

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



Wednesday, May 3

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

Saturday, May 6

8:30 a.m., Spring Work Day

Sunday, May 7

Beliefs *Coming of Age Youth*

It's important to know what you believe. Community, personal choice, love, questioning and so much more shape who we are. Our youth have been pondering what they believe. Join us to hear the credo statements of our Coming-of-Age youth.

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

Monday, May 8

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

Tuesday, May 9

9:30 a.m., [Sacred Texts and Coffee](#)
11:30 a.m., Budget Finance Committee Meeting
1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 11

7:00 p.m., Alzheimer's Association Presentation

Saturday, May 13

9:00 a.m., Trip to Ottawa Tulip Festival

Sunday, May 14

Who Do You Think You Are? *Dave Nelson, Pulpit Guest*

May is Mental Health Awareness month and our own Dave Nelson explores the availability of resources for treatment, providing hope and encouragement for everyone. He also considers with humor the impact of illness on self-perception, self-awareness (who we think we are) and challenges how this might keep those in need from seeking treatment.

Monday, May 15

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 16

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 18

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

7:00 p.m., Sermon Writing Workshop (1 of 3)

Sunday, May 21

9:00 a.m., Church History Circle

Vulnerability, A Strength *The Rev. James Galasinski*

The best medicine for heartbreak is to express it honestly. It comes with some risk, but being vulnerable builds community and gets us to where we need to go. It is not a weakness but an asset.

Noon, Marching Band Practice

Monday, May 22

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

Tuesday, May 23

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

Thursday, May 25

7:00 p.m., Sermon Writing Workshop (2 of 3)

Sunday, May 28

Divinity and Creativity *The Rev. James Galasinski*

Pursuing beauty, expression, and art is a spiritual path. There is a way to live creatively. There are spiritual elements to good art. I tend to associate creativity with divinity.

Noon, Marching Band Practice

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
Summer Intern and Worship

The weather is sunny and nice. Class is not in session. The kids are out of school. Many of you take vacations and time off. Perhaps you spend time at a camp. It is the natural flow of summer. In July and August I take the majority of my study leave and vacation. At the church, things slow down. Committees stop meeting and worship attendance drops.

This summer might be a little different. I applied through St. Lawrence University for our church to be an internship site. I am very excited to announce that Grace Brouillette will be an intern here! I interviewed her, her references were all glowing about her, and she is an impressive person who incorporates mindfulness and anti-racism into what they do. She will be spending a lot of time preparing the Social Justice Initiative which is focusing on Climate Justice and will be October 13-15.

About worship attendance dropping in the summer: The Worship Committee and I have discussed not having formal worship for four to six Sundays in the summer. There are many professional and volunteer hours that go into creating a worship service: greeters, social hour hosts, musicians, technicians, preachers, lay leaders, worship associates, preparing slides and orders of service, and RE.

In the Rev. Max Coot's ministry here, there were no services in July and August and perhaps preceding his ministry. The Revs. Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock created Sunday worship services in the summer which was part of a much larger movement.

There are many reasons to stay open in the summer. That is when a lot of church shopping happens. What if we still gathered on Sunday mornings during summer but instead had discussions of depth over coffee, had some multi-generational activities or maybe more informal worship? What do you think? I think this is a conversation the whole congregation should have.

In peace,

The Rev. James Galasinski

FROM OUR PRESIDENT
Just Add Water and Light

The Spring rains, the lengthening daylight, the warmer weather - produce an explosion of life in our part of the world. Birds build their nests, insects hatch, change and fly. Plants push up. Fish spawn. Peepers peep. It's all such a wonder.

We embrace this wonder in our Mission Statement:

*Creating a welcoming, compassionate faith community, committed to social justice and **open to wonder**.*



It is from our sense of wonder that our love for the Earth arises. Standing before the majesty of our wonder we receive the profound awareness of our interconnectedness and interdependence.

We can be a welcoming, compassionate faith community, committed to social justice, but prior to acting we must first be still and open to wonder.

Hold tight to your sense of wonder and never let it slip away.

*Happy May,
Jon Montan, Church Council President*



FAITH ENGAGEMENT

Spring inspires me! Seeing the grass greening. Flowers blooming. Trees sprouting leaves. People outside soaking up the sun's rays. All this energy is inspiring. I am inspired by our faith too. The work of the Article 2 Commission is coming to a close. Check out <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission> to see the timeline for submitting suggestions and upcoming amendment discussions meetings.

Side with Love has a great toolkit to help UUs thwart anti-transgender bills and attacks. They are offering an outline to write a compelling letter to the editor. Learn more at <https://sidewith-love.org/tools-to-help-uus-thwart-anti-transgender-bills-and-attacks>. There is also a Beyond the Binary workshop happening at First UU in Syracuse on Saturday, May 6. Check it out <https://firstu-usyr.my.canva.site/bbcb>

The UUA is offering workshops on Welcoming Neurodivergent People. These skill up workshops offer interviews and live Q&A to speak on neurodivergence, neurotypicality, and ableism. Click on the following link to learn more: <https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/neurodiversity-series>.

Our faith calls us to act in love and fight for justice. What is inspiring you right now? I look forward to hearing. Blessed be.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

THANK UU:

- Caron Collins for sharing Music Without Borders as part of a recent Fun Day in religious education.
- Karen Bage for working with Great Northern Printing as part of the Coming-of-Age T-Shirt Fundraiser.

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 Barry Taylor and his wife Lynne. Barry suffered a stroke a few weeks ago, which further complicated his ongoing health conditions.

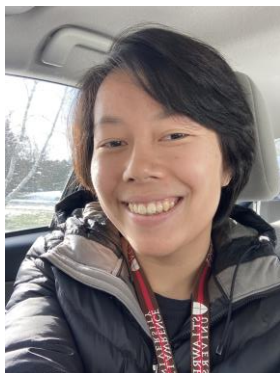
♥ We send healing thoughts to Barbara Beekman as she recovers from a broken ankle.

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.

A memorial service for Sarah "Sally" Van de Water will be held at church on Saturday, June 24 at 10 a.m. Please mark your calendars now so that you can join the family in celebrating her long and wonderful life.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Wondering how to contact your church friends? We have an online directory located on our website [here](#). The directory is password protected so the information can remain relatively safe. If you need the password, just contact the office via email or phone. If you are not listed in our directory, but you would like to be included, please tell us! We're happy to include anyone who wishes to participate.



MEET OUR SUMMER INTERN!

Grace Brouillette (she/they) is currently a senior at St. Lawrence University and will graduate in May with a degree in environmental studies and education. This summer, they will be the Unitarian Universalist Church's Media Strategist and Social Justice Coordinator through St. Lawrence University's Public Interest Corps internship program. She is very passionate about social justice, food advocacy, and community engagement. In her free time, she enjoys playing the guitar and piano, reading, spending time with friends and family, and going for long walks and hikes. She is very excited to spend her summer in the North Country helping us plan the

Social Justice Initiative Conference in October and continuing to expand UU's connections. Their internship will begin June 5 and end on August 4. Welcome, Grace!

One of our Spring fundraisers to help reach our \$10,000 fundraising goal will be **The Envelope Challenge**.

How will it work? Look for a display of 100 envelopes in our Social Room. Each envelope will represent a donation amount. So our 1st envelope is available for a \$1 donation; the 33rd envelope is available for a \$33 donation; our 99th envelope is available for a \$99 donation, and so on. If we get a supporter for every envelope, we will have raised over \$5,000!

Envelopes will be available in the Social Room starting on **Sunday, May 7**. Once you have taken an envelope(s), please put your name and phone number on the back so we can track returns. Why do we need your name and phone number? To be eligible for some great prizes awarded at the end of the challenge.



Options for returning your envelope:

- After Sunday service, select your envelope, insert your money, sign your name and phone number on the back of the envelope, and drop it in the designated container.
- Or if you take an envelope home you can return it the following Sunday (see instructions above); or you can drop it off at the church office during office hours (Tuesday & Thursday from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm).
- Or you can mail your envelope **in a separate envelope** (don't forget to sign your name and phone number on the back of the envelope containing your donation to be entered in the drawing) to the UU Church of Canton, 3½ East Main St, Canton, NY 13617.

Can't make it to church to select an envelope and want to participate? No problem. Just send a check for the amount you are comfortable contributing, and we will match you up with an envelope (or as close to the amount) you have chosen to donate.

Spring Church Work Day
Saturday, May 6, 2023
8:30 am – Noon



Many hands make light work, and we need hands! We will be weeding, edging, and mulching our landscaping beds, sweeping and edging sidewalks, washing windows (inside and out), removing storm windows and replacing them with screens, and other jobs to clean up after a long, cold winter. Please bring work gloves.

If you are comfortable lending tools for the cause, we can use rakes, brooms, weeding tools, and 5-gallon buckets. To participate please sign up with a Building & Grounds committee member in the social room after Sunday service on May 1st or email the office at office@uucantonny.org.

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, May 9, 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, join us via ZOOM at [this link](#).

UNDERSTANDING ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA
Thursday, May 11 at 7p.m. in the Social Room.

Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging. Join us to learn about the impact of Alzheimer's, the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia, stages and risk factors, current research and treatments available for some symptoms, and Alzheimer's Association resources. We are thrilled that Victoria Sokolowski from the Alzheimer's Association of Central New York has agreed to offer this presentation in person at our church. Watch for registration information in the weekly e-news or contact the office to sign up.



A Trip to the Ottawa Tulip Festival!

A caravan of cars is being planned for Saturday, May 13th. We will gather in the church parking lot at 9a.m. and then divide into cars. We'll meet in Byward Market and have lunch. And of course, tour all the beautiful tulips!

If you're interested or would just like to know more, email outreach@uucan-tonny.org.

Social Action Shared Offering (SASO) to benefit Behavioral Health Services at United Helpers Sunday, May 14



Concerns about Mental Health treatment in America are connected with seemingly every news event we read about, from the pandemic to mass shootings, from gun control to homelessness. What are we doing to support Mental Health Care, as a nation, as a community, and as a congregation? How do we contribute to the Wellness of our neighbors and friends? Did you know that one of our county's largest non-profit organizations provides Mental Health Services to over 1% of the residents in St Lawrence County?

United Helpers has been a force of healing and care in the North Country since 1898. As our community has evolved and needs changed, United Helpers has continually re-focused efforts to meet the needs of the people in our community. UH started with an orphanage, then opened a nursing home and then another, and eventually added community residences for Developmentally Delayed adults, Senior and Disabled Housing and, most recently, Behavioral Health programs. The Behavioral Health programs serve over 1,200 people in five programs throughout St Lawrence and Jefferson Counties.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. On May 14, the Faith In Action Committee has organized a SASO to benefit our local environment through the work of [United Helpers' Behavioral Health Programs](#) headed by our own Dave Nelson. The money raised will be used to make sure that our neighbors who struggle with mental illness will be cared for with dignity and understanding, with compassion and respect.

SCIENCE BOOK CLUB

On **Thursday, May 18**, the Science Book Club will be discussing Michael Shermer's book: *The Believing Brain: From Ghosts and Gods to Politics and Conspiracies - How we Construct Beliefs and Reinforce them as Truths*. The meeting will be held by Zoom at 7:00 pm. To join the discussion, email Brian Gardam at briangardam@gmail.com.



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@uucan-tonny.org.

Jazz Night and Coffee Bar at Church
Friday, May 19, 2023 6:30-8:30 p.m.

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

Coffee bar will include cafe americano, espresso, decaf coffee, various teas, including herbal, and hot chocolate. It's free and open to the public, so be sure to invite your friends!



WE'RE GETTING THE BAND BACK TOGETHER!



Join us as we celebrate the LGBTQ presence in our community during the **Canton Dairy Parade on Saturday, June 3**. We will play a fun and simple arrangement of *We Are Family*, and we want you to join the band! We'll hold rehearsals after church on Sunday, May 21 and Sunday, May 28. There will be another rehearsal on Saturday, June 3 at 11:30 a.m., just before the parade. Contact Jill Rubio with questions.

Waterfalls, Mountains, and Geocaches, oh my!



The UUGeos Group invites you to a Memorial Day Weekend geocache adventure on Saturday, May 27 at 1:00 p.m. exploring beautiful Rainbow Falls and Tooley Pond Mountain. We will meet at the trailhead for Rainbow Falls, located 6.1 miles down Tooley Pond Road from Degrass. A short walk, through open hardwoods and across a small footbridge, brings you to a gorgeous 35-foot waterfall on the south branch of the Grasse River. After finding the hidden treasure there, you can choose to hike the moderate 2-mile loop at Tooley Pond Mountain for another geocache. Please wear supportive shoes and don't forget to bring a camera to capture the beauty of this area. For more information about geocaching, visit www.geocaching.com

Questions? Contact Caron Collins at bandtchr1@hotmail.com.



Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton
Social Justice Initiative
Promoting justice, equity, and compassion in human relations

Social Justice Initiative 2023 Conference: Climate Justice
October 13-15, 2023

Timothy Beal will be one of the presenters at our Social Justice Initiative this year. The library committee is organizing a common read of his book [When Time Is Short](#).

The author will be joining us via Zoom for a discussion of the book the Sunday, October 8, which is the Sunday right before the conference. Copies of the book will be available through our library in the near future. Stay tuned for more details as they develop.



Sunday, June 11: Our Annual Church Picnic
at Bend in the River Park - Watch for more details in the coming weeks.

Unirondack is Filling up Fast!



Unirondack is a summer camp established by the New York State Convention of Universalists in 1951. We strive to merge our work with the UU values, and have found our program most poignantly focusing on acceptance, justice, equity, compassion, and valuing the inherent worth and dignity of all people. Things that build an inclusive and intentional community that serves our youth and we add youth empowerment and political awareness to our camp's influences.

Beyond the principles, Unirondack's work and community members are not exclusively UU. We place strong value on the possibilities and fun that can be created when you build a youth-centered space. We achieve our ultimate goal of fun by working to remove the barriers of acceptance and self-love the world puts on us. And the results are beautiful and come at a time when the world so badly needs places that tell youth they belong.

We are a UU summer camp. And we welcome everyone else who feels uplifted by values of truth and acceptance as well. We uphold values of queerness, youth empowerment, political awareness and social justice, and a commitment to grow and change with our community.

To learn more about our program, visit www.unirondack.org or email director@unirondack.org. We have programs for youth, families, young adults and adults alike! You're never too old to play, grow, learn, and build community - come say hello.

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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