its 199th anniversary, and on Sunday, January 5th, we will begin our year-long celebration of our bicentennial. As part of that celebration, the worship team has added a "Bicentennial Moment" to our Order of Service for the year. With these moments, we will mark the importance of this year each and every week. Bicentennial moments will include photo montages, short videos, show & tell, stories of our past, present, and future, and more. Have an idea for a bicentennial moment? Please share your idea with any member of the team or send your idea to worship@uucantonny.org. We look forward to celebrating with you!

2025 CANVASS:

Remembering Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Securing Our FutUUre.

Canvassing for our 2025 budget year is underway with individual meetings being scheduled and held and mailings sent encouraging support for our Bicentennial Year in 2025. We are striving to raise \$254,000 in pledges to ensure our dedicated staff receive raises, fund our bicentennial programs, our

justice work, and maintain our building, all of which create the spiritual home of liberatory faith. As of October 24, we received over \$75,000 from 28 pledging units. Thank you for your generosity! The Canvass Team hopes to complete individual meetings soon and get all pledges in by November 28th. If you received a pledge card and reply envelope in the mail, please complete your pledge and return it to the office.

Thank you for your generosity and participation in the 2024 Auction. The final tally is in and we raised \$6,704 from this special fundraising event.

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.

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.

To sign up to sing for any of these events, please email 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, November 3: Positivity and Hope before the Election
Rehearsals: Sundays 10/28 and 11/3 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 15: Christmas Pageant
Rehearsals: Sun 12/8 9:00-10:00, and Sun 12/15 9:00-10:00

Sunday, January 19: MLK Day, featuring African-American music
Rehearsals: Sun 1/12 9:00-10:00, and Sun 1/19 9:00-10:00

Sunday, March 16 and Thursday, March 20 (evening): Nowruz Celebration (WiSPP)
We’ll be performing a Zikr, which is a Sufi devotional praise song.
Rehearsals: Sun 3/2, Sun 3/9, and rehearsal/service on Sun 3/16; performance on Thurs 3/20 (evening)

NEWS FROM THE MAX COOTS LIBRARY

Whether you are new, new-ish, or a long-time member of the congregation, we encourage you to get reacquainted with our library. The Max Coots Library is open before and after the service each Sunday. Bring the kids; we have lots of great picture books and many young adult titles. We are also busy adding newly acquired titles to the windowsills.

We have recently added four Skinner House Books (SHB) to our collection. Skinner House is a publishing imprint of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). As noted on their website, “*Life never stops sending new spiritual challenges our way.... Skinner House sits at the intersection of your progressive values and life’s biggest questions.*”

SHB Books newly available for checkout are: *Testimony: The Transformative Power of Unitarian Universalism* (Meg Riley, Ed.), *Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism* (Nancy Palmer Jones and Karin Lin), *After the Good News: Progressive Faith Beyond Optimism* (McDonald Ladd), and the *UU Pocket Guide, 6th Edition*.

Other new titles we have include *Norwegian Wood: Chopping, Stacking and Drying Wood The Scandinavian Way* by Lars Mytting. For children, young adults and families we have *Tomorrow is Waiting* by our own Kiley Frank, *Different Kinds of Fruit* and *Too Bright to See*, both by Kyle Jukoff, and *Breakout* by Kate Messner.

If you are interested in learning more about what’s in the library, or how you can help us in the library, contact me or Arlene Oey. We are happy to share with you what we do.

Lorraine Olendzenski, Library Chair

FROM YOUR SOCIAL ACTION TEAM:

The SA Team held a number of get-out-the vote postcard writing events throughout September and October. More than 400 postcards were mailed out encouraging people to vote in the national election and for the NY Equal Rights Amendment. **Reminder:** *The NY ERA (Proposition #1) will be on the back of the ballot. Don’t forget to turn over your ballot to vote YES on the NY ERA!* If you’re interested in phone banking for the NY ERA, please contact Ginger Storey-Welch at storeygi@cpcs.us, or at (315) 854-5157.

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. Please bring your ideas for issues/events/projects (and for SASOs) to the SA Team by e-mailing Paul Siskind at socialaction@uucantonny.org, or by attending our upcoming meetings via Zoom. We will work with you to develop and implement your ideas:

Upcoming Social Action Meetings:

Tuesday, November 12, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Tuesday December 10, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Attend by Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/91742806459?pwd=dHRhRmFCMnZHRDhRbVB3cktTZzZiUT09>

Meeting ID: 917 4280 6459

Passcode: 744583

GAME NIGHT



Join us on **Friday, November 7 at 5 p.m.** for an evening of board games! Bring your favorite game and friends or just come to join in! We’ll meet in the social room and enjoy a relaxing evening of fun and fellowship. Want to stay up to date on all the game nights? Join the [private facebook group](#)! Contact [Carlene Bermann](#) if you have any questions.

NOVEMBER JAZZ AND COFFEE NIGHTS

Friday November 8, 2024: 5 Dots

John Danis, James Galasinski, Hailey Hodge, Ben Ritchie, Tim Savage

The band that started the UU Jazz Nights will sing and play jazz standards, originals, funk, straight ahead, blues, and Latin styles.

Friday, November 29, 2024: Ryan Meisel

Multi-saxophonist, composer, arranger, educator, from Wisconsin plays complex, accessible, smart, spirit-filled, entertaining, lyrical, and joyful music.

DID YOU KNOW?

Jazz Nights aren't just good for your soul- they also benefit your community:

60 people attended the first concert, donating **\$240** and a full box of nonperishable **food for CCP.**

This past Friday, **50 people** donated **\$285** and **more food!**

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.

CPR/AED Training

CPR/AED Training is an important way to help keep our UU Church community safe. A training will be offered in the Social Room here at church on **Sunday, November 17, from 1:30-3:30 p.m.** The instructor will be Patrick M. O'Brien, Director of Environmental Health, Safety and Emergency Management at SUNY Potsdam. Space is limited to 12 participants, so please **register in advance** [here](#). The cost is \$50, due November 8.

UU 101

This series of workshops, led by the Rev. James Galasinski, are designed for people new to Unitarian Universalism who want to find out about where we came from, who we are, and how we function as a congregation. These also might be good refreshers for long time UUs. Please come to one or all of them.

UU 101: Worship and Theology	Wednesday, November 13, 2024
UU 101: Social Justice Philosophy and Practice	Wednesday, November 20, 2024
UU 101: Growing Our Faith	Tuesday, December 3, 2024
UU 101: How Our Congregation Works	Wednesday, December 11, 2024

All workshops will be held in the Romer Room from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Please register in advance by email: office@uucantonny.org

199 Years of Unitarian Universalism in the North Country!!

We will celebrate our 199th year with a Birthday Bash (the first of many) after the Sunday service on November 17. The Bicentennial Team will be unveiling many of the events planned for 2025 and the full year of celebratory, educational and outreach activities during our Bicentennial year. The team is inviting broad participation for the variety and diversity of events, tasks and opportunities for involvement. Let us stride into our 200th year with gusto and commitment to our loving, inclusive, courageous community.

THIRD THURSDAY SOUP

Come enjoy dinner with fellow UUs on **Thursday, November 21 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.

SCIENCE BOOK CLUB

On Thursday, Nov. 21, at 7:00 p.m., the Science Book Club will meet by Zoom to discuss *Timefulness* by Marci Bjornerud. The theme is how thinking like a geologist can help save the world. For information, contact briangardam@gmail.com.

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

(315) 386-2498 • office@uucantonny.org • www.uucantonny.org