



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



March 2015

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

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

March 1

Realistic Hope: Living with a Terminal Diagnosis – Anita Figueras, Pulpit Guest

Guest speaker and church member Anita Figueras has been diagnosed with cancer and is receiving treatment. Her sermon is a beautiful blend of personal experience and helpful guidance to others in similar circumstances. Special music will be provided by John Danis. My sincere gratitude to Anita for sharing her story with us. – Jon Montan, Lay Leader

Greeters: Todd Moe, Jon & Kathy Montan

Social Hour: Pete & Barb Beekman, Gary Berk & Bryan Thompson, Lonie Bogett

Worship Associate: Robin Collen

Collection Counters: Ruth Baltus, Valerie Ingram

RE Ambassador: David Bradford

March 8

From Old Ways Come New Ways – Rev. Joel Miller, Interim Minister, and Gretchen Koehler.

Reflecting on the tension between creativity and tradition, Gretchen plays from her just-released CD "The Waxwing."

Greeters: Rajiv & Geetika Narula, Lan Norton, Erik & Jenn Whittaker

Social Hour: Ron & Katie Boczarski, Katherine & Bill Brown

Worship Associate: Doug Rubio

RE Ambassador: Wil Rivers

Collection Counters: Pat Gengo, Tim Opdyke

Library Table: Lois Cutter

March 15

Climate Justice Sunday - Rev. Joel Miller, Interim Minister, the Social Justice Committee, and the Environmental Action Committee.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, with a long heritage of justice-work in the world, this year is encouraging UU congregations in the work of access to water.

Greeters: David Nelson, Esther Oey,

Lorraine Olendzenski & Tim Nolan

Social Hosts: Kim Bouchard, Dave Bradford, Sheila Cerwonka

Worship Associate: Jon Montan

RE Ambassador: Esther Katz

Collection Counters: Jon Montan, TBD

Library Table: Bob & Irene Gardiner

March 22

Intergenerational Service and Installation of Carol Zimmerman as Director of Religious Education

Greeters: Carol & Tim Opdyke, Ed Hildebrand, Leigh Rodriguez, Kate Whitehorne

Social Hour: Steve & Cara Coffin, Robin Collen, Paul Cutter

Worship Associate: Kim Bouchard

RE Ambassador: Rhonda Rodriguez

Collection Counters: Lonie Bogett, Will Siegfried

Library Table: Katie & Ron Boczarski

March 29

Selma after 50 Years - Rev. Joel Miller, Interim Minister

Fifty years ago, hundreds of Unitarian Universalists went to Selma for the second march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Greeters: Susan Powers & Will Siegfried, Ron & Sharon Tavernier

Social Hour: Caron & Phil Collins, Maria & Mike Corse

Worship Associate: Valerie Ingram

Collection Counters: Valerie Ingram, TBD

Please note that the March Church Council meeting will take place on
Tuesday, March 3, at 6:30 p.m.

IN THE INTERIM – REV. JOEL REPORTS

On Sunday morning, March 22, our worship service will be intergenerational – adults, elders, youth, and children together in celebration. And as a part of the service we will “install” Carol Zimmerman as our Director of Religious Education.

I’ve always liked the word “celebration” as a synonym for “worship.” It doesn’t work well in everyday practice, though. That alternative definition of celebrate as a repeated observance or commemoration is not quite obscure, but it’s uncommon in everyday life. I’ve discovered it’s not a useful synonym since most folks, hearing me refer to Sunday morning as a celebration, combine the word’s more common definition and end up wondering about a Sunday worship service featuring birthday-party hats, cakes, and balloons.

There is a power in a practice that is repeated at key moments of life. In weddings, for example, the laws of the State of New York require that the “celebrant” of a wedding make a clear pronouncement that a couple has married. Yet regardless of the law, couples and their families and friends cherish that moment of declaration in a wedding. I’ve seen the congregated communities of couples express celebratory responses to a declaration of marriage ranging from contained joy to an eruption of cheering.

It’s not the legal requirement that gives that moment in a wedding its power. Child dedications have a deep psychological power even without a legally mandated declaration. There is power in the moment that parents and congregations are recognized for their dedication to a baby or a child, and that moment is both joyful and unsettling. Surrounded by family and community, a child in a parent’s arms, that moment of repetition reveals how deeply connected we are across generations, cultures, and religions. And it’s not unheard of to have cake and balloons after child dedications.

An installation does fit nicely with this more customary sensibility of a celebration. I’m so delighted to be working with Carol, and she brings a wealth of knowledge about how organizations work in addition to her skills in education and our Unitarian Universalist spirituality. Like the ceremonies that mark birth, marriage, or death, there are also ceremonies that mark the life-cycles of communities. This “installation” marks Carol’s role in the educational ministry this congregation offers us as children, youth, and adults. A cake sounds like a great idea for the 22nd!

Rev. Joel, Interim Minister

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Settled Minister Search process is moving on to the next step. Our thanks go out to Valerie Ingram for her diligence in compiling all the information gleaned from the congregation-wide phone calls. An ad hoc Church Council committee composed of Ruth Baltus, Todd Moe, and Pat Glover will work with Val to develop a working list of potential search committee members. The final search committee will be drawn from this list. We expect to have the committee finalized by the end of April.

Other search activities will occur this spring, including visits from UUA staff that assist congregations during settled minister searches. The newly appointed search committee will convene and begin planning the process for the search. By early fall, that process will be well underway.

If you are asked to be a member of this committee I hope you will spend some time thinking deeply about your decision. It is an incredible honor to be singled out by the congregation to represent them in our search for a settled minister. One cannot diminish the amount of work involved in serving on this committee, yet the deep relationships developed while undertaking this endeavor with six other congregants may be unmatched. This may be the single most significant act of service you can do for our church community.

We are all part of this endeavor whether we are serving on the search committee or not. We will do our best to keep everyone informed on what is happening. If you have questions or concerns about the search committee or the process please don't hesitate to speak with me.

Barbara Beekman, Church Council President

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

What Have We Been Up To in Religious Education?

Our Spirit Play group has been participating in some wonderful stories about how to pray, character building, and preventing bullying. The 2nd-4th graders continue to delve into the Faithful Journeys curriculum by looking at the importance of social justice. The 5th-7th graders are exploring the Riddles and Mystery curriculum by partaking in activities that help them answer the questions of "Is life fair?" and "How can I tell right from wrong?" The Coming of Age group has been visiting other church services, including the SLU Gospel Service and the Zen service. Our Youth Group spent the night in the church on February 7 and began preparing for their service scheduled for April 12. A reminder our Nursery is open every Sunday and is staffed by two caring volunteers. If your child is new to this program, parents are welcome to stay with their child if needed.

What's Coming Up In March for Religious Education?

March 1 - Coming of Age Fundraising Luncheon after church

March 8 - Senior High OWL Parent Meeting after church

March 22 - Intergenerational Service

March 29 - Coming of Age Fundraising Luncheon after church

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

THANK YOU THANK YOU...

- † Jim Rudd for helping out with mailing pledge statements!
- † Miles Manchester, Pete Wyckoff and Carol Pynchon for working with the 5th-7th group to create an igloo for Canton Winterfest Snow Sculpture event.
- † Carol Gable for organizing and chaperoning the Youth Group sleepover.
- † Jim William, Kelly Johnson-Eilola, Valerie Ingram, and Jan DeWaters for creating the Senior High OWL schedule.
- † Wil Rivers and Maria Dickinson for overseeing the February 15 RE Fun Day.

UNDER ONE ROOF CAPITAL CAMPAIGN WRAP-UP

The Under One Roof Capital Campaign was a resounding success. Together we raised over \$270,000 for our church!

Fixing our church roof was the starting point for this Campaign, a job that cost over \$100,000. In addition, we were able to make audiovisual upgrades to our sanctuary (\$40,000), renovate our kitchen (\$33,000), and refinish the flooring in our sanctuary (\$25,000). The final goal of the campaign was to add money to the depleted Capital Reserve Fund (CRF). This fund was created for capital projects, equipment replacement, and emergency repairs. To date the Campaign has provided over \$43,000 to the CRF. Many smaller projects have been completed with these funds over the last two years (e.g. new sign for the front of the church, landscape work, increased shelving in the Social Room closet). The remaining funds in the campaign account (\$32,000) will be transferred to the CRF in the next few weeks.

Our donor recognition team (Natalie Panshin, Pete and Kathy Wyckoff) has begun work on a commemorative plaque. Preliminary plans include having donor names engraved on brass plates that will be attached to a decorative wooden plaque.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who contributed to “Under One Roof.” We have been deeply moved by the generosity of our congregation. It was a privilege for us to lead this effort on behalf of the church.

Kathy and Pete Wyckoff, Capital Campaign co-chairs

SOCIAL ACTION UPDATE

A Shared Offering for Water!

This year, our Social Action Committee has been exploring a variety of issues related to inequality of access to the resources that make life possible – food, shelter, work, education, health care – all of which also depend on access to water. As we celebrate Justice Sunday <http://www.uusc.org/climate-justice-sunday> this year on March 15, we join with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee www.UUSC.org in focusing on the critical human need for life-giving water.



In my work in South Africa, I have experienced first-hand the extreme challenges many face in acquiring the water needed for daily life, particularly in the rural areas and informal settlements. Even in the Port Elizabeth metropolitan area on the Indian Ocean where we stay, there are many families living in poverty in informal settlements without access to water and electricity in their homes. Throughout Africa, it is common to see women and girls carrying large containers of water on their heads, sometimes for considerable distances, to provide water for their basic needs. In many rural areas there is no source of uncontaminated water. These shortages of safe water are sometimes related to changes in climate patterns and resulting droughts, but even more often they are the direct result of decisions by government and industry that favor the interests of the wealthiest among us.

UUSC works to support justice workers and advocates in the U.S. and around the world who are working to protect human access to water while confronting economic injustice by challenging development plans (e.g. corporate farms, polluting industries, hydrofracturing) that degrade the environment and shift water resources to corporate purposes and away from local communities.

Money from our Shared Offering on March 15 will be collected for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee in support of their multiple activities to advocate for universal access to safe water supplies. Some of these activities include (1) supporting recent efforts to pass legislation assuring access to clean water in California and (2) partnering since 2008 with the SoilFarm Multi-Culture Group (SFMG) in Kenya. <http://www.uusc.org/updates/partner-profile-soilfarm-multi-culture-group>. SFMG is a grassroots organization in the Kakamega rain forest region of Kenya that addresses climate adaptation and mitigation and engages local residents in activities that create food security, increase access to clean water, and conserve the rain forest.

With our support, UUSC has established a long history of multiplying resources through partnering with effective local organizations like SFMG in support of justice for all. We hope you will support this important effort generously by making your check out to the church, with SASO UUSC on the memo line. If you are not able to be in church on Justice Sunday, you can mail your check to the Church Office.
Eileen Raymond, Social Action Co-Chair

Eileen Raymond, Social Action Committee Co-Chair

FEED THE NEED

Please consider contributing to the “FEED THE NEED” box in the Social Room. This initiative supports the local food pantry (aka Church and Community Program) and also the Canton school “Bearpacks” program, which provides weekend supplements for hungry school children.

Particularly needed for the food pantry: tuna fish, canned fruit, peanut butter, cereals.

Particularly useful for Bearpacks: individually packaged foods, such as: cereals and cereal bars; standard size mac and cheese; Chef Boyardee items; tuna; fruit and pudding cups.

Pat Alden, Social Action Committee Co-Chair

CARING CIRCLE

If you are a newer member of our church, you may not yet be aware of the Caring Circle. The Caring Circle is a group who responds when our members experience special needs and challenges due to illness, birth/adoption, death, and other life changes. The impact of these challenges can be eased somewhat by our caring for one another, person to person, family to family.

How does it work? To join the Caring Circle, just complete a simple form (click the link to download from the church website, <http://www.uucantonny.org/documents.php?docid=529> or contact Natalie Panshin at caringcircle@uucantonny.org). On the form, new Caring Circle members indicate which caring actions they would be willing to provide when needs arise. This might be helping with transportation to a doctor's appointment, bringing a meal to a family, visiting a member in the hospital or nursing home, or helping with a memorial service reception. It can be as simple as sending a card to someone having a tough time. When a need arises, you will receive an email request. Please be assured that when you are contacted about a need, you are free to decline if the timing of the request is not good. We also try to match needs and carers on a geographical basis.

*Note: All current Caring Circle members should have received an email from Natalie in the last week or two. If you thought you were a current Caring Circle member, but have not heard from Natalie, then we no longer have your email address. In this case, please fill out the Caring Circle form and mail or email it to Natalie to get back on the Caring Circle list.

Finally, if at any time you are aware of a church member with a need we might be able to help with, or if you have a need, please contact our Caring Circle Coordinators, Esther Oey or Natalie Panshin. By letting us know of the needs that are out there, you enable us to do the work for which our committee was designed, and help us create the type of caring environment that allows our church to live up to our UU values.

Natalie Panshin, Caring Circle Coordinator

COOTS LIBRARY BOOK reMARKS

The Max Coots Library has recently acquired some excellent best-selling titles that can be found in a place you might not immediately think to browse: our Memorial Collection. *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande examines the limitations and failures of the medical profession as life draws to a close. In this hopeful book, Dr. Gawande also follows health care professionals who exemplify how the medical profession can ensure that people have a life as rich and full as possible amidst the circumstances of aging and ultimately, death. In *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?: A Memoir*, the cartoonist Roz Chast uses her signature illustrations and humor to broach the topic of aging parents and shares her personal story. From Beacon Press, Kate Whouley has written *Remembering the Music, Forgetting the Words: Travels with Mom in the Land of Dementia*. This book was a 2012 New England Book Award winner in Nonfiction, and one reviewer recommends it: "For anyone who has faced and fought the decline of a parent or loved one, this book will touch your heart, make you smile, and, quite possibly, change the way you think about love, life, and loss."

These may not be the titles that you reach for initially for a relaxing read, but they all provide thoughtful and sometimes humorous insight into the end of life issues that we may currently be dealing with or will have to face in the future. We are lucky to have them in our collection.

Lorraine Olendzenski, Library Committee Chair

I JUST READ...

I'll Be There by Holly Goldberg Sloan (Little, Brown and Co., 2011)

When a homeless teen goes into a Unitarian church to listen to the organ music he plans to slip out before the service ends. Sam doesn't believe in religion, "unless music could be considered a religion. Because he knew God, if there was one, was just not on his side."

Holly Goldberg Sloan's Young Adult novel *I'll Be There* pulled me in so thoroughly that I stayed up way past my bedtime to read the whole book in one sitting. Sam and his brother Riddle are richly detailed characters who can't escape their paranoid father, have never gone to school, and have never lived in one place for more than a few months. Sam is a master at non-attachment.

Until he meets Emily Bell, the daughter of the choir director of the First Unitarian Church.

I'll Be There is a fast-paced YA novel that has more than just plot. What is it like to be homeless? To be trapped by a crazy father? To be the teen caregiver to a needy little brother? I'm happy to say that Sloan knows how to write and spices her novel with plenty of humor to balance the sadness. Plus, she's just published a sequel!

Betsy Kepes

LENTON LUCHEONS

Lenten Luncheons will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Thursdays, March 12, 19, and 26, at the Methodist Church and hosted by the Presbyterian, Seventh-Day Adventist, Methodist, and Roman Catholic churches. Cost is \$7 per person (children 5 and under free). All are invited to share good food and fellowship with proceeds to benefit the Church and Community Program.

ADULT AND FAMILY PROGRAMS AT UNIRONDAK

Unirondack, our UU camp and conference center in the Western Adirondacks of NYS, has added exciting new opportunities for fellowship for adults this summer, in addition to their usual family and youth camps. Two special Monday to Friday programs are planned. Learn more about [Womens' Week](#) and [Outdoor Adventure Week](#) at www.unirondack.org. Both weeks are being offered at a special first-time cost of only \$350 for the week, which includes housing and Unirondack's usual outstanding food.

In addition to these two week-long programs, Unirondack will be offering a weekend retreat for [Young Adults](#) age 18-30. As part of Unirondack's commitment to supporting the participation of young adults in our faith, the weekend is being offered to young people for \$45 if registration is completed before April 1.

Of course Unirondack continues to offer extraordinary summer camp programs for [youth](#) from ages 9 -18, as well as a wonderful week for [families](#), a [weekend for families and friends](#) over Memorial Day, and a [Mens' Gathering](#) in June.

Programs fill up fast so if you are interested visit Unirondack's website to learn more and to register.

And don't forget to also check out all the wonderful programs offered by our other UU Camps and Conference Centers, [Rowe](#) in Western Massachusetts, [Star Island](#) in New Hampshire, [The Mountain](#) and [Shelter Neck](#) in North Carolina, [DeBenneville Pines](#) in California, [Ferry Beach](#) in Maine, [Unicamp](#) in Ontario, and [Murray Grove](#) in New Jersey.

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

ON THE CALENDAR

Sunday, March 1

9:30 a.m., UShare meeting
10:30 a.m., Worship and RE
Noon, Coming of Age (COA) Fundraiser Luncheon

Monday, March 2

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, March 3

6:30 p.m., Church Council meeting

Wednesday, March 4

8:00 a.m., Building & Grounds Committee meeting
10:00 a.m., Library work day

Thursday, March 5

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal
7:00 p.m., HUUMANIST Group meeting

Sunday, March 8

10:30 a.m., Worship and Children's RE
Noon, Our Whole Lives (OWL) program

Monday, March 9

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

Tuesday, March 10

5:00 p.m., Fellowship Committee meeting
6:30 p.m., Welcome Committee meeting
7:00 p.m., Chalice Circle

Wednesday, March 11

10:00 a.m., Library work day

Thursday, March 12

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir rehearsal
7:00 p.m., Worship Committee meeting

Sunday, March 15

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

Monday, March 16

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Wednesday, March 18

10:00 a.m., Library work day
6:30 p.m., Religious Education Committee meeting

Thursday, March 19

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

Sunday, March 22

10:30 a.m., Worship and RE

Monday, March 23

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, March 24

7:00 p.m., Stewardship Committee meeting

Wednesday, March 25

10:00 a.m., Library work day

Saturday, March 28

1:00 p.m., Bach Marathon

Sunday, March 29

10:30 p.m., Worship and Children's RE
Noon, Coming of Age (COA) Fundraising Luncheon



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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