



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



**February 2017**

**A MONTH OF SUNDAYS**

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

**February 5**

*Trump's Theology* – The Rev. James Galasinski  
President Trump does not normally talk about his beliefs much. He was raised Presbyterian, was deeply influenced by the preacher and writer of *The Power of Positive Thinking*, Norman Vincent Peale, and more recently has listened to the spiritual advice of televangelist, Paula White. How does his theology affect his politics?

*Greeters:* Ron & Katie Boczarski, Arthur Freeheart, Julia Freeheart, Jim Rudd

*Worship Associate:* Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel

*RE Ambassador:* Rhonda Rodriguez

*February Kitchen Cabinet Advisor:* Margaret Harloe

*Social Hour:* Jim Williams & Donna Dilworth, Carol Gable

*Collection Counters:* David Doran, Ruth Baltus

**February 12**

*Waves of Love: A Valentine's Story* – Kimberly Bouchard,  
Pulpit Guest

Four continents, fifteen countries, and two thousand nautical miles became a voyage of rediscovery and a reaffirmation of UU principles. Kim Bouchard was a faculty member with Semester at Sea from September to December 2016. She will share aspects of her travels that reawakened a commitment to community activism and to trust in the enduring power of love.

*Greeters:* Pat Gengo, Kevin Ball & Ruth Baltus, Carol & Phil LaMarche

*Lay Leaders:* Robin Collen and Theresa Witmer

*RE Ambassador:* Esther Katz

*Social Hour:* Rich Fennessey & Carmen Stuart-Fennessey, Brian & Claire Gardam

*Collection Counters:* Pat Gengo, Jon Montan

**February 19**

*The Ragged Figure Who Moves from Tree to Tree* -  
Doug Rubio, Pulpit Guest

In Flannery O'Connor's acclaimed first novel, *Wise Blood*, the main character struggles to escape from Christianity. Despite his often ludicrous efforts, his mind and soul are still haunted by a persistent image of Jesus, "a ragged figure who moves from tree to tree" motioning to him – a figure from whom he ultimately cannot escape. In this sermon Doug Rubio, an avowed atheist, will explore his own nagging thoughts that maybe God really does exist.

*Greeters:* Joan Kepes, Mary Michalek, Barbara & Pete Beekman

*Worship Associate:* Mark Berninghausen

*RE Ambassador:* Anna Sorensen

*Social Hour:* Andrea Ferro, Kelly Johnson-Eilola,

Emmy Stevenson, David Nelson & Rebecca Pickens

*Collection Counters:* Tim Opdyke, Lorraine Olendzenski

**February 26**

*David's Harp* – The Rev. James Galasinski

In the Hebrew scriptures the shepherd David played his lyre to drive away the evil spirits of King Saul. The power of music is undeniable. It can change our moods. It can bring back memories like no other. Music can drive away the clamor of our lives and give us peace.

*Greeters:* Esther Oey, Jean & Eric Williams-Bergen, Steve & Cara Coffin

*Lay Leader:* Valerie Ingram

*RE Ambassador:* Arthur Freeheart

*Social Hour:* Phil & Caron Collins,

Rhonda Rodriguez & Richard Cook

*Collection Counters:* Lonie Bogett, Will Siegfried

**Winterfest Church Concerts**

Come in from the cold and enjoy mini-concerts at Village churches as part of Canton's Winterfest. The event on Monday, February 13, begins with soup and bread at St. Mary's School from 5 to 6 p.m. A bagpiper will then lead participants walking together from church to church to enjoy: 6:30 Upbeats (SLU a cappella group) at First Presbyterian; 7 p.m. Goldenaires at Grace Episcopal; 7:30 p.m. Second Wind Quintet at First Baptist, 8 p.m. Noteworthy Handbells at UU, 8:30 p.m. Don Woodcock at United Methodist. Refreshments to follow at the Methodist Church.

## ON THE CALENDAR

*Please print and post!*



### Wednesday, February 1

8:00 a.m., Building & Grounds Committee Meeting  
1:00 p.m., Library Committee Meeting  
6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

### Thursday, February 2

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

### Sunday, February 5

9:30 a.m., UShare Meeting  
10:30 a.m., Worship & Children's RE

### Monday, February 6

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

### Tuesday, February 7

11:30 a.m., Red Cross Blood Drive  
12:15 p.m., Personnel Committee Meeting

### Wednesday, February 8

5:30 p.m., SURJ Meeting

### Thursday, February 9

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice  
7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

### Saturday February 11

8:30 a.m., Basement Cleanout

### Sunday, February 12

9:15 a.m., Coffee, Conversation & More  
10:30 a.m., Worship & Children's RE

### Monday, February 13

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation  
6:30 p.m., Winterfest Church Concerts  
7:00 p.m., Social Action Committee Meeting

### Tuesday, February 14

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting  
4:00 p.m., Welcoming Committee Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Chalice Circle

### Wednesday February 15

7:30 p.m., Jazz Circle

### Thursday, February 16

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice  
7:00 p.m., Budget & Finance Committee Meeting

### Sunday, February 19

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 a.m., Worship & Children's RE

### Monday, February 20

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation  
February Newsletter Deadline

### Wednesday February 22

7:00 p.m., Panel: Rolling out the Welcome Mat

### Thursday, February 23

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice  
7:00 p.m., Leadership as Spiritual Practice

### Sunday, February 26

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal  
9:15 a.m., Coffee, Conversation, & More  
10:30 a.m., Worship and Children's RE

### Monday, February 27

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

### Tuesday February 28

7:00 p.m., Stewardship Committee Meeting

## The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

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

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
(315)386-2498 • [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org) • [www.uucantonny.org](http://www.uucantonny.org)

## FROM OUR MINISTER

*Yahweh, Yahweh  
Always pain before a child is born  
Yahweh, tell me now  
Why the dark before the dawn?  
-U2 (Irish rock band)*

It is an existential prayer of sorts, asking the ground of existence (Yahweh is the Hebrew personal name for God) why there seems to be a pattern in life of newness and beauty only coming after pain and struggle. We must embrace darkness and pain knowing that pockets of freedom and joy will open up only after a struggle. Many of us, for various reasons, might be experiencing the dark dryness and the pain. Perhaps it is the death of someone close to us or it is the angst and uncertainty that comes with realizing our president is no longer Barack Obama.

Turning *in* to the pain instead of away may sound sadistic to some, but it is not. It is facing reality and life honestly. Those deep darker times can lead us to a profound sense of hope, peace, gratitude, and acceptance. Moments of dryness and pain can become reboots and resets if we can open up to them.

I don't know why this pattern of pain before birth and darkness before dawn exists. All I can say is that the dawn does come, babies are born, and joy will penetrate our lives once again. We will get through this, all of it, together.

*So It May Be, The Rev. James Galasinski*

*James is offering the following workshops this spring.*

*Please email the office to sign up for any sessions that pique your interest and fit on your calendar.*

### **Let's Talk About Race**

Thursdays, March 2, 16, & 23, 7 to 9 p.m.

In this integrated three-part series, each session will build on the last. You will explore your own cultural background and how that influences your perception of others. We will learn about white privilege, implicit bias, systems of oppression, and intersectionality. Being open and willing to share your personal stories and unpacking our cluttered past is imperative for this class. Bring your discomfort. By doing this important soulwork, we hope to do our part to building beloved community.

### **UU 101**

Saturday, March 11, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

This introductory course is intended for those who are thinking about becoming members. We will cover the theology and history of the UU movement and will also explore how our church functions. It will conclude with a potluck lunch. Childcare is available upon request.

### **Sermon Writing Workshop**

Thursdays, April 6 and May 4, 7 p.m.

*Everyone has at least one sermon in them, right?* In April I will show you all the tricks of the trade as we discuss do's and don'ts of preaching. Your assignment will be to write a 10-minute sermon. When we meet again in May, you will preach your sermon. The class will be your congregation and we will give you critical feedback.

Please sign up for these workshops by emailing [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org) or calling 386-2498.

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

As one of so many around the world who participated in the Women's March, I have come home from Washington in a different place. To be among 400,000 people crowded together for hours immersed in a non-stop, positive vibe was astonishing. I did not anticipate how this would affect me. I rode the bus to DC with a kind of grim determination. I returned with a determined hopefulness, and a renewed faith in the fundamental goodness of people across our entire country.

The real work begins now, translating all that positive energy into constructive action. Get connected. Do one thing a week that advances your cause. Go to a meeting, make a call, encourage a friend to run for office, show up at a local march or demonstration. Don't hide your beliefs – talk about them, stand up for them, live them in plain sight.

Our church community will be walking this talk as we move toward hanging a Black Lives Matter banner from our bell tower. As I mentioned during the discussion after the service on January 15, our congregation has a long history of advocating for marginalized people. At the September Start-up gathering, we constructed a timeline of memorable events in our congregation's past. It was obvious how much this history of social action resonated for those present, and how important it was to continue engaging in this work.

The church will be hosting a panel discussion on Wednesday, February 22, to better understand the experiences of students of color in our community. We also continue to host SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) meetings, the next one is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8 at 5:30. I encourage people to attend one or both of these events. The BLM ([blacklivesmatter.com](http://blacklivesmatter.com)) and SURJ ([showingupforracialjustice.org](http://showingupforracialjustice.org)) websites are also valuable sources of information.

Sometimes we just want to close our eyes and turn away. It is easier. Every moment is not filled with the exhilaration many felt at the Women's March. But we are at a moment where we must keep our eyes wide open and turn toward the action. It will be harder and messier, a long slog through rough terrain. But it will be worth it. After all, if you close your eyes, you miss the good things, too.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to speak to me after church or contact me at [president@uucantonny.org](mailto:president@uucantonny.org).

*Barbara Beekman, Church Council President*

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PONDERINGS

For many February is considered the month of love, with celebrations like Valentine's Day and Family Day in Canada. In our faith, we offer another way to celebrate this month of love coupled with social justice. Standing on the Side of Love is a public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love's power to stop oppression. From now through Valentine's Day you are invited to participate in *Thirty Days of Love 2017: Fortifying the Movement*. Although the program has begun, you can catch up by checking out the tools and resources shared to help individuals and congregations reflect, learn and act around different themes of fortification.

Learn more at <https://www.standingonthesideoflove.org/thirty-days-of-love-2017/>; click [here](#) for the Thirty Days of Love: All Ages Activity Calendar. There are also links to [Fortification](#) bi-weekly podcasts, including conversations about spiritual sustenance and meaning with organizers and activists, and a [Spotify mixtape](#) with some tunes for getting us through these times. There's even some cool merchandise [available here](#).

May this February with its power of love give you strength for the work your heart calls. Blessed be.

*Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education*

### Coming Up in February in Religious Education

February 14	Second Tuesday Chalice Circle Gathering at 7p.m.
February 15	RE Committee Meeting at 6:30pm
February 26	RE Fun Day

## THANK YOU THANK YOU...

- † COA teachers, mentors and parents for supporting our Coming of Age group in their fundraising luncheon.
- † Sara Ricalton for ordering books for the RE collection.
- † Youth Group members for helping with time for all ages story.
- † Rajiv and Geetika Narula, parents and mentors for their support during the COA retreat weekend.
- † Carol Pynchon, the Social Action Committee Team, and all who worked tirelessly to ensure that the Canton contingent for the Women's March on Washington was completely successful.

## JOYS & SORROWS

- † Our thoughts are with Jerry Bregg whose father Joseph Bregg, Sr. passed away on January 19 at the age of 98.
- † Our condolences go out to David Weissbard and Karen Wells on the death of David's mother, Ramona Weissbard. Ramona passed away on January 11 at the age of 100.
- † Wedding bells have been ringing! Heartfelt congratulations to Erika Barthelme and Natalie Panshin who were married by James on January 5.
- † Joyful church bells rang again on January 18, celebrating the marriage of Carol Strome and Theresa Witmer.

## MUSIC NOTES

### Choir Schedule for February:

2/5 Rehearse at 9:00 am  
2/12 Rehearse at 9:00 am, sing in church  
2/19 No Rehearsal  
2/26 Rehearse at 9:00 am, sing in church

New members are always welcome in our adult choir. Music reading ability is helpful but not required. Contact me for more information or just show up at a rehearsal. We'll be glad to see you!

## Jazz Circle

The next gathering of the Jazz Circle will be on Wednesday, February 15, at 7:30 p.m., in the sanctuary. We will meet monthly to play jazz standards, with the goal of playing in Sunday services regularly. Please bring your instrument, lead sheets, and ideas for the future. Anyone with an interest in jazz is welcome. If you have questions, please contact Pat Glover or James Galasinski.

## STEWARDSHIP THANKS & REMINDERS

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, I share thanks and gratitude for all who contributed to the 2017 annual canvass. From childcare providers and refreshment makers for the appreciative speed pledging sessions to the canvassers who made individual canvass appointments to each and every one who pledged, the gifts of time, talent and resources are deeply appreciated. The involvement of so many is a testament to the shared ministry of stewardship that supports our beloved community.

We are very close to meeting our budgetary goal for the year and will be organizing a set of small fundraisers in the spring to complete the operating budget goal for 2017. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, you will soon receive your year-end statements for 2016 as well as a confirmation letter of your pledge for 2017. Please review both and contact Sara in the church office if you have any questions about your contributions.

*Bart Harloe, Stewardship Committee Chair*

### **B&G TIP!**

Bathroom occupied? Please check the door handle to determine if the bathroom is Vacant or In Use. When the door is locked, the **In Use** message is visible on the door handle. If not occupied, **Vacant** is visible.

*Pete Beekman, Building and Grounds Committee Chair*

### **COFFEE, CONVERSATION & MORE**

These twice-a-month, before church meetings offer a chance for small groups to discuss a variety of topics in a relaxed atmosphere. Meet in the Romer Room at 9:15. Coffee is provided and childcare is available. All are welcome.

**Sunday, February 12:** Members of the SLU Islamic Culture Club will join us for a conversation about Islam and their experiences as Muslims in Canton. Join us to learn more about Islam and meet some of our student-neighbors who practice this faith.

**Sunday, February 26:** What does white privilege mean, how does it manifest itself, and what can we do to become more conscience of it? Marielle Matthews and Devin Farkas, coordinators of the local chapter of SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) will lead the conversation.

### **SOCIAL ACTION NEWS & NOTES**

**American Red Cross Blood Drive:** Tuesday, February 7, 11:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. in the Social Room. There is a severe blood shortage due to poor weather conditions throughout the country, leading to cancellations of many drives. If you can give, please make an appointment and find other information at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767). If you can assist with registering and dispensing refreshments at this event, please contact Pat Alden.

**SURJ North Country:** Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) will meet in our Social Room on Wednesday, February 8. Newcomers are invited to come at 5:30 p.m., the meeting will be held from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

**Social Action Committee Meeting:** Monday, February 13, at 7 p.m. All are welcome to join the discussion of how we stay involved in advocating for progressive issues.

**Rolling Out the Welcome Mat: Collaborating to Make Canton Safe for Everyone:** Canton – a friendly North Country village – but is it? For all? How supportive is our environment for people of color, of different faith traditions, for LGBTQ and trans-people? The SAC will host a panel and discussion to address these questions on Wednesday, February 22, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Social Room. Our panel is composed of students and alumni from SUNY Canton and St. Lawrence University. Our audience will include students from area high schools, townspeople, village leaders, educators. All are invited to participate in this discussion! Refreshments will be served.

**SASOs:** Social Action Shared Offerings are part of our social justice work. Anyone in the church community is welcome to nominate a local, national, or international organization for a SASO. A nomination form can be found on the church website at <http://www.uucantonny.org/social-justice/shared-offering/>.

**CCP Volunteers Needed:** Give a few hours of your time to help and get to know your neighbors. There is need for additional help in the thrift shop and food pantry during the winter to fill in for the snowbirds. Email [socialaction@uucantonny.org](mailto:socialaction@uucantonny.org) for more information.

**Film Recommendation:** Ava DuVernay's award-winning film, "[13th](#)," - about racial injustice in America -- is now streaming on Netflix. This is included in the "common read" for this year, which includes several books on this issue.

**Gilbert at AUUC:** The Adirondack UU Community is hosting a workshop led by Rev. Richard Gilbert on Saturday, April 22, that will explore the intersection between social justice/action and spirituality in worship. All are invited, but RSVPs are requested by March 1 to allow space planning. A \$10 donation will help AUUC cover expenses associated with the workshop.

Rev. Gilbert has been an articulate and passionate advocate for social action throughout his career, including 32 years of ministry at First UU in Rochester. More recently, he has helped launch Interfaith Impact of New York State, whose mission is to work for the common good through progressive religions advocacy.

Rev. Gilbert will also deliver the Gould Lecture entitled "The Prophetic Imperative in a Messy World" during the St. Lawrence Spring Gathering at May Memorial, Syracuse, on Saturday, April 1. According to Gilbert, the election of 2016 has done more than upset the political world. For Unitarians and Universalists - and many others - it has challenged the soul. Its meaning is far more than political. There are also moral, spiritual, and religious meanings in what has happened and is happening. What are those meanings and what are we to do with them? Leonard Cohen has caught the spirit of the age in his phrase "broken Hallelujahs." While we may wonder what he meant, it is more important what that phrase may mean for us.

There will be workshops and focused discussion groups following the Gould Lecture. The Spring Gathering will also include a live-streamed forum of UUA presidential candidates. Register at <https://www.uua.org/central-east/programs/st-lawrence-spring-gathering-and-uua-presidential-candidates-forum>

*Pat Alden, Co-Chair, Social Action Committee Chair*

## COOTS LIBRARY

One of the main benefits of our Annual Book Fair is that it allows us to buy more books for the Max Coots Library! We have several new books that will be of interest to lay leaders and members of the congregation. These include *Turning Point: Essays on a New Unitarian Universalism* edited by Frederic Muir, *InterFaith Leadership: A Primer* by Eboo Patel and *The Call to Care: Essays by Unitarian Universalist Chaplains* edited by Karen Hutt. In addition, *Humanist Voices in Unitarian Universalism* edited by Kendyl Gibbons and William B. Murry, *Darkening the Doorway: Black Trailblazers and Missed Opportunities in Unitarian Universalism* by Mark D. Morrison-Reed and *Love Beyond God*, meditations by Adam Lawrence Dyer are now available.

We also have the graphic novel *March: Book Three* by Congressman John Lewis, Andrew Aydin and Nate Powell. This is not simply a "comic book," but civil rights leader John Lewis's own story of when he was chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. *March: Book Three* picks up in the fall of 1963 and documents the events leading to the Selma to Montgomery marches; you don't need to have read the first two volumes to get the most out of this book. This is a story that is relevant for our times and an important one for people of all ages to study. This book made history in 2016 as the first graphic novel to receive the National Book Award.

Remember, the Coots Library is open just before and directly after service every Sunday. We welcome users of all ages. Be sure to drop in and check out what we have to offer.

*Lorraine Olendzenski, Library Committee Chair*

## FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

It's been a while since our last **church photo directory** – there are many new faces...and some of the familiar faces don't look quite the same any more! We are pleased to announce that we are organizing a "shoot" for a new photo directory this spring. Mark your calendars for May 31, June 1, 2 & 3; photography hours will be weekdays 2 to 9 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Stay tuned for details.

Looking for **church news and information**? It's everywhere! **The church website** – [www.uucantonny.org](http://www.uucantonny.org) - has just about everything you could want to know. The homepage includes two weekly posts to let you know about the sermon and Sunday volunteers and what will be happening in RE on Sunday. The calendar lists all church activities as well as building users, so you can check on space availability. You can access the monthly newsletter and weekly enews from the "Church News" button on the homepage, and there are news posts for upcoming events right there, too. You can even listen to sermons by James and other pulpit guests by clicking on "Sermons" on the Worship dropdown menu. If you can't find something, use the search bar (look for the looking glass at the top right) and type in the key words for what you're looking for. If you'd like a guided tour of the website, the Communications Committee is still offering house calls!

Details of current events and activities are also outlined in the **announcements** in the Sunday order of service. If you don't have time to read them during church, take the OOS home to peruse at your leisure.

For **Facebook** users, we try to keep news and information updated there as well. Facebook offers a nice platform for conversation and a fun place to look at and post photos. For example, did you see the terrific pictures taken at the Women's March on Washington? Check them out [here](#). If you haven't already "liked" our [Facebook page](#), please join us today!

If you have questions about church communications or suggestions for how and where communications might be shared, please contact any member of the [Communications Committee](#).

*Carol Pynchon, Communication Committee Chair*

If you would like to receive weekly electronic news updates,  
please email: [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org)  
Deadline for next newsletter:  
**Monday, February 20**