



# The Circuit Writer

March 2022

## March Services

**Sunday, March 6 | 10:30AM**

**Sunday Worship**

*the Reverend Brian Mason, preaching*

**Sunday, March 13 | 10:30AM**

**Sunday Worship**

*the Reverend Brian Mason, preaching*

**Sunday, March 20 | 10:30AM**

**“The Vernal Equinox: Honoring Balance”**

*led by Randy Jefferson, guest speaker*

An observance celebrating the natural world moment when Mother Earth completes the first quarter of her annual cycle around the sun.

**Sunday, March 27 | 10:30AM**

**Sunday Worship**

*the Reverend Brian Mason, preaching*

**Youth Wellspring:** Starting March 6, we are offering a small group ministry and spiritual deepening program from Wellspring for youth in grades 9-12. Youth Wellspring offers youth and their advisors and opportunity to come together in deep discussion and discernment about their own UU Faith, connect with one another, and explore spiritual practices that can begin a lifetime of peace while deepening their connection to Unitarian Universalism through the UU Sources.

*Due to Spring Break, Youth Wellspring will not meet on Sunday, March 20th, or Sunday, March 27.*

## RE Updates

**Nursery:** During Sunday Worship, 10:15-11:45 am, we offer childcare for children ages 0-4. The nursery will be open starting Sunday, March 6.

**Elementary Religious Education:** This month Elementary RE will be exploring the Soul Matters theme of 'Renewing Faith' with stories, games, art, and more! Our Elementary RE group is open to children in grades K-6th. Elementary RE kids will start with their families in worship and after the Time for All Ages, we will head down to the RE Commons.

*Due to Spring Break, Elementary RE will not meet on Sundays, March 20 or 27. Instead, children are invited to join their families for worship on those Sundays.*

**Taking Flight for Grades 7-9:** We are offering Taking Flight - An Our Whole Lives Based Sexuality Education Program for youth in grades 7-9. The program will run Sundays from 2:00-4:30 p.m. March 13 - June 5, with a break for holidays. Registration will close at the first session, so be sure to sign up soon!



## *From A Window on Grant*

The other day my 10-year-old daughter came home from school and told me that Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow, which, according to tradition, means the country can expect below-average temperatures for the next six weeks. For the record, I love groundhogs. I think they're adorable. But scientifically speaking, they're rubbish at forecasting meteorology.

In fact, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration discovered that in the last ten years Punxsutawney Phil has been right only 40 percent of the time. 40 percent! Of course he's wrong 60 percent of the time...he's a rodent!

This got me wondering about how accurate humans are at forecasting meteorology. Here's the answer: 7-day forecasts are accurate about 80 percent of the time whereas a 5-day forecast is accurate just about 90 percent. Here's where it gets interesting: 10-day forecasts, which are common on just about every news station and weather website, are accurate only about 50 percent of the time.

In other words, when humans forecast weather beyond seven days, even with the most advanced science and instrumentation money can buy, with weather models and data going back

decades, we're about as accurate as groundhogs.

When I asked my daughter if she thought Phil would end up being right, she said, "He'll be right, 'cause it's always winter in Wausau 'til June anyways." So the next time you open the weather app on your phone and look at the ten day forecast, just know that you might as well go outside and ask a squirrel what the temperature is.

See you at church,

*Brian*



## *March Community Focus Collection*

This month, our focus of support is the Wausau Free Clinic, currently located at the First Presbyterian Church on Third Ave. in Wausau. Founded in 2018, the medical clinic provides basic medical services completely free of charge to those without insurance. The clinic operates on donations and grants and is staffed completely by volunteers. The clinic is open Thursday afternoons, provides care to those at the Warming Shelter on Wednesday evenings, and does free community COVID testing on Tuesdays with an appointment.

In the fall of 2022, the clinic will be relocating to the Community Partners Building under renovation on Grand Avenue, where it will

partner with other groups such as the Neighbors Place and the Warming Shelter operated by Catholic Charities. Your donations will go toward equipment, supplies and allows for patients to receive basic health care including prescriptions if needed through local pharmacies. Please consider the great work that can be done with your donation. Thank you so much for your consideration.

**This month's CFC Sunday is March 20th.**

*Note from the Office: Our February Community Focus Collection raised \$283.10 to help support children's programming at The Women's Community. Thank you for your generosity!*

## *REflections*

I do not think it is hyperbole to say no one's mental health escaped the pandemic unscathed. While the degree may vary person to person, I think we can all say that at least at some point during the pandemic our wellbeing suffered, but this is especially true for our youth. The crisis in youth mental health is not new to the pandemic, but the pandemic certainly exacerbated it. The Surgeon General's [Advisory on Protecting Youth Mental Health](#) reported among youth an alarming and significant increase in depressive, anxious, and negative emotions, increase in suicide attempts, and increase in ER visits for mental health. Which if you pause to think about it, makes sense. The pandemic brought for youth, especially for those of marginalized identities and of the global majority, loss of connection, identity, and stability, and this was all compounded by uprisings due to racial injustice, increasing political tensions and violence domestically and globally, gun violence, climate crisis, socio-economic inequalities, lack of access to quality mental healthcare, and, and, and. . .

When I think about what the future of what faith development/religious education is in a post-pandemic world, two questions I ask are, "What is that people need and what is it we, Unitarian Universalists, can uniquely offer?" What this report makes so apparent is that we need to do better by our youth, and they need support, care, relationship, safety, affirmation, and resources. And while we can, along with so many organizations offer these, what we can uniquely offer is a deep faith and spiritual tools to help when we need grounding and coping with intense emotions, like anxiety and overwhelm. And it is because of the answers to these two questions that the youth advisors and I decided to offer the Wellspring Youth program this spring.

As you saw on the front page, Wellspring is a spiritual deepening program. The youth

program uses the lens of the Six Sources for deep discussion and takes a dive into spiritual practice so youth can gain tools to learn how they can rest, regenerate, and release. Much like our Soul Matters small group ministry, it involves pre-work, reflection, and runs weekly, and if you ask anyone who has worked with youth recently, between the academic pressures and full schedules of extra curriculars, running a program that asks for more than a casual drop-in is counter-intuitive to the reality of youths' lives. But the reality is youth are experiencing all the losses and injustices above and modern life doesn't give them the tools they need to navigate that world. That goes for most adults for that matter. And while it is not impossible to develop and nurture the lifesaving practices and rich faith needed in the world above with casual programming, and that programming has its place, it is improbable.

It is also by no means a substitute for treatment and mental healthcare, but helping youth develop tools to remain resilient, creating relationships and community for support and structure, connecting them to something bigger than themselves, and providing spaces that invite reflection to process experiences and bring healing can help youth keep their wellbeing in a good place.

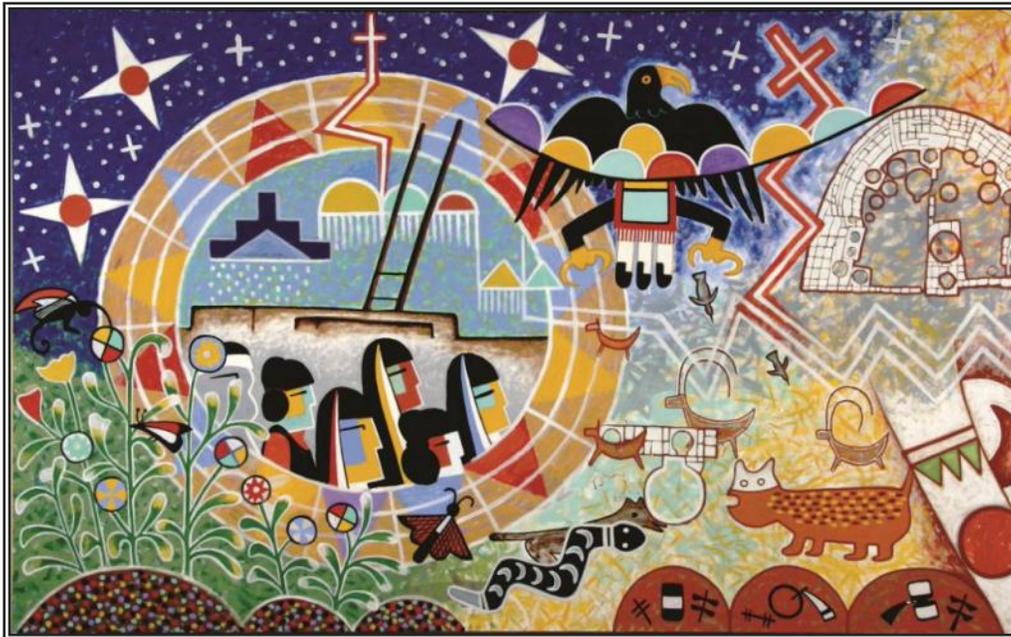
Families with Senior High Youth should be on the lookout for an email with details about the program and the first week's resources, and I invite everyone called to make a change surrounding how our society cares for mental health to check out the Surgeon General's full advisory. It has action items for what we all need to do to create a world where mental and emotional health care is accessible and normalized and where the needs for support, care, relationship, safety, affirmation, and resources are met.

In community,  
*Jes*

## *Course Offering: Spiritual Autobiography*

*Instructor: Rev. Brian Mason*

**Thursdays, March 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th, 7-8:30pm | Yawkey Hall**



**COURSE DESCRIPTION** Join Brian and a small group to reflect and consider your life through a spiritual lens while sharing and writing about it. Fear not, defining “spiritual” will be left to you.

With in-class exercises and writing assignments, participants will consider the different chapters of their journey up to now. You will select from a [provided list](#) of spiritual autobiographies, a companion to accompany your odyssey. You will have short (two page) weekly writing assignments that will evolve to become the final product: a “spiritual autobiography” (6-8 pages in length).

Everyone brings with them different experiences and questions. Some of the questions we will consider are: **What have been the gifts and graces of your life?** How did loss and pain, and success and winnings, impact your journey? **What name do you give the holy, God, life?** How do you speak of the moments in life that matter most, as miracles, as chance, as luck, as gift? **What creates in you a sense of reverence?**

Participants will be invited to share their weekly and final writings with the class, though restraint will be respected. Attendance is expected at each session.

**To RSVP and claim your book, email Brian at [brian@uuwausau.org](mailto:brian@uuwausau.org)**

*Image: “Hopi Visions: Journey of the Human Spirit” (2001) by Michael Kabotie (1942-2009) and Delbridge Honanie (b. 1946)*

## *From the Board Table*

It goes without saying that the past year was challenging on many levels for our church. The list is long and does not require delineation. And, yet, we have found ways to “live safely with” the reality of the pandemic and we do in fact have much to be thankful for. Our Church has:

- started 2022 in sound financial position
- remained fully staffed
- added new members (10 in February alone!)
- figured out how to sustain safe, in-person services
- begun to re-instate in-person religious education for kids and teens

And, I am happy to say, after some struggles, the Board and Minister are working together in a genuinely collaborative manner. And not a moment too soon, because, like most churches, we face multiple existential challenges, including, but not limited to:

- our aging congregational demographics
- shrinking numbers of families with children
- dramatic over-dependence on a small number of very generous major donors for our annual operating funds
- maintaining our relevance in an ever-changing world

If we are going to survive these and other threats, we will have to do it together, all of us, including the congregation. So I encourage you to become involved in shaping our vision for the future. This can be done in many ways from casual conversations with Reverend Brian to engaging with or even joining the Board. This is our Church, if we don't engage and support it (financially and with our time), it probably won't be here for another 150 years.

*-Brian Stezenski-Williams*



Coffee Hour  
is back -  
if we have hosts!

*Sign up to host:*

<https://tinyurl.com/UUWausauCoffeeHour22>

## Treasurer's Quarterly Report to the Congregation

Financial Results 1/1/2021 – 12/31/2021

### Key Annual Budget Numbers:

Total Income	\$395,635.75
Total Expense	\$359,835.97
Net Income	\$ 35,799.78

### 2021 Pledges:

Pledges Budget	\$354,513.00
Pledges Made	\$329,172.00
Pledges Received	\$ 333,811.12

**Outstanding Mortgage:** \$133,060.35

**Endowment:** \$698,433.02

Total Income includes a \$39,752 Federal Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) loan which we secured under the CARES Act pandemic legislation. Had we not received this loan, we would have had a deficit of \$3,952.64. We incurred no payback penalty for this loan.

Total Income was 98.2% of budget. Without the PPP loan, it would have been 88.3%. Total Expenses were 89.3% of budget.

The Endowment grew by \$186,210.02 from 1/1/2021. While the stock market realized considerable growth in 2021, the primary driver for the size of the increase was two significant gifts received in 2021, one of which was from a couple who are current church members.

Respectfully submitted,  
Randy Jefferson  
Treasurer  
02/24/2022



## Fair Trade Coffee & Chocolate

CHOCOLATE - \$4  
 COCOA MIX - \$7  
 COFFEE - \$10



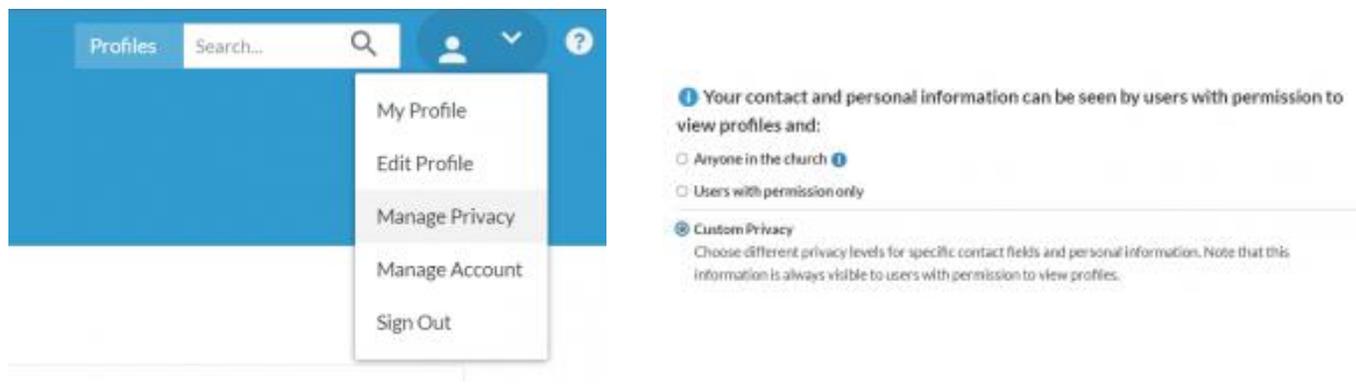
## *Let's Stay Connected with Realm!*

**What is Realm?** It's our long-time, trusted congregational management software from ACS Technologies (ACST). For years, we have trusted them to serve the needs of our administration — and now we have the opportunity to open it up for congregational use, as well! Through Realm, you will be able to connect to other congregants, communicate with groups and committees you're part of, receive updates about church events, and monitor your donations and progress on your annual pledge. ***The plan is to have this fully available to the congregation by March 5th.*** Realm will be available both [via site](#) and the Realm Connect app for iPhone and Android devices.

**To log in:** Go to <https://onrealm.org/uuwausau> and then click “Sign Up.” Enter the e-mail address where you receive church communication, your name and birthdate, then click “Continue.” Create a password, then log in; Realm will send you a confirmation e-mail. *Then it's time to log in and review your privacy settings — this is an important step!!*

**PRIVACY**—We understand that your online privacy is important to you – and it is of utmost importance to us, as well. Our staff will, as always, work to keep you and your information safe. While we want to encourage community, we recognize that not everyone is comfortable sharing personal information church-wide. *Please take a few minutes to sign into Realm and update your privacy settings.*

To review your privacy settings, [click here](#) to log in. In the upper right-hand corner, click “Manage Privacy” from the drop-down list. You can then edit the visibility of your profile to fit the level of privacy you feel comfortable with. There are multiple options:



“*Anyone in the Church*” means that your contact information (address, e-mail address, and phone number) will be visible to the whole congregation in our new online directory.

“*Users with permissions*” means that *only* church staff will have access to your contact information (this is the default setting, so if you want to be included in the directory, please do not check this box).

“*Custom Privacy*” is a flexible approach that allows you to select exactly which information you feel comfortable sharing — you can choose to share only your e-mail address, for example, while keeping the rest of your contact information private.

**If you ever have any questions or concerns regarding Realm and your privacy, or need help, please do not hesitate to [contact Danika](#), who can answer questions and make privacy changes for you.**

## 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 Rev. 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;

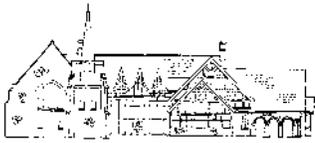
**7th Principle:** Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

-from [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)

# March 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Qi Gong 6:30PM  Anti-racism Family Storytime 6:30PM on Zoom	2 Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm Adult Choir 6:30pm	3 Tai Chi 6:30PM  Spiritual Autobiography 7:00PM	4	5   Buddhist Meditation 4:00PM
6  10:30AM: Sunday Worship, led by the Rev. Brian Mason	7  Caring Committee 4:00PM  Women's AA 6PM	8  Qi Gong 6:30PM  Anti-racism Family Storytime 6:30PM on Zoom	9  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm Adult Choir 6:30pm	10 SJC Meeting 6PM on Zoom  Tai Chi 6:30PM  Spiritual Autobiography 7:00PM	11	12   Buddhist Meditation 4:00PM
13  10:30AM: Sunday Worship, led by the Rev. Brian Mason  Taking Flight 2:00PM	14  Women's AA 6PM	15 Qi Gong 6:30PM  BOT meeting 6:30PM  Anti-racism Family Storytime 6:30PM on Zoom	16  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm Adult Choir 6:30pm	17 Church Office Closed  Tai Chi 6:30PM  Spiritual Autobiography 7:00PM	18	19   Buddhist Meditation 4:00PM
20  10:30AM: The Vernal Equinox: Honoring Balance, led by Randy Jefferson, guest speaker CFC Sunday— Wausau Free Clinic	21  Church Office Closed  Women's AA 6PM	22  Qi Gong 6:30PM  Anti-racism Family Storytime 6:30PM on Zoom	23  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm Adult Choir 6:30pm	24  Tai Chi 6:30PM  Spiritual Autobiography 7:00PM	25	26   Buddhist Meditation 4:00PM
27  10:30AM: Sunday Worship, led by the Rev. Brian Mason	28  Women's AA 6PM	29  Qi Gong 6:30PM  Anti-racism Family Storytime 6:30PM on Zoom	30  Knitting 10AM  The New Yorker Noon Swoon 12pm Adult Choir 6:30pm	31   Tai Chi 6:30PM	Don't forget the <b>UU Wausau Adult Drum Club</b> , which meets every Monday night at 7PM at Margaret's house! 1005 Steuben Street, Wausau. <a href="#">E-mail Margaret</a> with any questions.	



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

## *The Circuit Writer - March 2022*

*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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#### Board of Trustees:

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