



PRAIRIE FIRE

"As the prairie stretches out until it becomes one with the sky, let us reach out to touch and be one with the natural world and with one another." (Bond of Union)

January 21, 2005

Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. The two most recent issues may be seen at www.prairie.madison.uua.org

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Saturday, January 22

☞ 7:30 p.m. Playreaders at Bob and Barb Park's.

Sunday, January 23

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Death as Part of Life's Journey," presented by Linda Sheehy

12:00 noon. Prairie Board meeting

Sunday, January 23–Sunday, January 30

☞ Prairie helps host Interfaith Hospitality Network at Midvale Community Lutheran Church

Tuesday, January 25

5:30 a.m. Volunteers make breakfast, Men's Homeless Shelter, Grace Episcopal Church

2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meet in the 2nd floor exercise room, Oaks Building, Oakwood West

Wednesday, January 26

☞ 6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, January 30

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Pete: UU Themes in the Music of Pete Seeger," presented by Mike Briggs, Dan Proud, and Maggie Siegfried.

Wednesday, February 2

☞ 6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 6

Sunday, February 6

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Building a Rain Garden," presented by Roger Bannerman.

Thursday, February 10

☞ 6:00 p.m. Spanish Speakers potluck at Marcia and Dave Johnson's, 4467 Crescent Rd. Call 276-8397 for more information.

DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 23

"Death as Part of Life's Journey." For most of us, thoughts of death create feelings of fear and anxiety. We may attempt to segregate death from our lives as long as possible. But what if we were to use the certainty of death as an opportunity to heal our lives? This program will explore using forgiveness and gratitude to honor our lives and to deal with unfinished business and will also look at what "death" really is.

Sunday, January 30

Pete Seeger was called a Communist, a subversive, and too controversial a singer to be allowed to perform. He was found guilty of contempt of Congress by the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1961 (a ruling later reversed) and was blacklisted by television networks. Seeger also is arguably the most beloved folksinger in our country and the author or popularizer of many universally
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known songs about civil rights, women's rights, workers' rights, the environment, peace, economic justice, and the celebration of life. Explore UU principles by listening and singing along to Pete's music.

Sunday, February 6

Days are getting longer and it's time to think spring. Roger Bannerman, stormwater specialist with the Department of Natural Resources, will speak about exciting and earth-friendly ways to capture and clean stormwater, something we get a lot of here in Wisconsin. Whether or not you have planting space of your own, this service is an opportunity to learn about a very UU type of environmental project.

OUR SOCIETY

PART-TIME MINISTER SEARCH UPDATE

The Minister Search Committee is working with the Central Midwest District of the UUA to solicit applicants for our Consulting Minister Position. As the congregation approved, the position is for a one-quarter-time consulting minister for a term of one year.

Our brief statement of expectations for the position is as follows:

Prairie UU Society is seeking an experienced minister to serve part time who would (1) aid the congregation in understanding alternatives for providing pastoral care to members, (2) aid the congregation in clarifying members' commonalities and differences in values and aspirations with a view to healing and community building, (3) provide UU perspectives via sermons (about once a month) on topics that support the range of member interests and affirm connections and mutual support, (4) aid the congregation in understanding ways to attract and retain young couples and families, and (5) aid in providing ways to bring the congregation together to envision and plan a future and associated needed actions for Prairie.

We have compiled a congregational profile that we are sending to potential applicants. The profile is based on our congregational survey conducted in October 2004 and input from Prairie committees.

Following is the time sequence for our activities, indicating steps completed and steps remaining.

<u>Steps to Hiring Prairie's Minister</u>	<u>Status</u>
Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) creates duties for Minister	Completed Summer 2004
Board approves duties for Minister	Completed August 2004
MSC presents hiring process to congregation at Prairie Retreat	Completed September 2004
MSC conducts congregational survey	Sep.–Nov. 2004
Budget with funding for minister's salary approved by Congregation	October 2004
Pledge drive conducted to fund budget	November 2004
MSC compiles survey results	In Progress
MSC prepares Congregational Profile for prospective ministerial candidates, available at http://my.execpc.com/65/DC/prairieu/planning/ApplicationMaterials.pdf	Completed December 2004
MSC solicits applications of interested candidates from Central Midwest District (CMWD)	In Progress
MSC selects ministerial candidates provided by CMWD to interview	
MSC interviews candidates and selects one to present to congregation	
Ministerial candidate visits with the congregation in small groups during Candidating Week	
Congregation votes on the candidate	
Minister begins at Prairie	

Ken Skog, Chair, Long Range Planning Committee

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Prairie UU Society:

prairie.madison.uua.org

Prairie News Group:

groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/

Prairie Views Group:

groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/

Social Action:

socialaction.homestead.htm

Long Range Planning Committee (new):

www.execpc.com/~prairieu/planning (no space)

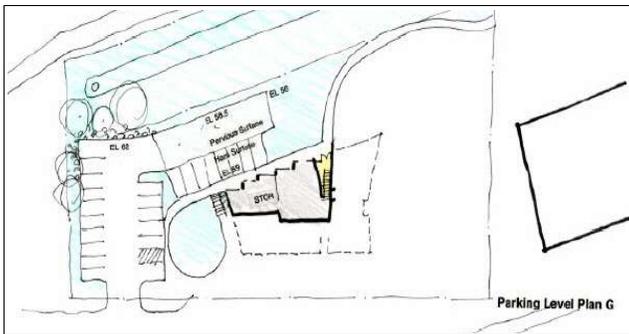
(To keep this last address from becoming a public site, type it directly into your browser. Omit the space before "planning".)

PRAIRIE MEETING FEBRUARY 20 WILL DISCUSS BUILDING CONCEPT DRAWINGS

Prairie members will have the opportunity to discuss the concept drawings on display outside the kitchen in a special congregational meeting after the Sunday service on February 20. Feedback will be solicited by the Long Range Planning Committee.

Please take some time to familiarize yourself with these concept drawings for a building adjacent to Eage School in Fitchburg.

The Long Range Planning Committee also invites members to submit information about alternate sites as soon as possible. See the January 7 *Prairie Fire* issue for more information.



Plan G for the Fitchburg Site

SPANISH SPEAKERS POTLUCK SET

Spanish Speakers are a group that has been meeting monthly for more than 15 years to share a meal and practice our spoken Spanish. No particular expertise is needed; we welcome people studying Spanish 101 as well as native speakers and former Peace Corps volunteers.

With the Spanish language becoming daily more prominent in the U.S.—and, yes, right here in Madison!—it's a good time to become bilingual. Bring a dish to share, if you can, but if not, come anyway.

For further information, or for transportation, call Rosemary at 238-4382.

Rosemary Dorney

MIDWEEK MEAL @ PRAIRIE INVITATION

Wednesday evening meals at Prairie, which we are calling Midweek Meal @ Prairie, began January 19, with about 20 members attending. The Midweek Meal will continue every Wednesday, starting at 6:30 p.m. Bring your own meal to eat.

Join your fellow Prairie UU members for a pleasant time and get to know how special we all are!

PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS

Mondays 8–10 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.–12 noon

SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR

Saturdays 8:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249–5933

GLBT EVENT AT PRAIRIE JANUARY 27

A community introduction to The Landmark Forum will be held at Prairie on Thursday, January 27, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Prairie members are invited to attend by the leaders, Jackie Ross, Michelle Walsh, and Phoenix Grace.

This event, geared towards the GLBT community, introduces a 3-day regional workshop coming to Madison on May 13 for developing unity, leadership, inspiration, and loving compassion in the world on behalf of the GLBT community.

For more information, call Michelle (843-7529) or Phoenix (438-4637).

2005 SERVICE AUCTION IS COMING!

The planning has started for the 2005 Prairie Service Auction. Please be sure you have collected/given your service for the 2004 auction so we can start with a clean slate!!! Also start thinking about a service you need or would like to provide this year. Send ideas for needed service to me and I will try to find a match for the auction.

Kathy Converse, Finance Chair

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Friday, January 21, is Eid al-Adha, or the Feast of Sacrifice, the most important feast of the Muslim calendar. This holiday also concludes the Pilgrimage to Mecca. The feast reenacts the sacrifice of a ram by Abraham after God spared his son Isaac's life (in Islam, Ibrahim and Ishmael). Today, Muslims eat about a third of the meal and donate the rest to the poor.  
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IHN BEGINS THE NEW YEAR

One last reminder about volunteering for the Interfaith Hospitality Network January 23–30. If you have been thinking about helping out, here are some slots which have not yet been filled.

Food Preparation (preparing PART of a dinner)
Sunday–Monday, January 23–24
Wednesday–Saturday, January 25–28

Dinner Hosting (sharing a meal with guests, cleaning up; a good activity for families)
Sunday–Monday, January 23–24
Thursday–Saturday, January 27–29

Overnight Hosting (staying from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m.)
Sunday–Friday, January 23–28

Contact me if you'd like to volunteer: 273-4806 or pachwack (at) sbcglobal.net

Paula Pachciarz

(To protect our e-mail addresses from unscrupulous etherpeople, we are substituting " at " for "@". Type addresses without spaces, and use the at sign.—Ed.)

THANKS FROM THE ALLIED FOOD PANTRY

Prairie has received a nice thank you note from Connie Weisse, co-manager of the Allied Food Pantry:

Please let everyone at Prairie UU know that we appreciate your consistent donations to the Allied Food Pantry. The need continues to rise, but we are able to keep up with the demand because of generous donations like yours. We served over 150 families last month.

This note was a good reminder that hunger and need does not stop with the end of the holiday season. When you are at the store, think of picking up extra for the Food Pantry. Paula Pachciarz or I periodically drop off the donations. The food pantry is always looking for monetary donations also. It increases their flexibility to meet the demand. A special thanks to Kathy Converse for encouraging guests to bring donations to her birthday celebration.

Barbara Park

PRAIRIE BOOK CLUB'S NEXT SELECTIONS

The Prairie Book Club meets at Prairie after Sunday services, starting about 11:45 a.m. Here is the lineup of books for the next few months:

February 13—KRAKATOA, *The Day the World Exploded: August 27, 1883*, by Simon Winchester (385 pages)

Being painfully aware of the power of a tsunami, our first selection is about the disaster caused by the explosion of the volcano-island Krakatoa (near Java) that also caused a tsunami. More details and reading guide at <http://www.bookbrowse.com/index.cfm?page=title&titleID=1213&view=guide>

March 13—THE MURDER ROOM by P.D. James
Follow the adventures of Commander Adam Dalgliesh, the detective working on cases of murder done in an art museum in London that seem to parallel crimes featured in a museum gallery called The Murder Room. See reviews at http://www.reviewsofbooks.com/murder_room/

April 10—THE MASTER BUTCHER'S SINGING CLUB by Louise Erdrich (416 pages)
This novel follows European immigrants to North Dakota. "Erdrich's multi-generational, character-rich story chronicles a group of ordinary small-town denizens as they encounter the extraordinary events—both in their insular world and in the larger world, too—that come to define their lives." Summary and reading guide are available at http://www.readinggroupguides.com/guides3/master_butchers_singing_club1.asp

May 15—MAYBE BABY by local author Tenaya Darlington, who writes for Madison's *Isthmus*
This entertaining novel is about raising a "gender-neutral" baby. Book review at <http://www.bestsellerworld.com/reviews-darlington-maybebaby.shtml>

June 12—RED GOLD by Allan Furst, a spy novel noir about the French resistance, 1933–1945
Quotes from some reviewers: "Furst really captures the strange pace of life for a resistor in an occupied country, and his historical realism is superb....Furst is a master of atmosphere and characterization."

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

COMING UP: WILD WINTERING

We are all excited in RE that Wild Wintering is quickly approaching. We could use a few more adults to lead activities, chaperone, or stay overnight. If you would like to join us for some fun activities and to be with a wonderful group of kids, teens, and somewhat wild adults, please let me know. It just might cure your cabin fever! Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 5!

February 2005

5-6: Wild Wintering overnight

6: YoUUth Circle; RE class; Secret Friends sign-up

13: Valentine's Day Intergenerational (led by RE)

20: Service Sunday and Secret Friends (1)

27: RE class, Secret Friends (2), and HS with FUS

In Peace,

Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky, DRE

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

UPDATE ON THE UU-UNO

The UUA is a non-governmental organization (NGO) and is therefore accredited, along with about 1300 other NGOs, in the UN Department of Public Information and in the Economic and Social Council, to participate in UN summits, conferences, briefings, etc., and to submit position papers to UN committees. This work is done through the UU-United Nations Office (UU-UNO).

In March 2004, the UU-UNO sent five delegates to the Commission on the Status of Women. Later in the spring of 2004, the UU-UNO submitted a position paper on Human Rights to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. In the fall of 2004, it joined eleven other NGOs in sponsoring a seminar at Seton Hall Law School in New Jersey entitled, "What Future for the United Nations."

Are you an individual member of the UU-UNO? Memberships are \$25 per year, and during this time when the UN is being so beleaguered by our government and its citizenry, new membership support is much needed.

Pat Watkins
233-5795

REGIONAL UU LEADERSHIP TRAINING OFFERED IN FEBRUARY

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva (Ill.) (UUSG) is stepping out into the greater community February 10–12 with a regional Train the Trainer "Building Bridges" workshop for the Illinois Chapter of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI).

This training is open to all, but there is limited enrollment. The training consists of materials and exercises designed to develop skills in reducing discriminatory conflicts—racial, gender, class, and all its forms. This training will "rekindle faith in people's ability to resolve conflicts justly, and tackle prejudice and conflict joyfully."

Who would benefit from this training? Individuals who work in a leadership capacity and have influence over their group or company policy in the corporate, government, education, or religious worlds, and those who actively seek a positive way to combat the destructive problem of prejudice in our greater community.

At the end of the training, participants will be members of the local chapter that regularly offers the "Valuing Diversity" one-day workshops throughout the Chicago area. Within the last year, the Village of Skokie chose this model of training their city employees over the Anti-Defamation League's diversity trainings, based on successful workshop outcomes typical for an NCBI event.

Cost is \$375 for the three-day training and includes all materials and lunches. There are also a limited number of openings for the one-day Valuing Diversity Workshop on Thursday, February 10, for \$80. These costs are about one-fifth the standard train-the-trainer fee for other organizations. Limited scholarships are available through NCBI, as is a fund from UUSG.

For more information on this group, visit their website at www.ncbiillinois.org. To register, download a form at: www.uusg.org or http://www.ncbiillinois.org/tt_form/tt_form.html

Monica Jenkins
V.P. Program Council/UUSG
630.262.8113 (home)
jenkins23@sbcglobal.net

REEB OFFERS FRIDAY NIGHT PROGRAM ON KENYAN HOSPICE

In January 2004, HospiceCare, Inc., in Madison formed a partnership with the Meru Hospice in Kenya, Africa. A committee of HospiceCare staff and volunteers has been formed to support and promote this partnership. The committee's primary objectives are fundraising and community education.

Meet Mia Morrisette, a HospiceCare social worker and team leader who traveled to Kenya last June and has returned to tell us of her experience and share with us a powerful slide show presentation, Friday, January 28, 7:00 p.m., at James Reeb UUC, 2146 E. Johnson St., Madison.

Jan Gordon, James Reeb UUC

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY EXHIBIT INFO



This year the General Assembly will be held in Fort Worth, Texas, the city “Where the West Begins.”

Approximately 60,000 square feet will be available for GA exhibitors.

Congregations can reserve space singly or cooperatively, and are encouraged to “incorporate the talents of congregation members into their exhibit space.” Members can also sell items through UNI-UNIQUES on a consignment basis (for more information on UNI-UNIQUES, contact Nancy Warren-Oliver at (585) 248-5688, email nancy@uniuniques.com, or visit www.uniuniques.com. Requests forms for exhibitor space or ad space in the GA program must be delivered to the GA office by February 2, 2005. Call (617) 948-4209 or gaoffice@uua.org for details.

UUSC GUEST AT YOUR TABLE BOXES

Please return your boxes or make out a check to “UUSC” and give your donations to Dan Proud in the next couple of weeks.



MEMBERSHIP

Please welcome our new members!

Andy Garst and Karen Deaton
(and daughter Jessie)
22 Starr Ct., Madison, WI 53711
278-8480
agarst (at) tds.net
north2wi (at) netscape.net

(To protect our e-mail addresses from unscrupulous etherpeople, we are substituting “ at “ for “@”. Type addresses without spaces, and use the at sign.—Ed.)

OTHER NEWS

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK NEWS

Did you know that part of case management is helping people navigate complicated systems? IHN case managers help families work effectively with schools, entitlement programs such as W2 and Social Security, and other community and government agencies.

"Dominique" is a young single mom working with a case manager through the Housing Stabilization Program. She is paying market rent for her apartment because she was denied by all of the subsidized housing in Madison for bad credit. Her case manager helped her get a current copy of her credit report, and examine it carefully. They discovered that several of the charges were incorrect—debts that had been paid, or that actually belonged to somebody else. The case manager and Dominique worked together to correct these errors and she has now been accepted for subsidized housing, which will reduce her rent to 30% of her income.



WORDS FOR TODAY

Civilization and violence are antithetical concepts. Nonviolence is not sterile passivity, but a powerful moral force which makes for social transformation. Sooner or later, all the peoples of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace, and thereby transform this pending cosmic elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood.

I still believe that one day mankind will bow before the altars of God and be crowned triumphant over war and bloodshed and nonviolent redemptive goodwill proclaimed the rule of the land. And the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, and none shall be afraid.

I still believe that we shall overcome.

—*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

REMINDER TO SUPPORT THE R.E. PROGRAM

In early December, the Religious Education Committee mailed forms to members soliciting ideas and support for the RE program. It takes only a minute or two to complete the form, and your participation will make a tremendous difference.

Please take a moment to consider how you can contribute to this program and help our community become more involved with each other. Complete the form and return it to one of the committee members: Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky, Rachel Long, Paula Pachciarz, Robin Carre, or Susan Herr-Hoyman.

BUS TOUR OF CIVIL RIGHTS SITES

Have you ever wanted to see some of the sites of the civil rights movement: the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma; 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham; Money, Mississippi, where Emmett Till was lynched? These and many more are included in a tour being offered this spring by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart, Indiana.

The April 9-17 tour has been planned and will be led by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson, minister of the Elkhart Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, who was involved in the early stages of the 1965 Selma voting rights campaign and was the Unitarian Universalist minister in Mississippi, 1969-1984. The Rev. Ed Harris, a native of Birmingham, will also be on the tour as a resource.

The tour, by luxury motor coach, will include all admission charges, overnight accommodations, and most meals. Videos on the bus and visits with 1960s activists will supplement the site visits. The tour will begin and end in Birmingham, Alabama.

For full details on cost and schedule, you can go to the Elkhart Fellowship's Web site at www.uufe.org. You can also request a printed version by writing UUFE, P.O. Box 584, Elkhart, IN 46515, or by e-mailing judygibson@juno.com. Registration is on a first-come basis with only 30 seats available.

A participant in the 2004 Tour said, “the stories from the folks who were ‘in the trenches’ make the Movement come alive.” Another participant described it as “seeing the Movement through the real experiences of real people.”

Whenever I despair, I remember that the way of truth and love has always won. There may be tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they may seem invincible, but in the end, they always fail. Think of it: always.—M. K. Gandhi