

# Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

## NEWSLETTER

### October 2022 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS

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#### Saturday, October 1

5:30 p.m., Fireside Fellowship at the Wyckoffs'

#### Sunday, October 2

##### **Redemption, God's Will, and Other Problematic**

##### **Religious Language**

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

Conservative religious language permeates our culture. People may want to pray for us and tell us the hurricane is part of God's will. What exactly do they mean by that? Translating this problematic language into our own theology can help us to become more loving and compassionate.

#### Monday, October 3

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

#### Wednesday, October 5

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

9:00 a.m., B&G Cleanup Party

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

#### Sunday, October 9

##### **What Is It You Really Want?**

*Charlie Bradt, Pulpit Guest*

The question "What is it I (or you) really want?" is designed to bypass questions like "What is the RIGHT thing to do?" Or.... "What SHOULD I do?" I'm suggesting that my question is more relevant in many cases, and I will speak to the difference between these two ways of addressing issues we all face.

11:45 a.m., History Circle

#### Monday, October 10

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

#### Tuesday, October 11

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

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

#### Wednesday, October 12

12:30 p.m., Budget & Finance Committee Meeting

#### Thursday, October 13

7:00 p.m., Let's Talk About Class (#1 of 3)

#### Sunday, October 16

##### **Knocking on Heaven's Door**

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

If we are fortunate enough to live into actuary expected lengths, death becomes less of a theory and more of a reality. Though we are knocking, we can still thrive.

#### Monday, October 17

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

#### Tuesday, October 18

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

#### Thursday, October 20

7:00 p.m., Let's Talk About Class (#2 of 3)

#### Sunday, October 23

##### **Courageous Conversations**

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

Few, if any, of us like conflict and we go about our lives hardly ever engaging in it. By confronting interpersonal conflict courageously we can deepen our relationships and understandings of each other and ourselves.

#### Tuesday, October 25

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

#### Thursday, October 27

7:00 p.m., Let's Talk About Class (#3 of 3)

#### Sunday, October 30

##### **Class Compassion**

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

We don't live in a class-less society, and upward mobility is actually difficult. Learning the stories of people from different classes than our own helps us live with more compassion.

11:30 a.m., Annual Congregational Meeting & Potluck

1:30 p.m., UUGeos at Indian Creek Nature Center

Worship services happen every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. [via Zoom](#) and in the Sanctuary.

## JAMES' JOURNAL

### Factories and Symphonies



If you have never been to Milwaukee, think tall smokestacks belching out steam and fumes, long tall rusty buildings with little light, and, if the wind is right, you smell yeast. The Galasinskis and the Polzeins (my mother's side) worked at places like Pfister & Vogel Leather, Pabst Brewing, Allis Chambers, Ladish, and other manufacturers.

It was instilled in me that smokestacks, train tracks, and making things, even if repetitively, was noble and good. I am the first person in my family to graduate from college. When I started attending a UU church in Milwaukee and was invited to houses overlooking the great expanse of blue that is Lake Michigan, I felt uncomfortable. I became very conscious of class and felt excluded and not worthy. I didn't fit in. In a sermon on income equality, the minister threw in a line about how some of us may charge \$250 in billable hours. Wow! At the time I think I was making \$17 an hour. This made me want to hide my family of origin and make sure to act more middle class.

As I got to know the lawyers, chairs in the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Harvard-educated anthropologists, I realized I was not all that different. I liked to read, had big ideas, liked art, enjoyed going to the symphony, and above all, we shared a faith.

However, I was living in two different worlds. Many people overspend to give the appearance that they are middle class. I was much too frugal to ever do that. Instead, I made sure to speak in more refined ways. I began to code switch to fit in.

I have learned to no longer hide my own identity as working class and to be proud of this background. I learned from my father that if you were smart and willing to learn you can get by on less. My father often went to the library to learn about cars and other repairs around the house. With no formal training he drew up blueprints for a garage. I now consider myself a mixed class. Now, when I see the abandoned factory in Tupper Lake I feel at home. I imagine the smells that may have come from those smokestacks. I think of all the workers of the past, the stable incomes that were provided, and how I have an inner urge to go to work there! I grew up working class but find myself in the professional managerial class.

One goal Church Council and I came up with at our retreat over the summer is to become more class conscious as a congregation. We want to look at how unwittingly we may be excluding people from different classes. Classism pervades our culture and we need to become conscious of it. I am going to be offering a workshop and will have a series of sermons on classism. Please join me to celebrate the symphony and the factory.



*The Rev. James Galasinski*

### FROM OUR PRESIDENT

September was a busy and exciting month! We had the Ingathering and the Congregational Connections Extravaganza. We also had Religious Education Teacher Training and the start of our Religious Education year. Then at the end of the month we had our Canvass Conversations meetings!

We plan to continue the opportunities for connection and commitment. At the start of this month, we have the Fireside Fellowship event at the Wyckoffs', and throughout October we have activities like geocaching, and various committee and group meetings. And then at the end of the month, we've got our annual Congregational Meeting and potluck.



I look forward to continuing to see many of you at church, meetings, and events. If you haven't had a chance to come to church or an event, I hope you'll take this as an invitation to attend. With the combination of inside and outside activities, there is likely to be something for everyone!

If you have any ideas for events or other connection ideas, please email me at [president@uuncantonny.org](mailto:president@uuncantonny.org)

*Jenn Whittaker, Church Council President*

### **FAITH ENGAGEMENT**



I've been reminiscing a bit the last few weeks. Remembering the time I spent 33 consecutive days hiking and canoeing in the Adirondacks in the fall of 1992 as part of my course study at North Country Community College. Recalling the summer vacation my family took to visit many of the western National Parks when I turned 10 years old. Remembering friends and family who have left this world both recently and in the past. Reflecting on the first RE class I assisted with in 2008.

I am also reflecting on what our religious education program looked like before COVID. In the fall of 2019, we had more than 60 children enrolled and almost 70 adults teaching and assisting in six different classrooms. On any given Sunday, you would see a gaggle of adults and children leaving the sanctuary after the Time for All Ages.

Things are different now. This fall we have almost 20 volunteers and it is unclear how many children and youth will be participating. We can't offer the same programming we did in 2019-2020, yet there is something really important about holding space for traditions. Children and youth have expressed so much joy at the idea of attending Spirit Play, MakerSpace, and Coming of Age. They want the experiences that either their siblings had, or they heard so much about from their church friends. The opportunity to have shared experiences across generations is sacred. Offering a space for children, youth, and adults to grow their UU identity together is valuable and needed in this time. Serving in the religious education ministry is one way to give to our church community and uphold the traditions that mean so much to us. Come be part of creating memories for our congregation. Blessed be and may it be so.

*Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education*

### **JOYS AND SORROWS**

- ♥ We hold Bonnie Danis in our hearts as she undergoes treatment for multiple myeloma. May she and her husband John find strength in our numbers.
- ♥ Congratulations to the DeWaters-Grimberg family on the happy occasion of Sebastian's recent marriage to Galen.

### **THANK UU TO**

- Ernesto Moralez for his work in the library
- Gary Hoose and Rev. James for refinishing the front doors of the church
- Robin Collen for all her work on the worship team for many, many years
- Bobbi Haldane for 25+ years of service on the Building & Grounds Committee
- Roger Hutchinson and Phil Collins for fixing the kitchen sink faucet



## CANVASS CONVERSATIONS

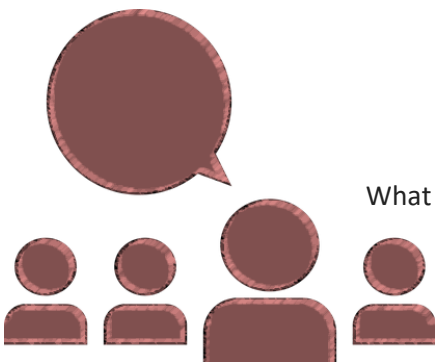
Considering Your Commitment to  
Our Faith Community

### Wait, WHAT?!? You haven't signed up for your Canvass Conversation yet?

People who have participated in these gatherings in friends' homes and at church have reported very thoughtful and thought-provoking conversations. They have enjoyed the time together, to share their dreams and wishes for our church as well as their concerns. We really hope to engage everyone in these conversations. We need to hear from you, and we need your pledge to support the important work of our church.

Learn more about Canvass Conversations [here](#) and sign up for a convenient time [here](#). If none of the times work for you, let a member of the Stewardship Committee (below) know. We anticipate adding several more gatherings to the line up!

Stewardship Committee: Steve Coffin, chair; Pete Beekman, Tim Opdyke, Carol Pynchon; Mary Michalek, Council Liaison



### Let's Talk About Class

led by the Rev. James Galasinski

Thursdays, October 13, 20, 27, 7:00-8:30 in the Romer Room

What does it mean to be poor? What exactly is the middle class? Who is in the owning class? What class were you born into and how does that affect you today? How can we break up any classism in our congregation? We will look into these questions and more in three 90-minute interactive workshops.

Please sign up by emailing [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org)

### UU 101

UU 101 is an introductory course intended for those who are thinking about becoming members or who would like a refresher course. It explains the theology and history of the UU movement and will also explore how our local church functions. Childcare will be available upon request. If you are interested in attending, please email [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org). We hope to schedule a UU 101 course this fall based on the availability of those who are interested in attending.

## BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Join the Building & Grounds team members for a fall grounds work session on Wednesday, October 5 at 9:00 am. We will be doing some fall pruning, weeding, and general grounds clean-up. Bring your work gloves, pruning shears, and weeding tools. This is a great opportunity to foster engagement, renew friendships, and make new friends while sprucing up our beautiful church landscape.



*Pete Beekman, Building and Grounds Committee Chair*

## YOU WANT TO BE PART OF CARING CIRCLE!

What is the Caring Circle? It is a group that responds when our members experience special needs and challenges due to illness, birth/adoption, death, and other life changes. The impact of these challenges can be eased by our caring for one another, person to person, family to family.



Caring Circle members indicate which caring actions they would be willing and able to provide when needs arise. This might be helping with transportation to a doctor's appointment, bringing a meal to a family, or

helping with a memorial service reception. It can be as simple as sending a card or making a phone call to someone having a tough time. When a request is made for the type of need you have offered help with, you will receive an email from the Caring Circle coordinators. Please be assured that when you are contacted, you are free to decline if the timing of the request is not good. "Declining" means you don't even need to respond. We cast a wide and inclusive net because we know that together we can meet all our needs; the responsibility should never rest on a few people's shoulders. If you would like to be in our Caring Circle you can sign up [here](#).

If you or another church member has a "Caring-Circle-type" need, please contact Caring Circle Coordinators Eden Terrell or Valerie Ingram, their contact information is in the church directory or email [caringcircle@uucantonny.org](mailto:caringcircle@uucantonny.org). If you have a need that requires pastoral care, please contact our minister, the Rev. James Galasinski, at [minister@uucantonny.org](mailto:minister@uucantonny.org). By letting us know about the needs that are out there, you enable us to do the work for which our committee was designed, and help us create the type of caring environment that allows our church to live up to our UU values.

## GREETINGS FROM OUR WORSHIP TEAM

We are thrilled that Arthur Freeheart has joined the Worship Team! In addition to our minister, membership currently consists of Cathy Crosby, Mark Berninghausen, Dave Nelson, Rajiv Narula, Maya Thomas, Stevie Michaelson, Arthur Freeheart, and Jon Montan. New members are always encouraged.

We have prepared a budget for calendar year 2023 that is based on a total of 18 Sundays for which Rev. James will not be leading worship. He has one Sunday off per month from September through June, four off for vacation, and four off for study leave. The budget anticipates five guest clergy, seven non-clergy guest, and six member/staff-led services, plus miscellaneous expenses such as candles and equipment.

As always, if you have questions, comments, suggestions, ideas, or anything else that touches on our shared time together in church, please let us know.

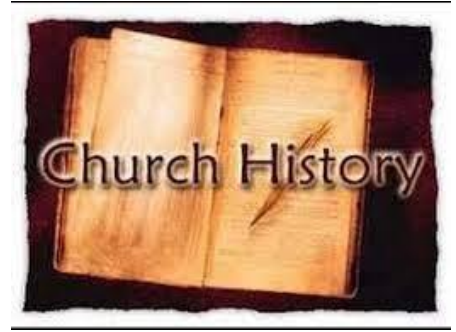
Thanks, and before you carve your pumpkin, listen to Peter Mayer's song: [Jack-O-Lantern Heart](#)

*Jon Montan, Worship Team Chair*

## IT'S TIME TO THINK ABOUT OUR CHURCH HISTORY!

If you are intrigued by history, we invite you to join our *Church History Learning Circle* as we delve into our archives, and research the Universalist movement in the North Country. The information we gather will provide direction to our bi-centennial planning and hopefully allow us to create a formal historical record of our movement here.

We will meet on the second Sundays after church starting in October to share our findings and new questions about our history. If this idea interests you, please contact Eileen Raymond ([history@uucantonny.rr.com](mailto:history@uucantonny.rr.com)) for more information.



## FAITH IN ACTION

Interested in social and environmental justice? Join the Faith in Action (FIA) Group Monday, October 10, at 7p.m. [via Zoom](#) to discuss upcoming events and actions. We will also be discussing future Social Action Shared Offerings (SASOs), and your suggestions for worthy organizations are much appreciated. You can also send your SASO suggestions to Pat Alden of our FIA group.

You are also invited to stop by our table after church to write letters encouraging voters in Pennsylvania our "Vote Forward" campaign. It only takes a few minutes while you enjoy social hour. Our FIA letter writing table will be up through October 23.

## LOOKING FOR MORE WAYS TO CONNECT? CHECK OUT THESE OPPORTUNITIES

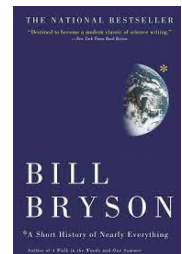


**On Saturday, October 1,** we will hold a **Fireside Fellowship** from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Pete and Kathy Wyckoff's house. Stories will be told from 6:30 to 7:30, followed by campfire sing-alongs and relaxed social time. Feel free to bring a picnic dinner to enjoy before the stories begin. We hope to see you there!

## Sacred Texts and Coffee

This is a small group gathering to read and reflect together on sacred texts and drink coffee and tea in the Social Room. No preparation is necessary. We even read unconventional sacred texts like the poetry of Mary Oliver. We will start up again on **Tuesday, October 11, at 9:30 a.m.** and continue to meet on the second Tuesday of every month. Everyone is welcome.

The October selection for the **UU Science Book Club** is *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson. We will be meeting by Zoom on **Monday, October 17 at 7:00 p.m.** Contact Brian Gardam for more information.



## ANNUAL MEETING

**On Sunday, October 30,** the **Annual Congregational Meeting and Potluck** will take place right after worship. All are invited to attend, but only members may vote. If you'd like to become more involved in church without a long-term commitment, you could start by helping us plan the Annual Meeting Potluck. It's a pretty simple process, but many hands make light work and we like light! Email our Congregational Administrator, Sara Trimm, to step into that role.



### Stickers, Frogs, and Birds, Oh My!

The UUGeos geocache team will explore the **Indian Creek Nature Center** trails and surrounding area to find four hidden geocaches on **Sunday, October 30, at 1:30 p.m.** immediately following the annual meeting and church potluck. This will be our last “official” geocache outing for the 2022 season so don't miss out. Please meet us at the main entrance and parking area of Indian Creek Nature Center at 770 County Road 14, Rensselaer Falls. We will walk the trails to find two easy geocaches then drive nearby for two more bonus caches. Wear sturdy shoes and dress for the weather. New to geocaching? Sign up online at [geocaching.com](https://geocaching.com) and download the free app on your phone. For more information, please contact Caron Collins.

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We aim to keep our congregation as safe as possible. We strongly encourage vaccines and boosters. We also encourage wearing masks when in our building, especially if you or someone in your household is immunocompromised. Disposable masks and hand sanitizer are available at all entrances. If you are having COVID symptoms or have been exposed, please get tested. If you test positive, please worship with us on Zoom. Thank you in advance for doing your part to keep each other safe.

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

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