



# The Circuit Writer

*First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau*

February 2018

## February 10:30AM Services at UU Wausau

### February 4

#### *-Prayer, or Something Like It*

The Rev. Brian Mason

Do you pray? I do. All the time, actually. Sometimes I think that's all I do. I don't pray because I think it will bring me prosperity, or fix the check engine light that's been on in my car since 2009. Nor do I think my prayers will solve the issues that plague our shared world. So why do I pray? Why do others? This morning's sermon will be an attempt to define a theology of prayer, particularly a UU theology of prayer.



### February 11

#### *-An Early Lenten Sermon*

The Rev. Brian Mason

The season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14, is observed by Christians and Catholics the world over. Most simply, Lent is about preparation. It's about prayer and mindfulness, repentance, generosity, and self-discipline. It's a season of putting away distractions, and replacing them with a radical openness to something larger than one's self. What's being prepared for, for UUs, is open to interpretation (of course). But what's being prepared for is an awareness of one's marvelous smallness in the midst of an awesome, but beautiful world. It is a season that invites us to ask how will we pledge our hearts? To whom do we gift our love? And to what will we pledge our hearts?

### February 18

#### *-End Child Poverty In Wisconsin*

Guest Speaker: Kate Gaines



Kate Gaines with NAOMI will be joining us to share information about a statewide campaign called "End Child Poverty In Wisconsin". NAOMI and its state organization WISDOM has teamed up with Citizen Action Education Fund, Kids Forward, and Wisconsin Council of Churches to educate people about the high rate of child poverty we have in the state and how we can work together to protect our most vulnerable citizens.

### February 25

#### *-Embracing Failure*

The Rev. Brian Mason



It's hard to reconcile failure. Feelings that accompany it seem to linger for a while, sending plagues of restlessness and self-doubt. I remember being taught, as a young adult, that failures are things humans overcome, and that I'll never actually be my failures. I don't believe those lessons anymore, however. After all, I'm still the very same person who, indeed, failed. And I'll be the very same person who will certainly fail again. Perhaps failure isn't events and choices we overcome, but a part of who we are, a part of our hope and bravery, a part of the richness of our lives, and the love we share.



## From a Window on Grant

I've always enjoyed the month of February. It's a unique month, with a fluctuating number of days, and a stray R that nobody pronounces. Even in a leap year the month remains just a tiny bit shorter than the others. I'd say it's cold, but it's always cold in Wisconsin. In my home state of Missouri, February can be counted on as winter's last month, the final stage before spring's enduring, fragrant flowering that lasts and lasts.



I've been warned not to expect spring to wait on February's heels here in north central Wisconsin. Instead, I've been advised to expect about three more months of winter. There are some aspects of winter I doubt I'll ever enjoy. Being cold is pretty high on the list; the weird white lines that make my shoes look like they've caught a disease is another. But there are other parts of winter I've come to appreciate.

I like mornings after a decent snow has fallen, and how it has the ability to hush the waking world, offering back to me varying shades of white and hardly a sound, save the muffled thud of my footsteps. I also like how winter and light seem to enjoy playing with each other in ways spring, summer, and fall can't quite pull off.

Six months of winter is still a mystery to me, and I cautiously look forward to its enduring presence up here in this neck of the woods. There's a hearty cheerfulness to Wisconsinites that I should probably admit to liking just as well. Maybe it's your accents, or how excited you get for winter sports and 33 degree days. Or maybe it's the subtle joy I'm noticing as my sense of home grows here in your midst.



There's one final thing I like about February, perhaps best of all: Pitchers and Catchers report! Football season is fine, and I'll watch a basketball game every once in a while. I've heard of this sport called hockey, but I'm convinced sports played on ice skates were invented by dentists and orthopedic surgeons. I look forward to the return of baseball because for me it symbolizes everything I hope America will be: occasionally boring, gradual, strange, heartbreaking, systematic, beautiful, and oh so capable of magnificent and surprising joy. In essence, it's a sport a lot like people, people like us.

Happy February, dear friends. Go Cardinals!

In faith,

*Brian*



## Office Space

Remember how much fun we had two years ago when we held our very first rummage sale? We made \$4,000 at that sale! Well, I hope you have been saving up your knick-knacks and sundries, because we are doing it again!



This year's sale will take place June 8th and 9th from 8am till 5pm., and your help is needed. When you find yourself in the midst of Spring cleaning and don't know what to do with those unwanted items, bring them to church. Because we are running short on storage space, we will begin taking item donations mid-May.

When gathering items for donation, please make sure they are clean and usable. No clothing items, please. If you find the time to price your items, all the better!

Would you like to be more involved? Consider volunteering. We could use people to help with set-up, take-down, cashiering, and customer-schmoozing.

See you in church,

*Anji*



## Religious Education



Looking for a way to help Religious Education? Here are a couple of opportunities:

1) participate in the soup and bread sale February 4<sup>th</sup>. Bring in a frozen quart jar of soup and/or a loaf of homemade bread that can be sold. Also plan to purchase soup and bread and go home with a meal. All proceeds from the sale will go toward updating furniture in the RE classrooms.

2) Consider serving as part of a teaching team in our 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the church year, which will begin the second week of March. If you're interested in helping in this way let me know. Together we will carefully consider which classroom could most benefit from your talents.

Poetry in the Bible. Our minister, Brian Mason is offering a Religious Education course titled Poetry in the Bible. This informal course will look at poetry in the Hebrew Bible, specifically in the Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. Participants will learn to identify some of the forms, structures and dynamics of Biblical poetry. This exploration is meant to be informative, but more than that it will be fun! The class will meet Thursday, February 15, 22; March 1, 8 & 15 from 6:00-7:30 pm in Yawkey Hall. Sign up in the atrium.

*Julie,*

Director of Religious Education

### 12 Days of Valentines!

A tisket, a tasket. What's inside your Valentine basket?



When you have your 12 items gathered, return your basket to church by Sunday, February 11. The **Ari Schmidt Fund** Committee will see that they are delivered in time for Valentine's Day.



Our 4K-1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom is taking a deep dive into our 7<sup>th</sup> Principle (Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part) this church year. Here they are January 21<sup>st</sup> having a hands-on experience with an interdependent web.

### **First Universalist Unitarian Church**

504 Grant Street, Wausau, WI 54403

Office Hours: Tue-Thu, 9AM-2PM

(715) 842-3697, [www.uuwausau.org](http://www.uuwausau.org)

#### **Board of Trustees:**

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Board meetings are held at 6:30PM on the third Tuesday of each month. All are welcome.

#### **Staff:**

Brian Mason, Minister	<a href="mailto:brian@uuwausau.org">brian@uuwausau.org</a>
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Margaret Jerz, Music Dir.	<a href="mailto:margaret@uuwausau.org">margaret@uuwausau.org</a>

## The Board Table

For a long time, I have believed deeply that when we work together, we can accomplish great things both locally and globally. We have many examples of these successes—the Abolitionist Movement, the Women’s Suffrage Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, and the #Me Too Movement to name only a few. But working together towards any goal, including the success of our church, takes money. So it is a great pleasure to write following the truly good news from the Stewardship Committee that not only did we meet our pledge drive goals, but we exceeded them by a significant amount. Thank you, thank you for the hard work done by the Stewardship Committee—Carl Drake, Marsha Fitzgerald, Christina Priewe, and Sarah Thurs.



AND a HUGE thank you to ALL who stepped up and contributed to the work of our congregation. We truly have the power to be a voice of reason working together during such a challenging time. Our numbers are growing both literally and financially. And the fellowship we share is welcoming and inclusive. Our Religious Education program is also growing and well-staffed. If you haven’t yet thought about participating in the social opportunities—2nd Friday Nighters is always fun—now is the time. Consider joining the newly reconstituted choir(s). Come to one of the adult religious education offerings.

And there are always service opportunities. Think about serving as greeters, coffee hosts, or ushers. There are clipboards on the sign up table in the atrium, and job descriptions are available. Children are welcome—indeed encouraged—to help with the work of the church. It is a wonderful chance—for everyone—to teach and learn about service.

And so on we go into February which holds those subtle hints of spring —the return of longer days, woodpeckers drumming, and unpredictable weather. One of these days, the loyal chickadees will begin their spring song. Holding onto hope...

**Joyce Kurth,**

Board of Trustees



### 2018 Stewardship Campaign Update



We’re SO PROUD to announce that **UU Wausau’s “New Beginnings” 2018 Stewardship campaign not only met — but EXCEEDED — its pledge goal of \$255,000!**

We wish to extend a **heartfelt THANK-YOU** to ALL those involved who contributed to support our church’s mission — as well as its vision for the future. **All told, we received 113 pledges totaling \$262,833.**

In addition, BOTH of the incentive-based \$7,500 matching grants were met:

**\$7,500 BONUS GRANT** for new Members who had never pledged before

**\$7,500 BONUS GRANT** for Members who increased their pledge by at least 15% above their pledge from the previous year

**These two grants earned UU Wausau an extra \$15,000 donated by a generous member of UU Wausau because YOU stepped up to pledge**, either for the first time or 15%+ over and above last year’s pledge. Thanks for helping us secure these BONUS funds.

We’re eager to extend UU Wausau’s reach into the community even further.

*“The BEGINNING is the most important part of the work,”* said Plato. Well, the first step was to meet our 2018 stewardship campaign goal... Having done that, **now it’s time for the REAL FUN to begin!**

In appreciation,

Your 2018 Stewardship Committee:

Carl Drake, Marsha Fitzgerald, Christina Priewe, & Sarah Thurs



# News for UUs



## 🍄 **Slow Food Film Screening**

Join Slow Food Marathon County here at UU Wausau on Wednesday, February 21 at 6:30pm for a screen showing of *Sustainable*, a documentary that explores organic farming and its impact on the sustainable food movement. Follow Illinois farmer Marty Travis as he organizes his fellow farmers to source farm-to-table restaurants in Chicago. Celebrity chefs, food critics, and experts examine a strong local food system versus conventional farming.

Prior to the film, beginning at 5:30pm, we will offer a potluck! We ask attendees to bring a dish or appetizer to share and BYOB. This is a free event and open to the public. Please RSVP via <https://sfmcustainablefilm.brownpapertickets.com> so that we have enough seating prepared.

## 🍄 **Pantheon of Illustrious UUs**

**Olympia Brown, Dorothea Dix, and Margaret Fuller:** Three Prominent Women in UU history.

As we find ourselves in a time of heightened awareness of issues common to fifty one percent of the world's population- but important to us all, let's look at the contributions of these three progressive women. This is the second session of our mini-series titled "**Pantheon of Illustrious UUs (or those who leaned that way)**". Feb 14, 10-11:15am. No need to sign up, just show up! Facilitated by **Richard Olson**

## 🍄 **Soup's On!**

UU Auction 2017 Family-Friendly Soup Luncheon will be held on Sunday, February 11, 2018, 11:45AM in the UU Wausau dining hall. The menu offers a choice of soups and chilies that are child-friendly and vegetarian. The soup will be accompanied by assorted breads, crackers, cookies, and fellowship. If you didn't get a chance to sign up at the UU Auction, please do so now—spots are limited! Adults \$10.00, children over 6, \$5.00, and a maximum family cost \$25.00. All proceeds go to the UU Wausau operating budget.

## 🍄 **February Community Focus Collection**

The CFC collection for February will go toward helping Bilingual Spanish Programs working out of the **Women's Community**. These programs help any and all Spanish speaking victims from our area. Last quarter 76 people were served; men, women and children. Services extend to working with the criminal justice system and social services as well as many other areas. Come learn more about this program on February 18 and show your support.

## 🍄 **What if the Fairy King Died?**

Immerse yourself in an ancient world filled with Fairies, Druids, Romaians, Naiads, Nevada, and other magical beings. Join poet **Brock Jansen** for the first public reading of his epic poem, *Of Ebrador and Kings*, from 1:00 – 2:30 on Sunday February 25<sup>th</sup> in Yawkey Hall. Take time to let poetry inspire your imagination. Event is Free and Open to the Public.

## 🍄 **Crop Walk Results**

The Crop Walk this fall was supported by Wausau area churches including UU Wausau. \$15,000 was earned through pledges. Of this, 25%, or \$3,750, stayed right here in Wausau and is being shared between the Salvation Army and the Neighbor's Place. Thanks to all members who supported this cause!

## 🍄 **Movies with Meaning**

Join us on February 22 at 6:30pm for a viewing of the documentary *The Shock Doctrine*, based on **Naomi Klein's** book by the same name. Using "Shock Therapy" as a metaphor, the film investigates Klein's central idea of "disaster capitalism". When countries are jolted by catastrophic events they are subjected to totally un-regulated "free market" remedies that benefit corporations at public expense. The film traces the doctrine's beginnings from the theories of **Milton Friedman** and the Chicago School economists through its implementation over the past 40 years in Pinochet's Chili, Yeltsin's Russia, Thatcher's Britain, and the American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

## **A Message about receiving the Love in Action Award from Brian's sermon on Sunday, January 21**

It was a rare privilege to accept the Love in Action Award at the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Banquet on Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup>. People for the Power of Love chose our church as the first recipient of their distinguished honor. The award celebrates our church's commitment to social justice, and also what we symbolize to the community: justice, hope, and most of all, love.

Furthermore, the award was a recognition of the Rev. Laurie Bushbaum's unwavering commitment to championing justice for all people, especially those who are forced to the margins of society: immigrants, minority groups, and all others who suffer from being uncared for in times of hunger, oppression, and disregard.

What Laurie, this church, and our greater religious movement share is a willingness to have difficult conversations and engage in the challenging work of justice making. But doing so isn't easy. It's hard to listen as someone describes what it's like to be a victim of injustice. It's hard to listen as someone tells you about the death of their loved one who died or was forever damaged because of gun violence, or police brutality, or insufficient access to medical treatment. But as hard as it is to learn of such horrors, try imagining what it's like to be a victim. We listen and we act because that's what our faith demands.

Our faith demands that, like Dr. King, we say "together" when others say "separate"; it demands that we say "peace" when others say "war"; that we say "love" when others say "hate"; and it demands that we keep showing up.

Dr. King believed "That our world is in dire need of a new organization – the International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment." We must resist the urge to wait for others to do the work for us. We must resist the urge to give into despair. And we must resist the urge to assume we're not enough. Being maladjusted is proof that you've opened your heart to the world, that you haven't turned away.

Dr. King's conviction is that "Through such maladjustment we will be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of man's inhumanity to man, into the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice."

After I was presented the award and started to make my way off stage a small group of people stopped to congratulate me. A man in the midst of the well-wishers took my hand and said, "Our eyes are on you, and our hearts are with you." On a personal level, I feel challenged and, if I'm honest, somewhat frightened by those words. It's intimidating to know that people look to you as a defender of justice and equity. But I refuse to give into my fear. I refuse to give into my fear because I believe in all of you.

I believe that each and every one of you are capable of moving that needle from injustice to justice, and seeing, in the words of the great Unitarian minister Theodore Parker, "a continual and progressive triumph of the right."

Congratulations on your award. You certainly earned it. Now, let's keep earning it.



# February 2018 Calendar

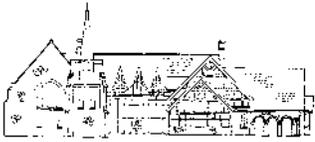
1 Thu	6:00PM	Unity Project	15 Thur	6:30PM	Tai Chi
	6:30PM	Tai Chi		7:00PM	Table Tennis
	7:00PM	Table Tennis	17 Sat	8:00AM	Wmn's Early Risers
4 Sun	10:30AM	Church Service	18 Sun	10:30AM	Church Service
	Soup Sale before and after service!			4:30PM	Beginner Meditation
	4:30PM	Beginner Meditation		6:00PM	Overeaters Anon
	6:00PM	Overeaters Anon	19 Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg
5 Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg	20 Tues	6:30PM	Qigong
	6:30PM	Wausau Bird Club		6:30PM	BOT Meeting
6 Tue	6:30PM	Qigong		7:00PM	Table Tennis
	7:00PM	Table Tennis	21 Wed	10:00AM	Shawl Time
7 Wed	10:00AM	Shawl Time		4:00PM	People/Power of Love
	4:00PM	People/Power of Love		5:30PM	Slow Foods Potluck
8 Thu	9:30AM	Open Arms Parenting		6:30PM	Slow Foods Movie
	6:30PM	Tai Chi		6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice
	7:00PM	Table Tennis	22 Thu	9:30AM	Open Arms Parenting
10 Sat	4:00PM	Buddhist Meditation		6:00PM	Poetry in the Bible
11 Sun	10:30AM	Church Service		6:30PM	Movies with Meaning
	11:45AM	Soup Luncheon		6:30PM	Tai Chi
	4:30PM	Beginner Meditation		7:00PM	Table Tennis
	6:00PM	Overeaters Anon	24 Sat	4:00PM	Buddhist Meditation
12 Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg	25 Sun	10:30AM	Church Service
13 Tues	6:30PM	Qigong		1:00PM	Poetry Reading
	7:00PM	Table Tennis		6:00PM	Overeaters Anon
14 Wed	10:00AM	Pantheon Class	26 Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg
	6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice	27 Tues	6:30PM	Qigong
15 Thu	6:00PM	Poetry in the Bible		7:00PM	Table Tennis
	6:00PM	Unity Project	28 Wed	6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice

## Happy Membership Anniversary!



Russ & Linda Forbess, 42 years. Brad Schmicker & Sarah Rudolph, 23 years.  
 Glen & Mary Beth Moberg, 21 years. Jeanette Johnson, 19 years.  
 Lisa & Tammy Rajek, 15 years. Anji Spialek, 8 years.  
 Kim & Dean Day, 8 years. Wayne & Mary Pierce, 6 years.  
 Tami & Graham Coulson, 5 years. Sarah & Brian Gunning, 5 years.  
 Lila Hobson, 5 years. Donna Allgood, 4 years. Jeanine Sewell, 4 years.





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Church of Wausau  
504 Grant St.,  
Wausau, WI 54403

## The Circuit Writer - February 2018

*Newsletter of the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau*

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FIRST UNIVERSALIST  
UNITARIAN CHURCH  
WAUSAU, WISCONSIN

SINCE 1870