



LCUUC NEWSLETTER

**Lake Country Unitarian Universalist Church
W299N5595 Grace Drive Hartland, WI 53029**

MARCH 2025

**Phone: (262) 369-1703
www.lcuuc.org**

Join us in the Lake Country Unitarian Universalist Church sanctuary for in-person services. For an order of service, go to [OOS](#). Sunday services are at 10am. Email joys and sorrows that you want shared aloud during worship to candles@lcuuc.org by 4pm on Fridays. Masks are welcome but not required. Contributions in the Sunday basket collections will be used to support LCUUC except for the 2nd Sunday of the month contributions which go to the designated charity/social justice program.

Sunday, March 2 “Trusting Ourselves,” with Rev. Matt Aspin, LCUUC Minister

Do you trust yourself? Do you trust your instincts? Do you trust yourself to honor the commitments you make to yourself and to others? Join us for an exploration of spiritual discipline as a path to greater peace and self-acceptance.

Sunday, March 9 “Trusting Others,” with Rev. Matt Aspin, LCUUC Minister

In divided times, trust is a gift that can feel hard to come by. What does it take these days to follow the ancient guidance to welcome the stranger?

Sunday, March 16 “Trusting the Process,” with Rev. Matt Aspin, LCUUC Minister

There are few guarantees in life. How can we maintain hope when we can't see any way to reach the destinations we seek?

Sunday, March 23 “Rebuilding Trust,” with Rev. Matt Aspin, LCUUC Minister

Can a trust that has been broken ever truly be restored?

Sunday, March 30 “Holy Humor!” with the Worship Arts Comedy Troupe

With all of the uncertainty going on in our nation right now, it seems like laughter is the farthest from our minds. It's understandable to feel this way. But humor can give us some hope. Come join us for a light-hearted, fun-inspired service that will lift your spirits and fill your soul with some good belly-laughs.

Monday, March 31 International Transgender Day of Visibility an LGBTQ Day of Remembrance

CREATING CALM IN THE STORM OF RESISTANCE

If you are anything like me, you are vacillating between gratitude for all that is currently good in our lives, and a fear that the foundation upon which all of this peace is based upon is being torn asunder. I am trying to prioritize my efforts between saving our democracy while also caring for my health, my family and my congregation. A daunting task, to say the least.

But this is the work of our faith. Belief in the collective wisdom accessed through the democratic process is central to the Unitarian Universalist tradition. We the people are at the top of the org chart in a democracy, whether it be in this church community or in our nation as a whole. We are encouraged to forget that fact by those that seek power over rather than power with. The rights afforded by a healthy, well-functioning democracy demand a high level of personal responsibility.

Challenges we see in the outcomes of democracy are not the fault of “government.” They are failures of governance. How we, the people, are governing ourselves. If we believe our democracy is faltering, what then should we do? I can't know all the specifics, but I do sense that the foundation of it all is a rebuilding of trust. Trust in ourselves, trust in our relationships, and trust in society as a whole.

The rebuilding of trust will be the focus of my messages to you throughout the month of March. So let me begin here in the place where all journeys must begin. Within ourselves. How can we begin to recalibrate trust in ourselves? Sometimes this is going to mean prioritizing care for our bodies and spirits. Drinking more water, or taking a moment to fully experience the miracle of a beautiful sunset. Other times it is going to mean listening to an inner voice that is encouraging us to give up our own comfort for a bit of time to make food for those who are hungry, or making five calls a day to our representatives, or boycotting a business we disagree with even if it feels like their services make our lives “easier.” Whatever that path is, it is going to take trust in ourselves and trust in one another.

In these tumultuous times, I want LCUUC to be a place of refuge, renewal and love. To become that, we need to have trust in one another. To build trust in our community here and to build trust in the other communities we are a part of, we need to first take care of our own minds and hearts. Some of us are in states of overwhelm right now.

A colleague of mine, Rev. Kate Wilkinson put together a chart to help us take care of ourselves so that we can remain calm, expand trust within ourselves and within our community, and do the work we need to address what is happening in our world. Print this out and put it on your fridge or medicine cabinet. [See next page for half-page chart and last page of this newsletter for a full-page chart]

She offers us these keywords: Remove, Recalibrate, Rest, Refill, Reconnect and Resist. I think this is a great guideline for us. You could even make your own personal chart if you wanted of what is restful or what you need to remove or do to resist. Whatever those boxes should be, do them.

Do them consistently so that your soul begins to trust that all of your needs are attended to. It is only from this place that it becomes truly possible to care for those around us. Anything less leads to actions based on fear. This is what got us here.

A new tomorrow requires new ways of being today.

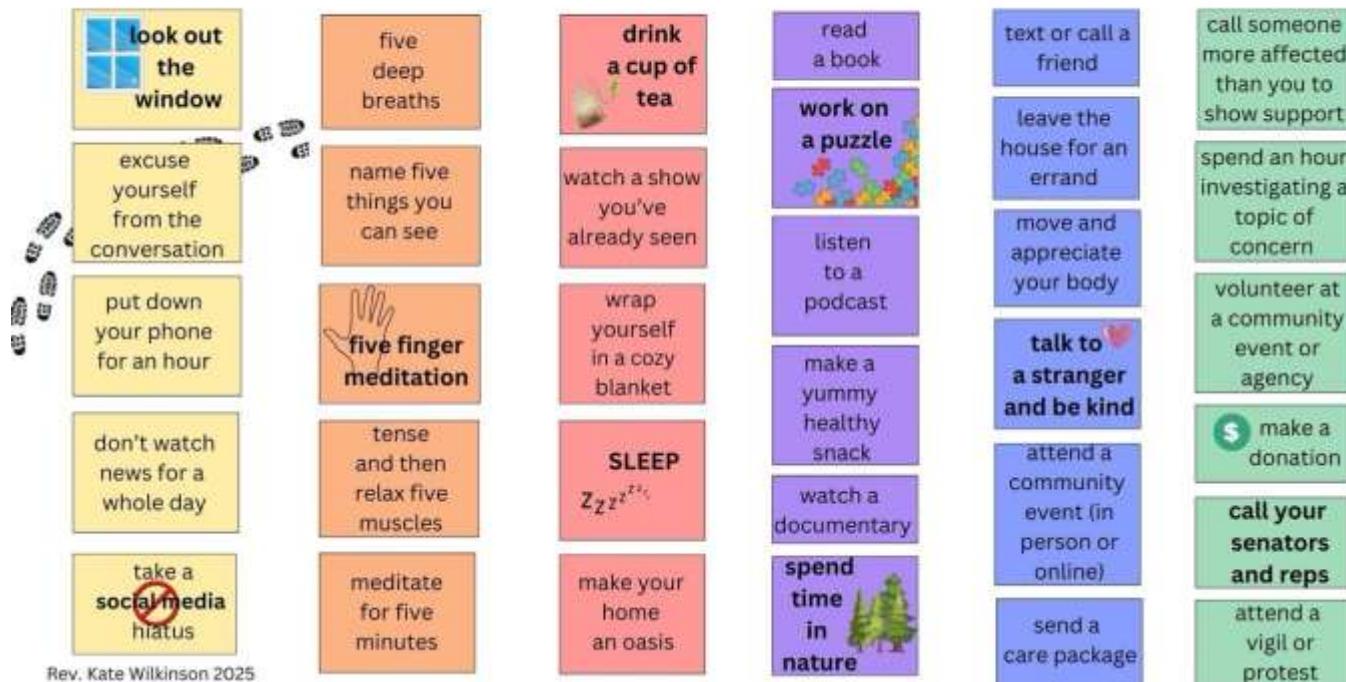
It is up to us to be the change we want to see.

We need you in this work. I need you. We need one another.

Rev. Matt



REMOVE RECALIBRATE REST REFILL RECONNECT RESIST



USHERS NEEDED

Want to get to know your congregation? Become an usher! Ushers are the people who greet you at the sanctuary door and hand you the order of service. They walk around with the microphones for Joys and Concerns and with baskets for the offering. Being an usher is a great way to meet people and be of service to your community. If you are interested in helping out on some Sundays, please contact Mike Campbell at mcampbell01@ameritech.net.

The Big Ideas Book Club is back this Spring!

The book: **Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI** by Yuval Noah Harari

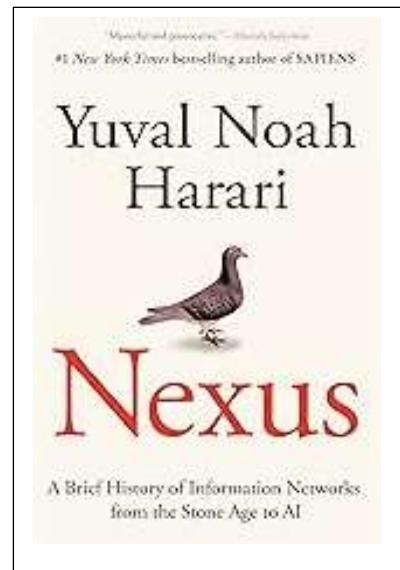
Where: LCUUC

When: Six **Wednesday evenings** from **7:00-8:30pm**

Dates: **3/12 & 3/26, 4/9 & 4/23, 5/7 & 5/28**

Facilitator: Greg Valde

To Register: Please email Greg at valdeg@uww.edu on or before March 6, then please get the book soon and come to the first meeting prepared to discuss the Prologue & Chapter 1

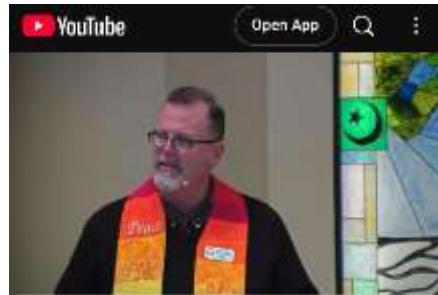


LCUUC IS ON YOUTUBE!

In person is always best, but you can now watch or listen to any sermon you might have missed since the beginning of the year.

Follow this link, subscribe to LCUUC's You Tube Channel, and never miss another informative and uplifting Sunday message.

<https://www.youtube.com/@LCUUC>



WE'RE ZOOMING! VOLUNTEER HOSTS NEEDED!

Our Sunday services are viewable live via a Zoom call during the service. To keep this option available, we need a group of people to help host the Zoom sessions, follow the service script and operate the camera during the service. If you are comfortable operating a computer and would enjoy making connections with those who are coming to our services online, we could use your help. Please stop at the Zoom table in the back of the sanctuary after the service and talk with us. Training and support will be provided.

By the way, be sure to check out the Lake Country Unitarian Universalist Church YouTube channel for recordings of each Sunday's sermons. While you're there, like and subscribe!



HELP US MAKE 'EM LAUGH!

Help the Worship Arts Committee create some laughter and fun

Worship Arts is looking for willing participants to help us make the March 30 service enjoyable and fun! You will be in a costume of some sort and you will be given an easy script that you can read – you don't have to memorize! We are looking for at least 8-10 people, but the more, the merrier! RE kids are encouraged to join in, too!

Email Claire Johnson if you are interested at theaussiefish@yahoo.com

MIDDLE SCHOOL RE MOVIE NIGHT – FRIDAY, MARCH 14

Middle School RE students have come up with a plan! We will have our first 2025 Movie Night featuring “Ready Player 1” on Friday, March 14 from 6-9pm. We’ll start with pizza for supper. We decided we’d like to each invite one guest. Students and guests should bring their own beverages and a snack to share with the group. Parents will be sent an email with a permission slip to sign. Parents will need to include emergency contact information. Guests’ parents will also be required to sign a permission slip and include emergency contact information. Our class covenant requires respect and safety for all.



MUSICALLY SPEAKING

The Soul Matters theme for March is trust. Reverend Matt's upcoming sermons consider trust from several different perspectives: trusting ourselves, trusting each other, trusting the process, and rebuilding trust. As I considered the idea of trust, I realized I hadn't thought much about how much I trust this community, both here at LCUUC, and the broader Unitarian Universalist community.

Our hymn of the month is 145 in our hymnal, "As Tranquil Streams." You might recognize the melody when you hear it each Sunday in March. It is an old tune that has lived on for centuries. It was originally found in the "Musicalisches Hand-buch" from 1690 in Germany. The tune has traveled and been adapted for use in many places and with many lyrics, it is also known as Winchester – yes, the town in England. The lyrics in our hymnal suggest that by each of us coming together we can create a church that is prophetic and liberating. A forward-looking church rooted in truth, freedom, and love that deserves our trust. I hope you will take a few minutes to consider the words written by Marion Franklin Ham and join me in singing them from your heart each Sunday in March.



As Tranquil Streams, a hymn

*As tranquil streams that meet and merge and flow as one to seek the sea,
Our kindred hearts and minds unite to build a church that shall be free –*

*Free from the bonds that bind the mind to narrow thought and lifeless creed;
Free from a social code that fails to serve the cause of human need.*

*A freedom that reveres the past, but trusts the dawning future more;
And bids the soul, in search of truth, adventure boldly and explore.*

*Prophetic church, the future waits your liberating ministry;
Go forward in the power of love, proclaim the truth that makes us free.*

Keep a song in your heart,

Tracy Moraine

Music Coordinator



GOOD COOKIE AWARD

Mike Campbell

Mike has been cheerfully volunteering his time for years without a lot of recognition. He has been making coffee for our Sunday morning social hour for the past 15 years, and filled in as our chief usher when Jim Hansen became ill and could no longer do it. Plus, he is now serving on the Board of Trustees!



BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The Board of Trustees met in February for our monthly meeting. We typically review what each of LCUUC's Committees are hard at work doing. For example, the Membership Committee has made the new-member handbook available online and our new-member orientation will now be broken into two parts so that more can be covered on what it means to be a UU. Also, our next Intro to Unitarian Universalism session will be 4/13/25. You do not have to be new to attend, so feel free to come for a refresher.

There were a whopping 16 kids here for services on February 16th! Special thanks to Megan and the Family Ministry Committee for helping us launch and grow our re-structured RE program. We are currently looking to hire an education-based teacher to lead our blossoming Family Ministry classes.

We also want to give a big hearty welcome to our newest members who recently had their New Member Ceremony in February. To boot, attendance has been great with a to-date weekly average of 69, which is a boost from last year. We've found out that people who are "church shopping" often want to see a sermon online first. Thanks to the efforts of Erich, our affiliated minister, people can now see our Sunday services on our YouTube channel. The link to see past sermons has been put on our website. Currently, the public can email the administrator to get the Zoom information for a live sermon.

Michelle Lawrence is back with her expertise to help us with our marketing goals. She will be taking care of things like social media maintenance, outreach for calendar listings e.g. Lake Country Now, Yelp etc., and potentially website remodeling. The more people in our church who can regularly go to our posts on Facebook/Instagram and comment on them, the more people will see it. Michelle has been a strong supporter of our UU faith tradition and we are glad to have her during this politically charged time.

Additionally, the Board of Trustees is considering making LCUUC a regional hub for Braver Angels. Our Board President, Mike McNett, was able to get in touch with the person responsible for implementing Braver Angels here in Wisconsin. Stay tuned for more details on this. For anyone not familiar with Braver Angels, they are a bipartisan, non-profit organization dedicated to political depolarization. Established in 2016, they accomplish this through workshops, debates and other events that increase a participant's ability to listen and attend to people with opposing perspectives. Fun fact: Jonathan Haidt, who has written multiple books from The Happiness Hypothesis to The Anxious Generation is a board member of Braver Angels.

Last but not least, next time you see the Reverend Matt, please give him a big congratulations for recently being granted a Full Fellowship by the Unitarian Universalist Association! A full fellowship is the equivalent of getting tenure for a minister. He certainly deserves it!

Curious to know more? Feel free to bring questions to any one of the board members after church services or even attend a meeting to see our process. The board meets the third Tuesday of every month.

Submitted by Stephanie Tsoris, Vice President

*Congratulations to
Rev. Matt for earning
Full Fellowship
by the Unitarian
Universalist
Association*



BOARD MEMBERS

Mike McNett, President
Stephanie Tsoris, Vice-President
Rob Suhr, Secretary
Mike Campbell, Member
Claire Johnson, Member
Kristin Sanden, Member
Karl Timm, Member
Tim Fuller, Treasure (ex-officio)
Rev. Matt Aspin (ex-officio)
Rev. Erich Moraine (ex-officio)



COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Adult Enrichment: Greg Valde and Chris Rollins
Family Ministry: Megan Fedders
Facilities: Mike Jury
Finance: Gail Ostler
Grounds: Amy Seay
Leadership: Lois Remeikis
Membership: Betsy Foss-Campbell
Social Action: Cathy Wendorf Peterson
Stewardship: John Kuhn
Worship Arts: Claire Johnson

SOCIAL ACTION OPPORTUNITY: WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT “GET OUT THE VOTE” POSTCARD WRITING SUNDAYS MARCH 9 & 16

A critical Wisconsin State Supreme Court election will be held on April 1, 2025. On March 9 & 16, the Social Action Committee will host postcard writing tables in the Social Hall after the worship services. Postcards from several non-partisan organizations, suggested messages, and will be provided.



NATIVE PLANT SALE FUNDRAISER

LCUUC is hosting their first ever native plant sale. The order form can be found in the church foyer or online at [Native-Plant-Sale](#). It is a long list and maybe a bit overwhelming for beginners so I bolded the plants that both Meredith and I recommend; however, you will still have to look at what works best for your location. One highlight I noticed this year is that they have Blue-Stemmed Goldenrod, which is actually endangered in WI. Have fun on your native plant gardening journey!

Order forms with payment can be dropped off in the lockbox in the office and are due by March 21. Please direct payment questions to admin@lcuuc.org or 262-369-1703. Plants will be ready for pick up May 24th and 25th. Questions? Contact Stephanie Tsoris at admin@lcuuc.org or 920-707-4114.

Photo of Blue-Stemmed Goldenrod



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

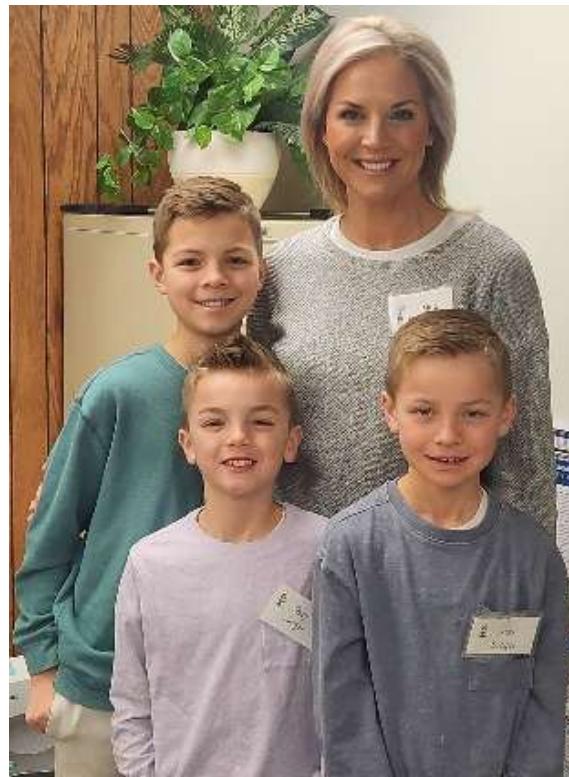


TOM SHEARMAN

We'd like to introduce one of our newer members, Tom Shearman. You will often see him at church with his two children: Olive (7 years old) and Sam (3 years old). Tom is from Sydney, Australia and his wife Lindsey is from Watertown, WI. The two of them met as students at the University of Kentucky. Tom is busy finishing up his MBA at Northwestern University while working in the field of marketing/communications. Lindsey is an equestrian who manages a farm, trains horses and travels to horse shows. "She is smart and hardworking," Tom says proudly of his wife. Olive is already riding horses and Sam is excited to get started hopefully soon. Tom has an interest in comparative theology and says he found our church because he was looking for a liberal religious institution with a broad spiritual focus. He regularly volunteers for RE as well as serves on the Marketing Committee. In Tom's downtime, he enjoys running and reading modern fiction.

MEG SHAD-SAEGER

Meg and her three sons relocated to Wisconsin from Naperville, Illinois in 2017. They joined LCUUC shortly after their arrival and have found a welcoming and enriching community here. Meg's spiritual path is rooted in Pagan/Wiccan traditions, and she finds a deep sense of connection in the natural world. She balances her professional life with the active role of supporting her sons in their various sports and extracurricular activities. Beyond these commitments, Meg serves on the Board of Directors for the Friends of Retzer Nature Center and volunteers with the Wisconsin DNR as a Wisconsin Master Naturalist Educator. In 2018, she and her sons transformed their yard into a certified Wildlife Natural Habitat, cultivating a thriving collection of native plant species. A passionate gardener, Meg spends much of the growing season tending her vegetable and tea gardens. She and her family deeply value their involvement with the LCUUC community. Let's welcome them with love and open arms!



MEMBERSHIP

NEW ORIENTATION SESSIONS COMING UP IN APRIL

New to UU Orientation – Sunday, April 13, 2025, 11:15am

If you are new to Unitarian Universalism, join us after the service for this second hour session to:

- Discover Unitarian Universalism's core values that unite us as a beloved community.
- Explore how the history of Unitarian Universalism affects who we are today.

All are welcome to attend. You can also join us if you're not new to Unitarian Universalism but would like a refresher. You do not need to RSVP for this session; just show up!

New to LCUUC Orientation – Sunday, April 27, 2025, 11:15am- 1:15pm

If you are newish to LCUUC and/or interested in learning more, join us after the service to learn more about our community!

In addition to eating a light lunch together, we will discuss what brings you here so we can continue to welcome you in the best possible ways to meet your needs.

What to Expect

- Learn about the vibrant and welcoming community that makes LCUUC special.
- Connect with fellow seekers on our spiritual journeys.
- Hear about the various ways you can become involved in our community, from worship services to social justice initiatives.
- Find your niche and discover how your unique gifts can contribute to our collective well-being.
- Get information on what it means to be a member and the pathway to do so, if you become interested.

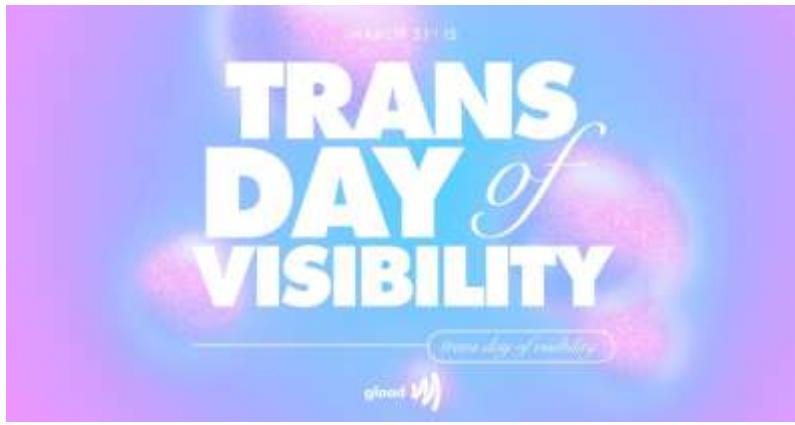
For more information, contact Betsy Foss-Campbell, Membership Committee Chair, at bfosscamp@gmail.com.

How to RSVP

Sign up at the Welcome Table in the church foyer, or sign up online at: <https://lcuuc.weebly.com/lcuuc-orientation-registration.html>

**Learn about Unitarian Universalism
and about the Lake Country Unitarian
Universalist Community!**





MARCH 31, 2025

Each year on March 31, the world observes Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) to raise awareness about transgender people. It is a day to celebrate the lives and contributions of trans people, while also drawing attention to the poverty, discrimination, and violence the community faces.

International TDOV was created in 2010 by trans advocate Rachel Crandall. Crandall, the head of Transgender Michigan, created TDOV in response to the overwhelming majority of media stories about transgender people being focused on violence. She hoped to create a day where people could celebrate the lives of transgender people, while still acknowledging that due to discrimination, not every trans person can or wants to be visible.

Given that a minority of Americans say they personally know someone who's transgender, the vast majority of the public learns about trans people from the media. This is a problem because, as shown in the Netflix documentary *Disclosure*, the media has misrepresented, mischaracterized, and stereotyped trans people since the invention of film. These false depictions have indisputably shaped the cultural understanding of who trans people are and have modeled, often for the worse, how the average cisgender person should react to and treat trans people in their own lives.

That's why it's still necessary for trans people to be seen through authentic, diverse, and accurate stories which reflect the actual lived experiences of trans people; both for themselves and for the people who believe they've never met a trans person.

LCUUC WELCOMING CONGREGATION RENEWAL



Unitarian Universalism has made a commitment to opening its doors to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The Welcoming Congregation Program is a volunteer program for UUA congregations that want to take intentional steps to be more welcoming and inclusive of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Being welcoming and inclusive is a never-ending commitment. LCUUC's efforts to renew our status as a UUA-recognized Welcoming Congregation will include two LGBTQ-themed worship services per year, recognition of LGBTQ Days of Remembrance, contributing to an organization that supports the LGBTQ community, and educational programs. **PLEASE SEE PAGE 16 FOR INFORMATION ABOUT OUR "AUTHENTIC SELVES" BOOK DISCUSSION CLASSES IN APRIL & MAY.**

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UPDATE ON FAMILY PROMISE: NEW AND DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

Update: Sadly, the Emergency Overflow Shelter was forced to close for the season because of another burst pipe. There was quite a bit of damage and the repairs are being made but they will not be finished in time to re-open this winter. All guests were relocated to other shelters or to hotels.

Opportunities: Go to the Family Promise Waukesha website, hover over "Get Involved," click on "Volunteer" and scroll down to a section entitled "10 Ways to" (do not follow the Volunteer Portal prompt at this time). Here you will find a list of the many ways to get involved with the program. For example, you can become a driver or help to clean the apartments when there is guest turnover....there are many ways. The Volunteer Portal section lists the current shelter census and details what you need to do to qualify as a volunteer for the various volunteer roles.

Meal Prep: Family Promise is back to the model in which we provide meals for the families living in our shelter apartment program. We do not get to eat with the families at this time. We deliver the meals to the Day Center and staff deliver the meals to the families on Wednesdays. Anyone can do this – just sign up on the website! This could be a fun and spiritually-fulfilling social action opportunity for your family or friend group.

LCUUC'S Continued Support is Appreciated: The broken water pipes, emergency over-flow shelter opening delays and then closure have been challenging especially for our guests – but it has also been challenging for the staff, and volunteers this winter. We are still helping families and individuals experiencing homelessness at a time when they are especially vulnerable and need our support.

Thank you,

LCUUC Family Promise Liaison: Gina Markson Magnus 262-424-7640



Transforming the lives of families experiencing homelessness. Because every child deserves a home.

<https://www.familypromisewaukeshawi.org/>

Most Urgently Needed Items by Shelter Guests & Alumni:

Conditioner	Floor Cleaner	Paper Towels	Stove Cleaner
Dish Soap	Kleenex	Shampoo	Toilet Cleaner
Disinfectant Spray	Laundry Detergent	Sink Cleaner	Trash Bags
Disinfectant Wipes	Loofahs	Sponges	Window Cleaner

PLEASE BRING DONATED ITEMS TO LCUUC AND PLACE THEM IN THE GRAY BINS IN THE FOYER

THESE ITEMS ARE NOT ACCEPTED: Clothing, Comforters & Quilts, Toys, Travel-Size Items

Caring Circle



The Caring Circle supports church members who are experiencing personal difficulties. If you find yourself in need of a helping hand, please contact Paula Hillmann at: paulahillmann@gmail.com or call 262-366-5991 (cell).

CRAFT & CHAT March 6 from 5-7pm

CRAFT & CHAT meets the first Thursday of every month. Bring your craft projects to work on and bring some topics to chat about! If you want to come and enjoy the space/time but don't have your own projects, there will be adult coloring books provided for anyone to use. There will also be some delicious tea provided. If you have questions, please contact Chris Rollins at crollinscareer@gmail.com.



LCUUC GAME NIGHT – MARCH 21 at 6:30pm

The Adult Enrichment Committee is sponsoring LCUUC Game Nights! - an opportunity to enjoy casual fun & fellowship on a monthly basis. Please come enjoy these evenings on the following Friday nights this fall in the church social hall. Remaining Game Night dates for this year are March 21, April 18, and May 16. Contact Chris at crollinscareer@gmail.com or cell phone 262-269-9787 with questions.

ONLINE AUCTION 2025 SUCCESS!!!

What a wonderfully successful event, raising over \$6,000. Thanks to all who donated and bid on all the wonderful items! Information has been sent out to those who have won.

Please contact the office at admin@lcuuc.org with questions.



KINTSUGI SANGHA



We meet every week to meditate together and share our interest in the philosophy of Zen as a way of life. While different from Unitarian Universalism in some ways, Zen is very similar in other ways. These two traditions make great roommates. Drop in and visit sometime. Mondays from 6:30pm sharp to 8:30pm.

Please check the sangha page on the LCUUC website for current information. It is located under the Community drop down tab on the homepage. You can also use the link:
<https://lcuuc.weebly.com/kintsugi-sangha.html> to get to it directly.

MARCH 22 (FOURTH SATURDAY THIS MONTH!) NATURE MEDITATION

There is a temporary change this month - For this month we'll meet on the ***fourth Saturday, March 22***, at **9:00am** at the **Merton Mill Pond** on the East side of Main Street in Merton. Here is a link to a map of the location: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/XUAF9N4LBRbfBnJ27>.

*Everyone is invited - no prior meditation experience needed!
If you'd like a reason to enjoy some quiet time outdoors,
this is for you.*

What to expect: The meditation will happen no matter the weather, so dress for the outdoors. We will start at 9:00 AM with an introduction and short reading, then spend twenty-five to thirty minutes quietly experiencing the environment by walking or finding a space to sit and observe the sounds, smells, sights and feel of the space. We'll gather again to share the experience and another short reading before returning to our individual routines.

Since this is a meditative experience, we ask that you do not bring things that may be distracting to yourself or others (e.g. pets) and that you silence communication devices before the meditation starts.

Questions, or for **more information** contact Tracy at tracywren@yahoo.com.

In April we will meet on the third Saturday, April 19. I'm looking at two new potential locations - so be sure to read next month's newsletter!



MIDWEEK MEDITATION MOMENT

Come join us at 12 noon on Wednesdays for an hour of antidote to all the shopping, work deadlines, and political anxiety. An hour of gentle silence spent sitting and walking. No prior experience necessary, first timers are most welcome. The bell rings promptly at noon, please arrive 5-10 minutes early to settle in. In the spirit of reflective calm, when you arrive, take off your hat/jacket and shoes in the hallway and enter the sanctuary in silence.



LCUUC has joined with Soul Matters – a network of Unitarian Universalist congregations who follow the same monthly themes. These themes will be woven through all aspects of LCUUC life, from weekly services & religious education, to small groups & individual learning opportunities. Explore what may be a good fit for you – organic growth into sharing and discussion is welcome and encouraged! Please visit the LCUUC website for individual opportunities revolving around this month's theme. These include podcasts, movies, articles, books and weekly exercises to promote more in-depth thought and conversation with family and friends.

MARCH 2025 – WELCOME TO THE PRACTICE OF TRUST

In religious circles, talk of trust most often revolves around having faith that life will look after us. For instance, our Christian friends sing hymns about God “watching over us” and keeping “an eye on the sparrow.” Our Jewish friends lift up the Exodus story to encourage faith that God will help us make our way even when things look bleak. Likewise, prayer practice for our Muslim friends is all about reminding oneself that you are in Allah’s safe hands. We UUs voice similar sentiments through the language of trusting “a Love that will not let us go.”

This call to trust Life comes to us as a gift. After all, it can be quite easy to convince ourselves that life is a foe. So, we need our faith communities to restore our faith that life is ultimately a friend. We need the reassurance that when we fall, we can count on being picked up. But what about being pushed? Don’t we need to count on that too? A Love that won’t let us go is essential, but isn’t it just as important to have faith in a Love that won’t let us get too comfortable?

Especially as March asks us to honor women’s history, the anniversary of the Selma–Montgomery March and Transgender Day of Visibility, we certainly don’t want to forget about a Love that disturbs. We need a Love that keeps us “creatively maladjusted” to the inhumane and unjust parts of our society. We need a Love that exposes privilege and unsettles those of us who have it. We definitely need a Love that tells those of us who are marginalized and tired, “I won’t let your pain be ignored.”

And just when that type of trust seems the one we all should place at the center of our hearts, another voice adds itself to the mix. This one reminding us to trust that it’s not all up to us. That sometimes it’s ok to rest. A voice that doesn’t disturb and push but instead assures us that we can let go. That tells us to trust that we can - for a while - put the work down because others are ready to pick it up, knowing that we will be there to pick it up when rest calls to them.

So, friends, where does that leave us? What is it? Trust life to pick us up? Trust life to push and poke us? Trust that it’s ok to put the work down for a while? It is all of them, of course. And more. But maybe it’s mostly about trusting that we’ll know which call is right for us. Maybe it’s about having faith in ourselves and not letting anyone tell us what we need to trust in the most. Another way to put this is to say that we need to make room for everyone’s uniquely broken heart. We all experience a loss of faith in our own way. The trust you need to repair is likely different from mine. But what we both long for is safe space. Space to say how hard that work of repair is. Space to say how much our experience of broken trust hurts. So, how about it friends? This month, let’s prove to each other that we can be trusted to offer safe and wide-open space for each other’s broken hearts.

From www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com

WISDOM is excited to invite you to **Madison Action Day 2025**—a powerful day of community action and advocacy for social justice, equity, and policy change!

SCAN ME

ENTRY FEE
\$35
/PERSON
EARLY BIRD

Madison
Action
Day

Join us for a day of community action and advocacy to promote social justice, equity, and policy change. Engage with leaders, hear inspiring speakers, and participate in legislative meetings to make your voice heard.

APRIL
10
2025

8:00 AM
ONWARD

MADISON MASONIC CENTER
301 WISCONSIN AVE,
MADISON, WI 53703

Purchase a ticket: bit.ly/madisonactionday2025

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION ENDS MARCH 1, 2025.

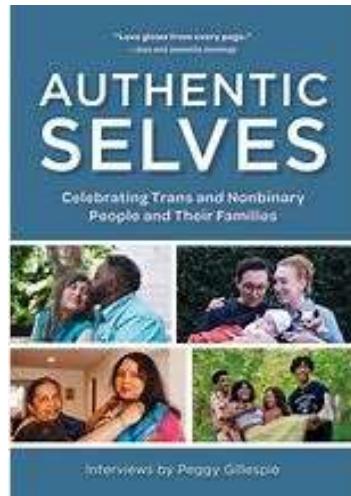
Contact Cathy Wendorf Peterson, chairperson of the Social Action Committee at cathymarie7755@hotmail.com if you are interested in carpooling.

“AUTHENTIC SELVES” UUA COMMON READ BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The LCUUC Welcoming Congregation Renewal Work Group invites you to read and discuss the UUA’s “Big Read” title for 2025, *AUTHENTIC SELVES: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families*, Interviews by Peggy Gillespie.

The UUA website describes the book as “a sweeping compilation of life stories and portraits of trans and nonbinary people, as well as their partners, parents, children, siblings, and chosen family members. Through interviews and photo portraits, the subjects of *Authentic Selves* invite readers into their real lives--their revelations, challenges, joys, and networks of support.”

HERE'S HOW TO GET INVOLVED:



To register for the class, please email cathymarie7755@hotmail.com or text or call 715-347-4793.

Get a copy of the book. Please reach out to Cathy if the cost of the book would preclude your participation. We have several donated copies available. If you would like to buy your own copy, Books and Company will have copies available on their shelves for book clubs near the front of the store.

Before reading, please jot down a few questions you have about trans and/or nonbinary folks. This is a list for your eyes only, to help give your reading focus and meaning.

Read the first half of the book. If you don't have time to read the whole first half, please read at least 3 of the stories—no need to read in order, just grab a few that catch your interest.

Discussion Session 1: Saturday, April 5 at 9:30 at LCUUC – with a potluck brunch

Read the second half of the book. (Same as above, if you don't have time to read the whole thing, do please read the stories of at least 3 people.)

Discussion Session 2: Friday, May 2 at 6:30 at LCUUC – with a potluck supper

While we'd love for people to attend both sessions, you are welcome to attend only one if that is all you can do. Also, if you have a friend who would like to learn more about our “TQ+” friends, family, and neighbors, please bring them along.

Facilitated by Kim Suhr. Questions? Please email kimsuhr@mac.com

We welcome you to join us!



OUR MISSION

LCUUC is a diverse religious community supporting one another in our spiritual searches for truth, meaning and compassionate connection. Based on the Unitarian Universalist Principles and the transforming power of love, we strive for positive change in the world.

OUR VISION

2020 LCUUC is an inclusive spiritual community that is diverse, growing, vibrant, and economically sustainable. We provide enriching lifespan education and a strong public presence supporting social justice.

The online LCUUC Church Calendar can be found [HERE](#)

LCUUC STAFF: All staff have mailboxes in the church office

Minister: Rev. Matt Aspin minister@lcuuc.org

Music Coordinator: Tracy Moraine music@lcuuc.org

Congregational Administrator: Leann Rigoli admin@lcuuc.org

Church Office Phone: (262) 369-1703

Administrative Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday from 8am to 4pm

Newsletter Editor:

Cathy Wendorf Peterson newsletter@lcuuc.org

Please submit articles by the 20th of each month.

VISIT LCUUC AT: [WEBSITE](#), [INSTAGRAM](#), [FACEBOOK](#)



EMBRACING DEATH'S MYSTERY

Our pulpit guest on February 23 was LCUUC member Fran Bills. Several members requested copies of Fran's sermon and other readings, so they are being shared here.

Benediction: *May your days be filled with joy, your heart be filled with peace, and your life be guided by love. May you find strength in difficult times, Hope in moments of doubt, And light in the darkest of nights.*

Closing Words: *Let us live our lives with curiosity, compassion, purpose, love, and an awareness of the legacy we leave behind, for it is in our shared humanity that we find the strength to face the unknown.*

Thanks Fran, for a thought-provoking and delightful service!

Sermon: Embracing Death's Mystery

Death, is one of life's greatest mysteries and a common thread that binds all of humanity together. It is an inevitable event that every living being must face. Different cultures, religions, and philosophies offer varied perspectives on death, each contributing to a rich tapestry of understanding and, for many, comfort.

From a scientific standpoint, death is seen as the cessation of all biological functions that sustain life. It is a natural process. Modern science often focuses on understanding the biological mechanisms of death and finding ways to prolong life. The scientific community sees death as a transition from life to a state of non-existence, where consciousness ceases, and the body returns to the earth through decomposition. Some scientists believe comets and asteroids infused primordial soup with carbon, the main building block of life on Earth. Perhaps the molecules that are you and I once rode a comet's tail, became one celled slime, then traveled through prehistoric plants, dinosaurs and eventually will pass through us to nourish new life upon my death. Is this not a form of reincarnation?

Humanism embraces the belief that humans have the capacity to lead meaningful lives without relying on the supernatural. Death, in the humanist view, is a natural end to life, and it emphasizes living a fulfilling and ethical life. Humanists encourage finding meaning in personal achievements, relationships, and contributions to society. They believe that the legacy we leave behind through our actions and the memories we create with others are what truly matter. Perhaps our "soul" is the good and evil left behind when the last breath leaves our lips.

In Christianity, death is not the end but a passage to eternal life. Christians believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who conquered death and offers eternal life to those who have faith in Him. Death is viewed as a temporary separation from the physical body, and Christians await the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. The hope of eternal life in heaven with God provides comfort and assurance to believers.

Judaism teaches that death is a natural part of life and a return to God. The soul is believed to be eternal and returns to its Creator upon death. Jewish beliefs about the afterlife vary, with some traditions emphasizing the resurrection of the dead and others focusing on the immortality of the soul. Mourning practices, such as sitting shiva, provide support and comfort to the bereaved, emphasizing the importance of community and the continuity of life.

In Islam, death is considered a transition from the temporary world to the eternal afterlife. Muslims believe in the Day of Judgment, where individuals are held accountable for their deeds. The righteous are rewarded with paradise, while the wicked face punishment. Death is seen as a part of God's plan, and Muslims strive to live righteous lives in accordance with God's will. Funeral rites in Islam emphasize humility, simplicity, and the importance of prayers for the deceased.

- CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE -

Hinduism views death as a part of the cycle of reincarnation. The soul is eternal and is reborn in different bodies based on the accumulated actions, or karma, from past lives. The ultimate goal is to attain liberation from the cycle of birth and death, and to unite with the divine. Hindu funeral rites, such as cremation, aim to release the soul from the physical body and facilitate its journey to the next life.

Buddhism teaches that death is a natural part of the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. The nature of one's rebirth is determined by the consequences of one's actions. Buddhists seek to attain enlightenment and break free from the cycle of death and rebirth. Death is viewed as an opportunity for transformation and growth. Meditation on death and impermanence is practiced to cultivate mindfulness and detachment.

Pagan beliefs about death are diverse and vary among different traditions. Many Pagan paths honor the cycles of nature and view death as a return to the Earth and the continuation of life in another form. The afterlife may be seen as a realm where the dead continue to exist, such as the Summerland, Valhalla, or the Underworld. Pagans often celebrate the deceased through rituals, honoring their memory and the cycle of life, death, and rebirth.

Death is a profound mystery that has been contemplated by humans throughout history. Each perspective offers unique insights and teachings that contribute to our understanding of this inevitable aspect of life. Whether viewed through the lens of science, humanism, or various religious beliefs, death remains a common thread that unites us all. By embracing these diverse perspectives, the hope is that we can find solace and meaning in the face of mortality.

None of it gives me comfort.

It is not fear but extreme curiosity that makes me want to be like Noah's ancestor, Methuselah, who lived 969 years. Why not forever? Most of us are familiar with Sisyphus and his punishment, meted out by gods, to push a rock up a hill for all eternity. The backstory is not as well known. King Sisyphus tricked Death into putting on handcuffs. He then locked Death away and no one died. Mankind continued to slaughter each other in battle. The gods finally stepped in and restored order. Death was reinstated and Sisyphus was punished. Immortality myths never end well.

To live an extraordinarily long life and view the marvels ahead, dystopian or utopian, probably something in-between, would be wonderful. Between artificial intelligence, quantum computing and CRISPER, a technology that can selectively modify the DNA of living organisms, the future will be fantastic or perhaps just ashes.

Since it is unlikely, I will make it to the year 2917, I am hoping to be totally present, not in pain but alert, for the last of life's adventures, Death. I want to see what Steve Jobs, the creator of all things Apple, saw on his death bed when he uttered his final words, "OH WOW. OH WOW. OH WOW".

Excerpts from **A DATE WITH DEATH** by Gina Purro

Death asked me to join him for dinner, so I slipped into my favorite black dress that I had been saving for a special occasion and let him walk me to our candlelit tryst. He looked at me with the endless night sky in his eyes and asked, 'Did you live your life, my love?' As I swirled my wine in its glass, I wondered if I understood the thread I wove into the greater fabric. If I loved in a way that was deep and freeing. If I let pain and grief carve me into something more grateful. If I made enough space to be in awe that flowers exist, and take the time to watch the honeybees drink their sweet nectar. I wondered what the riddles of regret and longing had taught me, and if I realized just how beautiful and insignificant and monstrous and small we are for the brief moment that we are here, before we all melt back down into ancestors of the land.

