

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton  
**NEWSLETTER**  
June 2022 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS

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**Wednesday, June 1**

8:00 a.m., Building & Grounds Committee Meeting  
6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

**Sunday, June 5**

**Come to the Pond** *The Rev. James Galasinski*

Dozens of Mary Oliver's poems refer to Blackwater Pond. She walked around it, found her peace there, paid attention, observed, and even drank of its water. In one poem she asks the reader to *come to the pond*. I took her quite literally and went on a pilgrimage there. I want to share with you what I found at Blackwater Pond.

**Monday, June 6**

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

**Tuesday, June 7**

Noon, Open Sanctuary Hour

**Wednesday, June 8**

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

**Thursday, June 9**

4:00 p.m., Welcoming Committee Meeting

**Sunday, June 12**

**RE Sunday: Our Religious Education Ministry**

*Carol Zimmerman, DRE*

The annual tradition of celebrating our religious education program is steeped in knowing we are raising our young people to value their UU identity. Join us to hear stories about how we are raising children and youth to make this world a better place. Our graduating high school seniors will also be honored.

**Annual Church Picnic at Bend in the River Park**

**Monday, June 13**

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

**Tuesday, June 14**

9:30 a.m., [Sacred Texts and Coffee](#)  
Noon, Open Sanctuary Hour

**Thursday, June 16**

1:00 p.m., Budget & Finance Committee Meeting

**Sunday, June 19**

**The Soul of a Congregation** *The Rev. James Galasinski*

Imagine with me that our congregation is an organism. It is made up of us, but it has its own will, knowledge, and authenticity going back to 1827 when it was founded. Imagine with me that our congregation has a soul and it's our distinct purpose to discern the ways it should lead us in a time when we don't know where we are going.

**Monday, June 20**

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, June 21**

Noon, Open Sanctuary Hour  
6:30 p.m., Religious Education Committee Meeting

**Sunday, June 26**

**12:30 p.m. UUA General Assembly Worship Service**

We will join the livestream of the service, which will be projected on the screen in the sanctuary here in Canton.

**Tuesday, June 28**

Noon, Open Sanctuary Hour  
7:00 p.m., Fourth Tuesday Listening Circle

**Worship services happen every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom at [this link](#) and in the sanctuary. You are welcome to join us in person if you are vaccinated.**



**SUMMER SCHEDULES**

DRE Carol Zimmerman will be away June 13-18 and July 10-August 7.  
Congregational Administrator Sara Trimm will be travelling July 1-12 and July 28-August 4.

*Watch for details in the newsletter next month or email us with any questions.*

**Please note:** Most of the content for this newsletter was submitted prior to the devastating events in Uvalde, Texas. We hold each other in love and want to acknowledge the pain, hurt, and frustration of yet another attack on innocent school children. If you find yourself in tears, or unable to concentrate, or just numb, you are not alone. This is a tragedy too often repeated. We must all do the best we can with what we have where we are. Reach out to those around you and connect. We all need to feel connected to something right now.

*Valerie Ingram's pastoral prayer last Sunday, also written before Uvalde, helps balance the anger and fear we are all feeling, with hope and gratitude.*

We come together to acknowledge and honor the truth of each other's experience with gratitude, compassion and love. And we pray for ways to bring grace and peace into our daily lives, and those of others, in the face of sometimes overwhelming fear and anxiety.

As we are regularly confronted with bad news about gun violence, shocking acts of hate, war, assaults on women's rights and voting rights, the impact of climate change, and the sometimes-seeming lack of will to make meaningful change, may we remember...

While those things are true, there are also millions of people – smart, caring, compassionate people – actively working every day to combat each of these things and create new possibilities for this crazy world.

There are dedicated people holding and running for public office because they care about the rights and well-being of people within their own communities and all communities.

There are people working on new technologies and policies that drastically reduce carbon emissions and greenhouse gasses.

There are people standing up to inhumane policies in the areas of immigration, LGBTQ+ rights, health care, and women's rights.

There are people creating employment and affordable housing opportunities for formerly incarcerated people so that their talents and spirits can reach full potential.

Local food systems and economies are being revived and strengthened by those who, with joy and optimism, invest in the heart and soul of their communities.

Children are being nurtured, loved, and fed in all kinds of families by all kinds of dedicated caretakers and teachers.

Young people are organizing to bring their considerable intelligence and passion toward creating a better world in all of these areas and more.

Neighbors are helping neighbors, no matter what they look like, who they love, or who they voted for.

There are people making music every day.

In other words, there are good things happening, too. Let us honor the grace and power of those efforts. Let us take heart in the work being done and refuse to relinquish our spirits to despair.

So may it be.



## JAMES' JOURNAL

### Never Expect Whale Breath

I am riding my bike along the shore and then down slow-moving, one-way Commercial Street, lined with a mixture of quirky cottages and idealized salt-box houses. I park my bike on the pier near the sign that warns of falling shells from the sky, as seagulls have been known to drop them on the pavement to break open.

I am a bit hesitant because I normally don't do tours. I find the ticket booth and a three-level ship with the name *Dolphin* on its hull. I expect a line of people. But it is early May and the middle of the week. It is foggy, cold, and rainy. It might just be me today. The man at the ticket window confirms I am in the right place and tells me not to worry, for very soon there will be two busloads of school children here.

As we leave the deep natural harbor, the thick and white Universalist church can no longer be seen. The naturalist gives an introduction to whale biology and points out the iconic lighthouses of the Cape as we pass them. After about 45 minutes the ship slows and we are instructed to be patient for about four minutes. A small humpback then emerges from the water to breathe. It was about a four-second glimpse into a huge life, four seconds of reverential heaven.

The naturalist warns us that with the fog and the lack of visibility we may not see many whales today. He asks us all to look out on the horizon for white airy puffs of water. I am content. I already saw a whale and am still lit up with awe of it all. So, I just gaze out at the vast expanse. I am at peace among the gray waves and I let go of all expectations. It is good to just be out on the water. We keep going further and further out with no other sightings. We are already an hour and half into this tour and it seems as if we will see but one whale.

The ship slows and repositions. We are given directions by clock hour where to look. Five humpbacks are opening their big mouths to gallons of saltwater. There was an awful odor. It is so bad, I assume the person next to me had an accident. The naturalist then announces through the PA, "What you are smelling now, a backed-up sewer smell, is whale breath." We see dozens more humpbacks and fin whales all feeding in a relatively small area. Then along came the white-sided dolphins, some showing off, jumping through air. Most people are taking videos and pictures. I am standing there wedded to the amazement, giddy with the awe of it all.

Our little stationary spots of life seem so small to the great power of Nature. I did not expect to see this many whales let alone be close enough to smell their putrid breath. Once we let go of expectation, we see life clearer and we notice, in the words of the poet Mary Oliver, that "Joy is not meant to be a crumb."

Let go of expectation and contemplate what is in front of you, and you just may see the holy nature of the world.

Please know how grateful and fortunate I feel to have taken this sabbatical. I am especially thankful to everyone who guided the ship of our congregation including our wonderful staff, Carol Zimmerman, Sara Trimm, and Betsy Kepes, our elected leaders, Jenn Whittaker, Jon Montan, and the rest of Church Council, all the pulpit guests, our ministers emeriti, the Revs. Anne and Wade, and all the congregants who stepped up in my absence.

Mindful of the joy in and between us, expecting only amazement and peace, and being fed by the presence of the mystery, it is good to be back together again!

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

## FAITH ENGAGEMENT

We have been living in a time of trauma with the pandemic, the climate crisis, war, gun violence, divisive politics, continued threats to black and brown people. All this trauma impacts how our community functions. Trauma affects us personally, too. It may cause us to be overreactive or shut down. The stress of trauma needs to be alleviated or it will build up in our bodies affecting our nervous system. We need to find ways to release this stress.



As part of my professional development this spring, I attended a training with the Rev. Evin Carvill Ziemer, our UUA congregational lead. Evin shared thoughts and resources about how our congregations are places to help heal community trauma.

Attending worship, participating in religious education, and being part of small-group ministries are ways being part of our church can deregulate our nervous systems and return us to our “window of tolerance.” Connection with this church community can help us heal the trauma, loneliness, and stress these past few years have caused.

If you would like to chat more, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me. If we have been traumatized, our church is a place to find the solace and human connection to help bring you back into balance.

*Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education*

### Resources

- Learn more about the phases a community goes through when dealing with trauma [here](#).
- Understand nervous system deregulation [here](#).
- “[Burnout and How to Complete the Stress Cycle](#)” – Podcast with Brené Brown and Emily and Amelia Nagoski
- [iChill app](#) provides guided exercises to manage stress response.



## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Some days it feels too hard to read the news or talk to others about current events. I can feel paralyzed with anger and fear. I realize though that inaction can be its own form of injustice.

Thankfully, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) sponsors [Side with Love](#). It is a public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love’s power to stop oppression. Their defining question is **“What is love calling you to do?”**

Recently, they released a [statement on the Buffalo Shootings](#). It was shared with me, and I found it so moving that I want to share it here. After you read it, I encourage you to explore the website. It gives me a way to direct my energies to help live my values. It’s also a great way to connect with other UUs to combine our energies to do the most good.

It can be so difficult in the aftermath of atrocities like the Buffalo shootings. But coming together in love is the way we can move forward.

*Jenn Whittaker, Church Council President*

## JOYS AND SORROWS

- ♥ We send our sympathies to Mary Michalek and her family following the loss of her stepfather.
- ♥ We join the Van de Water family as they mourn the loss of Sally Van de Water who died May 19, just one month shy of her 108<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

As Rogers and Hammerstein's song says: "June is bustin' out all over..."

We are looking forward to Rev. James' return from sabbatical! He will be in the pulpit on Sunday, June 5.

We are also excited for RE Sunday and the Church Picnic at Bend in the River Park on Sunday, June 12. Be part of the great Summer Fun Silent Auction that culminates at the picnic! On Sunday, June 19, Rev. James will be in the pulpit, and we will present the Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award.



The last Sunday in June will feature the live-streamed Worship Service from General Assembly in Portland, Oregon. This service will begin at 12:30 PM EST and we are planning a pre-service event at the church. Stay tuned for details.

*Jon Montan, Worship Committee Chair*

## SUNDAY MORNING SUCCESS

What makes our Sundays so special? Fantastic sermons, welcoming smiles, good coffee, and a sense of shared community. How do we make that magic happen? By giving EVERYONE a chance to be part of the fun.

Now that we have a solid group of congregants coming to worship in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, it's time to start up the complementary components of our worship that keep us coming back for more.



We need **greeters** who can welcome us (and chat with newcomers), hand out Orders of Service and Announcements, collect our Joys and Sorrows, light the candles, and collect the cash offering.

We need **social hour hosts** who can make that amazing coffee and make sure there's creamer in the fridge.



We all know that it takes money to operate a church. If you're willing to stick around for a few minutes after worship to record and **count the collection**, it makes the deposit process more secure and a little faster.

If you have questions about any of these roles, or would like to discuss the options, please email Sara to learn more. If you know you want to help and you're ready to sign up, just [click here](#) to add your name next to the date you can help. (Make sure you click the tab at the bottom of the page to get to the right category - Greeter, Host, or Counter.)

**GOT NEWS?**  
**Here's how to share it!**



Church Chatter: Fill out [this form](#) by 9am on Tuesday

Enews: [Email Sara](#) by 9am Thursday

Newsletter: [Submit to the church office](#) by the 20<sup>th</sup> for the coming month

Last-minute events and announcements: Share on [Facebook](#), use the private discussion groups, send to [committee lists](#), reach out to church friends and ask them to help you spread the word.

Keep in mind that if you send information to the office after 2pm on Thursdays, it may not get seen until Monday morning. Please share in the ways listed above.

## ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

It's back – finally! – and we're looking forward to seeing everyone at Bend in the River Park after the service on **Sunday, June 12**. The park is located on [outer Lincoln Street in Canton](#). Follow the cars!

**Here's how it works:** The church will provide meat and veggies for the grill and drinks. You can bring your favorite salad or dessert to share! As is our custom (we know you've missed it!), we'll divvy up assignments: If your last name starts with the letters A-M, you're invited to bring a salad or side dish to pass around. If your last name starts with the letters N-Z, please bring a dessert.

Please bring your own silverware, plates, and cups. (If you forget, we'll have disposable plates and utensils.) As a safety precaution, designated servers will dish out the foods you bring to share.

If you'd like to help out on the grill that day, contact Ron Tavernier. Anyone wishing to help with other picnic fun can contact Jenn Whittaker at [president@uucantonny.org](mailto:president@uucantonny.org).



## SUMMER FUN SILENT AUCTION

Have you submitted something for the silent auction?

Have you checked out the awesome items and experiences others have donated?

If not, get in on the fun! This is a great way for us to connect with our church friends AND raise much-needed funding to fill a hole in our annual operating budget.

- Check out donated auction items [here](#).
- Submit your items [here](#).
- Find out how it works [here](#) and register for bidding.

The auction opens at 12:01am on Wednesday, June 1, and closes during the Church Picnic on Sunday, June 12. Bid early and often then join us at the picnic. You don't have to present to win...but it will be a lot more fun!!

## MUSIC COMMITTEE IS BACK!



Do you enjoy the variety of music we have during our Sunday services? Or wish that we had even MORE variety? If so, you may want to join our Music Committee. Soon we hope to resume rehearsals with our choir and bell choir but before that we need to find choir directors. Be a part of a team that will work to make the music in our church more dynamic and accessible to many. Please contact Sara Trimm ([office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org)) or Betsy Kepes if you are interested.

## WHICH SERMON TOUCHED YOU?

We have heard so many wonderful sermons over the years from a wide variety of ministers and pulpit guests. Most of them have been recorded and stored online. This summer, we plan to compile a list (with links!) of some of our congregational favorites. If there is a sermon you still remember and think about, please share the title and speaker with us, along with a little description of what made it special for you. We will post the list online so we can all revisit some of our **GREATEST HITS**. Refresh your memory on our [Sermons webpage](#) (they go waaay back!).



## WANTED: SUMMER YOUTH WORKER



Building and Grounds is looking for a high school aged youth to work on our grounds and other projects during the summer months. Weekly time commitment on average is around four hours depending on weather conditions. Some weeks will require six to seven hours while, towards the end of the summer, it could be two to three hours per week. Hourly rate is \$13.70. Contact Pete Beekman for more details.

## FAITH IN ACTION

### Social Justice Initiative Survey



After a hiatus during the pandemic, the Faith in Action Group is excited to begin planning our next Social Justice Initiative (SJI).

The SJI is a biennial program to raise awareness about important problems that we face in our communities, with particular focus on the UU Principles of “justice, equity, and compassion in human relations” and “a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.” Each SJI focuses on a specific social justice issue and brings together people from across our region to make connections, share information and resources, and develop strategies for addressing the issue. Previous SJIs have focused on systematized imprisonment in the North Country (2019) and harassment and bullying in workplaces (2017). We are planning to present our next SJI conference in either spring or fall of 2023.

SJI activities center around us hosting a regional conference along with presenting workshops, educational activities, and arts events. These events assemble various facets from within our congregation as well as fostering connections with the community beyond our congregation. The SJI is made possible by a gift from the family of Paul Siskind and Todd Moe, along with support from our UU Church and the larger UU community.

**The Faith in Action group is soliciting ideas from the entire congregation for the topic for our next Social Justice Initiative. Please help us by completing this [three-question survey](#).**

## RACHEL SOMERS GRANT SOCIAL ACTION AWARD

Kathleen Stein, President of the St. Lawrence County Unit of the League of Women Voters (LWV), will be recognized as this year's Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award recipient. The award, created in 1990, is presented annually to someone who volunteers in grassroots efforts to make ours a more humane and just community.



The LWV does not support or oppose candidates or parties. Rather, it encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Ms. Stein was instrumental in reviving the local unit of LWV in 2009 and has continued to provide energetic leadership at local, state and national levels. She serves on the LWV NYS State Board as a Director at Large with a Rural Affairs brief since June of 2021, helping to ensure that rural Leagues have a voice at the state level. Currently she is helping to organize a national Rural Affairs Caucus. She also serves on the LWV state Agriculture, Energy and the Environment Committee, which successfully proposed that LWV NYS adopt a Climate Crisis Resolution in 2021.

This year's award will be presented at our worship service on Sunday, June 19. The public is warmly invited to join us in celebrating the contributions of Kathleen Stein, so please invite your friends!

### ***Interested in helping with voter participation efforts?***

Stay tuned for details coming soon about the ways you can help Get Out the Vote. Watch for announcements in enews, newsletters, and the website, or contact Sally Hoose.

## ADVENTURES WITH THE UU GEOCHACHERS!



***Choose your adventure!*** On Sunday, June 26, at 1 p.m. our UUGeos group will be exploring the woods of West Pierrepont, seeking three different geocaches. Each one offers a different challenge to please any adventurer, from easy to medium to difficult terrains. Please wear sturdy shoes and bring a hiking stick if possible.

We will meet at the home of Philip and Caron Collins at 1 p.m. and return there for refreshments after geocaching. Please contact Caron or Phil for directions. Hope to see you there! New to geocaching? Find out more at <https://www.geocaching.com/play/search>



PPNCNY AND THE CANTON UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH PRESENT

# TIE-DYE YOUR PRIDE

JUNE 17th • 11AM - 3PM • UU CHURCH FRONT LAWN  
3 1/2 E. MAIN ST.

*\$12/Shirt - Cost includes shirt and tie-dye*  
*\$15/Pre-Made Shirt*  
**SPECIAL DEAL: 4 SHIRTS FOR \$40**

GIVEAWAYS • RAFFLES • PRIDE SWAG  
PROCEEDS GO TO PPNCNY & LGBTQ+ PROGRAMMING



## **Announcement of Elections at General Assembly**

At this year's General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, delegates will be given the opportunity to vote on candidates to serve on the UUA Board of Trustees. We, Rebecca Mattis and Beverly Seese, petitioned to be placed on the ballot providing delegates a choice on who will serve as future UU leaders.

Please visit our personal campaign websites [RebeccaMattisUU.Blogspot.com](http://RebeccaMattisUU.Blogspot.com) and [BeverlySeeseUU.Blogspot.com](http://BeverlySeeseUU.Blogspot.com) to learn about our backgrounds and campaign platforms.

We have arranged to hold three Meet the Candidates Townhall meetings on May 25 and June 2. Details can be found on our campaign websites.

Delegate voting opens June 1. We encourage you to become informed voters and live into our Fifth Principle, the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

## **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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