

2018-2019 UUAA Men's Fellowship Report

Submitted by Gregg Peterson

The UUAA Men's Fellowship comprises UUAA congregants who identify as men and who participate in the programs and activities sponsored by the Men's Council. The Men's Council consists of 9 men who serve three-year staggered terms and are elected by members of the fellowship. The council provides leadership and support for the development and stability of our programs which are designed to enhance friendships, spiritual growth and positive community engagement. This mission aligns with UUAA Core Values of Spiritual Life, Social Justice and Environmental Action, Community, Stewardship, and Culture.

The membership of the Men's Council in 2018 included: Kurt Skifstad, Craig VanKempen, Sean Reed, Mike Muha, Tom Reischl, Dave Borneman, Russ Blaesing, Gregg Peterson, and James McCargar. In 2019, Jim Schaefer and Pat Herbst joined the council as Dave Borneman and Russ Blaesing finished their terms.

The Year's Men's Fellowship highlights include:

Annual and one-time events

1. Coming of Age Initiation Weekend – The Men's Fellowship hosted a community dinner for the initiates and their mentors May 5, 2018. Several men participated in the boys' initiation events.
2. "On ageing" was a special discussion group held on June 2nd at UUAA. The discussion was lead by a large community-based men's group known as the "Wise Guys" who led a conversation about ageing gracefully.
3. Men's Retreat – Our annual retreat was held at Judson-Collins Center on Wamplers Lake between September 28-30, 2018. Our theme was "A Field Guide to being a UU Man in 2018". 52 men attended including 13 first-time attendees.
4. "The Better Men Dialogue" was a special open community event held on January 26th, 2019, co-sponsored by the Men's Council and other non-UU community groups. Over 60 men and women participated in the event, including a large percentage of non-UU community members. It featured group drumming, a panel discussion and a wide-ranging group discussion about what it means to be a man, what's needed from men, and how we can help grow and nurture better men in our community.
5. Men's Dinner - The annual dinner will be held on April 27th, 2019 featuring our speaker and congregant, John Preston who will give a talk called: "Becoming the Man Your Dog Thinks You Are". Over 50 men have registered for the event. The 2018 Dinner was held on April 21st, 2018 and featured a catered meal and table discussions about the #MeToo movement.

On-going activities

6. Men's Circles – We now have eight active circles involving 80+ men including a new circle added in 2018 which has more than 10 active members.
7. Monthly Breakfasts – On the third Saturday each month at 8:30am, a mix of dozen men drop by to share stories and news of the day.
8. UU Men's Night Out – On the second Tuesday of every month, between 8 - 15 men gather for a social event at a local establishment.