

Prairie Fire

September 2014

Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)



- Sat. Sept 6** 5-7 am **Men's Shelter Breakfast:** Prairie & Reeb
9 am **WOW@Prairie**
- Sun. Sept 7** 10 am **Service - Water Ceremony**
11:45 am **Humanist Union**
5:30 pm **Men's Group**
- Sun. Sept 14** 10 am **Service - "Called to This Global Moment"** - Nastasha Ostrom
11:30 am **Prairie Book Club**
- Sun. Sept 21** 10 am **Service - "Worthy of Worship?"** - Rev. Sandra Ingham
11:30 am **Soup Sunday**
- Tues. Sept 23** 1:30 pm **Prairie Elders**
- Sun. Sept 28** 10 am **Service - "Happiness"** - Domo Geshe Rinpoche
- Mon. Sept 29** 6:15 pm **Spanish Speakers Potluck**

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

Water Ceremony: 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.

Humanist Union: Ingrid Laas will provide a "Report on the first annual Humanism at Work Conference" which she recently attended in Chicago. It was put on by the Foundation Beyond Belief, the humanist charitable organization started by Dale McGowan. We begin with a potluck lunch, then Ingrid's program from 12:30 to 1:30 pm.

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

"Called to This Global Moment": "In this time of global crisis, when the whole Earth cries out in sorrow, pain and protest against the devastating effects of climate change, are Unitarian Universalists called to be chaplains to a dying world or midwives to a world

reborn? Nastasha Ostrom is the ministerial intern at the First Unitarian Society of Madison and a recent graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry.”

Prairie Book Club will be reading *How Green Was My Valley* by Richard Llewellyn, published first in 1939. Goodreads review: “Growing up in a mining community in rural South Wales, Huw Morgan is taught many harsh lessons. Looking back, where difficult days are faced with courage and the valleys swell with the sound of Welsh voices, it becomes clear that there is nowhere so green as the landscape of his own memory”.

"Worthy of Worship?" What does that phrase even mean, you could legitimately ask? We might do an occasional "falling on our knees" when "O Holy Night" is played in December -- just to be silly. (Yes, I have done this, many times.) But, never would a good Unitarian Universalist seriously kneel down in front of anything or anyone. What if that isn't what worship is about? Can UU's ever say, "Let us worship."?

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 "The Common Core...What is it? A good idea? Bad?" 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).

"Happiness": The inherent worth and dignity of every individual includes the right to be happy! Every day we try to create happiness in our lives. Why does it work sometimes and other times we fail? When we find happiness, why is it so fleeting? What if we are doing the opposite of what we need to be doing to create happiness and satisfaction in life? Come join Domo Geshe Rinpoche, a Buddhist nun, as she leads us in the discovery of new insights about happiness.

Spanish Speakers Potluck will meet at the home of Audrey Shomos, 134 Grove St., Evansville. All levels of Spanish speakers are welcome, including beginners! Bring a dish to pass if you can. If you can't, come anyway! Please contact Rosemary Dorney (238-4382) for more information or to arrange a ride.

Message from the President

~ Gary Gates

As we head into the election season, I know that many Prairie members will be out working for the candidate or political party of their choice. That is the way it should be. It is important that we do everything we can to make our political institutions serve the interests of all people by protecting the environment and working to eliminate and rectify discrimination against oppressed minorities.

It is equally important to remember that Prairie is not a political organization and should not be used to promote a political party or candidate. Doing so would violate the tax

laws. More importantly it could alienate other members or potential members. Our goal is to be a welcoming congregation for everyone. So I urge you to do your best to support your chosen party or candidate while respecting the right of others to make a different choice.

Musings from the Minister

~ Reverend Sandra Ingham

HAPPY NEW YEAR! That would be the new church year, the start of our "regular" season. Something happened quickly to summer long before I was ready -- it is gone. True, we are having several days of real summer weather as I write this, but meteorological summer will be over by the time you read this and a mere three weeks later, so will "real" summer.

We have had a busy summer here at Prairie. I am impressed by how turnout for Sunday morning has been consistently good all through the summer months. I was similarly impressed when I found out that Prairie never followed that strange Unitarian custom of closing during the summer months. The Universalists never did that either.

So many exciting and challenging things will be happening this fall at Prairie. We have a new Director of Religious Education who is full of energy and ideas. We have terrific Sunday services planned. In October, our Caring Committee will once again offer the three-session workshop on end-of-life decisions. Look for a "New UU" orientation to be held in early November. We are busy! There is something for everyone!

If you want to be "in on the action", consider: being a substitute R.E. teacher; making coffee; CLEANING UP after coffee; helping with Soup Sundays; CLEANING UP after Soup Sundays; joining a committee - any committee. All committees are always looking for new committee members. This is a great way to get to know other people in the Prairie community. You might even have fun! If you really want to be a "mover and shaker", join the Program Committee where we stretch our minds and our imaginations to continue to bring you first-rate, top-notch Sunday programs week after week.

It's going to be, if not a happy new year, then surely a challenging one. Here's hoping that your involvement with Prairie just grows and grows... in ways that are transforming, meaningful and satisfying for you!

Prairie News

The Water Ceremony recognizes the importance of water to our lives. We do this celebration yearly at the beginning of the Religious Education 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.)

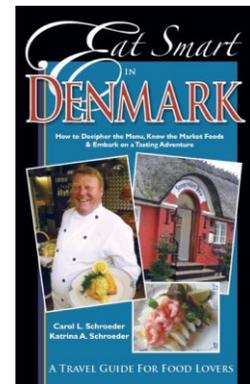
It is a common Unitarian Universalist tradition for members to collect water from their summer activity. It can be from your rain barrel, the local swimming pool, a lake, river or tap from an exotic vacation spot or any water that symbolizes something meaningful from the past year. At the ceremony, Prairie 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 remember to collect a sample of water, water will be provided as a substitute.

Pledges and/or Donations: Prairie runs on love and volunteer time, but it also needs your financial support to bring quality programs every Sunday, support our staff, and maintain our buildings. Pledges are the primary way that this financial support comes in. Pledges are promises that allow us to develop a proposed budget for the year. However, if you prefer to not pledge and want to donate throughout the year, or make one donation, then we will gladly record your donation(s) for tax purposes as long as you either give us a check or place your cash in an envelope with your name on it.

You'll be receiving a letter and pledge form from the Finance Committee soon. It would be very helpful if you could return the pledge form on or before October 5. Thank you for your commitment to Prairie. --Finance Committee



Carol “Orange” Schroeder and her daughter Katrina are pleased to announce the publication of their culinary guide to Danish food entitled *Eat Smart in Denmark* (Ginkgo Press, Madison). Prairie members are invited to the debut party at HotelRED, 1501 Monroe Street in Madison, on Sunday, September 14 from 5- 7 pm. The event will feature the North American Kringle Competition. Attendees are invited to sample kringle from across the country before voting for the People’s Choice Award. There will also be an exclusive kringle flavor of Michael’s



Frozen Custard and tastes of Kringle Cream liqueur from Death’s Door Distillery in Middleton, as well as sampling of other Danish foods such as æbleskiver and smørrebrød.

Rev. Sandy will be out of town the first two weeks of September. She will not have cell phone or internet access from September 8 to 12. Other than those days, as always when she is away, she can be reached via email or voice mail messages.

A Visit to the Free Congregation of Sauk County ~ Anne Lundin



I can hardly believe that I have been in Wisconsin for over twenty years and just this summer discovered Freethinkers Hall in Sauk City: Free Congregation of Sauk County (FCSC). I had heard about it in passing as a possible joint service and picnic there in the summer.

When I heard about the upcoming service in late July, where Prairie folks would participate in a joint service and afterwards a potluck lunch, I raised my hand, committing two fingers to the trip. I was hoping Tom would agree, and he gladly did. We both were so curious about this place, this historic building and congregation to which we are related.

When we arrived at Sauk City and found Polk Street – an easy drive, easy find – we were astonished at what we found: an absolutely gorgeous old building sitting on a massive block-long, block-deep, tree-filled lot. Founded in 1852, the Freethinkers Hall was built in 1884 on a beautiful lot just a block from the main street in town. The architect was Alfred Clas who did many famous buildings including the Wisconsin Historical Society, the Olin House in Madison, the Milwaukee Library, and the Pabst Mansion. For decades it served as a community center for the town as well as a meetinghouse for those liberal German immigrants and their families who moved to the area for religious and political freedoms. The German *Freie Gemeinden* (“free congregations” or “free societies”) were established in towns across the northeast and upper mid-west. One of these immigrants, Eduard Schroeter, moved to Sauk City and founded the congregation, becoming its leader and speaker. The Free Congregation of Sauk County is the last remaining Free Congregation in North America.

We’re all related because this historic gem is now a Unitarian-Universalist congregation. I encourage all of us to discover or re-discover this beautiful historic building and its history. I am awed to think of how over more than a century, this place of free thought, free inquiry has survived and flourishes still. I hope to return often. (For more information and pictures, see their website: <http://www.freecongregation.org>)



Final Choices Workshops: Coming This October: A series of three workshops on “Final Choices” will be held at Prairie in October for interested Prairie members. The purpose of the workshops is for participants to plan ahead for end-of-life decisions. Regardless of what age or stage we are at, we need to address the legal and medical decisions to meet our personal wishes and get our plans in order. The workshops, sponsored by the Caring Committee, will include speakers, discussions, and personal

planning. We will use the First Society resource “Final Choices” as a framework, with copies for participants. The three workshops are as follows:

October 11 10am-12 noon Session I: Legal Matters: Estate Planning, Durable Power of Attorney, Personal Representative Presentation by Heather Wilson

October 18 10am-12 noon Session II: Conversations about Our Decisions for End-of-Life: Presentation by Jim Jaeger

October 25 10am-12 noon Session III: Participants will choose one of these topics for the final workshop:

- Follow-up with Jim Jaeger
- Emotional Issues Related to End-of-Life
- Pre-planning for Funeral/Memorial Service, Obituary, Cremation/burial

Please register by September 30. Mail with \$15 Registration Fee to Aileen Nettleton, 645 Sheldon Street, Madison, WI, 53711 by September 30.

RE Circle of Friends

There are a couple new faces downstairs. The RE Program is pleased to announce that Amy Cifre (see FRAY) is joining Jed Anderson to provide quality child care for Prairie children during the Sunday service and special programs. Amy resides in the Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood and is bilingual in English and Spanish. Welcome, Amy!

The RE committee is also pleased to introduce our new Director of Religious Education.



Holly Tellander has been a teacher for as long as she can remember. Her first job was teaching all of her younger brothers and sisters how to get along! She has taught every age from preschool through college and has a passion for understanding and utilizing the developmental stages that children go through as a means to enhance learning. She is passionate about education and about the UU principles and this is her dream job!

Holly has already plunged in to Prairie's RE as she helped spruce up the RE space for the Open House on August 31.

Welcome, Holly! We look forward to working with you and getting to know you and your family here at Prairie!

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 Amy Cifre 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.

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



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