

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton NY
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
March 2021 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Monday, March 1

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

Wednesday, March 3

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Thursday, March 4

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Friday, March 5

5:00 p.m., First Friday Happy Hour
7:00 p.m., All Ages Fun Night

Sunday, March 7

This Service is Antiracist Carol Zimmerman, DRE
Using "This Book is Antiracist" by Tiffany Jewell as inspiration, we will explore what it means to be an antiracist. In this multigenerational service, hear from many voices as they share how they are learning to be antiracist.

Everybody's Birthday Party!

7:00 p.m., *Kiss the Ground* film screening

Monday, March 8

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

Tuesday, March 9

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

Thursday, March 11

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

Friday, March 12

7:00 p.m., Fun Night

Saturday, March 13

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

Sunday, March 14

TBA The Rev. Lynn Marshall, Pulpit Guest

Monday, March 15

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, March 16

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

Wednesday, March 17

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

Thursday, March 18

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation
2:00 p.m., Third Thursday Listening Circle
7:00 p.m., Planning for the Future and Your Legacy

Friday, March 19

7:00 p.m., Fun Night for All Ages

Sunday, March 21

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

All Bound Up Together The Rev. James Galasinski
As we see the faults of American individualism we can lean into the wisdom of activists and Unitarian Universalists who teach us that our liberation is bound up with each other. After all, we are "one great bundle of humanity." We will join the 4th Universalist Society of New York City and the First Universalist Church of Rochester and together explore contemporary Universalism.

Monday, March 22

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

Tuesday, March 23

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

Wednesday, March 24

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Thursday, March 25

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

Friday, March 26

7:00 p.m., Friday Night Fun Night

Sunday, March 28

What Is A Soul Anyway? The Rev. James Galasinski
The word "soul" is thrown about with many different meanings attached to it. Are souls really eternal? Is "soul" even the right word? Souls need nurture, the space to grow, and souls need other souls.

Today is Invite a Friend Sunday!

Monday, March 29

Noon, Mindfulness Meditation

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
The Link Is You

People join us for Sunday worship from all over the country and even around the world. Members that moved away join us from Florida and Pennsylvania. Parents of a member may join us from Illinois. Someone who grew up in Canton decades ago can easily take part in our services from the comforts of their California home. We have even had people in Spain and France tune in.

It has never been easier to try out our congregation. All people need is a link. The link is you. We link people to our faith community. Of course, you do need a link, as in a URL. An internet connection, a computer, tablet or smartphone would be great to have as well. Sunday, March 28, will be **Invite a Friend Sunday**. Please invite someone to worship with us.

We all probably have a friend who has said, "If I were religious I would probably be a Unitarian Universalist." Or maybe you know someone who is spiritually minded but fed up with traditional religion. They would benefit from travelling with us and we would benefit from their presence. I invite you to invite a friend to worship with us on March 28. We always need the new ideas and the new energy that the newness of new people bring to us.

Blessed be,

The Rev. James Galasinski

PRESIDENT'S POST

At the end of January, Church Council had its annual retreat. While we spent some of the time at the retreat connecting, our primary task was to create our Annual Vision of Ministry. The Annual Vision of Ministry is where we plan to focus our attention and work through the coming year (or years). I want to share what our Annual Vision of Ministry is this year.



Provide safe opportunities for attending worship

- Develop policy for reopening in-person worship in consultation with public health officials.
- Boost technology with a small team to transition to hybrid/dual worship.

Increase total income to sustain staffing levels

Support the Poor People's Campaign by offering awareness-raising opportunities and sponsoring activities with the congregation

Improve internal and external communication, including:

- Audit current communication structures
- Improve website
- Improve communication network in the church

If you have any questions or feel you have some ideas on how to help us further our work on these goals, please email me at president@uucantonny.org

Jennifer Whittaker, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT



The latter half of 1992 was life changing for me. My sister, Sharon and I had traveled across the country stopping at many of our country's national parks and forests as we made our way to the Unita National Forest in Utah, where we would spend the summer as volunteer backcountry wilderness rangers. For four months, we were immersed in the outdoors, hiking, biking, kayaking, and camping both for our work and in our play. Being trained in firefighting, learning, and teaching Leave No Trace ethics, seeing mountain goats, watching fireworks from over 12,000 feet, standing at the rim of the Grand Canyon, and sleeping out under the stars made it a summer of epic fun and personal growth.

Upon my return to New York, I was enrolled in the Wilderness Recreation Leadership program at North Country Community College in Saranac Lake. That September, I embarked on a 33-day wilderness trip through the Adirondacks by canoe and on foot. I was learning to be an outdoor leader and studied the 18-point curriculum of the Wilderness Education Association. That winter as part of my course work, I set out for a 12-day winter expedition in the southern Adirondacks. Again, I was immersed in the outdoors, carrying only what I needed on my back. It was another epic experience filled with life-changing moments.

Spending this amount of time in the natural world changed me. It fostered a deep connection to, and a sense of awe and wonder and respect for, the Earth. Since this time, I have been committed to its care and protection. My daily actions are connected to taking care of this place we call home.

I didn't know what Unitarian Universalism was at that time in my life. When I found this faith in 2008 and learned about its commitment to so many of the things I value, I knew I had found a faith community where I could be myself: a lover and caretaker of the natural world, as well as an educator and community builder! This month as we look to what it means to be a people of commitment. What experiences in your life have shaped the commitments and values you live? I would love to hear about it. Blessed be!

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



FROM OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

You may be familiar with the often-quoted indigenous idea of the Seventh Generation: that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future. While that sounds all-prescient, I prefer the way Native American activist Vine Deloria, Jr. spoke of the seven generations: that each generation is responsible to teach, learn, and protect the three generations that come before it, its own, and the next three. This is much more concrete: that we should make decisions today in honor of our great-grandparents and our great-grandchildren. We can honor our ancestors and our future descendants by taking responsibility for climate change and taking the necessary actions to fight for a more environmentally sustainable society, like our great-grandparents had.

That is why I encourage you to join us this month for our March 7 film screening of "Kiss the Ground." This documentary is especially aimed at those concerned about climate change and wanting to take action now. What we can do, as it turns out, is heal as much of the soil as we have access to. "By using plants, trees, and techniques of grazing and farming, we can capture carbon and store it in the soil."

This one is for all the gardeners, farmers, and landowners in our communities. By learning more about soil science, we can all act with more wisdom and foresight. Join us for this evening of education and action!

Teresa Veramendi, Social Justice Coordinator

JOYS AND SORROWS

- ♥ We send our deepest condolences to all those who knew and loved Kay Briggs. She passed away peacefully at the age of 95. She will be greatly missed.
- ♥ We send healing thoughts to Margaret Mauch, who was briefly hospitalized, and is now home recovering. She was diagnosed with two forms of pneumonia and COVID. We wish her much strength and send her our caring wishes.
- ♥ Our heartfelt sympathies are with Mark Sturges and his family, following the death of Mark's mother, Barbara. We send them our care as they grieve her passing.

THANK UUS

- Danny Thomas and Ben Hunkins for leading youth group in a conversation on neuroplasticity.



FUN FOR ALL AGES!!

Join us for **All Ages Fun Nights** each Friday evening in March at 7pm via Zoom! We will be playing Trivia, Reverse Charades, Bingo and having a Dance Party. Are you interested in hosting? The RE staff will help with resources and support. Contact Carol via email at dre@uucantonny.org to learn how you can be a host!

BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE Planning for the Future and Your Legacy

The UUA made a [resolution](#) to focus on Estate Planning in 2021 and we are joining their efforts. Whether you have been working on your estate planning for years, or this is the first time you've considered it, please join church member Kurt Terrell (Director of Planned Gifts at St. Lawrence University) and fellow congregants for a [Zoom](#) conversation on Thursday, March 18, at 7 p.m. to learn more, ask questions, talk about resources, exchange ideas, and discuss our church's Olympia Brown Society.

Estate planning can be impacted by any of these life events:

- A change in marital status for you or someone in your family
- A new child in your family
- A family member going off to college or starting a new job
- The loss of a loved one
- A new home, living situation, or relocation to a new state
- Thoughts of retirement in the long-term or near future



The Olympia Brown Society is our planned giving program that helps ensure future support for the mission of our church through one's estate plans. There are no specific requirements for membership, you can make a charitable impact at any level, for various church priorities, and you can even be an anonymous member.

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS



Jacky Ryan is originally from Massena and now lives in Canton with Jamey Merkel. They earned their undergraduate and master's degrees from SUNY Potsdam. Jacky now works at SUNY Canton and runs the STEM Tutoring Lab. In their free time, Jacky likes to be outdoors hiking and gardening. They enjoy swing dancing, fencing, painting, and photography. They also spend a lot of time with their many pets -- about 20 reptiles, two ferrets and more! Jacky is looking forward to getting more involved in the North Country.

Jamey Merkel is originally from Long Island and has now lived in the North Country for seven years. They currently live with Jacky Ryan and many pets in their Canton home. Jamey received an undergraduate and master's degree from SUNY Potsdam. They work at the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative, and are also currently an organizer for the North Country Poor People's Campaign. Jamey came to the UU church for the OWL Facilitator training and hasn't left. Jamey is currently serving on Church Council. They miss seeing people in person and look forward to that opportunity in the future.



Cathy Crosby came to our church service a year and half or so ago when her daughter, Aiofe, was asked to speak as a youth in the transgender community. Cathy felt an instant bond to the church and has formalized that by signing the membership book. She was raised Presbyterian, and it was an influential social and spiritual part of her early years—with a short foray into Methodism—but was still looking for “joy” in her spiritual life. During those years she attended Hamilton College for her bachelors, then on to University of Maryland for a law degree and on further to University of Virginia for a PhD. in psychology.

Cathy teaches at St. Lawrence in the psychology department and has served as department chair for the last eight years. Some of her students intern at community organizations such as Head Start and The ARC of Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties. Her law degree has helped her integrate the two disciplines into courses that broaden and consolidate both areas for aspiring students. She chairs the Institutional Review Board on campus which reviews the ethics of all research with human participants at SLU. She knew many years ago that her destiny would lead her to the classroom as a professor.

She grew up in Morristown, New Jersey. Her parents and brothers are still in the Northeast. Her daughter Aiofe is now a first-year student at St. Lawrence.

For a diversion from her hectic academic pursuits, she is a flower and herb gardener. She exercises often. She sang with the St. Lawrence University Choir for many years and now sings with TAMS (The Any Music Singers). As if she doesn't have enough challenge to keep her out of trouble, she does 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzles--without visual cues! This is part of her drive to create “systems.” Please ask her someday what she does in her free time!

Cathy is on the Worship Committee and seems to have found a spiritual home. If you haven't met her—grab her after a service and get her to stay for coffee. Someday soon, we may be able to be together again for such gatherings.

MEDICAL AID IN DYING

Compassion and Choices.org is seeking to raise support for just that – compassion and choices about the terms on which we are legally allowed to die. New York could become the 10th state to pass legislation for medical aid in dying. Unitarian Universalists have taken the lead in other states (e.g. Oregon). At the following link, you will get information and the text of New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act, now in the Assembly, Bill #A4321. The Senate bill is likely to be introduced in the coming weeks. <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/A4321>].

Letters, emails, and phone calls to our legislators would be very helpful. If you would like to be involved, there is a Zoom meeting of the NYUUJustice group, which is supporting medical aid in dying along with three other issues, on Sunday, February 28, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Contact Pat Alden or Teresa Veramendi for further information

FAITH IN ACTION & NC350 FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Our social action group, Faith in Action, is collaborating with the North Country 350 Alliance to engage with climate change issues. Their mission is to build a global grassroots climate movement that can hold our leaders accountable to the realities of science and the principles of justice.

Our first collaboration is a Zoom showing of an acclaimed film *Kiss the Ground* on Sunday evening, March 7, at 7 p.m. It explores “the first viable solution to our climate crisis.” [Click here](#) for more information.

NC350 is asking us to support two additional collaborative efforts:

- **Stop the Money Pipeline:** Campaign will involve letters and calls to put pressures on 18 banks to not renew Enbridge bank loans due on March 31.
- **Sane Energy:** Participate in an upcoming DEC hearing concerning approval of fracked gas infrastructure on Wednesday, March 10, at 6 p.m.

You are welcome to attend NC350’s monthly Zoom meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. (Next meeting is Thursday, March 11, 2021). For more information about NC350, visit <https://northcountry350.org/> or contact Ginger Storey-Welch at northcountry350@gmail.com.

Widening the Circle of Concern: Race, Identity, and Inclusivity Led by Dr. Steve Peraza Tuesdays, March 23, March 30, and April 6 at 7p.m. [via Zoom](#)

Together we will explore the tough issues of race in America, learn more about the formation and effects of white supremacy culture, and along the way center the stories of people of color like the Rev. Jeffrey Campbell, the first Black graduate of St. Lawrence University. We will learn more about allyship, so we can increase human empathy and ultimately widen our circle of concern.



Steve is a graduate of St. Lawrence University, loved his time in Canton, and has spoken at our church before. He is now an assistant professor in the department of history and social studies education at SUNY-Buffalo State College. Steve earned his Ph.D. in U.S. history from SUNY-Buffalo, specializing in slavery and manumission in the Atlantic World. Other research interests include race and racism in America, the Harlem Renaissance, and the long civil rights movement. He teaches courses on U.S. history, Black American history, African Americans and civil rights, and hip hop culture.

FLAT CHALICES!



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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