

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton
NEWSLETTER
May 2024 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Wednesday, May 1

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

Thursday, May 2

5:00 p.m., Game Night

Saturday, May 4

8:30 a.m., Spring Work Day

Sunday, May 5

The Swarming Blackbirds and Us

The Rev. James Galasinski

The process of swarming is much like how emergence happens in community. It involves simple entities operating independently in a chaotic environment.

Yet out of this murmuration comes awe-inspiring beauty and practical wisdom for us.

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

Tuesday, May 7

9:30 a.m., [Sacred Texts and Coffee](#)
1:00 p.m., CommComm Meeting

Wednesday, May 8

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

Thursday, May 9

7:00 p.m., Green Burial Workshop

Sunday, May 12

Lessons We Learned From Our Mothers

Cathy Crosby, Valerie Ingram, and Doug Rubio

Mothers are just people with all the complexities, flaws and gifts that most people have. Yet as our roles and relationships change over time it is important to reassess what is important. When reflecting on those relationships we can always learn more empathy and have stronger commitments to humanity.

Monday, May 13

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 14

1:30 p.m., Membership and Outreach Meeting
6:30 p.m., RE Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 15

Noon, Budget & Finance Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 16

6:00 p.m., Third Thursday Soup
7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Sunday, May 19

9:00 a.m., History Circle Meeting

As Yielding As Melting Ice

The Rev. James Galasinski

The Tao Te Ching, though ancient, exudes timeless wisdom. It is an ongoing eternal struggle to cultivate a presence of patience and receptivity. The ability to unknow and yield is needed now more than ever.

Monday, May 20

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

Tuesday, May 21

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

Saturday, May 25

4:30 p.m., Salsa Workshop

Sunday, May 26

B Corporations: The Organic Certification of Capitalism

The Rev. James Galasinski

Capitalism can be used to make the world better.

Businesses can benefit people, communities, and the environment. Companies can make a profit and be accountable to a greater good.

Noon, UU Geos Outing



JAMES' JOURNAL

Incarnating Interdependence

I have officiated and led many memorials, funerals, and burials in my ten plus years of ministry. Most have been either outside, in UU churches, or at funeral homes. Most of the deceased were cremated. I used to think I wanted my body to be cremated. I definitely didn't want to be embalmed. I didn't want my body taking up so much space. I didn't want a big vault and casket. But I didn't realize the amount of fossil fuel that is used to burn a body into ashes. Think about it; we are mostly made up of water.

There is a better alternative. Sometimes the old is new. Natural burials or green burials have existed probably since the first people existed. Bodies were put in the ground as quickly as reasonably possible. Maybe they buried them so that scavenging animals could not get at them. They then honored their ancestors with music, memory, myths, artifacts, and probably other rituals. Jews and Muslims still have natural burials.

There is deeper meaning here. We are returning to the earth. We decompose back into fundamental elements that can nourish a nearby tree. We are incarnating the interdependent cycle of life.

I don't understand all the regulations and costs regarding natural burials, but I know that it is now available locally. If you are interested in knowing more, please attend the Green Burial Workshop on Thursday, May 9.

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

The Rev. James Galasinski

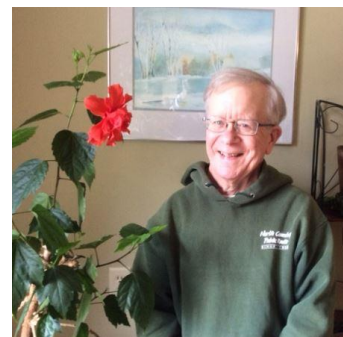
FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Gardener's Guessing Game

One of the great challenges of growing food crops in our northern climate is trying to extend the growing season. When is it safe to plant? Every gardener has their own strategy in this quest. May is a focal month for the spring gardener in this annual guessing game. You have the early planters who risk frost but have backup seedlings at the ready in reserve. You have the play-it-safers who plant when frost probability is almost zero. Then you have the technologists, who use everything from hot caps to high tunnels and greenhouses to buffer the vicissitudes of the spring weather. It's all about risk and reward.

Despite our best efforts, anyone who practices agriculture knows that things can and do go wrong from time to time, sometimes affecting one type of plant, sometimes affecting many (as in a drought). Gardeners and farmers try to control pests and disease, irrigate where needed and build up soil fertility, but come to see that some things are beyond their efforts. Conditions and results are never exactly the same from year to year. Inevitably they develop a long view of things.

Much has been said and written about gardening as a spiritual practice. For me being in the garden evokes a primal connection with the life that sustains me. A deep gratitude for my partnership in this exchange. You do not have to call yourself a gardener or even like to actually get your hands dirty in a garden. Nevertheless, you can learn so much about life by hanging around gardeners. Practically



everything that happens with a garden is a metaphor for something in life, if you are open to that awareness. Perhaps you may even come to be able to take the long view of the gardener/farmer and be able to put the problems of the moment in perspective.

Well, I gotta go. The garden is calling and I have work to do.

Jon Montan, Church Council President

FAITH ENGAGEMENT

Our religious education program provides some unique hands-on opportunities to grow in our faith. Every year we do service projects to make our world better. We have baked dog biscuits for the Potsdam Humane Society. This past month, we installed a new solitary bee hotel in our pollinator garden with help from Miles Manchester.



As Unitarian Universalists, we live our values every day. Spring is a wonderful time to reevaluate what is important. Like plants and newborn animals, we have an opportunity to grow right now. As we enter springtime and the growing season, how are you living your faith values? What ways are you finding to connect with being a UU? May we all find inspiration.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



- A shout out to the Earth Day roadside cleanup crew who patrolled our “UU Mile” on a brisk, windy day: Karen Bage, David Doran, Maggie Hockett, Valerie Ingram, Betsy Kepes, Lorraine Olendzenski, and Carol Zimmerman.
- Thank you to everyone who helped at Eileen Raymond’s memorial service: Barb Beekman, Pete Beekman, Louise Bixby, Jan DeWaters, Pat Glover, Valerie Ingram, Linda Kenny, Carol Pynchon, Rebecca Rivers, Wil Rivers, Sara Hutcheson, Carol Strome, Eden Terrell, Erik Whittaker, Jenn Whittaker, Theresa Witmer, Kathy Wyckoff
- Miles Manchester for working with our children to install the bee hotel near the pollinator garden.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

In an effort to use Everybody's Birthday to connect us within our community throughout the year, the Caring Circle has compiled a list of birthdays for the coming month. If you see someone at church or out and about, wish them Happy Birthday! If you're inclined to send a card, addresses can be found in the church directory online. You can ask Sara in the office for the password to access it. And if you'd

like to support the [Caring Circle](#), fill out [this form](#) and join us in supporting members in a variety of ways!

- May 1: Lena Frank, Sally Vrooman
- May 3: Doug Rubio
- May 5: Karen Wells
- May 8: Crosby Terrell, Harper Terrell
- May 9: Geetika Narula
- May 10: Ed Gordon, Phil LaMarche
- May 11: Todd Moe, David Nelson
- May 17: Eric Williams-Bergen
- May 18: Elias Nelson
- May 19: Wyatt LaMarche, Kevin Ball, Nelly Case
- May 26: Maggie McKenna
- May 27: Dave Nelson
- May 28: Dwight Stevenson
- May 29: Zoya Kocho-Williams, Milner Grimsled



GOOD NEWS! GRANT AWARDED!



The Church has received a grant award of \$3,000 from The New York State Convention of Universalists (NYSCU) to create an external communication's campaign titled, *Is UU for You?* NYSCU awards resources annually to Unitarian Universalists organizations across New York State to help congregations promote awareness, appreciation, and literacy in Universalist history and contemporary UU values.

"While we are a spiritual tradition that does not proselytize and try to convert someone from one religion to another, Canton's innovative program will communicate UU values in a way that broadly resonates across their region. We're delighted to be able to support this project with grant funding," said Ann Rhody, President of NYSCU.

The region-wide communications campaign set to air on radio and post to social media in the spring and summer of 2024 will promote the UU congregations of Canton, Watertown, and Plattsburgh. "This is a timely grant for us", said Rev. Galasinski. In October of 2025, the church will host the 200th meeting of The New York State Convention of Universalists (NYSCU) bicentennial.

SPRING WORK DAY



It's time to get the church grounds all spruced up and looking fabulous for the summer. Many hands make light work, so we're gathering on **Saturday, May 4 at 8:30 a.m.** with our work gloves to enjoy a morning of yardwork and fellowship. What a great way to meet new people at church!! Please contact Gary Hoose with any questions.

FROM YOUR WORSHIP TEAM

It's the May newsletter. That means the Summer Worship Series is right around the corner! We will be continuing the tradition started last summer of alternative worship formats during July and August, including Coffee & Conversation and interactive worship. In addition, we will be adding some services that begin in the sanctuary and continue in the social room with conversation focused on meaningful questions posed during the service. Hopefully, an outdoor service will also be among the mix!

If you have any thoughts about the summer, please speak with Rev. James or Cathy Crosby, Worship Committee Chair. You can also email the Worship Team at worship@uucantonny.org.

...And just a quick reminder, because with summer approaching many of us will find ourselves away from an easy drive, walk, or bike to the church. You can always join our spiritual community through Zoom! Click on **Sunday Worship** in the "This Sunday" section of the church homepage. On this page, you will find a brief description of today's service and a link to Zoom. We invite people into the meeting at about 10:20. A member of the worship team is always there to welcome you, share information, answer any questions you might have, and host an online conversation time following the service. Hope to see you online when we can't see you in person!

Thanks!

Your Worship Team

Dance Connections: Latin Beats! Salsa, Bachata, and Bomba

North Country Latin Dance will host a two-session Latin Beats: Salsa-Dancing Workshop, **Saturday, April 27 and Saturday, May 25, 4 - 5:30 p.m.**

Jeanna Matthews, founder of the North Country Latin Dance community, will lead a fundamentals of salsa workshop including a variety of dance moves such as shoulder check and hairbrush, and basic steps like cumbia, as well as a variety of turn patterns. In April, the workshop will include bachata moves. In May, the instruction will include bomba moves. Workshops will be hosted in the social room and childcare will be available.



GAME NIGHT

Join us on **Thursday, May 2 at 5 p.m.** for an evening of board games! Bring your favorite game and friends or just come to join in! We'll meet in the social room and enjoy a relaxing evening of fun and fellowship. Want to stay up to date on all the game nights? Join the [private facebook group](#)!

Contact [Carlene Bermann](#) if you have any questions.



Green Burial Workshop led by Barry Walch Thursday, May 9 7:00-8:30p.m.

Barry Walch, recently retired professor Funeral Service Administration at SUNY Canton, will offer a consumer-centered presentation on green burials followed by a question-and-answer period at church in the Romer Room.

There is a growing interest in green burials. Our last environmental impact as humans will be what happens to our bodies when we die. For many people that opt for a green burial, it can come down to cost, environmental impact, and legacy. Individuals planning their options are considering how to minimize negative environmental effects, conserve natural resources, limit carbon emissions, mitigate health risks, protect natural habitat, and preserve the environment. Choices can be made at each step of the death care process to limit waste, reduce the carbon footprint, and nourish the local ecosystem.

Workshop presenter, Mr. Barry Walch, a funeral director since 1978, practiced in Conway New Hampshire prior to relocating to Canton. Walsh was also a professor of Funeral Service Administration at SUNY Canton for 32 years until his recent retirement. He has lectured throughout New York to groups of funeral directors, hospice volunteers, funeral service students, and fellow educators. Walsh continues to occasionally serve local funeral homes to maintain his currency in the field. Whether he's meeting with grieving families, caring for the deceased, or participating in funeral rites, the combination of close personal service for a bereaved family and the wider view of regional and national patterns of response to loss, place Walsh in a well-informed position on green funerary options.

It was recently announced that Bayside Cemetery in Potsdam has been approved by the state to offer 'natural burials' in certain sections of the cemetery. Bayside has set aside two areas for natural burial, a riverside section, and a wooded section. Both sections are near roads to make winter burials possible, and each area has approximately 20 spots.

TULIP FESTIVAL TRIP

A Trip to the [2024 Ottawa Tulip Festival!](#) A caravan of cars is being planned for **Saturday, May 11th**. We will gather in the church parking lot at 9 a.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 like to know more, email outreach@uucantonny.org.



THIRD THURSDAY SOUP



Come enjoy dinner with fellow UUsers on **Thursday, May 16 at 6 p.m.**

We have been sharing a simple meal of soup and bread on the third Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. in the Social Room.

Email outreach@uucantonny.org with questions or to sign up to make soup for any of the meals.

This will be the last Thursday soup of the church year - we'll start back up in September.

SCIENCE BOOK CLUB

The UU Science Book Club will examine the smarts of plants by discussing *Brilliant Green - the surprising history and science of plant intelligence* - by Stefano Mancuso and Alessandra Viola. The group meets by Zoom on Thursday, May 16, at 7:00 pm.

For more information, contact briangardam@gmail.com.

UU SUMMER CANOE/KAYAK SERIES

Mark your calendars for Saturdays **May 18, June 22, and August 10.**

Destination for Saturday, May 18, is Rainbow Falls Reservoir. We'll meet at 9:30a.m. and plan to be back by 2:30p.m. If the weather is poor, we'll schedule a rain date for Sunday, right after church. Contact [Valerie Ingram](#) or [Carol Zimmerman](#) to sign up and for more details.



Destinations for June 22 and August 10 TBD, but expect a longer, full-day wilderness experience on August 10.

Please let us know if you would like to participate, but do not have access to a canoe or kayak. We'll round one up for you!



UUGeos family geocaching returns!

Join the UUGeos on **Sunday, May 26th at 12:00 noon** to seek and find 2 local geocaches. What are geocaches? Traditional geocaches can be large containers filled with prizes or very small ones that are well hidden in unique locations. Some may be Earth Caches that bring you to interesting geological or historical locations, or Virtual Caches where you must answer questions about the location. They can be Multicaches that lead you from place to place, or Mystery and Puzzle caches

that challenge your ingenuity. Intrigued? Come join us on Sunday, May 26th at 12:00 noon in our church parking lot. We will carpool together to 2 traditional geocaches in Rensselaer Falls. All ages and abilities are welcomed. Snacks provided. Contact Caron Collins at bandtchr1@hotmail.com for details.



Potsdam Pride Invites UU's to Stand with LOVE

UU LGBTQIA2S+ allies have been asked by Potsdam Pride to bring pride flags and stand outside the doors of the **June 7** Pride Festival drag show to welcome guests and form a visual deterrent to any protestors who might try to approach attendees.

To stand with love, sign up at social hour!



FRIDAY
JUNE 7 **2024**
5:45 p.m.



Pine Street Arena
43 Pine St.
Potsdam, NY.

Celebrate the freedom to LOVE

Our Annual Church Picnic will be held on **Sunday, June 9, 2024** at Bend in the River Park in Canton. If you can help with the planning, please email outreach@uucantonny.org

Adult Adventure Trips at Unirondack!

Unirondack is excited to announce a whole new slate of new trips for adults! Unirondack is a summer camp and conference center founded by Unitarian Universalists that has been serving UU youth and adults in the Adirondacks for more than 70 years. This year we are offering a whole new selection of adventure programs for adults! These programs offer full guided service throughout the Adirondacks including food and cooking, logistics planning, and the major equipment as well. For more information, you can email Sam.B@unirondack.org, or check out our [website](#).

Unirondack's Spring 2024 Adult Trip Calendar:

May 6 - 12: Wilderness Art Trip // Creatives Retreat
May 16 - 22: Adirondack 90-Miler (FULL!)
May 16 - 21: Intro to Backpacking
May 24 - 29: Introduction to Canoeing
May 16 - 21: Leadership Paddling
July 7 -12: Intro to Backpacking II

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**

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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