



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."

September 21, 2007



Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. View past issues at www.uuprairie.org.

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, September 23

- *9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
- *10:00 a.m. "Breaking Barriers Between Old and New" presented by Marion Nelson
- 11:45 a.m. Prairie Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 25

- *2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood West

Wednesday, September 26

- 6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie
- *6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers meet at the home of Prudence Barber

Sunday, September 30

- *9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
- *10:00 a.m. "G.A. Inspiration" presented by Mike and Norma Briggs and Barb Park
- *11:45 a.m. Congregational meeting and potluck

Monday, October 1

- 6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie
- 7:30 p.m. Membership and Hospitality Committee meets

Wednesday, October 3

- 6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie
- 7:30 p.m. Program Committee meets

Sunday, October 7

- *9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
- *10:00 a.m. "There Is Something in the Autumn..." presented by Mary Mullen and Anne Lundin

Wednesday, October 10

- 6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, October 14

- *9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
- *10:00 a.m. "Association Sunday: Growing Our Faith through Growing Our Numbers" presented by Rev. Ralph Tyksinski
- *11:30 a.m. Prairie Book Club potluck and discussion
- 12:00 p.m. Humanist Union program on Freedom from Religion Foundation

Saturday and Sunday, November 10-11

- Fall Frolic at Prairie

(* = Details follow in this issue.)

NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, September 23

Marion Nelson has been going to India for 35 years – first going to Auroville in southern India and now working with Tibetan refugees in Dharamsala, Darjeeling and Kalimpong. She visits the same people learning about their life styles and rituals. She works directly with artisans to bring back handicrafts to her center near Spring Green called Global View. From Indonesia – Bali come carved items or textiles, from the island of Lombok baskets or pottery, from Java puppets, and handmade textiles from all over. She will be showing slides of these artisans and will have a selection of handicrafts for sale.

Sunday, September 30

There's a wider world of Unitarian Universalism out there beyond Prairie, ideas and trends that are usually brought out at the Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA) annual General Assembly (G.A.). This summer our delegates to G.A. were Norma and Mike Briggs, who had never attended a General Assembly before. Barbara Park, a veteran G.A.-er, also traveled to Portland, Oregon for the event. Each of the three had the opportunity to choose from among hundreds of presentations and workshops as well as the business meetings of the UUA. Our Prairie folks probably also roamed the many booths in the exhibition hall. Come to the "G.A. Inspiration" service on Sunday, September 30, to find out what they learned and perhaps go away inspired yourself.

Sunday, October 7

"There is something in the autumn that is native to my blood..." begins Bliss Carman's rousing poem "A Vagabond Song." If either the beauty and crispness of fall or the sound of poetry moves you, come for a treat of seasonal poetry. Like the service of spring poetry, this fall program will feature a number of excellent Prairie readers. And...there's still a smidgen of time to let Anne Lundin (alundin(at)wisc.edu) or Mary Mullen (mmullen(at)chorus.net) know if you have a favorite poem and if you'd like to read it.

Sunday, October 14

Rev. Ralph will be presiding at the service on this Sunday. We join with thousands of Unitarian Universalists across the nation celebrating our shared commitment to strengthen the bonds of our common purpose and combine our resources to make Unitarian Universalism a stronger voice for liberal religious values in our country. We are stronger together. We can and must increase our spirit and influence. We honor the "inherent worth and dignity of every person."

Our values are needed to help heal a wounded world. So, we will be taking a special collection for the growth and vitality of our congregations. Funds raised will be used for a national marketing campaign and for grants to congregations for growth outreach projects. We are hoping that each Prairie member and friend will consider contributing \$50. If you can't attend, please send in a check; envelopes will be available at the meeting house. To donate online for Association Sunday, please visit <http://www.uua.org/giving>

OUR SOCIETY

FALL RETREAT THANKS!

The Prairie Family Retreat was a success, thanks to the many activity leaders, lots of good participation, the Bethel Horizons Environmental Center, and great weather. The weekend gave us a chance to share ideas, learn new crafts, play games, dance and sing, appreciate nature, and strengthen our bonds with each other across generations as a community.

Special thanks to the following people who led activities: Robin Proud, Carl Wacker, Al Nettleton, Erin Bosch, Paula Pachciarz, Bob Park, Karen Deaton, Doug McFarlane, Rebecca Malke-Eligenti, Karleen Tyksinski, Barbara Park, Doleta Chapru, Ruth Calden, Mary Franz, Rose Smith, Mary Mullen, Randy Converse, Rachel Long, Ralph Tyksinski, Kathy Converse, Judy Wacker, Ken Skog, Madeline Arnold, Phyllis Long, Reuben Arnold, Rick Ruecking, Andy Swartz, Anne Lundin, Mary Somers, Andy Somers, and Dan Proud.

Aileen Nettleton, Program Coordinator

PARISH MEETING INFORMATION

As you probably know by now, Prairie has a Parish Meeting scheduled on **Sunday, September 30**, 2007, at 11:45 a.m. We currently have two items of business. First, we are voting on two candidates to fill open Board positions. Nominated are Mary Somers for Finance Chair, and Reuben Arnold for Youth Board Member.

The other item on the agenda regards the need to finance \$50,000 that Prairie owes in promissory notes to two of its members by November 1, 2007. The Board felt that depending on how we finance this debt, it might make sense to pay back some or all of the other promissory notes at the same time. Most of you received a letter from Ralph Tyksinski and myself a few weeks ago describing the situation and options we were considering for responding to the immediate need as well as the other outstanding debt to members. Since our letter was written, we have received new information that significantly alters our approach.

Our total promissory note debt is about \$192,000. I have received verbal assurance (as well as the promise to put this in writing) from almost all of the note-holders (totaling \$133,000) that they will not request payment for at least 18 months. We have only \$9,000 in notes for which the promise to defer has not been made, plus the \$50,000 that is coming due. Therefore, we only need to raise \$50,000 now and \$9,000 within the next 6 months to be sure that we will not have a budget shortfall. The note-holders' willingness to defer has given us the time to consider our options for paying their notes during the strategic planning process, which will begin later this fall (see article in this *Prairie Fire*).

We also had an incredibly generous offer from two of our members on September 15 to provide a matching grant of \$29,500 to help Prairie finance both our immediate need and the portion of our notes for which there was no promise of deferral. This means that if Prairie can raise \$29,500 from other members and friends, these gifts will be matched by that amount in a gift from these two members, so that this \$59,000 in promissory notes can be paid in full. This offer was announced at the retreat, and one day later

we already have contributions from 4 individuals totaling \$5,500 toward the matching fund.

I believe that with the combination of the members who hold \$133,000 worth of promissory notes agreeing to defer requesting that money for at least 18 months, and the wonderful offer of a \$29,500 matching grant, we have been given the opportunity to make the decisions facing our congregation the right way—unhurried, methodically, with concern for each other and input from everyone.

Let's give ourselves time to follow the process needed to reach consensus. Can you help us reach this fund-raising goal before the Parish Meeting? I am encouraging our members and friends to contribute to this fund in any amount you can, and I think we can make it. If I'm right, we will not need a second item of business at our September 30 Parish Meeting. Thanks so much for your help!

In Peace,

Rachel Long, President

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR PRAIRIE

You may have been hearing, either at a Sunday Service or at a Retreat Workshop, about a strategic planning process for Prairie coming up later this fall. The Board hasn't finalized the schedule, but I wanted to give you at least an outline of what to expect.

I've had the opportunity to be involved in the development of several strategic plans. It is an exciting and invigorating process that tends to help bring people together around a common vision. Doing formal strategic planning takes time, but what you get is well worth the investment—inspiration, energy, and the framework needed to take action to make an organization better. It's a process that should take place every 5 years or so to adjust to changing circumstances and keep the vision fresh.

Wayne Clark is the Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA) director of congregational fund-raising services. He leads weekend workshops for congregations, and the Board will be working either with him or with another consultant to assist us in developing our strategic

plan. I'd like to share with you part of an article from the UUA about how he views this process. The weekend workshop he leads is just the beginning.

Wayne Clark encourages every congregation to have a strategic plan. "Long-range planning implies that you start with what you have and build from there," he said. "Strategic planning is more of a clean slate approach and is less confining. I encourage congregations to get very clear about their vision; who they are as a congregation and where they are going."

During a weekend workshop, called Searching for the Future, Clark helps a congregation do the following:

- form a Strategic Planning Committee
- divide into focus groups where participants contribute their visions of the future
- develop a mission statement
- create a "starter list" of goals and objectives
- determine what resources are needed to accomplish the goals.

"Ideally," said Clark, "at least a fourth of the congregation should participate in the weekend workshop."

"Development of a strategic plan should take six months to a year," Clark said. "Resist the temptation to do one in, say, six weeks, just because it's a prerequisite to a capital campaign or other project. Unless the roof is literally falling in, congregations usually have more time with building programs than they think they do," he said. "If you forge ahead without a well thought out strategic plan people won't feel invested in it."

I am excited and looking forward to engaging in development of a strategic plan with you, my church community, for the Society we share.

In Peace,

Rachel Long, President

PRAIRIE ELDERS MEETS SEPTEMBER 25

TIME: Tuesday, September 25, 2:00-3:50 p.m., Nakoma Room, Heritage Oaks Building, Oakwood Village West.

TOPIC: The 2008 Presidential Candidates. Briefly relate some aspect of a candidate's voting record, legislative initiatives, career, statements or other information that isn't drilled into us daily by the sound-bite media. Share ways to become as informed as possible before Wisconsin's February 19 primary election. Listeners are most welcome.

We alternate a round-robin "show-and-tell" topic with discussion of a current issue. At our August meeting, fifteen of us happily reminisced about our favorite children's books including *Heidi*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Little Women*, a boys' rowdy adventure story, and Milne's tear-producing tale of Christopher Robin's pending departure. Having the Somers' grandchildren as guests was a treat.

Typically, we begin and end our gathering with casual conversation. The Nakoma Room will be open at 1:30 for those who wish to come early.

REFRESHMENTS: Please bring snacks to pass and a beverage cup. Beverages are furnished.

DIRECTIONS: On the 6100 block of Mineral Point Road west of Whitney Way, follow the main entrance road, veer left and up the hill. Heritage Oaks, the new building on the right, has a visitor parking entrance across from Oakwood's one-story Resale Shop. Keep right of two yellow posts; an arrow on the driveway points to the automatic entrance door. Park near the elevator shaft and take the elevator to the first floor. From the elevator go to the right and past the mail boxes. Turn left by the reception desk and go straight ahead to the Nakoma Room. A few handicapped stalls are farther up the hill in front of Heritage Oak's main entrance. Enter there and turn right immediately past the receptionist's desk.

ABOUT US: Prairie Elders provides good times and mutual support for Prairie UU Members and Friends over 65. We welcome UUs who live in the facility where we meet. For directions, rides, parking and further information please contact Donna Murdoch 238-3802. Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363.

REV. RALPH'S RUMINATIONS

Not another request for financial help? Yes; however, this request has been on the calendar for months. Prairie will be celebrating "Association Sunday" on **Sunday, October 14**, at our regular 10:00 a.m. service.



What is "Association Sunday"?

Association Sunday is a request by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) for all congregations to recognize and support, both in spirit and financially, the national work of the Association. On "Association Sunday"—thousands of UUs across the nation are simultaneously celebrating our shared commitment to Unitarian Universalism.

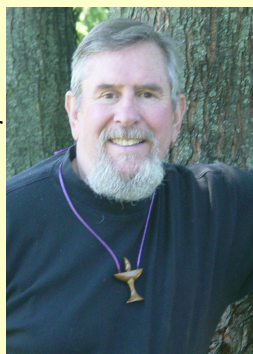
At this Sunday service a special collection will be taken to affirm our connection, and to bring our resources together for greater effect. This will be a shared opportunity for us to come together to grow our faith and to make a constructive impact in the world.

This is an opportunity for Prairie members and friends to support the work that individuals, congregations, and the UUA do to make Unitarian Universalism a haven for those who seek a liberal religious home.

What will Association Sunday funds support?

Funds raised this year will support national marketing and growth outreach projects: 50% to the national marketing campaign in *Time* magazine and their Web site; 25% to support the congregations and the ministers of color they call; 25% to congregations as grants for their growth outreach projects. These grants will be allocated according to how much the district raised, and they will be distributed by district boards (perhaps through their chalice lighters programs.)

Four subsequent Association Sundays (one per year) will be devoted to the following themes: growth in diversity, growth in witness, growth in spirit, and growth in leadership.



UUA President Bill Sinkford believes strongly that "now is the time" to share our faith message with a national marketing campaign. An awareness campaign will help seekers looking for a liberal religious home to find us. This is an opportunity for us to support the work that individuals, congregations, and the UUA are currently doing to share the "good news" of Unitarian Universalism in the larger communities we serve.

The vision for these Association Sundays is that through them, our sense of connection will be strengthened, and we will become more effective in growing our faith, and helping to heal a wounded world

How will the money be raised at this service?

Each Prairie member and myself, as your minister, is being asked to contribute in a special collection during the service on **October 14**. Congregations that raise an average of \$50 per member (less than 15 cents, a nickel and a dime, a day for a year!) will be listed as Empowering Congregations in our Annual Report on Giving and at a special display at General Assembly.

Your generosity and appreciation for Unitarian Universalism will be most gratefully received.

Glad to be journeying with you,

Ralph

PRAIRIE CHOIR!

I know you've all been waiting and the time has come. Once again, it's time to get up *early* on Sunday morning because *choir rehearsals* begin this **Sunday, September 23**, at 9 a.m. If you've been considering joining the Prairie Choir, this would be a great time to do it. No prior singing experience is necessary. If you were in the choir at any time in the past, now is a great time to return. See you Sunday morning.

Barb Park

SPANISH SPEAKERS ON SEPTEMBER 26

Spanish Speakers will meet for potluck and conversation on **Wednesday, September 26**, 6:30 p.m. at the home of Prudence Barber, 1104 Mound St, Apt. C, Madison. Contact Prudence at 251-0852 or Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382.

BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS FOR THE FALL

All are welcome to the Book Club discussions listed below. We meet at Prairie after Sunday services, except in September. Participants bring food to share. The meeting usually begins about 11:30 a.m. For more information or to be put on the e-mail list, contact Mary Mullen, mmullen (at) chorus.net, 608-298-0843.

Sunday, October 14

Man Gone Down by Michael Thomas, from \$5.95 at <http://www.amazon.com/Man-Gone-Down-Michael-Thomas/dp/0802170293>.

The narrator of this first novel is a man who was born poor, black, and brilliant in a Boston ghetto, married a white upperclass woman, became a father, and at 35 is struggling to reconcile his upbringing and his life as a black father. He has four days to come up with \$12,000 to rent an apartment, pay the tuition at his children's private school, and rescue his family from New England where they've spent the summer with their Brahmin grandmother. Flashbacks to his 1970's childhood as a "social experiment" and the son of an abusive mother and absent father blend into his more recent history. The *New York Times Book Review* notes that in his critique of American Society Thomas relies heavily on "Invisible Man" and also on T.S. Eliot. 432 pages (Suggested by Donna Murdoch)

Note: In each case, the Amazon URL give access to used books at reasonable prices and includes brief reviews of the books. The Web sites have brief reviews as well as links to buying the books.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

START OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION YEAR

The start to the RE year was a "big splash". Almost everyone from our RE program was able to attend our first annual pool party at the Walter R. Bauman Aquatic Center in Middleton. It was the perfect way to bring in the coming school year and honor our water ceremony. I would like to thank Karen Deaton for arranging the party and thank you to our two carpoolers: Carl Wacker and Doug McFarlane.

We have several new students this year. Lew Blank, a third grader, is new to our 1-3 class and



Dustin Branson, a seventh grader, is in our 7-12 class. Ellie Perrin is our newest preschooler and in our nursery our newest addition is my son, Indiana (Indy). Welcome!

Students in the 7-12 class have been busy studying Sikhism and had an opportunity to visit the Sahib Gurdwara in Middleton on September 9th. I would like to thank John Eligenti and Paula Pachciarz for bringing our students to the temple. Our students listened to devotional hymns, took part in the lunch, and had the opportunity to ask the Sikhs questions about their faith. **October 7** the class will begin learning about Islam.

Students in the 4-6 class are already learning about Islam while the 1-3 class have been learning about Judaism.

Next month, for our first Service Sunday project, students will rake leaves in the neighborhood. We are in need of volunteers to supervise our younger children. Please contact me at [youthcoordinator\(at\)uuprairie.org](mailto:youthcoordinator(at)uuprairie.org) if you can help.

Also coming up will be our parent/teacher coffee sessions. Parents will receive letters in the mail with the date and time of their children's session.

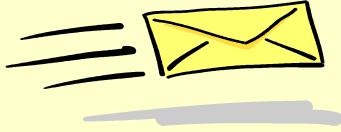
I would like to say once again how wonderful our RE students are. At the retreat I led a discussion on peer pressure. Everyone in the group said there was pressure to drink and to do drugs at their school but they have no interest, they hang out with people who don't do it and are simply happy without it. There is so much pressure to fit in and be liked and I was so happy to hear that our students are just fine with who they are—drug and alcohol free. Parents, as always you can be proud of your children!

Rebecca Malke (YREC)
[youthcoordinator \(at\) uuprairie.org](mailto:youthcoordinator(at)uuprairie.org)

UPCOMING RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

- 22 September—Yom Kippur (Jewish)
- 23 September—Autumn Equinox (Pagan)
- 27 September—Sukkot (Jewish)
- 4 October—St. Francis Day (Catholic Christian)
- 4 October—Shemini Atzeret (Jewish)
- 5 October—Simchat Torah (Jewish)
- 6 October—St. Thomas Day (Orthodox Christian)
- 9 October—Laylat el Qadr (Islam)

LETTERS



SINGERS NEEDED FOR JANUARY SERVICE

Hi! I am going to do a Prairie service in January on an interesting character I have been studying and would like to get some of the Prairie performers to assist me by singing some of his lyrics. Edgar "Yip" Harburg is probably best known as the lyricist for the film musical "The Wizard of Oz." However, his is an interesting character for many other reasons.

Some of the songs (you may have heard of a few) I'd like to have done (I also have recordings but that's not as fun):

"Over the Rainbow" (music by Harold Arlen)
[Wizard of Oz]

"Necessity" (hopefully done by the choir if at all possible; music by Burton Lane) [Finian's Rainbow]

"When the Idle Poor Become the Idle Rich" (music by Burton Lane) [Finian's Rainbow]

"The Eagle and Me" (music by Harold Arlen)
[Bloomer Girl]

"It was good enough for Grandma" (music by Harold Arlen) [Bloomer Girl]

"Down with Love" (music by Harold Arlen)

"I like the likes of You" (music by Vernon Duke)

Please e-mail me at [SusanTanyaAml\(at\)aol.com](mailto:SusanTanyaAml(at)aol.com) or call 608-238-4970 if you can help.

Susan Hagstrom

AMERICAN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE

Dear religious seekers, ministers, and religious educators,

I'd like to spread the word about the American Unitarian Conference.

<http://www.americanunitarian.org/>

It's not a denomination or a church. It's an organization serving as a network for people who have a Unitarian theology. They welcome Christians, theists and deists.

It was founded in the year 2000 by several Unitarian-Universalists who desired a network for traditional Unitarian believers. The organization is

independent of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

I invite you to explore the Web site.

Peace,

Ben Frank

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWS

DRUMMERS

There will be a regular Drum Circle for all UU's which will be held at James Reeb UU on the third Tuesday of every month starting September 18. There will be instruction starting at 7 p.m. This is a family friendly event and anyone who is interested in starting drumming or folks who are already experienced and all invited and encouraged to come.

JOURNEY TOWARD WHOLENESS NEWS

Anticipating President Bush's recent address, and aware of the need for Congress to act, President William Sinkford wrote a letter to Congress that our Washington Office for Advocacy staff sent to every fax machine on Capitol Hill urging Congress to stop the war. Sinkford wrote:

"I write to you today with a heavy heart. Our national crisis has become spiritual crisis, and as a religious leader, I am called to urge to you once again to consider the true cost of the war in Iraq.

"Not far from the collapsed 35W bridge in Minneapolis is a yard sign that reads, "Bridges Not Bombs." The entire transportation budget for the state of Minnesota is \$250 million. For the \$78 billion spent in Iraq since March, the federal government could allocate six times that amount to every state in the nation to improve their transportation infrastructure. While we fight a losing war abroad, Americans at home are at increasing risk.

"This September you will hear a report from the administration about the progress in Iraq, and you will be asked to appropriate more funding for this

continuing tragedy. As you deliberate, please be mindful of the chaos and resentment that grows every day in Iraq, as the death tolls continue to break records. Please consider all the urgent needs in our own country that go unmet. And, in memory of our fallen soldiers, please act now to end this hopeless war.

"I pray that you will find the courage and the will to end this tragedy.

"Not another dollar. Not another life."

Interfaith Fast Day for Peace and Justice

The UUA has joined an interfaith coalition of activists performing a group action on October 8th, 2007. We will be putting our bodies and wills on the line in the name of peace. Through this action, we will be creating a deeper and more meaningful way of investigating our own implicit participation in global violence.

In cities all over the United States and Canada, we will see activists of all faiths coming together to reflect on our universal struggle for peace and justice. In Washington DC, religious leaders will join together in prayer and fasting as guidance for our goals.

Religions all over the world, we have stories of prophetic women and men denying their bodies of earthly pleasures in the name of peace and justice. They will inspire our own work for good in this world. At sunset, we will break bread together and celebrate the beauty that is life. We will resolve to recognize the gift of this world and our shared humanity. We will call for a peaceful resolution to the conflicts in the Middle East.

For more information on actions near you, please visit www.interfaithfast.org and stay tuned for more resources on how to safely fast and prepare for the action.

Justice for the Jena 6

The UUA has joined a civil rights and interfaith movement for Justice for the Jena 6. The Jena 6 are six African-American high school students who were arrested and charged with murder and conspiracy following escalating racial tensions

that led to a fight with white students after nooses were hung on a tree on the high school campus in Jena, Louisiana. None of the white students were arrested. An all-white jury convicted Mychal Bell, the first of the defendants to be tried, of aggravated battery and conspiracy to commit aggravated battery. He faces up to 16 years in prison. The five other youths are awaiting similar trials on attempted second degree murder and conspiracy charges.

At our General Assembly last June delegates adopted a resolution for truth, repair, and reconciliation for racial justice. The Jena 6 case is an egregious instance of judicial and institutional racism that cries out for truth, repair, and reconciliation. The case has gained international attention and a broad coalition of civil rights and interfaith groups have rallied to their defense. President William Sinkford has sent a letter to Gov. Blanco in Louisiana asking her to intervene (check www.uua.org) and a letter of support to the Northern and Central Louisiana interfaith coalition.

UUs in Louisiana, Texas, and around the country have joined efforts to get out the truth and achieve justice for these six African-American high school students and are asking UUs around the country to lend their support. All Souls Church in Shreveport LA and the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge (UCBR) have passed congregational resolutions in support of the Jena 6 and for racial justice, reconciliation, and reform of the Louisiana judicial system.

Rev. Lyn Oglesby of All Souls and Rev. Steve Crump of UCBR are active in interfaith coalitions calling for support from the UUA and Rev. Oglesby has written a letter to all UU clergy. Members of All Souls are on the legal defense team and UCBR took up a special collection for the Jena 6 Defense Fund.

Through this effort we can work for racial reconciliation in Jena and nationally. To remain silent is to be complicit. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

What you can do:

- Sign the Petition from Color of Change and contribute to the Defense Fund

- Learn more about the case and hold congregational meetings and involve our youth
- See BBC Video "Race Hate in Louisiana"
- NPR Story "Beating Charges Split La. Town Along Racial Lines" by Wade Goodwyn
- Democracy Now "A Modern Day Lynching"
- Speak out in the media, write Letters to the Editor, and spread the word!

To create "beloved community," this vision for loving and just human relationships, we must show up, tell the truth, dedicate ourselves to dismantling racism in the justice system, and practice reconciliation. Please join us for Justice for the Jena 6.

Update: On Wed., Sept. 12, 2007, Judge J.P. Mauffrey, of the 28th Judicial District Court in Jena threw out the conspiracy conviction of Bell, granting a defense motion that the trial had been improperly held in a adult court. The district attorney reduced attempted murder charges against two of the other co-defendants. The battery conviction against Bell remains and he could still face a prison sentence of up to 15 years.

Also on Wed., thousands rallied at Howard University in support of the Jena 6.

And sadly, a noose was found outside the Black Cultural Center at the University of Maryland.

Sanctuary Movement Action and Updates

In the last six months, new interfaith sanctuary movement coalitions have emerged in 24 communities around the nation, inspired and motivated by Elvira Arellano's courage, faith and tenacity, as well as the vision and support of her congregation and pastor.

In August, after 15 days of prayer and fasting, Elvira felt called to leave the sanctuary of her Chicago, IL storefront church and confront California legislators Nancy Pelosi, speaker of the House, and Zoe Lofgren, chair of the subcommittee on immigration. While in Los Angeles, she met with and encouraged the families there in congregational sanctuary. On August 19, Elvira was captured on a city street

and deported.

Homeland Security hoped it could silence Elvira by a quick deportation. Instead its actions have galvanized those who recognize the brokenness and unjustness of the nation's current immigration system. Many who were demoralized by Congress' inaction this summer have renewed their hope and begun pressuring Congress anew.

This Fall there will be many opportunities to honor Elvira Arellano and publicly challenge our nation to address the crisis in immigration that splits apart hard-working families like Elvira and her son. Elvira has called for a National Day of Prayer on September 12. Local sanctuary coalitions are supporting the day of prayer, although public events will vary because of existing preparations for and celebrations of Rosh Hashanah and Ramadan. Some local sanctuary city coalitions will join the protest in Washington, DC. Some will participate in local events. Still others are planning special prayer services and educational forums. A sample written prayer, is available on the website, giving thanks for the leadership of Elvira Arellano and praying for national leadership to fix our broken immigration system.

Conversations are underway to plan additional actions and events in mid-October, tentatively scheduled for October 12. As more details are available, they will be posted on the website.

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

- Society Home Page: <http://uuprairie.org/>
- News Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/>
- Views: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/>
- Social Action: <http://socialaction.madisonwi.us>
- Humanist Union: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>

Watercoloring for all ages



INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK NEWS

Did you know? In addition to the care IHN families receive from volunteers and staff, they also care for one another. Parents in shelter often watch each others' children and share emotional support. One mom who has been in housing for a couple of years is now making "welcome baskets" of cleaning supplies for families just starting out in their apartments.

Last month, a woman staying in shelter became critically ill and was in the hospital for several days. All of the other families helped care for her daughter, and the whole shelter group left early each day to visit her on their way to the host congregation. In fact, she got permission from the nurses to get a larger room to accommodate her 14-person "family". She is feeling much better now and has moved into housing. Last weekend, she welcomed everyone in the "family" to her new apartment for a barbecue.

Rachel Krinsky, MSW, IHN Executive Director

Rose Smith at the Saturday evening talent show



TALK SCHEDULED ON UU-JEWISH RELATIONSHIP

Please join the Friends of the Meeting House for an address by Jon Pollock, Madison historian, on the long relationship between Madison's UU and Jewish congregations. The talk will be **Tuesday, October 9**, at 7 p.m. at the Gates of Heaven Synagogue (corner of East Gorham and North Butler Streets in James Madison Park).

Ann Smiley, Friends president

Photos by Bob Park