

THE CIRCUIT WRITER

December 2019



December Services at First UU Wausau

Sunday, December 1, 10:30AM: "Meeting God"

The Reverend Elizabeth Hazel, guest speaker

RE: No classes; multi-generational service

Pageant choir rehearsal: 9:30AM

Nursery is available for children 5 years and under.

Sunday, December 8, 10:30AM: "Annual Report Sermon"

The Reverend Brian Mason, preaching

RE: Regular classes

Pageant choir rehearsal: 9:30AM

Sunday, December 15, 10:30AM: A Christmas Pageant!

RE: No classes; inter-generational service

Nursery is available for children 5 years and under.

Saturday, December 21, 7:00PM: Winter Solstice Service

Led by the Religious Services Committee

No nursery is available.

Sunday, December 22, 10:30AM: Christmas Sing & Holiday Sweater Day!

RE: no classes; inter-generational service.

Nursery is available for children 5 years and under.

Tuesday, December 24, 7:00PM: Christmas Eve Candlelight service

No nursery is available.

Sunday, December 29: "Remembrance of Things Past"

Led by the Religious Services Committee

No RE classes & no nursery; inter-generational service.



FROM A WINDOW ON GRANT. . .

I've been doing a lot of research about the history of our beloved church. In so doing I've been reminded of a quote that Google tells me is by George Santayana. You've probably heard it before – it goes like this: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." So, in honor of the 149th year of our congregation's gathering, here's a lesson from Friday, May 19, 1933...

So long as you remembered to mail in the fifty cents annual subscription fee, you would have read in "The Wausau Universalist" these words: "Here we learn to respect our differences, cherish our agreements, and foster the joys of religion." In those days the First Universalist Church of Wausau published a weekly that showed the coming Sunday's order of service, along with a few readings, quotes, and personal paragraphs about what was happening in the members' lives.

For instance, you would have learned that Leroy Rodehaver requested that the congregation sing "Onward Christian Soldiers" on Sunday and was granted this request. And let's not fail to mention that the Sunday school lesson was taught by Roger Maas who spoke of his experiences and observations visiting the south. What is meant by "the south" is a mystery lost to time.

Unlike the two paragraphs that make up our Mission and Vision statements today, back then the church managed to get by with this quippy sentence: "Not to maintain ancient creeds and customs, but to attain the attitude of Christ towards God and man." Here's my attempt at modernizing that statement: *Not to maintain ancient creeds and customs, but to attain the attitude of wonder and reverence and love for creation and humankind.*

Since 1870 this church has set the moral bar high. Our goals, then and now, are lofty. But the greatest, unchanged, calling we have is to be the church. But what does this mean?

If you want to know what it meant to the members in 1933 you might start by reading "A Psalm of the Helpers," which was used as the Responsive Reading for Sunday, May 21, 1933. Space prevents me from printing it here so I'll paraphrase: being the church means we are helpers who travel in peace; we are people who journey in paths of mercy; we are people who lighten the burden of the burdened; we comfort and care for the sick, and wounded, and lonely; and we notice when people are in need, and respond with generosity. In other words, we live our lives with wonder and reverence and love for creation and humankind.

That's quite a history lesson, one well worth the fifty cents, and certainly worth remembering.

See you in church,

Brian

REflections

It's an exciting time of year! It can also be a hectic and stressful time of year. Again this year I want to share some wisdom from the book, "Unplug the Christmas Machine," by Jo Robinson & Jean Coppock Staeheli, which states that the four things children and youth really want for Christmas are: 1) a relaxed and loving time with their family, 2) realistic expectations about gifts, 3) an evenly paced holiday season and, 4) reliable family traditions. I would invite you to pause for a moment and ask yourself if you're giving your children (and yourself) those four things during the Holiday season.

If you're looking for a new family tradition, we're offering several opportunities at First UU Wausau this month that could fit the bill. Perhaps your family wants to attend the Christmas Pageant on Dec 15th, the Solstice Service on Dec 21st, Holiday Sweater Day & Christmas Sing on the 22nd, or the beautiful candlelight Christmas Eve service on the 24th.

However you decided to participate, I'm wishing you an evenly paced, relaxed, and loving Holiday Season,
Julie

Christmas Pageant, 2018



December RE calendar

- Sunday, Dec 1st** —No RE classes, Multi-generational Service (nursery open)
Pageant Choir rehearsal—9:30 am
- Saturday, Dec 7th**—Coming of Age Retreat—1:00-6:00 pm
High School youth group movie night!—6:00-9:00 pm
- Sunday, Dec 8th**—Regular RE classes
Pageant Choir rehearsal—9:30 am
Christmas Pageant & Pageant Choir rehearsal—12:30-2:00 pm
- Saturday, Dec 14th**—Christmas Pageant & Pageant Choir dress rehearsal—4:00-5:30pm
- Sunday, Dec 15th**—No RE classes—Inter-generational Christmas Pageant (nursery open)
- Tuesday, December 17th**—Family Drum Club—6:30 pm (1005 Steuben Street, home of Margaret Jerz)
- Saturday, Dec 21st**—Solstice Service—7:00 pm (NO nursery)
- Sunday, Dec 22nd**—No RE classes—Inter-generational Christmas Sing (nursery open) & Holiday Sweater Day!!
- Tuesday, Dec 24th**—Christmas Eve Candlelight service—7:00 pm (NO nursery)
- Sunday, Dec 29th**—NO RE and NO nursery

REflections...for Adults

December's Soul Matters question:

What does it mean to be a people of AWE?



Once again this month's small group packet is FULL of wonderful resources and information on the topic of AWE.

The packet also contains an invitation to several spiritual exercises, and reflection through the monthly questions. I'm particularly excited about Option B in the

Spiritual Exercises. This activity offers a YouTube link to 31 awe-filled videos (one for each day of December). I'm looking forward to using those videos as a way of taking an intentional "Awe Break" each day.

These packets are available to all members. If you aren't in a small group, you can pick up a packet on the reception counter at church or ask Julie to e-mail one directly to you.

Our next round of small groups will begin in February. You'll have the opportunity to register in January. Contact Julie with questions.

December Adult RE Offerings

(in addition to Worship Services and Soul Matters Groups)

First UU Wausau Adult Choir – Wednesdays, 6:30-8:00

Singing as spiritual practice. Join the choir to connect to yourself and others through soulful music.

Adult Drum Club – Mondays, 7:00-8:00 pm

1005 Steuben Street, home of Margaret Jerz, Music Director

No previous experience in percussion is necessary – just a pair of hands and the willingness to listen, watch, focus, and match. All instruments will be furnished. The sessions will feature equal parts of community building, meditative drumming, and recreational activities along with the development of fundamental skills.

Family Drum Club – Tuesday, December 17th, 6:30-7:30 pm

1005 Steuben Street, home of Margaret Jerz, Music Director

Similar to Adult Drum Club but geared to all ages. This percussion experience includes plenty of instrument exploration.

Minister's Book Club

The Minister's book club will take a holiday break for December and will return in January.

Early Risers

If you'd like to join other church members or friends December 21st at 8:00AM at the Eagle's Nest for breakfast and conversation, please join us! Currently the 12 members are all females, but all are welcome. For more information and to get on the e-mail list to be notified of meetings, please e-mail Carol Bronston at cbronston39@gmail.com.

Religious Education is looking for a volunteer Office Assistant!

Do you have 1-3 hours a week (Wednesday or Thursday during church office hours) to give to RE – for tasks such as copying, gathering supplies, tidying or prepping classrooms, or the occasional craft project?

If yes, contact Julie at julie@uuwausau.org to express interest, or to ask questions.

HOLIDAY POINSETTIAS FOR OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

The Caring Committee is inviting the congregation to participate in delivering small poinsettia plants to our homebound friends for the holidays.

Plants will be available in the Atrium on Sunday, December 8th, and will include a card with the member's address.

We welcome anyone willing to take a plant and deliver it sometime during that week. In this way, our homebound folks get to see someone from church! Families, couples, and singles are encouraged to grab a plant for someone in your neighborhood, and see how much your visit will mean to those who can't attend our church services!



FAIR TRADE BASKETS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Do you need a hostess gift for the Holidays? Or a consumable gift for that person who has everything? Consider a basket of Fair Trade goods! We will provide baskets (or bring your own), tissue and wrappings. You purchase the Fair Trade chocolate, nuts, coffee or hot chocolate (new this year)!

Available after church on December 1, 8, 15 (and 22?). Profits from sales of Fair Trade goods support the Ari Schmidt Troublemaker Fund for Bus, Bail and Pizza which provides assistance to First UU participants undertaking social justice experiences or projects.



Remember that First UU Wausau has **Fair Trade coffee and chocolate** for sale on Sundays. The products come from Equal Exchange: A worker owned co-operative founded in 1986. Take some home to share with friends and family.

The modest profits from these sales go to the **Ari Schmidt Fund for Bus, Bail and Pizza** – which offers funding to individuals from our church community wishing to experience, participate in, or start social justice activities.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Please join us in welcoming Anders Curtis Eberlein! Anders was born on September 2, 2019, to Ross and Julie Eberlein of Stevensville, MT. Grandparents are Tom and Sara Eberlein, and Anders' great-grandmother is Doris Eberlein. Congratulations to the Eberlein family on this wonderful addition!

WINTER RETREAT

Join us for this year's Winter Retreat at Camp Manitowish's Schwartz Lodge Jan 24-25-26, 2020! A full weekend of friends, fun, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, shared meals and winter fun.

Contact Sally Schmidt at (715) 370-1157 or sallyschmidt213@gmail.com to sign up, or for info.

The 2019 Annual Congregational meeting will take place Sunday, December 8. All UUA-certified members are encouraged to attend to vote on the 2020 Budget, board and endowment nominations, and minutes from last year's meeting.

INTRODUCTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Are you interested in becoming a **member** of First UU Wausau? Are you a new member who wants to meet other new or *newish* members? Are you an old member who wants a refresher? Do you want to learn more about the **First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau** or about **Unitarian Universalism**?

If you answered "yes!" to any of these questions, please consider yourself cordially invited to the next **Intro to Membership** gathering! Join our minister, director of religious education, and congregational administrator after the service on **Sunday, December 15, at 12PM, in Yawkey Hall**, for coffee, refreshments, and conversation. (If you would like childcare, please RSVP to julie@uuwausau.org by December 8.)

COMMUNITY FOCUS COLLECTION

DECEMBER 2019

As is our tradition, the Community Focus Collection for the month of December will be distributed to our local food pantries.

The Neighbors' Place, Mosinee Community of Hope, and the Women's Community, will each share in the generosity of our community. This collection will take place on Christmas Eve, but if you might not be here, please feel free to drop off your donation to Dänika at the church office anytime during the month. The Community Focus Collection committee thanks you in advance for helping our pantries make the holidays more FULL-filling for their clients.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Earlier in November, I had the opportunity to speak to the congregation about the importance of the 2020 stewardship drive for our Church. In effort to keep my comments brief, I left out several important points that are worth your consideration.

The first, which is obvious, but not always true, is simply that every member of our Church should participate in the stewardship drive. The level, of course, is a personal choice which should be made with thoughtful consideration.

The second point, is that if we want the quality we currently enjoy (from music to religious education and everything in between), we're going to have to pay for it – quality isn't free, and we shouldn't expect it to be, at Church or anywhere else.

The third and final point is that supporting our church is about more than keeping it going another year. This coming year, our 150th year, we have a rare opportunity to make the Church more than simply a place where we feel comfortable and welcome. We have an opportunity to make our Church bigger, stronger, and more impactful in the larger community and beyond. To continue doing things along the lines of what "we've always done," is not a strategy for long-term or even mid-term success. Our Church is growing and becoming more dynamic. If we want that to continue, we need to be willing to invest in the resources (staff and facilities), which make that possible.

- Brian Stezenski-Williams

VOLUNTEER FOR THE FAMILY FRIENDLY SOUP LUNCHEON!

On Sunday, February 9, after the church service, we will be holding a hearty soup luncheon in the Dining Hall for your enjoyment with family and friends. Some people signed up at our auction, but you can still join in by paying at the church office, or at the event. Offerings will include soups of all kinds, chilis, breads, crackers, relishes, coffee, and desserts!

Adults \$10.00. Kids 6 and older: \$5.00. Under 6 are free! Max per family is \$25.00.

But we can't do this without volunteers! Please, if you help every year, or if you just realized how much fun it would be to cook, set up or clean up, **sign up** on one of the sheets which will be available in the Atrium! **Thank you!**

- LeeAnn Venne & Carol Bronston

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND YOU

"A new engaged spirituality has taken hold in our faith, and we are beginning to understand that to work for social justice is in itself a spiritual practice." - Susan Leslie, UUA Director of Congregational Advocacy & Witness

The Social Justice Committee is ready and willing to help with your spiritual practice! We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 6 PM. If meetings and a full-blown committee commitment are not your thing, there are numerous ways we can still be of service. The Committee's top two priorities are immigration and reproductive rights, and we are exploring realistic ways that support and improve the lives of those in need. However, if these are not your issues, the Committee stands ready to help you fulfill the vision and mission of both you and the church with whatever time, talent, and resources you have available. Even climate change can be considered part of social justice. The UUA has several climate-change resources on their website, including: (1) the "2006 Statement of Conscience", (2) the "Green Sanctuary" program, and (3) "Ethical Eating - Food and Environmental Justice".

The committee also has an interest in exploring the feasibility of renewing our Welcoming Congregation status. Find out more at: <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/program/five-practices-welcome-renewal> Your opinion and your possible interest in helping are important in determining whether the Church undertakes the renewal process.

Please let us know your specific interests. Obviously, the Social Justice Committee cannot tackle all issues, but if there is wide interest in an issue, we can at least help connect people with similar interests.

If your spiritual practice needs a small boost, check into the many opportunities made easy by United Way of Marathon County. A few examples include: (1) gift wrapping at the mall for "Bundles of Joy" (provides infant formula and diapers to struggling families in Marathon County), (2) take phone calls and schedule appointments for Wisconsin/Marathon County AARP Tax-Aide Tax Preparation, or (3) provide transportation for seniors living in rural areas (going to medical appointments or grocery shopping). Find out more at: <http://unitedwaymc.galaxydigital.com/need/>

Or don't wait for the Social Justice Committee to roll out our fundraising plans for Planned Parenthood. Be an advocate for comprehensive health care access in this difficult political time for this vital organization by sending a check to Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, Inc., 302 N. Jackson Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202-5917 or give online at https://www.weareplannedparenthood.org/onlineactions/2U7UN1iNhESWUfDs4gDPNg2?r=false&_ga=2.194664878.2011490542.1574302535-1469754108.1569348707

Please come to our next meeting (**December 10th, 6 PM** at church) and/or contact Jerry Phelan (gcphelelan@gmail.com) with your specific interests or concerns.

2020 ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DRIVE NEEDS YOUR \$UPPORT!

If you haven't yet turned in your **2020 Pledge Form** committing your financial support to First UU Wausau, please take 2 minutes (it's that QUICK!) to complete & return a form ASAP.

As of the time of this newsletter's printing, we have **over \$181,005 pledged** to support our church. That's fantastic, and we're so appreciative of to all of those who've already pledged for the upcoming year, but:

We have a loooooooooooooong way to go yet to reach our goal...

Your pledge helps us teach children and adults in our community about love and acceptance, forgiveness and grace, integrity and awe, and so much more!

In addition, **your financial support impacts our community** through its many **dedicated service projects** and by providing a **welcoming sanctuary and spiritual home for people from EVERY walk of life**.

We have several easy ways for you to pledge your financial support:

Download a Pledge Form at the church's website, <http://www.uuwausau.org>

Pick up a Pledge Form at the church's Front Desk.

Return the Pledge Form existing Members received in the mail in the S.A.S.E. provided.

Request a Pledge Form be snail-mailed or emailed to you: danika@uuwausau.org.

(We'll gladly accept your Pledge Form anytime, but it's very helpful to have the bulk of our Pledge Forms in by early December to assist with our 2020 budget planning – and to save us from having to reach out and check in on your pledging intentions.)

First UU Church is a cause you can truly FEEL GOOD about contributing to.

We thank you in advance for your generous financial support of this beloved church community – whether it's your 1st or 101st pledge. Please consider raising your annual pledge by 15% to help us meet our ambitious goal. **We can't do all the wonderful things that we do at First UU Church of Wausau without YOU!**

Please take some time to reflect on all that First UU Wausau offers its Friends, Members, and Visitors and **pledge generously to help us guarantee that people will always have a spiritual home that welcomes them just as they are, that inspires them to dream of a more JUST and LOVING world, and that nurtures them along the way.**

We thank you in advance for your generous support of this beloved church community.

Your 2020 Stewardship Committee,

– Carl Drake, Marsha Fitzgerald, & Sarah Thurs

December 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:30AM — Service 1st Sunday Potluck! 3:30PM —Narcotics Anonymous 6PM — Overeaters Anonymous	2 Women's AA 6PM	3 Qi Gong 6:30PM	4 Shawl Time 10AM PFPL—6PM Adult Choir 6:30PM	5 Tai Chi 6:30PM	6 Buddhist Meditation 4PM	7 Buddhist Meditation 4PM
8 10:30AM — Service Annual Congregational Meeting 3:30PM —Narcotics Anonymous 6PM — Overeaters Anonymous	9 Women's AA 6PM	10 Social Justice 6PM Qi Gong 6:30PM	11 Adult Choir 6:30PM	12 Tai Chi 6:30PM	13 Buddhist Meditation 4PM	14 Buddhist Meditation 4PM
15 10:30AM — Christmas Pageant! 3:30PM —Narcotics Anonymous 6PM — Overeaters Anonymous	16 Women's AA 6PM	17 Qi Gong 6:30PM	18 Shawl Time 10AM PFPL—6PM Adult Choir 6:30PM	19 Tai Chi 6:30PM	20 Winter Solstice Service 7PM	21 Early Risers—8:00AM Winter Solstice Service 7PM
22 10:30AM — Christmas Sing and Holiday Sweaters! 3:30PM —Narcotics Anonymous 6PM — Overeaters Anonymous	23 Women's AA 6PM	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7PM	25 Happy Holidays! Church office closed.	26 Buddhist Meditation 4PM	27 Buddhist Meditation 4PM	28 Buddhist Meditation 4PM
29 10:30AM — Service 3:30PM —Narcotics Anonymous 6:00PM — Overeaters Anonymous	30 Women's AA 6PM	31 Happy New Year! Church office closed.	1 Happy New Year! Church office closed.	2 Buddhist Meditation 4PM	3 Buddhist Meditation 4PM	4 Buddhist Meditation 4PM



THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF UU CONGREGATIONS

Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote seven Principles, which we hold as strong values and moral guides. We live out these Principles within a “living tradition” of wisdom and spirituality, drawn from sources as diverse as science, poetry, scripture, and personal experience.

As the Reverend Barbara Wells ten Hove explains, “The Principles are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a guide for those of us who choose to join and participate in Unitarian Universalist religious communities.”

1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

May we enter this new year holding these principles in our hearts.

-from www.uua.org



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

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Newsletter of the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau

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Happy Holidays!

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