



Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton **NEWSLETTER**

October 2025

October 5, 10:30 am - Shaped by the Waters of this Faith

The Rev. Jan Hutslar, Bicentennial Pulpit Guest Speaker

We will explore how our UU faith shapes us and is also shaped by us.

Like water, we are both the river and the course the river flows in.

We are the rain and the prayers for its falling.

How do our actions change the landscape of our world and those of future generations?

Rev. Jan Hutslar learned about Unitarian Universalism and its power to change a person and her life from this Canton congregation, where she served as the DRE for twelve years before being called into ministry.

Jan is in her eighth year as the minister of the UU Congregation of the Upper Valley in Norwich, Vermont, where they keep showing her how to keep her heart open. No matter what.

October 12, 10:30 am - Seeming Rather Being

The Rev. James Galasinski

The Rev. Jeffrey Campbell was one of the first people of color to be a Universalist minister and one of the first to graduate from St. Lawrence University. He wrote a great newsletter article in the 1960's about the rise of plastic flowers. Though not specifically about race it can be applied to many areas of life including race because even during the Black Power movement he refused to be put in a racial box.

October 19, 10:30 am - Love Will Guide Us

The Rev. James Galasinski

Revenge won't guide us. Power and greed won't guide. The greatest value and that which is central to our faith moving forward is love.

This service will kick off our 2025 canvass and be followed by our annual meeting.

October 26, 10:30 am - Love: The Web of All That Is

The Rev. James Galasinski

We are not only celebrating 200 years of our congregation this year but also 200 years of the New York State Universalist Convention. The belief that love went all the way down, made Universalism flourish. We can we harness its power today.



JAMES' JOURNAL



Endorsing Candidates

Almost every November in an election year I have some sort of message about voting our values. I keep the conversation to policies and voting on the principles of our faith. Churches and other religious organizations run the risk of losing their tax exempt status if they participate in political campaigning.

Over the summer the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) reversed a 5 decade old policy that religious organizations could not endorse candidates for political offices. Endorsing a candidate from the pulpit was seen as violating that. But now the IRS states that a religious institution when "in good faith speaks to its congregation, through its customary channels of communication on matters of faith in connection with religious services, concerning electoral politics viewed through the lens of religious faith" can endorse political candidates. The IRS said a faith community's endorsement of candidates was like a "family discussion."

So, now clergy can endorse a candidate from the pulpit without fear of losing their tax exempt status.

I believe in the separation of church and state. We should continue with all our social justice work and keep putting our values in the community. However, I am not going to get into the business of endorsing a candidate formally as a minister from the pulpit. I think you all know where I stand on most issues and plus you are all smart people who can think and vote for yourself. Plus this could be a trap set by the Trump Administration for religious liberals. We come to the UU Church of Canton for many reasons: for healing, to be around like minds, for spirituality, for community, to give back, to learn, to help bend the arc of moral universe toward justice and to grow but I doubt any of us are looking for direction on who to vote for. In fact, some of the research I have looked at says that people often self-select into religious affiliation based on their political stances.

May Love guide us,

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

The Rev. James Galasinski

Faith Formation



Recently, I was having a conversation with a church member, and we were talking about the changes in our religious education program and a possible move to monthly whole church worship services where children stay in the sanctuary for the entire service. They felt it best to have only a few services like this during the year because attendance might decline and the service wouldn't have enough depth for adults. This gave me deep pause.

I've been learning about the concept of Whole Church Religious Education and checking out the [faith curriculum library](#) from the UUA. Maybe you read about it in the recent articles in UU World, ['Whole Church' Approach Can Deepen Intergenerational Spiritual Practices at Your Congregation](#) or [Regularly Reimagining Religious Education Can Boost Membership, Better Serve Families](#). As the UUA website states, Whole Church RE is an approach that combines three things:

- The need for shared experiences that connect people and build covenantal community, an essential part of our non-creedal faith
- Lifespan faith development's role in shaping and strengthening UU identity and commitment within and among individuals and their communities
- Engaging and powerful practices in religious education (RE) but underutilized in adult or all-ages space

I would value exploring these ideas for Whole Church RE more deeply with those interested. As we continue to change, grow and live into our shared values, may we be open to "experi-learning" and "experi-failing" together. May we wonder together and find new ways to grow our own and the whole church's faith formation. Blessed be.

~ Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

★ Thank You!

Thank you to all who took time to make the origami cranes for the Peace Tree Dedication and International Day of Peace, especially Kerry Planty, UU Watertown, and Arlene Oey's family in California. For Mande Thomas, Sara Hutcheson, Caron and Phil Collins, Mark Berninghausen, Karen Bage, Esther and Arlene Oey, Eileen Wheeler, Louis Bixby and Kim Bouchard for helping to string them and a special thanks to Stefan Grimberg for hanging them all in the social room.



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Citizenship

I was recently reminded of a reading shared by Rev. James during a service last fall. The excerpt, from the book *Citizens: Why the Key to Fixing Everything is All of Us* by Jon Alexander, articulates beautifully both the meaning of and the importance of active citizenship:

Citizens are humans who want to shape the world around them for the better and who claim, and where necessary demand, the right and the means to do so. To be a Citizen is to care, to take responsibility, to acknowledge one's inherent power. It is to cultivate meaningful connection to a web of relationships and institutions.

We will come together as citizens within our church community for our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, October 19, following the service. It is a simple act to attend the meeting and raise your hand to express your opinion, but it is an important way that we cultivate our meaningful connections to each other and this institution.

So, I hope to see you on October 19th.

Take care,



Cathy Crosby, Church Council President



JOYS & SORROWS

We will celebrate the lives of two dear members with memorial services this month. While our hearts may be heavy to miss their presence with us, it is a joy to remember the richness of their lives and all of the memories they have shared with us to hold.

- ★ A Memorial Service for Becky Van de Water will be held on Saturday, October 11th, at 10 am, at the church. A gathering and refreshments will follow.
- ★ A Memorial Service for Joan Kepes will be held on Sunday, October 19th, at 3 pm, at the church. A gathering and refreshments will follow.



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](#), or to add any birthday names that are missing, email caringcircle@uucantonny.org.

Ashley Clover	Oct 1
Jonathan Carls	Oct 3
Jessie Coffin	Oct 5
Desireé LeBoeuf	Oct 6
Roger Hutchinson	Oct 6
Kiley Frank	Oct 7
Galen Oey-Langen	Oct 11
Gretchen Koehler	Oct 13
Claire Rousell, Maddie Rousell, Grace Rousell	Oct 21
Helen Hutchinson	Oct 24
Erika Barthelmess, Braden Whittaker, Tom Frank	Oct 27
Nancy Alessi	Oct 29
Margaret Mauch	Oct 30

Bicentennial Events, Activities and Celebrations



Many, many thanks to the scores of volunteers who participated in the inspiring September Bicentennial Events. October promises to be as wondrous and celebratory.



October 4 & 5 - Special Bicentennial Pulpit Guest, Rev. Jan Hutslar

Rev Jan Hutslar is beginning her eighth year as the minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Upper Valley in Norwich, Vermont. Jan was inspired and called into ministry from this congregation, where she worked as the

DRE for twelve years.

Jan's theology is this: As a Unitarian Universalist, I am dazzled by the majesty of trees, and the way the rivers keep flowing. I am wowed by the immensity of thunderstorms, the night sky, the Aurora Borealis. I trust in the incredible discoveries of science. I am awed by the mystery of the unknown and unexplainable. I am inspired by the wisdom of many faith traditions, the songs of prayers, the laughter of children. I believe in the spark of Love at the core of all of us. I have faith in transformation. I count on the restorative power of community.

Saturday, October 4, 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM Informal Gathering and Conversation with Rev. Jan Hutslar, **hosted by Pete & Barb Beekman, 2 Elm St, Canton, NY**

Sunday, October 5, 10:30 AM Sunday Service and Social Hour

Saturday, October 11 - 2:00- 4:00PM - OPENING RECEPTION for the Special Exhibit: **200 Years of Progressive Faith - History and Archives of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton** featuring the "Rev. Dr. Payson's Signature Quilt", Rare Archival Materials, Building Tours and Refreshments.

This is a joint project of our congregation with the St. Lawrence County Center for History and Culture. *This Special Exhibit will be at the Center through December 2025.*



October 24, 25 & 26 - New York State Convention of Universalists 200th Anniversary
Hosted by the UU Church of Canton.



The Keynote speaker for the convention is the current UUA President Rev. Dr. Sophia Betancourt.

Full Schedule of Events:

[w NYSCU Schedule of Events 2025 Convention.docx](#)

VOLUNTEERS* ARE NEEDED FOR HOSTING, SETTING UP, HOSPITALITY AND MORE. [Link to volunteer form](#)

*Volunteers will be able to attend all events of the Convention with **Free Registration**.
To register for the NYSCU convention go to: <https://nyscu.org/>

November 8 & 9 - Special Bicentennial Pulpit Guest, Rev. Dr. John Buehrens, former UUA President and Universalist Historian: Informal gatherings, special lecture Saturday night, and Sunday service

**November 13-16 - BICENTENNIAL BIG BASH WEEK!!
HOLD THESE DATES!!**

Welcome events, gatherings, concerts, tours, presentations, lunches, dinners, CAKE!
For detailed information please see the church website at www.uucantonny.org/our-bicentennial/ .



Social Hour Signups – Fall Season

Thank you to everyone who has already started to sign up!

Social Hour after Sunday services has become a cherished tradition—a time to connect, share stories, and spark new ideas over coffee and treats. It’s a moment of hospitality and community that helps carry us through the week.

As we enter the Fall season, we’re inviting signups for hosting Social Hour from September through December. Choose a week that works for you—whether you want to bring your favorite seasonal refreshments or simply lend a hand. If you’d prefer to co-host, we’ll pair you with someone who can help with the setup or snacks.

Need guidance? Our Kitchen Cabinet Team is happy to assist with supplies and instructions.

Sign up now, [HERE](#), and help us fill the calendar with warmth, connection, and delicious moments. You may also contact office@uucantonny.org, or add your name and dates to the sheet in the Social Room after service.

Greeter Signups

Part of the warmth and connection on Sundays, begins with the smiles and cheer of Greeters who provide a friendly welcome, an Order of Service, and information about the Worship Service, as well as Social Hour.

Sign up, [HERE](#), to help share a welcoming experience with visitors, friends, and members on Sundays. You may also contact office@uucantonny.org, or add your name and dates to the sheet in the Social Room after service.



Jazz and Coffee Night with the 5 Dots - October 3, 6:30 pm

Come on out for a live Jazz performance by the 5 Dots! Coffee and refreshments will compliment an evening of music at the UU Canton Social Room.

The Jazz and Coffee Nights project is made possible with funds from the Statewide Community Re-grants Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by the St. Lawrence County Arts Council.

Third Thursday Soup

Third Thursday Soup is back! Come enjoy dinner with fellow UUs on Thursday, October 16 at 6 p.m. We will share 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 or bread for the meals.



**Annual Congregational Meeting
October 19, 2025, 11:30 AM**

Agenda:

1. Reports from
 - a. The Minister
 - b. The President
 - c. The Treasurer
 - d. The Director of Religious Education
 - e. The Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee
 - f. The Chair of the Nominating Committee
2. Vote on the slate of nominees for two Church Council trustees and Vice President of Church Council
3. Vote on three Bylaws changes

Bylaws Changes for October 2025 Congregational Meeting

ARTICLE VIII: ELECTIONS

8.2. Term of office for Trustees is two years, ~~three~~ **two to three** Trustees to be elected each year. Trustees may serve three consecutive terms but will not then be eligible for election until a full year has passed. **However, they will be eligible for election to an officer position immediately after their third term.**

[Rationale: The congregation voted to change the total number of Trustees to 5 last year; therefore, we will be electing two to three Trustees each year. The addition of the final sentence makes clear that a Trustee could stand for election as an officer after three terms as Trustee, allowing experienced Trustees to move into officer positions.]

ARTICLE IX: CHURCH COUNCIL

9.2. Authority and Specific Duties.

j. Church Council shall assign a member of Church Council, **excluding the President**, to each committee to act as liaison between the committee and Church Council.

[Rationale: This change recognizes that (1) the President of Church Council is already an ex officio member of all committees with the exception of the Nominating Committee and Ministerial Search Committees, and (2) the President already assumes significant responsibility.]

Come Sing in the UU Choir for these Special Events!



Carol Strome and Paul Siskind invite *new* and returning singers to sing with our UU Church Choir for special themed services and events throughout the year. Along with being “in the choir” on a regular basis, *we’re also inviting new singers to join for individual services/events/themes which particularly interest you.* The Choir rehearses at 9:00-10:00 am on the Sunday the week before the performance service, as well as 9:00-10:00 am on the day of the performance service.

Rev. Jan Hutslar - Bicentennial Guest

Schedule:

- Sunday 9/28 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10
- Sunday 10/5 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10; perform during service 10:30-11:00

Jan served as Director of Religious Education at our church before becoming an ordained minister; she now serves the UU Congregation of the Upper Valley in Norwich VT. Music for Jan’s service will include a diversity of styles, including the gossypelly *Where You Go*.

Bicentennial Festival Choir

This is the culmination of our Bicentennial year, and we hope to put together a sizable “festival choir” for this special event; come sing with us! (And here’s a challenge: In 1899, the UU Choir had 22 singers; let’s beat that number!)

- Sunday 10/19 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10
- Sunday 10/26 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10
- Sunday 11/2 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10
- Sunday 11/9 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10
- Friday 11/14 Performance 7:00pm, Bicentennial Concert
- Sunday 11/16 Perform during the Bicentennial Service 10:30-11:30 (rehearsal at 9:00-10:10)

The Bicentennial Celebration culminates during the second week of November, with a concert on Friday 11/14 and a worship service on Sunday 11/16. The concert will feature a diversity of musical styles under three themes: 1) historical music performed at the dedication of the Church's buildings in 1829 and 1897; music by composers and poets who were/are members of our congregation; and performances by musicians currently active in our congregation. The service on Sunday will reprise some of these pieces. Nelly Case, former organist for our congregation, will return to perform (and accompany us) on our historically-significant tracker organ.

News from the Social Action Team - Get involved!



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 (please let us know ahead of time if you want to add an item onto our agenda). The SA Team generally meets on the second Tuesday of each month (but check the Church Calendar and newsletters to confirm). We meet in person (in the Romer Room), with a hybrid/Zoom option available:

Social Action Meeting

Tuesday October 14, 7:00-8:30 pm

In the Romer Room, with Zoom option:

<https://zoom.us/j/91742806459?pwd=dHRhRmFCMnZHRDhRbVB3cktTzZiUT09>

Meeting ID: 917 4280 6459

Passcode: 744583

Medical Aid in Dying: Write to Governor Hochul!

The NYS Legislature passed the *Medical Aid in Dying Bill* in June; so now we need to encourage Governor Hochul to sign the bill. Even though there are “rules” about how long the Governor has to sign or veto each bill, in practice the rules are suspended and the Governor calls up bills in small groups through the end of the year. 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 11 states allow medical aid in dying to be available, and the issue is one of the priority issues for NYUU Justice.

<https://compassionandchoices.org/in-your-state/new-york/>

You can write or call Gov. Hochul’s office, with a short message explaining why you believe it’s important for her to sign the bill into law:

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224
518-474-8390

Along with writing or calling, you can add your name to an open letter to the Governor, joining hundreds of others across the state to encourage her to sign the bill into law:

<https://tinyurl.com/NYMAIDSignOn>

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSft-VHiyGb6a5rcg0d2vF4rxAcCU0eeuz5MkZX0mp0kVUJuTA/viewform>

Helping Immigrants and their Families

Our Social Action Team has teamed up with Catholic Charities and other local groups to bring important information and resources to 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 emergency situations when necessary). Along with our regular Social Action communications, we have a separate e-mail list for the *Immigrant Resources Volunteer Network*. If you’re interested in learning about how to help immigrant families in our community, please e-mail socialaction@uucantonny.org to sign up for the *IRVN-SLC* emails. ***If you witness any immigration situations that you suspect involves ICE (or other agencies), or if you have any information about recent situations in the North Country, please call or text Paul Siskind (315-267-6102), and he will send the information to the appropriate response teams.***

<https://www.nyc.org/our-work/campaigns/new-york-for-all/take-action-new-york-for-all/>
<https://www.nyc.org/resources-training/kyr/#1>

The Gathering (Side With Love)

The Gathering is a monthly virtual event from the UUA's Side With Love, designed to offer:

- Spiritual Grounding – Strengthen your heart and spirit for the work ahead.
- Political Analysis – Understand the threats to democracy and justice.
- Collective Action – Organize with others to block anti-democratic forces and

build a just and loving world.

<https://sidewithlove.org/the-gathering>

[Download Promo kit](#)

Join us every Second Monday of the month at 8 pm ET. Register by clicking:

[October 13](#)

[November 10](#)

[December 8](#)

No Kings Rally

“NO KINGS” is more than just a slogan—it’s the foundation our nation was built upon. Born in the streets, carried by millions in chants and on posters, it echoes from city blocks to rural town squares, uniting people across this country to fight dictatorship together. The president thinks his rule is absolute. But in America, we don’t have kings, and we won’t back down against chaos, corruption, and cruelty. Grow our movement and join us.”

Saturday, 10/18, 11:00-1:00

Route 37 and Main St., Massena

https://www.mobilize.us/nokings/event/844110/?utm_source=uua

Supporting the Second Chance Scholars Program

The Second Chance Scholars Program provides safe and secure housing and other support for formerly-incarcerated people who are enrolled at SUNY-Potsdam. Our congregation has been a strong supporter of this program.

<https://secondchancescholars.org/>

Second Chance Scholars will be welcoming 8-9 new students this year, and needs to raise money to support them. They are holding a reception to help raise funds to support these students:

October 18, 4:00-5:30 pm

First Presbyterian Church, 42 Elm St., Potsdam

RSVP:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeh-mQIn35OTqrMuOlwQaBZXgljZ5g0DVwr7bZ6Z-NIViZH5Q/viewform>

To make a donation to Second Chance Scholars:

<https://donorbox.org/academic-reentry-housing>

Come join our UU Frame Drumming Group!

Tuesday, October 28th 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

Our UU Frame Drumming Group, led by Caron Collins, meets the last Tuesday of each month in the Social Room. Anyone can enjoy playing Arabic drumming along with singing simple chants and movement. 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 Frame Drums. You will also enjoy playing multiple Arabic instruments such as the Daff, Katim, Sagats, and a variety of Tars. 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. Come explore frame drumming with us. All ages and abilities are welcome!





FACING THE PRESENT WITH HEART

In these troubled times, full of anger, fear, and uncertainty, we are not alone. Please join us in Facing the Present with Heart, a listening meditation 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 will meet on the first Sunday of the month, October 5, from 2 to 3:30 pm in Canton at the Unitarian Universalist Church; and on the third Thursday of the month, October 16, from 6 to 7:30 pm in Potsdam at Trillium at the Presbyterian Church.

There is no charge, and all are welcome.

UU Science Book Club

(Zoom Meeting)

The UU Science Book Club will kick off its sixth season on Thursday, October 16, 7:00 pm, by discussing *How the Hippies Saved Physics* by David Kaiser. Did an eccentric group of physicists discover new insights to quantum reality, or did they push physics beyond the realm of science? Or both? Join the discussion by Zoom by contacting briangardam@gmail.com.

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 pm 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.



GAME NIGHT

Look out on the church calendar for an evening of board games! Bring your favorite game and friends or just come to join in! We try to meet monthly 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.

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 **Tuesday & Wednesday**.

Dan Burton, Congregational Administrator:

Available [by email](#), office hours **Tuesday & Thursday 9 am - 2 pm**, by appointment on **Monday & Wednesday**, and at **(315) 386-2498**.

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

3½ East Main Street Canton, New York 13617

The Reverend James Galasinski, Minister

Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education

Dan Burton, Congregational Administrator

Betsy Kepes, Music Coordinator

Open Church Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 9am-2pm

www.uucantonny.org office@uucantonny.org 315-386-2498