



First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau

The Circuit Writer

October 2022

Sunday Services

Sunday, October 2 | 10:30AM

“Living in the Upside Down World”

Led by the Reverend Brian Mason

Potluck in the Dining Hall after the service!

Sunday, October 9 | 10:30AM

Sunday Worship

Led by the Reverend Brian Mason

Sunday, October 16 | 10:30AM

Sunday Worship

Led by the Reverend Brian Mason

Sunday, October 23 | 10:30AM

Sunday Worship

Led by guest speaker Pey Carter

Sunday, October 30 | 10:30AM

“All Saints Service”

Led by the Reverend Brian Mason

Join us for this annual honoring of those whose life and living touched our own.

RE Programming

Elementary Religious Education

This month Elementary RE will be exploring the Soul Matters theme of "Cultivating Relationship" with stories, games, art, and more! Our Elementary RE group is open to children in grades K-6th.

Youth Group

For youth in grades 7-12, Youth Group focuses on building relationships, creating a greater sense of belonging, and helping each other feel supported in their spiritual journey through hands-on experiences and deep conversation. During October Youth Group will be exploring the theme of "Cultivating Relationships."

Elementary RE and Youth Group will not meet on October 30.

Tween Book Club

Geared for tweens and their families (caregivers, grandparents, etc.), we meet weekly on Thursdays at 7:00 pm on Zoom, to discuss the month's graphic novel or chapter book. Selections explore themes of equity, inclusion, justice, and celebrating the diversity of differing and intersecting identities, including race, ethnicity, sexuality, faith, ability, class, and gender. Email Jessica, jessica@uuwausau.org, for this month's title and Zoom link.

Book Club will not meet on October 27.



From a Window on Grant

A little something different this year—

As time goes on, I discover new ways to appreciate my ministry here. There is the amazing history and the beautiful building. But most of my gratitude is reserved for the congregation. It is the people I love best. Together with you, over the course of my time here we've helped resettle Afghan refugees, remodeled Yawkey Hall, tuckpointed the sanctuary stonework, done a capital campaign feasibility study, designed a capital campaign, launched and quickly paused a capital campaign due to covid, hired and trained new staff, worked with UUA consultants, began discussing a new capital campaign, welcomed fifty-two new members, presided at twenty-eight funerals, won a social justice award, navigated a global pandemic, fixed the fourteen-year-old leak in the Atrium's roof, created a church podcast, installed live video in the sanctuary, transitioned the church from in person to online to hybrid to in person again, hired a non-profit consultant, reviewed and updated bylaws, reviewed and updated the personnel manual, modernized the church's financial management practices, recovered after the church was vandalized, served two stints as admin between hirings, one stint as DRE between hirings, one stint as music director between hirings, countless performance reviews, six annual budgets, hundreds of sermons, dozens of classes, shed some tears, shared some laughter, and more. We've been busy these past six years. And none of this would have been possible without your support and leadership abilities.

Some of you may know that my agreement with UU Wausau includes a provision for sabbatical leave, with a month accruing for each year of my ministry here. Ministerial sabbaticals are recommended as they provide opportunity for refreshment and renewal, for both the congregation and the minister. My three mentors in ministry took multiple sabbaticals over the course of their pastorates, and all of them speak about the energy, excitement, and ideas they brought back. They also shared how their sabbaticals offered the congregation an

opportunity to gain new appreciation for its capabilities.

In consultation with the Committee on Ministry, church staff, and the Board of Trustees, I have developed a plan to use four months of my accrued sabbatical to walk the Camino Frances, meet with Unitarian colleagues and congregations in Transylvania, study Unitarian and Universalist history in archives throughout New England and the Midwest, observe prayerful discernment about my ministry at UU Wausau, and enjoy extra time with family and friends.

My sabbatical will begin on January 1, 2023. My last time in the pulpit before sabbatical will be Christmas morning. **I will return on May 1st and resume preaching on Sunday, May 7th.** I will be away from Wausau at various points while on sabbatical but will spend a good portion here. So, if you see me out, feel free to stop and chat.

The Reverend Suzanne Wasilczuk, a Duluth MN based Unitarian Universalist minister familiar to many, will serve as Preacher in Residence, occupying the pulpit most Sundays I'm away. She will be assisted by the Worship and Music Committee. The Reverend Wasilczuk will also assist with weddings and funerals. Two local pastors, the Reverend Rebecca Voss (Methodist church) and the Reverend Erik Olson (First English Lutheran), have also made themselves available while I'm gone to assist with pastoral conversations and rites of passage. Pastoral Care will be supported by the Caring Committee. A separate sabbatical plan will include contact information and specifics about who is taking on additional responsibilities while I'm gone. You will get the details as the sabbatical gets closer.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your pastor. Thanks too for continuing with me this congregation's commitment to ministry. These past six years have been a joy. I'm looking forward to what comes next.

Sincerely,

Brian

Letter from the President of the Board of Trustees

Dear fellow members of First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau:

I am writing at this time on behalf of the Board of Trustees to give our enthusiastic support for the upcoming sabbatical of our minister Brian Mason. We wholeheartedly endorse the general idea of ministerial sabbaticals as a time for study, rest, and reflection. It is a long tradition in the UU faith experience. Even more importantly, we feel strongly that the time devoted to sabbatical by our own minister will be of great benefit to our congregation. The Board fully supports Reverend Mason as he takes this time away from the pulpit.

We also want the congregation to understand that as part of our written agreement with Reverend Mason, we committed to a sabbatical when we called and contracted with him. The information below describes the pertinent sections.

3.8.1. The Minister shall use sabbatical leave for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional and religious growth. ...with leave to be taken after four but before seven years of service.

3.8.2. The Congregation will continue full salary, housing allowance, and benefits during sabbatical leave.

As a church and Board we have been planning for this in our annual budgets.

Logistical and pastoral arrangements have been made to cover his absence. Some of the details have been outlined in the letter from Reverend Mason. Other specifics will be forthcoming in the next months. Please be assured that the Board and staff will have everything ready for this time of sabbatical. And, as always, your Board is available for questions and support.

The Board is excited about this upcoming time and hopes that the congregation will also see this as an opportunity for growth for all concerned.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Hemp

First UU Wausau Board of Trustees President



Mid-Week Adult RE

Adults are invited to join us for a mid-week break to build community over a delicious meal and to nurture our spiritual and intellectual growth with a moment reflection with evening worship followed by an engaging Adult RE class.

Sign up here:

<https://forms.gle/SvNAUWjhpNPUQAQQA>

When: Wednesdays, October 19 and 26, November 2 and 9, from 6:00pm-8:00pm.

Schedule:

@6:00-6:30 - Dinner

@6:30-7:00 - Worship

@7:00-8:00 - Adult RE Classes (*pick from the three listed below*)

You can attend part or all (dinner & worship; worship & class; just a class; etc.). Signup is required for the meal and appreciated for the classes to help with supply planning. Unless noted otherwise, a commitment to attend each session is preferred. Unfortunately, due to staffing, we will not be able to offer childcare for our fall series.

Navigating Anxiety and Grief through Spirituality

led by Rev. Brian Mason

Let's face it, most of us are more anxious than we realize or care to admit. There's so much that worries us: money, health, our loved ones, jobs, the news, whether we'll ever stop grieving or feeling weak or embarrassed.

By exploring religious and non-religious essays, film and music, group discussion, and journaling we will look at anxiety and grief from several angles to discover meaning in it that guides (or returns us) to acceptance and a lighter heart.



Learning to See

led by Sarah Mason

"Time stands still best in moments that look suspiciously like ordinary life." - Brian Andreas

Together, we will explore four fundamental art elements through the medium of photography aligned with themed teachings from various religious traditions. We will learn + practice a mindful process that connects our inner selves with our world. All are welcome; all are artists.

Supplies needed: camera phone + journal.

Drop-ins welcome. Participants do not need to attend all four weeks.

Reconnection Small Group Ministry

led by Jessica Zimmer

Our congregations have lived through a time of disconnect, and while some of us have returned to normal, some of us are still finding our way back. It may be awkward, and we may feel uncomfortable. Yet, we if we have learned anything from our experience, it is the importance of our emotional and spiritual connections. Over four weeks we'll explore themes of relationship, joy, connection & community, and interconnectedness to help us reconnect to life, each other and ourselves.

Small group ministry is a style of circle worship for small groups. It allows each person a chance to share, if they choose, and to be heard and held by the group.

Limit: 10 people

Please send any questions about these Adult RE offerings to Jessica, jessica@uuwausau.org.

Scan the QR code with your phone camera to navigate to the sign-up page for these Adult RE offerings!





OCTOBER 14, 2022
7:00PM

Family Movie Night

By popular request, we'll be making up our July family movie night on Friday, October 14 at 7:00 pm with a spooky (but not too scary) movie and Halloween-themed activities. We'll have snacks and costumes are welcome.

RSVPs are not required but appreciated—write to jessica@uuwausau.org.

This event is open to all, but it is geared for families with elementary-aged children.



Early Risers Meeting October 15th!

All women of the church are invited to gather for breakfast and conversation!

When: Saturday, October 15th, at 8:30AM

Where: The Garden Pancake House, 508 Grand Avenue in Schofield (the old Perkin's building)

It's Time to Restock the New Beginnings Pantry!

The New Beginnings Pantry will reopen for donations on the first Saturday of every month, starting October 1, from 10a.m.-12 p.m. in the lower lever of Whitewater Music Hall. Watch for more information coming soon for what's on the most needed list! Contact Joyce Schneider for more information.

First Sundays Potluck October 2nd!

On October 2nd, the Caring Committee and the Knitting Group will be hosting our October Potluck in the Dining Hall right after the Sunday service. The theme is Wisconsin Comfort Casseroles, though we will also need salads and desserts! We will have pumpkins with flowers as our center-pieces, and these will then be distributed to our homebound members. Each table will have a centerpiece and a card with a homebound member's name, address, and phone number. We are asking for volunteers to visit and deliver these fall decorations; take one with you and deliver either Sunday or Monday, so the flowers are fresh. It doesn't take long to drop them off, and the elderly really appreciate a visit!

Please think about stopping on your way home from church to brighten a homebound member's day.

For the potluck, please bring a dish to pass—a casserole, salad, or dessert—and Caring and Knitting will provide water, milk, lemonade, and coffee.

Hope to see you there!

Living Green

“Honored miracle of fungi by taking photos of glorious mushrooms while on a hike at Frog Bay National Park (Bayfield).” (anonymous comment on the scroll for Project SEA-Change)

“Love this! I did the same @ Rib Mtn!” (another anonymous comment on the scroll)

This wonderful exchange was the third time of late when fungi have called to me. Autumn is mushroom season here in Wisconsin—whether you photograph or forage, admire and/or eat. (Be very cautious about eating foraged mushrooms, because **many fungi species are poisonous.**)

Choice edible species make up roughly four percent of the visibly fruiting mushrooms. One of my favorites is hen-of-the-wood (*Grifola frondosa*). Instead of searching under old oak trees, I opted to buy a beautiful one at the Weston farmer’s market. Sautéed it in butter, salt and garlic. Added it to a sherry cream sauce with broiled cauliflower florets. Served it over jasmine rice. Chris and I feasted that night.

I first tasted *G. frondosa* long ago in Kyoto. Its Japanese name is maitake, “dancing mushroom.” There is an old legend about a woodcutter and a Buddhist nun finding maitake on a mountain trail. They danced in delight over their discovery. I understand why they danced.

My recent mushroom forays extend to reading *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds & Shape Our Futures* (2020), by Merlin Sheldrake, a biologist and a musician whose name is almost as magical as his insights are profound.

Next month, it will be time to compile “Good Leads for Green Reads,” the annual annotated list of books on climate, ecology, natural history and the environment, suitable for winter holiday gift-giving. Please consider submitting a title or two to my email address: donna.keuck@gmail.com

With gratitude for the bounty of autumn,
Donna Keuck for the EAG

Sources:

1. [Galloway Wild Foods—Hen of the Woods](#)
2. [Poisonous Fungi](#)

October CFC: New Beginnings Pantry

About one year ago the Wausau Community started a conversation about welcoming refugees to our area. Since then, much has happened thanks to the many generous people, organizations, and agencies in our area. On October 16th we will be updated on the progress New Beginnings has made in helping refugees feel welcome in our community. It hasn’t been without struggles, but in a learn as you go process, it has done marvelous things for many families and created new friendships. We have been a truly welcoming community.

Your donations today will help resupply the New Beginnings Pantry which supplies basic Home Nesting Needs and ongoing daily living needs for current newcomers through ECDC/New Beginnings programs.

Please join us on **Sunday, October 16th**, to raise funds for this essential project—all plate offerings & [online donations](#) earmarked for “Community Focus Collection” will go to the New Beginnings Pantry.



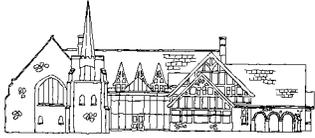
October Second Friday Nighters

Reconnect with old friends and make new ones at our October Second Friday Nighters event! On Friday, October 14th, at 6:30PM, join hosts Jeff Leigh and Ramona Winter-Leigh at their house, 2208 Midway Blvd, Wausau, 54403. All ages are welcome; if weather permits, we’ll be enjoying the backyard firepit! Beverages will be provided; please bring a dish to share.

October 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 10:30AM: Sunday Worship the Rev. Brian Mason, preaching First Sundays Potluck!	3 Women's AA 6PM	4 Qi Gong 6:30PM	5 Knitting 10AM The New Yorker Noon Swoon Choir 6:30PM	6 Tai Chi 6:30PM Tween Book Club 7PM on Zoom	7	8
9 10:30AM: Sunday Worship the Rev. Brian Mason, preaching	10 Women's AA 6PM	11 Qi Gong 6:30PM	12 Knitting 10AM The New Yorker Noon Swoon Choir 6:30PM	13 Tai Chi 6:30PM Social Justice 6:30PM Tween Book Club 7PM on Zoom	14 2nd Friday Nighters (Leigh) 6:30PM Family Movie Night 7PM	15
16 10:30AM: Sunday Worship the Rev. Brian Mason, preaching CFC Sunday!	17 Women's AA 6PM	18 BOT Meeting 6:30PM Qi Gong 6:30PM	19 Knitting 10AM The New Yorker Noon Swoon Adult RE 6PM Choir 6:30PM	20 No Tai Chi Tween Book Club 7PM on Zoom	21	22 Early Risers @ Garden Pancake House 8:30AM
23 10:30AM: Sunday Worship Pey Carter, guest speaker	24 Women's AA 6PM	25 Qi Gong 6:30PM	26 Knitting 10AM The New Yorker Noon Swoon Adult RE 6PM Choir 6:30PM	27 Tai Chi 6:30PM No Book Club	28	29
30 10:30AM: All Saints Day the Rev. Brian Mason, preaching	31  Women's AA 6PM	November 1 Qi Gong 6:30PM	2 Knitting 10AM The New Yorker Noon Swoon Adult RE 6PM Choir 6:30PM	3 Tai Chi 6:30PM Tween Book Club 7PM on Zoom	4	5



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 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-2PM
Please contact us to set up an appointment.

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