

Prairie Fire



August 2014

Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

- Sat. Aug 2** 5-7 am **Men's Shelter Breakfast: Prairie & Reeb**
9 am **WOW@Prairie**
- Sun. Aug 3** 10 am **Service - "UW Odyssey Project"** - Emily Auerbach
11:45 am - **Humanist Union**
- Sun. Aug 10** 10 am **Service - "Providence 2014"** - Gary Gates
11:30 pm - **Prairie Book Club**
1 pm - **Stand on the Side of Love at the Pride Parade**
5:30 pm **Men's Group**
- Sun. Aug 17** 10 am **Service - "So, What CAN I Say?"** - Rev. Sandra Ingham
- Sun. Aug 24** 10 am **Service - "Come, Let Us Gather to..??"** - Rev. Sandra Ingham
- Mon. Aug 25** 6:30 pm **Spanish Speakers Potluck** (TBA)
- Tue. Aug 26** 1:30 pm - **Prairie Elders**
- Sun. Aug 31** 10 am **Service - "What Sustains Me At Work"**

Men's Shelter Breakfast: Prairie & Reeb: If you can help make breakfast, please let Paula Pachciarz know. (pjpchz@gmail.com)

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

"University of Wisconsin Odyssey Project": The UW-Odyssey Project offers a UW-Madison humanities class for adult students facing economic barriers to college. Odyssey provides thirty students each year with a challenging college humanities class with award-winning faculty. Students receive free tuition, textbooks, childcare, and a weekly dinner through support from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, grants, and private donations.

The Humanist Union meeting will be short, from 11:45 to 12:15. The Humanist Union will first hear an *Introduction to Sunday Assembly* by Naomi Kroth, lead organizer of Sunday Assembly Madison, instead of eating first as we usually do. Then starting about 12:30 pm we'll join the Sunday Assembly Madison potluck picnic at Marlborough Park.

"Providence 2014": Prairie's new president, Gary Gates, returned from his excellent adventure at the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly exhilarated by the experience. He has so much to share and so little time in a Sunday morning service, but Gary promised he is up to the challenge.

Prairie Book Club will discuss *Uncle Vanya*, a play by Russian playwright Anton Chekhov. Amazon reviews: "His structurally and psychologically compact drama takes place on an estate in 19th-century Russia, exploring the complex interrelationships between a retired professor, his second wife, and the daughter and brother-in-law from his first marriage. Interwoven themes of weakness, delusion, and despair are balanced by an underlying message of courage and hope." Suggested by Nancy Garst.

Stand on the Side of Love at the Pride Parade! OutReach is hosting the Pride Parade in Madison. The theme this year will be "Equality Marches Forward - 25 years of Celebrating LGBT." Parade staging happens at the new Central Park on the near-east side, followed by a 2 p.m. march to the Capitol. Prairie UU, James Reeb UU and First Unitarian will march behind the Standing on Side of Love banner. Please wear your SSL t-shirt or any yellow or purple shirt. This year, we'd like to have a flag team perform an easy routine along the route. If you'd like to be a "Flaggie," Contact Elizabeth Barrett at ebarrett@tds.net.

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

"So, What CAN I Say?": I have always been fascinated by language and the meaning of words. Recent conversations and events at General Assembly and at Prairie, as well as various things that I have been reading have left me puzzled and curious about what words are acceptable when talking about whatever it is we do at Prairie... See! I can't be more exact than that without possibly using a word or two that might offend someone or "put them off" or cause them to dismiss the content of what I am trying to say! Help! I need input from all of you in this area. Accordingly, I will attempt to leave enough time for this during the congregational response.

"Come, Let Us Gather to..?": To do what? To worship in a church? What? At Prairie? WHOA! Possibly not! On this Sunday, I will continue my exploration of language as it relates to our Unitarian Universalist heritage. Do we actually engage in worship on Sunday mornings? This could lead to some lively discussion! See you in church!

Spanish Speakers Potluck will meet in August, but details are not available at this time. Please check online, or the order of service on Sundays for more information or contact Rosemary Dorney, (238-4382).

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 "Exercise, Is It Really Necessary?" 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).

"What Sustains Me At Work": What do you get when you do a mash up of Rev. Ingham's sermon, "Sustainability" and Labor Day? You get a panel of Prairie member talking about what sustains them in the work place.

Message from the President

~ Gary Gates

To provide myself with a better understanding of my role as your new President, I decided to attend both the Midwest Regional Assembly and the national General Assembly. In both cases I oriented on sessions on what the future holds for our Society. It looks both exciting and challenging.

One of the statements that really caught my attention was that we are undergoing the most significant religious revolution in centuries as young people are staying away from church in ever increasing numbers. Unitarian Universalism has not lost a significant number of members, but neither have we grown while the mainline Christian churches have lost 20% in the last decade.

Many ideas were proposed on how to react to these changes, but I particularly liked the statement that growth in membership numbers did not equal success. Success is getting an ever increasing part of the population to believe in and live by the seven principles. If we can achieve this, we probably will grow in membership, but that would be merely a side effect of success.

The world will be a much better place if we can achieve this success. The world needs our principles and our efforts should be directed towards living and advocating them. I hope that doing so will be a major focus of our congregation as we move into the future.

Musings from the Minister

~ Reverend Sandra Ingham

On July 20, when I was talking about sustainability, as in what sustains us personally, I mentioned that people sometimes can be one of the sources that sustains me. I referenced a newspaper column that I had recently read, titled "The Immense Power of People", written by Leonard Pitts, a columnist for "The Miami Herald". That column was about the Peace Corps Nigeria Alumni Foundation (PCNAF.org). It exists for only one purpose: to provide scholarships for Nigerian girls. When Pitts first wrote about the PCNAF, he thought perhaps a few of his readers would send a small contribution to the foundation, as he had done. He was wrong. So many contributions were sent that the tiny foundation was overwhelmed. The president reassures us that this kind of attention is a good thing; they don't mind being overwhelmed at all. They even hope to use some of the money for any of the kidnapped Nigerian girls who might be released or manage to escape.

I was so moved by this column that I want to share this information with you: Send donations to PCNAF, c/o P.O. Box 65530, Washington, D.C., 20035. I was moved because here is a tangible, concrete way to "Do Something". Too often, I feel helpless, even hopeless, when learning about the world's problems. But here is something that I can do. I am not "rolling in money", but I can give \$25.00 to the PCNAF. That equals three movies I will not go to or perhaps five espressos that I don't really need to drink.

Here is something that won't cost any money, but might help answer that nagging, persistent social justice question, "But what can I do?" What can we do to help mend a broken world? We can sign the Charter for Compassion, a document that has already been signed by hundreds of people throughout the world. And, then we can become part of the global effort to "translate the charter into practical, realistic action". I will be telling you more about this in the fall. In the meantime, check it out for yourselves at charterforcompassion.org. Hoping your summer has been rich thus far...

Prairie News

Meet the new board! The new board convened its first meeting in July. The members are Gary Gates, president; Patty Stockdale, Vice President; Anne Urbanski, secretary; Al Nettleton, Treasurer; Dirk Herr-Hoyman, Trustee; Phil Nelson, Trustee; Judy Lazarus, Trustee.



The President shall preside at meetings of the Board and of the Congregation. She/he shall be a non-voting ex officio member of all committees, except that the President may not serve on either the Nominating Committee or the Committee on Ministry.

Gary: Born Seneca, WI; arrived Madison age 4; agnostic since age 16; UW-Madison economics major; Young Republicans member; state budget analyst; Secretary Wis Dept Employee Trust Funds; State Investment Board member; Libertarian party activist; Madison alderman; political independent; Alanon; transition from "talk to nobody about anything" to "talk to every body about everything"; in love with Black Hills; rock climber; performing dance group member; Whitewater canoeist; married Pam at Devil's Lake; five kids in blended family, umpteen grand kids, still counting great grandchildren; Dumpster Diver; WI State Journal "Know Your Madisonian"; Shoreline Parks referendum activist; recycled 1,700,000 aluminum cans; Controlled burns crew member; Nature Conservancy, Prairie Enthusiasts and Ice Age Trail brush clearing work parties; Prairie UU member 2010.

The Vice President shall assist the President and shall preside at Board meetings and Congregational Meetings in the absence of the President.

Patty: In this picture, my sister Bobbie met us at the Denver Airport last fall as we traveled back from San Diego. I like to travel to visit new places and family. I am recently retired from WI Public Radio and am enjoying many new activities, including serving on Prairie's Board!



The Secretary shall be responsible for producing the official correspondence of the Board and for maintaining official Society records including records of proceedings of meetings of the Board and of the Congregation. The Secretary also shall be the custodian of the Bylaws, Board policies and other Society procedural documents.

Anne: I attended Catholic schools for 13 years, which made me an agnostic. I first visited Prairie in July 1982 and joined a few weeks later. I've worked for the Wisconsin DNR since 1991 and hope to retire in the next two or three years. I live with my husband, Lee, and our dog, Olly, on the far east side of Madison, and we will be welcoming our son, Janne, and his partner, Nate Elliott, back to our home in November. In my spare time I like to read, crochet, walk our dog, play too many games on Facebook, and watch baseball, football, movies and dramas on TV.

The Treasurer shall assure safe receipt and management of all money and property of the Society entrusted to his/her care, and shall disburse the same under the direction and to the satisfaction of the Board. The treasurer shall be bonded or insured at the expense of the Society.

Al: I have been an active member of Prairie since 1969. I have also served as President, Vice President, and chair of program, long-range planning, housing & property, and communication committees. Aileen and I have a son living in Madison, a daughter in Plymouth, Minnesota and four grandchildren. I am retired from a career that included university teaching, research, and information technology. Major hobbies are photography, woodworking, repairing & remodeling things, technology, travel, and reading. I am also the current President of the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association.



Dirk: I have been on the Board seven of the past 10 years. I have been Treasurer, Chair of H+P and Communications, as well as serving on Finance and Membership. In my day job, I am the project manager in software development for SnapPlus at UW Soil Science.

Judy: I have been a member of UU fellowships in NC, NY, Greenville, TX and Austin, TX. I moved from Austin to Madison three years ago and became a member of Prairie. I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Prairie members better at the two retreats I have attended. I have worked as a computer operator in the days of Big Blue; been a supervisor at a group home for autistic adults and a domestic violence shelter counselor.

The Artist of the Month is Sky Wacker! Check out her works up front in our meeting room. She is a self-taught artist who started as a child. She has tried watercolor, acrylic, oil pastels, colored pencils, charcoal, chalk, and markers, but hasn't settled on a preferred medium. This is a first show for her. She has a website www.storyspirals.com where you can also sample her most excellent writing.

Water Ceremony - 2014: This yearly event will be held September 7th. The yearly cycle of life in a congregation revolves around the school calendar. With the end of the school year, some Prairie members' lives revolve around gardens, some with the enrichment or sports activities of their children, some travel, but no matter what you do water is somehow involved. (As anyone who watches "Naked and Afraid" knows water is essential to our survival.)

The Water Ceremony recognizes the importance of water to our lives. We do this celebration yearly at the end of summer vacation and the beginning of the Religious Education calendar. It is a common Unitarian Universalist tradition for members to collect water from their summer activities. It can be from your rain barrel, the local swimming pool, a lake, river or tap from an exotic vacation spot or any water that symbolizes something meaningful from the past year. At the ceremony, Prairie members pour their water in a communal bowl and tell briefly where they obtained the water. This ceremony symbolizes the coming together again of Prairie as a community. If you didn't know or didn't remember to collect a sample of water, water will be provided as a substitute.

This year our past president Barb Park, will give a presentation on memorable moments from past Water Ceremonies. If you have a memorable Water Ceremony moment, let Barb know so she can include it in her presentation. - Penny Eiler

RE News

The summer of 2014 finds the Religious Education Program working with change. The Director of Religious Education position is vacant, but thanks to an RE committee comprised of committed RE advocates, the work to ensure a smooth beginning to the 2014-15 year continues to get done. Never fear, RE packets for families will be out soon.

At the same time, we are busy advertising for the DRE position. It is a permanent part-time position of 15-20 hrs/wk working with young people from infants through high school. A job description is posted on the Prairie website at <http://uuprairie.org/>. Please send a cover letter with a resume to admin@uuprairie.org with the subject line: DRE application.

In the meantime... The Prairie Religious Education Committee has hired Rachel Herr-Hoyman as a short-term assistant to help out with some of the many tasks associated with the RE program. She herself is a graduate of our RE program and we welcome her back to Prairie.

Rachel is the daughter of Dirk and Susan Herr-Hoyman. She earned her masters degree in International Development at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. She has jumped right in with RE jobs and has already been a big help to the program.

Rachel will be working primarily in the RE office, but you may see her on the occasional Sunday morning at Prairie. If you wish to communicate with the RE program, feel free to call the church (271-8218) or send an email to DRE@uuprairie.org. Rachel will route all messages to the appropriate person and they will be promptly responded to. You may also contact an RE Committee member. Committee members are: Karen Deaton, Susan Herr-Hoyman, Rachel Long, Paula Pachciarz (co-chair), Robin Proud, Carl Wacker, Kent Wenger (co-chair).

We are also seeking a childcare worker to care for infants to the age of 2 1/2. If you have a babysitter or know someone who would be interested in a few hours of work Sunday mornings and for other Prairie events, contact Paula Pachciarz at pjpchz@gmail.com

The first day of class for the coming year will be September 7th. The children will be upstairs with their parents for the Water Ceremony and then go downstairs to meet their new teachers and get to know each other.

The curriculum this fall for RE is new! The theme is "The Big Questions: Understanding, Using and Living Your Faith". Here are the classes with their teachers and a brief description:

Nursery up to age 2 1/2 will be cared for by Jed Peterson (and a caretaker yet to be hired) from 9:45 - 11:45. We provide a safe, fun atmosphere with crafts, stories, play and snacks.

4K-1st Grade will be taught by Karen Deaton and Carl Wacker. The text will be *Chalice Children*. This program helps nurture spiritual growth, creativity and a sense of community through imaginative activities and rituals such as rhymes and finger plays. It also emphasizes cooperation, conflict resolution, and communication.

2nd- 4th Grade will be taught by Kial and Phil Nelson. The text will be *UU Super Heroes*. Children will get to know UU people who have acted with courage and wisdom as they have attempted to live their lives fully and make the world a better place.

5th-7th Grade will be taught by Robin Proud and Molly Plunkett. The text will be *Riddle and Mystery*. This curriculum helps children in their own search for understanding of the bigger questions of life. Where do we come from? Where are we going? Does God exist? What does it mean to be Unitarian?

8th-12th Grade will be taught by Rachel Long and Barb Park. The text will be *Compass Points*. This curriculum will help students to sort out their feelings about themselves and their world as they do the difficult work of starting to create their adult selves: assuming responsibility, making decisions, exploring values, UU-ism and what it stands for, and the nature of humanity.

Who's New at Prairie

Kim, Matt, Sophie and Ava Tedesco

Kim: hmmm. What's interesting about me? I grew up all over-Colorado, Washington state and then mostly in NY, on Long Island. I attended college in Buffalo, NY and received my degree in Physical Therapy. I then went on to practice full-time in geriatric outpatient and long-term care until I had children. I currently continue to work part-time and love that I have the opportunity to work with patients both young and old. I was thrilled to be able to go back to school to work on my doctorate in PT, which I received in 2011. I absolutely love spending time with my family, traveling to new places, camping and hiking. I love to read and can often be found squirreled



away reading away the day (this is way better than cooking and cleaning); my other joy is quilting. My girls keep me busy and growing and I truly enjoy this stage of our lives-where they are self-sufficient and still want to hang out with us! It's been a wonderful this past year to join and be welcomed to the Prairie community.

Matt: "I grew up on Long Island, went to school there at Hofstra University, then moved out to Boulder, Colorado to get my PhD in Philosophy. Kim and I then split the difference and came to southern Wisconsin, where we have lived since 2004. I'm a professor at Beloit College, and for fun I like: to play music (I play the electric bass), bowling, running, board games, card games, most sports. I love to travel, and hope to do a lot of that with my family in the coming years."

WELCOME, Kim, Matt, Sophie and Ava!

AND A PRAIRIE FIRE EXCLUSIVE! (Best news for last)



Welcome to your Prairie family, Aurora Beatrix Hatch Creed!

Aurora Beatrix Hatch Creed (also known as Rory) was born very quickly into her mama's hands on July 2, 2014 at 10:56 AM. She weighed in at 8 lb, 3 oz and was 18 3/4 inches long. Older brother Liam has declared her "cute-dorable to 1000." The name Aurora is Johanna's great-grandmother's middle name, and Beatrix means "bringer of joy." Everyone is healthy and happy and enjoying these early days together. We are so grateful to everyone who brought us dinners in the first weeks of Rory's life - each one was delicious! We are looking forward to introducing Rory to our Prairie community very soon. - Johanna, Evan & Liam

Visit Prairie's website (see below) for further information.

 **Prairie Unitarian
Universalist Society**

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