

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton  
**NEWSLETTER**  
April 2023 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS

---



**Sunday, April 2**

***Covenant with Mystery Part II***

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

Nature provides us with awe and so does Unitarian Universalism. Nature exudes calm and quiet to help us temper all those negative voices in our head and so does Unitarian Universalism. Nature invites us into a covenant with mystery and so does Unitarian Universalism.

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

**Wednesday, April 5**

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

**Thursday, April 6**

1:00 p.m., Google Drive Workshop

**Saturday, April 8**

3:00 p.m., All Ages Game Time

**Sunday, April 9**

***As Circular As Hope***

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

As we celebrate spring and Easter, we recognize snakes and bears leaving their caves and how Jesus did something similar. We too must leave our dark nests and return to the realm of sun and hope.

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

**OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED THIS WEEK (4/10 - 4/15)**

**Monday, April 10**

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

**Tuesday, April 11**

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

**Sunday, April 16**

9:00 a.m., Church History Circle

***Losing Your Mind***

*Kathy Montan, Pulpit Guest*

A good mind is a valuable asset, but is it who you really are? Does it define you? What if you lost your mind; would you still be you?

1:00 p.m., Google Drive Workshop

**Monday, April 17**

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

**Tuesday, April 18**

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

**Wednesday, April 19**

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

**Sunday, April 23**

***Re-Wilding and Reciprocity*** *The Rev. James Galasinski*

There has been a movement to rewild the world by reintroducing native species and recreating natural habitats. However, since humans have arrived the world was never a true pristine wilderness. We can exchange back and forth in a mutually beneficial way. We can rewild with reciprocity.

Noon, Roadside Cleanup on Riverside Drive

**Monday, April 24**

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

Rachel Somers Grant Nominations Due

**Tuesday, April 25**

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

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

**Friday, April 28**

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

**Sunday, April 30**

***The Dawn of Everything*** *The Rev. James Galasinski*

The fall story as recorded in Genesis claims the world was once perfect then we sinned and now it sucks. Similarly, some anthropological models claim that once things were more egalitarian, then things got bigger, bureaucratic, more hierarchical and now it sucks. These, of course, are both myths. Things were never perfect but they can be better.

**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**  
**Pop-Up Ministries**



The St. Lawrence County Health Initiative secured a grant to study how to make Canton more bike friendly. A civil engineering professor and his students came up with a number of plans for Court Street. One of the plans included moving some underground utilities with a new curb to create a protected bike lane. Then I saw the cost: hundreds of thousands of dollars. To me, it only made financial and environmental sense to make those changes the next time the street is redone. Then I saw some pop-up proposals. These utilize existing infrastructure and are less permanent. For example, bike lanes separated from auto traffic by plastic delineators that actually screw into the ground. You could remove them in the winter. The costs are low and in a short time you can improve safety and get more people to bike.

I think we need pop-up ministries. These are nimble and creative solutions to build community, get more people more engaged with us. As a congregation we already have a lot of social and physical infrastructures in place. We have a beautiful well-kept space, great staff, and wonderful loving people who care about Unitarian Universalism. We can creatively modify these so our progressive faith flourishes with safety and sustainability for all. Jenn Whittaker and I started a Jazz and Coffee night. A Men's Group popped-up. I know each of us has special talents and passions that we could offer to the congregation and the wider community.

Maybe someone offers a painting class. Or we will carpool to Ottawa for the Tulip Festival. Pop-up ministries are flexible and adaptable and will get more people on the road towards more liberatory and loving lives. Please let me know your ideas.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Galasinski".

*The Rev. James Galasinski*

**FROM OUR PRESIDENT**  
**Church as Refuge**

Every Sunday as part of our worship service people light candles and some share their joys and concerns in writing. This is a quiet, contemplative time and I find myself thinking, amid the candles and remarks, about all the joys and concerns that go unexpressed but are surely felt by all. It reminds me that I must always be present with others and committed to giving and receiving love. Sometimes our concerns seem to far outweigh our joys.



Regardless of your life circumstances, our Church is a refuge. Not an escape from the World but a place of understanding and compassion. A safe place in which to be heard. A place where you will not be force-fed religious doctrine. A place of rest. A place of quiet calm amidst the maelstrom. A place where you might even feel the need to laugh.

I look around and see our members and friends sustaining our religious community and working to support our values in the wider World. Part of our work is to help support our Church as a refuge for those who need it. This is what I see and it makes me glad. Do you see what I see?

*In faith,  
Jon Montan, Church Council President*



## FAITH ENGAGEMENT

Spring is here! For many that means vacation time or spring break. Vacation can be defined as an extended period of leisure or recreation; A period during which activity is stopped for a time; or a period of suspension of work, study, or other activity, usually used for rest, recreation, or travel; recess or holiday. How do you define vacation? When I think of vacation, I think of a time of rest. Rest is much bigger than just sleeping. According to Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith there are 7 types of rest. Rest should equal restoration in seven key areas of your life.

**Physical rest** includes sleeping and napping but can also include active rest like stretching and massage.

**Mental rest** includes taking short breaks, meditation and using a journal or note pad to jot down nagging thoughts.

**Sensory rest** includes closing your eyes, unplugging from electronics, sitting in the dark and wearing noise cancelling headphones.

**Creative rest** reawakens the awe and wonder inside each of us. The key here is to make time for the things that you don't normally make time for that can refill your creative cup. Go into nature, decorate your environment so that it's aesthetically pleasing, or visit a museum.

**Emotional Rest** includes being aware of what emotional drains are and emotional restorers are key here. Finding spaces to express your feelings in a safe space will offer you emotional rest. Emotional rest also requires the courage to be authentic and share how you are truly feeling.

For **Social Rest** we need to differentiate between those relationships that revive us from those relationships that exhaust us. To experience more social rest, you need to identify your social needs. Are you introverted or extroverted? Depending on this, you may need time alone or social time with folks who share similar interests.

**Spiritual rest** includes participating in this religious community or by connecting with a deep sense of belonging, love, acceptance and purpose. To receive this, engage in something greater than yourself and add prayer, meditation or community involvement to your daily routine.

What type of rest do you need right now? Take a few minutes to schedule it into your day or maybe take time during an upcoming vacation to try all the different kinds of rest and see if you can feel a difference in how you feel. May we be blessed with the rest we need.

Source: <https://ideas.ted.com/the-7-types-of-rest-that-every-person-needs/>



@SHINETEXT

*Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education*

## JOYS AND SORROWS

- ♥ We are pleased that Bonnie's scheduled stem cell transplant went well and she is recovering at the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Our love and well wishes go out to her and John and to Bonnie's sister, Maggie.
- ♥ We send our condolences to the family of Gary Kelly, former long-time member and Church Council president, who recently died due to complications of liver cancer.
- ♥ Our hearts go out to the family of Lois McAllester, another long-time member, who died in February of this year. Memorial Services are being planned for July 1 at our church. You can read her full obituary [here](#).
- ♥ We celebrate Barbie Miller for earning an associate degree in human development from SUNY Empire. Congratulations, Barbie!

**Want to join the Caring Circle email list?** You'll get emails when someone needs a card or letter, a ride, or a meal. Help when you can, but there's no pressure to respond every time. If you'd like to be included, just complete [this form](#). Contact Eden Terrell or Valerie Ingram if you have any questions.

Thank you

**Thank you to everyone** in our UU Church of Canton for pledging and fulfilling 99% of your commitments for the calendar year 2022. This is the best we have ever done and we want to celebrate your generosity. In addition, we are grateful to all who participated in the 2022 spring auction fundraiser which made all the difference in finishing the year as well as we did. We are grateful to all the committees and church staff members for keeping expenses on track, the Stewardship Committee for running a fantastic 2022 canvas, the staff team of Rev. James, Carol, Sara, and Betsy, and of course our Church Council for steering our congregation through 2022.

*In appreciation,  
The Budget and Finance Committee - Gwen Cunningham, Laura Foster; Brian Gardam, Stefan Grimberg (Treasurer & Church Council Liaison); Kurt Terrell (Chair); Erik Whittaker, and ex officio members the Rev. James Galasinski, Minister and Sara Trimm, Congregational Administrator*



### AN APRIL BREAK:

The staff will be away during **the week of April 10** and the church office will be closed all week. The Rev. James Galasinski and Carol Zimmerman, DRE, will be attending a religious professionals retreat together. Sara Trimm, our Congregational Administrator, will be on vacation. For pastoral care, contact a member of the Pastoral Care Team or leave a message on our voicemail.

### EARTH DAY ROADSIDE CLEANUP

Join us after worship on Sunday, April 23 to help clean up our adopted section of Riverside Drive. We will depart from the church at noon. Bring your work gloves and bright colored clothes. Garbage bags will be provided. If you have any questions, please contact Carol Zimmerman, DRE via [email](#).



## SPRING IS A TIME FOR... *SINGING!*

Many people in our congregation have happily noticed that our UU Church Choir has been reconvening to sing during some of our Sunday services. As we continue to rebuild our sense of community after the pandemic, we invite you to join our choir. For the rest of spring, the choir will be singing on an occasional basis, and new singers are welcome regardless of background and experience. If you're interested in singing, please contact:

Betsy Kepes, Music Coordinator [bkepes@yahoo.com](mailto:bkepes@yahoo.com)  
Carol Strome, Choir Conductor [cstrome50@gmail.com](mailto:cstrome50@gmail.com)  
Paul Siskind, Choir Conductor [paul@paulsiskind.com](mailto:paul@paulsiskind.com)



## FROM THE WORSHIP TEAM

As summer approaches, the Worship Team is gearing up to provide you with high-quality summertime worship services while Rev. James is taking his well-deserved summer leave. If you know someone who might make a good pulpit guest - or maybe you have a sermon in you - please speak with any member of the worship team during social hour (online or in-person) or drop a note to [worship@uucantonny.org](mailto:worship@uucantonny.org). We would love to hear your ideas!

Also, let us know what you think. We use feedback from the congregation in thinking about ways to provide you with a meaningful spiritual experience. Once again, talk with us during social hour or drop us a note!

Here are the members of your Worship Team:

Mark Berninghausen  
David Bradford  
Cathy Crosby (chair)  
Arthur Freeheart

Stevie Michaelson  
Rajiv Narula  
Dave Nelson

## MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS!

**Ed and Bobby Gordon** were attracted to the UU Church because of the values it espouses, the members themselves (many of whom we already knew), the lack of dogma, and the many activities it offers."

Ed was born in NYC and Bobby in a small town near Kingston, NY. They both graduated from Cornell, Ed in Veterinary Science and Bobby in Chemistry. After Cornell, Bobbi received a Master's Degree in Education from The University of Buffalo. They lived in Buffalo and Warsaw, NY before moving to Potsdam (actually Slab City) in 1975 and "hope to never move again"! Bobby and Ed have been married for 58 years! They have 4 children and 7 grandchildren scattered around the country. A small animal veterinarian off and on for 55 years, Ed also taught Veterinary Technology at SUNY Canton for 21 years. He was a colonel in the U. S. Army Veterinary Corps Reserves.



Bobby has had several jobs and volunteer positions over the years including chemistry technician, science teacher and real estate agent. She has been a literacy teacher and Coordinator of the Adult Literacy Program at the Potsdam Public Library for 18 years. In retirement some of Bobby's interests and activities include reading, travel, gardening, scrabble and Rummikub. In addition to his love for animals and plants, Ed enjoys



auctions, garage sales and flea markets. Both get a kick out of going to the casino. Ed and Bobby continue to volunteer in the local community.



**Carlene Bermann** grew up non-religious in Hampton, Virginia, and also lived in Vermont, Washington State, and Rhode Island. She is currently the interim director of the St Lawrence County Historical Association. Carlene resides in Potsdam right now but is in the process of buying a house in Oswegatchie.

She enjoys making pottery, volunteering at the Nicandri Nature Center, playing board games, kayaking, hiking, and caring for her many pets. She appreciates the sense of community and inclusivity at the UU Church of Canton.

### GOOGLE WORKSHOP

*Have you struggled to use Google Docs? If so, this workshop is for you!*

Many teams and committees at our church use Google products like Google Docs because of their shareability, but learning to use them can be tricky, at least at first. This workshop can help you to set up a Google account (if you don't already have one), access your Google Drive, and learn the basics of Google Docs.



The workshop is led by Jenn Whittaker in the Romer Room and it will be offered twice:

**Thursday, April 6 at 1:00p.m. and Sunday, April 16 at 1:00p.m.**

Each class will be limited to 6 participants. Please bring your laptop or tablet if you have one. If you don't have access to a device, please mention that when you sign-up. Contact [Jenn Whittaker](#) or call the office at 315-386-2498 to sign up today!



### ALL AGES GAME TIME

**Saturday, April 8 at 3:00p.m. in the Social Room**

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

### 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, April 11, 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](#).

**Jazz Night and Coffee Bar at Church  
Friday, April 28, 2023 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

Come out for an exciting night of Jazz, featuring local favorites John Danis and the Rev. James Galasinski!

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



**Sermon Writing Workshop  
Thursdays, May 18, May 25, and June 8  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

In the first two sessions, the Rev. James Galasinski will show you the dos and don'ts of preaching and examine what makes a good sermon. The assignment will be to write a 10-minute sermon (about 1,000 words). On the 3rd date we will meet to preach that sermon in a workshop format. The class will be your congregation and we will give you critical feedback. Please sign up by emailing [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org).

**SEEKING NOMINATIONS: 2023 Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award**

Each year, we recognize an individual who is making a difference in our community with an award established in 1990 in memory of Rachel Somers Grant. Rachel was a teacher and activist who lived in Canton from 1977 until her death in 1990. The award was established to honor those who work, as Rachel did, to make ours a more humane and progressive community.

Rachel believed grassroots movements were an effective means of achieving change. She challenged the lack of responsiveness of elected officials on issues important to her community, and she was a strong advocate for causes affecting the welfare of women, families, and the environment. She had a gift for organizing diverse groups and a talent for gaining the respect of supporters and opponents alike.

Nominations for the 2023 Rachel Somers Grant Award are asked to explain how the nominee exemplifies some of the following criteria:

- promotion of local grassroots efforts as a means of achieving social change
- advocacy on behalf of social justice, especially for those who are marginalized in some way
- active involvement in a variety of local groups working for a better community
- history of organizing, involving, and supporting community members in pursuit of social justice

Nominations are due no later than April 24, 2023 and may be sent by email to [socialaction@uucantonny.org](mailto:socialaction@uucantonny.org), or by mail to:

Social Action Committee  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton  
3 ½ East Main St.  
Canton NY 13617

## Our Church and General Assembly

General Assembly (GA) is the annual event when members of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) gather together to celebrate, sing, worship, confer, and take action. The location for this assembly moves around and this year will be in Pittsburgh, PA. from June 21-25. People can participate in-person or online. Detailed information is available [here](#).

Our past participation as a congregation in GA has varied. Our Minister and often one member of the congregation have attended in person. We have streamed the Worship Service from GA via Zoom. On occasion we have sent delegates to represent our congregation and vote on certain matters that are particularly important to us. This year there are two items of particular interest:

1. The election of the next President of the UUA.
2. The approval of a newly-worded Article II of the UUA Bylaws.  
(Rev. James spoke about this in his sermon on February 26.)

Our own Bylaws state that: “The Church Council shall appoint delegates to the General Assembly of the UUA...” Therefore, if you would like to be a delegate, please let Rev. James know. We can designate up to four delegates from our Church. Church Council will appoint our delegates at our May 3<sup>rd</sup> monthly meeting. Please note, being a delegate does not require in-person attendance at GA.

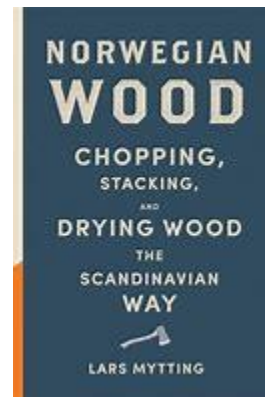
### DRY FIREWOOD CHURCH PROJECT

Church Council is endorsing a project to be led by Miles Manchester to encourage safer and better use of firewood for home heating in St. Lawrence County. Initially the focus is to distribute a copy of the book “Norwegian Wood” by Lars Mytting to every fire department in the county. The only stipulation is that someone in a department expresses an interest in acquiring the book for their department. No church funds are involved in acquiring the books since they are being purchased by a donation from an estate.

Efforts are being made to reach out to fire departments across the county through the fire chief’s association and other connections and opportunities. If anyone has contacts or connections with fire department members please contact Miles at [dryfirewood23@gmail.com](mailto:dryfirewood23@gmail.com) or speak with him at church.

Why this book? The primary cause of chimney and home fires originating from wood stoves and furnaces is wet unseasoned wood. This Norwegian author writes in great detail about the drying process, from when to cut trees for fuel to when it ignites in a stove. What he writes is based on scientific research done in Norway on “wood for fuel”. It appears that no similar research has been done in the US or Canada.

Why fire departments? Who better to understand the results of improper operation of wood stoves and furnaces? With all the personal connections of individuals in fire departments and events like field days and barbecues perhaps this effort could have a real impact. Feel free to offer comments and/or suggestions.





## FAITH IN ACTION

FIA's next scheduled meeting is Monday, April 10 at 7p.m. via [Zoom](#). Your attendance and participation are encouraged and welcome.

### SUNY POTSDAM@RCF SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

If you would like the opportunity to tutor or teach a skill or class to incarcerated students in Ogdensburg, [click here](#) to read about the various roles you could fill. This exciting program helps men in prison earn their Bachelor's Degree, which is a tremendous step toward successful re-entry into society.



#### CALL TO ACTION: Your help and support is needed now.

Our focus on Medical Aid in Dying legislation has a **new urgency**, as we learned from Corrine Carey at Compassion and Choices/NY: *"I wish I had better news to report this morning, but the fact is: We are going to have to work even harder than we have been to push lawmakers to take action in 2023. Another week goes by, and the bill is STILL not scheduled for a vote in the Health Committee in either the Assembly or the Senate."*

Our most recent newsletters contained a lot of information about this bill, [A995/S2445](#). We now urge everyone who wants to see this bill passed to take some action. **What actions?**

- **Join the Compassion & Choices email list** for weekly updates and most effective steps to take – email Corinne Carey [ccarey@compassionandchoices.org](mailto:ccarey@compassionandchoices.org) and mention you are with the Canton UU Church.
- **Please phone, write or email each of our district representatives.** Both Dan Stec and Scott Gray are on their respective Health Committees. [This legislation, which has the support of 63% of New Yorkers in polls, has been prevented from having a floor vote for 8 years. This is a profoundly undemocratic tactic.]
  - Dan Stec** – District 45 – [stec@nysenate.gov](mailto:stec@nysenate.gov) 518 455 2811  
118 State Street  
Legislative Office Building, Room 408  
Albany, NY 12247
  - Scott Gray** - District 116 - [grays@nyassembly.gov](mailto:grays@nyassembly.gov) 518-455-5545 or 315 786 0284  
317 Washington Street  
Suite 210, Dulles State Office Building  
Watertown, NY 13601

You can also contact other legislative leaders like:  
**[Senator Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins: \(518\) 455-2715](#)**  
**[Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie: \(518\) 455-3791](#)**
- **Write a Letter to the Editor** of our local publications, This will likely have the greatest impact on legislators and on the general public. As a plus, you can send a personal copy of your letter to legislators.
- Help with **phone-banking** - email [triest@compassionandchoices.org](mailto:triest@compassionandchoices.org).
- Finally, a **major lobbying effort** is scheduled for the morning of April 17 in Albany. More information is on the [C&C website](#).

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The planning committee for our **Social Justice Initiative** has been working to organize the events for our next conference, which is scheduled for October 13-15, 2023. We will explore the disparate impacts of climate change and other environmental issues on marginalized communities of our North Country, and steps we can take to make a positive difference. Along with a conference slate of guest speakers and informational workshops, we're also planning various events including music performances, films, a book discussion, and a Three Sisters community meal. Keep an eye out for complete information coming soon!



## WHAT IS PHISHING?



Phishing is a new method of tricking people into giving strangers money or access to accounts. A criminal will contact you pretending to be someone you know. Sometimes it's an entire email conversation back and forth before they ask you for "a favor" or make a "confidential request". How can you protect yourself from phishing scams?

**DO NOT BUY GIFT CARDS. DO NOT GIVE OUT PASSWORDS. DO NOT WIRE MONEY.**

DO NOT REPLY to any email that seems suspicious. Instead, contact the person directly using an email address or phone number that you already have. Ask them about the request you received. Even if the request seems legitimate, it's always good to double check. If the request is real, the person you contact will be able to verify. If the person you contact has no knowledge of the request, mark the request as "phishing" and report it. That will help prevent future scams and victims.

## 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

(315) 386-2498 • [office@uucantonny.org](mailto:office@uucantonny.org) • [www.uucantonny.org](http://www.uucantonny.org)