



News & Information from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

APRIL 2018
A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

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

April 1

Cracking Our December Husks - *The Rev. James Galasinski*

Spring and Easter are great reminders of the rich life we have within. Sometimes all we need to do is peel the dry husks off those seeds and let them grow.

Music: Doug & Jill Rubio

Worship Associate: Jon Montan

Greeters: Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel & Ryan Hicks,
Dan Kuelgen

Social Hour Hosts: Oscar Sarmiento & Lillian Trevizan,
Judy DeGraaff, Pete & Kathy Wyckoff

Collection Counters: David Doran, Ruth Baltus

April 8

Legacy - *The Rev. James Galasinski*

As we mature, it seems only natural to ask ourselves what kind of legacy we are leaving. Attempting to answer the question influences how we live now. Most of us will not have any plaques and statues but we can leave a legacy of love.

Music: UU Choir

Worship Associate: Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel

Greeters: Karen Bage, Lonie Bogett, Leo Burger, Joan Kepes

Social Hour Hosts: Jason Shirtz, Rajiv & Geetika Narula,
Margaret & Bart Harloe

Collection Counters: Pat Gengo, Tim Opdyke

April 15

If It's a Spectrum, We're All On It -

Theresa Witmer, Pulpit Guest

Gay or straight, black or white, rich or poor, female or male: we're finding that parts of our world we learned to understand as opposites, instead fall along a spectrum. For Theresa, coming out of the closet years ago meant an immediate polar shift from being "straight" to lesbian. Now she explores how embracing the concept that there is a spectrum of sexuality - as well as a spectrum of many other traditionally "binary" concepts - can lead to greater contentment and compassion.

Music: Doug & Jill Rubio

Lay Leader: Kim Bouchard

Greeters: Gwen & Sean Cunningham, Miles Manchester,
Cliff & Janice Westerling

Social Hour Hosts: Barbara & Pete Beekman,
Rick Tomlinson & Julie Welch

Collection Counters: Jon Montan, Lorraine Olendzenski

April 22

The Blue-Green Hills of Earth - *The Rev. James Galasinski*

Gazing all the way out from our Milky Way galaxy, seen from a distance, our home - Earth - is a pale blue dot. This multi-generational service will explore the sense of awe we feel from being such a small part of the universe. This feeling of mystery and wonder can lead us to make practical choices to care for our blue-green home.

Music: UU Choir, UU Handbell Choir, RE Youth

Worship Associate: Theresa Witmer

Greeters: Erika Barthelmess & Natalie Panshin,
Morolake Odetoyinbo & Kara McLuckie

Social Hour Hosts: Ron & Sharon Tavernier, Claire Fargo,
David Weissbard & Karen Wells,

Collection Counters: Lonie Bogett, Will Siegfried

April 29

Numbering Our Days - *Anne Marsh & Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti*

Last year at James' installation, we told the kids that "emeritus" is Latin for "old people." As old people, are we sages or dinosaurs? As we become more and more aware of our own mortality, do we focus on gratitude or regret?

The answer to both questions is probably "yes."

Wade and Anne served as co-ministers of this church from 1993 until their retirement in 2009.

Music: Sondra Goldsmith Proctor, organ

Lay Leader: Valerie Ingram

RE Ambassador:

Greeter: Bonnie & John Danis, Maggie Hockett, Eileen
Raymond & Donna Smith-Raymond

Social Hour Host: Emily Dixon, Bill Short, Margaret Mauch,
Debra Mitchell

Collection Counters: Lorraine Olendzenski, Valerie Ingram

ON THE CALENDAR

Please print and post!



Sunday, April 1

9:30 a.m., Ushare Meeting

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

Monday, April 2

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, April 3

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

Wednesday, April 4

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

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Sunday, April 8

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

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

12:00 p.m., Children's Choir Rehearsal

Monday, April 9

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

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

Tuesday, April 10

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

4:30 p.m., Welcoming Committee Meeting

6:00 p.m., Voter Rights Forum

7:00 p.m., Second Tuesday Chalice Circle

Wednesday, April 11

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m., UU Men's Group

Thursday, April 12

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Sunday, April 15

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

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

12:00 p.m., Children's Choir Rehearsal

Monday, April 16

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Wednesday, April 18

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

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

7:00 p.m., Third Wednesday Chalice Circle

Friday, April 20

Newsletter Deadline

Sunday, April 22

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

9:30 a.m., Children's Choir Rehearsal

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

Monday, April 23

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Wednesday, April 25

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m., UU Men's Group

Friday, April 27

6:00 p.m., Potluck Dinner

7:00 p.m., LGBTQ Film Series: *Boy Meets Girl*

Sunday April 29

9:00 a.m., Choir Rehearsal

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

Monday, April 30

12:00 p.m., Mindfulness Meditation

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

The Rev. James Galasinski, Minister

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

Sara Trimm, Congregational Administrator

Carol Strome, Choir Director

Betsy Kepes, Music Coordinator

Theresa Witmer, Handbell Choir Director

The Reverends Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti

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

(315)386-2498 • office@uucantonny.org • www.uucantonny.org



FROM OUR MINISTER Shared Pastoral Care

A friend of mine recently told me that his brother died alone in a hospital. His brother was diagnosed with terminal cancer and never told him because he didn't want to be a burden to anyone. My friend wanted to be with his brother. He would have taken time off from work to care for him and it would not have been a burden at all.

This might be an extreme case, but it is a good reminder about the importance of sharing our worries, concerns, and sorrows with others. Being heard by another, not being alone and isolated with our problems, can be part of the healing process. Whether it is during a check-in at a committee meeting, during a Chalice Circle, while talking to a close friend, or privately with me, we do not have to go it alone.

I have been trained in a type of emotional and spiritual support called pastoral care. It is not about giving advice; it's about being a calming presence amidst the chaos of life. If you ever need a caring ear, I am here for you. However, I do go away to conferences and on vacations. And there are home-bound members of our church I do visit, but not as often as I would like. Therefore, I am planning to start a pastoral care team. The team will be trained in the art of being a peaceful presence. A community that shares ministry is healthier and stronger.

In addition, our Caring Circle, which provides practical care like rides and meals, can only help when we know about a need. If you cannot meet in person with me, you are welcome to email me or call the church to let us know of a problem or need. If you wish, I will include your concern in the pastoral prayer on Sunday services, so that our congregation knows. There will also be new bulletin board in the Social Room that will allow us to share what's on our hearts.

We are not burdens but blessings to each other.

Blessed Be, The Rev. James Galasinski



JAN'S ORDINATION!

The congregation and the community are invited to celebrate the ordination of Jan Hutslar on Saturday, May 5, at 4 p.m. in our sanctuary. A long-time member of our church and beloved former Director of Religious Education, Jan completed seminary last spring and passed the Ministerial Fellowship Committee with flying colors in December. It is her wish that the UU Church of Canton ordain her. Childcare will be provided during the service, and a potluck dinner will follow in the Social Room.

Everyone should have received an e-invite to the ordination. If you did not (and after you check your mailbox promotion folder, spam/junk folder, etc.) contact the [church office](#)/315-386-2498 and Sara can forward you one. But here's what you need to know:

- Learn about Jan's ordination and journey to ministry [here](#).
- RSVP to the service and potluck [here](#).
- Volunteer to help with the ordination preparations and celebration [here](#).

Jan's ordination offers a chance to celebrate our dear friend and our entire community. Welcome!



PRESIDENT'S POST

A new month, a new season – and none too soon! Even if there's still a blanket of snow, spring reminds us of new beginnings.

A Church Council tradition every year is a day-long retreat, where we get to know each other better and narrow a list of goals for the coming year. In early March, we spent a Saturday at the SUNY Canton Alumni House with the Reverend Christine Robinson, one of James' ministerial mentors from Albuquerque. It was a productive day of discussion, dialogue, strategic thinking, and socializing. We're grateful for the Reverend Robinson's outsider perspective and input on how we "do" church in Canton. She developed an agenda that helped us set some realistic goals for the next year.

I want to touch on a few of them:

One of our primary goals will be finishing a draft of our Mission Statement, and I want to thank Kathy Wyckoff and the Mission Commission for their work, so far, on this goal. I think our Mission Statement will allow us to look inward, define ourselves, and become more confident in our role in the community. Our UU Church of Canton is a unique and important place in the St. Lawrence Valley!

How do we tap into our congregation's creative energy without getting bogged down in the details? This year, Church Council will be examining a form of Policy Governance. It allows the Council to focus on the church's vision and goals rather than minutia, and to give staff and committees more freedom in making decisions. I suspect we'll spend more time defining "committee," "team," and (where you all come in) "shared ministry."

We also want to start a conversation about where we are as a congregation and where we're headed. Some UU churches choose an annual "Big Question," with topics like community, loving our elders, the environment, and long-range planning. We'll talk more about a "Big Question" forum later this year.

I want to close by saying I'm so proud of our youth group and their mentors. They were the pulpit guests on March 18th, and did a stellar job leading the worship service with words and music. It wasn't an easy topic – "Beyond Thoughts and Prayers: Youth Going a Step Further" – in the aftermath of the deadly school shootings in Parkland, Florida. After the sermon, the congregation rose in body and spirit to give these young people a well-deserved standing ovation. It was a proud moment, and another example of our UU teens "walking the talk."

Todd Moe, Church Council President



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PONDERINGS

According to the UUA website, "we create change: in ourselves, in the world. Seven days a week, Unitarian Universalists (UUs) live their faith by doing. Whether in community with others or as an individual, we know that active, tangible expressions of love, justice, and peace are what make a difference. Embracing peace, love, and understanding that goes beyond individual belief systems, we are creators of positive change in people and in the world." On April 15 during religious education, our 2nd through 6th graders will be participating in a faith in action program to live our seventh principle values. Members from our Environmental Action Committee will help our children understand the devastation to our oceans from plastic waste.

As adults, we have many opportunities to act in our faith. We worship, we care for others, and we work for justice. There are wonderful opportunities coming this April. As spring arrives and the world is renewed with vital energy, may you find ways to act in faith. Blessed be.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

THANK YOU THANK YOU...

- † Sara Hutcheson for joining the nursery care team.
- † All the bakers for making cakes for Everybody's Birthday Party.
- † Glen Butler, Jeff Rousell and Julie Van Duyne for chaperoning a youth sleepover.

MISSION COMMISSION
Wondering where things are with the mission statement process? Check out the latest [here](#).

MUSIC NOTES

Adult Choir

Choir is open to anyone who likes to sing! All voice parts are welcome. Music reading ability is helpful but not required. We rehearse music from a variety of sources and styles and sing in church two times a month. All rehearsals are at 9 a.m. in the choir room downstairs. If you are interested in singing with us, contact the choir director or just show up at rehearsal. We are a very welcoming bunch and will be glad to see you!

The schedule for this month is:

- April 8: rehearse, sing in church
- April 15: rehearse
- April 22: rehearse, sing in church with Children's Choir and RE
- April 29: rehearse



Children's Choir

Children's Choir will assemble to prepare a song for our Earth Day themed service on Sunday, April 22. We will rehearse for 30 minutes after church at 12 noon on April 8 and April 15, and then at 9:30 a.m. on April 22 with the Adult Choir. Children's Choir is open to any RE members who like to sing!

Carol Strome, Choir Director
choir@uucantonny.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

A big welcome to our newest members: Ethel Slocum, Dotty Hall, Donna Elliott, and Tori Elliott. Be sure to look for more information about our newest members on the New Member Board in the Social Room.

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

Sunday, June 10 – We Need Your Help!

The church picnic is one of the most fun, church-wide social events of the year. It will be held after church on June 10 at Bend in the River Park in Canton.

Church Council is looking for a few church members to organize this event. We have records from previous picnics that will make it easier to plan this one.



If you've wanted to get involved at church but don't want to sign-up for an on-going committee this might be a good project with a limited time commitment!

Please contact Sara at the [church office](#) if you are willing to get involved in this way. We would be so grateful.

OLYMPIA BROWN SOCIETY

An informal discussion about ways to support the church through planned gifts and the Olympia Brown Society will take place on Sunday, April 8, right after church in the Romer Room. A light lunch will be provided.

The Olympia Brown Society recognizes individuals who have placed the church in their estate plans. This is usually done by leaving a bequest to the church, but there are other ways such as naming the church as the beneficiary of a retirement plan, or through a planned gift such as a charitable gift annuity. During uncertain financial times, the popular charitable gift annuity can provide a fixed payment for a donor's lifetime, which provides income security.

Past presentations have helped church members think through their charitable giving plans for the church. There is no obligation and all information shared is confidential. Tom Pynchon and Bart and Margaret Harloe will be there to answer your questions about the OBS.

BUILDING & GROUNDS UPDATE

The B&G Committee has been busy this winter with various projects. We are happy to report the heating deficiencies in James' office have been resolved with the installation of three wall-mounted radiator panels now providing the necessary BTUs to properly heat the space. We also upgraded the insulation on the 250 feet of supply and return lines. B&G members have made repairs to the pulpit chairs and some of the library chairs. This spring Casey Thompson from Limbwalker will be on the grounds for our biannual pruning of trees and shrubs. Coots Masonry will be back this summer to continue repointing our stone veneer on the east side of church. We also are getting advice and estimate on repairs to the outer glass protecting our stained glass windows on the east side of church. The two small attic windows also need to be replaced.

We are fortunate to have our Capital Reserve Fund to utilize for these type of improvements to avoid deferred maintenance issues that only worsen if action is delayed. The CFR was a major objective of the 2008-2010 Under One Roof Capital Campaign, when we replaced the roof, renovated the kitchen, purchased new audio and visual technology for the sanctuary, and installed new flooring and carpet in the sanctuary.

Pete Beekman, Building & Grounds Committee Chair

SPRING WORK DAY



Our spring work day is earlier than usual this year to ensure our building and grounds are beautiful for Jan Hutslar's ordination service on Saturday, May 5. During her years as our director of religious education Jan touched our lives and our kids' lives in profound and lasting ways. Many hands make light work even if you can only come for an hour or two; let's show our love and appreciation for Jan!



Spring Church Work Day Plan Saturday, April 28, 2018 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

We will be weeding, edging, and mulching our landscaping beds and the Memorial Garden, sweeping and edging sidewalks, washing windows (inside and out), removing storm windows and replacing with screens, and other tasks. Please bring work gloves. If you are comfortable lending tools for the cause, we can use rakes, brooms, weeding tools, and 5 gallon buckets.

To sign up for the work day please use the following link below or sign up with a B&G committee member in the Social Room after Sunday services on April 9, 16, and 23.

<http://www.uucantonny.org/committees/buildings-and-grounds/help-wanted/>

THE WELCOMING CONGREGATION: LOOKING BACK

On May 3, 1998, this congregation passed the following resolution by a vote of 64 to 4:

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton shall be recognized as a Welcoming Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association. We celebrate and support the lives, relationships, religious quests, and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people. We affirm and promote the full participation of all people in every aspect of our congregational life. We pledge our church's commitment to do its part to heal centuries of religious and societal prejudice and oppression, making our church a sanctuary of spiritual growth and welcome for all.

We remember applause, hugs, and tears of joy as the vote was announced, for the resolution was the culmination of a three-year process in which the whole congregation was actively involved. Now, 20 years later, it's a good time to look back on that process and to celebrate, but also to recommit ourselves to the work that is still to be done.

When we arrived as co-ministers in September 1993, the first item we bought with our professional expenses was the UUA's manual, "The Welcoming Congregation," but we hoped the impetus for becoming a Welcoming Congregation would come from the congregation, not just as a request from the ministers. During our first year, a couple of sermons on LGBTQ issues sparked conversations about becoming more inclusive. Then, in an April 1995 "question box" sermon, we got a card asking, "Is there interest in starting a Welcoming Congregation at this church?" Anne replied in part: "Some of you will think I paid someone to put this question into the box. I didn't, but Wade and I are excited and delighted to see this card... We would be proud to be part of such an effort, but this is a question only you can answer."

Your answer was "Yes!" Within a few weeks, a planning team was at work and the process of becoming a Welcoming Congregation began. Two series of adult workshops were offered, exploring heterosexism and homophobia, religion and the Bible, discrimination and advocacy in the wider society, religious education, and much more. Forty congregants participated and many felt transformed, especially by listening deeply to the stories shared by gay and lesbian congregants. We had all thought we were already welcoming, and in many ways, we were. But most emerged from the workshops ready to make our own efforts more intentional and to act for justice in the wider world.

To that end, the congregation committed to:

- Using inclusive language and content in worship and ensuring that religious education programs include recognition of the different kinds of families formed by gay and lesbian parents and children.
- Offering to our youth sexuality education that fully affirms all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- Establishing a chapter of the national organization PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and providing much of the early PFLAG leadership.
- Marching with PFLAG and PRISM in Canton's annual Dairy Princess Parade.
- Advocating for equal rights and health care for people with HIV/AIDS (for which we received an award from AIDS Community Resources).
- Speaking to campus groups on gay rights and on homosexuality and the Bible.
- Being a sponsor of the "Out at the Movies" annual film festival.
- Hosting the national traveling photo exhibit, "Love Makes a Family," featuring LGBT families.
- Hosting a community forum "Freedom to Marry: A North Country Conversation."
- Offering services of union for gay and lesbian couples throughout the North Country until New York legalized marriage equality in 2011.
- Lobbying for anti-discrimination legislation and, especially, actively and persistently advocating for marriage equality through congregation-wide letter-writing campaigns, discussions with legislators, and everything else we could think of.

No doubt the congregation could have passed a Welcoming Congregation resolution back in 1995, but it wouldn't have meant as much. After three years of learning, sharing, and acting, we knew what we were voting on. We had moved from acceptance to affirmation and celebration. And the congregation had received the gift of many more openly LGBTQ members and friends.

Since that time, much has changed in the wider society, and marriage equality is the law of the land. Yet LGBTQ rights we thought had been won are now threatened. The work continues. We know this congregation will continue to fight back against those who use religion as a cover for discrimination. You are also working for an end to gun violence and for justice for people of color, immigrants, and women. As Audre Lorde reminds us, "There is no hierarchy of oppressions." We are called to the struggle for justice for all.

Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti

BE A STORYTELLER!

The Worship Committee is interested in involving more people in our worship services. The “Time for All Ages” is a wonderful place in the service to hear from you. Jan Hutslar and Todd Moe will be leading a storytelling workshop in April or May. The workshop will give you skills, show you some techniques, and provide an opportunity to develop as a “five-minute storyteller” for our Time for All Ages. If you are interested in attending please sign up on the sheet in the Social Room by the name tag cabinet or contact Robin Collen.

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS & NOTES

The Social Action Shared Offering (SASO) on April 15 will benefit a local high school mentoring program, Lifted Out of Poverty ([LOOP](#)). This is new, transformative program for girls in grades 9- to 12 who are living in poverty and experiencing trauma is “committed to creating positive cycles for underprivileged girls.” Its director and initiator (in 2016) is April Charleson, who describes her project as “a selective program currently providing mentoring through academic, enrichment, and personal growth experiences . . . Our goal is to help foster a sense of self, establish positive coping and thinking skills, and encourage each member to engage in meaningful activities in order to change her mindset and prepare her for post-secondary goals.” April has worked for 15 years as a language arts teacher and coach. Her passion stems in part from the fact that she grew up in circumstances similar to those of the girls in this program.



The Red Cross Blood Drive will be held Tuesday, April 3, from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Due to the severe winter weather in many parts of the nation, there is a significant shortage in the blood supply. Please consider donating. You can sign up [online](#) or by calling 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767). If you can help with registration and hosting, please contact [Pat Alden](#).

On Tuesday, April 10, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. our church is sponsoring a forum on voting rights - [Democracy at Risk?](#) - with the League of Women Voters of St. Lawrence County, the American Association of University Women, and the St. Lawrence University chapter of the Vote Everywhere project of the Andrew Goodman Foundation. The non-partisan event will be held at our church. Everyone is welcome; light refreshments will be served.

Nominations for the [Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award](#) are invited. Deadline is Monday, April 30.

Pat Alden, Co-Chair, Social Action Committee

WHAT'S IN YOUR HEART?

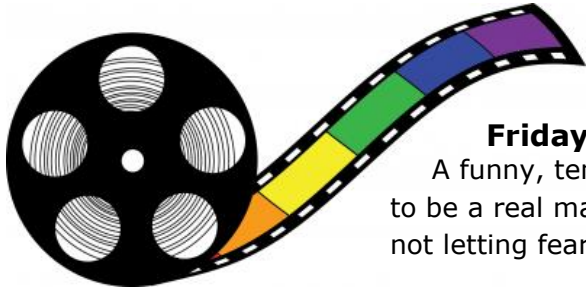
Did you light a candle in church on Sunday? Do you have something on your mind or in your heart that you'd like to share? James' column reminds us that we can't be there for each other if we don't know what's going on in each others' lives.

The Communications Committee wants to help you share your joy, sorrow, or concern. The bulletin board beside the elevator in the Social Room is now the place for sharing with our church community. Brightly colored slips of paper are available for you to write a brief note about what's on your mind. You may tack it on the board to share publicly, or if it's a private message for James or the Caring Circle, slip it in the small box by the bulletin board. All notes in the box will be confidentially handled by James and the staff. Be sure to note if you'd like James or a worship associate to share your concern with the congregation during the pastoral prayer time.



Let us know if you have questions or suggestions for making sharing easy and comfortable for all.

Carol Pynchon, Communications Committee Chair



LGBTQ+ FRIDAY FILM SERIES

Co-sponsored with PRISM

Friday April 27: [Boy Meets Girl](#)

A funny, tender, sex positive romantic comedy that explores what it means to be a real man or woman, and how important it is to live a courageous life not letting fear stand in the way of going after your dreams.

Friday, May 18: [God's Own Country](#)

Young farmer Johnny Saxby numbs his daily frustrations with binge drinking and casual sex, until the arrival of a Romanian migrant worker for lambing season ignites an intense relationship that sets Johnny on a new path.

All films will be shown in the Romer Room, with potluck at 6 p.m. and movies at 7 p.m.

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