

Prairie Fire



May 2014

Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

- Sun. May 4** 10 am Service - "I Forgive You. Please Forgive Me." - Sandra Ingham
12 noon - Humanist Union potluck and discussion
5:30 pm - Men's Group
- Sun. May 11** 10 am Service - "Mother's Day Tribute" - Celia
- Sat. May 17** 9-11 am WOW@Prairie (NOTE TIME CHANGE)
- Sun. May 18** 10 am Service - "Julia Ward Howe" - Robin Proud
12 noon - Spring Parish Meeting
- Mon. May 19** 6:30 pm - Spanish Speakers Club
- Sun. May 25** 10 am Service - "Tying Rocks to Clouds" - William Elliott
- Tue. May 27** 1:30 pm - Prairie Elders

"I Forgive You, Please Forgive Me" - We are all in need of both receiving and giving forgiveness, whether we are talking about relatively mundane matters or murky situations or even miraculous moments of true forgiveness. So, I ask you to consider the following question, which Simon Wiesenthal posed several years ago: "You are a prisoner in a concentration camp. A dying Nazi soldier asks for your forgiveness. What would you do?" And this one, "What role does forgetting play in the act of forgiveness?"

Humanist Union topic will be: What's Up with Young Humanists? After our usual potluck lunch at noon, our program beginning at 12:30, will be led by Susan Hagstrom on "The Younger Generations and Their Humanist Activities - What's Up." She will be looking at what teenagers and college students working on Humanist issues in the public area within the last couple of years have been doing. All who are interested are invited to attend, especially any young humanists seeing this.

The Men's Group meets the 1st Sunday of the month at Prairie. Bring a dish to pass.
Contact: Dan Proud derrproud@att.net

"**Mother's Day Tribute**" - Celia has been described as "A cross between an Earthy Enya, Joan Baez, and Tina Fey." She dishes up the most delicious concoction of the silly and sacred. With powerful, heart-felt vocals and wacky comedic improvisations. The audience never knows what will happen with Celia on stage. To learn more about Celia visit her website at www.celiaonline.com

WOW@Prairie - Women of Wonder meets every 1st Saturday of the month (EXCEPT THIS ONE) at Prairie. Bring a breakfast/brunch dish to share. Contact: Anne Urbanski 221-4053; anne53714@gmail.com

"Julia Ward Howe" - Robin Proud will share with us the life and times of Julia Ward Howe, best known to us as the author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Spring Parish Meeting - We will be voting on a change to the by-laws (Please see Message from the President).

Spanish Speakers Club will meet at the home of Mary Tremain, 906 Waban Hill. Please bring a dish to pass, if you can - everyone welcome! More info or to arrange a ride contact Rosemary Dorney 238-4382.

"Tying Rocks to Clouds" - Publisher's Weekly had this to say about local author, William Elliott, and his book Tying Rocks to Clouds: Would you like to talk about the meaning of life with Mother Teresa, Norman Vincent Peale, the Dalai Lama, B.F. Skinner, Ram Dass, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, Pir Vilayat Khan, Jean Houston and other world-renowned spiritual leaders and experts in wise living? In this ecumenical volume, "ordinary person" Bill Elliott asks 20 such people essentially the same set of questions: "What is the purpose of life?" "Why is there suffering?" "Do all religions lead to the same place?" "If you were on your deathbed, what advice would you give to your son or daughter?" What emerges from this process is nothing less than a snapshot of our planet's philosophies at the end of the millennium..."

Prairie Elders aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU Members and Friends over 65 and UUs living at the facility where we meet. The topic this month is "Camping: Does it Build Character? If Not, Why do People do It?". If convenient, bring your own beverage cup and a few snacks. Newcomers welcome. Nakoma Room, Heritage Oaks building, Oakwood Village West. Call for directions, parking or a ride. Rosemary Dorney (238-4382) or Donna Murdoch (238-3802).

Prairie News

Thanks! A big thanks goes to the youth, who provided the art for the month of April. We have some great talent amongst our young people! If you haven't been up front to see their work, check it out!

Another Thanks! Goes to the poets in the last Prairie Fire. There is another well of artistry with words and pictures! Such offerings are always welcome!

Roy Zimmerman will be performing at Prairie on his next visit to Madison on May 10, at 7:30 pm as part of his current "Blue Dot Tour." Cost is "\$18 or pay what you can."

Roy Zimmerman tours constantly, taking his funny songs about fracking, creationism, marijuana laws, government shutdown, same-sex marriage and more across the country, often playing in some of the least progressive places in America for the most progressive people there - the "Blue

Dots” - he calls them. In thirteen albums over twenty years, Roy Zimmerman has brought the sting of satire to the struggle for Peace and Social Justice. He’s been profiled on NPR’s “All Things Considered,” and he’s a featured blogger for the Huffington Post. The world is full of funny songs, but Zimmerman’s hilarious, rhyme-intensive originals are also incisive calls to action, smart, savvy and undeniable.

More details and links to several of his songs are posted on the Social Action Calendar of Events at <http://socialaction.madisonwi.us/FILES/events.htm>

Prairie Family Retreat - June 6-8, 2014! Mark your calendars for the annual Prairie Family Retreat at Bethel Horizons in Dodgeville, WI. The fun begins Friday evening, June 6, and continues through noon on Sunday, June 8. This is a great time for Prairie members to connect with each other in a less hurried environment, have a chance to play, sing, talk, or just linger over coffee.

For those of you who have not attended a Prairie Retreat before, here is the typical schedule: **Friday evening** - arrival in the early evening, finger food potluck, mixer games; **Saturday** - breakfast, programming (arts & crafts, games, discussions, etc) lunch, more programming, dinner, talent show, and folk dancing; **Sunday** - breakfast, key log ceremony, clean up, and home again

This is a family friendly retreat weekend. One of our regular childcare providers will be there, and there are plenty of activities for kids to do. Phyllis Long is coordinating the program and is looking for volunteers to lead programs.

Kate Liu will be the registrar this year, coordinating rooms and meals and whatnot. Registration forms and an information sheet will be available shortly. Closer to the actual retreat dates, final schedules for programming will be available. Any questions, please contact Kate Liu (about logistical details) - kgliu311@gmail.com 238-9153, or Phyllis Long (about the program) - plong373@gmail.com, 608-325-7397.

Did you know Prairie has a Committee on Ministry that, among other things, acts as a liaison between the minister and the congregation? Members of this committee are Heidi Hughes, Kate Liu and Rick Ruecking, with Rev. Sandy, of course. More information about the Committee will be available in the June newsletter.

Rev. Sandy will be attending a Mediation Skills Training Institute in Minneapolis, from May 12-16. Following that I will be taking a few more days of study leave, this time in Northern Minnesota, where my daughter and son-in-law have just purchased a restaurant. Being a study leave, this week in the North Woods will be a Prairie working week, but might also include some "free labor" in the restaurant to help "the kids" get this venture up and running. As always, I will be available via email and telephone should you need or want to contact me. I will return to Madison Memorial Day weekend.

Message from the President

~ Barb Park

The Spring Parish meeting will be a brief meeting to vote on a change to the by-laws. Below is the current by-law with the changes noted in red.

Purpose: To replace the appointed youth member with an elected At-Large member.

Sections 7.1, 7.4 and 9.1 shall be amended as follows:

Board of Trustees

7.1 There shall be a Board of Trustees (the "Board") consisting of the four officers, ~~three~~ **two** elected at-large trustees, ~~and a youth member appointed by the Board~~. All Board members must be Members of the Society.

7.4 Members of the Board shall be elected to two-year terms, ~~except that the youth member shall serve a one-year term~~.

Nominations and Elections

9.1 The Membership shall elect a President, Vice President and ~~one~~ **two** at-large Board member in even-numbered years and a Secretary, Treasurer, and one at-large Board member in odd numbered years at the Annual Meeting. Their two-year terms of office shall commence on July 1, of the year of election.

Musings from the Minister

~ Reverend Sandra Ingham

I had forgotten how important it is to get together with Unitarian Universalists who are not a part of your own congregation ... until I went to the regional meeting in Wausau on April 12. Then, I remembered what it is like to feel that sense of a larger connection, an even greater connection than we can make on any given Sunday in any given congregation.

I had forgotten how fragile and precious life is... until I learned at the regional meeting that the Bradford Community Church UU minister had died from injuries sustained in a bizarre, "freak" car accident in Kenosha earlier in the week.

I had forgotten how astonishingly spectacular -- and healing -- the spring flowers are... until I began to pay attention to them during the last few days. The sudden appearance of these flowers in their vast array of colors and shapes and sizes is not only awesome, in the best, truest sense of that word, but also soothing and calming.

I had forgotten that everything I have learned in my life, even during the dark times, has value... until, at the regional meeting in Wausau, I reconnected with some people from my previous congregations in Green Bay and Ripon.

I had forgotten how important laughter is... until the dear friend with whom I was staying in Wausau asked if I wanted to go to the Sunday morning service at her congregation, the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau, the Sunday after the regional meeting. She said it was about the Rapture -- at least, that's what I thought she said. I was intrigued -- a UU service about

the Rapture. OK. What she actually said was that the service would be about raptors! Much laughing occurred as we sorted this out. We went to the wonderful service, which featured actual, live raptors... and, again, healing.

May you have laughter and many healing moments during the merry, merry month of May.

Committee News

Interested in serving Prairie more? We are seeking candidates for the following positions on the Prairie UU Board and its committees. These are the Vice President and Secretary for the board. For the committees, co-chairs are needed for Housing and Property. If interested, please contact Patty Stockdale, Ken Skog, Paula Pachciarz, or Mary Frantz.

News from The Social Action Committee

Moses: Pam Gates reports that there was a jail tour arranged for Moses members as a jail expansion is planned. A task force on post release issues for prisoners is working to ban the “box” on job applications that asks about criminal convictions. Another initiative has group members working with the circuit court system to develop legislation to limit access to criminal records. The group is also working toward getting a 1/2 of 1% kick back on transportation (road etc) projects to go toward public transportation (for those without cars) and toward apprenticeships for former felons. The group continues to work for expansion of treatment options and expansion of drug court.

Backpacks: We have contributed a number of items for backpacks for homeless middle school kids.

Allied Partners Neighborhood: Molly has been attending meetings to free Pam. The Wellness Center at Boys and Girls Club needs a printer if anyone has one to donate. The food pantry got a large donation from Woodman’s from dollars designated by food purchasers and is buying diapers and other staples needed. *The Boys and Girls Club needs donations of bus tickets, especially 2 ride tickets, to get people to doctor appointments, grocery shopping, or to job interviews. If you can buy tickets and drop them off at Club for Gloria they are GREATLY appreciated. I may ask to take up a collection for bus tickets.*

Why Should Program Committee Members Have All The Fun?

While full Program Committee membership requires monthly committee meetings, there are ways to contribute to Prairie’s programming that are less of a time commitment. Some join the **Program Committee’s E-mail Group** offering their opinions and help via email when things come up between meetings.

There are several auxiliary jobs that only require participation during Sunday morning services. Perhaps you would like to be a **President**. This requires you to read the script of the order of service and fill in the blanks for the changing cast of characters.

Or maybe you are the silent type. You could be a **Program Assistant**. This requires you to come about a half hour early to prepare the room. The Program Assistant passes out the hymnals and orders of service. They set up the chalice, sound recording and candles. They ring the bell,

carry the mikes, count attendance and recruit offertory ushers.

Our pool of **Tech Assistants**, trained to run the soundboard and set up the projector is so thin, we are in danger of a Sunday where none of them are available! This is not a big time commitment, but it is a vital function that needs Prairie's tech talent to step up. Training would only take about a 1/2 hour after church.

We are of course looking for full members of the committee that would like to coordinate the service by corresponding with the presenters, recruiting readers, and selecting hymns, stories for all ages and readings. Everyone at Prairie is an unofficial member of the committee. Keep your eyes and ears open for program ideas and share them with Program Committee members.

Finally what would Prairie services be without music? To volunteer to accompany hymn singing, see Orange Schroeder: for prelude/offertory music see Mary Frantz: and to singing in the choir, see Barb Park. AND for the Program Committee, see Penny Eiler.



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