

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton NY

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

January 2021 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Friday, January 1

5:00 p.m., First Friday Happy Hour

Saturday, January 2

11:00 a.m., Boosting Immunity

Sunday, January 3

Imagining a New Year on New Terms

The Rev. James Galasinski

2020 brought to the forefront terms we would rather not be familiar with such as online happy hours, super-spreader events, contact tracing, essential workers, flattening the curve, P.P.E., remote learning, and pods. I am not sure how many times I have said, "uncertain times". What will 2021's terms be?

Monday, January 4

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

6:30 p.m., First Monday Listening Circle

Wednesday, January 6

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Saturday, January 9

9:00 a.m., Second Saturday Coffee Hour

11:00 a.m., Boosting Immunity

Sunday, January 10

Consciousness: How Far Does it Go Down?

The Rev. James Galasinski

Which animals besides us have consciousness? Does elemental matter have some sort of experience? Does the universe have awareness of itself? These are not just questions for mystics, but also philosophers and scientists.

Monday, January 11

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

7:00 p.m., Faith in Action Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 12

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

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

Wednesday, January 13

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

12:00 p.m., Budget & Finance Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 14

4:15 p.m., Welcoming Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Saturday, January 16

11:00 a.m., Boosting Immunity

Sunday, January 17

9:30 a.m., Children's Chapel

MLK and the Poor People's Campaign

The Rev. James Galasinski

MLK, Jr.'s last project was the Poor People's Campaign. He realized the civil rights wins of the 50's and 60's were not making the lives of ordinary African Americans better. The campaign was a multiracial coalition dedicated to economic equality. It continues today and we have a chance to be part of it.

Monday, January 18

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, January 19

7:00 p.m., Third Tuesday Listening Circle

Wednesday, January 20

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Saturday, January 23

11:00 a.m., Boosting Immunity

Sunday, January 24

Rivers in the Desert *The Rev. James Galasinski*

The desert is a place of extremes. To my surprise, life flourished everywhere. I learned novel lessons while living in a high dry land.

11:30 a.m., Annual Congregational Budget Meeting

Monday, January 25

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, January 26

7:30 p.m., Tending the Spark: A Parenting Circle

Thursday, January 28

2:00 p.m., 4th Thursday Listening Circle

Sunday, January 31

TBA *Evin Carvil-Ziemer, Pulpit Guest*

Evin serves the Central East Region of the UUA in the areas of Youth Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, and Intercultural Competency work and is the Primary Contact of our congregation. Evin holds a Masters of Divinity from Earlham School of Religion and Bachelor of Arts from Carleton College. Evin is married to the Rev. Melissa Carvil-Ziemer and they have two boys.

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#. (Long distance fees may apply.)



JAMES' JOURNAL Imagine Nation

On the Remington Trail there is a huge sandy play area alive with carved wood bears, a hollowed-out log, and various toy construction vehicles. The sign on the wooden fence reads *Imagine Nation Park*. I contemplate that name while my son builds nests and dams and who knows what else in snow and sand. I think of myself as being a pretty creative person with a good imagination but living with a 5-year-old has made me rethink things. I realize how stuck I am in my own schemas. He can imagine a world which I can only dimly see. Imaginary friends are like gods. Can our tame adult imaginations be enough in this world of change? What if we were a nation that imagines unfiltered? I am pretty confident our children with their neural plasticity and imaginations will come out of this pandemic okay. It is the adults I am more concerned about.

I hope we can all imagine a 2021 with big dreams, imagine a world with more trust, more justice, more peace, more love, more community, and more equity and become a nation that imagines. One big question we must ask ourselves is what are we learning from the pandemic? What can we take away from this? Can we imagine a post-pandemic world with less travel and more connection?

Imagination will be explored throughout the month in worship, in small groups, and in RE.

The Rev. James Galasinski

PRESIDENT'S POST

The holiday season is usually a fun (if not occasionally stress-filled) time of year. While I tried to limit my hopes for this past year, the season was incredibly magical. This isn't because of the snow (of which there was very little) or the beautiful light displays on many houses around town. For me and my family (and I'm guessing many other Church goers), much of the magic came from the hard work and dedication of the staff and members of this church.



I want to thank all those who made this past year's holiday season so special.

Christmas Caroling in Cars was a fun, meaningful gathering. Not only did my family and I feel safe, but it was also so special to be able to wave at everyone from the car and sing our carols together. I also want to thank Carol, Shelby and many others who made the pageant and Virtual Cookie Decorating a success. The excitement the children had at visiting with each other over frosting was heart melting.

I also want to thank all those who helped make our various holiday services so memorable. Having helped out occasionally on a Zoom service, I can tell you, even though it often comes across as seamless, a virtual service takes a lot of work, practice, and preparation.

Finally, I want to thank all those who contributed to the beautiful music we've had through the season. During a pandemic, trying to provide virtual music is beyond challenging. I'm so impressed at the way we were able to have a variety of musicians and songs. My heart was so full at the beauty of the music.

Jennifer Whittaker, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT



Imagine! What comes to mind when you hear this word? The song “Imagine” by John Lennon? A childhood imaginary friend? An unfulfilled dream? A world without COVID? A new invention? A new normal? Merriam-Webster defines it as “to form a mental image of (something not present); suppose; guess; to form a notion of without sufficient basis; fancy; plan; scheme; and to use the imagination. What are you imagining?

The Religious Education Ministry Team has been using its imagination to create fun, engaging and meaningful programming for our congregation. Have you checked out the [Wonder-filled Faith Engagement for Your Home](#) Pages on our website? Using our monthly themes, you will find activities, videos, and so much more. There is something for every age.

Have you seen our postcard campaign with Miss Panda and Mr. Dog? Some of our biggest stuffies in the nursery are sending out postcards to remind children what’s happening each month at church. Families: keep your eye out for them in your mailbox. If you are not receiving these postcards, please contact Carol via email at dre@uucantonny.org.

What about attending [RE Choice](#)? We offer (3) different choices – the Legends and Tales Room, the Creativity Realm and the Wisdom Keepers Room. Beginning in December, we started delivering RE-at-home kits to support and supplement our RE Choice program, which happens 2 Sundays each month. Kits for December and January included cookie decorating supplies, snowflake templates, meditation beads and more.

Parents, have you tried the [Parent Circle](#) yet? If you are totally exhausted or stressed out about parenting during these trying pandemic times, join other like-minded folks and hear how they are coping or not. Bring your favorite beverage and snacks. You will come away renewed!

As we continue to live with a global pandemic, the RE ministry team will continue to use our imagination to find ways to best serve our children, youth and their families. In what ways are you imagining staying connected to our faith? We hope you’ll let us know if there is something we can offer.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



FROM OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

In this new year, the Faith in Action Leadership Group and I invite you to join us for a series of social justice-oriented conversations, during the social hour after Sunday services in the beginning of the new year. Everyone is invited to participate in these dialogues to help connect the knowledge and experience in our congregation to our power and agency within the St. Lawrence community and beyond.

Just as our church has a positive impact in our lives, we have discovered many ways to make a difference locally through Campus Kitchens, nationally with our 2,000 postcards sent for the Georgia run-off elections, and even internationally with some of our Social Action Shared Offerings (SASOs).

Join us for these open dialogues on topics that are important to us, and collaborate in creating a vision for what our church can do moving forward in these times:

January 3: Climate Action
January 10: Police Reform
January 17: Anti-Racism

January 31: Housing
February 7: Healthcare

I look forward to creating change with you in 2021!

Teresa Veramendi, Social Justice Coordinator

JOYS AND SORROWS

♥ Our sincere condolences go out to Arthur Freeheart, whose mother passed away in December after a long battle with diabetes.

THANK UUS

- Mark Berninghausen and Ben Hunkins for helping with the Drive In Candlelight and Carols Service.
- Mary Michalek, Danny Thomas, Maxwell Hunkins, Finley Thomas, Crosby Terrell, Dave Nelson, Walden Nelson, Josiah Nelson, Harper Terrell, Esther Katz, Fiona Hunkins, Ben Hunkins, Jessie Jean Coffin, Susannah Coffin, Jenn Whittaker, Erik Whittaker, Arianna Whittaker and Braden Whittaker for participating in the holiday pageant.
- The Hunkins Family for lighting the chalice on Sunday, December 13th.
- Pam Boyle, Cara Coffin, Rebecca Pickens, Ron Tavernier, and Jim Williams for baking cookies for our religious education classes.



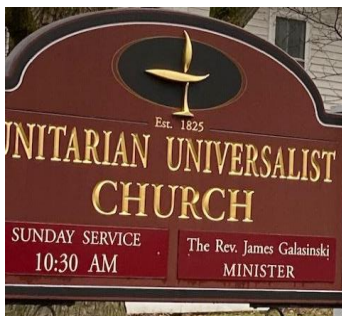
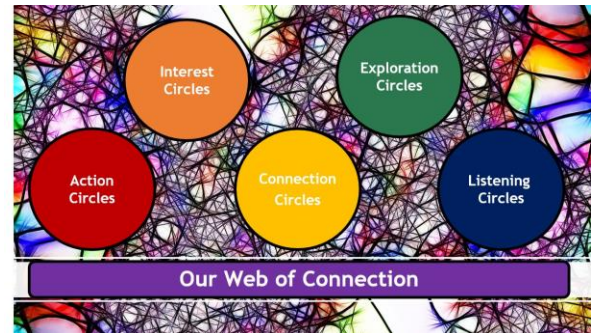
Annual Congregational Budget Meeting: Sunday, January 24, 2021

Join us after worship on Sunday, January 24 to review and vote on the 2021 Budget. All are invited to attend, but only members may vote. Look for details on the proposed budget in our weekly e-news and on our website.

NEW YEAR, NEW CIRCLES

Boosting Immunity Through Nervous System Regulation

Kathy Montan will lead this class, which is an exploration of techniques that you can develop and use at any time. Each half hour is divided into 3 segments which include breathing, guided imagery, and acupuncture. Although you can come to just one session, each session will build upon the last with deeper and deeper explorations. After the half hour is up, you are free to leave the meeting or stay on for questions or discussion for another 20 minutes. This circle starts Saturday, January 2 at 11 a.m. [via Zoom](#) and will meet for 30 minutes every Saturday in January. Sign up [online](#) or by emailing the [office](#).



Calling All History Buffs! There's a new Church History Circle

Have you ever noticed the small date on our church's sign? What happened in 1825? Have you wondered how our church came to be out here in the North Country wilderness? Who were the folks who gathered this congregation so many years ago? Who were the people who inhabited these lands before the settlers arrived? What has our congregation accomplished over the last 200 years? How has our congregation affected the very nature of our communities in St. Lawrence County? What is our connection to St. Lawrence University? Who have our leaders been over the centuries? Why did they choose to devote their time and treasure to this enterprise?

With our bicentennial coming up in 2025, this is a good time for us to seriously start digging for answers to these and other questions. We can start in the church archives and the Coots Library as well as in this short history on our [website](#).

If you are intrigued by the idea of this treasure hunt, we hope you will be interested in spending some time this year to delve into and preserve our archives, and to research the Universalist movement in the North Country. The information we gather will provide direction to our bicentennial planning and hopefully allow us to create a formal historical record of our movement here.

Once we have gathered a core circle of searchers, we will develop a plan for beginning the project in a COVID-respectful manner over the next 6-9 months. Much of this will be done by individual members on their own schedules. Periodically we will gather the circle to share findings and new questions. If this idea intrigues you, please [sign up online](#) or contact Eileen Raymond.

SOCIAL ACTION SHARED OFFERING



Sunday, January 17 will be the church's next SASO [Social Action Shared Offering] and will benefit Reachout of St. Lawrence County.

Reachout has been around a LONG time: established at SUNY Potsdam in 1976, it provides vital help to desperate people, and does so with modest resources.

Reachout is St. Lawrence County's Crisis and Information Hotline. Serving as our Rape Crisis Center and Suicide Hotline, Reachout offers free, confidential, nonjudgmental support and information for residents of St. Lawrence County. They focus on crisis services and supportive listening and provide a host of other services as needed. They answer after hour calls for many other human services agencies including AA, Renewal House and mental health clinics, and they connect callers with staff from other programs. The phone line is answered 24/7 by a group of trained volunteers. Their Mobile Crisis Team of 3, each with over 25 years' experience, sends trained counselors to meet and assess at-risk people at locations throughout the county. Reachout also participates in many health fairs in the community and at schools to share information. Training is offered in QPR and Mental Health First Aid. Staff also participate in the county's Opioid Task Force and Suicide Coalition.

The Covid 19 pandemic has put intense pressure on Reachout. They are receiving double, and in some months triple, the typical number of crisis calls. Our county has experienced a spike in suicides and seen increases in domestic violence, abuse of drugs and alcohol. Also, Reachout receives calls about social isolation and calls from college and younger students about the difficulties with remote learning. Reachout has been operating remotely throughout the pandemic.

Reachout is a nonprofit organization that receives funding from the state that is funneled through the county. They have been hit with a 20% reduction of funding due to the pandemic. The pandemic has also impacted the large number of dedicated, trained volunteers who help staff the 24/7 hotline. Many had been college students who are not currently available. Reachout provides comprehensive training program to prepare volunteers. If you'd like to help save lives in St. Lawrence County, please consider volunteering for their training program.

More information about Reachout can be obtained at www.reachouthotline.org or by calling Reachout at 315-265-2422.

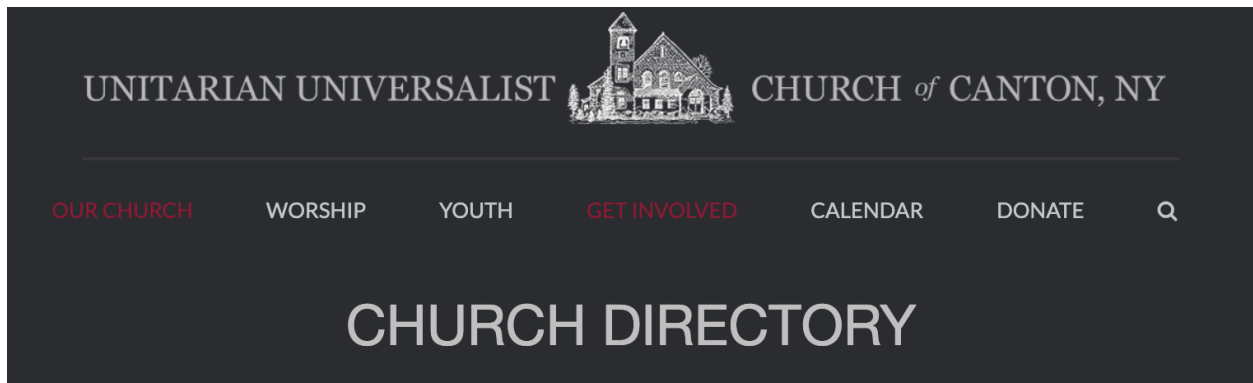
Donations to this SASO will help this important not-for-profit organization to maintain its mission and continue to provide essential services to the residents of St. Lawrence County.

KEEP IN TOUCH!

News for UU!

Do you receive the **weekly enews** - "News for UU"? It should arrive in your inbox Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and is chock full of all the news you need to know to keep up with church news and activities. If you haven't signed up, you can do that at <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/mQxxJa7/newsforuu>.

If you think you signed up but don't remember seeing emails recently, search for News for UU! or office@uucantonny.org in your inbox and spam/junk folders. If you use Gmail, these emails may be going to your Updates, Promotions, or other folders. If you find them there, you can drag one to your Inbox and click on yes when it asks if you want future messages from office@uucantonny.org to go to that folder. If you have trouble with any of these steps, contact the church office for help.



The **church directory** was recently updated. You can request a copy from the church office or access it from the Our Church or Get Involved tabs on the church website. The directory is password protected for privacy and security; the password is available from the church office. Please review your entry and let Sara know if there are any changes or corrections. If you'd prefer not to have your children listed, also let her know.

Remember how good we were about wearing our **nametags** at church? It has always been part of our welcoming ministry. We can do the same on Zoom! It's not always easy to tell who's who in those little Zoom boxes, and "Joyce's iPad," "315-555-2424," or "xysmith@gmail.com" doesn't help! But it *is* easy to change your name once you've entered the Zoom service. You can either:

- Click on the "Participants" list in your Zoom window and hover your mouse over your name -or-
- Click on the blue box with three dots in the top right corner of your Zoom window
- Click on "Rename" and type in the name you'd like to appear
- Type your full name(s) or your family name if there are a lot of you.



Help us be welcoming to newcomers and everyone joining us for our virtual services.

If you have questions about how to do any of this contact the church office office@uucantonny.org 315-386-2498 or any member of the [Communications Committee](#).

BUILDING USE PROTOCOL

Church Council has currently limited use of the church building to staff and individual visitors.

The following precautions must be taken:

- *sign in on arrival
 - *wear masks
 - *maintain 6' distance
 - *use hand sanitizer
 - *no shared food
 - *wipe down surfaces when finished in the church
-

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
-

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

The Reverends Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti

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