

News & Information from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

November 2014



A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

Worship services and religious education for children and youth begin at 10:30 a.m.

November 2

Theology of Fire Drills (concluding with an actual fire drill!) – Rev. Joel Miller Greeters: Duncan & Lois Cutter, John & Bonnie Danis Social Hour: Susan Powers & Will Siegfried, Rebecca & Wil Rivers Worship Associate: Mark Berninghausen Library Table: Duncan Cutter Collection Counters: Ruth Baltus, Valerie Ingram

November 9 - ANNUAL MEETING

Freedom and Intent – Rev. Joel Miller In the ancient debate over how much freedom we humans actually have (if any), "intentional community" and the work of philosopher Daniel Dennett suggest that our freedom evolves out of how we live together. *Greeters:* Ben & Reggie Budlemann, Maria Dickinson,

Greeters: Ben & Reggie Budlemann, Maria Dickinson Noel de la Motte, Jan DeWaters *Annual Meeting Luncheon:* Fellowship Committee *Collection Counters:* Pat Gengo, Tim Opdyke *Worship Associate:* Jon Montan

November 16

Empowering Women & their Families - Rev. Joel Miller Rev. Joel reflects on two decades of work for women's reproductive rights. Representatives from Planned Parenthood will be with us. *Greeters:* Louise Bixby, Patricia Dunkelberg, Laura Foster *Social Hour*: Carol & Tom Pynchon, Drew Pynchon, Ron & Sharon Tavernier *Worship Associate*: Kim Bouchard *Library Table:* Joan Kepes *Collection Counters*: Janet Green, Jon Montan

November 23

Thanksgiving – Rev. Joel Miller Many hands bless the tables that are the center of our daily living. *Greeters:* Rich Fennessey & Carmen Stuart-Fennessey, Dick Fennessey, Susan Dillon & Arthur Freeheart *Social Hour:* Eileen Raymond, Sara Ricalton, Lana Rodriguez Worship Associate: Robin Collen *Library Table:* Kathy Wyckoff *Collection Counters:* Lonie Bogett, Will Siegfried

November 30

Moments of Grace – Members of the Worship Committee.

Have you ever had a moment in times of stress, worry, sadness, or despair when the words of another person, a sight or a sound, or an unforeseen event gave you instant relief? In Christian traditions those would be called moments of grace, where God intervenes in your life. Can Unitarian Universalists also have moments of grace? If so, what does grace look like? Members of the Worship Committee will explore these questions with readings and stories of grace from their own lives.

Greeters: Robert & Irene Gardner, Judy Gibson, Pat Gengo

Social Hour: Anne Richey, Jeff & Heather Rousell, Jim Rudd

Worship Associate: Doug Rubio

Library Table: Susan Dillon & Arthur Freeheart *Collection Counters:* Janet Green, Valerie Ingram

The **Annual Meeting** will be held after the service on **Sunday, November 9.** The congregational meeting will include the election of new members of Church Council (see slate on page 8), reports from our Interim Minister, Director of Religious Education, Council President, Treasurer, Budget & Finance Committee Chair, and Nominating Committee Chair.

IN THE INTERIM - REV. JOEL REPORTS

Unitarian Universalist congregations elect search committees to find ministers they believe are good matches for their congregations. The minister chosen by a search committee as the "candidate" meets the congregation during a "candidating week," and the congregation experiences that minister in several worship services and in other events throughout that week. The congregation then votes at the end of that week on whether to "call" that minister.

Part of our interim work together will be the following process for creating a slate of nominees for a search committee for the next minister of the church. This process was adopted by the Church Council at its October Meeting. Our search committee will be elected in late March or April of 2015, and will begin the process of identifying with the congregation its priorities for its minister late next summer. They will prepare materials for interested ministers in early fall, and then begin its interviews of interested ministers in December of 2015. Finding a good match for the church, the committee will present that minister as the "Ministerial Candidate" to the congregation, and the candidate and congregation will meet one another during the candidating week in spring of 2016.

But, first, there is the process of selecting and electing the search committee. The following process, adapted for use here in the North Country, has been used by many UU congregations with success.

Rev. Joel

Canton's 2015/2016 Search Committee election process:

- 1. Church Council approves the process for nominating a slate of candidates for the election of Search Committee members. The Council publishes this process in the November 2014 church newsletter so that the entire congregation is aware of it.
- 2. Council, Nominating Committee, Worship Committee, and other congregational leaders divide up the list of church members and contributors. Each member and contributor receives a phone call from a congregational leader in January 2015.
- 3. During the phone call, the member or contributor is engaged in conversation around the following questions:
 - What are good qualities needed for someone to serve on a ministerial search committee?
 - Who in the congregation works well with others?
 - Who can represent and serve the whole congregation (which would include looking out for the needs of children) and not just a segment or faction of the church?
 - Who knows the history and culture of the church (note that these could be people new to the congregation as well as established members)?
 - Who is now active or has previously been active in the congregation and has demonstrated skills to be both a responsible leader and a responsible participant?
 - Who understands the group dynamics and systems within the congregation and can clearly relate to potential ministers the congregation's strengths and weaknesses; who understands what the congregation is like at its best and at its worst; and what the congregation is like on autopilot or an average day. (For interested ministers, the most attractive quality of a congregation is self-awareness.)
 - After thinking about all these questions, whom would you trust to work on behalf of the whole congregation?
- 4. The names of up to three persons suggested in response to this last question, including any selfnominations, are recorded by the congregational leader who has made the call.
- 5. A respected and trusted leader who is a good data manager is appointed by the Church Council to receive the names suggested and recorded during these calls. This data manager makes a spreadsheet, noting how many times each person has been suggested. (Neither the whole Council nor anyone else will see this data).

- 6. In mid-February 2015, the data manager reports to Council and the Nominating Committee the names of 14 to 18 people who were suggested by the most people, without ranking or noting the number of times their names were suggested. These people are the potential nominees for the Search Committee.
- 7. A subcommittee from the Council and Nominating Committee is appointed to call the potential nominees to invite them to be on a seven-member slate that will be presented to the congregation as the proposed Search Committee. Potential nominees are informed that a slate of seven nominees for the Search Committee will be presented to the congregation. If the slate is elected, they will have to give up any other leadership position they currently hold. As the potential nominees accept or decline the invitation, the subcommittee reports on an ongoing basis to the combined Council/Nominating Committee. The subcommittee is responsible for the need to adapt and reconsider who next to call so that the final slate of seven nominees presented to the congregation represents the congregation's diversity and interests. It is possible that to fill and properly balance the slate, the subcommittee may need to ask the data manager for the names from the next-highest group mentioned in the phone calls in order to contact them as potential candidates, even though they were not in the initial group of 14 to18 people.
- 8. At its March 2015 meeting, the Council accepts the slate of nominees to the Search Committee, and reports its decision to the congregation in mid-March along with the announcement of a special meeting of the congregation in April.
- 9. Statements from the seven nominees about why they want to be on the Search Committee are posted along with pictures, if possible.
- 10. A written ballot is prepared. Candidate names are listed alphabetically. The vote occurs at the April 2015 Special Meeting of the Congregation, and if the slate is elected, the new Search Committee proceeds with its work according to the Search Guidelines of the UUA.
- 11. The Search Committee is commissioned at a Sunday service. The Search Committee is covenanted to serve the congregation and the congregation is covenanted to entrust the tasks of search to the committee on their behalf.

This process, adapted for use here in Canton, NY, comes from UU interim minister Rev. David Keyes.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

October means many things to each of us; for me it is about transitions and starting to plan for the end of the year and the next calendar year. For Church Council, October is also an important month for laying the groundwork for our year ahead. During October, our Nominating Committee puts a slate together for next year's leadership team, we make plans for special recognitions such as the Theo Dunn Award, and plans are in motion for the Annual Meeting (November 9, immediately after church—led by Todd Moe, our Church Council Vice President, since I will be out of town for work obligations).

One of the most important events during the year is the annual canvass campaign. It is our way of "voting" on the health of our church for the next year; your cumulative pledges decide how much we can accomplish programmatically and institutionally the next year. As Bart Harloe has written in his column, this year we are bringing members together for Canvass Conversations about the church and the meaning it holds for each of you. I am pleased to see the high turnout at these conversations, and Carol and I look forward to hosting one on November 2 (slots still available!). As you think about your pledge for this year, I urge each of you to not just automatically repeat your pledge from last year, but to make a pledge investment that matches the importance of the church in your life.

At the Annual Meeting on November 9, the congregation will vote in new trustees and a new president. I am very pleased by the quality of the slate and how it reflects the greater church membership — thank you Nominating Committee! While participating in the Annual Meeting, think about your role in the life of the church and your involvement. We can use volunteers at all levels, and we welcome those who wish to be

involved beyond Sunday services. I urge you to start thinking about where you would like to make a difference in the church down the road, and intentionally start building your experiences toward that goal.

Our next Church Council meeting is Wednesday, November 5. We welcome members of the congregation to join us for "open comments" from 7 to 7:15 pm. Let us know what is on your mind.

I welcome your thoughts and questions about Church Council and the church community itself via email, mail, phone calls, or in person. Please feel free to see me at church, email me at <u>tpynchon@stlawu.edu</u>, or call me at 315-244-3437.

Tom Pynchon

RE UPDATE

Our LOVED (Living Our Values Every Day) sessions began on October 12. This year we are focusing on service to church and community. The children learned the four types of service: direct, indirect, advocacy, and research. We also created letters for our members and friends who are unable to attend service or live far away. Our next LOVED session will be on November 9. During this session we will learn about the UUSC and their work for social justice.

Our Coming of Age Youth and their mentors came together for dinner and getting to know each other through games and fun activities. The mentors will be participating in the COA class sessions to have conversations about bad things, after death beliefs, and faith. A big thank you to Erika Barthelmess, Katherine Brown, Valerie Ingram, Kelly Johnson-Eilola, Esther Katz, Gretchen Koehler, Becky Van de Water, and Jim Williams for being mentors in the COA program.

Carol Zimmerman, DRE

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE

The small-group Canvass Conversations have been well attended with well over 100 members and friends of the church attending 17 different conversations with Rev. Joel Miller. We have had terrific conversations, enjoyed lots of good food (including many scrumptious gluten free options), and made excellent progress in raising the funds needed to support the programs we love and value.

The feedback and ideas we have gathered will become particularly important as we prepare for the upcoming search for a new minister. We want to make sure we heard you correctly. In the coming weeks, we will be collating and distilling the notes from the Canvass Conversations, which we will then post in the Social Room. Everyone will have a chance to see the rich diversity of ideas as well as the common themes and shared love of our church community, and also to add any additional notes. Once we complete the small group sessions, we will reach out to those who have not been able to attend a meeting with Joel.

We hope you all will have the opportunity to participate in this year's canvass and contribute your thoughts, ideas, and pledges of support to help determine the future of our church.

Bart Harloe Chair, Stewardship

SOCIAL ACTION COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

The Social Action Committee has engaged in two wide-ranging discussions this fall on the topic of inequalities in the North Country. We invite everyone to join this conversation at our upcoming community roundtable focusing on "Inequalities in the North Country: A Community Roundtable." This event will be held on Tuesday, November 11, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in our sanctuary, and will focus on the impact of inequalities with a focus on housing and food issues.

The program will begin with a panel presentation by speakers identifying some of the critical issues related to food and housing challenges they have encountered in their work. Our speakers include:

- Chris Rediehs, Commissioner, St. Lawrence County Social Services
- Norma Cary, Executive Director, St. Lawrence County Community Development Program
- Maria Corse, GardenShare Board of Directors
- Daisy Cox, Director, Potsdam Neighborhood Center
- John Tenbusch, Planner, St. Lawrence County Planning Office

The panel remarks will be followed by an extended period for audience discussion and questions.

When dealing with such complex topics, it is often difficult to see the road ahead. We hope this roundtable will help sharpen our focus on some of the most critical and challenging issues, providing direction and opportunities for education, advocacy, and service delivery in addressing the impact of inequalities in our everyday lives.

We hope you will pass this invitation on to colleagues and friends. The roundtable is open to the community, and we are hoping that attendance will be widely representative of the concerns in the region.

Eileen Raymond

ANNUAL MEETING POTLUCK

As is our tradition, all are invited to share a potluck lunch in the Social Room after our Annual Meeting on Sunday, November 9. We would like some man and woman power to help with the set-up and clean-up for the event and a sign-up sheet will appear in the Social Room in time to get some signatures. The Fellowship Committee has agreed to organize and host this event and will appreciate early sign-ups on the two Sundays prior. A dish to share is requested according to the alphabet breakdown as follows: A-F please bring desserts; G-P please bring a hot dish; and R-Z please bring a salad. As in past communal meals, we make a strong appeal for folks to bring their own table settings to reduce our waste and cut back on dish washing. Hope to see you there!

Stevie Michaelson

NOVEMBER SASO

The service on November 16 will be centered on reproductive justice and the Social Action Shared Offering that day will be taken for Planned Parenthood of North Country NY or PPNCY. I serve on the board and as treasurer for PPNCY because I believe their services are vital for a healthy community. I believe the right to have children, to not have children, and to raise one's own children in safe and healthy environments are basic human rights. I believe that all people, but especially young adults, need to know how to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. PPNCY provides health services to so many in our community with a sliding scale fee structure so even individuals with low income and/or no health insurance have access. PPNCY staff counsels and educates numerous individuals on topics ranging from avoiding pregnancy to the importance of good prenatal care. PPNCY frequently communicates with politicians in Albany and Washington DC on health care issue impacting their clients and advocates on their behalf.

PPNCY currently operates a health clinic right here in Canton as well as seven other centers throughout Clinton, Franklin, Essex, Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties. Last year more than 12,000 women and men received services from the clinics and countless more were served by PPNCY's education and advocacy work. Please consider supporting PPNCY's important work on November 16.

Carol Gable

COOTS LIBRARY BOOK reMARKS

How does our Max Coots Library manage to keep surprising us? Through the many great titles that are constantly being added! Some are the results of book donations from church members. Others have been identified by members of the committee for purchase. Our annual UU Church Book Fair also provides an opportunity for acquiring the latest books from Beacon and Skinner Press.

Thanks to some generous donors, we've recently expanded our collections in a couple of topic areas. *Be Who You Are* by Jennifer Carr and *Jacob's New Dress* by Sarah and Ian Hoffman, are two new children's books donated by Mark Berninghausen that complement two other titles on transgender issues recently donated by him and mentioned in the October newsletter. We are also developing quite a collection of books related to Buddhism thanks to generous donations by Debbie St. Germain. *The Heart of Understand-ing* by Thich Nhat Hahn, *Taking Our Places: The Buddhist Path to Truly Growing Up* by Norman Fischer, *Buddhism for Beginners* by Thubten Chodron, and *Buddhism Plain and Simple* by Steve Hagen are now part of our collection. Thank you Mark and Debbie and to all of you who support our library in this way.

Keep your eyes on this space in the next newsletter for news of this year's UU Church Book Fair. It will arrive just in time for holiday shopping during the month of December.

Lorraine Olendzenski

FEED THE NEED

This is one way in which our congregation can remember the hungry in our town. Food contributions to this brown wooden box (in the corner of the Social Room by the kitchen) go to stock the food pantry shelves at the Church and Community Program. Particularly requested items include: beef stew, tuna, hearty soups, and canned corn. We also invite items that support the Canton school's Bear Packs program, which sends needy school children home for the weekend with food. (This was our September SASO.) Items for this program need to be individual servings and easy to prepare: granola bars, quick oatmeal, fruit cups are all good. You might want to know that CCP won't be providing Thanksgiving dinners this year, so Feed the Need is the main way church members will be asked to help the hungry.

FREE WILL DINNER

Here's another way our congregation can help provide food for the hungry in our community. Twice a year we assist the Methodist Church with its Wednesday Free Will Dinners. We're on deck for Wednesday, November 12, and are needed to help set up, serve, and clean up from 4 to 6 p.m. If you'd like to participate, be in touch with Pat Alden (palden@stlawu.edu) 854 8130.

CHOIR NEWS

The adult choir (high school and older) rehearses three times a month and sings in church twice a month. New members are always welcome! Contact me--cstrome@twcny.rr.com or 315-212-9014--or just show up at rehearsal!

The choir schedule for November is: 11/9 rehearse at 9 a.m., sing in church; 11/16 rehearse at 9 a.m.; 11/23 rehearse at 9 a.m. and sing in church

Carol Strome, Choir Director

If you would like to receive weekly electronic news updates, please email: office@uucantonny.org Deadline for next newsletter: Thursday, November 20

Nominating Committee Announces 2015 Church Council Slate

The Nominating Committee is composed of three church members who broadly represent the congregation: the Chair, elected annually at the Annual Meeting, one member appointed by Church Council, and one member appointed by the Nominating Committee Chair. Our primary task is to identify and nominate individuals to fill open positions on Church Council. The 2014 Nominating Committee consists of Valerie Ingram (Chair), Jon Montan (Council appointee) and Erika Barthelmess (at-large appointee). We have worked hard to construct a slate of candidates who will complement the continuing Council members and to build a Council who will provide strong, wise, compassionate, and thoughtful leadership as we continue the work of transition in 2015 and prepare to search for a settled minister.

Before introducing the new slate, we would like to recognize and thank Tom Pynchon and Laura Foster, who are stepping down from Church Council when their terms end at the conclusion of 2014. Tom was serving as Trustee when our former President, Charlotte Ramsey, moved to New Hampshire at the end of 2013. Tom stepped into that role to complete Charlotte's term in a transition that felt seamless to the church at large. Laura also was serving as Trustee and stepped up to complete Todd Moe's term as Secretary when Todd became Vice President. It was a bit of a domino year last year! Laura and Tom have served our church community faithfully and well, and gamely stepped in to fill important roles when the need arose. It's time for a much-deserved rest! Thank you, Tom and Laura.

Now, we are pleased to introduce the following members of our church as candidates for the 2015 Church Council.

President (January 2015 - December 2016)

Barbara Beekman has been a member of the church for over 20 years, serving on the RE committee, the First-Year Committee, the Personnel Committee (formerly Staff Relations); she recently joined the Memorial Committee. Barbara has lived in the North Country for 25 years, having grown up in northwestern Connecticut and attended college in Vermont. Barbara was a member of the Canton Board of Education for 15 years, serving as president for seven years. She and her partner, Pete Beekman, have two children, Erica (25) and Christian (22), and a rascally dog, named Gordie.

Secretary (January 2015 – December 2016)

Katherine Brown says that although she can't take credit for the decision, she first started coming to this church in 1968, when she was in kindergarten. She formed a deep connection to Unitarian Universalism and to the people of this congregation, becoming a member while in high school. She was actually thankful that there wasn't as much of a youth program back then, because that meant she could stay in the sanctuary with her parents and grandparents and listen to Max's sermons. For 20 years, she and her husband Bill lived in the Adirondacks, where she taught school, helped raise their two daughters (Ellie and Grace), and served on various school and community committees, including serving on the Church Council for the UCC Church in Keene Valley. In 2007, when the opportunity arose to teach in Colton and move back to Canton, the thought of coming home to this church thrilled her. Since returning to Canton, she has been privileged to teach in the RE program, and chair the Welcoming Committee. Katherine and her family live just south of the village, where they enjoy exploring the woods and waters of the North Country, and growing good food.

Katherine is finishing her first year as Trustee and has agreed to take on the responsibility of serving as Secretary to Church Council.

Trustee (January 2015 - December 2016)

Gary Hoose grew up in the suburbs of Rochester and married Sally O'Brien in 1973. He graduated with a degree in physical therapy from Upstate Medical University in Syracuse in 1974 (where he also received his doctorate in physical therapy in 2010) and immediately moved to Potsdam, where he established the physical therapy department in what is now Canton Potsdam Hospital. He has also served as a clinical assistant professor for the physical therapy program at Upstate Medical. Gary left the hospital to enter private practice in 1994. While living in Potsdam, he and Sally were members of the First Presbyterian Church, where he served as a deacon and representative to the PICS Council. In 2002 the Hooses moved to Colton and shortly thereafter started attending the UU Church in Canton. They became members in 2008. Sally and Gary have three grown children (Kari, Jonathan & Jamey) and five grandchildren. Gary plays drums in a vintage rock group...that is, the guys in the group are vintage!

Gary is just completing his second term as Trustee and has agreed to stand for re-election to a third term.

Trustee (January 2015 - December 2016)

Jon Montan originally hails from Upper Montclair, New Jersey, and attended St. Lawrence University during the Vietnam War period. At St. Lawrence he met his wife Kathy and they were married in Gunnison Chapel the day after he graduated. After a teaching stint, graduate school at Utah State University, and searching for employment in a tight job market, he and Kathy settled in Pierrepont in 1977. Jon worked as a planner in the St. Lawrence County Panning Office for more than three decades and retired from that position at the end of June 2012. Jon and Kathy joined the church somewhere around 1983. He has served on the Buildings and Grounds Committee and currently serves on the Worship and Green Sanctuary Committees. Jon and Kathy have one son, Christopher, who resides in Potsdam.

Jon has just completed one year as Trustee and is standing for re-election.

Trustee (January 2015 – December 2016) TBA

Nominating Committee Chair (January - December 2015)

Valerie Ingram does not actually remember how long she has been associated with this church, but it's been well over 25 years. During that time she has held many roles including Church Council Secretary and Vice President, Ministerial Search Committee member, Youth Group Advisor, CoA Mentor, OWL Facilitator, Canvass Chair, and Worship Committee Chair. She has two sons who grew up in the UU Church of Canton and are now admirable adults whom she likes very much. She has enjoyed serving on the Nominating Committee because fostering broad-based leadership is important for our church community and because it is a great way to meet and have meaningful conversations with many new and long-time members of the congregation. *2015 will be Valerie's third year on the Nominating Committee. In her first year, she was member at large; in 2014 she served as Committee Chair.*

We are fortunate to have the continued leadership of Todd Moe as Vice President, Pat Glover as Treasurer, and Trustees Ruth Baltus, John Danis, and David Nelson. Their terms will expire at the end of 2015.

ON THE CALENDAR

Sunday, November 2 9:30 a.m., UShare meeting 10:30 a.m., Worship and RE 11:30 a.m., Fire Drill

Monday, November 3 Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Wednesday, November 5 8:00 a.m., Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting 10:00 a.m., Library work day 6:30 p.m., Church Council meeting

Thursday, November 6 4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal 7:00 p.m., HUUmanist Group meeting

Sunday, November 9 10:30 a.m., Worship and RE Noon, Annual Meeting & Potluck

Monday, November 10 Noon, Mindfulness Meditation 1:15 p.m., Library Committee meeting 1:30 p.m., Outreach Committee meeting

Tuesday, November 11 7:00 p.m., "Inequalities in the North Country: A Community Roundtable"

Wednesday, November 12 10:00 a.m., Library work day

Thursday, November 13 4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal 7:00 p.m., Worship Committee meeting **Sunday, November 16** 10:30 a.m., Worship and Children's RE

Monday, November 17 Noon, Mindfulness Meditation 1:30 p.m., Outreach Committee meeting

Wednesday, November 19 10:00 a.m., Library work day 6:30 p.m., Religious Education Committee meeting 7:00 p.m., Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Thursday, November 20 4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal 7:00 p.m., Budget & Finance Committee meeting 7:00 p.m., HUUmanist Group meeting

Sunday, November 23 10:30 a.m., Worship and Children's RE

Monday, November 24 Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, November 25 7:00 p.m., Stewardship Committee meeting

Wednesday, November 26 10:00 a.m., Library work day

Sunday, November 30 10:30 a.m., Worship and RE



The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

Interim Minister, Rev. Joel Miller Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education Nelly Case, Music Director Gwen Cunningham, Congregational Administrator The Reverends Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeritus

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