



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)

March 11, 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, March 12

*7:00 p.m. Oldtime Family Dance, at Prairie

Sunday, March 13

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Let Justice Flow," presented by Dan Proud

*11:45 a.m. Secret Friends Party

*11:45 a.m. Book Club discussion of *The Murder Room*

Wednesday, March 16

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

7:00 p.m. Board Meeting at Prairie

*7:00 p.m. Midlife orphans discussion at Prairie

Saturday, March 19

*7:00 p.m. Playreaders reading of "Black Comedy" at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker

Sunday, March 20

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. Earth Day celebration with Galen Smith

*11:45 a.m. Humanist group lunch and discussion

Tuesday, March 22

*2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meeting at Oakwood Village West

Wednesday, March 23

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

*7:00 p.m. Midlife orphans discussion at Prairie

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: MARCH 20

Thursday, March 24

6:00 p.m. Spanish Speakers potluck and meeting at Prairie

Sunday March 27

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

*10:00 a.m. "Celebrating Easter in Poetry and Prose"

Sunday, April 10

*12:00 noon. Potluck and Parish Meeting

Friday-Sunday, April 15-17

*UUA Central Midwest District Assembly, Arlington Heights, Illinois

(* = *Details follow in this issue.*)

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, March 13

We each have the power to help stop injustice in the world. On Justice Sunday we will celebrate the vital role that we as UUs can play on local and area social justice initiatives, and on the national and international work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), with a focus on defending the human right to water. Dan Proud, local UUSC rep, leads the program.

Kids and adults both are encouraged to wear international clothes to church. Children will have a chance to model their costumes. Many families have traveled abroad, so this would be (*continued*)

a fun way to raise our awareness of the greater web of human existence.

Following the program, the secret friends will reveal their identities in the Secret Friends party.

Sunday, March 20

The intergenerational program celebrating Earth Day will be led by Galen Smith and members of the Religious Education Committee. The kids will put on a skit featuring Ostara, goddess of Spring. Then, the younger set will leave for a treasure hunt outside as Galen explains how Earth Day started and describes spring traditions from different cultures. The skit alone is sufficient reason to attend this Sunday. We have such talent in our children and R.E. staff!

Sunday, March 27

Our Easter Sunday program is entitled, "Celebrating Easter in Poetry and Prose." We welcome Prairie adults to come share poetry and prose about the Easter season that have particular meaning to each reader. Keeping our UU Principles in mind, we will create a potpourri of thought-provoking, whimsical, spiritual, secular, or amusing literary gems reflecting the rich diversity of our Prairie family. Prairie writers are welcome to bring their own creations. Rose Smith will present a children's story and facilitate the adult readings, interspersed by congregational singing and special music.

To add a visual treat, bring your favorite Easter symbols. We anticipate a colorful display of fascinating items that never fail to emerge from Prairie members' attics, basements, closets and shelves.

People interested in going out to lunch afterward, please check with local restaurants to see what options are available.

March 11 is Farvardegan, a major Zoroastrian festival celebrating guardian angels coming to earth before the start of the new year. These guardian angels were created to protect all living beings. Zoroastrianism was the religion of Persia (Iran) before the advent of Islam in the seventh century AD. Zoroastrians believed in two primal forces, good and evil. Everything that supported and enriched life was good and all that threatened life and disturbed order was bad.

OUR SOCIETY

HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

The Spring Parish Meeting of the Prairie UU Society will be held Sunday, April 10 after the service and will include a potluck lunch. Highlights will include elections and reports of the committees including the ad hoc ministerial and building committees. Please make every effort to attend this very important business meeting.



PRAIRIE FAMILY DANCE MARCH 12

Prairie will host an Oldtime Family Dance on **Saturday, March 12**, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Music will be provided by Dark of the Moon Contra Band (Mary Mullen's group); the caller is Reid Miller.

This evening of dance will be easy, recreational fun for all ages (6 and up). The dances will feature simple reels and circles. Figures will be demonstrated. Partners are not required to attend.

Come to Prairie for an evening of good music and easy dancing. Invite your friends! Donation is \$3; under 12 is free. For information, call Reid (576-7529) or Marcia (276-8397). Let's go dancing!

Reid Miller

PRAIRIE BOOK CLUB MEETS MARCH 13

The Prairie Book Club meets at Prairie on March 13, starting about 11:45 a.m. We will discuss *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/

Mary Mullen

PRAIRIE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS

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

SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR

Saturdays 8:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249-5933

MIDLIFE ORPHAN DISCUSSIONS START UP AT PRAIRIE MARCH 16 AND 23

Wednesdays, March 16 and 23, 7-9 p.m., Prairie hosts discussions about being a midlife orphan. Midlife orphans are adults whose parents have died and who often suddenly find themselves the elders of their families. Hosts for the meetings will be Erin Bosch and Reid Miller. Talks will include sharing of participants' experiences, sharing of resources on the topic, and discussion of topics common to midlife orphans, such as grieving the loss of both parents, inheritance and managing family finances, adjusting to changing family roles, and finding new sources of strength.

Pre-registration is required. Anyone is welcome. To pre-register, e-mail prairieu@execpc.com or call 271-8218. A donation of \$5 per meeting is welcome.

PLAYREADERS ON MARCH 19

If you're in the mood for a little comic relief to the season and the times, join us for the March playreading event. *Black Comedy* is a fast-paced ensemble comedy, written in the mid-sixties, which featured Sir Laurence Olivier in the London production. We encourage newcomers to join us for a fun evening. No previous experience is necessary. The reading begins at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 19, at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker. For more information, or to let us know if you plan to come, call Paula at 273-4806.

HUMANIST GROUP TO MEET MARCH 20 FOR LUNCH AND DISCUSSION

The humanist discussion group will meet on Sunday, March 20, at Prairie for a light lunch and a discussion of **Dominionism in American Politics** led by Doleta Chapru. Participants are encouraged to visit Theocracy Watch at <http://theocracywatch.org/> for background information on this topic.

Barbara Park will have a pot of vegetarian chili ready to serve. Others are asked to bring platters of sandwiches or other finger food that we can pass around the tables. We will set up a cluster of tables we can all sit around about 11:45 a.m. and plan to be ready to start lunch at noon. Once we are all seated we can start the discussion while we eat. We are aiming to finish by 1:30 p.m.

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEETS ON MARCH 22

Prairie Elders meets Tuesday, March 22, at 2 p.m. in the Second Floor Exercise Room of the Oaks Building at Oakwood Village West. We will relate favorite travel stories, show interesting items from those travels, and share important happenings in our lives. The travel topic grew out of an impromptu discussion held as some of us huddled in another building during a surprise fire drill which ended our formal meeting. Prairie Elders is never dull. For further details, call Doleta Chapru, 238-4970; Donna Murdoch, 260-8551; or Rosemary Dorney, 238-4382.

PRAIRIE NEEDS YOU!

The Spring Parish Meeting is coming soon, Sunday, **April 10**, and with it comes opportunities to bring your ideas and energy to keep Prairie vital and to expand our horizons.

The Prairie Board has the following positions open:

- **Social Action Co-Chair**

Keeps Prairie members aware of social action activities, both UU and in the larger human community. Sarah Lord will be one co-chair and Bob Park will continue to keep the Web page bulletin current.

- **Housing and Property**

Do you notice things that need doing to keep Prairie's home functioning smoothly and want to facilitate that process? Are you handy around your own house? If so, please consider chairing the H&P committee. Note: this committee has the largest line item in the budget!

- **Finance**

Prairie runs on money. The yearly pledge drive and auction are this committee's primary activities, to provide sufficient funds to pay for salaries, upkeep, and mortgage—essential to carry out Prairie's mission.

- **Denominational Affairs**

Meet and connect with other UUs in the Central Midwest District and continental UUA.

Lay ministries are needed to provide a 4- to 6-week series during the 2005-2006 program year. The Program Committee then schedules these presentations in coordination with other single

Sunday service programs and monthly presentations that we are anticipating will be provided by a part-time minister. Do you have an idea for a series to inspire the congregation to thought and action?

Act Fast!! Offer Good for a Limited Time Only!!

- March 20 is the deadline for Board openings
- April 6 is the deadline for Lay Ministry proposals

Please contact one of the following members of the Committee on Committees to offer your talent:

Mary Mullen	KK Anderson
Rick Ruecking	Norma Briggs
Susan Hagstrom	

KK Anderson

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

SECRET FRIENDS PARTY AND INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE COMING

On **Sunday, March 13**, we will be having our **Secret Friends party** at Prairie after the service. Eighteen pairs of adults and youth participated this year and at the party we will finally unveil the identity of their Secret Friends. After a friend-guessing game, we will proceed to some fun games to help the pairs get to know each other better. This is a great way for youth and adults who may not usually have much of an opportunity to interact to get to know each other!

For the **March 20 Intergenerational Service**, kids and teens are strongly encouraged to dress as their favorite animal, plant, insect, rock or anything else from nature they would like to represent. It doesn't have to be an elaborate costume! Just a pair of rabbit ears or a picture of a flower will work too. Hope to see you there!

In Peace,

Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky

PROGRAM

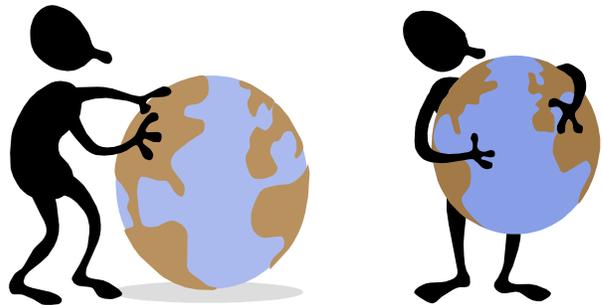
IDEAS SOUGHT

Ideas for programs on topics of spirituality are sought by the Program Committee. Contact Warren Hagstrom or Doleta Chapru (238-4970).

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WEAR YOUR INTERNATIONAL CLOTHES TO PRAIRIE ON MARCH 13

Do you have a sweater from Ecuador in your closet? A shirt from Ghana? A dress from Poland? A hat from Australia? If you have clothes from a trip abroad, or from a vendor on the Square, if you have ethnic clothes from other cultures, wear them to church on Sunday. We will be celebrating our human diversity and interconnectedness.



PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: prairie.madison.uua.org

News Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/

Views Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/

Social Action: socialaction.homestead.com

Humanist Group: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>

Long Range Planning Committee:

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

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

CENTRAL MIDWEST DISTRICT ASSEMBLY APRIL 15-17, 2005

This year's assembly, entitled "Creating Beloved Community: The Challenge and the Promise," features keynote presenter the Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt. Join district UUs in Arlington Heights, Illinois, for a weekend of celebrating through music, 30 workshops, 3 worship services and fellowship. Connect with other UU's and hear what's happening in our congregations.

The deadline for early registration for the 2005 CMwD District Assembly is Tuesday, March 15. If you wait until Wednesday, March 16 at 1:00 a.m. to register, you will have to pay \$185 rather than \$150 and you will not be guaranteed a hotel room.

Register today at www.regonline.com/20204. There you will be able to register with ease and also book your hotel room with the link provided.

QUESTIONS? Call or e-mail the District Office: 708-236-0831 or cmwd@cmwd-uua.org.

FRAMING OUR VALUES IS TOPIC OF BOOK DISCUSSION AND TRAINING

A discussion of the widely acclaimed book, *don't think of an elephant – know your values and frame the debate: the essential guide for progressives* by George Lakoff, will be held on **Monday, March 28**, in FUS West Living Room from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. If you want to talk about the ideas in this important new book about how progressives and liberals can better frame our values, this discussion is for you. Alan Knox will facilitate the discussion. Please let Joy Knox (e-mail Lknox@chorus.net or call 831-0021) know if you plan on coming. If possible, please read the book first. It is a short paperback and reads very quickly. A 25-minute summary video will be shown first. There is no charge for this event; refreshments will be served.

On **Wednesday, March 23**, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., a "training" on how to use the ideas in the book will be held at the Social Justice Center at 1202 Williamson St. (across the street from the Willy St. Coop). A staff member of WI Citizen Action from Milwaukee will help us practice using a values approach to talking about what we wish our government to be. This will also be offered free of

charge. For more details, information, and registration, please email Sharon Barbour (Reeb UU church) at sharbarb@yahoo.com

INVITATION TO ALASKA UU PROGRAM

Five Alaska UU fellowships invite other UUs from "outside" for our UU eco-spiritual/intercultural programs in July 2005. Participants stay in UU homes in Anchorage, Seward, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Sitka and enjoy discussions and dinners with Alaska UUs.

Visit the Web site, www.wuurld.org, e-mail dick@wuurld.org, or phone toll-free 1-888-998-8753 for a brochure. Reservations are due April 1.

FUS LIBRARY AVAILABLE TO AREA UU'S

The FUS Library Committee would like to more formally share its resources with all area Unitarian Universalists.



The library hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and during weekend church services (4:30 p.m. on Saturday and 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. on Sunday). The checkout procedure consists of a 4-week self checkout (written procedures are posted in the library).

Thank you, in the spirit of cooperation,

Ann Smiley, FUS Library Committee chairperson

UU B&B DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) can help you fulfill your dream. For 25 years, we've provided a network of hosts in North America (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and who are happy to open their home to like-minded people.

The directory is published every year in April. For a copy of the 2005 directory, please send a check for \$18 to UU're Home, 43 Vermont Court, Asheville, NC 28806. *UU're Home* has just launched a new web site at www.UUreHome.com, which includes about half of the listings. Entries are updated whenever changes are made or new hosts are added.

OTHER NEWS

BUS TOUR OF CIVIL RIGHTS SITES IN APRIL

A tour of civil rights movement historical sites is 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 details, go to www.uufe.org, or 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.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE (UUSC) NEWS BULLETIN

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC): advancing human rights and social justice in the United States and throughout the world.

Burmese tsunami survivors seek to recover from destruction, harassment

In the chaos after the disaster, human rights abuses are being perpetrated against Burmese migrants in Thailand. As one UUSC partner based in Thailand writes, "Life in Thailand for Burmese migrant workers was dangerous and difficult before the tsunami and it has now been made much worse for those in the tsunami-affected areas." Read this and other firsthand accounts of how tsunami survivors are faring since the disaster. Visit: www.uusc.org/tsunami/stories_intro.html

As of the end of February, the generosity of our members and supporters is estimated to have raised more than \$1.5 million dollars for the UUSC-UUA Tsunami Relief Fund. Read stories of those who

survived the disaster, how UUs and UU congregations are responding and how your donation is being used.

Visit: www.uusc.org/tsunami

Action alert: Urge senators to oppose Negroponte as intelligence chief

President Bush has nominated John D. Negroponte to the new post of national intelligence chief. As intelligence chief, he will wield enormous power, and will be President Bush's closest advisor on intelligence issues.

Mr. Negroponte was notorious throughout the 1980s for his support for the Honduran death squads when he served as ambassador in that country. If he is confirmed for this position, the use of torture and terror by our intelligence services will be given free rein.

Contact your senators now to strongly oppose the nomination of John Negroponte. For an action alert, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/news/alert021805.html>.

Action alert: UN, U.S. must act to end genocide in Darfur

A United Nations report released in February concluded that the government of Sudan and the Janjaweed are responsible for grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. With mass atrocities continuing to take place, concrete measures by the UN Security Council are needed immediately.

The United States must use its power as a permanent member of the Security Council to end the genocide taking place in that region of Sudan. For an action alert, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/news/alert020905.html>.

UN peacekeepers accused of crimes in Congo

Since the onset of war in 1998, women and girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo have endured extreme sexual violence perpetrated against them by government soldiers and rival militias. In an even more alarming development, UN peacekeeping troops in the region have been accused of sexually exploiting young girls. With the current state of lawlessness in the eastern Congo, grave crimes such as rape often go unpunished. For more, visit: www.uusc.org/news/alert022805.html

UUSC 2005 Holiday Card Design Contest

Your design could be the illustration for one of UUSC's holiday cards this year! Artists of all ages and skill levels are encouraged to submit their original designs to UUSC's 2005 Holiday Card Design Contest. All entries must be received by UUSC on or before May 6, 2005. For more, visit: www.uusc.org/holidaycards.

Nominations invited for annual UUSC social justice awards

UUSC is now accepting nominations for the Social Action Leadership Award, the Mary-Ella Holst Youth Activist Award and the Vision of Justice Sermon Award for the year 2005.

SALA honors creative, inspiring and effective leadership by an individual or group working for justice in cooperation with UUSC. The Mary-Ella Holst Youth Activist Award recognizes the achievement of young people who distinguish themselves through activism and leadership.

The Vision of Justice Sermon Award recognizes a sermon for its clear expression of Unitarian Universalist principles specifically as they are put into practice through current UUSC programs.

For more information about these awards and how to nominate yourself or another candidate, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article012705.html>.

ANNOUNCING A COMPETITION TO DESIGN A HOME WEB PAGE FOR PRAIRIE UU SOCIETY

**Competition Conducted by
the Prairie Web Committee
March 2005**

This is a request for people to submit designs for: (1) a home page and (2) at least one interior page for the Prairie UU Society Web site.

If you would like to be included in the competition, please send an email to bob@madisonwi.us (starting the subject line with "Web design") by **Sunday, March 27, 2005**.

We would like **final designs submitted by Sunday, April 10** to the email address above as: (1) a set of files; or (2) a Web link to the pages you designed. You may submit as many alternate designs as you like.

Please see our information Web site at <http://madisonwi.us/prairie/> for the home page example and photographs and graphics that may be used in preparing the designs.

The intent of the design is to be attractive and informative for prospective newcomers to Prairie, particularly families with school age children.

The home page design should contain:

1. A banner with photos at the top similar to the home page example – alternate photos may be selected.
2. A navigation bar (under the banner of photos) using the link words on the example page.
3. A side bar with the headings and subheadings provided on the example page.

4. The home page body (under the banner and navigation bar and to the right to the right of the side bar) should contain near the top the heading "Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society".

5. Near the top provide one image (graphic, photo, etc.) that is emblematic of Prairie, e.g., Prairie smoke flower, photo of church, chalice.

6. Other images may be used elsewhere on the page.

7. Our preference is for a design that minimizes (or does not require) scrolling of the home page.

8. In the body we must have the text that appears in the body of the example page (links will be added).

9. Avoid backgrounds that distract from reading the text.

We also request that you design an interior page.

For the interior page please include items 1 and 2 above from the home page. For item 1, photos may differ from those in the banner on the home page. A link to the home page should be provided in or near the navigation bar.

Criteria for judging the designs include:

- Time to download should be relatively quick over a dialup line.
- The designs should work on Windows, Mac and Linux platforms.
- The designs should be attractive to newcomers and families with school age children.

The name of the winning designer will be indicated at the bottom of the new home page when it is posted on Prairie's Web site.

Prairie Web Site Committee