

# *The Circuit Writer - May 2021*

Monthly theme: *STORY*.

What does it mean to be a people of *Story*?

## *Services for May 2021*

**May 2, 2021 | 10:30AM:**

**“I Read in The New Yorker About...”**

Randy Jefferson, speaking.

“In gratitude for my abiding friendship post retirement with The New Yorker magazine, a sampling of writing that touched me from the latest two issues, and an idea for ongoing The New Yorker sharing.”

*Children’s Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM*

*Youth Group event at 4PM*

**May 9, 2021 | 10:30AM:**

The Rev. Brian Mason, preaching

*Children’s Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM*

**May 16, 2021 | 10:30AM:**

**All Music Sunday!**

Margaret Jerz, the Rev. Brian Mason, and special guest musicians will lead us in an all-music service.

*Children’s Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM*

**May 23, 2021 | 10:30AM:**

**Baccalaureate Service**

led by the Rev. Brian Mason

*Children’s Chapel on Zoom at 9:30AM.*

**May 30, 2021 | 10:30AM:**

the Reverend Brian Mason, preaching.

*No Children’s Chapel—enjoy Memorial Day weekend with your families!*

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*UU Wausau is open for **in-person Sunday services** at 10:30AM, unless otherwise stated.*

*On Sundays by 1PM,, a recording of the service will be posted to our [website](#), [Facebook](#), and sent via e-mail.*

*Our podcast is available via Podbean, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts.*

*Sign up to receive e-mails from First UU Wausau [here](#).*



## *From a Window on Grant—May 2021*

*Dear friends and members,*

What a joy it is to be back at church in person. I forgot how much I enjoyed hearing the sound of everyone's voice in song and seeing (the top third of) your faces!

This pandemic and the circumstances it imposes on all of us lingers on. Many cities in the US and nations throughout the world are seeing record breaking infection and death rates, which is a sobering reminder that life is precious, and we still have a way to go before this pandemic moves fully behind us.

I've told the board and several members in the congregation that UU Wausau is now in what I'm calling a "Rebuild." In other words, we don't really know what church will be like in the months ahead. Of course, there will be worship and religious education, there will be small groups and opportunities for fellowship. But exactly how all of that will happen is to be determined, and what it will look like will take immense time and careful planning. But we'll get there. I'm confident of that.

Recently a religious education committee was gathered to assist with RE in the fall and also to give shape to the search and hiring process for the new director of religious education. This work is equally challenging and exciting. Thankfully the new RE committee (Joni Hahn, Kate Passineau, Sally Schmidt, and Greg Zavadoski) will be here to guide and support the work.

I want to thank all of the committees and their respective chairs (or co-chairs),

as well the board of trustees, who have helped keep the engine of the church in good working order.

I want to thank all of the committees and their respective chairs (or co-chairs), as well the board of trustees, who have helped keep the engine of the church in good working order.

As the saying goes, it takes a village. It takes a village to make a church. Thank you for your support during this difficult time. The church wouldn't have come this far without you. Each of you.

The months ahead will be trying. But whatever awaits, with people like you, we'll be just fine.

See you at church,

*Brian*



**What does it mean to be a people of STORY?**  
**Join us this month as we explore what it means to be a people of *Story*.**

### Children's Chapel

RE for children in Kindergarten-6th Grade.

**Sunday mornings, 9:30 am-10:00 am**

Live via Zoom. Adults and families welcome!

**May 2:** Stories remind us who we are as Unitarian Universalists

**May 9:** Stories remind us who we are as families

**May 16:** Stories remind us who we are as anti-racists

**May 23:** Stories remind us who we are as interconnected beings

**May 30:** No RE classes; enjoy Memorial Day weekend with your families!

### Youth Group

RE for youth in 7th through 12th grade

**May 2nd, 4:00 pm-5:00 pm**

For youth and advisors only.

Details will be emailed to registered families.



### Anti-Racism Family Story Time

**Wednesday evenings through May, 6:30-7:00 pm**

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

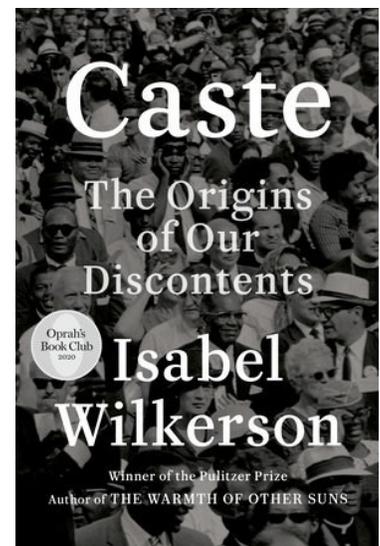
We'll use children's picture books to start conversations around anti-racism. Appropriate for all ages. All are welcome. Families are encouraged to attend together, so conversations can extend outside of our meeting times. E-mail [sallyschmidt213@gmail.com](mailto:sallyschmidt213@gmail.com) to request the Zoom link.

### Practicing Hope Book Club – May 2021

In April and May, the Practicing Hope book club will read and discuss Isabel Wilkerson's Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*.

Discussion of the second half (chapter 19 onwards) will take place on **Monday, May 24**, from 6-7pm.

RSVP to [brian@uuwausau.org](mailto:brian@uuwausau.org) for Zoom meeting link.



## *From the Board Table: Coming Back Together...Finally!*

We all know that it's been a long, difficult year, since COVID-19 changed everything. And, of course, we're all eager to get back to "normal," even though we don't fully understand what the new normal will be.

But before we charge fully ahead, I think that it is worthwhile to take a moment to reflect on or even meditate or pray on what we learned, re-learned and even gained from the experiences created by the pandemic. Of course, these will be different for everyone, but here are few that I have been thinking about.

The need for community, particularly our church community, remained powerful and profound throughout.

The desire to support each other as well as the larger community continued.

Our ability and willingness to adapt to change and do things differently was surprisingly rapid and encouraging, especially considering how resistant to change we tend to be during "normal" times.

And, people of all ages, adopted new modes of communication that existed previously, but were never utilized fully. In a matter of weeks and months, our weekly services gained a broader audience from around the country and even other parts of the globe.

And the corresponding advent of "Zoom" meetings allowed us to continue working together as well as socializing and discussing an endless number of issues. This has been particularly important from a Board of Trustees perspective because it has allowed us to continue working

with the Minister to ensure the Church's present and future.

One thing which makes all of the above possible, is money. And I am happy to share that despite many reasons and fears to the contrary, funding for our Church has remained strong. We are on track to maintain a balanced budget in 2021. This is due, first and foremost, to the generosity of our members. And it was reinforced by federal grants through the Payroll Protection Plan.

All things considered, from a church perspective, we have weathered the challenges of the pandemic well and we have a great deal to be thankful for and look forward to.

That doesn't mean, however, that the future will be easy. Looking around the world, we know that we still need to put safety first.

We also have to prepare ourselves mentally for continued change because things are not going to simply re-set to where they were prior to March 2020. We need to be patient with ourselves and each other and accept that while we won't all see the same paths forward, we do share the same positive intent of doing what we can to continue the work of strengthening the Church and figuring out how to engage positively with the broader community and world around us. Keeping our shared positive intent at the forefront will enable us to figure out how to work forward together.

*-Brian Stezenski-Williams*

## *Second Friday Nighters is BACK!*

With Covid vaccines gaining wide distribution, we hope many of you will feel safe in joining a group to find community and society on the second Friday night in May.

Your happy — and fully vaccinated — hosts will be Jim and Macia Sheibley, Jerry Phelan, and Laura Syring. We'll throw open the doors to the outside and enjoy refreshments and company come rain or shine! As the CDC assures us that coronavirus is not transmitted by shared food, we ask that the traditional bringing of a dish or snack to share be observed, while hosts provide drinks and dinnerware.

Please join us for this adults-only, masks-optional event at 6pm on May 14 at 1312 Green Vistas Drive in Wausau. We've missed seeing everyone, and look forward to a fun gathering!

## *The Neighbors' Place Diaper Drive*

Throughout the month of May, please help stock The Neighbors' Place new Baby Pantry with essentials! Help "Make a Mother's Day in May" by dropping off diapers and wipes at the church during office hours, Monday-Thursday, 9am-1pm. Thank you for helping our local families with these essentials!

## *New Book from Annette Grunseth*

Annette Grunseth, who grew up attending UU Wausau, and is the daughter of longtime members Al and Betty Langlois, has written a new book. In Annette's words, "As a promise to my family and parents, I have spent the past two decades working on a book of letters from Vietnam, written by my brother, Peter, along with my remembrances while in college during the anti-war protest years at UW-Madison."

About her book, ***Combat and Campus: Writing Through War*** (Elm Grove Press, Mystic, Connecticut, 2021):

*As a journalist and soldier with the 25th Infantry Division, riding armored personnel carriers into rice paddies, engaging in night time sweeps of the jungle, Sgt. Peter Langlois chronicles the smells, sights, and sounds during some of the darkest days of the war from 1968 – '69. He would return home to a nation still protesting the war in which his younger sister, Annette, had walked to class behind National Guardsmen marching across the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. Their correspondence and her poetry offer a unique perspective of the war in Vietnam and social change happening at home. Together, they share what was learned and what was lost.*

There is a free virtual book release/launch event, on Zoom, on Monday, May 17, at 7 p.m. CDT, hosted by Write On Door County. [You can read about it and register here](#) to get a Zoom link sent to you via e-mail.

More information is available at Annette's website, [www.annettegrunseth.com](http://www.annettegrunseth.com).

Thank you to everyone who helped clean up our stretch of highway on April 24th!  
(Photo credit: Jim Sheibley)



**ANTI-RACISM  
STORYTIME**

Wednesdays in May @ 6:30pm  
Intergenerational & live on Zoom  
E-mail [sallyschmidt213@gmail.com](mailto:sallyschmidt213@gmail.com)  
to register

[uuwausau.org](http://uuwausau.org)

***Calling all Greeters, Ushers, and Worship Associates!***

With UU Wausau open for in-person services, we're in need of greeters, ushers, and worship associates! If you can lend us your friendly faces and help out, please [sign up here](#). We have spaces available through the end of the church year.



save a life.  
give the gift of blood.

**Red Cross @ UU Wausau  
Blood Drive**

**Monday, May 3, 2021**

**12pm-5pm**

First UU Wausau  
504 Grant Street  
Wausau, WI 54403

sign up at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)  
questions: [danika@uuwausau.org](mailto:danika@uuwausau.org)

# May 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 <b>9:30AM:</b> Children's Chapel on Zoom <b>10:30AM:</b> "I Read in the New Yorker About..." service led by Randy Jefferson <b>4PM:</b> Youth Group	3  <b>Women's AA</b> 6PM	4	5 <b>Knitting 10AM</b>  <b>Choir meeting</b> 6:30pm <b>Anti-racism Family Story Time:</b> 6:30pm on Zoom	6	7	8
9 <b>9:30AM:</b> Children's Chapel on Zoom  <b>10:30AM:</b> Service led by the Rev. Brian Mason	10  <b>Women's AA</b> 6PM	11	12 <b>Knitting 10AM</b>  <b>Choir meeting</b> 6:30pm <b>Anti-racism Family Story Time:</b> 6:30pm on Zoom	13  <b>Social Justice meeting</b> 6:30pm on Zoom	14  <b>2nd Friday Nighters</b>  6pm <i>(See page 5)</i>	15
16 <b>9:30AM:</b> Children's Chapel on Zoom  <b>10:30AM:</b> All Music Sunday! Led by Margaret Jerz and the Rev. Brian Mason	17  <b>Women's AA</b> 6PM	18  <b>BOT meeting</b> 6:30PM	19 <b>Knitting 10AM</b>  <b>Choir meeting</b> 6:30pm <b>Anti-racism Family Story Time:</b> 6:30pm on Zoom	20	21	22
23 <b>9:30AM:</b> Children's Chapel on Zoom  <b>10:30AM:</b> Baccalaureate Service	24 <b>Practicing Hope Book Club—6PM</b> RSVP to Brian  <b>Women's AA</b> 6PM	25	26 <b>Knitting 10AM</b>  <b>Choir meeting</b> 6:30pm <b>Anti-racism Family Story Time:</b> 6:30pm on Zoom	27	28	29
30  <b>No Children's Chapel</b>  <b>10:30AM:</b> Service led by the Rev. Brian Mason	31  <b>Memorial Day</b>					



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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**Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 9AM-1PM**  
**Please contact us to set up an appointment.**  
**Church phone: (715) 842-3697, [www.uuwausau.org](http://www.uuwausau.org)**

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