

Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton

NEWSLETTER

June 2025 - THIS MONTH AND SUNDAYS



Sunday, June 1: **Welcoming Congregation**

The Rev. James Galasinski

For nearly 30 years we have been officially designated a Welcoming Congregation. It means that we have been out and proud, and welcoming LGBTQ+ people. Theologically, it means all people are loved and deserving of love. Being welcoming also means we keep learning.

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

Monday, June 2:

2:00 p.m., Shamanic Drum Circle
5:00 p.m., Bicentennial Meeting
7:00 p.m., UU Men's Group

Wednesday, June 4:

8:00 a.m., Building and Grounds Meeting
10:00 a.m., Soul Matters Listening Circle
6:30 p.m., Church Council Meeting

Thursday, June 5:

10:30 a.m., Bicentennial - NYSCU Planning Meeting
5:00 p.m., Google Workspace Workshop
7:00 p.m., Sermon Writing Workshop

Friday, June 6:

11:00 a.m., Library working group

Saturday, June 7:

11:30 a.m., Dairy Parade Church Parking Lot Meetup
1:00 p.m., Parade and Festivities on Church Lawn
4:00 p.m., UUs and D&D

Sunday, June 8:

Shared Values of Our Faith

*Carol Zimmerman,
Director of Religious Education*

Our faith calls us to be accountable to one another and to do the work of living our shared values of Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence and Generosity through the spiritual discipline of Love. Our children and youth will share what they have learned about these values. They will also appreciate the adults who gave their time, knowledge and care as part of our RE Teaching Ministry.

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

Monday, June 9:

8:00 a.m., Church Council Covenant Workshop

5:00 p.m., Bicentennial Team Meeting
6:30 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 10:

9:30 a.m., Sacred Texts and Coffee
1:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m., Second Thursday Listening Circle
7:00 p.m., Social Action Team Meeting

Wednesday, June 11:

7:00 p.m., Sermon Writing Workshop

Thursday, June 12:

5:00 p.m., Game Night
6:00 p.m., Second Thursday Listening Circle

Friday, June 13:

11:00 a.m., Library Working Group
12:30 p.m., Second Friday Listening Circle
6:30 p.m., Bicentennial Auction

Saturday, June 14:

11:00 a.m., Potsdam Pride Table & Celebrations
4:00 p.m., UUs and D&D

Sunday, June 15:

Progress and Optimism

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 5th is that "liberalism holds that the resources that are available for the achievement of meaningful change justify an attitude of ultimate optimism."

RSG Award Presentation

9:00 a.m., History Circle
10:45 a.m., Religious Education Fun Day

Monday, June 16:

2:00 p.m., Shamanic Drum Circle
7:00 p.m., Worship Committee Meeting

Tuesday, June 17:

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

Thursday, June 19:

4:30 p.m., Stewardship Meeting
7:00 p.m., Science Book Club (Zoom)

Friday, June 20:

11:00 a.m., Library Working Group

Saturday, June 21:

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

Sunday, June 22:**Evading Hate, Cultivating Hope**

Doug Rubio

We live in a time when many government officials seem to have little love and compassion for their fellow human beings. Acts of cruelty against individuals and groups abound. How do we as Unitarian Universalists observe, acknowledge, and fight against this current of inhumanity without letting our hearts and souls descend into hate? How do we cultivate hope in such times?

Doug Rubio is a member of the Worship Committee. He has been attending our church for over 27 years and has held a number of leadership positions. In his non-church life he is a retired professor of classical guitar at SUNY Potsdam.

10:45 a.m., Religious Education Fun Day

Monday, June 23:

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

Tuesday, June 24:

9:30 a.m., Sacred Texts and Coffee

4:00 p.m., Pastoral Care Team Meeting

**JAMES' JOURNAL - Articulating Kindness**

The Men's Group has one. The team that led the last Social Justice Initiative has one as well. So do Listening Circles, Church Council, RE, and the staff wrote one a few years back. They all have covenants, but we don't have a congregation-wide covenant.

Covenants are agreements we write ourselves. We all know we want to be kind to each other and expect kindness in return. A covenant articulates what that kindness looks like. Much of the time kindness is implied or assumed. But a covenant spells out expectations and what should happen if we fail to be kind.

6:30 p.m., Frame Drumming Group

Wednesday, June 25:

3:00 p.m., Spiritual Direction with Joya

Friday, June 27:

11:00 a.m., Library working group

Saturday, June 28:

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

Sunday, June 29:

Flourishing in Covenant *The Rev. James Galasinski and Carol Zimmerman, DRE*

A covenant is kindness articulated. Our relationships flourish when a covenant is created and supported by our faith community. Please bring a flower to celebrate flower communion.

Monday, June 30:

2:00 p.m., Shamanic Drum Circle

A covenant is a living, breathing aspiration, made new every day. It can't be enforced by consequences, but it can be reinforced by forgiveness and by grace, when we stumble, when we forget, and when we mess up.

A covenant is how we aim to journey together across disagreements, dissent, and difficult discernments, cherishing the process as much as the outcome.

A covenant is a way to bring people back into healthy relationship. We will have disagreements. We won't always see eye to eye.

But it is how we disagree that is important.

The practice of promising to journey together is a core part of our living tradition. Covenant is both a noun and a verb.

Creating and agreeing to a covenant can be an extremely effective tool for building a foundation of trust. By creating shared expectations around the behaviors we want to cultivate, we actively create beloved community.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Galasinski". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid.

The Rev. James Galasinski



FAITH ENGAGEMENT

As June arrives, I am appreciating all the different shades of green from mint and chartreuse to emerald and forest green. For me, it marks the end of the school year and the beginning of summer fun. That is true for our religious education program, too.

Our religious education program will wrap up this year with preparations for the RE Sunday worship service on June 1. June 8 will find all our children and youth leading and participating in the worship service. June 15 and 22 we will have fun days. June 29 will find us all in the sanctuary for a multi-generational worship service.

If you are interested in joining the RE Teaching Ministry, we will be hosting RE Sundae Sunday on June 22. Join us to make your own sundae and learn what we will be up to in the fall and sign up to be part of our vital teaching teams.

In June you look forward to the coming of summer. Take in all its beauty and have fun!

Thank You

Jim Williams for his leadership in chairing the RE SMARTIE Goal conversations.

~ Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



FROM OUR PRESIDENT Caring Together

One of my closest friends lost her father to early onset Alzheimer's, and only one year later, she lost her mother to cancer. She was 15 years old. The deaths of both parents left her and her sister orphaned. My resilient friend created a good life for herself, raising two loving sons, but the stress created by the tragic loss of her parents heavily marked her adolescence and early adulthood.

Unlike my friend, I am in my 60s and blessed to still have both my mother and father with me. However, caring for aging parents weighs heavily on many of us. It seems to be one of the secret stresses of middle age that sometimes catches us by surprise: a serious incident or the accumulation of a series of small changes cause us to realize suddenly that those on whom we have relied since birth are now relying on us.

Fortunately, we are not alone in our struggle to navigate both the complex systems of elder care and the complex feelings of caring for aging parents. Talking with others experiencing the same issues can help.

To facilitate our caring for each other, Mary Michalek, Carol Zimmerman, and I are creating a support group for individuals caring for aging parents. If you would like to be part of this monthly support group, please contact me (president@uucantonny.org) with your interest as well as any questions. You should also feel free to speak with any of us during social hour. We broadly define “caring for aging parents.” So, whether you are providing primary in-home care to parents or are considering services for parents who still live independently, you are welcome. We hope to organize the first meeting during the month of June.

Take care,
Cathy Crosby, Church Council President



JOYS & SORROWS

- **Laurel Balog and Sam Joseph** welcomed their child, Maxwell, to the world. Born April 28!
- **Judy DeGraaff** is continuing to rehab from hip surgery and is now back home in Canton.

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!

June 4: Cara Coffin, Emmy Stevenson
 June 6: Liliana Trevizan, Maxwell
 Hunkins, Brendan Nolan, Tera
 Siegfried
 June 7: Christian Beekman
 June 8: Ryan Hicks
 June 9: Lowell McAllister
 June 10: Lauren Dixon
 June 11: Valerie Ingram

June 13: Max Kocho-Williams
 June 14: Einer Kocho-Williams, Mary
 Michalek
 June 15: Lila Hunnewell
 June 17: JoAnn McAllister
 June 21: Leo Burger
 June 22: Jon Montan
 June 23: Miles Manchester

June 25: Brianna Dixon, Danilo Oey-Langen
June 28: Linda Kenny, Wil Rivers

BICENTENNIAL EVENTS



200 Thank You's to the many people who contributed to the success of the Sacred Sites Tour on Saturday, May 17: Roger Hutchinson, Tour Leader Extraordinaire; Nelly Case, Organ History and Riveting Performances; Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel and Lorraine Olendzenski, Council Greeters; Phil Collins, David Doran, Arthur Freeheart, Ed Gordon, and Erin Roe, Building and Grounds Committee members who assisted on many levels!! And all our UU Canton congregation members and friends who attended and supported the event!

Seeking strong Volunteers to carry the Bicentennial Banner in the Dairy Parade on Saturday, June 7. Meet by 12:30 p.m. behind the church parking lot.

Join us on Sunday, June 1st to Celebrate our Collective Affirmation of our Historic Designation as a Welcoming Congregation. We will celebrate with a Special Cake in the Social Room after the Service.

At this year's Annual Congregational Picnic on June 8, we'll be celebrating the completion of the first half of our Bicentennial Year! Let's Celebrate all we have done and all we will be doing in the second half!!

Last Call for Peace Plaque Haikus. The deadline of June 9th is approaching for submitting Haikus. Please use this [link](#) to upload your International Day of Peace - themed submission or bring a hard copy to the church and place it in the envelope on the bulletin board next to the office.

FROM YOUR SOCIAL ACTION TEAM:

RSG SOCIAL ACTION AWARD
Rose Rivezzi to be Recognized with RSG Social Action Award



Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award

The Social Action Team has chosen Rose Rivezzi to be the recipient of this year's Rachel Somers Grant Social Action Award! Rose has served our community in many ways, through her varied work as a public school teacher; a member of the Potsdam Town Board; chair of the Potsdam Climate Smart Community Task Force; creation of Kay's Play Space in Ives Park; and coordinating the Farm to School program as co-owner of Big Spoon Kitchen. Rose will receive the Award during our service on Sunday, June 15.

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.

During the week of June 23, we're planning to host a *Know Your Rights* information session to help people know how to handle situations such as Border Patrol traffic stops or an ICE visit at homes or workplaces. Date, time, and location will be announced when we nail down the details.

Survey about topic for our next SJI coming soon!

The *Social Justice Initiative* (SJI) is a program of our church to raise awareness about important problems that we face in our North Country communities, with particular focus on the UU Principles of "justice, equity, and compassion in human relations" and "a free and responsible search for truth and meaning." Each SJI focuses on a specific social justice issue, and brings together people from across our region to make connections, share information and resources, and develop strategies for addressing the issue. Our three previous SJIs have focused on: Bullying and Harassment in Workplaces

(2017); Incarceration and Imprisonment in the North Country (2019); and Cultivating Climate Justice (2023).

The Social Action Team will be soliciting ideas from the entire congregation for the topic for our next Social Justice Initiative, which will likely take place in Fall of 2026. We will e-mail you a brief survey within the next few weeks. Please keep an eye out for the survey; your feedback is important for our planning of the event.

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. We will work with you to develop and implement your ideas. Please bring your ideas to the SA Team by e-mailing socialaction@uucantonny.org, or by attending our upcoming meeting. The SA Team has returned to meeting in person (in the Romer Room), with a hybrid/Zoom option still available:

Social Action Meeting

Tuesday June 10, 7:00-8:30 pm

In the Romer Room, with Zoom option:

<https://zoom.us/j/91742806459?pwd=dHRhRmFCMnZHRDhRbVB3cktTZzZiUT09>

Meeting ID: 917 4280 6459

Passcode: 744583



Medical Aid in Dying bill passed the NY Assembly!

On Tuesday, April 29, the NY Assembly passed the *Medical Aid in Dying* bill! The legislation would allow a terminally ill adult with a prognosis of 6 months or less to live to have the option to request, obtain, and decide to ingest medication to die peacefully in their sleep if their suffering is unbearable; it is sometimes referred to as Death With Dignity. Only 10 states allow medical aid in dying to be available, and the issue is one of the priority issues for NYUU Justice.

Our congregation has been very active in supporting this legislation, honoring the legacy of Eileen Raymond who was a strong advocate for the bill. Congregants have traveled to Albany to meet with legislators and join in rallies, written letters to encourage the legislature's leadership to move the bill, and shared our stories with our families and friends. Our voices were heard, and they made a difference. (see photos below)

There's just two weeks left before the Legislature adjourns (around June 12). We're hopeful that the Senate will follow the Assembly's lead and move the bill before adjournment. While neither of our local Senators supports the bill, you can contact Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins to thank her for her support of the bill and ask her to bring it to the floor for a vote. At this stage, phone calls are more effective than emails; her office is basically just keeping tally of phone calls for/against the bill, so just plan to say 2-3 sentences to her staff: "Hello, my name is _____, and I live in _____. I'm calling to thank Senator Stewart-Cousins for her support of the *Medical Aid in Dying* bill, #S-138, and I hope that she will bring the bill to a vote on the floor in June. I support the bill because....."

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins
(518) 455-2585, (518) 455-6844



UUUs 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.



FACING THE PRESENT WITH HEART

Sunday, June 1 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.

Google Workspace Workshop

Are you a committee chair or team lead looking for assistance with your church provided email, Drive files, or other Google tools?

Jenn Whittaker is here to help! She'll be offering another workshop on **Thursday, June 5th at 5:00 p.m.** in the Romer Room. [Contact Jenn](#) to sign up and request the password to your committee/team account. Please bring your iPad or laptop. The class is limited to 6 participants.

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC



Join us for our annual church picnic on **June 8 at the Bend-in-the-River Park** Picnic Shelter located at 90 Lincoln Street in Canton! We'll ring in a fresh new season from 12:00 to 2:00p.m.

[Here's how it works](#): The church will provide grilled meat and veggie burgers and drinks too. Bring your favorite potluck salad or dessert to share. If your last name starts with the letters A-M, you're invited to bring a salad or side dish to pass around. If your last name starts with the letters N-Z, please bring a dessert instead. Please bring your own silverware, plates, and cups. In case you forget, we'll have paper plates and plastic utensils on hand.

If you'd like to help out on the grill that day, or to help with other picnic tasks can contact Jenn Whitaker at outreach@uucantonny.org.

There will be outdoor games provided and restrooms are available on site. We can't wait to see you there!



GAME NIGHT

Join us on Friday, **June 12 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.

A promotional graphic for an auction. On the left is a circular logo for the UU Church of Canton, NY, celebrating its 200th bicentennial from 1825 to 2025. To the right of the logo, the text reads "A GOODS & SERVICES AUCTION OF HISTORIC PROPORTIONS!". Below this, a yellow banner contains the date "FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 2025". To the right of the text is a yellow icon depicting a person at a podium with an audience.

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!



POTSDAM PRIDE FESTIVAL

Please stop by the UU Church of Canton table at the Potsdam Pride Festival on **Saturday, June 14 at 11:00 a.m. at Ives Park in Potsdam**. This year we are the Rainbow Sponsor! For more information about the festival, go to <https://potsdampride.org/>

Frame Drumming Group at the UU



Tuesday, June 24, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the Social Room.

Come play the frame drum!

Frame drumming has a rich and ancient history, dating back to at least 2380 BCE in Mesopotamia. It is one of the oldest percussion instruments and has been used in music, ritual, and spiritual ceremonies across diverse cultures and regions. In recent times, frame drumming has experienced a modern revival, with musicians, healers, and educators exploring its diverse possibilities and uses.

Caron Collins, brings her playing and teaching experience with frame drums to our UU Church of Canton. She will lead a monthly frame drumming group where you can learn and enjoy playing Arabic drumming along with familiar chants. It's easy to learn and fun to play the techniques and rhythmic patterns of frame drumming. Bring your own frame drum or use one of Caron's Remo Fiberskyn Frame Drums. All ages and abilities are welcome! For more information, contact Caron at bandtchr1@hotmail.com.

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
(315) 386-2498 • office@uucantonny.org • www.uucantonny.org