

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2021 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Monday, February 1

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation
6:30 p.m., First Monday Listening Circle

Wednesday, February 3

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Thursday, February 4

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Friday, February 5

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

Sunday, February 7

Believing Whatever You Want?

The Rev. James Galasinski

In a world of anti-vaccinators, plandemics, and other conspiracy theories, how does a free faith based on reason, science, and inclusivity react? Is everyone really welcome here? What are the boundaries of our beloved community?

Monday, February 8

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

Tuesday, February 9

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

Wednesday, February 10

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 11

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation
4:15 p.m., Welcoming Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Saturday, February 13

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

Sunday, February 14

TBA *Kim Bouchard, Pulpit Guest*

Kim Bouchard is a long-time member of our congregation and Professor Emeritus at SUNY Potsdam's Department of Theatre and Dance.

Monday, February 15

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, February 16

6:30 p.m., Religious Education Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m., Third Tuesday Listening Circle

Wednesday, February 17

12:30 p.m., Budget & Finance Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Thursday, February 18

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation
2:00 p.m., Third Thursday Listening Circle

Sunday, February 21

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

The Rev. Jeffrey Campbell: Undertaking the Call

The Rev. James Galasinski

The Rev. Jeffrey Campbell was the first Black graduate of St. Lawrence University. Despite years of service and talent Rev. Campbell never found a full-time ministry. He endured the racism of Universalism but never gave up his calling.

Monday, February 22

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, February 23

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

Wednesday, February 24

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Thursday, February 25

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation
2:00 p.m., Fourth Thursday Listening Circle

Sunday, February 28

Creating Community Wherever You Are

The Rev. James Galasinski

Always try to find friendships with those around you. The practice will give you lifelong friendships and heartaches. But would we have it any other way? Community is always worth the risk and time to create.

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 Redemption Centers

Near the supermarket entrance, you put your empty container into the hole and onto the conveyor belt. It gets read and travels down. Then suddenly the glass smashes, which is always a bit shocking. You are awarded 5 cents. You put in another one and then you hear the beep beep. This particular store doesn't redeem that kind. Frustration fills you. Is this worth the trouble?

When I moved here 4½ years ago this whole deposit thing was a bit confusing. It took me about a year to figure out I could also redeem aluminum cans. And I had to take the containers back to the same store I bought them from?

I came to learn the best places for redemption do not look like soda machines. They sometimes look like a storefront church on Route 11 between here and Watertown. The one with the words, "Redemption Center" on the building. Though "redemption" is absolutely the correct word to use, I can't get the theological connotation out of my mind. You know, the old stale theory that God sent Jesus to redeem us from sin.

The real redemption centers don't have bar code readers. You go there and just lay out everything on the table. They don't smash your glass or crush your cans. They just see the emptiness of your containers and total you up. You walk over to the cashier and tell them the number. They give you the cash. They don't care where you bought the containers. They just accept your empties for what they are and move on.

We need to be redeemed at times, I am sure of it. We get empty and used. I am not sure we need cosmic redemption. Just some place where we can be centrally accepted and where a collective song of relief rings in the rafters. There are spaces that accept everything about us no matter what we are or have become. Our congregation attempts to manifest the divinity of acceptance. In doing so, we are a redemption center.

The Rev. James Galasinski

PRESIDENT'S POST

Last month was a rollercoaster of emotions for me. From the deep lows of the Capitol riots to the soaring highs of the Inauguration, I struggled to attend to daily life in a meaningful way. Unfortunately, this has been the case for much of the last year. As much as I've tried to stay in the present moment, the pandemic has wreaked havoc on my attention span.



It's been all the more difficult because of the physical distance between everyone. The Circles have been very important to me during this time. Volunteering has also helped, giving me a feeling of contributing to the greater good. I'm grateful that Teresa, our Social Justice Coordinator, has been offering meaningful ways to help. I also have tried to increase the amount of time I meditate every day.

I continue to look forward to a time we can be together at the Church. That time seems ever closer, with the introduction of the Covid-19 vaccines. I'm excited for the time I'll be able to get mine. Until then, I'd love to hear from our church members. Please email me at president@uucantonny.org with any comments, questions, or concerns.

Jennifer Whittaker, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT



According to the proposed [8th Principle](#) for Unitarian Universalism, “Beloved Community happens when people of diverse racial, ethnic, educational, class, gender, sexual orientation backgrounds/identities come together in an interdependent relationship of love, mutual respect, and care that seeks to realize justice within the community and in the broader world.”

Our UU faith has two organizations, [BLUU \(Black Lives of UU\)](#) and [DRUUMM \(Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries\)](#) that provide leadership in how we can move closer to Beloved Community and dismantle the white supremacy culture in our faith organization and

in ourselves.

We, meaning white Unitarian Universalists, have work to do to make this vision of Beloved Community a reality. As we move into this new year with a new president and with the hope this brings, may we find the courage, strength, and commitment to do this work together and create Beloved Community. May it be so.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



FROM OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

On January 24, our church voted to endorse the platform of the Poor People’s Campaign and become faith partners! I was thrilled that so many voted “yes” because I do believe that the Poor People’s Campaign is the right long-term social justice partnership for our church. Both UUs and the Poor People’s campaign talk about a kind of collective liberation that connects back to what the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King called a dream. I think we now understand all that dream includes, more than ever.

In these times of economic insecurity in the North Country and beyond, we must recognize that in St. Lawrence County nearly one in five people were living below the federal poverty line before COVID-19. The crisis of the pandemic shows how insufficient the social safety web is in our society, where one’s health insurance is dependent on employment. This is irrational when individual health depends on community health; the interdependent web of all existence, that is our 7th principle as UUs, has been making this very clear lately.

Even more of us, not considered “poor” by the federal government, are economically vulnerable to a single medical emergency, or are already chained to mortgage-sized student loans, or were about to get hired before COVID-19 and now have lost everything, including homes. The Poor People’s Campaign is the right moral fusion movement to answer the call of this moment when too many have been hurting for too long, and we can recognize that everybody has a right to live.

I invite you to listen to [Bishop Barber’s inaugural prayer](#) calling for the administration to become “Repairers of the Breach.” This is a reflection on Isaiah: “Whether we like it or not we are in this mess together as a nation. When this word of the Lord came to Isaiah his people were also in a jam. Bad leadership, greed, and injustice, and lies, had led them into trouble, exile, and economic hardship.”

Lastly, don’t neglect to join the last of the Faith in Action Conversations Series, as we finish up after our service on February 7 with a discussion on Healthcare. So far, all our conversations have been very fruitful and resulted in concrete action items for moving forward! I can’t wait to continue learning from and building in this community with you.

Teresa Veramendi, Social Justice Coordinator

JOYS AND SORROWS

- ♥ Our heartfelt sympathies go out to Rajiv Narula, following the death of his mother, Kamlesh.
- ♥ Our positive energy and best wishes are with Eileen Raymond as she begins her first round of chemo treatments.

THANK UUS

- Ben Hunkins for participating in the Time for All Ages on Sunday, January 10.
- Wyatt and Carol LaMarche for shelving books in the library and delivering Faith Engagement home kits.



MOVE OVER FLAT STANLEY!

Remember Flat Stanley? The cut-out figure school children sent far and wide to learn about new places and engage with people all over the country and the world? Well, we have the UU Church of Canton's pandemic answer to Stanley – Flat Chalice! We're hoping a visit from our Flat Chalice will help you feel connected to church friends and acquaintances – near and far – both in the receiving and the sending.

Here's how it works

We will mail several Flat Chalices (now affectionately known as FC!) out to church members and friends. If you are in the church directory, FC will arrive in your REAL mailbox in a small manila envelope, accompanied by instructions, a travel log, and mailing labels.

Here's what you do:

- Open the envelope with care (your FC has a lot more stops!).
- Add your name to the travel log, including the date you received FC and any message you'd like to send.
- If you'd like, take your picture with FC and post it on the church's [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) page (you can also send your picture to the [church office](#) and we can post it for you).
- Take one of the mailing labels from the packet and affix it to the outside of the envelope, add a regular 55-cent stamp and drop it in the mail.
- Check Facebook and Instagram regularly to see who and where our Flat Chalices are visiting!



We will see our Flat Chalices off on Monday, February 1. If you'd prefer not to receive one, please let the church office know immediately (office@uucantonny.org / 315-386-2498). If you know someone who is not in our directory who would like to receive FC, go ahead and use your own label to send it to them, then they can follow the instructions and use one of the enclosed labels to keep FC's travels going.

Please try to send your FC promptly so we can keep them traveling around the North Country...and the country! We hope this activity will be fun and help you feel connected during this very disconnected time!

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
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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 Revs. Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti

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