

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

NEWSLETTER

March 2023 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Wednesday, March 1

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Saturday, March 4

6:30 p.m., All Ages Game Night

Sunday, March 5

A Hearth of Love and Justice

The Rev. James Galasinski & Carol Zimmerman, DRE

Following the Women's Ministerial Conference in 1875, twenty-one Unitarian women founded the Iowa Sisterhood to serve churches throughout the Great Plains. They sought to make their churches extensions of the domestic hearth. Join us for this multigenerational service and learn more about this extraordinary group of ordained women.

11:30 a.m., Everybody's Birthday Party

12:15 p.m., First Sunday Listening Circle

Wednesday, March 8

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

Thursday, March 9

7:00 p.m., Committee Chairs Meeting

Sunday, March 12

9:00 a.m., Church History Circle

Generations of Generosity

The Rev. James Galasinski

Over the course of nearly 200 years our congregation's many members have been generous in time, talent, and treasure. Generosity is a spiritual value that we hold dear in its many forms.

Monday, March 13

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

Tuesday, March 14

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

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

Sunday, March 19

Doing Interdependence

The Rev. Joe Cleveland

We live in an interconnected, interdependent world. Our lives and our living participates in all life. Interdependence is a fundamental characteristic of life. But it's not a static state. The web of life

is constantly being woven. So, what does it mean to do interdependence?

Monday, March 20

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 21

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Friday, March 24

6:30 p.m., Jazz Night & Coffee Bar

Sunday, March 26

***Who Are "All Beings"?* Jacob King, Pulpit Guest**

Since 1985, our faith has made a covenantal commitment to the "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part". This principle has been slightly transformed in the Proposed Article 2 Study Commission's draft revisions. This "value", now called "Interdependence", references a covenant of cherishing Earth and all beings.

Monday, March 27

7:00 p.m., UU Men's Group

Tuesday, March 28

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

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

Our 2023 Church Council:

Jon Montan, President

Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel,
Vice President

Mary Michalek, Secretary
Stefan Grimberg, Treasurer

Wil Rivers

Jim Williams
Rebecca Pickens

Ron Tavernier

Katie Boczarski

Eden Terrell

JAMES' JOURNAL

The Daffodils Respond (and So Should We)



This time of year, I eagerly watch for the daffodils to appear near the front door of the church, underneath the mailbox. They are a sign of spring. It is microclimate there, facing south and with the warmth of our building the snow melts there first. I noticed them sharply cutting through decaying leaves on February 10th this year. This is the earliest I have ever seen them. Though I know it is just one year, it is difficult to not think of climate change.

The daffodils respond.

The bulbs survived once again the arctic chills of winter. There is no other process quite like spring when flowers rise and display their life affirming colors. They mark regeneration and renewal. Much like the daffodil senses light and heat of spring approaching, we should be open and responsive to the changing environment around us as it signals to us to grow.

Afterall, we have in us that same life force that brings up daffodils, that which helps us push life out of our tombs of pain and decay. You need not wait until spring to renew yourselves, early or not we do not need to wait for the daffodils to rise for us to also rise. Everyday has within it, a spring, a flower, a kind word, a powerful practice, a sacred pause, a spark of divine life. Every day we are given the chance to be re-born. Everyday, a spring.

That is, if we have the courage to leave the harshness of our past, to walk a life born anew with our lives open to the sun. Everyday we have the chance to rise up like the daffodils, early, late, or right on time.

In peace,



The Rev. James Galasinski

FROM OUR PRESIDENT What Does Church Council Do?

Once each month, your fellow members who have been elected to Church Council meet to exercise governance over the workings of the Church in support of our mission. Joining us in an ex officio capacity is our Minister and, on occasion, the Director of Religious Education.

Council deals mainly with financial oversight and policies around safety, building use, and officially sanctioned actions of our Church that involve the wider community. We call upon committees, teams, and staff for advice and proposals concerning specific matters that fall under these categories. We use Council member liaisons who communicate with committees and teams and bring forth matters requiring Council action. Vice President Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel meets with Committee Chairs during the year. The next such meeting will be March 9 at the Church. We also approve members who will be attending General Assembly (this year in Pittsburgh, PA).



Another important role of Council is to set aside some time for reflection and “vision work”. For example, we have recently been reading and discussing chapters from *Class Lives: Stories from Across Our Economic Divide*. We also assess how well we are meeting goals and whether new goals are appropriate. Council is here to support our staff. Our staff implements the “ministry” part of our mission, where Council can be thought of as providing the “governance” function. My strong feeling is that Council should always provide constructive input but never micro-manage the staff. Furthermore, I want our committees and teams to feel empowered and only seek formal Council approval for things that significantly affect our budget, building use or safety policies, or require official sanctioning as a new Church event, project, or affiliation.

I hope this quick overview will be helpful, particularly for those who are relatively new to our religious community. Your input is always welcome.

*In faith,
Jon Montan, Church Council President*

FAITH ENGAGEMENT



“If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path.” - Brené Brown

Growing up I thought vulnerability was a weakness. I often hid my emotions and didn’t allow others to see me cry. I felt I would be judged or worse ridiculed. I almost never asked for help.

I felt like I was hiding from myself. Those patterns are hard to break, and I feel like I am still learning how to be vulnerable. Yet I know there is so much strength and bravery there. The above quote speaks to me about how I can grow more fully into myself by following the path of vulnerability. This month in religious education we will be exploring vulnerability. I look forward to exploring this path with you, our children and youth!

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

JOYS AND SORROWS

- ♥ Theresa Witmer and Carol Strome are in our hearts. Theresa’s sister Ruth recently died of pancreatic cancer.
- ♥ We send healing thoughts to Katie Boczarski as she recovers from a broken ankle.

SHIRT SALE FUNDRAISER

Buy a Canton UU t-shirt or sweatshirt at Everybody’s Birthday Party on Sunday, March 5th! The COA and Youth Group will be selling shirts that we have in stock and taking orders. We have women’s cut, adult sizes, and youth sizes. There are short sleeve, long sleeve, and sweatshirts available in a variety of colors. Shirts will range in price from \$12 to \$25. Orders will require pre-payment so please bring cash or a check. Profits will go toward funding their trip to Boston in May. See you at Everybody’s Birthday!





CAKE BAKERS NEEDED!

Sunday, March 5 after worship, we will be celebrating Everybody’s Birthday! We need (8) regular cakes, (1) gluten free cake, (1) vegan cake, and (1) savory cake. If you are interested, please let Carol know by emailing her at dre@uucantonny.org or sign up in the Social Room this Sunday. Thank you!

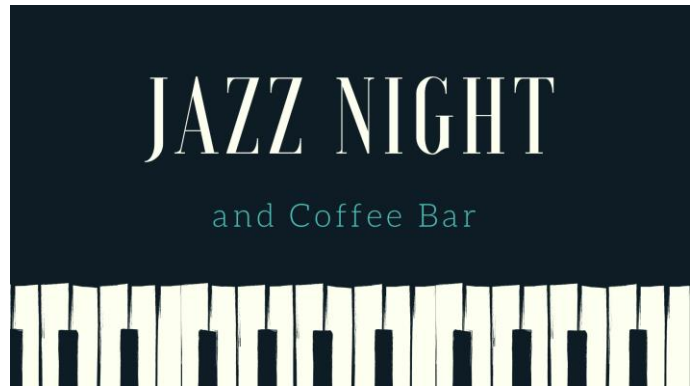
OLYMPIA BROWN SOCIETY

Members of the Olympia Brown Society are providing future financial support for the church in their estate plans. How important is this type of support? In 2022 we received \$5,000 from the estates of Marilyn Ross, \$2,500 from Aileen and E. Allen “Vince” Barwood, and \$7,000 from Don and Nancy Auster. While we are emerging from the pandemic and the challenges it has presented, these types of estate gifts helped ease the financial strain. We are blessed that thirty-six members have included the church in their estate plans. The Stewardship Committee will be providing more information in March on the different ways you can support the church financially in your estate plan and join the Olympia Brown Society.

Jazz Night and Coffee Bar at Church
Friday, March 24, 2023 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Come out for an exciting night of Jazz, featuring local favorites Tim Savage, Rev. James Galasinski, and Sam Bailey!

Coffee bar will include cafe americano, espresso, decaf coffee, various teas, including herbal, and hot chocolate.



This event is free and open to the public.



ALL AGES GAME NIGHT

Saturday, March 4 at 6:30p.m. in the Social Room

Join us for an evening of fellowship and playing board games. Come to learn a new game. Bring your favorite games. All ages are welcome!

FRIENDLY REMINDER TO BUILDING USERS

We have seen a significant increase in building use requests this fall, which is a wonderful sign of great things happening in our building. While we strive to make the building available as much as possible, and refrain from charging members a fee for use, the costs associated with the additional use do add up. As you've read on the building use forms, **DONATIONS ARE WELCOME!** If you are meeting in the space, please consider taking up a free will collection from time to time to help offset costs. A little bit can go a long way in maintaining the financial health of our church.

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'll meet again on **Tuesday, March 14, at 9:30 a.m.** and continue to meet on the second Tuesday of every month in the Romer Room. Everyone is welcome. If you can't make it in person, to join us via ZOOM at [this link](#).

SCIENCE BOOK CLUB

On Tuesday, March 21, the Science Book Club will meet by Zoom at 7:00 to discuss *The Dawn of Everything*, by David Graeber and Martin Wengrow. The authors offer a « *more hopeful and interesting story ... a completely new account of how human societies developed over the last 30,000 years.* ». To join the conversation, contact Brian Gardam at briangardam@gmail.com.

UU MEN'S GROUP

Unitarian Universalist men are not your average men. We recognize that what it means to be male in our culture is changing. We deplore toxic masculinity and want spaces to explore our identity. We may have numerous work colleagues and buddies, but it's rare these friendships provide opportunities for exploring personal issues in any depth.

This group will start with a check-in allowing for personal sharing, followed by discussion of an issue of relevance and will be facilitated by the Rev. James Galasinski.

4th Monday of the month at 7p.m. in the Romer Room

FAITH IN ACTION

FIA's next scheduled meeting is Monday, March 13 at 7p.m. via [Zoom](#). Your attendance and participation are encouraged and welcome.

FAITH IN ACTION: CALL TO ACTION: Your help and support is needed now

New Yorkers have the opportunity this spring to make a difference in how we all face the most difficult situations in life. We can convince our legislators in the New York Assembly and Senate to vote for more options when we face terminal illnesses, to vote for CHOICE, an Act provides each of us with the choice to control how we approach death. New York's Medical Aid in Dying bill will be voted on this year. How can we assure that we all will have access to choices already available to people living in 10 other states and Washington DC?

1. Talk to the Faith in Action Ambassadors during social hour in March for more information
2. Check the [Compassion and Choices website](https://candc.org/in-your-state/new-york) (<https://candc.org/in-your-state/new-york>)
3. Call or email your assemblymember and senator with your support for this bill
4. Write Letters to the Editor to express your support
5. Sign up to phone bank through Compassion and Choices
6. Talk to friends and neighbors about the Act about your support for this bill
7. Attend Lobby Day in Albany on April 17.

Background Information:

New York's Medical Aid in Dying Act allows a terminally ill, mentally capable adult with a diagnosis of 6 months or less to live to have the option to request, obtain and decide to ingest medication to die peacefully in their sleep if their suffering becomes unbearable. This bill is modeled after Oregon 's Death with Dignity Act, which has been in effect for 25 years without a single instance of abuse or coercion.

Our NY Medical Aid in Dying Act states that to be eligible to exercise this choice, a person must:

- Be an adult, age 18 or older
- Have a medically-confirmed terminal illness that is incurable and irreversible and will likely cause death within six months
- Be mentally capable of making an informed healthcare decision and able to take medication independently
- Individuals younger than 18 or with a disability are not eligible for medical aid in dying.

The act outlines numerous safeguards to prevent abuse or coercion, including:

- Two physicians must confirm that the person has a terminal condition, is making an informed healthcare decision, and is not being coerced.
- The attending physician must inform the requesting individual about all end-of-life care options, including palliative care and hospice.
- A mandatory mental health evaluation is required if either physician has concerns about the person's mental capacity to make their own healthcare decisions, and must confirm in writing the dying person's capacity before a prescription can be written.
- The person must request the medication orally and in writing.
- The individual must be able to self-ingest the medication.
- The terminally ill person can change their mind at any point in time, including withdrawing the request for aid-in-dying medication, or not taking the medication once they have it.
- No physician, health provider, or pharmacist is required to participate in medical aid in dying.
- Anyone attempting to coerce a patient faces criminal prosecution.
- Health insurance benefits are not affected by the availability of medical aid in dying, and life insurance payments can't be denied to the families of people who use the law.

We will be receiving a **Shared Offering on Sunday, March 26** in support of the work of Compassion and Choices. See [their website](#) for more information on the work they are doing nationally to improve end-of-life care and to expand options and empower each of us to chart our own end-of-life journeys.

Calling all Musicians, Amateurs, and Aficionados!

You are invited to attend and/or participate in the **North Country Musicale and Potluck** on **Saturday, March 25th at 4:00 p.m.** here at our church. The Musicale is in its 14th year of informal musical gatherings held at churches and outdoor venues across the North Country.

Organized by Carol Kissam, musicians have the opportunity to share their music with the community and each other in a supportive and inclusive environment. Each concert culminates in a grand finale that includes musicians and often the audience, too. This spring the grand finale will feature the simple haunting piece by Jodie Blackshaw called "Whirlwind". This piece represents the mysterious Dust Devils encountered on the Australian outback, by using traditional instruments and environmental percussion, including "whirlies", shakers, and jars. Caron Collins is seeking participants for this grand finale. If you are interested in participating and/or performing in the Musicale, please contact Caron at bandtchr1@hotmail.com.



BEYOND OUR WALLS

Are you looking for ways to live your faith and grow as a UU beyond what happens at our church? Now you can sign up for a monthly email. The Unitarian Universalist Association, UU Ministry for the Earth, Side with Love, Soul Matters, local organizations and many more groups offer fantastic ways to live your faith values. This newsletter will offer links and materials that will connect you with the wider UU world and our local communities.

Sign up today by clicking [here!](#)

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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