



The Latest News

from the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

January 2020

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

January 5

Tugging on Indra's Net *Teresa Veramendi, Pulpit Guest*

How does an old Hindi myth call us into the pursuit of social justice? We will explore the expansion of our compassion to all things, recognizing our constant interconnection and our daily impact on the fabric of society

Music: Betsy Kepes

Lay Leader: Dave Nelson

RE Ambassador: Jim Williams

Greeters: Kevin Ball & Ruth Baltus, Miles Manchester, Pat Gengo

Social Hour Hosts: Jim & Stevie Michaelson, Ben Budelmann

Collection Counters: David Doran, Ruth Baltus

January 12

Led by a Pillar of Cloud *The Rev. James Galasinski*

The ancient Israelites were led through the wilderness to the promised land by a mysterious pillar of cloud during the day. This image has inspired mystics and theologians to conclude that we cannot know divine attributes; all we can do is be caught in the foggy texture of not knowing.

Music: Betsy Kepes & Jill Rubio

Worship Associate: Doug Rubio

RE Ambassador: Arthur Freeheart

Greeters: Bart & Margaret Harloe, Kim Bouchard, Annie Chase

Social Hour Hosts: Julie Van Duyne & Ken Hebb, Jen & Danny Thomas

Collection Counters: Pat Gengo, Ruth Baltus

January 19

Waterfalls, Chimps, and Spirits

The Rev. James Galasinski

New York State is blessed with some of the most beautiful awe-inspiring waterfalls in the world. In similar spaces, our human ancestors, with no biological need, stared on in reverence. This inclination to look on in wonder to a beautiful natural power was the beginning of religion.

Music: UU Choir, Betsy Kepes

Worship Associate: Robin Collen

RE Ambassador: TBA

Greeters: Anna Sorensen & Desiree LeBouef, Carol & Phil LaMarche

Social Hour Hosts: Todd Moe & Paul Siskind, Mark & Rachel Sturges

Collection Counters: Jon Montan, Lorraine Olendzenski

January 26

Moral Suasion and Dr. King *The Rev. James Galasinski*

Early in his career, to persuade whites to be less racist, King encouraged blacks to be well spoken and set a moral example. But he evolved past this assimilationist dream into a more antiracist demand to our world.

Music: UU Choir & Betsy Kepes

Worship Associate: Jon Montan

RE Ambassador: Arthur Freeheart

Greeters: Valerie Ingram, Janet McFarland

Social Hour Hosts: Miles Manchester, Cliff & Janice Westerling

Collection Counters: Lonie Bogett, Will Siegfried

HAPPY ★ NEW ★ YEAR

ON THE CALENDAR

Please print and post!



Sunday, January 5

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

Monday, January 6

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, January 7

4:15 p.m., Welcoming Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m., Canvass Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 8

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

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Thursday, January 9

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Sunday, January 12

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

Monday, January 13

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

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

Tuesday, January 14

9:00 a.m., Sacred Texts and Coffee

5:30 p.m., Safety Committee Meeting

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

Wednesday, January 15

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

Thursday, December 12

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Sunday, January 19

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

Monday, January 20

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, January 21

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 22

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m., Jazz Jam Session

Sunday, January 26

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

11:30 a.m., Annual Budget Meeting

Monday, January 27

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, January 28

4:00 p.m., Pastoral Care Team Meeting

Wednesday, January 29

4:30 p.m., Handbell Choir Practice

Friday, January 31

6:00 p.m., Family Game Night

Mark Your Calendar Now for these Upcoming Events:



- **All Day Congregational Retreat** on Saturday, February 29, 2020
- **Exploring World Religions:** 6 part series led by James, with special guest appearances. Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. February 20 and 27, March 5, 12, 19, and 26.

More details coming soon!

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

The Rev. James Galasinski, Minister

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education; Shelby Hunkins, Assistant Director of Religious Education

Sara Trimm, Congregational Administrator

Teresa Veramendi, Social Justice Coordinator

Betsy Kepes, Music Coordinator; Carol Strome, Choir Director; 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



In the church mailbox is an envelope with that familiar red and orange corporate-looking flaming chalice. With some unease I begin to open this letter addressed to me from the Unitarian Universalist Association. I have an idea what it might be. Yet, I do not want to open it. I pause. A whole history of memories and feelings well up in me--butterflies in the stomach take flight. This could mean more work, another setback. My eyes skip ahead and I see the word, **Congratulations!** My heart leaps --joy-- a sigh of relief.

Then I read before that word, “the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) voted to grant you Full Fellowship”.

Forging the institutionalized path to make my inner calling an outward reality involved repeated trips to Boston. The Regional Sub-committee on Candidacy (RSCC) was the first gate to pass through. Not really regional, they required essays, a year of seminary completed, and an in-person interview. I did not pass and had to come back a second time. By the way, the RSCC doesn't even exist anymore! After that first hurdle was the MFC which required 120 pages of background checks, mental health evaluations, internship evaluations, seminary transcripts, a series of essays, and proof that I have read their reading list. The MFC did not pass me and I had to come back the next year. In 2015 I was granted Preliminary Fellowship. Getting high praise from the MFC panel, they asked me to come back to serve as a liaison on their committee. Five years in a row going to cold, damp, dark Boston in December.

To achieve Full Fellowship I needed to complete 3 years of satisfactory evaluations from a committee on ministry and our church board, attend monthly meetings with a ministerial mentor, and offer up my own self-reflections and plans of action to improve. Jenn Whittaker, Pete Wyckoff, Phil Collins, Erika Barthelmess, Theresa Witmer, Susan Powers, Ben Hunkins, and Bill Kirchgasser all gave me honest feedback and diligently worked with me to improve my ministry and achieve Full Fellowship. Thank you for your service to me, our congregation, and our wider faith.

This June in Providence, RI at General Assembly the annual meeting of the UUA, I will be honored along with other religious professionals in the Service of the Living the Tradition. Hope to see you there!


The Rev. James Galasinski

PRESIDENT'S POST



Happy New Year! It's officially 2020, and I'm excited to start this new year as Church Council President.

First, I want to thank outgoing president Todd Moe for his leadership the last two years. His calm and intentional guidance has created a warm, collaborative atmosphere at Council meetings. Learning from Todd has been invaluable to me.

I'd like to offer a warm welcome to our newest Church Council members, Stefan Grimberg, Ashley Nadean Clover, and Jim Williams! Sadly, we are saying goodbye to two trustees, John Danis and Anna Sorensen. Thank you, Anna and John, for all your contributions!

Going into the new year, we're wrapping up the canvass. Unfortunately, we were not able to make our goal. If the congregation approves the budget at the end of January, we will need have a fundraiser to finish meeting the budget. If you have an interest in helping to plan a fundraiser, please let me know.

I am grateful for this opportunity to serve this congregation. If you have any concerns or ideas you'd like to share, please e-mail me at president@uucantonny.org.

Jennifer Whittaker, Church Council President



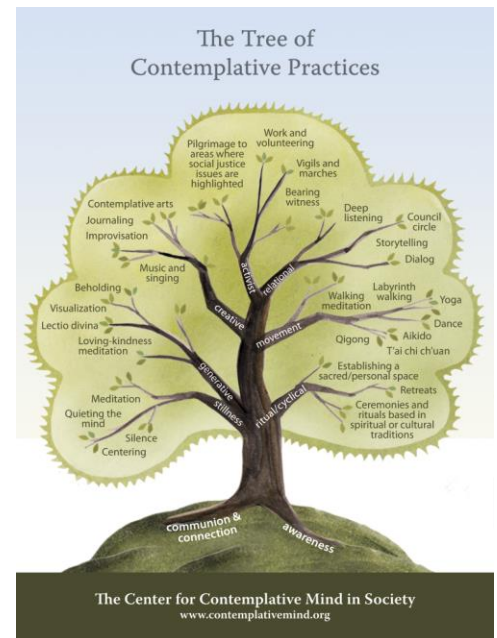
FAITH ENGAGEMENT

As we begin a new year, I am wondering what that means for my faith. I don't like new year's resolutions. I like the idea that the new year is a time to think and act anew.

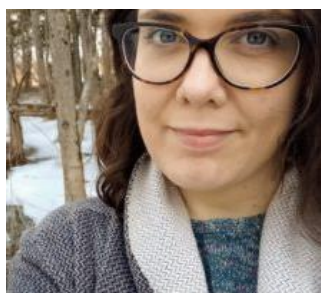
I recently participated in a LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association) Town Hall Meeting where we were discussing spirit practices and it was there, I learned about

"The Tree of Contemplative Practices." This opened my eyes, mind and heart to new ways I can live into my UU faith. The ritual/cyclical branch holds appeal to me as I begin the new year. What ways are you looking to live into your faith as you begin 2020? I look forward to hearing when we next meet. Blessed be.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society
www.contemplativemind.org



SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

Many Hands Make Light Work

As the year comes to a close, I am filled with gratitude for the many blessings I have found here at the UU Church of Canton. I have been able to learn from various inspiring social justice leaders, not only through the [Poor People's Campaign](#) and connecting with other congregations, but primarily through our own community! I am particularly grateful for the wisdom and opportunities granted to me through our minister, the Rev. James Galasinski, and our local powerhouses: Pat Alden, Margaret Harloe, and Eileen Raymond. I have been able to support the participation of various members of our community, from within the congregation and without! New projects and actions are growing!

Looking into the new year, I see so much potential for every member of our congregation to take more action to make the world a better place. On Sunday, January 5, I have the honor of sharing my thoughts on what inspires me towards social justice in the form of a sermon. I invite you to consider with me the Buddhist concept of the interconnection of all beings, and how every choice we make affects the fabric of society. I will also be

offering a guided Buddhist meditation practice, *tonglen*, where we exercise our hearts by sending and receiving compassion to various people in our lives. I hope you will join us.

When we open our hearts to feel compassion for all, even those we may not understand, we begin to see how much power we have to transform the moment, others, and society. The year of 2020 will be very important for our country, in the form of the Census, the Presidential Election, Climate Change, and many other transformative issues that are reaching a tipping point. I encourage each of you to imagine how much time, energy, and skills you are able to dedicate to the practice of compassionate and righteous action in the next year on behalf of our community, our country, and our species.

Two opportunities have arisen directly out of our incredibly successful Social Justice Initiative: Justice for All. There is action to be taken to support those who are incarcerated in the North Country, consider both opportunities: one is to speak to our legislators about halting long term solitary confinement (considered torture by the UN) on January 21st in an all-day action in Albany, NY; the second is to become a pen pal to someone who is incarcerated, using our church as your mailing address.

Come speak with me if you have any ideas, time, or energy to volunteer. Come speak with me if you feel too discouraged to act. There are both small and big tasks to be completed, and every single thing you do counts. Really.

Teresa Veramendi, Social Justice Coordinator

THANK YOU...

- ⊕ Jim Williams for organizing the SLU Spectrum panel discussion for the Jr. High OWL class.
- ⊕ Debra Mitchell, Arthur Freeheart, Danny Thomas, Isaac Tavernier, Paul Cutter, Harper Terrell, Lois Cutter, Mary Michalek, Violet Woodruff, Crosby Terrell, Claire Thomas, Zoya Kocho-Williams, Maxwell Hunkins, Fiona Hunkins, and Freya Fargo for performing the Spirits of December Holiday Pageant.
- ⊕ Karen Wells and Finley Thomas for supporting the case and technical needs for the holiday pageant.
- ⊕ Elyse Tavernier, Braden Whittaker, Brendan Nolan, and Noah Rousell for helping with the candle lighting ceremony.

JOYS & SORROWS

- ⊕ Welcome Shepherd Lawrence Coffin, who weighed in at 10.5 pounds when he was born on December 20!
- ⊕ Our wishes for a speedy recovery go to Esther Katz, who sustained a fall and had surgery to mend a broken wrist and who is now recuperating.
- ⊕ Our thoughts are with Ed Hildebrand, who is at RiverLedge United Helpers for care and rehabilitation after a downturn in his health.



PIZZA PARTY AND GAME NIGHT

Join members of the Religious Education Committee for a Pizza Party and Game Night on **Friday, January 31** at 5:30pm. The church will provide crust (both gluten and gluten free), pizza sauce and cheese. Please bring your favorite toppings and your favorite games to share. All are welcome!



WELCOMING COMMITTEE

Happy New Year from the Welcoming Committee!

It is time once again for Winter Potlucks! These are casual potluck gatherings during the months of January, February and March. We hope to get close to 100% participation, as either hosts, guests or both!

Here's how they work: A host family sets a date and time to host a meal at their home. They can be held after church, on a weekend evening or other time. Sometimes there might be a theme, like a book discussion or sledding activity. Sometimes the gathering is for adults only and others are for families. Guests sign up to attend, and then communicate with the host to choose what to bring.

If you are interested in HOSTING, please email heather@rousell.org, sign up on this [Google form](#) or look for a Host Sign-up in the Social Room.

If you are interested in being a GUEST, look for Potluck sign-ups in the Social Room very soon. Please consider hosting AND being a guest. This is a wonderful way to get through the winter months together.

Heather Rousell, Welcoming Committee Chair

CAMPUS KITCHENS PROJECT (CKP)

CKP offers a free hot meal every Monday night to people in our community. Our objective is to provide volunteer support when students are on vacation. We plan to cover January 6 & 13. Volunteers are needed to help with cooking (at SLU), set up and serving (in our social room), and washing up (at SLU). Sign up for a shift on the storage closet doors in the Social Room. Any donations in the Feed the Need box will also go to our Monday night guests. Help us fill it up! Questions? Contact Carol Pynchon.



SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The Social Action Committee regularly meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the library and all are welcome. Can't make the meeting but want to keep up with Social Action? Look for our meeting minutes on the church website and [linked here](#).

Over the last year, there has been a lot of social justice activity as the new mission statement has inspired us to explore and grow our commitment to social justice. Currently, the Social Action Committee, Social Justice Coordinator, Social Justice Initiative, Social Action Shared Offerings and several working groups are all contributing to the congregation's social justice efforts, but how do these pieces fit together? The Social Action Committee has been discussing how best to coordinate these efforts and build a structure that allows broad participation and encourages action over meetings. More details will be coming soon. Stay tuned!

The next Social Action Shared Offering will be taken for the Unirondack Campership program on February 2. Unirondack, the UU camp and conference center in the Adirondacks, is committed to providing an environment that values the each individual and promotes a caring and inclusive community. All are welcome and Unirondack is committed to making camp available to everyone. The Campership Fund helps to ensure that no one is turned away on the basis of financial need.

Action Items:

Halt Solitary Confinement lobbying day on Tuesday, January 21. The proposed legislations would limit confinement to a maximum of two weeks. Be a voice of support by contacting your representative or joining a group that traveling to Albany to lobby for this bill. Not the lobbying type but want to connect? Consider becoming a pen pal to someone in prison. For more information on either of these opportunities, contact Teresa Veramendi (sjcoordinator@uucantonny.org).



Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

Creating a welcoming, compassionate faith community,
committed to social justice and open to wonder.

Together we strive to:

- ⊕ Foster a spirit of inclusion and connection
- ⊕ Encourage exploration of truth and meaning
- ⊕ Nurture respect for all life and the environment
- ⊕ Live our values in the North Country and in the wider world



If you would like to receive weekly electronic news updates,
please email office@uucantonny.org
Submission Deadline for our next newsletter: Monday, January 20.