



Prairie Fire Bulletin

December 6, 2010

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The **Prairie Fire Bulletin** is a calendar- only newsletter that is published by Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society on the 6th of every month. The full featured **Prairie Fire** is published on the 21st of every month. View past issues at www.uuprairie.org

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Calendar

Sunday, December 12, 2010

9:30 Nifty Gifty!

10:00 Service - "In the Midst of Darkness," presented by Rev. Jane Esbensen

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Articles and more due for Prairie Fire Newsletter.

7:00 Program committee meets

Sunday, December 19, 2010

8:45 Choir Rehearsal.

10:00 Service – "A Very Prairie Holiday," presented by Karen Deaton.

11:30 Soup Sunday! Sponsored by the Humanist Union.

4:00 Graduation Party for Rachel Herr-Hoyman.

Monday, December 20, 2010

6:30 Spanish Speakers Holiday Potluck at the home of Prudence Barber, 1104 Mound St #C, 251-0852. Call Prudence for directions, or Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382 for more information.

Thursday, December 23, 2010

5:30 HumanLight Celebration – Humanist Union holiday party.

Friday, December 24, 2010

4:30 Service – "Candlelight Carol Sing," presented by Doleta Chapru and Kate Liu.

Sunday, December 26, 2010

10:00 Service

Tuesday, December 28, 2010

1:30 Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood; topic is Childhood Memories of Trains and Other Travel Modes.

Saturday, January 1, 2011

Happy New Year!

Calendar items due for Prairie Fire Bulletin

New Calendar / Tax year begins

Sunday, January 2, 2011

10:00 Service

11:45 Humanist Union: Potluck lunch 11:45 am, presentation and discussion 12:30-

1:30 pm on "Bioethics beyond Terry Schiavo" led by Mary Frantz.

Upcoming Programs

Prairie Web Sites:

Home Page
www.uuprairie.org

News Group
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_news/

Views
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_views/

Social Action
<http://socialaction.madisonwi.us>

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

Sunday, December 12, 2010, 10:00 am: "In the Midst of Darkness," presented by Rev. Jane Esbensen. These are the contemplative days of winter, where the outside world often more poignantly reflects our inner world. Come and join us for a service of poetry and of peacefulness, of music and song and silence, as we attend to the darkness and find beauty and hope.

Sunday, December 19, 2010, 10:00 am: "A Very Prairie Holiday," presented by Karen Deaton. Come enjoy Prairie's winter holiday traditions. We will celebrate the light of hope in the dark of winter with our children's candlelight Santa Lucia procession. We will also decorate our Symbol Tree. Bring a trinket, picture, or note that commemorates something significant in your life this year. Tell the congregation a little about it, and hang it on the tree. As the tree is covered in sad, funny, troublesome, joyous, and thought-provoking momentos, it becomes a symbol of the richness of our lives. Plan to stay after the service to enjoy Soup Sunday.

Friday, December 24, 2010, 4:30 pm: "Candlelight Carol Sing," coordinated by Doleta Chapru and Kate Liu. Join in singing familiar carols or come discover this lovely music from our UU roots. Sixteenth century Unitarian minister Francis David of Transylvania said, "We need not think alike to love alike." We also need not think alike to find beauty in traditional carols and their message of joy and peace. If you plan to attend, you are welcome to email the title of your favorite carol to dchapru@aol.com.

News and Announcements

Finance Notes – the calendar & tax year is ending soon

December 31st marks the end of the calendar year for tax purposes. In early January 2011, you will receive a statement from Prairie that will list your donations for all of calendar year 2010, which includes the second half of the 09-10 budget year and the first half of the 10-11 budget year. If you would like to pay all or part of your 10-11 pledge so that it lands in the 2010 tax year, please make sure that it arrives at Prairie postmarked no later than December 31, 2010. If you have any questions or concerns, you can speak to any one of the "finance team" : Kathy Converse (finance chair,) Amy Armstrong (treasurer,) or Kate Liu (administrator.)

Prairie Fundraising Trips 2011 Schedule

We will be scheduling the following trips in the coming year. You will receive an individual notice of each trip, but mark your calendars now!

****26 February 2011:** Frank Lloyd Wright: Organic Architecture for the 21st Century at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

****18 June 2011:** The Rotary Gardens in Janesville and a Sail on Lake Geneva.

****13 August 2011:** The Emperors' Private Paradise: Treasures From the Forbidden City at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

****8 October 2011:** A scenic overnight trip to Decorah, Iowa. Possible side trips to Grant Woods art collection at the Cedar Rapids Art Museum, the Laura Ingalls Wilder home and museum in Burr Oak, or the Villa Louis in Prairie du Chien.

****3 December 2011:** Impressionism on Paper: Drawings from Manet to Van Gogh at the Milwaukee Art Museum.

JOURNEYING – One Minister’s Reflections by Rev. Jane Esbensen

This column feels bittersweet today as I sit here and write, for by the time you read these words, some of you will have already heard my news: I will have gotten married to a wonderful man – Mats Karlsson – who lives in Sweden, and this means that I will be moving to Sweden next summer.

This news, while certainly wonderful for me, also carries with it a great deal of sadness.

The first year of any ministry with a congregation is a learning year, for both the congregation and the minister. My first few months here at Prairie have been tremendously exciting and so heartwarming. I have felt such immediate acceptance, and that has made this announcement of my leaving at the end of the church year all the more difficult. I feel a great kinship with this congregation and had looked forward to many years ahead with you. And that was an exciting thing to have in my future. Not that this would be a given, of course, but I felt confident that I would at least be considered as an option to continue to be your minister for awhile at least. As I say, I think that we have been a good fit, a good team, together creating a good church for people to come to and to feel at home in.



But life is an endless journey of unexpected twists and turns, and this year is one like no other. Not in a bad way, but only in good ways, and what I mean by that is that not only was my falling in love with Mats an unexpected and truly amazing thing, but at the same time as that was happening, there were several ministry opportunities coming my way. When it rains it pours. Having gone from last year with three different jobs in order to make ends meet, to this year when doors have just kept opening, it has been both wonderful and stressful, because I wanted to make the right decision for the right reasons. And since my heart was with both you and Lake Country UU, and with Mats and Sweden, it has been a long, hard, sleepless road that I’ve trod upon these past several months before I finally came to a resting place that felt right, and that continues to feel right. Thus the bittersweet feeling. It feels right to move toward the rest of my life in Sweden, and yet it also feels so very right being your minister. But oh, how lucky is that?

So now, despite my leaving next summer, my thoughts naturally turn toward how to ensure that we proceed with continued energy and great health for the remainder of the church year. My goal and my promise is to continue to be the best minister I can be for you and to continue to help you become the best congregation you can be. I believe in you and I believe in Unitarian Universalism, and I certainly believe in the future and in all things good.

Most affectionately,
Jane

THE CHALLENGE AHEAD: A message from Prairie President, Barbara Park

I got the news of Rev. Jane's marriage with such mixed feelings. I am so happy for her. Clearly her heart is in Sweden. But, as a congregation, we have a challenge facing us. So.....what to do now.

It seems to me that we have two tasks ahead of us. The first is consolidate the gains that we have made as a congregation since Rev. Jane arrived a mere three months ago, and the second is to launch another ministerial search.

On the first:

Rev. Jane came with new eyes and helped us see ways to make our space more welcoming. With the increased publicity, including the article in the Isthmus about Rev. Jane (which was arranged by our wonderful DRE, Rebecca Malke-Eliganti) we have had increased attendance on Sunday mornings. The change has been in more than numbers, though. There has been a dynamic, positive feel in the air. People

walk in and feel welcomed. Whatever drew them to us, they will stay only if we can offer them a caring community, an extended family in a world where all of us can feel very disconnected, a place to grow and stretch their intellectual legs and spiritual wings. A congregation can be aided by a good minister, but it never is the minister. It is the members, the people who form the body and heart of the group. The members are the continuity.

Rev. Jane and I have already been talking about ways to help newcomers get to know us better. We will be arranging some type of get-together and personally invite new members and attendees to it. Of course, everyone is welcome, so keep your eyes out for news in this area.

On the second:

We will need to organize a new ministerial search committee. I am hoping that we can have one or two people from the previous search committee on the new one to use their recent experience in working with the UUA search process. I will also be seeking new people to participate, so if you are interested, please let me know. It is a big job, so be sure you have the space in your calendar for the task.

We will have Rev. Jane with us until the end of June. Let us enjoy that time with her and make the best use of her varied skills while she is with us. In addition to being the terrific speaker that was promised by the search committee, she has already learned most of our names, proved to be a great organizer, and demonstrated her love and skill at pastoral care. Most of all, she has very quickly wormed her way into our hearts. We wish her the best in her new marriage. Best of all, we will now have someone to visit in Sweden!

Sincerely,
Barbara Park
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Newsletter Input Deadlines:

Calendar items and program descriptions are due on the 1st and 15th of each month. Feature articles for the full *Prairie Fire* are due on the 15th of each month. Please send to Kate Liu at admin@uuprairie.org or call 271-8218.



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