

# The Circuit Writer - June 2021

## Services for June 2021

**June 6th | 10:30AM\*:**

### **Flower Communion Service**

At the beginning of summer, in UU churches throughout the world, Flower Communion is celebrated. Flower Communion is an annual ritual that celebrates beauty, human uniqueness, diversity, and community. Remember to bring a flower to this service. Any flower will do. Buy one from a florist or a gas station, pick one out of your garden, or even out of your neighbor's yard. Together we will bless the flowers, our year together, and many more to come. Special music from Margaret Jerz, the UU Wausau Adult Choir, and Louis Pradt.

**June 13 | 9:30AM\*:**

### **Περιπέτεια στην αγορά**

Richard Olson, guest speaker

“While the Greek Agora was an open market for goods and services, it also served as an open market for ideas. Sometimes those ideas were dangerous, just ask Socrates. Let's go back in time and listen in as we go on An Adventure to the Greek Market. Roundtrip transportation included.”

**June 20, 2021 | 9:30AM\*:**

### **Storytelling**

Greg Venne, guest speaker

“American discourse has grown uncivil, hostile, and ineffective. Our session today uses the telling of stories to cement the common bonds that hopefully outlast the discord.

“Of course, we will sing some folk songs that tell stories, which we can all sing or hum. We will tell and listen to stories; in a cozy circle of friends, attendees may tell a brief story, or they may choose to be the crucial listener.”

**June 27, 2021 | 11:00AM\*:**

### **UUA General Assembly Worship**

Join us in the Atrium at UU Wausau to virtually attend the largest annual gathering of UUs in worship.

**\* Please note the different start times of the services this month.**

## **Religious Services - Summer Services**

While the Religious Services Committee has done considerable summer service planning, there are still four Sundays to schedule. We are optimistic that two of those will be filled, so we have room for a worship leader or two who are interested in putting together a summer service. If leading is not for you, but you have an idea for a speaker or a topic, we are open to suggestions.

Please contact [Randy Jefferson](#), [Sheryl Hemp](#), or [Brian Mason](#) regarding leading a service or speaker/topic ideas. Thank you for considering.



## *From a Window on Grant—June 2021*

What an amazing, trying, and inspiring year it's been. Pandemic, transitions, online church, hybrid church, reopening, reclosing, (re)reopening, vandalism, (re)reclosing, moonlighting as Methodists while our church gets tidied up, and soon, (re[re])reopening. Never a dull moment at UU Wausau!

There are two things I want to accomplish in this newsletter: 1, I want to thank you; and 2, I want to update everyone on how we'll gather at UU Wausau once we're given the "all clear" from the cleanup crew to resume meeting in our building.

First, the thanks—Thank you for your care and concern. Recent weeks have been trying. But thanks to you, it's not only been manageable, it's been inspiring. I've been moved, over and over again, by acts of kindness, love, and generosity. From people dropping by church to show their care and support, to the kind notes and emails, to the yummy treats left on my porch at home. It's meant the world to me, and I know the ways you're caring for one another has meant the world too. If you're struggling about the recent vandalism, or about anything, reach out. Know that the members of the Caring Committee and I are here, willing to lend a hand and a caring heart.

Now to how we'll gather—I'm cautiously optimistic we'll be back in our church by the first Sunday in June. (Note that optimism is cautious, but it's optimism nevertheless!) Be sure to keep an eye out for more info about that in the coming days. In addition to my excitement about gathering in our church again, I'm excited by the recent gathering recommendations from the CDC that says those who are fully vaccinated no longer need to wear masks at indoor or outdoor gatherings (with some exceptions).

The church's Bounce Back Plan has been updated to reflect the most recent scientific data, which means that if you're fully vaccinated wearing a mask inside the church building is optional; however, if you're not fully vaccinated, we trust that you will wear a mask whenever you're in the building. If you have questions, check out [the updated Bounce Back Plan](#). And don't hesitate to be in touch with me or any staff member if you have concerns or questions.

Thanks again for your commitment and faithfulness to UU Wausau and to one another.

See you at church,

*Brian*

### **Volunteers Needed for Ushering**

We are all looking forward to in-person church services this fall. There are many volunteer opportunities for members to step up and serve. One of those opportunities is ushering. Please consider a small commitment of two to three Sundays during the year. If you have never ushered before, it is a great way to meet people, both visitors or long time members. An ushering schedule would be mailed to you in August, along with a brief description of the responsibilities. If you have never ushered before, I would be happy to walk you through the duties (which are few).

I hope that you will volunteer to usher, and notify me [via e-mail](#). Thank you.

*- Karen Peterson*

## *From the Board Table*

What can each of us do to help First UU move forward beyond Covid? With the pandemic closing the church building, services being moved to podcasts, RE and other gatherings going to a Zoom format, cancellations of Second Friday Nighters and our much-anticipated FUUDIES auction dinner among other gatherings it was hard to feel connected to our church community. I mean, I listened to the podcasts when I could and participated in my Soul Matters group. We sent in our pledge like always. Then, in a very unexpected turn of events, I found myself back on the Board of Trustees. And that's got me thinking about what it really means to be a member of this beloved community.

I'm going to get personal for a bit. Many of you know my parents were killed in a car accident in 2019. What you may not know is that they were on their way home from La Crosse where they had spent the day at a clergy meeting. My dad was an ordained deacon in the Catholic Church and he took his commission very seriously. My mother had been the parish secretary for over 40 years and even though she had retired the previous year she was still very active in the church. In fact, the day before the accident was spent helping out with the church's annual Harvest Dinner. They sang in the choir, my mom played the organ, my dad recruited and trained altar servers, they taught catechism, were members of the parish council, taught marriage prep, hosted visiting priests, worked at funeral masses, and were pillars of the church. They didn't have a lot of material gifts to offer but they gave their time, their effort, and their love to that little church. At their funeral, scores of people we'd never met came to tell us how they had been touched by our parents.

Now, I know that my parents were volunteers

beyond what almost anyone else is capable of. But I've been thinking of their selflessness often since joining the Board. Now is the time to truly consider what this church means to us. As we reopen things may look different than before and it will take volunteers to make our vision post-pandemic a reality. It's been easy to sit back and listen to podcasts and join Zooms but I am asking you to search your soul and do more. We need volunteers for our Personnel and Conflict Management committees. We need Board members to replace several whose terms are up this year. We need ushers and greeters and worship associates. We need you in ways we can't even envision right now. Please reach out to Reverend Mason or any member of the Board and we will find a place to use your gifts. Thank you and I hope to see you all very soon!

*- Dawn Ashenbrenner*

### **“The New Yorker” Noon Swoon**

Anticipating a June church reopening, the new weekly exchange of The New Yorker magazine related musings will convene at **12:00PM on Wednesday, June 2**, at church.

Open to “The New Yorker” readers and those interested in participating in chat on articles, reviews, poems, cartoons, and covers that have appeared in The New Yorker.

Plan is for this to be an informal, “come when you can” group.

*- Randy Jefferson*

## *Treasurer's Quarterly Report to the Congregation*

### Financial Results 1/1/2021 – 4/30/2021

1. Key Annual Budget Numbers:	2021 Pledges (Stewardship Drive Results):		
Total Income	\$175,402	Pledges Budget	\$354,513
Total Expense	\$123,112	Pledges Actual	\$329,172
Net Income	\$ 52,290	Pledges Less Than Budget	\$25,341

Outstanding Mortgage: \$138,838      Endowment: \$536,645

2. Total Income includes a \$39,752 Federal Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) loan which we secured under the CARES Act pandemic legislation. The PPP loan significantly impacted Net Income and budget comparison results through the first third of the year.
3. Total Income was 130.6% of budget, while Total Expenses were 91.7% of budget.
4. Investment income in the Endowment grew 4.8% (\$24,422) from 1/1/2021 to 4/30/2021.
5. Thank you to everyone making pledges for 2021. While our Stewardship Drive produced \$25,341 less than our budget goal, the second request for increased giving resulted in an additional \$11,075 in pledges. The \$329,172 pledged for 2021 was a 3.9% increase over 2020 pledges, \$316,765. On a per pledge basis, 2021 increased 13.2% from 2020, with the 112 2021 pledges averaging \$2,939 while for 2020 the 122 pledges averaged \$2,596. More detail on pledge results by quartile are in #6 below.
6. As has been my practice during the five years I have served as a church treasurer, I have created a pledge profile by quartile for 2021. A portion of the profile is shown in the table below. While our profile seems similar year to year, it is notable that since the 2017 pledge year, the combined first two quartiles who give 50% of our pledge income has shrunk from 11.8% of pledgers to 7.1%, a decrease of about 40%. This means our dependency on a few members shouldering the responsibility for half our pledge income has become more acute. Ways to address this concern need to be considered so we can ensure our long-term financial health.

Quartile	1st	2nd	3rd	4 <sup>th</sup>
#Pledges	1	7	24	80
% of Pledges	0.8%	6.3%	21.4%	71.4%
UUA Guide	10%	15%	35%	40%

Respectfully submitted,  
Randy Jefferson  
Treasurer  
05/26/2021

# June 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm  Choir meeting 6:30pm	3	4	5  Buddhist Meditation 4PM
6  10:30AM: Flower Com- munion service led by the Rev. Brian Mason	7  Women's AA 6PM	8	9  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm	10  Social Justice meeting 6:30pm on Zoom	11	12  Buddhist Meditation 4PM
13  9:30AM: Service led by Richard Olson, guest speaker	14  Women's AA 6PM	15  BOT meeting 6:30PM	16  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm	17	18	19  Buddhist Meditation 4PM
20  9:30AM: Service led by Greg Venne, guest speaker	21  Women's AA 6PM	22	23  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm	24	25	26  Buddhist Meditation 4PM
27  11:00AM: General As- sembly livestream from the UUA	28  Women's AA 6PM	29	30  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm			



First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau  
 504 Grant Street  
 Wausau, Wisconsin 54403

## *The Circuit Writer - June 2021*

*Newsletter of the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau*

### Inside this Issue:

June Services	1
Guest Speakers	1
From a Window on Grant	2
Ushering	2
From the Board Table	3
The New Yorker Group	3
Treasurer's Quarterly Report	4
Calendar	5



**Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 9AM-2PM**  
**Please contact us to set up an appointment.**  
**Church phone: (715) 842-3697, [www.uuwausau.org](http://www.uuwausau.org)**

#### Board of Trustees:

Jody Maier, President	canoemaier@gmail.com
Sheryl Hemp, Vice President	wishemp@aol.com
Dawn Ashenbrenner	dawn1969@yahoo.com
Kara Hall	kara.h.hall@gmail.com
Joyce Kurth	joyce.kurth@gmail.com
Karen Monarski	krmon12@gmail.com
Brian Stezenski-Williams	BS-W@outlook.com
Josh Wright	joshuawright888@gmail.com

#### Minister/Staff:

Brian Mason, Minister	brian@uuwausau.org
Dänika Kozlovich, Congregational Admin.	danika@uuwausau.org
Margaret Jerz, Music Director	margaretjerz1@gmail.com