

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

NEWSLETTER

November 2023 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Wednesday, November 1

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

6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Thursday, November 2

5:30 p.m., Yoga with Robin

Sunday, November 5 - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

9:00 a.m., Canvass Conversation Meeting

Peace is Possible

The Rev. James Galasinski

Hamas terrorizes, murders, and takes hostages. Israel launches intense missile strikes in response. Thousands of children are dead. The U.S. and other Western democracies officially support Israel. Who has the power? How does antisemitism play a role here? Who is being marginalized? It's complex and complicated but peace is always a possibility.

Noon, Canvass Conversation Meeting

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

Wednesday, November 8

7:00 p.m., Second Wednesday Listening Circle

Thursday, November 9

Noon, Budget & Finance Meeting

5:30 p.m., Yoga with Robin

Sunday, November 12

9:00 a.m., Canvass Conversation Meeting

The Gospel According to James

The Rev. James Galasinski

Meaning and happiness can be found despite the terror of history, insane cruelty, and repugnant death. That is the good news. And it takes some work and practice.

Noon, Canvass Conversation Meeting

Tuesday, November 14

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

1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting

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

Thursday, November 16

6:00 p.m., Third Thursday Soup

Sunday, November 19

9:00 a.m., History Circle Meeting

Billions and Billions

Samuel Joseph, Pulpit Guest

Scientists estimate that 2 trillion galaxies exist in the observable universe each with millions of stars. Reflections on the magnitude of the universe and what it means for our finite lives.

Monday, November 20

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, November 21

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

1:30 p.m., Membership and Outreach Meeting

6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

Sunday, November 26

Whatever Happened to Black Lives Matter?

The Rev. James Galasinski

Let's take a look back at the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd. 2020 was ripe for change but not much actually changed. In order to succeed, justice movements need to go beyond virtue signaling and demand policy changes.

Monday, November 27

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

Thursday, November 30

5:30 p.m., Yoga with Robin

Staff Schedules for the 2023-2024 Church Year:

THE CHURCH OFFICE IS OPEN on TUESDAY and THURSDAY from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Rev. James Galasinski: Available [by email](#) and by appointment **Monday - Thursday**

Carol Zimmerman, DRE: Available [by email](#) **Sunday-Thursday** and by appointment on **Tuesdays & Wednesdays.**

Sara Trimm, Administrator: Available [by email](#) **Monday - Thursday** & in the office **Tuesday & Thursday**



JAMES' JOURNAL Cultivating Climate Justice

Cultivating Climate Justice's events have drawn to a close, but I know the new insights, deeper connections, and hope live on. This was our 3rd Social Justice Initiative and was made possible by the generosity and vision of Todd Moe and Paul Siskind.

On our last weekend Sakokwenionkwas (Tom Porter) led us in the *Words Spoken Before All Others* and some teaching stories. One story involved his grandfather. A professor asked him what he means by Creator. His grandfather said he would need 300 people and 300 years to explain that because the Creator is everything. Bear Fox of the Akwesasne Women Singers shared beautiful songs, stories, and group dances. This was followed by a Three Sisters Soup dinner.

Saturday was filled with the poetry of Dale Hobson and beautiful harp music and singing from Martha Gallagher. Timothy Beal spoke about how to compost Christianity and find indigenous wisdom in the creation accounts in Genesis. Talking Wings spoke about the rights of watersheds and the legislation that is trying to be passed locally. We learned about the history of environmental racism at Akwesasne. Catherine Landis spoke about the need for native plants which support insects which birds need. Erik Backus took a look at what our local vulnerabilities will be like as climate change occurs in the North Country. Our very own Sue Powers got us to look at the bigger picture of clean energy despite some who don't want those solutions in their backyard. Caron Collins led some eco-drumming. We had a great lunch from Big Spoon. These are just the highlights.

On Sunday, Tom Porter returned to offer the closing for the *Words Spoken Before All Others* and Martha Gallagher graced us with more of her melodic harp music.

Thank you to Caron Collins, Arthur Freeheart, Ginger Storey-Welch, and Paul Siskind for organizing this.

In peace,

The Rev. James Galasinski

FROM OUR PRESIDENT To What Are You Connected?



This month I will focus on connection, which is part of our Meaning, Connection, and Participation theme.

Everything in Nature is connected, on the smallest and all the way up to the largest scales. These connections manifest in almost infinite ways, but the ones that link human beings together are the ones I wish to speak about.

If you walk into a room full of people you have not met, you may wonder: "What is my connection to these people?" You haven't yet asked anyone about their occupation, their interests, marital status, ethnicity, religious orientation, or beliefs. All you really know is that they are human beings and that fact is the answer to the question of how you are connected.

This is how Unitarian Universalists connect -- human to human. Of course, we are interested in peoples' stories, of their joys and sorrows, of the opportunity to share vital feelings in a safe, compassionate way. Those things come in

time, after trust has been established. Connection begins with presence, kindness, and an open heart. With us being our authentic selves. Connection strengthens over time with trust, compassion, respect, and reciprocity.

This deeper kind of connection supports the other essential things that church should provide: meaning and participation. Our Church Community, our Ministry, can be a source of connection for you. This is a message I hope you will share with people who may not yet realize they wish to join with us.

In Faith,
Jon Montan, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT

Life has a way of throwing us curve balls. My father has recently entered hospice care. I would have thought it would have been my mother first. As a whole family, we are managing these changes and decisions.

This wholly human experience has made me grateful for my faith and this church. I know that this is the cycle of life and yet there are so many doubts and fears. I am leaning into the divine universe to hold me and my family during this challenging time. I know too that this church community will be present for me when I need it.

We are in this process of life and death together. I recently found the UUA Tapestry of Faith Curriculum “[Facing Death with Life: An Adult Program](#)”. I will be reviewing it to help me navigate the end of my parent’s lives. I am wondering if this would be helpful for others and if we should offer it as a workshop at the church. What do you think?

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



JOYS & SORROWS:

- ♥ Our deepest sympathies go out to the family and friends of Pat Dunkelberg, who died on October 15 at the age of 93. We have fond memories of Pat, who attended church here her whole life. Read her full obituary [here](#).
- ♥ Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Galen Pletcher, a former church member who died in September at the age of 80. You can read his full obituary [here](#).
- ♥ We are keeping Carol Zimmerman in our hearts as she navigates the next step in caring for her parents.

THANK YOU:

- Phil Collins who took the time to thoroughly clean our coffee maker.
- To everyone who helped with our 2023 Social Justice Initiative: Cultivating Climate Justice.



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
3 1/2 East Main Street, Canton, New York 13617-1417

2024 Canvass

Meaning – Connection – Participation

Our [2024 Canvass](#) focuses on **Meaning, Connection, and Participation**, three words that form the foundation of a vibrant church community. We will use our time together to explore more deeply how we can improve opportunities for meaning-making, genuine connection with others, and authentic participation.

To facilitate our ability to meet in small groups of 8-10, we will hold meetings before and after Sunday worship services on November 5 and November 12. You can sign up for meetings during social hour or [online here](#).

THIRD THURSDAY SOUP



Come enjoy some dinner with your fellow UUs! A simple meal of soup and bread will be offered on the Third Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. in the Social Room. Vegetarian options will be available. Our next Soup Dinner is scheduled for **Thursday, November 16 at 6 p.m.**

Any questions or interest in making soup for one of the monthly meals, email outreach@uucantonny.org.

FREE YOGA CLASSES OFFERED



Robin Collen will be leading a series of free yoga classes **on Thursday evenings from 5:30p.m. – 6:45p.m.** in the Social Room. Classes will be held on **November 2, 9, & 30 and December 7 & 14.** If you are interested in attending, please [complete this form](#).

These sessions are appropriate for anyone interested in an accessible meditative and physical practice that inspires connections, compassion, and joy, and can lead to improved general health, strength, and flexibility. The entire community—whether you are new to yoga or have practiced extensively—is invited to attend. Classes will be gentle and meditative with the invitation for participants to work at a pace that is right for them—whether that is taking things more slowly or offering greater challenge. Participants are welcome to use chairs as well as mats. Please bring a yoga mat and bath towel. Call or text Robin with questions and concerns (315.261.1684). Robin is a dance professor at SUNY Potsdam and a 200-hour Kripalu certified yoga teacher.

SCIENCE BOOK CLUB

The UU Science Book Club's November book is *This is What It Sounds Like* by Susan Rogers and Ogi Ogas. The club will meet by Zoom on Thursday, November 16, at 7:00 pm. To participate, contact Brian Gardam at Briangardam@gmail.com.

CULTIVATING CLIMATE JUSTICE: FOLLOW UP

At the end of Saturday's SJI events, a TED Talk entitled *Finding Joy in Climate Action* by Ayana Johnson was shown, followed by an activity where participants recorded and shared their ideas for "making a difference." There were many great ideas, such as:

- Promote peaceful communications
- Call my elected representatives
- Address rapid and non-rapid responses (a rapid response would be an emergency; a non-rapid response might be working on a resilient microgrid)
- Grow more of your own food & promote local self-sufficiency
- Share knowledge (such as food preservation)
- Outreach to community
- Policy changes (It was discussed during the conference that elected officials need to hear "yes" as well as "no" to issues, and people tend to show up to say "NO!!")
- Welcome climate migrants
- Promote neighborhood microgrids
- Help your neighbor in little ways, build community
- Use less, redefine what it means to be "middle class," what it means to be "rich"
- See natural world as sacred
- Express gratitude for natural world OFTEN
- Watch word choices (words like "natural resources" and "natural capital" imply an exploitive, extractionist type of mindset)

POLICY REGARDING ANNOUNCEMENTS DURING CHURCH SERVICES

In order to maintain the flow and mood of a worship service, the Minister and Worship Committee request, if you would like to make an announcement during a service, that you please follow these policies.

For a **Brief Announcement** that you would like the minister or lay leader to deliver from the pulpit in order to briefly convey timely information, follow these guidelines:

1. Ideally, announcements are included in the order of service and do not need to be verbally repeated. You may request that the announcement in the order of service is also highlighted from the pulpit.
2. The announcement should be no longer than 3 succinctly written sentences.
3. Give your announcement to the Congregational Administrator in the office, (or email it to office@uucantonny.org) by noon Wednesday.
4. Whenever possible, write your announcement in a format that is pertinent to the immediate mission of our religious community. For example: "If you were moved by last week's sermon on poverty in St. Lawrence County, please attend the Poverty 101 workshop at noon on Sunday."
5. There is time for a maximum of 3 Basic Announcements during a service, in order of request.
6. Announcements will not be accepted on Sunday morning.

For a **Special Announcement**—a specific, more detailed announcement that you would personally like to deliver from the pulpit—follow these guidelines:

1. This type of announcement is reserved for church groups and committees (OWL, SASO, Stewardship, etc.).
2. Announcements must be submitted to the Congregational Administrator in the office, (or email it to office@uucantonny.org) by noon Wednesday.
3. Write out your announcement and rehearse reading it. Do not deliver your announcement off the cuff. Stay on script. Reading it slowly and clearly, it may not be longer than 3 minutes. (Maximum of about 350-400 words.)
4. The minister or lay leader may contact you for clarification and to let you know when during the service, you will be delivering your announcement.

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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