



*News & Information from the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton*



December 2014

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

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

December 7

Book Heroes: Beacon Press and President Nixon –
Rev. Joel Miller, Interim Minister
Greeters: David Fox, Pat Glover, Nicole Pain,
Kim Bouchard
Social Hour: Doug & Jill Rubio, Oscar Sarmiento,
Mary Lawrence
Worship Associate: Robin Collen
Library Table: Judy DeGraaff
Collection Counters: Ruth Baltus, Valerie Ingram

December 14

*Moontides: This Web of Relationships Has Unexpected
Gravities* – Rev. Joel Miller, Interim Minister

Greeters: Janet Green, Milner Grimsled, Richard
Grover, Bobbi Haldane
Social Hour: Catherine Sanja, John Tyo, Laura Foster
Collection Counters: Pat Glover, Jon Montan
Worship Associate: Valerie Ingram

December 21 **No 10:30 a.m. Service**

Holiday Pageant @ 4:30 p.m.
Greeters & Social Hosts: Laura Foster, volunteers
needed
Worship Associate: Mark Berninghausen
Collection Counters: Janet Green, Jon Montan

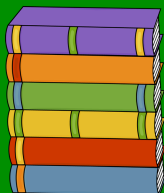
Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ 7:30 p.m.
Greeters: Jim & Stevie Michaelson
Social Hour: Volunteers needed
Worship Associate: Doug Rubio

December 28

Lessons from Seminary - Jan Hutslar
Jan will deliver this service following her first semester as a seminarian at Starr King School for the Ministry. She will share some of the most significant lessons she has learned on this new adventure of ministry school. Jan has been a member of the Canton UU Church for 15 years, and served as the Director of Religious Education for 12. This congregation was instrumental in her call to ministry and in supporting her on this journey. Jan is thrilled to be back in Canton to share her experiences so far with her home congregation. She will be returning to Starr King in early January to continue her studies.
Greeters & Social Hour: Volunteers needed
Worship Associate: Jon Montan
Library Table: Lois Cutter
Collection Counters: Lonie Bogett, Will Siegfried

Mark Your Calendars!



**Annual Holiday
Book Fair**
Sunday, December 14
9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Holiday Pageant
Sunday, December 21
4:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service
Wednesday,
December 24
7:30 p.m.



IN THE INTERIM – REV. JOEL REPORTS

I enjoyed the Canvass Conversations and talking with more than 130 of you about the “glowing coal” that is at the heart of this Beloved Community. I heard powerful stories from you and relished sharing the amazing story of how I first came to know about this congregation. And, as I write, the 2015 Pledge Canvass is coming in well – the church is graced with many generous spirits.

I’m now reading the notes from our Canvass Conversations, and as I read, I’m appreciating all the joy and passion I remember from our meetings. In my reading, I’m planning to organize your responses by looking for consistent themes and trends in your answers to the questions that guided our conversations. As I do this, I’m working with the Stewardship Committee and other leaders for their feedback on how I organize and group your answers. They and I will report back to the congregation in January, and we will ask you for your feedback as we report.

Also coming in January: you will begin receiving phone calls for nominations for the Settled Minister Search Committee. The process of creating the search committee, explained in detail in last month’s newsletter, begins with these calls. I’ve been told by folks in other congregations that these calls are also a lot of fun in connecting with one another.

As this year draws to a close, we’ll be celebrating the holidays – the annual Holiday Service and Pageant on December 21 at 4:30 and the Christmas Eve service at 7:30. I look forward to celebrating with you.

Happy Solstice, Happy Hanukah, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

Rev. Joel, Interim Minister

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is my last president’s column, and as I reflect on the past year, I think about the transition we have been making as a congregation and what I have learned from our members:

- ✦ We are not a congregation that sits still.
- ✦ We are not a congregation that is satisfied with the status quo.
- ✦ We are a congregation that is growing by moving forward.
- ✦ We are a congregation that respects each other.
- ✦ We are a congregation that wants a better North Country and world.
- ✦ We are a congregation that appreciates music, food, children, and being together.

I would like to thank my fellow Council members for their support of the church and their dedication over the past year, and especially our interim minister Joel Miller, who has helped guide me in my role and who is doing a wonderful job for all of us during his interim ministry.

Most importantly, I want to thank the members of the church who keep the flame burning – whether leading a committee, serving as a committee member, supporting our canvass, or helping out by working at clean up days, assisting in RE, or preparing the sanctuary for church service every Sunday. It is our members who make the difference here.

I am very pleased that Barb Beekman has been elected to serve as our next president. Having co-chaired the interim minister search with her and Gary Hoose, I know she has the skills, experience, and temperament to continue to work with Joel on our transition and lead us forward as we search for our next settled minister.

Our next Church Council meeting is Tuesday, December 9. We welcome members of the congregation to join us for “open comments” from 7 to 7:15 p.m. Let us know what is on your mind. I also welcome your

thoughts and questions about Church Council and the church community in person at church or via email at president@uucantonny.org.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve this congregation as your President of Church Council. Thank you.

Tom Pynchon, Church Council President

RE UPDATE

Join us for the Holiday Pageant! Our pageant is a fun tradition that is made even better with lots of participation. It is a multi-generational extravaganza with great roles for everyone. It's not too late to sign up!

The pageant takes place on Sunday, December 21, at 4:30 p.m. There are only two rehearsals – one after church on December 14 and the dress rehearsal at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 21.

What else is happening in Religious Education during December? We will have regular RE classes on the 7th and 14th. Check the e-news for details each week. On the 21st, no classes will be held as we will be preparing for the Holiday Pageant. On the 28th, we have a Fun Day scheduled, where all of the children and youth are together in the main downstairs room, playing and socializing.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

THANK YOU THANK YOU...

- † Carol Strome, Theresa Witmer, and Jim and Stevie Michaelson for donating office supplies and curriculum materials.
- † Ron Tavernier, Lois Cutter, Esther Oey, Kate Whitehorne, Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel, Helen Hutchinson, Heather Rousell, Lorraine Olendzenski, and Carol Gable for creating a safe and effective fire drill for the RE program.
- † Carol Pynchon and Jenn Whittaker for assisting with the Religious Education's LOVED (Living Our Values Everyday) Session on November 9.
- † The Buildings and Grounds Committee, especially Roger Hutchinson, for hanging the RE Bulletin Board in the Social Room.
- † Judy Gibson for being a substitute mentor in the Coming of Age program.
- † Bonnie Danis, Judy DeGraaff, Pat Glover, Esther Katz, Margaret Mauch, Eileen Raymond, and Andrea Smith for their assistance at the Free Will Dinner on November 12.
- † Joan Kepes, Linda Kenny, Stevie Michaelson, Andrea Smith, and Karen Wells for their help with the October Red Cross blood drive.

JOYS & SORROWS

- † Marilyn and John Ross have moved to Pennsylvania to be closer to their family. If you'd like their new address, please contact the office. All the best, Marilyn and John!
- † Our condolences to Natalie Panshin and Erika Barthelmess on the death of Natalie's father.

SOCIAL ACTION UPDATE

Task Groups Forming

The Social Action Committee is seeking folks interested in exploring a specific issue in more depth, with the goal of making recommendations to the committee and congregation on opportunities for education, advocacy, and service on that issue. These groups will work rather independently and collaboratively, setting their own agendas, communication, and meetings. Even folks who may be away for some time in the winter are welcome to participate.

We hope you will consider joining one of these groups:

- ✦ Food insecurity and access
- ✦ Housing/energy/heating
- ✦ Health access and practices

Sound interesting? Just send an email to Eileen Raymond at socialaction@uucantonny.org with your name and interest, and we'll be back in touch.

Community Roundtable Report

On the evening of November 11, our church and the Social Action Committee hosted a community roundtable on the topic of inequalities in the North Country. Open to the community, a diverse crowd of about 60 folks attended, with church members as well as many from the wider community in attendance.

The planning team had invited panel members whose work in the community focused on the impact of income inequalities with particular emphasis on access to adequate housing and food security. Speakers included Chris Rediehs (County Social Services); John Tenbusch (County Planning Office); Norma Cary (Community Development Program); Daisy Cox (Potsdam Neighborhood Center); and Maria Corse (GardenShare). Their remarks underscored the complexities of these topics and the interconnectedness of the impacts. They frequently mentioned current efforts to work more collaboratively to better meet critical needs.

An extended period for audience discussion and questions followed the panelists' remarks. Many participants wanted to find ways that they personally or their churches could help. A number of suggestions included the value of personal interactions with neighbors and others in need. Participants voiced concerns about the effectiveness of these services in helping others find more permanent solutions to the challenges they face. Some comments focused on potential overlaps or lack of coordination of efforts. Panelists responded with current initiatives to work more closely with other groups and agencies. It was acknowledged that the work of one group often helps in another area. Closing remarks centered on the importance of citizen advocacy with elected representatives in efforts to change the root causes of the economic distress we are seeing and in preserving a safety net for those in difficult situations.

When dealing with such complex topics, it is often difficult to see the road ahead. This roundtable helped sharpen our focus on these most critical and challenging issues. We will continue to explore opportunities for education, advocacy, and service delivery in addressing the impact of inequalities in our everyday lives here in the North Country. Additional roundtables will be scheduled this year on topics such as employment, transportation, and access to education and healthcare. We hope you will plan to attend our next event!

Eileen Raymond, Social Action Committee Co-Chair

HOLIDAY GIVING TREE

The Church and Community Program Holiday Giving Tree is set up in the Social Room, and we hope you will consider taking a tag to support children in economically disadvantaged families. CCP has nearly 300 in the application pool! There are four kinds of tags: a clothing item for a particular child, a toy for a particular child, a financial gift, and a Canton hoodie tag. This fourth tag is new this year and is for a Canton Schools hoodie (a \$25 gift). On the recommendation of the school guidance counselors, we offered the option to Canton participants to choose a warm hoodie with the school logo, something many families can't afford. **Deadline for all gifts is December 12.**

Natalie Panshin

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

The next American Red Cross Blood Drive will be on Tuesday, December 9, from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in our Social Room. We need people to give much-needed blood, and we need volunteers to help with regis-

tration and hosting duties. To schedule your blood donation, contact the Red Cross at 1-800-733-2767. To assist with registration/hosting (2 to 3 hour stints) please contact Pat Alden socialaction@uucantonny.org.

So, what happens to this donated blood? The following information from the Syracuse Red Cross office illuminates this. Typically, our drive produces between 35 to 45 productive pints. "The red cells help save the lives of trauma patients, premature babies and newborns, transplant patients, open heart surgery patients, anemic and sickle cell patients. The platelets help save the lives of cancer and leukemia patients, and bone marrow recipients. The plasma helps save the lives of trauma patients, burn victims and blood transfusion recipients. Within three days, the blood products from the drive are shipped to hospitals in northern New York, the NY Penn Region, and across the country on an as needed basis. Blood and platelets are both perishable. Red blood cells have a shelf life of 42 days, and platelets have a shelf life of just five days, so they must be replenished constantly; there simply is no substitute. The Red Cross needs blood and platelet donors to help restock the shelves. Donors of all blood types are currently needed, especially O negative, O positive, B negative, and A negative. It's the blood already on the shelves that can help save lives in an emergency situation. On average, the Red Cross must collect about 15,000 units of blood every day for patients at approximately 2,700 hospitals and transfusion centers across the country."

Pat Alden, Social Action Committee Co-Chair

COOTS LIBRARY BOOK reMARKS

The Book Fair is coming! Our Annual Holiday Book Fair will take place on Sunday, December 14, from 9:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. in the Romer Room. Our sale will feature titles published by Beacon and Skinner Press, plus a few others that are available from the UUA Bookstore. There will be books for adults and children alike. This is a great opportunity to browse new as well as classic titles. Perhaps you'll find the inspiring bedside reading for yourself or a gift for someone you care about. We'll have some extra items on sale this year: keychains, bracelets, and necklaces that display the UU logo. We also have a new printing of the Max Coots 'Friends' posters that may make the perfect gift for someone you know. All profits raised at the book fair are split between the Caring Fund and the library's New Book Fund. Items will be available for purchase that day, so bring cash or your checkbook - we can't take credit cards. Plan to come early, stay late, and have an extra cup of coffee while browsing. We look forward to seeing you there!

Lorraine Olendzenski, Library Committee Chair

FEED THE NEED

"Feed the Need" is an important way our congregation can remember the hungry in our town. Food contributions to the brown wooden box (usually in the corner of the Social Room by the kitchen) go to stock the food pantry shelves at the Church and Community Program. We also invite items that support the Canton schools Bear Packs program, which sends needy school children home for the weekend with food. Items for this program need to be individual servings and easy to prepare, such as granola bars, quick oatmeal, and fruit cups.

Pat Alden, Social Action Co-Chair

MUSIC FOR CHRISTMAS ORGAN RECITAL

Our church is now the official sponsor of organist Sondra Proctor's "Noon in the Chapel" recital series. The SLU Chapel is still undergoing repairs so Sondra has been using the UU Church for these concerts. On Friday, December 12, at 12:15 p.m., she will present a "Music for Christmas" organ recital in our sanctuary. All are welcome to this free concert.

Betsy Kepes

HANDBELL CHOIR SCHEDULE

Thursday, December 4: regular rehearsal at 4:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, December 5: Christmas party and carol sing at my house, 5 p.m. till ???

It's a potluck. Bring a dish to share and your significant others!

Thursday, December 11: regular rehearsal at 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 18: rehearsal at 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 21: bell warm-up at 2:15 p.m.; Pageant and Candlelight Service at 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Eve service (we'll figure out who wants to participate and what we'll play after Thanksgiving)

Nelly Case, Music Director

CHOIR NEWS

The adult choir (high school and up) rehearses three times a month before church, and sings in church twice a month. New members are always welcome. Contact me at choir@uucantonny.org for more information, or just show up at rehearsal!

The schedule for December is:

Sunday, December 7, rehearse at 9 a.m., sing in church.

Sunday, December 14, rehearse at 9 a.m.

Sunday, December 21, rehearse at 9 a.m., pageant rehearsal at 10:30

Wednesday, December 24, sing at Christmas Eve service, 7 p.m.

Children's Choir for Pageant!

Children in 2nd grade and up are invited to be in a children's choir that will sing in the holiday pageant. Rehearsals will be from 12 to 12:30 p.m. after church on Sunday, December 7 and 14, and during the pageant rehearsal on Sunday, December 21. Children's Choir singers can also take roles in the pageant.

Carol Strome, Choir Director

CHURCH EMAIL ADDRESSES

The Outreach Committee is in the process of reviewing and evaluating our church website in anticipation of a re-design next year. One of the website's primary purposes is to inform, encourage, and welcome newcomers to our church. For that reason – and for easy retrieval by our members and friends – we post our monthly newsletter on the website in addition to sending it via e-news. When the newsletter is posted on the website, it is open and available to anyone and everyone, which makes personal information vulnerable. For that reason, it is considered a best practice and recommended by the UUA that personal email addresses and phone numbers not be used. To be on the safe side, beginning with this issue we are going to use “church-issued” email addresses, e.g., president@uucantonny.org, stewardship@uucantonny.org. If you have questions about using or accessing these addresses, please contact Gwen in the church office.

If you would like to receive weekly electronic news updates, please email:

office@uucantonny.org

Deadline for next newsletter:

Saturday, December 20

ON THE CALENDAR

Monday, December 1

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Wednesday, December 3

8:00 a.m., Buildings & Grounds Committee meeting

10:00 a.m., Library work day

Thursday, December 4

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal

6:30 p.m., Welcome Committee meeting

7:00 p.m., HUUMANIST Group meeting

Friday, December 5

5:00 p.m., New Family Canvass Conversation

Sunday, December 7

9:30 a.m., UShare meeting

10:30 a.m., Worship and RE

Monday, December 8

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, December 9

11:30 a.m., American Red Cross Blood Drive

6:30 p.m., Church Council meeting

Wednesday, December 10

10:00 a.m., Library work day

Thursday, December 11

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee meeting

Sunday, December 14

9:30 a.m., Book Fair

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

11:30 a.m., Pageant rehearsal

Monday, December 15

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

1:30 p.m., Outreach Committee meeting

Wednesday, December 17

10:00 a.m., Library work day

6:30 p.m., Religious Education Committee meeting

Thursday, December 18

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal

7:00 p.m., Budget & Finance Committee meeting

7:00 p.m., HUUMANIST Group meeting

Sunday, December 21

10:30 a.m., Pageant dress rehearsal

4:30 p.m., Holiday Pageant

Monday, December 22

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, December 23

5:00 p.m., Fellowship Committee meeting

6:30 p.m., Welcome Committee meeting

7:00 p.m., Stewardship Committee meeting

Wednesday, December 24

7:30 p.m., Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 28

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

Carol Strome, Choir Director

Gwen Cunningham, Congregational Administrator

The Reverends Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeritus

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