

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton
NEWSLETTER
May 2025 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Saturday, May 3

9:00 a.m., Spring Work Day
3:00 p.m., Reception for the Rev. Joel Miller

Sunday, May 4:

Falling Into Joy *The Rev. Joel Miller, Pulpit Guest*
I learned from a Black UU in Baton Rouge during my interim ministry there that Joy is an essential survival skill. In these remarkable times, our UU congregations are called to preserve much of what is good about our country and democracy. Just as the UU Church of Canton has been for 200 years, UU congregations everywhere are essential lights of hope and love.

12:15 p.m., First Sunday Listening Circle
2:00 p.m., Facing the Present with Heart

Wednesday, May 7

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

Thursday, May 8

6:00 p.m., Second Thursday Listening Circle

Friday, May 9

12:30 p.m., Second Friday Listening Circle

Saturday, May 10

4:00 p.m., UU D&D

Sunday, May 11

The Deep Sources of Moral Courage
The Rev. James Galasinski

The news is full of examples of leaders and institutions not standing up for their values. Though I have been outspoken at times, there are times when I have kept silent when I should have said something. What are the sources of moral cowardice and courage? What is it that triggers that feeling of "I can no longer remain silent?"

11:30 a.m., Social Hour Host & Greeter 101
12:15 p.m., First Sunday Listening Circle
2:00 p.m., Facing the Present with Heart

Tuesday, May 13

9:30 a.m., Sacred Texts and Coffee
1:00 p.m., CommComm Meeting
7:00 p.m., Social Action Team Meeting

Wednesday, May 14

7:00 p.m., Sermon Writing Workshop

Thursday, May 15

7:00 p.m., Science Book Club

Friday, May 16

5:00 p.m., Game Night

Saturday, May 17

8:00 a.m., Sacred Sites Building Tour
4:00 p.m., UU D&D

Sunday, May 18

9:00 a.m., History Circle

Good Things Don't Just Happen

The Rev. James Galasinski

In this Bicentennial year, I have been exploring the 5 smooth stones of liberal religion articulated by the Rev. James Luther Adams. He says that our 4th is that "we deny the immaculate conception of virtue and affirm the necessity of social incarnation." People make good things happen.

Monday, May 19

7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 20

1:30 p.m., Membership & Outreach Team Meeting
6:30 p.m., Religious Education Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 21

7:00 p.m., Sermon Writing Workshop

Saturday, May 24

4:00 p.m., UU D&D

Sunday, May 25

The Listening Cure *The Rev. James Galasinski*

There is an art to listening. The greatest gift we can give someone is our attention. Truly listening to someone, letting the words and nonverbals soak in is rare. Perhaps we can be better healers by being better listeners.

Monday, May 26

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

Tuesday, May 27

9:30 a.m., Sacred Texts and Coffee
4:00 p.m., Pastoral Care Team Meeting

Saturday, May 31

4:00 p.m., UUs D&D



JAMES' JOURNAL Being in the History

It was my first official day as your minister and the Church Council President, Barb Beekman, wanted to meet with me. Our Congregational Administrator had resigned. In the meantime, Carol Pyncheon and others volunteered to do the essential duties. Carol also helped me get the word out about the open position and was on the hiring team.

A few candidates showed interest and we had some interviews. But the right person was not emerging, and we needed someone soon. So, I made the decision to offer it to someone who could do the job but was not the right fit. But when I did, they said they would need to get back to me. I realized the error of my ways. I was trying to fill the position instead of hiring the right person.

Carol Pyncheon and I decided to open another round of applications. Then we found the right person. She was working at St. Lawrence University at the time. Pat Alden had actually hired her. She was looking to work less hours so she could spend more time with her children. Hiring Sara Trimm was one of the smartest decisions I have made in my ministry here. I have had so many conversations with Sara asking her feedback on how to better serve you. Sara has been a partner and a collaborator.

She is hard working, willing to learn new things, a good listener, creative, intelligent, efficient, dependable and often made me look good by catching errors before they went out.

Unfortunately, Sara has resigned her position and accepted a full-time position as an academic advisor at SUNY Potsdam. I know she missed working with students and being in higher education. When Sara started her kids were not much older than my kids. Now, they are about to go off to college. We have been through a pandemic together, trying to figure out how to use the building safely.

We were fortunate to have her as long as we did. Sara will be missed. If you haven't yet, please give Sara a warm thank you for her 8 ½ years of service to our congregation.

She will always have a home here at the UU Church of Canton.

We wish Sara the blessing of meaningful work, deep connections, and continued growth in all she does.

In Peace,

The Rev. James Galasinski

FAITH ENGAGEMENT

We have only six Sundays of religious education classes left for this year. Throughout the course of religious education this year we have explored each of our shared values: Interdependence, Generosity, Equity, Love, Pluralism, and Transformation. For the month of May, we will be learning about the shared value of Justice. This value calls



us to work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive. Also, we covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions within our congregations, our Association, and society at large.

The first two Sundays in May, the fourth and eleventh, our children and youth will be in age separated classes. On Sunday, May 18, members of the Social Action team will be joining our children and youth to share how our church lives this value. Sunday, May 25 we will have a fun day. We look forward to being together.

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

FROM OUR PRESIDENT Magic Words

When I assumed the role of Church Council President, I met with Jon Montan, the outgoing President, to receive his wise counsel. The simplest, but possibly most important, bit of wisdom Jon offered was to always say “thank you.” My own prior experience had taught me the power of gratitude, and I appreciated Jon reminding me to use those “magic words” generously.



I didn't appreciate, however, how often a “thank you” would be in order. From my new vantage point as Church Council President, I have begun to appreciate the extent to which our church community embodies all of the idioms for being helpful. Members of our church community

- ...step up.
- ...come when called upon.
- ...rally around.
- ...do their part.
- ...pull their weight.
- ...go the extra mile.
- ...lend a hand.

But helpful people can get burned out, and although “thank you” might be magic in some respects, these words do not magically fill us when we become depleted. And many members of our community find themselves depleted, especially in the face of a political climate that calls us to do more, not less.

So, how do we live our values without burning out as a community?

I have no “magic words” to answer that question. I pose the question because we need to seriously engage with it, and to thank you in advance for helping to do so.

Take care,
Cathy Crosby, Church Council President



FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

Can you hear that? That's me (Sara) shouting a huge **THANK YOU!!!** to everyone in our church community for the many years of wonderful friendships and shared moments. The incredible flexibility

you've afforded me allowed me to focus on my family and children as they grew into young adults. This job was simply ideal for me in so many ways, and I will forever be grateful for the opportunity to serve you. The time has come for me to shift gears and pursue a different path. I will be returning to the field of higher education, transitioning back to full-time work at SUNY Potsdam beginning Monday, May 5.

I look forward to watching the congregation grow and thrive in the future. I wish every one of you the very best and hope to see you out and about in the community. Please know that you have made a real impact on my life and the lives of my children. Your kindness matters, and I am honored to know so many exceptional humans in this corner of the universe. Please continue to do all the important work you're doing!

Take good care,
Sara Trimm

JOYS & SORROWS



- **Judy DeGraaff** had hip surgery earlier this week in Burlington and is now back in Canton in the Rehabilitation Unit at Maplewood (United Helpers). While she is still experiencing some discomfort, Judy is generally doing well and would love to see people.
- **Becky Van de Water** has moved from the Legacy K home in Hermon to **St. Joseph's Home** in Ogdensburg. We expect to continue to see Becky in church, but she also enjoys visitors during the week and would love to see some of you in Ogdensburg.
- **Cliff and Janice Westerling** are back at home in the North Country! Hurray!! Cliff is regaining strength but will need to stay out of circulation for some months yet. While his immune system is in the early stages of rebuilding he cannot have in-person visitors but looks forward to continued communication with folks via phone, text, email, and snail mail. Cliff hopes to be in church by the end of the summer. What a great day that will be!

UU BIRTHDAYS

If you're inclined to send a birthday card, addresses can be found in the [church directory online](#). If you'd like to *support* the [Caring Circle](#), fill out [this form](#) and join us in supporting members in a variety of ways! Email caringcircle@uucantonny.org to add any birthday names that are missing!

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 12: Cathy Crosby
 May 16: Miriam Graham

May 17: Erik Williams-Bergen
 May 19: Wyatt LaMarche, Kevin Ball, Nelly Case
 May 23: Rob Carr
 May 26: Maggie McKenna
 May 27: Dwight Stevenson
 May 29: Zoya Kocho-Williams, Milner Grimsled

BICENTENNIAL EVENTS

Our next **Bicentennial Sunday will be May 4 with the Rev. Joel Miller in the pulpit.** Rev. Joel served our congregation as interim minister from 2013-16 and currently serves First UU Society of Newton, MA as co-minister. There will also be a reception in the Social Room on Saturday, May 3 at 3 p.m. to welcome Rev. Miller back to campus and enjoy some casual conversation.

Sacred Sites Open House, Saturday, May 17th, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Our beloved UU Church of Canton will be part of a New York state-wide event sponsored by the New York Landmarks Conservancy. This year's theme is "Building for Eternity: Religious Architecture and Artisans", and participating congregations will showcase their buildings and histories through guided tours, lectures, and musical performances. The Bicentennial Team and Building and Grounds Committee will be seeking volunteers to assist with welcoming, greeting, refreshments, and guiding tours. It will be a fun day to welcome guests into our beloved church building and acknowledge its beauty and history. Look for more information in future newsletters and to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

RSG SOCIAL ACTION AWARD

Rose Rivezzi to be Recognized with RSG Social Action Award.

Every year the Social Action Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton recognizes a member of our wider North Country community whose volunteer work is exceptional. The award was set up in 1992 to honor Rachel Somers Grant (1948-1990), who worked on behalf of a variety of community groups and who believed in grass roots movements as an effective means of achieving change. The award, given each June, honors an individual who has worked, as Rachel did, to make ours a more humane and progressive community.

This year's recipient is Rose Rivezzi of Potsdam, New York. She has served our wider community for several decades, especially in the areas of environmental education and preservation, access to healthy food, and support of small businesses and farmers in our region. A two-term member of Potsdam's Town Council, Rose has provided notable leadership on the Potsdam Climate Smart Community Task Force, and in bringing into being Kay's PlaySpace in Ives Park, and as co-owner of Big Spoon Kitchen. This business supports local social causes and community events like Juneteenth and Potsdam Pride Fest. Additionally, Rose has used Big Spoon as a base from which to promote education about healthy food and has supported the Farm-to-School program. In many ways and for many decades, Rose has served our community by providing nutritious food and education, generating volunteerism across a range of actions, and supporting a healthy environment. The RSG Social Action Award will be presented during worship on **Sunday, June 15**, with a reception during social hour.

COME SING IN THE CHOIR!

New and returning singers are invited to sing with our UU Church Choir for special themed services and events throughout the year. The Choir rehearses from 9-10 a.m. on the Sunday the week before the performance service, as well as 9-10 a.m. on the day of the performance service.

Sunday, May 4: Rev. Joel Miller - Bicentennial Guest

Rehearsal on Sunday May 4, from 9-10 a.m. and performing during the service at 10:30 a.m.

Rev. Miller served as our Interim Minister for three years, bridging between the Rev. David Blanchard and the Rev. James Galasinski. He is returning to help us celebrate our Bicentennial Year.

FROM YOUR SOCIAL ACTION TEAM:

Helping Immigrants and their Families

Our Social Action Team is teaming up with Catholic Charities and other local groups to bring important resources for immigrant families in the North Country. Catholic Charities has opened an Immigrant Resources office in Ogdensburg, affiliated with their office in Watertown and connected with service organizations in Syracuse. Our SA Team is building a volunteer network to serve as their “ears” (to let them know about local needs and issues), and to be their “boots on the ground” (to help with situations when necessary). If you’re interested in joining the Immigrant Resources Volunteer Network, please e-mail socialaction@uucantonny.org.

Medical Aid in Dying:

We continue to support the campaign to pass the Medical Aid in Dying bill at the State Capitol. The issue is one of the priority issues for [NYUU Justice](#). [Compassion & Choices](#) organizes the legislative efforts, and they also offer [valuable information and resources](#) for individuals and families facing end-of-life decisions.

We’re getting very close to having a vote on the bill in the Assembly, and C&C is organizing a big Rally Day at the Capitol to encourage lawmakers to finally do it. We need many people there to show support (and outnumber the opposition), and we will be organizing carpools to Albany; please e-mail socialaction@uucantonny.org for carpooling. To register with C&C:

[Compassion & Choices Rally Day at the Capitol](#): Tuesday May 6, NYS Capitol, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Upcoming Social Action Team meetings:

The Social Action Team invites all congregants to bring us your ideas for social justice issues, events, and projects that you think our congregation might be interested in engaging with. *Please bring your ideas for issues/events/projects to the SA Team by e-mailing socialaction@uucantonny.org, or by attending our next meeting on **Tuesday, May 13 at 7 p.m. in the Romer Room or [by Zoom](#)*** We will work with you to develop and implement your ideas.

UUs and D&D

Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) has seen a resurgence in recent years due to appearances in pop culture and the pandemic. But is it possible that Dungeons & Dragons can be more than just a game? Join us **Saturdays at 4 p.m.** in the Social Room for an afternoon of D&D.

All ages are welcome, though younger brave hearts should bring an adult mentor. Let us know if you’ll join us by emailing toddamoe@gmail.com.

SPRING WORK DAY Saturday, May 3 at 9:00 a.m.

Our annual spring cleaning of the outside and inside of the church will take place on Saturday, May 3 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. All hands on deck will make the work fun and satisfying. Any amount of time you

can contribute will be appreciated and there is a variety of work so everyone can find something that will make our church a Welcoming Spruced up Space!

Let us join together to ready the church for the spring and summer events happening during our Bi-centennial year!



FACING THE PRESENT WITH HEART **Sunday, May 4 at 2 p.m.**

In these challenging times, we are not alone. Please join us in [Facing the Present with Heart](#): a mindful listening circle, in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh.

We will practice breathing meditation to reduce stress and facilitate understanding and compassion. And we will listen deeply and mindfully to each other as we share how we're feeling, our struggles, joys and sorrows, hopes and fears.

Facilitated by Jenna Joya Blondel, PhD, Minister of Walking Prayer, we meet on the first Sunday of the month from 2 to 3 p.m. in Canton at the Unitarian Universalist Church; and on the third Thursday of the month from 6 to 7 p.m. in Potsdam at Trillium at the Presbyterian Church. There is no charge, and all are welcome.

SERMON WRITING WORKSHOP

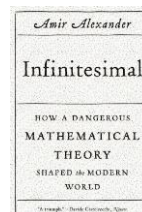
Wednesday, May 14 , Wednesday, May 21, Thursday, June 5, & Wednesday, June 11
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Everyone has at least one sermon in them.

In the first two sessions the Rev. James Galasinski will show you the tricks of trade and discuss the do's and don'ts of preaching. The assignment will be to write a 10-minute sermon. Then when we meet again in June you preach the sermon. The class will be your congregation, and we will give you critical feedback.

SCIENCE BOOK CLUB

On Thursday, May 15, the Science Book Club will discuss Amir Alexander's book *Infinitesimal - how a dangerous mathematical theory shaped the modern world*. We meet by Zoom at 7:00 pm. For more information, contact Brian at briangardam@gmail.com.



GAME NIGHT

Join us on Friday, **May 16 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.

GOODS & SERVICES AUCTION OF HISTORIC PROPORTIONS

Friday, June 13 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

[Submit your auction items here.](#)



Mark your calendar for the super fun auction coming up on Friday, June 13. There will be live music and live bidding and it's all to raise funds for our operating budget. See you there!

GATHERING OF UU MEN

Men from upstate NY have been gathering for fellowship and retreats for 35 years. Our next gathering is at Camp Arnot near Ithaca on June 6-8, 2025. You can find more information on facebook [here](#) or check out the poster in our Social Room. This is a sexual orientation, gender identity and expression inclusive group.

SAVE THE DATE! ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

Our Annual Church Picnic will be held on Sunday, June 8, 2025 at Bend in the River Park in Canton. If you can help with the planning, please email outreach@uucantonny.org.

POTSDAM PRIDE FESTIVAL

Please stop by the UU Church of Canton table at the Potsdam Pride Festival on **Friday, June 14** at Ives Park in Potsdam. This year we are the Rainbow Sponsor! For more information about the festival, go to <https://potsdampride.org/>

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 2025

Please consider attending this June 18-22, 2025 in Baltimore, MD. General Assembly provides an opportunity to connect with others from around the country who share our love of our free faith. We need delegates. You can find more information about GA here: <https://www.uua.org/ga>. Church Council has set aside special funds to help defray the cost of attendance and financial aid is available from the UUA (<https://www.uua.org/ga/registration/financialaid/scholarships>). If you have interest in attending this year's General Assembly, please contact Rev. James (minister@uucantonny.org) or Church Council President Cathy Crosby (president@uucantonny.org).

Staff Schedules for the Church Year:

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 .

You can always check [the calendar on our website](#) for details.

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

Betsy Kepes, Music Coordinator

The Revs. Anne Marsh and Wade Wheelock, Ministers Emeriti

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