

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

NEWSLETTER

January 2022 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Sunday, January 2

Intentions Amid Weariness

Carol Zimmerman, DRE and Dave Nelson

Living amid this global pandemic has us weary in body, mind, and spirit. Finding ways to live with intention may ease some of that weariness and can offer solace, joy, and peace. We will actively explore ways to soothe your soul and connect with your inner self.

Monday, January 3

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

Tuesday, January 4

10:00 a.m., Open Sanctuary Hour

Wednesday, January 5

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

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Sunday, January 9

Religion and Violence

The Rev. Christine Robinson

That religion causes violence is a truism in our culture...something that everybody knows. But is it true? Does it matter much if it's not? We will delve into this truism, into what we know about religion and about violence, and see where we get!

11:45 a.m., Church History Circle

Monday, January 10

7:00 p.m., [Faith in Action Committee Meeting](#)

Tuesday, January 11

9:00 a.m., [Sacred Texts and Coffee](#)

10:00 a.m., Open Sanctuary Hour

Wednesday, January 12

1:00 p.m., [Communications Committee Meeting](#)

Sunday, January 15

Myth and History

The Rev. Dave Weissbard

On January 16 we celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther King, Jr. It has been suggested that one of the roots of the controversial Critical Race Theory is Dr. King's realization that the roots of racism were deeper than most Americans recognized. He said, "The value in pulling racism out of its obscurity and stripping it of its rationalizations lies in the confidence that it can be changed." In celebration of his birth, we will be looking at what CRT is and isn't and why so many are upset by it.

Monday, January 17

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 18

10:00 a.m., Open Sanctuary Hour

Sunday, January 23

The Progressive Religious Impulse

The Rev. A.J. van Tine

Unitarian Universalism is a relatively young religion, yet we also have ancient roots. What is the thread that connects us to our past and informs how we approach our future? And how does being aware of this thread help us live our lives today?

11:30 a.m., Annual Budget Meeting

Tuesday, January 25

10:00 a.m., Open Sanctuary and Library

7:00 p.m., 4th Tuesday Listening Circle

Sunday, January 30

Earth Stewardship in the Spirit of Wangari Maathai

Dr. Tom Langen

To counter the legacy of colonialism, the Kenyan veterinary scientist Wangari Maathai initiated a powerful social movement based on planting trees, The Greenbelt Movement, for which she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004. Though focused on ecological restoration, the Greenbelt Movement was and is so much more – addressing women's rights, economic opportunity, environmental and economic justice, and democracy for both rural and urban poor.

Dual Platform Worship Services continue! A limited number of people are allowed to attend worship in person. Proof of vaccination is required for anyone 12 years and older. We continue to offer online worship, as well. Find detailed instructions about connecting via Zoom [here](#).

THE REV. JAMES' JOURNAL

Sabbatical Thoughts



Initially, Church Council approved my sabbatical for January-April 2021. Since my son was not yet in school, I thought the whole family would travel somewhere together. But during that period of the pandemic it seemed foolish to take it. The vaccine was not yet available and things were so uncertain. Naively, I thought I would just wait a year until the pandemic was over. Of course, things have not calmed down and my youngest son is still not able to get vaccinated. As we are all learning, living with Covid and all its unpredictable mutations is something we will all have to get used to. It is a crazy time to take a sabbatical. And so it is a crazy time to do just about anything.

As I prepared for my sabbatical leave I noticed how many congregants have stepped up during this pandemic. The Worship Committee was a very deserving winner of the Theo Dunn Award. Church Council and the Covid Safety Team have led valiantly. The Pastoral Care Team is a caring and compassionate group that you should readily utilize. We have a great staff of Carol Zimmerman, Sara Trimm, and Betsy Kepes. We have a committed core of congregants. Ministry is not about me, one minister; it is about the collective call of spiritual growth, living out our values, and connecting with something bigger than ourselves. Ministry is about us.

Many of you have asked what I will be doing. I am going to be focusing on my writing and hopefully have enough poems and meditations to submit to Skinner House Books for publishing. I plan to travel to San Diego in late January for a minister's conference. I will go early and then slowly take the train back visiting friends in Albuquerque and Chicago. For the majority of my sabbatical I will be in Canton.

Granting me this sabbatical is not only good for me personally and professionally, it is good for our congregation and our wider religious movement as well. I know that very few professions get paid sabbaticals, so I am very grateful for the privilege of this opportunity. Thank you!

Please know that in my travels and in my writing I will miss many things about being your minister and above all else I will miss the depth of connection we have among us.

In Peace,

The Rev. James Galasinski

Do you have questions about sabbatical and whom to contact with questions? Visit our [website](#) for a complete explanation and a list of resources available.



FAITH ENGAGEMENT

On the nights I stay with my parents, my mother and I say nightly prayers. For her this means an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a personal prayer asking for safety and happiness for those she loves. For me, it is a time to connect with what I am grateful for that day and a moment to remind myself of the importance of being mindful. A time to connect with who I want to be in my life. A reminder to live with patience, love, and grace.



For me, living with intention and mindfulness can be challenging. Those moments when frustrations arise, something doesn't go as I expected, or the painful news of the world throws me off balance, I lose touch with how I truly want to be in this world. Taking a few moments just before I go to bed to remind myself of what is important to me offers some solace.

As we begin this new year, so often a time for setting resolutions and being more intentional, I am inspired by this quote from Katie Covey, Soul Matters Director of RE Resources. "Here's what I discovered. Intention is different from setting goals or resolutions in that it 'pulls us into' who we truly are. Goals and resolutions 'push us out' into future possibilities. To set intentions, we must listen to our inner voice which tells us who we truly are."

May we find our inner voice, live with that intention, and find the peace this brings. Blessed be.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Happy New Year!

I want to use this space to say thank you so much for all the volunteers that have helped over the past year to keep our church going.

It takes a community for the UU Church of Canton to happen, and I'm so grateful for all the work our community has done.

Thank you!!!



Jenn Whittaker, Church Council President

BE THE FIRST TO GREET SOMEONE ON SUNDAY

If you've attended worship in person, you know there is someone there to greet everyone as they arrive, verify vaccination status, gather the Joys and Sorrows cards, and collect the offering. If you are comfortable being in person and could come a few minutes early to serve in that role, [please sign up online](#) for the Sunday(s) of your choice.

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

When will the church be open?

My official work hours remain Monday through Thursday from 9 to 2. Since Covid taught me to work from home, I can do most things online and I plan to work two days from home and two days in the office each week. Right now I'm scheduled to be at church every Tuesday and most Thursdays. Sometimes that second day in the office may change because of weather or other factors like meetings, my family schedule, or other events. I will post my "office days" in the enews and on the church calendar. If you need to see me or be at the church for any reason, please call or email to arrange a time. Let's be flexible together!

Most importantly, I would like to assure you that I am here and I am available, even if I'm not in the office all the time. Don't hesitate to reach out – I love hearing from you!

Sara Trimm, Congregational Administrator

JOYS AND SORROWS

♥ We send our best healing energy to our Church Council President, Jenn Whittaker, as she recovers from surgery.

♥ Don Auster, 99 years old, who lived a full and beautiful life, died peacefully at home early in the morning on December 6, 2021, surrounded by loved ones. A wonderful husband, father, and grandfather, he brought joy and insight to us all with his huge, warm, caring heart; amazing sense of humor; and perspective on life. A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring or summer of 2022. Details will be shared at a later time.



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET MEETING Sunday, January 23, 2022

Please join us after worship on Sunday, January 23, for the Annual Congregational Budget Meeting. We will present the proposed 2022 budget and all members will vote. Look for any email in mid-January with final reports from 2021 and more information about the 2022 budget.

OPEN SANCTUARY HOURS ~ OPEN LIBRARY HOURS Tuesdays from 10 to 11a.m.

Carve out time Tuesday mornings to bring yourself back to center in the church sanctuary. A member of the Pastoral Care Team will be present in case you need to chat with someone, or just to be supportive in the silence.

Need some reading material for winter months? The library will also be open, allowing you to check out books from our fabulous selection.



FAITH IN ACTION

Faith in Action is delighted to announce that collectively we UUs donated over \$1,000 to the November SASO on behalf of the [Welcome Home Circle](#) at Akwesasne. The program will provide six transitional “tiny houses” for individuals returning from incarceration. Anyone interested in developing further connections at Akwesasne is invited to attend the Faith in Action meeting on Monday, January 10, at 7p.m. [via Zoom](#), or to contact Faith in Action member Pat Alden.



THEO DUNN AWARD PRESENTATION

We were thrilled to present our annual Theo Dunn Award to our Worship Committee in December. In case you missed it, we wanted to share some of what Council President Jenn Whittaker shared during the presentation. We also want to shout out a huge THANK YOU to our Worship Committee—you are our heroes!

This year, the award goes to volunteers who have worked tirelessly through the pandemic. When it started, we all had to stay home. In-person church was not possible. But a team of individuals made sure we were still able to have church. This team of individuals not only had to learn the various types of technology to stream church, but how to create an online service that felt meaningful to church goers.

And even when we started to look toward having a modified in-person worship service, this team had to learn how to provide hybrid worship. This included learning how to have multiple cameras to switch between, as well as coordinating such things as joys and sorrows between in-person and online church goers.

I'm sure many of you have figured out who I'm alluding to.... Our Worship Team has done an amazing job both before and during the pandemic, and they are this year's recipients of the Theo Dunn Award!

Our 2021 Worship Team is Robin Collen, David Nelson, Rajiv Narula, Cathy Crosby, Jon Montan, Ben Hunkins, Arianna Whittaker, Doug Rubio

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE WORSHIP TEAM!



As we enter 2022, we all face a year of uncertainty and anxiety but also a year of new possibilities and hope for constructive change. Perhaps we could say this at the turning of every year, but somehow I feel it especially acutely now. Maybe you do too. The point is that we need each other. Our church community can be both a beacon and a refuge, an expression of our care for the wider world and support for our inner lives. Your ongoing participation is vital to our ability to achieve our mission.

The members of the Worship Team greatly appreciate your vote of confidence, as expressed in our receipt of the Theo Dunn Award.

The Worship Team is always interested in your opinions and suggestions as we strive to create meaningful services each Sunday. It has at times been challenging to gauge the feelings of our congregation as we have faced reduced in-person attendance and changing levels of virtual service participation. Receiving the Theo Dunn Award certainly sent us the message that we are doing a good job. So, on behalf of our volunteers, thank you and see you in 2022!

Jon Montan, Worship Committee Chair

JANUARY: LIVING WITH INTENTION

“At the beginning of the day, the mind is most open to receive new impressions. One of the most important things we can do is to take full responsibility for the power of the morning.”

- Marianne Williamson



What is your intention when you wake up? Some begin the day by asking, “What do I have to get done?” Others ask, “What do I want this day to be about?” Which are you? Is it time to reframe your morning?

TRANSCENDENTALISM: THEN AND NOW



Please join us for a four-part adult religious education class led by the Rev. John Buehrens, hosted virtually at First Unitarian Rochester, and sponsored by the St. Lawrence Chapter of the UU Minister's Association.

Optional background reading for the course is Rev. Buehrens recent book, *CONFLAGRATION: How the Transcendentalists Sparked the American Struggle for Racial, Gender, and Social Justice* (Boston: Beacon Press, Jan. 2020). The book is available from Beacon Press or the UUA bookstore.

The course will be thematic rather than following the narrative of the book. Rev. Buehrens will identify contemporary issues and explore the pioneering efforts of our spiritual forebears in spiritual practice, women’s rights, anti-racism, and ecotheology. The format of the course will include both lecture and discussion.

During his career, Rev. Buehrens served congregations in Tennessee, Texas, New York, Massachusetts, and California. Prior to his retirement in 2017, he was the

Senior Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco. He was also the president of the UUA from 1993 to 2001.

The four sessions will cover the following topics:

- Sunday, January 9: The Transcendentalists: Shared Values, Conversations, and Spiritual Friendships
- Sunday, January 16: Women’s Rights, Education, and Economic Inequality
- Sunday, January 23: Abolitionism and the Civil War: The Peak of Transcendentalist Influence
- Sunday, January 30: Nature, Evolution, and Environmentalism: The Transcendentalist Contribution



Canton!

NEW GROUPS FOR LGBTQ YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS!

Monday, January 24th: LGBTQ Youth & Allies ages 13-18

Monday, January 31st: LGBTQ Young Adults 18-25

Groups meet from 4-5:30pm, upstairs at the Unitarian Church- side door!

Starting in February, Youth will meet the 1st/3rd Mondays, and Young Adults the 2nd/4th Mondays!

Check out our socials for more details! Have questions or not sure what to expect? Message or email us!



The Q Center @ ACR Health



theqcenter_at_acrhealth



qcenter@acrhealth.org

BUILDING USE PROTOCOLS TO KEEP US SAFE

As Covid cases continue to increase and the Omicron variant spreads this way, we appreciate all your efforts to keep the church building as safe as possible. As a reminder, please make sure you take the following steps each time you are in the church:

- Sign in when you arrive
- Always wear a mask properly - make sure it covers your mouth and your nose
- Maintain distance whenever possible
- Do not share food or drink
- Wash your hands, use sanitizer and wipes on surfaces as needed
- Be respectful of those around you



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
Sara Trimm, Congregational Administrator
Betsy Kepes, Music Coordinator
The Revs. Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti

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