



The Latest News

from the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

April 2020
A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

While our church building is closed and we are all practicing social distancing, Sunday worship services will be held virtually on Zoom, beginning at 10:30 a.m. Instructions and the link to participate are [here](#); meeting ID# is 336 941 336. If you don't have internet access, you can also listen over the telephone. Simply dial 1-646-558-8656. When prompted, enter 336 941 336#.

April 5 The People Stayed Home

The Rev. James Galasinski

With many things closed, gatherings banned, borders closed, and travel a thing of the past, we are being forced to do what Henry David Thoreau told us so many years ago: simplify, simplify, simplify. Isolation and physical distancing might be the simplest of gifts. All around us are new choices, new shadows, and new healing.

April 12 Easter: What Really Happened?

The Rev. James Galasinski

Over the past few decades biblical scholars and historians have been speculating about what exactly happened after Jesus died. We know his memory and teaching lived on. This service will celebrate the symbol of resurrection and the hope of new life.



As we work to create a compassionate faith community, especially as we are separated from one another during this period of social distancing, the Caring Circle and Pastoral Care Team are here to help. Learn more [here](#).

April 19 Language, Truth, and Meaning-Making

Dr. Laura Rediehs, Virtual Pulpit Guest

We have all noticed how hard it can be to communicate these days, especially when we disagree. One little-known reason is that communication is a mixture of factual claims and meaning-making. While questions of truth are important, our meaning-making—how we try to make sense of our thoughts and experiences— informs how we decide what to believe is true. If just one person in a frustrating disagreement understands this, that person can steer the conversation in a more productive direction.

Laura Rediehs teaches philosophy and peace studies at St. Lawrence University, loves music, and is a Quaker. She is trying to understand the crisis of truth in today's world in the hope that solving it can help us create a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

April 26 Let It Be

The Rev. James Galasinski

Hope whispers to us when we hear Paul McCartney sing one of his greatest songs, *Let It Be*, which he wrote after the death of his mother Mary. In spite of tragedy, death, and pandemic, there is so much wisdom in those three little words.

Special thanks to Eden Terrell for technical support with our virtual services!

IT IS GOOD TO BE TOGETHER

More Opportunities to Connect with Each Other!

In this time of constant change, it is more important than ever to connect with each other in new ways. Here's what is planned. Check the [website](#) for updates.

UU 101: An introduction to Unitarian Universalism designed for those who are interested in becoming a member, or anyone who would like to learn more about the history and theology of our church.

Tuesday, March 31 and Thursday, April 2, at 7 p.m.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Event ID 772 982 715



Chalice Circle: A chance to connect in the middle of week; begins with chalice lighting, followed by a reading and subsequent discussion, and ending with extinguishing the chalice.

Thursdays, April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at 2 p.m.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Event ID 798 759 094

Sacred Text & Coffee: A morning gathering where the group reads from the Tao Te Ching and discusses the meaning of the reading. This happens on the second Tuesday of every month.

Tuesday, April 14, at 9 a.m.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Event ID 640 733 233

Most committee meetings are still happening virtually. If you are a committee member, watch for email invitations to join the Zoom meeting at your normally scheduled meeting time.

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

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JAMES' JOURNAL

Things are closed. Life is open.

The COVID-19 pandemic is hitting us all differently. Things are closing. Normalcy has left us. Yet, we are still open to wonder and to each other. Some of us are privileged enough to work from the safety of our own home. Others are out there on the front lines or maybe cannot work and will hit particularly hard times. I am no economist, but it looks like we are headed for a worldwide recession.

Fortunately, there have been some generous contributions over the past few months to our Caring Fund. Many churches have them. Sometimes they are called Minister's Discretionary Funds. Our Caring Fund is a separate checking account from everything else at the church, where I am given the freedom to give money to congregants, friends of the church, or people in the community who are in need. I normally don't broadcast this too much. But we do have some money to help those in need. Please call me if you are in need or know someone who might need help. The Caring Fund was set up many years ago to assist those who find themselves in unusual hardship.

The Caring Fund is just one way among many we are staying open. I will offer some sort of regular video podcasts. I have started my own Youtube Channel - [the Rev. James Galasinski](#). In addition to worship and committee meetings still being held via Zoom, I am going to be offering Chalice Circles online. In essence, these are slightly structured conversations and anyone can join in to anyone of the sessions. Things are closed but life is still open

In Peace, *The Rev. James Galasinski, Minister*

PRESIDENT'S POST

It's been a difficult few weeks, not only for our church community, but also our wider world community. Our lives have changed so drastically, it's difficult to feel centered. Even with all these changes, I'm so heartened to see how we as a church community continue to work to stay in community together while being physically distanced.



Staying connected now is more work. It's harder than when we could just walk down the street and visit with neighbors. Or gather at the church for Sunday service, committee meetings, and religious education. This hard work now has to be done through any means we have, including the telephone, mail, and virtually through the internet. The Caring Circle has been and will continue to be vital in these efforts. If you want to volunteer to help with their efforts, you can reach out to Natalie Panshin or Eden Terrell at caringcircle@uucantonny.org. I also encourage you to reach out to me at president@uucantonny.org with any concerns or ideas you might have.

Finally, I leave you with this prayer written by Erika A. Hewitt.

We are hunkering and hoarding, Great Shimmering Goodness, though you call us to be better than that. Remind us that you delight, first and always, in showing up in the spaces between people – no matter how big those spaces are.

Jennifer Whittaker, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT

According to the Families page of the UUA website, "Unitarian Universalism affirms all families, of origin and of choice. Parents and caregivers find support to embrace their roles as children's primary religious educators – to open authentic conversations with children about difficult topics – to grow in faith together through religious practices, truth-seeking, justice work, service projects, and more."

During this time of COVID-19 and the need to stay connected and stay at home, our religious education program is creating fun programming to support you in staying connected to your faith and our faith community.

On Monday afternoons at 3 p.m. we will be offering Zoom Storytime with our Spirit Play and Love Will Guide Us teachers. On Monday evenings at 6:30 we will offer a time for our MakerSpace class to check in and share how they have been creating while at home. Our Jr. High OWL class and our Youth Group will meet separately on Sunday afternoons at 1. We will be hosting a game night on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Watch for details weekly in enews.

We are committed to supporting our congregation in staying connected while staying safe.

Blessed be, Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

JOYS & SORROWS

Our most heartfelt sympathies go out to the family and friends of Kelly Johnson-Eilola, who passed away unexpectedly in mid-March. Kelly was a longtime leader in our OWL program and had a profound impact on the lives of many of the youth in our congregation.

SERVICES AUCTION

Along with so many other events, the Services Auction scheduled for May 1 will have to be postponed. We are hoping to reschedule for June but we'll wait to see how the pandemic and its consequences play out over the next few months.

In the meantime, we all can be thinking of what we can offer for the auction. The church is counting on the auction as the main source of funds to make up for the 2020 budget shortfall.

In addition to services we would love to have some handmade items. If you are cooped up at home, is there a craft item you could make to donate to the auction (a knit or quilted item, earrings or necklace, candles, a painting, a picture frame or coat rack, etc.)? You can submit your auction items [here](#).

If you have any questions, you can speak to auction organizers Kathy Wyckoff, Carol Pynchon, Mary Michelak, and Barbara Beekman, or email auction@uucantonny.com.

FAITH IN ACTION

Seeking Nominations for the 2020 Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award

Each year, our church recognizes an individual who is making a difference in our community with an award established in 1990 in memory of Rachel Somers Grant. Rachel was a teacher and activist who lived in Canton from 1977 until her death in 1990. The award was established to honor those who work, as Rachel did, to make ours a more humane and progressive community. You can learn more about Rachel, the award, and past recipients [here](#). The Social Action Committee is accepting nominations for the 2020 award.

Nominations should explain how the nominee exemplifies some of the following criteria.

- promotion of local grassroots efforts as a means of achieving social change
- advocacy on behalf of social justice, especially for those who are marginalized in some way
- active involvement in a variety of local groups working for a better community
- history of organizing, involving, and supporting community members in pursuit of social justice

Nominations are due no later than Friday, April 24, and may be sent by email to socialaction@uucantonny.org, or by mail to the Social Action Committee, Unitarian Universalist, 3 ½ East Main Street, Canton NY 13617

Teresa Veramendi (Social Justice Coordinator), Margaret Harloe (Co-Chair), and Pat Alden (Co-Chair)

#UUtheVote

Sign up to receive updates and discover the seven ways you can #UUtheVote from home.

You can text VOTELOVE to 51555 or [sign up online](#).

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, April 20.