

The Circuit Writer - January 2021

Monthly theme: *Imagination*. What does it mean to be a people of *Imagination*?

Services for January 2021

January 3, 10:30AM: Sages, Saints, and Scoundrels—The Rev. Kimberley Debus, pulpit guest. It's easy to put our Unitarian and Universalist forebears on pedestals, but how noble were they really? How do we simultaneously celebrate their wisdom, good works, and faults... and our own? And how do we hold the legends in tension with the realities of their – and our – stories?

Children's Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM.

Coffee Hour on Zoom at 11:45AM.

Youth Group on Zoom at 4PM.

January 10, 10:30AM:

the Reverend Brian Mason, preaching

Children's Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM.

Coffee Hour on Zoom at 11:45AM.

Youth Group on Zoom at 4PM.

January 17, 10:30AM: Martin Luther King,

Jr. Sunday – the Rev. Brian Mason, preaching

Children's Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM.

Coffee Hour on Zoom at 11:45AM.

Youth Group on Zoom at 4PM.

January 24, 10:30AM:

the Reverend Brian Mason, preaching.

Children's Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM.

Coffee Hour on Zoom at 11:45AM.

Youth Group on Zoom at 4PM.

January 31, 10:30AM:

the Reverend Brian Mason, preaching.

Children's Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM.

Coffee Hour on Zoom at 11:45AM.

Youth Group on Zoom at 4PM.

At this time, all services are online-only, available at 10:30AM on Sunday unless otherwise stated. Every service is posted to our [website](#), [Facebook](#), and sent via e-mail. Sign up for e-mails from First UU Wausau [here](#).



From a Window on Grant

As New Year's Eve approaches I often catch myself humming "Auld Lang Syne." I'm sure you know the tune and maybe the first lines, "Should old acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind? Should old acquaintance be forgot, and auld lang syne?" Auld Lang Syne's a Scottish phrase that means something like "long long ago" or "days gone by." This pandemic year has me thinking of time *long long ago* a lot.

The *New York Times* recently ran an essay collection called "Let's Start Over" in which writers meditate on topics like Conversation, Literature, Sports, and Food in this pandemic moment. The comedian Maeve Higgins wrote on the topic of Friendship in a piece entitled, "I Will Never Bail on My Friends Again." I'm sure you know what she means without even reading it. The article had me thinking about my extroverted friends who are eager for the pandemic to be over so they can get back to hosting parties and going to concerts and Packers games at Lambeau. It also had me thinking of the introverts I know who tell me they're having extroverted impulses for the first time. "Won't it be nice when..." is a phrase I'm hearing a lot these days. The moral? Most of us just really miss our friends, the days gone by, and we can't wait to start over.

This New Year's Eve I'll spend it like I've spent the last nine months: at home, missing the people and places I took for granted in that time long long ago, those days gone by. So—as an act of penance I'll be singing "Auld Lang Syne" extra loud this New Year's Eve, especially the last verse: "And there's a hand my trusty friend! And give me a hand o'thine! And we'll take a right good-will draught, for auld lang syne." Won't it be nice when...we can hug, eat, take a right good-will draught together again? Hell yes it will. I'll never bail on my friends again either, Ms. Higgins. Never.

Good riddance 2020! 2021, what took you so long?

Happy New Year, dear friends, I'll see you in church again soon.

Brian

Reflections

Happy New Year! Do you make new year's resolutions? I tend to set my intentions for the year in July. My teacher brain still prefers to work on a school-year calendar. But I do find that January is a perfect time to review my yearly intentions and see if there are any adjustments I want to make. I stumbled upon the work of Danielle LaPorte a few years ago and it's changed the way I set intentions. LaPorte suggests that we set goals and intentions based on how we want to FEEL, rather than making lists of all the things we want to change about ourselves or lists of all the things that we think we 'should' be doing. She suggests that we spend time in reflection to identify the key feelings we want to have and then set goals or intentions that will move you closer to those feelings. For example, if in 2021 you want to feel more connected, then perhaps you'd set the goal of attending some Religious Education offerings at your church or joining a Soul Matters small group. The idea is that identifying the desired feeling, and then regularly reminding yourself of the desire, will serve as motivation to meet the goal. One of my identified desires for 20-21 is to feel energized. It's a lot easier to remind myself that a daily walk will increase energy, than it would be to get myself out the door simply because I wrote down that I wanted to walk five times a week. Keeping that desire of feeling energized in mind also helps me identify things to let go, or opportunities to turn down. If I know a new opportunity will be more draining than energizing (and if I have a choice in taking it on), it's easier to say 'no' having identified my desire for more energy. I wonder, how do YOU want to feel in 2021? What are a couple of small steps that could move you closer to that feeling? Drop me a note or email and share. I'd love to hear from you.

~Julie

What does it mean to be a people of Imagination?

This is our Religious Education question for the month of January.



From this month's Small Group packet:

"Imagination isn't just a force that drives us forward toward a more perfect future, it also pulls the sacred into our impoverished present. Imagination is what transforms trees from potential firewood into wise friends. Imagination is what moves us from lording over the natural world to seeing ourselves as part of it. It gives the world a soul. And not just the natural world, but the ordinary world too. Through the lens of imagination, we perceive the common as precious, even miraculous. The laughter of children becomes the sound of angels. Sunshine on our face becomes a greater treasure than gold. Our 'everyday' lives are understood as amazing adventure and inexplicably lucky gifts."

Join us in the following ways this month as we explore IMAGINATION.

Children's Chapel

RE for children in Kindergarten through 6th grade
Sunday mornings, 9:30 am-10:00 am

Live via Zoom

Adults and families welcome!

Topics:

Jan 3: Imagine a New You

Jan 10: Imagine a World Without Covid

Jan 17: Imagine a Better World

Jan 24: Thing Outside the Box

Jan 31: Visit Other Worlds

Anti-Racism Family Story Time

Wednesday evenings, 6:30-7:00 pm

Live via Zoom + a recording of each story available to those unable to attend live.

We'll use children's picture books to start conversations around anti-racism. Appropriate for all ages.

All are welcome. Families are encouraged to attend together. Email julie@uuwausau.org to register and request Zoom link.



Youth Group

RE for youth in 7th through 12th grade
Sunday afternoons, 4:00 pm-5:00 pm

Live via Zoom

For youth and advisors only

Topics:

Jan 3: Imagine a New You

Jan 10: Imagine a Better World

Jan 17: Thing Outside the Box

Jan 24: Visit Other Worlds

Jan 31: Outdoor, in-person activity

Imagination as Meditative Practice—Zentangle Class

Saturday, January 23rd, 10:00-11:30 am

Live via Zoom. Join certified Zentangle instructor Sally Schmidt for **Imagination as Meditative Practice**. Registration is required. Email julie@uuwausau.org by January 16th to register. See page 6 for more information.

Soulful Home

This monthly PDF packet of at-home Religious Education exploration is created with families with children in mind, but contains activities and information that could be enjoyed by anyone. The packets align with the monthly Religious Education question. Email julie@uuwausau.org to request a Soulful Home packet.

NEW—Parenting During Covid

6 Week session beginning January 20th
Wednesday evenings, 7:30-8:30 pm, January 20th, 27th, February 3rd, 10th, 17th, & 24th. Join this small group for 6 weeks of sharing, listening, supporting, and learning. We'll meet live via Zoom. All parents are welcome. Email julie@uuwausau.org by January 17th to register.

Soul Matters Small Groups

New Soul Matters Small Groups will begin in February!

Soul Matters, a program used by hundreds of UU congregations across the country, uses monthly themes to explore ways of being that line up with Unitarian Universalist values. Soul Matters Small Groups offer structured and facilitated sharing, and deep listening, around a monthly theme. These groups offer the gift of deeper connection to life, others, and ourselves--rather than the opportunity to debate or intellectualize.

Spring session groups will meet 2 times per month, February through June, for a total of 10 meetings. A commitment to attendance is important, as meetings are as much about connection to group members as they are about exploring the topic. These are closed (as opposed to drop-in style) groups of 6-8 participants, offering the opportunity to get to know group members well, over the 5 months you'll meet together. Prior to each meeting, participants will be given suggested spiritual exercises, questions, and resources to help guide exploration on the theme, before engaging in group conversation at the meeting. Themes this session include: Beloved Community, Commitment, Becoming, Story, and Play.

Soul Matters Small Groups are an opportunity for meaningful connection with other congregants, even if/when the church building can't be open! All Soul Matters groups currently meet via Zoom. The registration deadline is January 13th. Registration is required. Email julie@uuwausau.org to express interest in joining a group for the spring session.

If you are currently in a Soul Matters group you'll be contacted separately about continuing with your group for the spring session.





This month's Soul Matters theme is **IMAGINATION**. Did you know that brain science now shows us that imagination, or new ways of looking at things, can be *practiced*? Let's have some fun and practice *together*!

Join Sally Schmidt, certified ZenTangle® Method Teacher for

Imagination as Meditative Practice

ZenTangle® Class January 23, 10:00-11:30.

ZenTangle® is a visual entry point to meditative practice. It is not art per se, as there is no specific product or piece of work at the end of a session, and no artistic talent is required. ZenTangle® is practiced by making a series of lines, dots, and shapes, repeated in a pattern. There is no right or wrong, no planning, and no erasing. Without a specific expectation about an end product in mind, you are free to practice non-judgement and to enjoy the process. It requires nothing but your pen, your breath, and your awareness.

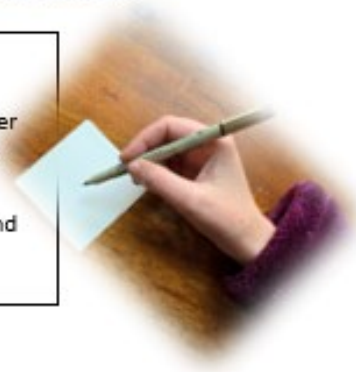
Participants will learn tools of the imagination to help us both create- and think differently about "life on and off the page," and learn the principles of mindfulness on which the approach is built. Then participants will be guided as we explore the practice to gather.

Class will be online via Zoom. To register, email Julie at julie@uuwausau.org before January 16th. Arrangements will be made to pick up a packet of materials before class day.

"Anything is possible, one stroke at a time!"®



Sally C Schmidt is artist/owner of [Etsy.com/SpiritsTrue: Art for Good](https://www.etsy.com/shop/SpiritsTrue), and is a Certified Zentangle Teacher. She completed her CZTeacher Training in November 2020, during the first ever online worldwide CZT program, with 494 other artists from 32 countries around the world.



From the Board Table

On behalf of our congregation, the Board of Trustees would like to express our gratitude for Kevin Briquelet Miller's years of service on the Board including his time as president. Thank you, Kevin.

In addition, we welcome Roxann Bornemann to fill the seat vacated by Kevin.

A year ago, we had no idea. No idea that we would be worshipping and conducting Board business and annual meetings via this thing called Zoom. We had no idea that we would not be grasping the hands of friends at the end of worship in our beautiful sanctuary. We had no idea that we would even understand the notion of "A Pod" let alone be a part of one. And on a personal note, I had no idea that I would, or even could, go this long without physically touching another human being. And yet, here we are. Poised on the brink of a new year. A new year filled with hope and promise. A new year filled with bumps and missteps. A new year filled with oops and let's try that again.

Please know that your Board of Trustees, together with our dedicated staff, is working hard to rise to the challenges that 2021 will hold. This, too, will be a year of practicing flexibility and forgiveness. A year of learning and letting go. A year of creativity and ingenuity. We are a group of kind and dedicated individuals. This church has survived 151 years of ebbs and flows. We will go on, and together we will be stronger and wiser. Together...

-Joyce Reynolds Kurth

Thank you from the CFC and Social Justice Committees!

On behalf of the Community Focus Collection Committee and the Social Justice Committee's Community Suppers group we want to thank all of you who have been so generous funding the February and March dinners. Please do know how grateful we are.

Our goal was surpassed and this in turn will allow the suppers to be catered and most especially HOT.

Thank you all so much!

Marsha Fitzgerald, Community Suppers group

Judy Beier, CFC

UU Auction Planning Committee Meeting

Zoom Meeting on January 12 at 7:00pm

To say that our Church has been fortunate so far in the Pandemic is an understatement that misses the point. We have navigated the many challenges of the pandemic because we have supported each other and because of the thoughtful leadership provided by our minister, staff, lay leaders, and Board of Directors, working together to find a path forward that allows us to stay connected in meaningful ways that most of us had not considered prior to March. The podcast services have been a wonderful success and source of spiritual support. Surprisingly, our financial position, despite economic uncertainty and decline, has remained strong.

But to assume that that things will simply continue to go well because they have, would, I think, be a mistake. We need to work together to ensure the financial health of our church so that we can continue to provide a leading liberal religious voice in our area. Of course, this begins with our personal pledges to the annual stewardship drive. We all need to participate at a level that is meaningful and manageable for us.

Given the continued economic uncertainty, however, I think we also need to revive and reinvent our auction to generate some additional revenue to ensure the delivery of our Church's mission in 2021, our 151st year. Doing an auction in 2021 is right on schedule (the last auction was in 2019), and the pandemic creates an opportunity/ AKA "necessity" to do things differently. Historically, we have tended to rely heavily on the same brave souls to raise our money year after year until they finally wear out and politely withdraw, leaving everyone wondering how we will possibly continue raising funds in the future.

Perhaps the pandemic can help us take a different, more proactive, approach in 2021. The best place to start is by thanking everyone who worked on the 2019 auction. They are:

Jerry Phelan, Laura Syring, Sarah Thurs, Lila Hobson, Sheryl Hemp, Mike Moen, Marsha Fitzgerald, LeeAnn Venne, Greg Venne, Christina Priewe, Matt Priewe, Erin Verley, Heather Busig, Jeannie Russell, Wolfram Weinberg, Anji Spialek, Diane Walker, Karen Peterson, Tim Peterson, Bart Hobson, and Bill Schumacher.

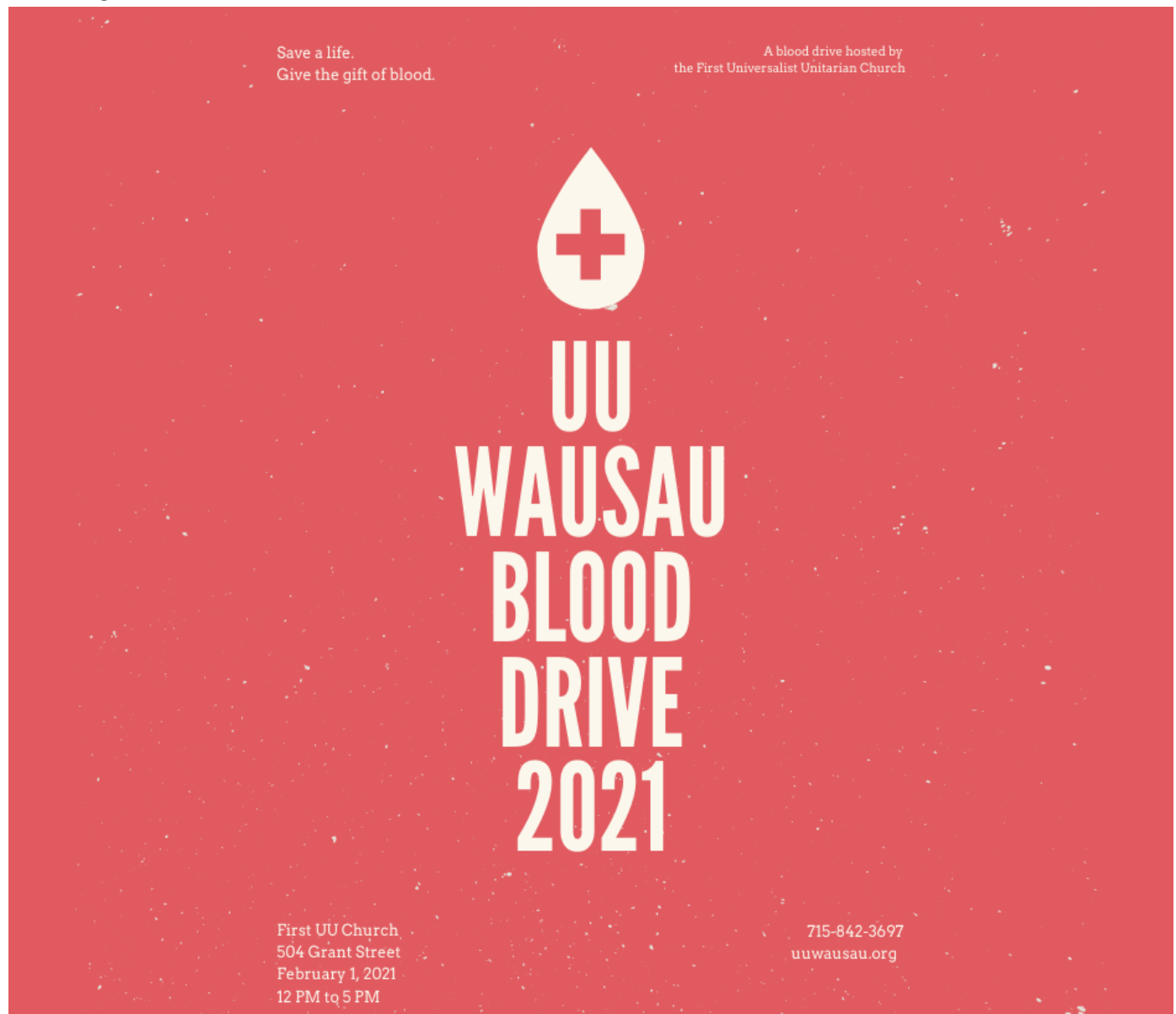
Certainly, those who want to continue being part of a planning group for 2021 would be most welcome to say the least. We need to learn as much from them as we can. But to succeed, we also need to engage new volunteers with new skills, perspectives and relationships to help us re-shape the auction as a virtual event. To get started, we will be hosting an initial Zoom planning meeting on January 12th at 7:00pm.

[Link to Zoom meeting.](#) Meeting ID: 873 7385 6636

-Sheryl Hemp & Brian Stezenski-Williams

Red Cross Blood Drive

First UU Wausau is hosting a Red Cross blood drive February 1, 2021, 12:00-5:00 pm. Please visit redcrossblood.org to schedule a time to donate. Volunteers will also be needed that day to assist the Red Cross staff. Contact Julie at 715-842-3697 or julie@uuwausau.org to express interest in volunteering.



Congratulations to Kay Meyer on being elected President of the Board of the North Central Conservancy Trust, beginning January 1st, 2021!

Please Support UU Wausau in 2021

We understand that life gets busy with the holidays — and we certainly are mindful of the havoc a once-in-a-century pandemic is creating. But our church is a place of strength and support during hard times like these, and it takes YOUR GENEROSITY to allow us to do as Rev. Brian said and “*Keep ministering to those in need, singing a joyful noise, maintaining beloved traditions, and growing, not only in membership, but in that spirit of love that’s been our guide for 150 years.*”

If you haven’t yet turned in your [2021 Pledge Form](#) committing your financial support to First UU Church, please take 2 minutes to fill it out and send it to the church. **As of the time of this newsletter’s printing, we have a number of outstanding Pledge Forms we’d sure like to see come in.**

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

- [Download a Pledge Form here](#)
- Return the Pledge Form that Members received in the mail in the self-addressed envelope provided.
- Request a Pledge Form be snail-mailed or emailed to you: danika@uuwausau.org
- Give online at <https://onrealm.org/uuwausau/give/online>
- Text “FirstUUWausau” to 73256

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

- *The Stewardship Committee*

From the Front Office

Hello from the front office! This beautiful space is one of my favorite places to be, as I have the pleasure of witnessing your continued care and support for our community. In the last six weeks, you have donated 15 large grocery bags filled with food, toiletries, baby essentials, beautiful hand-knitted hats and mittens, and more than 11 dozen canned goods, which are destined for The Neighbor’s Place, along with our Christmas Eve special offering of nearly \$200. The Neighbor’s Place has been working hard to keep up with the current needs of our community, and your gifts have a direct impact.

My office filled up with gifts for children in the weeks before Christmas, making me feel a bit like an elf, as you responded so quickly to the call to help local children have a merrier holiday. Partnering with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Wausau this year, you all – far and near— brought Christmas to *thirty-three* local children!

It is humbling to witness the way you care for each other and our greater community. Thank you for your generous, giving hearts. I hope you have a wonderful beginning to 2021.

Stay safe and take good care.

- *Danika*

JANUARY 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 9:30AM: Children's Chapel on Zoom 10:30AM: Service led by the Rev. K. Debus 4PM: Youth Group—Live via Zoom	4 Women's AA 6PM	5	6 Choir meeting 6:30pm on Zoom	7	8	9
10 9:30AM: Children's Chapel on Zoom 10:30AM: Service led by the Reverend Brian Mason 4PM: Youth Group—Live via Zoom	11 Women's AA 6PM	12 UU Auction Committee Meeting 7pm on Zoom	13 Anti-racism Family Story Time: 6:30pm on Zoom	14 Social Justice meeting 6:30pm on Zoom	15	16
17 9:30AM: Children's Chapel on Zoom 10:30AM: Service led by the Reverend Brian Mason 4PM: Youth Group—Live via Zoom	18 Women's AA 6PM	19 BOT meeting 6:30PM on Zoom	20 Anti-racism Family Story Time: 6:30pm on Zoom Parenting During Covid group: 7:30pm on Zoom	21	22	23 Zentangle Class 10am on Zoom
24 9:30AM: Children's Chapel on Zoom 10:30AM: Service led by the Reverend Brian Mason 4PM: Youth Group—Live via Zoom	25 Women's AA 6PM	26	27 Anti-racism Family Story Time: 6:30pm on Zoom Parenting During Covid group: 7:30pm on Zoom	28	29	30
31 9:30AM: Children's Chapel on Zoom 10:30AM: Service led by the Reverend Brian Mason 4PM: Youth Group—Live via Zoom	February 1st Blood Drive 12pm-5pm Women's AA 6PM	2	3 Choir meeting 6:30pm on Zoom Parenting During Covid group: 7:30pm on Zoom	Sunday Services at UU Wausau: <i>All services are online-only, posted at 10:30AM on Sunday unless otherwise stated. Every service is posted to our website, Facebook, and sent out via e-mail. You can sign up for e-mails from First UU Wausau here.</i>		



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

The Circuit Writer - January 2021

Newsletter of the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau

Inside this Issue:

January Services	1
From a Window on Grant	2
REflections	3
RE Events	4
Soul Matters	5
Zentangle Class	6
From the Board Table	7
CFC & Social Justice	7
UU Auction Planning	8
Blood Drive	9
Stewardship	10
From the Front Office	10
Calendar	11

Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 9AM-1PM
Please contact us to set up an appointment.

Church phone: (715) 842-3697, www.uuwausau.org

Board of Trustees:

Jody Maier, Vice President	canoemaier@gmail.com
Sheryl Hemp, Secretary	wishemp@aol.com
Roxann Bornemann	roxannbornemann@gmail.com
Heather Busig	hbusig@gmail.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
Danika Kozlovich, Congregational Admin.	danika@uuwausau.org
Julie Trombley, Dir. of Religious Ed.	julie@uuwausau.org
Margaret Jerz, Music Director	margaretjerz1@gmail.com