



# News & Information from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton



## May 2017

### A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

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

#### May 7

*Coming Of Age Worship Service* – Coming of Age Youth  
The Coming Of Age group will be planning, preparing and presenting worship today. The process allows them to understand what goes into a worship service and also gives them a platform to share a topic that is important to them.

*Greeters:* Bonnie & John Danis, Anna Sorensen & Desiree LeBouef

*Lay Leader:* Valerie Ingram

*RE Ambassador:* Sally Hoose

*May Kitchen Cabinet Advisor:* Becky VandeWater

*Social Hour:* RE Sundae Sunday, RE Committee

*Collection Counters:* David Doran, Ruth Baltus

#### May 14

*A Mother's Day for Peace* – The Rev. James Galasinski  
The idea of Mother's Day came from a Unitarian, Julia Ward Howe. In 1872, she began advocating for the creation of a "Mother's Day for Peace." Over time it was resurrected and adapted into its current Hallmark form. We will mark the contributions women have made to peace as a means to get back to the genesis of the holiday.

*Greeters:* Bill Kirchgasser, Mark Berninghausen

*Worship Associate:* Theresa Witmer

*RE Ambassador:* Esther Katz

*Social Hour:* Tim & Carol Opdyke, Jerry Bregg

*Collection Counters:* Pat Gengo, Tim Opdyke

#### May 21

*A White Supremacy Teach-In* - The Rev. James Galasinski  
Around the nation UU churches are having White Supremacy teach-ins. We're going to talk about why change has got to come, and why it has to come now. We're going to talk about living in a world where "white" is synonymous with "normal," and where a set of institutional assumptions and practices, often operating unconsciously, tend to benefit white people and exclude people of color. We're going to talk about listening to the voices of the people of color. We're going to talk about sitting down and even about shutting up. And we're going to talk about the joy of going forward together.

*Greeters:* Richard & Peggy Mooers, Bill Hull

*Worship Associate:* Robin Collen

*RE Ambassador:* Wil Rivers

*Social Hour:* Judy DeGraaff, Esther Katz

*Collection Counters:* Jon Montan, Lorraine Olendzenski

#### May 28

*In the Words of Joni Mitchell*

We explore the poetic lyrics of singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell, and the ways they have resonated in our lives.

*Greeters:* Laura Foster, Helen & Roger Hutchinson, Kathy Curro

*Lay Leaders:* Robin Collen, Doug Rubio

*RE Ambassador:* David Bradford

*Social Hour:* Rebecca & Tim Weld, Eileen Wheeler,

JoAnn & Lowell McAllister

*Collection Counters:* Lonie Bogett, Will Siegfried



***I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream!***

Join the Religious Education Committee during Social Hour on Sunday, May 7, to make your own sundae. During this time, we will have information about the 2017-2018 religious education program and begin recruiting for volunteers.

Look forward to seeing you there!

## ON THE CALENDAR

*Please print and post!*



### **Monday, May 1**

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

### **Tuesday, May 2**

12:15 p.m., Personnel Committee Meeting

### **Wednesday, May 3**

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

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

### **Thursday, May 4**

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m., Sermon Writing Workshop

### **Sunday, May 7**

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

9:30 a.m., UShare Meeting

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

12:00 p.m., RE Sundaes Sunday

### **Monday, May 8**

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

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

### **Tuesday, May 9**

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

4:00 p.m., Welcoming Committee Meeting

### **Wednesday, May 10**

6:30 p.m., Committee Chairs Meeting

### **Thursday, May 11**

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

### **Sunday, May 14**

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

9:15 a.m., Coffee, Conversation, & More

10:30 a.m., Worship

### **Monday, May 15**

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

### **Wednesday, May 17**

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

7:30 p.m., Jazz Circle

### **Thursday, May 18**

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

6:00 p.m., SURJ Meeting

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

### **Saturday, May 20**

June Newsletter Deadline

9:00 a.m., Spirit Play Curriculum Training

8:30 a.m., Spring Clean Up Day

### **Sunday, May 21**

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

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

Noon, Common Read

### **Monday, May 22**

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

### **Tuesday, May 23**

7:00 p.m., Stewardship Committee Meeting

### **Wednesday, May 24**

7:00 p.m., Let's Talk About Race

### **Thursday, May 25**

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

### **Sunday, May 28**

9:15 a.m., Coffee, Conversation & More

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

### **Wednesday, May 31**

1:00 p.m., Directory Photo Sessions Begin

## **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 Emeriti

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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## **Upcoming Workshop: Let's Talk About Race**

*This is a three-part series held on Wednesdays May 24, June 14, and June 28 from 7 – 9 p.m.*

Limited to 8 people and facilitated by James, we will explore our own cultural background and how that influences our perception of others. We will learn about white privilege, implicit bias, systems of oppression, and intersectionality. However, the main component of this class is having an open and honest dialogue about race. Being willing and open to sharing your personal stories and unpacking our cluttered past is a must.

Please bring your discomfort. Sign up by emailing [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org).

### **FROM OUR MINISTER**

#### **The Boundaries of a Small Town**

Before moving to the North Country, the smallest city I had lived in was Albuquerque, New Mexico. So, it goes without saying, it has taken some time to get used to living in the village of Canton. I think of myself as a pretty adaptable person, but at first I was bewildered when strangers greeted me with eye contact, a sincere smile, and a “hello” when I passed them on the sidewalk. Every time I went out to eat with my family, I ran into someone I knew or someone who knew me. At first this was shocking. Having been here eight months now, I am shocked when I go out to eat and I do *not* see someone I know. I run into people I know everywhere. In the two years I lived in Albuquerque, I was noticed once in a coffee shop and ran into a staff member at Target once. Now that I am here, I can't imagine going back. Not everything is perfect, though. Despite all I said, I have not grown to love the smell of manure.

When it comes to professional boundaries, seminary didn't train me for pastoral care visits while shopping or the smell of manure. They trained me for urban and suburban settings, where most UU churches are located. We learned about conflict of interests. For example, it might not be good if a congregant serves on the church council and the board of another non-profit. We should also be leery of hiring members as staff. I was taught that the minister should be a separate and distinct entity to allow him or her to be objective as possible. I quickly realized many of the ethical and professional boundaries I had learned must be re-thought and re-applied in a small community.

Nonetheless, one thing that must remain strict are sexual boundaries. I am guided by strict ethical guidelines from the UU Minister's Association and the staff policies of this congregation. If I ever cross sexual boundaries, the Personnel Committee and Church Council should be contacted immediately. I expect those same strict boundaries to be upheld by every member of our congregation. Sexual harassment and unwanted sexualized behavior have no place in this faith community.

To be very clear, sexual harassment can be repeated and unwelcome invitations and jokes, inappropriate physical proximity and contact, and the use of offensive or demeaning terms with sexual connotation. Of course, this can happen online or via text as well. Sexual harassment done electronically is still sexual harassment. If this is happening in any way, shape, or form, or if something just doesn't feel right, especially after the person was asked to stop, please contact me.

We, as a congregation, gather in covenant. We make promises to each other to be the best we can be, and we commit to ourselves to create religious meaning and community together. In a small village in the North Country or in a big city, that means we treat each other with dignity, respect, and healthy sexual boundaries.

*Blessed Be, The Rev. James Galasinski*

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### UUA Presidential Election

Next month the UUA will be selecting a new president. Three candidates are vying to serve a single six-year term. In light of the uncertainty created by the circumstances surrounding sudden resignation of President Peter Morales, this is an important election for our denomination. Our next president will be grappling with some complex questions.

Based on our membership total, our congregation has been assigned four (4) voting delegates. This year they will be able to cast their ballots electronically, and the election will be finalized on June 24 when in-person voting concludes at General Assembly in New Orleans.

Church Council has designated Mark Berninghausen, Judy Gibson, Margaret Harloe, and me as our credentialed, voting delegates. As official clergy, James is also eligible to cast a vote. Delegates will review videos and written material of all three candidates. In order for the delegates to make a fully informed vote, congregants are encouraged to provide comments on the candidates in the following ways:

- ✦ Join the Coffee, Conversation, & More discussion with our four delegates at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, June 4
- ✦ Send comments about the presidential candidates via email to [president@uucantonny.org](mailto:president@uucantonny.org).

Delegates will consider all comments and available information, and then vote on or before June 24.

You can find information about the three candidates at the following links :

<https://www.uuworld.org/topics/uua-elections>

<http://www.uua.org/central-east/blog/watch-cer-uua-presidential-candidate-forum>

Written material on the candidates is also available outside the Congregational Administrator's office.

### Church Mission Statement: A Fresh Look

Council has also been prioritizing our goals for 2017. Defining our church mission statement has emerged as the #1 priority. This is *not* just a word-smithing exercise, but a thoughtful, deliberative process in which the entire church community will play an essential role. Many of us feel like the world has somehow shifted on its axis, and so has our place in it. We find ourselves searching for a new way to be in this world. So too our congregation's role is becoming something different than it was 10 years ago. I know it has been longer than that since we have considered what our mission is exactly. Our goal is to spend the rest of 2017 answering that question.

Kathy Wyckoff and Todd Moe from Church Council have volunteered to lead this process. We are looking for two or three members of the congregation to work with them on this. If you are interested, please contact me at [president@uucantonny.org](mailto:president@uucantonny.org) by May 15. Please consider being a part of this vital process of defining the mission of our beloved community.

*Barbara Beekman, Church Council President*

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PONDERINGS

Have you ever been asked what is Unitarian Universalism and what do you believe? Recently the RE program asked this question via the RE bulletin board. We asked our faith community to share their "Elevator Speech," A short response that can be delivered in the length of an average elevator ride of approximately 30 seconds to two minutes. Here are the responses:

- An intergenerational community grateful for--and actively cultivating--the transformative power of love. ~ Jeff Frank

- Deeds not creeds
- UUs embrace a religion rooted in reason, free inquiry and open debate. We work for social justice and advance a spirit of empathy that increases the sum total of good in the world.
- Encouraging wonder in ourselves and our children, helping one another and building the world I want to live in. ~ Margaret Harloe
- The *world* is my country. To do *good* is my religion. ~ Todd Moe via Thomas Paine
- Our history includes founding Mothers/Fathers of this country. Our faith has many sources. Our practice is to serve the world. ~ The Rev. James Galasinski
- An eclectic group of spirits seeking community.
- To be UU is to be open . . . to new people, new ideas, new understandings of old ideas, new actions, and to new hopes for a happy future for this generation . . . and new ones.
- Rise above . . .
- Take care of each other. ~ M. Hopper
- UUs are almost always free thinkers and being so, each develops an individual spirituality reflecting their world view. Our religious views are shaped by nature, science, human interaction, individual experience as well as ancient and modern teachings. We see divine in the mundane. For most, the compassion and empathy found in the Golden Rule is the statement that should guide our lifetime course. The foundation of our religious beliefs must lead us to action and, at the core, right living. ~Stevie M.
- As UUs we believe in the inherent worth and dignity of everyone. We look to six sources for wisdom. Our motto is LOVE! ~ Carol Z
- The church of the . . . open mind, helping hands, loving heart.
- Seek Truth. Be & Let Be. Don't be a jerk. ~ Dwight S.
- It's okay to not know. Treat others well. ~ Kate
- Social action--the fire of commitment!!

For more inspiration, go to [www.uuabookstore.org/assets/pdfs/3104.pdf](http://www.uuabookstore.org/assets/pdfs/3104.pdf).

Articulating your beliefs can deepen your connection to your faith. May you find your voice and share it with those you hold close or those who might be curious. Blessed be.

*Blessed Be, Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education*

### **Coming Up in May in Religious Education**

Sunday, May 7	Coming of Age Worship Service RE Sundaes Sunday
Wednesday, May 17	Religious Education Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, May 20	Spirit Play Training
Sunday, May 21	RE Sunday Rehearsal
Friday, May 26 – Sunday, May 28	COA Boston Trip
Sunday, May 28	RE Fun Day

### **THANK YOU THANK YOU...**

- † Todd Moe for getting the Black Lives Matter banner made, Pete Wyckoff, Pete Beekman, and Miles Manchester for hanging it, and Hugo Atteman for the use of his scaffolding.
- † Linda Kenny, Eileen Raymond, Margaret Mauch, Becky VandeWater, and Peter Beekman for their work on the April blood drive. We exceeded our target number of units!
- † Valerie Ingram for proofreading and editing last month's newsletter.

- † The COA mentors for supporting the fundraising luncheon.
- † Kelly Johnson-Eilola, Jan DeWaters, Jim Williams, and Richard Cook for leading the discussion for the April 9 CC&More.
- † Anna Sorensen and Janet McFarland for helping out the RE Fun Day.
- † Rhonda Rodriguez for overseeing the T-shirt sales for the Coming of Age trip to Boston.
- † Wil Rivers for organizing the Spirit Play Training.

## MUSIC NOTES

### Choir Schedule for May

The adult choir rehearses three times per month in the choir room downstairs, and sings in church twice a month. New members of any voice part are always welcome! Music reading ability is helpful, but not required. Let me know ([choir@uucantonny.org](mailto:choir@uucantonny.org)) if you would like child care provided during rehearsal time.

5/7 Rehearsal at 9 a.m.  
 5/14 Rehearsal at 9 a.m., sing in church  
 5/21 Rehearsal at 9 a.m., sing in church  
 5/28 No Rehearsal

*Carol Strome, Choir Director*

### Jazz Circle

The next gathering of the Jazz Circle will be on Wednesday, May 17, 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 the Rev. James Galasinski.

## COFFEE, CONVERSATION & MORE

Coffee, Conversation & More continues this month! 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 a.m. Coffee is provided and childcare is available. All are welcome. Conversation topics for this month are:

**Sunday, May 14:** Unitarian Universalists are governed by congregational polity, which means each congregation is self-governing. In our congregation, Church Council is the democratically elected governing body; it comprises four officers--president, vice president, treasurer and secretary--and six trustees. The minister and DRE serve as ex officio members. What exactly does Church Council do, who can serve and what are the officers and trustees responsible for? The Nominating Committee and Council invite you to join us to learn more about the important work of your elected church leaders and how to get involved. Everyone is welcome.

**Sunday, May 28:** As of press time, we are still finalizing this topic. Keep your eye on the weekly e-blast and stay tuned!

**Sunday, June 4:** A special, bonus Coffee, Conversation & More will allow us to discuss the UUA Presidential Candidates with our congregational delegates (see Council President Barbara Beekman's column on page 4).

## BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Over the last year you asked, we listened, and we delivered on many requests for improvements to our building. During the past few months B&G has installed low-flow dual-flush toilets, signage for our restrooms and the Romer Room, safety lighting for the staircase and side entrance hallway, all while also dealing with a

number of plumbing and heating problems. Now it's your turn! This is the one time of the year that the B&G asks for volunteers, and we hope *you* are listening and will deliver.

**Spring Church Work Day**  
**Saturday, May 20, 2017**  
**8:30 am - 12:30 pm**

We will be weeding, edging, and mulching our landscaping beds and the Memorial Garden, sweeping and edging sidewalks, washing windows (inside and out), spreading topsoil and planting grass, removing storm windows and replacing them with screens, applying shellac to the front and back doors and repainting the side doors. Please bring work gloves. If you are comfortable lending tools for the cause, we can use rakes, brooms, weeding tools, and five-gallon buckets.

To sign up for the work day go to [www.uucantonny.org/committees/buildings-and-grounds/help-wanted/](http://www.uucantonny.org/committees/buildings-and-grounds/help-wanted/) or sign up with a B&G committee member in the social room after Sunday services on May 7th and 14th. Many hands make short work so please sign-up...we can use all the help we can get.

*Pete Beekman, Building and Grounds Committee Chair*

**COOTS LIBRARY**

Join members of the Library and Social Action Committees for the **Common Read** on Sunday, May 21, at noon in the Romer Room. We will be discussing a selection of books and short readings related to our topic, "Understanding the Politics of Race." A light lunch will be served.

You don't need to have read all of the suggested titles to participate, or even any! There are two excellent documentaries, "White Like Me" and "13th" (available on YouTube and Netflix), as well as a short article that appeared in *The New Yorker* on the Moral Monday movement. Stop by the library or the library table to pick up a copy of something that interests you.

Among the books we have been reading are: *The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement* by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II with Jonathan Wilson Hartgrove, *White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son* by Tim Wise; *Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race* by Debby Irving, and *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson. We look forward to thoughtful discussion and hope to see you there.

*Lorraine Olendzenski, Library Committee Chair*

**ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE**

The Environmental Action Committee has been exploring opportunities for the church to "go solar." Following a presentation by an area solar firm, the EAC made a proposal and Church Council is now seeking possible investors as a first step in determining feasibility. Learn more in the post on our website - <http://www.uucantonny.org/solar-photovoltaic-electricity-proposal-seeks-investors/>

*Susan Powers, Environmental Action Committee*

**STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Stewardship Evolves!**

This Spring, the shared ministry of stewardship took some steps to prepare for a more active fundraising program. In the process, we think we have created a structure that will bring new leadership to this important initiative and also allow for a more coordinated and diversified approach to fundraising.

First, I am very happy to announce that Desiree LeBoeuf and Jenn Whittaker have agreed to co-chair the canvass effort this coming year. Our conversations together have been exciting and we look forward to

collaborating on future fundraising efforts. Second, we are very excited to report that Pete Wyckoff has agreed to serve as a consultant for the canvass process this fall. As many of you know, Pete was a founding member of the Stewardship Committee and he has stayed involved and active over the many years that our stewardship initiative has evolved and progressed. It will be great to have his insight and wisdom as we move forward with our program this coming year.

I am also happy to report that we have a great Stewardship Committee in place and we hope Tim Opdyke, Louise Bixby, Bill Short, and Katherine Brown will continue to participate in the canvass process and help us achieve our budget goal for the coming year.

In the meantime, Margaret and I are going to be very involved in the Shared Ministry of Stewardship and look for new opportunities to raise funds for the church beyond the annual canvass process. We will be announcing soon our next fundraising effort and look forward to many new projects that help to make this congregation the vibrant and generous community that it is.

*Bart Harloe, Chair, Shared Ministry of Stewardship*

## **SOCIAL ACTION NEWS & NOTES**

### **Coming Up in May**

Wednesday, May 3	Canton Free Library "Living Books" 6-8 p.m.
Monday, May 8	Social Action Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.
Thursday, May 18	Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) meeting, 6 p.m.
Sunday, May 21	SASO to benefit Compassion and Choices
Sunday, May 21	Common Read discussion of various writings about racial justice
Saturday, June 17	All-day training workshop by New York Immigration Coalition

### **Social Action in the Community - Our Abiding Concerns**

1. Poverty in the North Country
  - A new group, with good energy and leadership, has formed "Community Conversation about Poverty," working with the SLC Community Development Program. Talk to Rhonda Rodriguez or Pat Alden to learn more.
  - The Church and Community Program, which our church sponsors, offers a food pantry, thrift shop, and emergency financial help for those in need. Volunteers are needed!
  - And remember our "Feed the Need" box through which we support both the pantry and the Bearpacks program with our weekly donations.
2. Opioid Crisis
  - We hear more and more about the devastating opioid crisis in our country and, specifically, in our area. Talk to Sara Hutcheson and Esther Katz about this. You can also borrow a video "The Hungry Heart" about a Vermont community addressing the crisis.
3. Diversity in Canton
  - On Wednesday, May 3, from 6 to 8 p.m., the Canton Free Library continues the community discussion on diversity with its "Living Books" program. Several community members who have brought their culture to Canton--including our own Geetika and Rajiv Narula--will be available to talk about what it's like to come to the North Country from another country or culture-- for work, school, family or just love of the region. Families, children, and teens are welcome.
4. Medical Aid in Dying



- Our May SASO (shared offering for social action) will be taken for Compassion and Choices, a national group that is addressing the urgent need to support legislation that would make medical aid in dying legal. Opponents of medical aid in dying are moving quickly to attack this compassionate and legal option in state legislatures, the courts, and Congress. Compassion & Choices needs your immediate help to stop them. For more details, go to [www.compassionandchoices.org/wont-back-down](http://www.compassionandchoices.org/wont-back-down). This follows up on last year's discussion of Atul Gawande's book *Being Mortal*.
5. Sanctuary and Support for Immigrants in the U.S.
- A number of people in our congregation are invested in learning more about what kind of support is needed for immigrants and refugees and what interfaith groups can do to provide support in northern New York. For a brief introduction, click [here](#)
  - Recently Bart Harloe and Relani Prudhomme attended a day-long training session in Syracuse presented by the New York Immigration Coalition. Our church, co-sponsoring with SURJ, will be bringing NYIC here to give the same workshop on Saturday, June 17. SAC urges you to consider attending this workshop. For more information, click [here](#).
  - Bill McKibben has also written about how the new administration wants to “[expel our neighbours](#).”

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

If you would like to receive weekly electronic news updates,  
please email: [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org)  
Deadline for the next newsletter: **Monday, May 22**