



White  
Bear  
Unitarian  
Universalist  
Church

# The MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

328 Maple Street | Mahtomedi, MN 55115 | Phone: 651.426.2369 | [wbuuc.org](http://wbuuc.org)

February 2017

## Prayer: the practice of staying awake

Find resources for spiritual practice at [wbuuc.org/themes](http://wbuuc.org/themes).



To see this month's issue of *Show Your Soul*, visit [wbuuc.org/show-your-soul](http://wbuuc.org/show-your-soul).

Between rocking the boat and sitting down; between stirring things up, and peaceably going along,  
we find ourselves here: in community.

Let the current hold you; let the current guide you.

The river that gently flows through your soul whispers, "Come, let us worship."

- Manish K. Mishra-Marzetti



Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer  
Associate Minister  
[revluke@wbuuc.org](mailto:revluke@wbuuc.org)

A staunch humanist minister, while serving a historic humanist congregation, had a steel plaque hanging in her office that read: *poetry is prayer.*

She had a lyrical heart, and mind, and spirit—recalling and reciting prayer and prose, favorite writings and readings by memory and by heart. It is as if the words that point to meaning and depth and intention and hope and love found their way into her mind and settled into her heart as a guide, an inner poet—and she held it like a prayer.

Prayer isn't a word to fear. We tend to get lost in the questions of *who prayer is addressed to*, or *what good will it do*. I find it helpful to think of prayer as a verb—

something active, a practice—like mindfulness and meditation. Then, it doesn't need to be addressed to anyone, necessarily, but rather it can be a time for breath, centering—a posture of reverence and humility to the mystery of life, and a moment of intention toward growing more compassion and strength and courage in the rest of one's life.

It's like a phrase I recall from my grandfather, a Lutheran minister: *When you pray, move your feet.* For him, prayer was about centering your heart in the values and teachings of scripture, and then enacting those values in the world through service—to *love thy neighbor.*

Prayer can take many forms—as Muslim mystic Rumi said, *There are a hundred ways to kneel and kiss the ground.* From walking meditation, to music, to old forms of "Lectio Divina" where one reads a piece of scripture or poetry over and over to find more layers of meaning. Prayer can be about expressing gratitude before a meal or during a commute or at day's end—alone, or with others. It can

be about grounding and bracing oneself for a task ahead, or about setting your intention, your heart, toward holding someone who is struggling—which grows your compassion and, if shared, can be a source of strength and support for your loved one.

**Sometimes**, prayer needs old words that you know by heart that connect you across generations and speak of ancient truth.

**Sometimes**, prayer needs new words that you find in the moment with fresh metaphor that use the vernacular of the now.

**Sometimes**, prayer needs lyric and harmony, to lift our spirits and blend our breath.

**Sometimes**, prayer needs sighs and silence too deep for words.

**And sometimes**, when the words and forms and philosophizing get in our way, we would do well to remember the words of Meister Eckhart: *If the only prayer you said was "thank you," that would be enough.*





Laurie Kigner  
2016-2017 President  
[president@wbuuc.org](mailto:president@wbuuc.org)

Prayer: the practice of staying awake. Surely there are as many implementations of prayer as there are people. Jon Kabat-Zinn states that:

Mindfulness . . . is not a concept; it's a way of being. And it's a way of being awake . . . the real practice is living your life as if it really mattered from moment to moment. The real practice is life itself . . . hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and also we could say minding. Which is another way of saying awareness-ing.

**“Is prayer partially a discernment of my ruminations, the ticker tape in my head?”**

“Awareness-ing.” Is prayer partially a discernment of my ruminations, the ticker tape in my head? Or, is it working through, around, and beneath the ticker tape, perceiving deeply buried emanations, as John O’Donohue references:

It takes a long time to sift through the more superficial voices of your own gift in order to enter into the deep significance and tonality of your otherness. When you speak from that deep inner voice, you are really speaking from the unique tabernacle of your own presence. There is a voice within you that no one, not even you, has heard. Give yourself the opportunity of silence and begin to develop your listening in order to hear, deep within yourself, the music of your spirit.

Perhaps, it is less benign as described by Rev. Jen Crow:

Lying flat there on the dirt floor basement of our hearts—most of us come face to face with the difficult reality of our situation—with the unchangeable and frightening facts—and in that moment we may just become willing to try something we’ve never tried before . . . turn to living life in the moment . . . reach out to our family and friends—sharing the truth of our situation and our feelings . . . We will choose well if rather than simply trying harder with the tools we’ve always used—we turn in that moment to something different. When things feel impossible . . . be willing to choose different.

We, WBUUC, are in the process of choosing different as we answer

the call to be a Sanctuary Church. Rev. Grant Steverson shared at a press conference on December 6, accompanied by Twin Cities clergy committed to the Sanctuary Church movement:

Many of us standing here have been asleep and we have been woken up by the terror and the fear that immigrants are feeling now because of the rhetoric that is being thrown around for the last year in this country, and we intend to stay awake.

**“Or, is it working through, around, and beneath the ticker tape, perceiving deeply buried emanations.”**

Rev. Victoria Safford shared during the same press conference, “Our calling is to love and justice and faithful prophetic resistance.” And more recently,

I am deeply inspired by the courage, clarity and integrity of the Board and other leaders here, as they hold at once the urgency of this moral question, the call to conscientious resistance, and the principles and processes by which the congregation is governed.

When things feel impossible—*be willing to choose different*. These *are* prayers, these emanations from White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church.





*Jane Bacon*  
*Social Action Committee Chair*  
*and WBUUC Member*  
[justice@wbuuc.org](mailto:justice@wbuuc.org)

When I first heard about our church becoming a sanctuary church, I was excited by the opportunity. Then, the part of me that cares about congregational polity that allows members to be directly involved in major decisions—that part kicked in and I thought—maybe the congregation should vote on this first.

As I struggled with these two responses, I decided to imagine myself as Victoria, or a Board member. What would I have done? What was it like to be at that ISAAH meeting when churches were called to become sanctuaries? Victoria was in the room when the call came. What response to give? She must have asked herself, “Is our church ready to step into this prophetic role?” Knowing our congregation as she does, knowing the journey we have all been on together—to become a justice congregation—to hold that as part of our identity—to be known as a justice congregation by others—knowing all that, I think she said, “Yes, we are ready to answer the call.”

What do I know about answering a call? I think of Selma in 1965. Dr. King put out a call to clergy to show up. He didn’t say, “Consider coming; think about whether this will work for you.” He said, “Come!”

And those ministers had to decide whether to answer that call. Our congregation may not know all about immigration issues, but we do know about the call to Selma. We know because some of us went to Selma in 2015. Because all of us learned about the importance of Selma, and the importance of showing up when called.

Victoria heard the call from ISAAH. She might have wished that she could talk to the congregation, to be sure they were with her, but that was impossible. So she did what she could: she contacted the Board President and was encouraged to say “yes.” Shortly afterward the entire Board met and voted unanimously to move towards becoming a sanctuary church.

But then what? The ministers and Board had taken a bold step, but did they have the solid backing of the congregation? One way to know with certainty would be a congregational vote. But how could that be done without the congregation being fully informed?

The members would need a chance to understand why the call had come; why the sanctuary movement matters; the symbolic

importance of a majority white church in the suburbs stepping forward in support of vulnerable immigrants; and the important implications and details of being a sanctuary church. The members would need a chance to ask questions, express opinions and concerns, talk to each other, and to really consider the impact of the decision.

The timing could not have been worse. The call came at Christmas time, when the ministers and staff already had many obligations, when most people’s attention was elsewhere, when no one would have time to attend extra meetings. So the leadership had to act quickly, and then figure out what to do next. They scheduled a whole series of community discussion meetings in January for education and reflection.

Is it necessary to have a congregational vote as a way of being certain of support? At first my answer was “yes.” Now, I am not as sure. It feels as though the situation is evolving and I’m okay with that ambiguity.

As we wrestle with this, I believe it will become clear what is best to do. For now, I am trusting the process the Board is following, and I better understand why they are doing it this way- insuring that everyone is included, that all the voices are heard.

## A Congregation of Generous People

*This church is sustained by the generosity, service and vision of its members and friends. Learn more about our history, and about opportunities for giving and service, at [wbuuc.org/donate](http://wbuuc.org/donate) or contact us at [office@wbuuc.org](mailto:office@wbuuc.org).*

### ***Our church is funded by you.***

Its day-to-day operations, from the mortgage and utilities, to payroll for our Ministers and staff, to sheet music, coffee and crayons and technology: all of this is paid for through donations.

***Whether you come every week—***  
or only sometimes;

***Whether you sing in the choir*** (enjoying the incredible, professional talent of our staff musicians)—or whether you just love to listen;

***Whether you have kids in Religious Education***—or are simply, deeply grateful that a new generation of young Unitarian Universalists will be nurtured in our midst;

***Whether you have called upon our Ministers*** for pastoral care, for a wedding, memorial or funeral, or with a question or concern, or listen to their sermons online or here in person;

***... This church is always here,*** standing on the side of love, shining light, bringing wisdom, reason, compassion, faith, and hope in a time when these are needed more than ever.

For a congregation of our size with its vibrant programs, our

staff is very small and our budget is practical and lean. We know that the annual cost per household of running this church is about \$2,500 a year. We are mindful that some of us can't possibly give that much, and we are grateful that many others can give more, based on their income. Our doors are open to all, without exception.

Every year in March, we invite you, members and friends alike, to make a pledge, to make a promise, to fund the church for the year ahead:

***to give*** your share to the community that sustains you

***to renew*** your commitment to the church that restores and renews your own spirit

***to transform*** our world through our continued, faithful insistence on justice, love and hope.

In March, please watch for our urgent, heartfelt invitation to join us in promising to support our beautiful, beloved church home. We'll be sending information about making your annual pledge in person or online, and our goal is 100% participation in this most crucial year. For now, please feel free to contact us with questions or ideas about giving, renewing, and transforming this church into the force for good we know we are called to be.

With gratitude and gladness,

Jeff Nelson  
([nelson1259@comcast.net](mailto:nelson1259@comcast.net))

and  
Jane Holzer  
([jane.n.holzer@gmail.com](mailto:jane.n.holzer@gmail.com))  
2017 Pledge Campaign Chairs

Victoria Safford  
([vsafford@wbuuc.org](mailto:vsafford@wbuuc.org))  
Lead Minister



**MARCH 2017**  
**[wbuuc.org/pledge](http://wbuuc.org/pledge)**



*Jill Schwendeman*  
Director of Youth Programs  
[youth@wbuuc.org](mailto:youth@wbuuc.org)

undecided, or not moved  
by either pole.

responsible search for meaning  
and truth, among them.

**“We are nested in  
goodness. How does  
it call to you? How  
do you seek it?”**

Prayer in our setting is many things. It’s an expression of joy or grief, pleading or gratitude; an act of attention, intention, intercession, humility, conjuring, repentance, alignment, mystery, seeking, worship, peace, challenge, longing, and more.

The youth arrange themselves in a line as a way to physically answer questions about faith. On one end stand those who believe in a warm and personal God. On the other are those who trust only in reason and human virtues. Most place themselves somewhere in the middle. They are searching,

Our non-creedal faith cherishes and nurtures each of you, I tell them. This place belongs to everyone, no matter what their orientation, who abides by our guiding principles—the worth and dignity of each person, support for one another and encouragement to spiritual growth, a free and

We are nested in goodness. How does it call to you? How do you seek it? In preparing a worship service this month, our youth deepened or expanded their practices of prayer.

I am moved by this invitation by Rev. Leslie Takahashi:

### Labyrinth

Walk the maze

Within your heart: guide your steps into its questioning curves.

This labyrinth is a puzzle leading you deeper into your own truths.

Listen in the twists and turns.

Listen in the openness within all searching.

Listen: a wisdom within you calls to a wisdom beyond you and in that dialogue lies peace.





## Grow Your Soul | Classes, Groups, and Forums

### Welcome Table Wednesdays

Every Week | 5:30pm Dinner | 6:30pm Forum

### Upcoming Wednesday Forums

**February 1 | *The Sharps' War – Session II*** | We will watch the second half of the PBS documentary by Ken Burns, *Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War*, followed by discussion.

**February 8 | SoulWork for Racial Justice** | A church-wide conversation on racial justice, guided by *The Fire This Time – A New Generation Speaks About Race* by Jesmyn Ward. Drop-ins welcome, no pre-reading required. Common Read books available through the bookstall in the Social Hall. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays at 6:30pm, 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays at 12:30pm.

**February 15 | Rural Health Care Initiative** | A presentation by member Carol Nelson about the Rural Health Care Initiative, providing health care in rural Sierra Leone.

**February 22: Global Climate Forum** | A Citizens' Climate Lobby panel will discuss carbon fee and dividend, a market-based strategy to reduce greenhouse gasses.

### New Member Classes

#### Membership I:

**Feb. 12, 12:30–2:30pm**

#### Membership II:

**March 12, 12:30–2:30pm**

A two-part series, Session I explores our church's history and mission, as well as UUism. Session II focuses on the meaning of membership and getting engaged in the church, with a book signing ritual. After participating in Session I, Session II can be taken at anytime. Register in the Social Hall or at [www.wbuuc.org/classes](http://www.wbuuc.org/classes).

## Ongoing Small Groups

### Men's Group

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays at 12:30pm

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 7:00pm

Make connections and build community through sharing and support. Open to all WBUUC men.

**Contact:** Steve Kahn, [stevekahn@comcast.net](mailto:stevekahn@comcast.net)

### Parents of Young Children/Youth

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays, 6:15-7:30pm

Explore spirituality and parenting.

**Contact:** Amy Peterson Derrick, [dre@wbuuc.org](mailto:dre@wbuuc.org)

### Shamanic Drumming

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays - 7:00pm

Participate in the ancient practice of shamanic drumming for meditation and spiritual exploration.

**Contact:** Nancy Hauer, [nancy@rookhouse.org](mailto:nancy@rookhouse.org)

### Theme Circles-Monthly

3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays 12:30-2:30, 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays 10:00-12:00

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays 1:00-3:00, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays 6:30-8:30

A small group focusing on the monthly theological theme with guided questions and short readings. Led by a trained facilitator. New participants are welcome to join throughout the year.

**Contact:** Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer, [revluke@wbuuc.org](mailto:revluke@wbuuc.org)

### Third Thursdays for 60+

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays, 11:00am-1:00pm

For those 60+, including lunch, discussion and occasional speakers.

**Contact:** Rev. Victoria Safford, [vsafford@wbuuc.org](mailto:vsafford@wbuuc.org)

### Unitarian Universalist Voices

4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays, 7:30-9:00pm

Discuss texts from our UU heritage. Readings provided.

**Contact:** Victor Urbanowicz, [vurbanowicz@yahoo.com](mailto:vurbanowicz@yahoo.com)

### Women's Book Group

2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays, 7:00-9:00pm

Read and discuss books written by women.

**Contact:** Dana Jackson, [danaleep@q.com](mailto:danaleep@q.com)

### WomenSpirit Circle

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays, 7:00-9:00pm

Exploring personal spiritual origins and experiences. Open to all WBUUC women.

**Contact:** Carol Marsyla, [carol.marsyla@gmail.com](mailto:carol.marsyla@gmail.com)

### Young Adult "After Hours"

4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays – 8:00-9:30pm

Young adults meet for conversation around the monthly theme at a local pub.

**Contact:** Rev. Luke Stevens-Royer, [revluke@wbuuc.org](mailto:revluke@wbuuc.org)

## Looking Ahead



**MARCH 2017**  
[wbuuc.org/pledge](http://wbuuc.org/pledge)

## A Month of Sundays

February 5

**Our Native Language**

Victoria Safford

*Zaccurus Fricke, featured musician*

February 12

**The Divine Hours**

Victoria Safford

*Music from the Choir*

February 19

**Prayer and Balance**

Presented by the WBUUC Youth Group

*Music by the WBUUC Youth*

February 26

**Imagine the Dawn**

Nic Cable

*Music from the Choir*

Nic Cable is a lifelong UU who currently serves as a Ministerial Intern at Unity Church-Unitarian in Saint Paul.



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To contact *Monthly* contributors, or for general information: [monthly@wbuuc.org](mailto:monthly@wbuuc.org).

February 2017



# February

# 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>For more current information visit:</b> <a href="http://www.wbuuc.org/calendar">www.wbuuc.org/calendar</a>						
05 RE Social Action Sunday 9am & 11am Religious Ed. 9am & 11am Worship Service 10:10am Sunday Meditation 12:30pm Lay Leadership Winter Forum	06	07 12:30pm Men's Groups 7pm Women Spirituality Group 7pm Adult Children of Alcoholics	08 5:30pm Wed. Night Dinner 6pm Youth Grow and Serve 6pm Youth Service Workshop 6pm Parents of Teens 6:15pm Parents/Young Children 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Wed. Forum 6:30pm Homework/Soulwork 6:30pm Nominations and Leadership Development 7:30pm Social Action Comm.	09 7pm Pledge Comm. Meeting	10 3pm Memorial Service for Marlys Oliver	11 9am Cookie Bake 9am Pledge Gathering 9:30am Big Band Rehearsal
12 9am & 11am Religious Ed. 9am & 11am Worship Service 10:10am Sunday Meditation 12:30pm Membership I	13 10am People Incorporated 12pm Second Monday Discussion Group 7pm Women's Book Group	14 7pm Men's Group 7pm Adult Children of Alcoholics	15 5:30pm Wed. Night Dinner 6pm Parents of Teens 6pm Youth Programming 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Theme Circle 6:30pm Wed. Forum 6:30pm Homework/Soulwork 7:30pm Joyful Noise Comm.	16 11am Third Thursday 60+ Group	17 Church Closed	18 6pm Youth Service Rehearsal
19 9am & 11am Religious Ed. 9am & 11am Worship Service 10:10am Sunday Meditation 12:30pm Gallery Comm.	20	21 12:30pm Men's Group 7pm Adult Children of Alcoholics 7pm Shamanic Drumming	22 5:30pm Wed. Night Dinner 6:15pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Homework/Soulwork 6:30pm Wed. Forum 8pm Young Adult Group	23 6pm Pledge Mailing Party	24 Church Closed	25
26 9am & 11am Religious Ed. 9am & 11am Worship Service 10:10am Sunday Meditation 12:30pm Racial Justice Conversation	27 7pm Executive Comm. Meeting	28 7pm Men's Group 7pm Adult Children of Alcoholics				



# Show Your Soul

BWCA

*From  
Stones, weeds, bits of life—  
smoke rising through  
a tunnel  
past piney fingers to arching milky  
blue and dark*

*Stars piled and jumbled.  
What holds them there?  
What are the outer limits?  
Where do things stop?*

*Down here, below, reflections  
rippling  
Repeat the questions.*

*-Mim Weber, 2002*

## Calling All Artists and Writers!

We are always seeking your imagery, poems, and prose reflecting on the monthly themes. Many of you have submitted beautiful offerings over the past year and a half. Thank you! If you haven't seen the Show Your Soul web page, visit:

[www.wbuuc.org/show-your-soul](http://www.wbuuc.org/show-your-soul)

In 2017, we're changing the guidelines. There will be **no submission deadline** and you can submit your art and writing anytime on any theme, past, present, or future. Find all of this year's themes at [wbuuc.org/themes](http://wbuuc.org/themes). Our congregation needs the beauty of your inspiring, hopeful imagery and words as we journey together through challenging times.

photo by Gail Diez