



Unitarian Universalist Church of Canton **NEWSLETTER**

March 2026

March 1, 10:30 am - Contributing Through Service

Jim Williams and Carol Zimmerman, DRE

As Unitarian minister, James Vila Blake stated, “Love is the spirit of this church, and service its law. This is our great covenant: To dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.” Our shared value of generosity calls us to freely and compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources within our local and global community. During this whole church service, we will engage in meaningful service projects for Renewal House, SLC Office for the Aging and St Lawrence Valley Hospice.

Everybody’s Birthday Party - Immediately after the service in the Social Room

March 8, 10:30 am - The Call Ignited a Spark: Reflections on Minneapolis Part 1

The Rev. James Galasinski

Going to Minneapolis was a moment of moral clarity and faith for hundreds of faith leaders from around the country. I paid attention to an inner voice and acted on a theology of liberation. Looking into the eyes of ICE agents, I wanted them to be free of the dehumanizing act of oppression. I wanted a transformed society where all are free.

March 15, 10:30 am - We Are All Related: Reflections on Minneapolis Part 2

The Rev. James Galasinski

Minneapolis organizers had built deep bonds and connections over many years. There was a whole lot of planning in a short amount of time. They embraced and worked with change. Building resilient deep relationships is more effective than top-down approaches for large-scale transformation.

March 22, 10:30 am - Dorsal Practices

The Rev. James Galasinski

Dolphins have dorsal fins by accepting the wild movement of the ocean and adapting accordingly over many generations. What are the evolutionary practices that stabilize us? We can create our dorsal fins of stability with practice overtime.

March 29, 10:30 am - Pause, Breathe, Respond and Other Forms of De-escalation
The Rev. James Galasinski

Know your role. Don't get a 'good' idea. Leave if you need to. Slow is safe. Smooth is sometimes fast. Be in relationship. Pause, breathe, respond. These important concepts kept me grounded in the moment in Minneapolis and led me to be a natural de-escalator.



James's Journal - A Sabbatical to Remember



I am very grateful to you all, everyone at the UU Church of Canton, for the ability and privilege to take a sabbatical. Everyone deserves a rest, a time to reflect, and a time to just be. That is exactly how I wanted January and February to be but as you probably all know I spent four fast moving days in the Twin Cities in late January that not only changed the trajectory of my sabbatical but possibly my life. I had heard and read about UUs going to Selma in 1965 and how that experience transformed them. I can now relate.

I witnessed a growing fascism, federal government overreach, fear, and terror. Yet at the same time I saw gratitude, a community coming together, joy, and powerful worship. Going there and being there led me to go beyond the normal forms I am used to. Like being interviewed on a live internationally broadcast news program! After that interview I woke up in the middle of night in a casita in the middle of Old Town in Albuquerque and thought I had blown my chance to speak truth to power. I should have said this or that. But CNN gave me the clip in the morning and I quickly realized I did just fine.

I wasn't the only one changed. A rational humanist colleague of mine broke down in tears when he saw how many UU ministers had shown up. A felt theology of relationship and liberation permeated everything we did. We truly are all related. I sensed a deep connection to everyone I encountered. I saw mutual aid and the power of community coming together and in the process having a huge impact on the future of our country.

I have not fully unraveled and explored my Minneapolis experience but I hope to share my reflections with you in the coming weeks.

In gratitude,

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

The Rev. James Galasinski

Faith Development



Our faith calls us to recognize and value the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We are a neurodiverse community and as such we need to be aware of how best to support those whose brains work and are structured differently.

According to the Autism Today website, “simply put, society is a proving ground for neurodiversity, but not everyone in society is neurodivergent.” To live into this value, the RE Committee is hosting “Born to Belong: A Neurodivergent Workshop” on Sunday, March 8 from 12:30-1:30 pm in the Romer Room. J.L. Shattuck, an autistic, disabled UU religious educator and writer, to explore how children’s nervous systems, emotional needs, and ways of engaging with the world shape what their participation looks like—and how church environments can either support or work against it. This information is transferable to our lives outside the church too. Everyone is invited. Light refreshments will be provided. To help us plan food, please register [here](#) or visit the church website!

Let us be a church community that welcomes and supports neurodiversity and those who are neurodivergent! May it be so.

Blessed be.

~ Carol Zimmerman, Director of Religious Education





President's Message – March 2026

Steps Forward with Safety and Covenant

As we anticipate the approach of spring, I want to use my March newsletter message to provide a heads up on some Spring activities.

Safety and Security Task Force

In late 2025, Church Council asked John Danis to lead a Safety and Security Task Force. The other task force members are David Doran, Miles Manchester, Erin Roe, Ron Tavernier (as Church Council liaison), and Carol Zimmerman, DRE. Church Council identified several safety and security issues and charged the task force to:

investigate the safety and security issues [Church Council identified], as well as any others issue they identify during their work, to (1) determine the extent to which these issues pose a threat to the safety and security of the members of our community as well as the building and grounds; and (2) develop a plan, including a preliminary budget and any attendant policies changes, for ameliorating identified threats and enhancing our safety and security.

The Task Force began its work earlier this month and will be providing Church Council with their plan by July 1 st . If you have any questions or comments for the task force, please reach out to me or John.

Thank you to the members of this task force for doing this work on behalf of our church Community!

Behavioral Covenant Project

Based on the ideas generated during the two summer services and the covenant conversations in the fall, a working group comprised of Ed Gordon, Mary Michalek, Jon Montan, Dave Nelson, and I created a draft congregation-wide behavioral covenant, on which Church Council provided feedback at our retreat in late January. The working group is now drafting a set of policies and procedures for moments of conflict to accompany the behavioral covenant.

Once the draft is complete, we will invite everyone to provide feedback through two means: an online survey and another series of small group conversations to be held in later March and April. Please look for more information in the News for UU weekly e-blasts and the OOS announcements later this month.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this project!

Take Care,



Cathy Crosby, Church Council President



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.

Eden Terrell	Mar 5
Janice Westerling, Elian Erickson	Mar 9
C. Nelson	Mar 13
Caron Collins, Sarah Bentley-Garfinkel	Mar 20
Natalie Panshin, Maureen McCarthy	Mar 22
Kurt Terrell	Mar 26
Richard Grover, Danny Thomas	Mar 29
Travis Graham	Mar 30

Donation Box

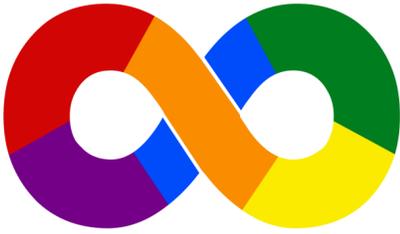
For the whole month of March, we will be collecting the following items to be donated to the Office for the Aging:

- Night lights - Back scratchers - Cotton Socks - Puzzle Books

There will be a box on the chancel during the March 1st worship service and then in the social room until March 31st. Your support is greatly appreciated as we live into our shared value of generosity to our local community.

Soul Work Station

On Sunday, March 29 look for our new Soul Work Station at the back of the sanctuary. Sitting still, with nothing to do but listen, can be hard for kids and adults alike. In fact, neuroscientists are learning that “fidget items,” like pipe cleaners, play-doh, and coloring can actually help listeners focus better. In particular, knitting, sewing, and coloring mandalas have been found to create the same brain patterns as those found during meditation—bestowing a calming, balancing effect. Often, busy hands = calm mind and body. That's good for the soul and that's faith development. Take one of these new soul work bags to your seat during worship. Reach out to Carol Zimmerman, DRE if you have any questions or suggestions for the table.



Born to Belong: A Neurodivergent Awareness Workshop

Many congregations care deeply about inclusion but still find themselves stuck when it comes to welcoming neurodivergent kids. Drawing on the Born to Belong framework, this workshop on Sunday, March 8 from 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm will explore how children's nervous systems, emotional needs, and ways of engaging with the world shape what their participation looks like—and how church environments can either support or work against it.

Participants will learn how to recognize common access needs, meet challenging moments with compassion and confidence, and make small, meaningful adjustments to physical spaces, programming resources, and classroom expectations so that all children can participate with dignity and joy. Plan to bring a bag lunch (refreshments and light snacks will be provided) and [register HERE](#), or reach out to Carol Zimmerman, DRE.

Social Hour and Greeter Signups for 2026

[2026 Social Hour Host Schedule](#)

[2026 Greeter Schedule](#)

Welcoming all who come on Sunday mornings and hosting social hour are responsibilities we all share. Church members and regularly attending friends are asked to take their turns with this important work of our church community. To learn more, please visit:



<https://www.uucantonny.org/get-involved/service-volunteer-instructions/>.

Thank you for helping to make this a warm and welcoming congregation!

Third Thursday Soup

Third Thursday Soup is on! Come enjoy dinner with fellow UUs on Thursday, March 19 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.

GAME NIGHT



Join us on Thursday, March 12, 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.

ANNUAL UU "Playin' with Fire!" CHILI FEST

It has been a long, cold, snowy winter! So, let's *heat things up* at our annual Chili Fest on Sunday, March 15th right after worship. Veggie, vegan, carnivore, spicy, sweet - bring it on! To enter your chili in the competition, please email toddamoe@gmail.com. Prizes will be awarded! This is a fundraiser for the church, so bring some dollar bills to cast your votes.



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 generally 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.



Worship Service on 3/15

Music: TBA

Schedule:

- Sunday 3/8 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10
- Sunday 3/15 Rehearsal 9:00-10:10; *perform during the Service, 10:30-11:00*

News from the Social Action Team - Get involved!

Immigrant Resources Volunteer Network

In spring of 2025, our Social Action Team was approached by a number of regional organizations to help organize resources to help immigrants and their families in our communities face the hurtful actions of the Trump administration. Those initial efforts led to the formation of the *Immigrant Resources Volunteer Network*. IRVN started as a project within the Church's Social Action Team, but it has since grown to be a group of 160 people from within our congregation and across the North Country. Because immigrant communities are integral to our region (e.g. agriculture, the colleges, etc.), at our February meeting the Social Action recommitted that immigrant support will be one of the issues we will focus on for the foreseeable future.

Over the past year, IRVN has partnered with Maria Garito, the Immigrant Resources Coordinator for Catholic Charities. Maria is based in Watertown, but she has opened an office in Ogdensburg and will split her time between the two; this is the first immigrant resource office in our county in recent decades. Maria and IRVN are connected with the Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network (which is affiliated with the Workers' Center of Central New York) and the NYS Office for New Americans, which connects us with a broader network of resources and services.

IRVN helps Maria's work by being "ears on the ground" to let her know about any situations that arise, as well as being "boots on the ground" for any volunteer work that needs to be done. Some of the goals of IRVN include:

- Alerting Maria when we hear about detentions of immigrants, raids of homes/business, and other situations.
- Getting helpful info about immigration issues out to immigrants and their families.
- Educating community members who want to support immigrants.
- Providing services that might be helpful to immigrants and their families (e.g. legal; financial; transportation)
- Spreading info for other groups when they are organizing events, rallies, protests.

Most recently, IRVN has been fighting against the Sheriff's decision to sign onto a 287(g) Agreement to collaborate with ICE and perform immigration enforcement duties in our county jail. We are now lobbying state legislators to pass the *New York for All Act*, which would nullify such agreements throughout the state.

IRVN sends out a Newsletter with info about immigration issues and upcoming events by e-mail about once a week. If you are interested in receiving the e-mails from IRVN, please contact paul@paulsiskind.com to be added to the IRVN e-mail list.

If you witness or are aware of any suspected detentions, raids, or other activity by ICE or other immigration agencies, you can report them to the following link and phone hotline. These links submit the information directly to the Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network [SIRDN], who will investigate the situation and coordinate with other organizations to provide resources and support if needed. Please be sure that only credible/verified situations are reported.

<https://tally.so/r/3ybWD4>

(315) 400-0920 (voice and text)

Even if you submit the info to SIRDN via the link, please also send the information to me (via email or text), so that I can follow-up with other partnering networks (e.g. Catholic Charities, and [Northern NY Coalition](#)) to make sure that situations are responded to quickly and effectively.

paul@paulsiskind.com

(315) 267-6102 (voice and text)

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 March 10, 7:00-8:30 pm

In the Romer Room, with Zoom option:

<https://zoom.us/j/99736094441?pwd=3bpHAb6Rv1fCLVskAta2t5jxb5BtLJ.1>

Meeting ID: 997 3609 4441

Passcode: 450380

Supporting Food Pantries

Given the ongoing uncertainty about federal funding for SNAP (food stamps), it's more important than ever that we consider supporting local food pantries. You can support food pantries by donating dry/canned food items and/or through monetary donations. Our congregation has a long-standing partnership with the Canton Church and Community Program: <https://ccpcanton.org/>. Or, you can donate dry/canned goods simply by bringing them to the Church and placing them in the Big Blue (Wooden) Box that's located in the Social Room.



30 Court Street
PO Box 55
Canton, NY 13617

315-386-3534
director@ccpcanton.org

History Circle

The history group meets next on Sunday, March 15 at 9:00 am in the Coots Library.

Our History Circle brings you another look back into the past with a special recipe from our 1896 church cookbook:

Scripture Cake

Submitted by Mrs. Ada Fry

From "The Economist

a practical common sense cook book published for the benefit of the New Universalist Church, Church"

Canton NY 1896" p 51

1 c. Butter	Judges v, 25
4 c. Flour	I Kings iv, 22
3 c. Sugar	Jeremiah vi, 2020
2 c. Raisins	I Samuel xxx:12
2 c. Figs	I Samuel xxx: 12
1 c. Water	Genesis xxiv. 17
1 c. Almonds	Jeremiah i, 11
6 Eggs	Isaiah x, 14
1 T. Honey	Exodus xii, 21
1 t. Cream (baking powder)	Exodus xii, 19
Pinch, salt	Job vi,6
Spices to taste	I Kings x, 10

Follow Solomon's advice for making
good boys and you will have a good cake Proverbs xxii, 13

(This recipe was popular in the late 1800's to teach young girls cooking and scripture. It did not include step by step instructions, which may be typical of that era).

Science Book Club

The UU Science Book Club will meet on Thursday, February 19 at 7:00 PM by Zoom
For more information, contact bdgardam@icloud.com.

Shamanic Circle Will Meet Bi-Weekly on Mondays at 9:30 am in 2026

Meets every other Monday. Next Circle will be on March 2, 9:30-11:00am. Knowledge of how to journey is necessary. To learn more on journeying and Shamanism, feel free to contact Debra Mitchell at dmitchell317@twcny.rr.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.



Image created with ChatGPT

Drumming, Dancing, and Singing for Mother Earth

Join our monthly UU Frame Drumming Group in honor of Mother Earth on Tuesday, March 31 st at 6:30 pm in the church Social Room. To celebrate the awakening of Spring, we will create easy drumming accompaniments to our UU Earth-centered hymns found in the hymnal supplement, "Singing the Journey". Do you feel the urge to dance rather than drum? Then join our group of dancers and create easy expressive movements to enhance these songs. All ages and abilities can enjoy collaborative musicking with our UU Frame Drumming Group. Drums and instruments provided or bring your own. Come celebrate with us! For more information, contact Caron Collins at bandtchr1@hotmail.com.



Beyond the Binary Conference

Our Church is pleased to be a satellite host for the Building Beloved Community Beyond the Binary Conference, presented by the First UU Society of Syracuse. We will stream the conference at our Church, and provide a supportive space for transgender people and their allies to gather together for fellowship to watch the conference. We also hope to add 1-2 local, in-person sessions/events at the Church.

We are registering our Church as a satellite host; you don't need to register as individuals if you attend our streaming.

Saturday 4/26, 8:30-5:00
Social Room

Here's information about the streamed conference:

<https://firstuusy.org/bbcbb-conference/>

<https://www.uuworld.org/articles/beyond-binary-syracuse-lgbtq-trans-intersex-rights-unit-arian-universalism>

If you would like to help with planning/organizing this event, please contact:
socialaction@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 **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
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