



# The Circuit Writer

*First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau*

May 2019

## May 10:30AM Services at UU Wausau

**May 5**

*- On the Difficulties of Defining Time*

**The Rev. Brian Mason**

There is more than one way to define time. Time is a relational concept, slowing down and speeding up depending on the person and event. Some days seem to speed by, while others linger on. There are also moments that feel as though time stands still. Seasons come and go, marking time with life and death and rebirth. This morning's sermon will be a meditation on the multiplicity of time.

**May 12**

*-The Matriarchs of Our Faith*

**The Rev. Brian Mason**

On Mother's Day Brian will offer a sermon about some of the matriarchs of our liberal religion. These impressive women were revolutionary, shaping our faith in ways that endure today. Be sure to get to church early as our annual Mother's Day breakfast will be served in fellowship hall before the service.



**May 19**

*-Atheism: Defined and Delineated*

**Greg Venne**

Join us this morning for what promises to be an engaging conversation about atheism. Greg will take as his primary focus the following:

- Being cautious about accepting the label, atheists want their turn at defining atheism.
- Typically, those who adhere to atheism, work from lines of reasoning and observations.
- Atheism possesses a moral framework.

*Greg spent over four decades as an educator in the Wausau School District and at UWMC. Ill at ease with retirement, he works as a free-lance editor and as a novelist.*

**May 26**

*-If I Were Giving a Commencement Address*

**The Rev. Brian Mason**

It's graduation season and that means graduates will be offered commencement speeches by wise or brave or otherwise famous people. There are well known addresses, such as Oprah's to Harvard and Churchill's to Harrow. But let's face it, they're just another formality in the way of real fun: post-graduation revelry. They're dull because they're predictable, saying such things as, "seize the day," "never give up," "don't let haters get you down," or "life is only what you make it." This morning we'll enjoy a commencement address without the usual clichés. Wisdom not guaranteed.

## From a Window on Grant



A lot happened at UU Wausau in April. Most notable, Anji Spialek, after twelve years of service to the church, announced her resignation. For as much as I will miss being Anji's colleague, I trust that

her family's move to Michigan will lead to new possibilities and adventures. I wish Anji well, as I know you do too. Be sure to mark June 2<sup>nd</sup> on your calendar, as that will be her last Sunday with us and we'll have a reception for her following the service.

With that in mind, I have been thrilled by the level of interest in the position and have enjoyed interviewing potential candidates. I look forward to announcing the new Congregational Administrator very soon!

In April I also experienced my first Goods & Services Auction. It was a delight. I was so impressed with the event. The food, drinks, decorations, and auction items were perfect. I want to send a massive thank you to the Auction Team for their thoughtfulness, creativity, and hard work. I also want to thank everyone who generously gave auction items and showed up for the celebration. I'm already looking forward to the next one.

This May marks the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of my calling as UU Wausau's minister. It was a great day; one I'll never forget. In keeping with my promise to help achieve the congregation's mission and vision, I have worked closely with Julie, the Director of Religious Education, and several congregants to come up with a survey that seeks to gain a better understanding of how you think the congregation, as an institution, is doing. Are there areas in need of improvement? Are we being the church we need to be, not just for ourselves, but for the world around us? These are the kinds of question the survey asks. In sum, the survey was designed to get a "read" of the congregation and thus to help all of us guide the church into a new era. So, please participate in the survey once it's released later this month.

2020 will be the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church's founding. In typical UU Wausau fashion, we'll host wonderful parties and energetic

worship services in honor of the occasion. But I also envision this anniversary as an opportunity for us to shape what UU Wausau will be 150 years from now. I know it sounds dramatic. But that's our task; that's our gift—to steer this great religious institution into the future so that people just like us will find a spiritual home filled with radiant people who enact the principals of Unitarian Universalism in the world—and have a good time doing it.

In Faith and Love ,

*Brian*

## Office Space

As most of you know, this is my last month here at UU Wausau. My husband, Terry, has accepted a new job in Michigan. Leaving is bittersweet, as I will miss you all so much, but I am also excited about embarking on a new adventure with my family.

Over the 12 years that I have been with the church, my favorite thing has been getting to know the children. When my family started attending, Rosemary was in the Kindergarten RE class. It's amazing to think that she and her classmates are in high school now. And all of those babies that I cuddled and loved along with Ragnar in the nursery are in OWL! That can't be right?!

Sometimes when sitting in the sanctuary, it crosses my mind that someday I might see my children walking up that aisle on their wedding day; or that my own memorial service would someday take place right there in that space that has held so much meaning in my life. I guess those things are not to be. But this place and the people here that have welcomed, loved, comforted, celebrated with, and supported my family and me over the years will always hold a special place in my heart.



See you in church,

Love,

*Anji*



## Reflections

Spring is upon us and the end of the church year will be here before we know it! Mark your calendars for these exciting spring RE events:



**May 12<sup>th</sup>** will be an **inter-generational service** for Mother's Day. The nursery will be available to children 5 and under and all children and youth are invited to stay in the sanctuary and participate in the service. **No regular RE classes** will be offered.

**May 26<sup>th</sup>** the nursery will be open and a large group activity will take place for any children and youth in attendance. **No regular RE classes** will be offered.

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>** we're rolling out a new tradition! Join us for **Summer Kick-off**, a fun celebration for the end of the RE year (think Gross and Creepy Snack level of fun, with a summer theme). Children and youth 4-18 will be together in the basement for food, games, face painting, crafts and 'campfire' sing-along. Older youth will even get to try their hand at an escape room experience. Watch for sign-up sheets as I'll be looking for a little extra help this this event. You don't want to miss it!

**June 9<sup>th</sup>** will be our **inter-generational Bridging** service. This is a special service honoring our RE participants and teachers. All RE participants will have the opportunity to walk across our bridge signifying another year of growth in our church community. The nursery will be open as usual and all children 4+ and youth are invited to stay in the sanctuary and participate in the service. **No regular RE classes** will be offered.

**June 16<sup>th</sup>** will be our **inter-generational Flower Communion** service. This is a special ending to our church year. The nursery will be available to children 5 and under and all children and youth are invited to stay in the sanctuary and participate in the service. **No regular RE classes** will be offered.

I hope to see you at all of these special events!

*Julie*

## Midwest Leadership School Fundraisers

I'm very excited that we have three youth, Ruby Fischer, Danika Monarski, and Alek Zavadoski who plan to attend Midwest Leadership School this summer, July 14-20! This is a tremendous opportunity for Danika, Ruby, Alek, and our whole congregation; as the youth will come back and share their new knowledge with all of us. There are three different opportunities for you to offer financial support to these youth. 1) Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> the youth will host coffee hour after church. They'll bake and provide special treats and will be accepting donations. 2) Offered with families in mind, May 19<sup>th</sup> will be a church pajama day! For \$5 per person, or \$20 per family, you can skip the Sunday morning rush to get ready for church and come in your pajamas. The youth will be selling stickers for that event in the atrium each Sunday through May 19<sup>th</sup>. 3) You can make a direct, tax deductible sponsorship. Contact Julie Trombley if you're interested in directly sponsoring the trip.

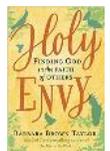
## Adult Religious Education

### **(Mostly) Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Unitarian Universalism\* (\*But were afraid to ask)**

9:00-12:00, Yawkey Hall (Saturday, June 1)

Are you new to this church? New to Unitarian Universalism? Come to this casual, interactive, and swift but deep dive into the history of Unitarianism and Universalism. Along the way you'll meet some of the people who helped shape our unique faith, journey to foreign lands, and touch down back here in North Central Wisconsin where circuit riding evangelists once paved the way for what would become the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau. Breakfast provided. This class is led by Pastor Brian. **Kindly RSVP to [brian@uuwausau.org](mailto:brian@uuwausau.org) by May 30.**

## **Minister's Book Club**



May's read is "Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others" by Barbara Brown Taylor. Meeting will be on Tuesday, May 28, at 6:30PM.



# News for UUs

## ☛ **May First Sunday Potluck**

Melissa Heiser and Lee Ann Venne are hosting our First Sunday Potluck, and since it's Cinco de Mayo, what better way to celebrate than with Mexican dishes?! Of course, anything you wish to bring and share is more than welcome. Just be sure to bring yourself so we can enjoy your presence! See you there, Sunday, May 5 after the service.

## ☛ **May Second Friday Nighters**

Join Greg and Ingrid Zavadoski at 6:30 on May 10 for May Second Friday Nighters. The address is 720 E. Crocker Street, and this is a child-friendly event.

## ☛ **Summer Service Planning**

There may still be some snow on the ground, but your Religious Services Committee is eager to start planning summer services. We are a two person committee seeking the input of the congregation through suggestions for speakers, topics, or any other ideas you have regarding summer services. As many of you know, most summer services are lay led on a wide variety of subjects, using flexible presentation formats. We have scheduled two short meetings at church and invite anyone with ideas to attend one of them. We will meet Wednesday, 4/10, at 12:00, and Sunday, 4/14, after church. If you are unable to make either meeting, but have suggestions or would like to volunteer to be lead a summer service, please contact either Randy Jefferson or Sheryl Hemp. Thank you for helping ensure that our summer services reflect the interests of a broad cross section of our congregation.

## ☛ **May Community Focus Collection**

This month, our Community Focus Collection will go to the Women's Community.

In April, you generously raised \$513 for Proud Theater!

## ☛ **Bread and Soup Sale a Success!**

Thank you so very much to all of the cooks, bakers, and of course, buyers and eaters at this year's Bread and Soup Sale. Thanks to your effort and generosity, we were able to raise \$430 for bus tokens and County Market grocery gift certificates for Brian to give to those in need in the congregation and community on an as-needed basis.

## ☛ **Invitation to Membership**

12:00-1:30, Minister's Study (Sunday, May 5)

All prospective members are invited to attend our new member gathering where you will learn more about our church community and our faith tradition in an informal environment. New members will be welcomed by church leadership and sign our membership book. Refreshments will be provided. Contact Pastor Brian ([brian@uuwausau.org](mailto:brian@uuwausau.org)) if you have questions.

## ☛ **Family Friendly Cinco de Mayo**

Enjoy a family friendly Cinco de Mayo at Wausau Center Mall on Saturday, May 4th from 2–9pm. \$5 general admission, children under 12 free! Authentic food, singing, dancing, kids games, and more! All proceeds benefit the Wausau Firefighters Community Foundation .

## ☛ **Annual Mother's Day Breakfast**

The annual Mother's Day Breakfast to benefit the Women's Community is set for Sunday, May 12 at 9:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome to come and celebrate the miracle of motherhood. All donations go to the Women's Community, \$5 is suggested, Mothers attend at no charge. Men-folk and children are needed as volunteers to cook, serve, clean, entertain, and generally add to the revelry. Please contact Josh Wright ([joshuawright888@gmail.com](mailto:joshuawright888@gmail.com)) or Jody Maier ([jody.maier@wausausupply.com](mailto:jody.maier@wausausupply.com)) to sign up.

## The Board Table

As the newest member of the Board, I have been given the opportunity to share a few observations. In the 14 years since my wife Tammy and I began attending First UU Wausau, there have been significant accomplishments, many changes as well as some significant challenges. The completion of the 2006 renovations which brought all new RE classrooms and the atrium was a substantial high point which seemed to bring the whole congregation together with renewed energy and pride. But it wasn't long before internal conflicts began to surface. The perceived stability of a settled minister disappeared and the tensions continued through the interim transition. Some people left, some stayed, membership, participation and money all ebbed and flowed inconsistently. Everyone was upset and everyone wondered how we would stabilize the ship and avoid shrinking into insignificance.

Fortunately, throughout all of the highs and lows, there was a core group of committed church members, many of whom served on the Board, who selflessly shouldered the existential challenges of securing the required financial resources, successfully completing the search process for a new settled minister and restoring civility and pride in First UU Wausau. To say that we all owe them a deep debt of gratitude is an understatement.

I almost feel like I joined the Board after all of the heavy lifting has been done (we have a settled minister who is widely respected. Our finances, membership and participation are all stable and growing), but the reality is that the challenges never stop, they simply continue to evolve. Past success is no guarantee for the future, so our challenge as a Board and as a congregation is to make full use of the leadership, stability and assets

which have been gifted to us by that core group of members. What we need most of all at this point is to fight the natural complacency that comes from perceived stability and work toward a much broader and deeper engagement from the entire congregation. If we are going to do more than simply celebrate our 150-year anniversary, we will need real congregational engagement. It is the only way that we can build and truly deliver on a bold vision for our mission to transform ourselves and the larger community.

Brian Stezenski-Williams

### A Prayer Among Friends

By [John Daniel](#)

Among other wonders of our lives, we are alive  
with one another, we live here  
in the light of this unlikely world  
that isn't ours for long.  
May we spend generously  
the time we are given.  
May we enact our responsibilities  
as thoroughly as we enjoy  
our pleasures. May we see with clarity,  
may we seek a vision  
that serves all beings, may we honor  
the mystery surpassing our sight,  
and may we hold in our hands  
the gift of good work  
and bear it forth whole, as we  
were borne forth by a power we praise  
to this one Earth, this homeland of all we love.



# May 2019 Calendar

1	Wed	10:00AM	Shawl Time	16	Thu	6:00PM	People/Power of Love
		5:00PM	Proud Theater			6:30PM	Tai Chi
		6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice	18	Sat	8:00AM	Women's Early Risers
2	Thu	6:00PM	People/Power of Love			4:00PM	Buddhist Meditation
		6:30PM	Tai Chi	19	Sun	9:00AM	Baconfest
4	Sat	4:00PM	Buddhist Meditation			10:30AM	Church Service
5	Sun	10:30AM	Church Service	20	Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg
		11:45AM	First Sunday Potluck	21	Tue	6:30PM	BOT Meeting
6	Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg			6:30PM	Qigong
7	Tue	6:30PM	Qigong	22	Wed	5:00PM	People/Power of Love
8	Wed	5:00PM	Proud Theater			5:00PM	Proud Theater
		5:00PM	People/Power of Love			6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice
		6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice	23	Thu	6:30PM	Movies with Meaning
9	Thu	6:30PM	Tai Chi			6:30PM	Tai Chi
11	Sat	4:00PM	Buddhist Meditation	25	Sat	4:00PM	Buddhist Meditation
12	Sun	10:30AM	Church Service	26	Sun	10:30AM	Church Service
13	Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg	27	Mon	6:00PM	Women's AA Mtg
14	Tue	6:30PM	Qigong	28	Tue	6:30PM	Minister's Book Club
15	Wed	10:00AM	Shawl Time			6:30PM	Qigong
		5:00PM	Proud Theater	29	Wed	10:00AM	Shawl Time
		6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice			5:00PM	Proud Theater
						6:30PM	Adult Choir Practice
				30	Thu	6:30PM	Tai Chi
				31	FRI	6:00PM	Proud Theater Play

## Annual Summer Retreat

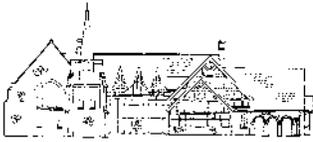
It's time to get the annual UU camping trip on your calendar! Greg and Ingrid Zavadoski have 6 sites (plus one group site) reserved for August 16-18 at Franklin Lake campground (10 miles East of Eagle River). We set up two families per site so the camping cost is approximately \$20-30 per family for the weekend. Meals are shared so that you put your effort into one and relax the rest of the time. Come join us and swim, kayak, hike, bike, run, or read a book by the continuous campfire.

Please email [gzavados@gmail.com](mailto:gzavados@gmail.com) to sign up on a first come, first served basis. We especially encourage new members or families with young children to join us. This event has been a touchstone for several generations of UU families and some of the current families have spent over 10 summers in those woods. Please come join the Zavadoskis and other UU friends!

## Happy Membership Anniversary!



Jerry Gunderson, 62 years    Leigh Tuckey, 57 years    Ellie Ullrich, 50 years  
 Tim and Karen Peterson, 29 years    Bob & Sally Decker, 27 years    Richard Olson, 24 years  
 John Faville, 20 years    Bill and Tricia Forbes, 16 years    Mandy Wright, 14 years  
 Donna Seidel, 13 years    Jody & Kati Maier, 11 years    Wayne Olson, 8 years  
 CJ Heiser & Melissa Goessel-Heiser, 8 years    Kevin and Holly Briquet Miller, 7 years  
 Diane Cauger, 5 years    Andrew Holloway, 2 years    Carl Berge, 2 years  
 Anna Gresch, 2 years    Elizabeth Rossiter, 1 year



First Universalist Unitarian  
 Church of Wausau  
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# The Circuit Writer - May 2019

*Newsletter of the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau*

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