



## Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills

Whoever you are, Whomever you love, Wherever you are  
in your life's journey, YOU are Welcome Here.

[VISIT WEBSITE](#)

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## From the Minister

March's monthly topic is vulnerability.

I don't know about you, but I had to be taught how to be vulnerable. It didn't always come naturally to me. I thought you just had to "keep a stiff upper lip", not show the cracks. I have been fortunate to be in groups where people I greatly respected – people with wisdom, compassion, great leadership qualities – would express their vulnerability. Admit they had their doubts about themselves sometimes. Say out loud that they didn't know for sure if they were right. Ask for help from others.

Through these mentors, I came to understand that vulnerability is not the opposite of strength. Being willfully unaware of one's own flaws – and our basic humanness – isn't strength at all. It's much stronger to be able to say, "I'm just one imperfect person doing my best, but I am doing the best I can on this one, and together, who knows what we might accomplish." Through these vulnerable people – of all genders and ages and backgrounds – I have learned the strength and collective power of vulnerability.

How about you? What have you learned about vulnerability? Here's to March,

and all the fragile beauty that thaws, and grows, in the spring.

Blessings,  
Rev. Bob

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## SUNDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

### JOIN US EVERY SUNDAY AT 10:30AM

#### **March 5 - Meditation on the Interdependence of All Existence, Or: Why the Chicken Crossed the Road - Rev. Bob Janis**

(In-person & Zoom) (Childcare available. No RE\*)

A reflection on life, death, particle physics, and bad jokes.

Worship Associate - Kathy Atwell

#### **March 12 - Volunteering and Vulnerability: Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone - The Board**

(In-person & Zoom) (RE\* and Childcare available)

What are some of the many paths to volunteering? What holds us back?

And how have we grown through the process? As a follow-up to our January Volunteer Sunday several Board members and other leaders will speak of their path to engagement in the life of our congregation.

Worship Associate - Vickie O'Dougherty

#### **March 19 - Taking a Few Risks - Rev. Bob Janis**

(In-person & Zoom) (Childcare available. No RE\*)

Lent is not necessarily just about cutting back on what we love - the coming of spring invites us to reflect on what areas we might live life in abundance. Some thoughts on a more radical, yet more humble, life.

Worship Associate - Liz Thomas

#### **March 26 - Divine Companion - Catherine Cattabiani**

(In-person & Zoom) (RE\* and Childcare available)

Join us as we acquaint ourselves with one of founding members - the feisty Anita Trueman Pickett.

\*Religious Exploration

[ZOOM LINK](#)

## SERVICES IN-PERSON AND ON ZOOM

As of February 26, every service will be live in our Sanctuary AND on Zoom - weather permitting. In case of snow or ice, check the website the morning of the service for any cancellations.

We expect to have every service live and on Zoom from now until June. This will require increased volunteers - especially for the social hour after the service. Please email Catherine Cattabiani at [geeliot7@gmail.com](mailto:geeliot7@gmail.com) if you can volunteer to make the coffee, or help with the tech (training is available).

## WATCH PAST SERVICES

Many past sermons and services are available on our [YouTube page](#).



**MARCH HALF PLATE RECIPIENT IS  
A.J. WILLIAMS-MYERS AFRICAN ROOTS CENTER**

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# From the UU Catskills President

Our theme for March is vulnerability. We feel most vulnerable when we step outside our comfort zones to take on a new role or project that challenges us to grow and move beyond ourselves. Yet, isn't this the very calling of life as it seeks to overcome the spirit of gravity that strives to hold us fast? Much of our March agenda focuses on change—the changing seasons to be sure, but also changes to our mission, our ministry, and even to our principles.

On March 12, the Board will conduct a follow-up service on Volunteering and Vulnerability: Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone, during which we will hear from several leaders about their path to service within our congregation. Following Service, there will be another opportunity for those of you looking to get more involved to meet with members of the various UU Catskills committees and groups. Throughout March, there will be series of cottage meetings (on March 14, 18 and 30) to discuss where we are as a congregation and where do we go from here—important questions to ask as we head into our Pledge Campaign and our Ministerial Search. And finally, there is the unfolding of the Eighth Principle, and the proposed revision to Article II of the UUA Bylaws (watch for further discussions of these two important issues).

Lots of potential change with lots of ways to get informed and let your voice be heard. Come to the Board Service and to one of the Cottage Meetings. Step out of your comfort Zone and get involved in a committee or group. UU Catskills can only truly be ours, if all of us engage in its unfolding together.

Mark S. Howenstein

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# NAME TAGS

In the interest of inclusivity, we have implemented the addition of pronouns to our name tags. If yours does not have your correct pronouns, please contact Lois Slade (Lois.Slade@gmail.com) and she will make you a new one. Name tags are located in the entry hallway. If you did not find your name tag, please let Lois know.

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## MARCH EVENTS

March 2 at 11am - First Thursday Hangout (In-person & Zoom)

March 4 at 11am - Buddhacats (In-person)

March 5 at 12:30pm - (Re)Learning our ABC's

March 7 at 7pm - "Mistakes and Miracles" Book Group (Zoom)

March 14 at 7pm - Congregational Meet & Eat (In-person)

March 18 at 2pm - Congregational Meet & Eat (In-person)

March 19 at 12:15pm - UU 101

March 20 at 5pm - Buddhacats (Zoom)

March 23 at 5:30pm - Let's Do The Work (Zoom)

March 27 at 7:30pm - Great Books - *Song of Songs* (Zoom)

March 30 at 11am - Congregational Meet & Eat (In-person)

April 8 at 5pm - Passover Seder (In-person)

## **RECURRING EVENTS**

Every Sunday at 7pm - Grief Support Group (Zoom)

Every Thursday at 7:30pm - Bedtime Story and More! (Zoom)

First Saturday at 11am - Buddhacats Affinity Group (In-person)

First Saturday at 7pm - Folk Guild (In-person)

First Wednesday at 5pm - SGM Writing Group (Zoom)

First Thursday at 11am - Hangout with Rev. Bob (In-person & Zoom)

Second Friday at 10:30am - Soul Matters (In-person)

Third Monday at 5pm - Buddhacats Affinity Group (Zoom)

Third Monday at 7pm - Soul Matters (Zoom)

Third Tuesday at 5pm - Climate Action Team (Zoom)

Third Thursday at 10am - Board Meeting

Last Monday at 7:30pm - Great Books (Zoom)

Last Tuesday at 7:30pm - Women's Group (Zoom)

[CHECK OUT ALL EVENTS](#)

## **FIRST THURSDAY HANGOUT**

First Thursday Hangout is simply a chance to hang out with Rev. Bob and others in an informal setting, on the first Thursday of each month, 11 am – noon. Thursday, March 2nd, on Zoom and in person. NO MEETING IN APRIL.

([Zoom Link](#) or dial in 646-558-8656)

## **BUDDHACATS AFFINITY GROUP**

This is an informal group of people who share an interest in Buddhism and meditation. Through a communal practice (Sangha), we seek to develop and enrich our individual meditation practices as we explore the teachings of Buddha (Dharma).

Our meetings consist of a short group mediation (15-20 minutes), after which those who wish to are invited to share their experience, as well as any Buddhist-related thoughts, practices, and/or readings.

All those interested are invited to attend.

We meet the first Saturday of each month (March 4th) at 11:00 am at the home of Judee Irwin. Contact Judee, [judeeirwin@gmail.com](mailto:judeeirwin@gmail.com), for details.

And we meet online via Zoom the third Monday of the month (March 20) at 5pm. Contact Karen Lindsay, [kwykslindsay@gmail.com](mailto:kwykslindsay@gmail.com), for the Zoom link and details.

## "MISTAKES AND MIRACLES" Book Group

The Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism book group completed its 3 sessions of discussion. There will be another opportunity March 7th from 7:00 - 8:30 pm on Zoom with Rev. Bob for those who have read the book and who were unable to make the in-person meetings. The link for this meeting is below.

Our work to build a Beloved anti-racist Community will continue with the Do The Work! discussions seen elsewhere in this Newsletter. The Anti-Racism Task Force will continue proposing ways to come together in this work, to recognize our strengths, to take risks and be vulnerable, and to support one another through the difficult task of change. Remember, the proposed 8th Principle calls us all to live into our faith - into our 7 Principles. For more on the 8th Principle go to [UUCatskills.org](http://UUCatskills.org)

All welcome. You don't have to have read the book, but the book is available to purchase [HERE](#).

[Zoom LINK](#)

## CONGREGATIONAL MEET & EAT

YOU are invited to take part in one of three "cottage meetings" in March. The purpose of these cottage meetings is to get together in joyful community, discuss the congregation and our future, and kick off our pledge campaign. Rev. Bob, who will be at the meetings, has created a

“scenario game” to help us think through congregational life and visioning here at UU Catskills – kind of a conversation starter. A simple, scrumptious meal of soup, salad and bread will be provided – no need to bring anything.

The dates for these in-person meetings are:

Tuesday March 14, 7 – 8:30 pm

Saturday, March 18 2 – 3:30 pm

Thursday, March 30 11 am – 12:30 pm

All meetings will be in the Sanctuary. Each meeting is limited to 30 participants, and you must RSVP. So sign up now! To sign up, please click on this [Doodle Poll](#) by March 6 so we know which meeting you can attend. Or you can email Lois Slade at [lois.slade@gmail.com](mailto:lois.slade@gmail.com) with which meeting(s) you can make. Each person will be assigned one date based on their availability. If you can't make any of the in-person meetings, there will be a Zoom meeting on Thursday, March 23, 3-4:30 pm. Thanks!

## UU 101

UU 101 will be offered, in person and on Zoom, on Sunday, March 19, at 12:15. At this informal session, presented by Rev. Bob and the Membership Committee, you will learn about UU history, our seven Principles, and UUCatskills governance and activities. This event is geared toward interested visitors and potential members, but all are welcome to attend. An RSVP to [membership@uucatskills.org](mailto:membership@uucatskills.org) is appreciated but not required.

[Zoom LINK](#)

## ANTI-RACISM TASK FORCE Let's Do The Work!

In follow up to the UUA Common Read of Mistakes and Miracles, the ARTF will host a series of monthly discussions led by Rev. Bob. Using a newly published activity book called Do The Work! we will participate in fun, thought-filled, activities, games, illustrations and comics, and be challenged to think critically and act effectively.

Where Mistakes and Miracles was an exploration of how 5 congregations are working to meet the expectations of the 8th Principle, Do The Work! brings us an opportunity to grow individually and together as we learn what we really CAN DO to address racial injustice and become a Beloved



multicultural anti-racist congregation. Isn't this what the 8th Principle is calling us to do?

Don't miss this engaging opportunity to grow together. Our first meeting is Thursday, March 23rd, 5:30-7:00 on Zoom. Link below. Others are scheduled for April 27 and May 25. Contact Rev. Bob if you need help with the book's purchase. Several copies are already here.

[Zoom LINK](#)

## GREAT BOOKS SERIES

Great Books Series is a discussion of the world's sacred and philosophical texts. We meet on the last Monday of the month 7:30 – 9:00 pm, on Zoom.

March 27, 7:30 pm Song of Songs

April 24, 7:30 pm Mary Oliver, Devotions

May 29, 7:30 pm Upanishads

[Zoom LINK](#)

## PASSOVER SEDER

Mark your calendar for our Passover Seder which will take place in our sanctuary on Saturday, April 8th at 5:00 pm. The Seder is a Jewish celebration of collective liberation. All are welcome, of all faiths and faith perspectives – kids of all ages very welcome too. The meal will be potluck – for some ideas of Seder-friendly recipes, there are many sites online such as [THIS ONE](#).

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# UU Catskills Children's Art



*Artwork by Jake.*

## RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Jane Podell, Director of Religious Exploration

This month, we will explore the challenges and paths of **vulnerability**. Each path includes an exploration of a moment of vulnerability. Our aim is to explore some key moments when life asks us to be vulnerable.

**March 5** – childcare only – fun in the farmhouse!  
Ann Peters, Childcare provider

**March 12** – Religious Exploration + Childcare

Jane Podell, R.E. leader

Jillian Hanson, childcare provider

*Life Asks Us to Be Vulnerable...*

**When We Seek Friendship**

A big part of vulnerability is being willing to take a risk. And one of the biggest and most vulnerable risks we take is friendship. We need to trust that they will respond in kind when we signal, we want to be friends. We need to trust that they will not hurt us once we've become friends. So come, let us leap into and explore the vulnerable ability to say, "I like you."

**March 19** – childcare only – fun in the farmhouse!

Jillian Hanlon, childcare provider

**March 26** – Religious Exploration + Childcare

Jane Podell, R.E. leader

Ann Peters, childcare provider

*Life Asks Us to Be Vulnerable...*

**When We Can't Do It On Our Own**

We will explore the times when life asks us to be vulnerable because we need help, feel worried, or can't do something on our own. In these moments, we are asked to vulnerably say, "I need help."

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## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### 8TH PRINCIPLE

The Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism book group has completed its 3 sessions of discussion. There will be another opportunity on Zoom with Rev. Bob for those who have read the book and who were unable to make the in-person meetings.

Our work to build a Beloved anti-racist Community is ahead of us. We will be proposing ways to come together in this work, to recognize our strengths, to take risks and be vulnerable, and to support one another through the difficult task of change. Remember, the proposed 8th Principle calls us all to live into our faith - into our 7 Principles. For more on the 8th

Principle go to UUCatskills.org

### **AN 8TH PRINCIPLE MOMENT**

The proposed UU 8th Principle is the only one, within the stated principles of our faith, that articulates a commitment to the dismantling of white supremacy "by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions." Let's own this work!

## **MINISTERIAL SEARCH TEAM**

A Congregational Record (CR) is a document describing our congregation, our local community, what we would like see in our minister, and for the larger community.

For the purpose of transparency, the CR that your ministerial search team created is now posted on our UUCatskills website in the Member's section. Please feel free to [look through it](#) if you wish.

Ministers seeking positions will read our CR and decide whether they would like to consider us for a position. We have been contacted by two minister so far. The team will be meeting next week to fine-tune our interview questions for them.

If you have questions, please contact one of the members of the team: Kathy Eberlein, Rob Becker, Lydia McCaw, Karen Howenstein, or Jerelynn Mason.

## **CLIMATE ACTION TEAM**

"UU's show up" was a comment I recall from our read of *Mistakes and Miracles* referring to UU's showing up for social justice work. What will you show up for? Here are three opportunities to show up for this month.

#1 Join Rev. Bob and other members on Tuesday, 3.21.23 and be part of a National Day of Action by Third Act, Bill McKibben's climate group and our local partner Rivers and Mountains GreenFaith Circle calling on banks to stop funding the climate crisis. We are looking for drivers and riders to carpool to Albany. Note this event involves more than a mile of walking.

Contact Karen Miller if interested 845-399-2805. [Details here.](#)

#2 Come hear hydrogeologist Paul Rubin, son of long-time member Jane Riley, speak about Bluestone Wild Forest becoming a NYS historic site to preserve it from development. Saturday, March 25th in the sanctuary at 11 am. Look for details to come and link for viewing via Zoom.

#3 Mobilization for Climate, Jobs, and Justice March 28th in Albany by NY Renew. Bus from Kingston lunch provided [Register here](#)

## SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE TABLE

*"Justice is what Love looks like in public."* Dr. Cornell West

When asked "What Your Center is Calling You To Do", and what injustices are weighing on your mind, these are the responses: Equity in Education, All Animals be Cared For, No One to be Hungry, To Reach a Sustainable World Community that is Just for All, That the World May Heal Her Many Injuries Through Love, To Keep on with the Voice that Comes Through Clearer and Clearer, Climate Change is my "burning" Issue, That the Natural World be Healed Through our Conscious Change of Thoughtless Behavior, Gun Control, Climate Action

## SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Thoughts after our All Congregation Read of 'Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism'

By Christie Billeci

In chapter one the authors state "it is our culture and not our theology" that is the biggest obstacle for UUs trying to work toward creating more inclusive congregations -but that should offer us hope! A congregation can't get anywhere in the work of building a beloved, multicultural, antiracist community until they understand how the concept of white

privilege is at work in their lives and their institution. A congregation has to reach a tipping point in the number of white folks who understand the concept of white privilege in order to be able to make progress.

"Understanding white privilege" is shorthand for awakening to this country's system of racial hierarchy.

The term 'white supremacy culture' is also used to mean the same thing and while it may conjure up images of hoods and mobs, it is used to describe the "set of institutional assumptions and practices, often operating unconsciously, that tend to benefit white people and exclude people of color". In the 2020s actual 'white supremacists' are not required in order to uphold white supremacist culture. Building a faith full of people who understand that key distinction is essential as we work toward a more just society.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

### **UIDN March Collection**

Our next Ulster Immigrant Defense Network collection runs from March 1 to Sunday, March 26. This time we request different items: toilet paper, tissues, band aids, diapers sizes 5 and 6, and Enfamil Infant Formula in yellow canister. Donations can be put in the Sanctuary hallway box or money can be given to member Paula Silbey. She and another volunteer will shop on your behalf.

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

### TRANS CLOSET DONATIONS NEEDED

The [Trans Closet of the Hudson Valley](#) needs our donations of Men's and Women's clothing sizes XL through 5X (or larger.) No suits or formal

attire. This is a wonderful service for people who cannot easily and safely shop for their everyday clothing needs. Please call Donna Schlachman (603-686-1063) if you have donations and we will arrange drop off or pick up.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

UUCS Minister - Rev. Bob Janis-Dillon - minister@uucatskills.org

UUCS Office Administrator - Sarah Bissonnette-Adler - uuccoffice@gmail.com

Director of Religious Exploration - Jane Podell - RE@uucatskills.org

Music Director - Catherine Cattabiani - geoeliot7@gmail.com

Membership - Mary Evans - membership@uucatskills.org

Social Action Committee - Donna Schlachman - Social.Action@uucatskills.org

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