



Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton **NEWSLETTER**

November 2025

November 2, 10:30 am - A Piece of Fertile Ground

Rev. James Galasinski and Carol Zimmerman, DRE

Every year gardeners plant seeds—not to control what will come, but out of faith that transformation and growth will follow. What unexpected gifts are growing in our religious education garden? In this time when UUs strive to “meet the moment” - when growing empathy, equity, and interdependence in children, youth, and adults is so vital - we will practice, sing, and wonder together: what gifts might grow when we let go of “shoulds” and cultivate liberal religious education with wild abundance?

November 9, 10:30 am - The Problem and Persistence of Partialism

Rev. Dr. John A. Buehrens, Pulpit Guest

In 1925, anti-immigrant sentiment and the KKK were in revival, taking over the government of one state and powerful in a number of others. Now it's 2025. Churches of all sorts are in decline. Does the US still even have a soul to save? Progressive religion still holds great promise is needed now more than ever. The former UUA president, Rev. Buehrens is a dynamic and charismatic speaker and leader of our faith. You will come away energized, inspired, and proud to be in the long line of our living tradition. Doughnuts, cider, and coffee to be served!

John A. Buehrens has taught at three seminaries. He is the author or co-author of nine books about progressive religion. John retired from full-time ministry in San Francisco in 2017. He now lives in Berkeley with his wife of 53 years, the Rev. Gwen Langdoc Buehrens, a pioneer among ordained women in the Episcopal church.

November 16, 10:30 am - Bicentennial Celebration: A Home For Many Paths

Rev. James Galasinski

We are a theologically diverse congregation. Our many paths make us better. Come as we celebrate our bicentennial with inspiring music by the UU Choir and other guests.

November 23, 10:30 am - When Rumi Meets Shams

Rev. James Galasinski

Rumi was an accomplished intellectual and teacher of the laws of Islam. Then he met a dervish named Shams that completely changed his life into the mystical poet we know him as now

November 30, 10:30 am - Nurturing Gratitude

Rev. James Galasinski

It's all too easy to overlook good things when challenges occur. Deep contentment is possible even amidst suffering.



James's Journal - Bicentennial and a Sabbatical



In November of 1825, Universalists first met in Canton for worship and eventually became the First Universalist Society in the Town of Canton. This humble beginning led to 200 years of creating democratic institutions, inspiring worship, spiritual growth, extending compassion, seeking justice, and choosing love. This is something to be celebrated!

I will be taking a sabbatical in January and February of 2026.

The root of the word sabbatical means "rest." One purpose is to cease regular ministry and engage in study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional and religious growth. Part of my sabbatical will be used to further explore the life of the Rev. Jeffrey Campbell, one of the first UU ministers of color and lived in Canton in the 1920's and 30's. I will continue to collaborate with a group of St. Lawrence University alumni and faculty on a book and I hope to contribute two chapters. I will also be attending Institute for Learning Ministry 2026, a weeklong conference for UU ministers. I have chosen a track that will focus on improving preaching.

In peace,

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

The Rev. James Galasinski

Faith Formation



Why do we have fun days in religious education? You might be wondering why our religious education program has fun days on four Sundays during the church year. First, our shared value of transformation calls us to adapt to the changing world. Today many children are overscheduled and have little time for play and to explore their own boundaries. By offering fun days, we provide a space for play, fun, and connection. They also help children learn conflict negotiation, being present with feelings, a chance to belong, and the deliberate creation of space to feel safe in. Not to mention play is crucial for a child's development in cognitive, social, emotional, and physical areas. Secondly, they coincide with the K-12 school holidays when many families are traveling and thus there are fewer children in attendance. Finally, it requires only 2-3 adults to be present on that given Sunday, which allows most adults to attend worship.

During a recent L.O.V.E.D class, we asked the children how they would like to spend their fun days. They shared cubing (Rubix type cubes), drawing, crafting, baking, science, games, Legos and playing instruments. All of these activities are great ways for our children to grow and learn. Check out the church calendar to see when the fun days are scheduled and plan a fun day of your own. Blessed be.

~ Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education



FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Gratitude

I have been awestruck by the intensity of the fall colors this year. Have they always been this vibrant or has being forced to leave my office, where my eyes are constantly trained on my computer screen, allowed me to pause and notice? Or was it my travel companion—my elderly mother who I have been taking to see my father at Canton-Potsdam Hospital for more than a month—who opened my eyes to their evolving beauty? My mother no longer forms new memories, so every day the colors of the trees were a new experience for her: “I can’t get over the trees!”

Whatever the reason, I need to work harder to notice the leaves next fall...

What a wonder our lives are! Gratitude can catch us when we least expect it.

Take care,



Cathy Crosby, Church Council President



JOYS & SORROWS

- ★ It has been a joy to host the New York State Convention of Universalists Bicentennial meeting and gather together with UUs from around the state, for learning, fellowship, and celebration.

Dear Volunteers,

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! This past weekend was a great success. I got dozens of compliments from our guests saying how welcoming and hospitable our congregation was. One colleague, of mine, said something like, "Wow, you have a great congregation!"

Yes, I do! You all were awesome. I am very proud of what we accomplished. And it took everyone who organized, did dishes, set up, cleaned up, and everything with a smile and care! That is called living out our values!

The Rev. James Galasinski (he/him/his)

- ★ With sorrow, we pray for the vulnerable lives caught in the brutality and senseless violence, across our nation and around the world.
- ★ With joy, we look forward to gathering our congregation and friends from near and far, for our Bicentennial Bash of celebrations, as we work to remember our past and share our values in the world today.



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.

Matt Hayes	Nov 3
James Galasinski, Wade Wheelock, Dan Burton	Nov 4
Ayomi Odetoyinbo, Mary Rubio	Nov 9
Elyse Tavernier	Nov 10
John Trombley	Nov 11
Judi Cohen, Arthur Freeheart, Dominic	
Grimberg, Scott Shipley	Nov 13
Laura Foster	Nov 14
Albert Glover, Rebecca Pickens	Nov 19
Brook Stevenson	Nov 20
Cliff Westerling, Fiona Hunkins	Nov 22
Rocky Morreale	Nov 23
Kay Briggs, Remi Oakley	Nov 24
Barb Beekman, Elaine Thomas	Nov 25
Rajiv Narula	Nov 27
Kate Cleary, Donna Smith-Raymond	Nov 29

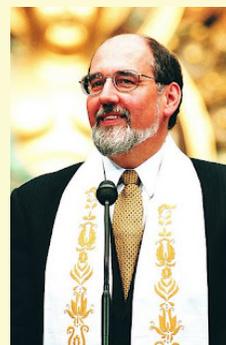
Bicentennial Events, Activities and Celebrations



This November, we gather together to celebrate 200 years of living our values in our community!

Progressive Religion and the Soul of America

Saturday, November 8, 10-11:30 AM, we will hold a workshop led by the Rev. Dr. John A. Buehrens in the Social Room. Doughnuts, cider, and coffee to be served!



In 1925, anti-immigrant sentiment and the KKK were in revival, taking over the government of one state and powerful in a number of others. Now it's 2025. Churches of all sorts are in decline. Does the US still even have a soul to save? Progressive religion still holds great promise is needed now more than ever. The former UUA president, Rev. Buehrens is a dynamic and charismatic speaker and leader of our faith. You will come away energized, inspired, and proud to be in the long line of our living tradition. Doughnuts, cider, and coffee to be served!

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Sunday, November 9, 10:30 am, join us for worship with our Bicentennial Pulpit Guest, Rev. Dr. John A. Buehrens and The Problem and Persistence of Partialism.

UU Canton to Appear on WWNY TV Noon News

Tuesday, Nov. 11, The Rev. James Galasinski and Church Council President Cathy Crosby are scheduled to be the guests for the News at Noon interview, WWNY-TV channel 7. They will discuss the upcoming bicentennial celebration, and in particular the Friday night, Nov. 14 concert. The interview is normally a three to five minute segment, at about the 20 minute mark of the newscast. Set your recording devices.

Bicentennial Big Bask Weekend!

Please RSVP online [HERE](#).

Thursday, November 13, Welcoming Reception

Snacks Provided, Cash Bar Available

7:00 pm – 10:00 pm

Laurentian Room

Best Western University Inn

90 East Main Street

Canton, NY



Friday, November 14, Gathering Service

9:30 am

Sanctuary

The Home to Many Paths, Gathering Together I*

10:00 am – 11:45 am

Romer & Social Rooms

Now is the time for action! Exploring the work of Deepa Iyer from her book, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection*, we will learn to grow more authentic, connected, and effective as individuals and communities as we pursue transformative justice together. All ages are encouraged and welcome to participate.

*You may attend either or both Gatherings.

Lunch Break, 12:00-1:30

Join with Friends to enjoy lunch at a local eatery.



Activities, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

- Universalist Walking Tour of St. Lawrence University, St. Lawrence University was started by Universalists. Some of this history is preserved in its walls. We will tour Richardson Hall, the oldest building on campus, the beautiful Gunnison Memorial Chapel which has a window dedicated to Universalism, and Atwood Hall, the last home of the Theological School. Led by the Rev. James Galasinski. Only one of these buildings is accessible to wheelchair users. The two other buildings will include some stair use. The total walk will be about ¼ of a mile. Meet at west end of the Vilas Hall Parking Lot (16 Romoda Drive Canton, NY 13617)
- 200 Years of Progressive Faith – Exhibit at St. Lawrence County Center for History & Culture; 3 East Main St, Canton, NY
- Church Building Tour, led by Roger Hutchinson. Roger, with assistance from the Building and Grounds Committee, will lead a tour of our beloved church building with highlights of historic building details, the stain glass windows legacy and more. Nelly Case will conclude the tour with information about the organ and a short organ recital.

“Then and Now” Concert, 7:00 pm

Sanctuary

Enjoy a concert of varied music connected with the history of our Church, including pieces from the 1897 dedication of our building; music by composers and poets who have been members of our congregation; and performances by the diversity of musicians who enliven for our services.

Post-Concert Dessert Reception, immediately following the concert

Romer & Social Rooms

Enjoy specially prepared, delectable desserts by many of our esteemed local chefs.

Saturday, November 15, Gathering Service

9:30 am

Sanctuary

The Home to Many Paths, Gathering Together II*

10:00 am – 11:45 am

Romer & Social Rooms

Now is the time for action! Exploring the work of Deepa Iyer from her book, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection*, we will learn to grow more authentic, connected, and effective as individuals and communities as we pursue transformative justice together. All ages are encouraged and welcome to participate.

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Lunch Break, 12:00-1:30

Join with Friends to enjoy lunch at a local eatery.

Activities, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

- Quarry Tour, led by Wil Rivers, SUNY Canton Professor. An easy and short walk to the historic quarry site where the grey marble that surrounds and supports our church building was quarried at the end of the 19th century. Appropriate dress for the weather is recommended. Meet and park at 595 Miner St. Rd., Canton.
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Bicentennial Dinner Celebration – Catered by Big Spoon Kitchen

5:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Social & Romer Rooms

Menu to include vegetarian, vegan, and gluten free options

Sunday, November 16, The Bicentennial Service

The Home Of Many Paths

10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Sanctuary

Celebratory Social Hour. immediately following the service

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Social and Romer Rooms

CAKE! And more Celebrations



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. 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.

Prism Holiday Pot Luck

Join North Country Prism on Sunday, November 16th at 6 pm, in the Social Room. Bring a dish to pass. All members of the LGBTQ community and their friends are urged to attend.





Third Thursday Soup

Third Thursday Soup is back! Come enjoy dinner with fellow UUs on Thursday, November 20 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.

Church and Community Food Donations



30 Court Street
PO Box 55
Canton, NY 13617

315-386-3534
director@ccpcanton.org

For those looking support families and friends who might be affected by the expected SNAP benefit delay in November, you can help the Canton Church and Community Program by placing non-perishable food in the blue bin in the social room at church, which will be delivered to the food pantry, by directly dropping off food donations at 30 Court Street M-F, 10 am to 4 pm, or by donating funds at the Canton Church and Community Program website. For those living outside of Canton, you may choose to donate to a local food pantry.

SNAP Benefit Delay

For those affected by the SNAP benefit delay expected in November, GardenShare offers this searchable database of local food sources like pantries, backpack programs, farmers market and more in the North Country. Go to the GardenShare website to search: <https://gardenshare.org/food-guide/>.

Potsdam Pride Friendsgiving

Sunday, Nov 23, 4:30-6:30 pm in the Social Room

Start the holiday season queerly with the annual Friendsgiving potluck. Bring a side dish, dessert, or non-alcoholic drink to share, if possible. Can't bring anything? Join anyway! There will be a mutual aid supply station at Friendsgiving this year. Anyone can take what they need, and donations of toiletries and shelf- stable holiday foods are welcome. Answer our online poll to let us know what we should buy!

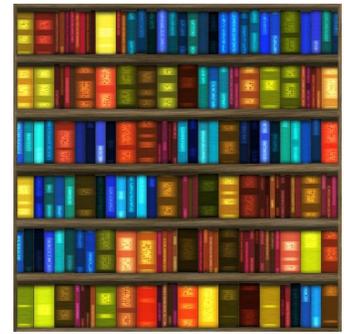
Link here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScoK9rkM4osWUyP4SDhZy0VQ3lQuHmc_fGNVq4jk7-53YZBFg/viewform?usp=header

To make a donation, please bring items to Friendsgiving

Check Out Transgender Resources in Our Library!

As you undoubtedly know by now, the transgender community is under vehement attack by the MAGA movement and our current administration. With book banning on the rise and incidents of censorship in the news, the library committee is doubling down on its existing commitment to make LGBTQIA+ resources accessible here in our faith community. We particularly want to spotlight the resources we have available to transgender individuals and their family members, as well as anyone who wants to better understand the myriad experiences of transgender individuals.



Perhaps you are questioning your own gender identity and want to know more about the experiences of others. Jennifer Finney Boylan's *She's Not There* and Shannon Kearn's *No One Taught Me How to Be a Man* are intended for adult readers. Another particularly valuable resource is *Gender Euphoria*, edited by Laura Kate Dale. This anthology moves away from the traditional dysphoria narrative and spotlights the joys of people embracing who they truly are. *GenderQueer* by Maia Kobabe (among the most commonly banned books nationwide) and *This is Our Rainbow*, edited by Katherine Locke and Nicole Melleby, are both geared primarily to a young adult audience.

Perhaps you are a parent looking to introduce your young children to concepts of inclusivity and gender fluidity. You might check out *I Am Jazz* by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings, or *Be Who You Are* by Jennifer Carr. Perhaps you are a grandparent wanting to better understand how language use has changed for your grandchildren. You might select *How to They/Them: A Visual Guide to Nonbinary Pronouns and the World of Gender Fluidity* by Stuart Getty or *Gender and Sexuality for Beginners* by Jaimee Garbacik. These are just a few examples of the resources we have available. Others include but are not limited to: *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves*, edited by Laura Erickson-Schroth, and *Rethinking Gender* by Louie Lauger. We are currently adding two new references to our collection: *Transitions of the Heart*, edited by Rachel Pepper, which is a wonderful anthology of essays by mothers of transgender children, and *Unbound: Transgender Men and the Remaking of Identity*, by Arlene Stein, another exploration of the transmasculine experience. These will be available in the library shortly. We also have a number of picture books and books for young readers featuring characters who embody non-traditional gender roles.

Lastly, the library aims to be a safe space that welcomes all questioning individuals and all individuals with questions. If you have questions or don't see a reference you are looking for, please contact Rebecca Rivers or Lorraine Olendzenski at library@uucantonny.org. In addition, youth who might like to check out books anonymously can do so by contacting either Rebecca or Lorraine, using the above email, or Jan DeWaters, one of the Our Whole Lives educators.

Rebecca Rivers

Come Sing in the UU Choir for these Special Events!



UU Bicentennial Festival Choir performance

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 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)*

As part of our Bicentennial Celebration, the UU Festival will be presenting a special concert:

***Raising Our Voices: Music of Our Church,
"Then and Now"***
Friday, November 14, 7:00 pm

The concert will feature three themes:

- Historical music that had been performed at the dedications of our church buildings in 1829 and 1897.
- Music by composers and poets past and present who have been members of our congregation.
- Performances by the diversity of musicians who currently enliven our services.

The concert will also feature premieres of new music/lyrics by Rev. Galasinski, Kathy Montan, and Karen Wells. Singers from the community will be joining our UU Choir to help us celebrate. Nelly Case, retired organist for our congregation, will be returning to perform on our historic organ. A dessert reception will follow.



News from the Social Action Team - Get involved!



Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton **Social Justice Initiative**

Promoting justice, equity, and compassion in human relations

The Social Action Team is pleased to announce that Katelyn Jessmer has volunteered to be the coordinator for our next Social Justice Initiative. The next SJI will focus on the topic of ***Overcoming Isolation***, and will take place in Fall of 2026. We invite members of the congregation to be part of the planning team for this important event. If you're interested in being part of the planning team, please e-mail:

sjcoordinator@uucantonny.org

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 November 11, 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

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.nyic.org/our-work/campaigns/new-york-for-all/take-action-new-york-for-all/>
<https://www.nyic.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:

[November 10](#)
[December 8](#)

UU Frame Drumming Group

Come Celebrate Native American Month with Music!

You are invited to join our special monthly Frame Drum Group on Tuesday, November 25th from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in recognition of our Indigenous neighbors. Native American Heritage Month is observed every November to honor the culture, history, and contributions of the nation's original inhabitants. Enjoy learning the history and playing authentic Native American instruments such as the Mohawk water drum and bone rattle, Navajo leather rattle, Chilean rain stick, Tamahumara Pow-Wow Drum, Buffalo Drum, and various Native American flutes. No experience necessary. All ages and abilities are welcome!

For more information, contact Caron Collins at bandtchr1@hotmail.com.



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, November 2, from 2 to 3:30 pm in Canton at the Unitarian Universalist Church; and on the third Thursday of the month, November 20, from 6 to 7:30 pm in Potsdam at Trillium at the Presbyterian Church. There is no charge, and all are welcome.

The Dances of Universal Peace

On Saturday, November 22, 10am - 1pm, join Azad Volckhausen. The Dances blend chants, live music, and simple movements into a living experience of unity and peace. Please register by clicking [HERE](#). A donation in any amount would be appreciated.



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

Join us on Thursday, November 13 at 5 pm! 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

For online giving, please click [HERE](#) or scan the QR code below:



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