



# Prairie Fire

**February 22, 2010**

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The full-featured **Prairie Fire** is published on the 22nd of every month. The **Prairie Fire Bulletin** is a calendar-only newsletter that is published on the 6th of every month. Both are published by Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. View past issues at [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org)

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## Calendar

### Tuesday, February 22, 2011

1:30 Prairie Elders meet at Oakwood. Topic is Stones. For more information contact Donna Murdoch 238-3802.

### Wednesday, February 23, 2011

7:00 Program Committee meets at Prairie.

### Sunday, February 27, 2011

8:45 Choir rehearsal

10:00 Service - "Reframing the Conversation about Workers and Wealth: from Myth to Reality," presented by Peggy Wireman.

### Monday, February 28, 2011

6:30 Spanish Speaker's Potluck at Prairie, for information call Rosemary Dorney 238-4382.

### Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Deadline for calendar items for the Prairie Fire Bulletin.

### Thursday, March 3, 2011

7:00 Prairie Board meeting.

### Friday, March 4, 2011

7:30 Showing of the Bill Maher film "Religulous" at the home of Barb and Bob Park, 5610 Hammersley Rd.

### Saturday, March 5, 2011

9:00 Prairie's Women's Group (WOW) meets for breakfast potluck and conversation. All women welcome.

5:30 New Friends Dinner.

### Sunday, March 6, 2011

8:45 Choir rehearsal

10:00 Service - "Sikhism and How it Affirms and Promotes the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle," presented by Dr. Satwant Dhillon.

11:45 Humanist Union of Madison meets for potluck lunch, 12:30 discussion of Bill Maher and the movie "Religulous."

### Sunday, March 13, 2011

Mystery Friends Party!

# Upcoming Programs

**Sunday, February 27, 2011, 10:00 am:** "Reframing the Conversation about Workers and Wealth: from Myth to Reality," presented by Peggy Wireman.

## Prairie Web Sites:

Society Home Page  
[www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org)

News Group  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie\\_news/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_news/)

Views  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie\\_views/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairie_views/)

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

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

## 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](mailto:admin@uuprairie.org) or call 271-8218.

**Sunday, March 6, 10:00 am: "Sikhism and How it Affirms and Promotes the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle," presented by Dr. Satwant Dhillon.** Dr. Dhillon will present how sacred Sikh texts teach that they too must have respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. This is the third installment in the lay series: How the world's religions use their beliefs and practices to care for our environment.

**Sunday, March 13, 2011, 10:00 am: Rev. Jane Esbensen.**

## Religious Education News

During the winter months many of us like to stay indoors and stay warm by a crackling fire. In RE we like to race down snowhills! Last month we had our annual Wild Wintering event. We went sledding at Elver Park and had a great time. I'm saying this even after Indy and I went down the huge hill hitting every snow bump on the way down. There was even a group of women laughing at us as we finally hit the bottom, our faces completely covered in snow! Once we got back to Prairie we warmed up with hot cocoa and sub sandwiches. Erin Bosch a.k.a "The Game Lady" had us laughing as we raced around chairs and did silly walks down the aisle. Many thanks to Erin and Isaac Vetter for donating their time to volunteer.

Last week we had a Valentine's Day party at Prairie. Rev. Jane was there and helped our young people use the heart-shaped cookie cutters to make beautiful treats. Cheyenne Hale decorated our sanctuary while students Meaghan, Logan and Kalob made Valentine cards. The rest of us decorated cookies. Indy and Chance piled on the sprinkles while little Ella snuck in a bite! Many thanks to all who were there to help out that afternoon.

Coming up next month our middle and high school students will take a field trip to the Sikh Gurdwara in Middleton as part of their studies on Sikhism. As always all are welcomed to join us. If you would like to take part in the field trip please let me know.



The RE Committee is looking at the possibility of meeting at a different day and time to better accommodate all who want to be involved in our RE program. If you are interested in joining us please see me or RE Chair, Robin Proud.

*Rebecca Malke  
Director of Religious Education  
Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society*

# Our Society

## **Prairie Seeking a New Minister for Next Year**

As most of you know, our wonderful consulting minister, Jane Esbensen, is moving to Sweden at the end of her contract with us on June 30 to be with her new husband. We are in the process of seeking a new half-time consulting minister with a projected start date of August 1st. The process consists of sending a fairly thorough description of our congregation, know as the "Congregational Record," to the UUA which is then posted on a special web site open to ministers looking for church positions. This document should be completed and posted this week.

The group charged with our search is the "Ministerial Search Committee". Since we just went through this process last year, we have several people with recent experience, so the committee is a combination of old hands and new faces. Our committee includes Al Nettleton, Dorothy Krause and Heidi Hughes from the previous committee plus additional members Bob Park, Katherine Peterson and Bill Parmenter. The process is confidential. Committee members will sift through the various applicants and, in the end, present one candidate for our approval. That person will probably spend a week-end with us, meet Prairie members at informal gatherings, and speak to us on that Sunday morning. That will be followed by a Parish meeting and a vote to approve or not. The timing of all of this depends on how the selection process goes.

If you have any questions, comments, ideas or concerns please get in touch with one of the committee members.

We have been privileged to have wonderful part time ministers to work with over the last several years. Each person brings unique skills and approaches to the job. We have grown as a congregation by having worked with each of them and I trust that this will continue to happen with our new half-time, consulting minister, whoever that turns out to be.

*Barbara Park  
President*

## **Book Club**

The Prairie Book Club meets once a month after Sunday service to share a potluck lunch and discuss a book. This is an open book club; and you do not need to have finished the book to attend. Below is a list of upcoming books the group will be reading. For more information, contact Mary Mullen, mmullen (at) chorus.net or 298-0843.

Sunday, March 20 - [The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo](#), mystery by Swedish author Stieg Larsson

Sunday, April 17 - [Canoeing with the Cree](#) by Eric Sevareid. About his teenage adventure from Minneapolis to Hudson Bay.

Sunday, May 15 – [Cry the Beloved Country](#) by South African author Alan Paton. Apartheid theme.

Sunday, June 19 - [The Death of Josseline: Immigration Stories from the Arizona-Mexico Borderlands](#) by Margaret Regan. This is a UU common read book.

Sunday, July 17 - [The Help](#) by Kathryn Stockett. Wildly popular NYT best-seller.



## Adult Education News

If you are interested in a class on UU Parenting, please contact Rev. Jane Esbensen or DRE Rebecca Malke as soon as possible. Registration is also open for "UU Perspectives on Immigration," which will take place in April and May.

For registration forms, please visit the Prairie website at [http://www.uuprairie.org/re/adult\\_ed\\_brochure\\_final2010-11.pdf](http://www.uuprairie.org/re/adult_ed_brochure_final2010-11.pdf). Please note that some of the dates for the classes may have changed from what was listed in the brochure from the fall – the dates listed on the SPRING 2011 brochure are the most accurate.

*Aileen Nettleton,  
Acting Chair of Adult Education*

## WOW News

WOW – Prairie's wild, outstanding women, meet once a month for breakfast potluck and conversation. Our usual meeting time is 9am on the first Saturday of the month, sometimes at Prairie and sometimes at a member's home. Our next meeting is Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, at 9am at Prairie. This is an open group, all women are welcome – you do not need to be a member of Prairie to attend. Any questions or to add to the email group call 276-8397 or email [marysomers44 \(at\) charter.net](mailto:marysomers44@charter.net) or Kathy Converse, 238-1856, [conversekrtn \(at\) msn.com](mailto:conversekrtn@msn.com).



*Kathy Converse, Winter WOW coordinator*

## Spanish Speaker's Potluck

Prairie has a very long-running Spanish Speaker's group that meets once a month to converse in Spanish and have potluck dinner. The group will be meeting next on Monday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at Prairie. Please call Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382 for more information about the group or to coordinate a ride.

## Humanist Union Discusses "Religulous"

For our March meeting we will be discussing the Bill Maher film "Religulous", for which we will hold two events. First, on Friday March 4 there will be a gathering at the home of Barb and Bob Park, 5610 Hammersley Rd, to view the entire 101 min. film for those who have not seen it before (or wish to view it again). If you can't make it to that showing, an alternative would be to check out the DVD from the public library yourself. (The South Central Library System has 30 copies.) Then on Sunday March 6 we will view the 20 minutes of monologues by Bill Maher filmed at locations around the world and included on the film's DVD, after which we will discuss the film. On the 6th we will start with our usual potluck lunch at 11:45 am, with the video and discussion between 12:30 and 1:30 pm. Comedian Maher sees his film as part of the "final battle between intelligence and stupidity that will decide the future of humanity".

## Prairie Elders

Prairie Elders will meet at Oakwood on March 22 at 2pm. The topic has yet to be decided, but will no doubt be interesting! Contacts: Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Gordon Cunningham 230-3367, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363. Call Donna to add your name to the mailing list.

## UU Blood Drive Coordinator Needed

HELP! Prairie, James Reeb, and First Societies hold blood drives about 3 times a year. Would someone be willing to take over as our Prairie coordinator? Coordinators meet only 3 or 4 times yearly (shortly before a 'drive') to coordinate publicity. Currently Ann Moser & Mary Murphy coordinate for First, and John Mathis coordinates for James Reeb. I was our Prairie rep because I benefited from blood donations during an operation, so being our coordinator has been my 'payback'. I donated blood also, but had to stop at 30 gallons because, at 88, it left me too tired. I am ready to step down and let some "new blood" take over! Please contact me, Gordon Cunningham (gcunning at wisc.edu or 230-3367) for more information.

# Membership News

## Presenting New member Bill Parmenter

### My Journey

One day I was traveling down the road to Damascus and I heard a voice speaking out of the desert sand saying, "Why are you persecuting me?" I replied, "You must have mistaken me for Garrison Keillor." That was the first and last time that ever happened to me, call it epiphany, or mistaken identity, or a dream.

My first waking connection to UUism was in college. There was wonderful place in West Lafayette called Von's Bookstore. Von was a graduate student, an eclectic reader and his front room was lined with bookshelves. That was the Bookstore and also the meeting-room for the Lafayette UU Fellowship, which I attended sporadically.

I met and married a fundamentalist feminist woman and attended a fundamentalist, patriarchal church for several years, followed by several years of non-affiliation. That ended one Sunday morning when a sprightly old lady jumped out of her Cadillac, came up to our house and said, "let me tell you about my church." Since I had been confirmed in the ALC, a predecessor of the ELCA, I had no resistance. That day began a 20-plus year relationship with (the English Evangelical Church of the ) Holy Trinity, including Sunday School and Bible Study teaching, 10 years as Council secretary, ending with a "confrontive but not confrontational" Bible study about gay and lesbian issues. That showed us that we needed to be in a place where hospitality was alive and people could be welcomed as they are.

We found Shalom UCC, a small church with perhaps 15 giving units and big dreams of giving away half of the income of the church, welcoming people of any sexual orientation, gender identity, social/economic/marital/faith/family status. One of the first and most influential books we read in Shalom was *Original Blessing*, by Matthew Fox. Somewhere along the way I came upon the Platinum Rule: "Do unto others as they would be done to by you". This puts a burden on us to learn what other people want, rather than assuming that it's the same thing we want.

Shalom church dwindled and by 2002 there were 11 giving units remaining and 5 of them were leaving town, including us and the pastor. The books were closed out at the end of 2002 and we went to Madison, getting divorced and remarried (to each other) along the way. We stayed long enough to realize that we are not (yet) condo people, nor yet again are we ready to stay in Watertown for ever. We are now Madisonians and expect to stay here for some time. We find Prairie UU to be a compatible, challenging, welcoming community and would like to continue the journey together.

*Bill Parmenter*

# Green Tidbits

## Go Green in Your Bathroom!

Replace your old toilet with one that uses only 1.28 gallons per flush and receive a \$100 rebate from the Madison Water Utility! Details are at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/water/inthehome/toiletrebate.cfm>. Al Nettleton says his high quality qualifying toilet, including seat and installation parts, only cost \$29 after the rebate.

*Al Nettleton, Green Reporter*

## Number 5 plastics

Did you know that Whole Foods has bins out front for #5 recyclable plastics? This includes yogurt containers, deli tubs, cream cheese containers, etc. This recycling program will also take Brita water filters, too. The containers get sent to a company called Preserve which then makes a variety of household products out of it.

I have a tendency to get to the store and realize I have left my recycling behind – I gather that this is a common problem as Whole Foods even addressed this in their blog post about this program. They suggest placing the containers in your reusable shopping bags, so when you grab the bags to go shopping, you automatically have the containers, too. (This of course assumes you remember the bags, too!)



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