

Prairie Fire

November 2016

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Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

Sat Nov 5 5:00 a.m.—*Men's Shelter Breakfast*

Sat Nov 5 9:00 a.m.—*Prairie WOW*

Sun Nov 6 8:45 a.m.—*Choir Rehearsal* in Annex

Sun Nov 6 10:00 a.m.—*What Ails Our Democracy*—With the election looming, Mike McCabe of the Blue Jean Nation will give us his prescription for curing our ailing democracy. Blue Jean Nation is commoners working to house the politically homeless and transform parties that are failing the United States.

Sun Nov 6 11:45 a.m.—*Humanist Union*—meets

Thurs Nov 10 6:30 p.m.—*Humanist Union Movie Night*—in the Annex

Sun Nov 13 8:45 a.m.—*Choir Rehearsal* in Annex

Sun Nov 13 10:00 a.m.—*Untitled*—No, not untitled because I couldn't think of a title—*Untitled* is the title. Because I find that I am unable to decide what I want or need to say on this Sunday morning until November 9th, when we will know what happened on November 8th. Whatever the outcome of this strangest-ever election, we need to figure out how to go forward in a positive, united way. How do we begin on November 9th to heal this nation? Is that even remotely possible?—Rev. Sandy

Sun Nov 13 11:30 a.m.—*The Genius Factory: The Curious History of the Nobel Prize Sperm Bank*—by David Plotz is the November Book Club selection. "Not just a history of the sperm bank founded in 1980 by Robert Graham, but a report of the author's encounters with the bank's employees, its donors, its donees—and the children that resulted." Kirkus Reviews, suggested by Deesa Pence, 288 pages.

Sun Nov 13 11:45—*Prairie Board*—meets in the Annex

Mon Nov 14 6:00 p.m.—*Finance Committee*—meets in the Annex

Sun Nov 20 8:45 a.m.—*Choir Rehearsal* in Annex

Sun Nov 20 10:00 a.m.—*Who Invited YOU?*—An intergenerational, very special service about a service organization dear to the hearts of many Unitarian Universalists—the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee). Everyone is invited to be a guest at the table of life, aren't they? And yet...the seating arrangements are handed out willy-nilly. It's all a matter of luck as to whether or not you get first-class accommodations or have to stand up because there aren't any seats left. There will be skits performed by our young people and perhaps by some older folks, as well. We will learn a little bit about which particular guests at the table the UUSC wants us to focus on this year. And, we will consider how to do this.—Rev. Sandy

Sun Nov 20 11:30 a.m.—**Soup Sunday**

Sun Nov 20 11:45 a.m.—**Parish Meeting**

Tues Nov 22 1:30 p.m.—Prairie Elders will meet in the Annex. The topic this month will be *Our Thanksgiving traditions*. Elders meet in the Annex the fourth Tuesday of each month to chat and enjoy shared snacks, with coffee and tea provided.

Sun Nov 27 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal** in Annex

Sun Nov 27 10:00 a.m.—**Nonviolent Peaceforce**—The Nonviolent Peaceforce is an organization Kathy and Randy Converse have supported for ten years. NP is an unarmed, paid, civilian protection force that protects threatened civilians and facilitates discussions among groups in conflict. Currently NP has teams in the Philippines, South Sudan, Myanmar and the Middle East. In addition, NP holds Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN. It has been endorsed by nine Nobel Peace Prize winners including the Dali Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. This year NP was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER

I have been collecting children's books for twenty years -- picture books, mainly, ones supposedly meant for the four-to-seven-year-old market. But, as anyone who is familiar with books for children knows, the really good ones are written for people of all ages and illustrated with the same intention and for the same audience.

Recently, I used one of my favorite children's books in a Sunday service -- Frederick, the title of the book and the name of the main character. Frederick, our hero, is part of a family of five field mice preparing for winter. It appears that Frederick is not doing any work at all. As the other four run around gathering food and nesting material, Frederick just sits there. But things are not always as they appear. Frederick, too, is gathering supplies for the winter. You just can't see what he is storing up: words, colors, the sun's rays, beauty, poetry.

Not long after telling Frederick's story, I spent a few days hiking in the Southwest, in Red Rock Canyon on the outskirts of Las Vegas, and then in Zion National Park. I found myself lamenting the fact that, for a number of reasons, this could be my last trip to Zion. My feelings of sadness, of loss, of the fleetingness of life were overwhelming.... until...

.... until Frederick popped up in my mind. Then I realized that I am not here (In both senses of that word: here at Zion, where, incidentally, I am writing these words, and here on earth at this particular point in time) -- I am not here to lament being here and to dwell on thoughts of mortality, which for me go hand-in-hand with autumn. I am here to find beauty and joy in a broken world. I am here to seek out and redistribute as much love and gratitude as I can in my being-alive-time. That's what I am doing on these fall hikes -- gathering supplies for the winter.

What better month to give thanks for life -- its brokenness, as well as its wholeness -- than November? The poet Rumi wrote: "Let the beauty we love become the good we do." May it be so. Happy Thanksgiving! -- Rev. Sandy

Message from the President—Gary Gates

I am home from my surgery. The doctor described it as complex.

He said the tendon that keeps the foot from tipping out was completely gone. He took the tendon that supports the arch of the foot and used it to replace the missing tendon. He then moved the heel bone and the ball of the foot to place less stress on the tendon.

He said it was essential not to place any weight on the foot until the newly sewn in tendon had a chance to grow into the bone and the heel and ball of the foot had a chance to solidify in their new positions.

He felt that would take two to three months and about a year to have about 80% of my tendon problem resolved, which he said would be good enough to resume my normal activities.

I think Karen Deaton will need to step into my role as President for awhile. Please give her all the help you can.

Circle of Friends—Holly Tellander, Director RE

Prairie RE October Happenings

Busy in RE

October PAD (Principal Action Day) Workshop & Lunch

For October's workshop RE students continued the yearly theme of Social Justice. They learned about the work of UNICEF worldwide. We rotated through different stations to give us an idea of what it is to experience limited resources. Then we trick-or-treated through the larger congregation for spare change to donate to UNICEF. After we had lunch together and then took a walk around the block to do a neighborhood cleanup.

It was a great time!

Coming up!

Guest At Your Table will kick off in November. Keep an eye out for GAYT boxes and special announcements.

New faces!

We have two new childcare workers downstairs. Faith Robinson came on board at the beginning of the summer and we've just added Gloryvee – who lives right in the neighborhood. If you see them, please introduce yourself and make them welcome. We are so lucky to have them!

Middle School Social Justice Team

Our middle school class is busy turning plastic bags into sleeping mats to be donated to homeless shelters in Dane County. If anyone would like to help out with this project at home – it's easy to get started and the students would be happy to get you help to do so. All you need to be able to do is a simple crochet stitch. Talk to Holly Tellander if interested.

Our website is always being updated and if you haven't done so yet, please 'Like' Prairie's RE Facebook page: [Prairie UU Religious Education Program](#).



As always, thanks for your support!



Fall in the Prairie Yard

The seasons are changing and it's time to do end-of-summer cleanup in Prairie's yard: raking, trimming, and hauling, as well as checking the roofs and doing minor repairs. Come help on Saturday, November 5, from 10 a.m. until we're done or tired. Cider and snacks will be provided. Bring rakes, tarps, and pruning tools.

This is a great opportunity to check out this year's improvements to the yard, while helping our hardworking Housing and Property committee. All ages are welcome.

Social Action Committee Report by Pam Gates

The UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee) will be the recipient of half of our Sunday morning collections in November. The funds collected will be added to our Religious Education Guest at Our Table collection and sent together to the UUSC, which is the UU service arm.

The UUSC does outreach work around the world. Projects include rebuilding a Haitian village after the earthquake; supporting water sanitation and hygiene in Flint, Michigan; giving humanitarian relief to flood victims in West Virginia; working for access to clean, affordable water in communities around the world; the list goes on and on.

Our project for December is Dane County jail inmates' needs. We're hoping to write Christmas cards to inmates as a Prairie project and to collect warm winter clothing for people being released or on Huber. We've asked the jail whether we can give such things to people housed in the jail itself, but we won't find out for a while if that's allowed.

MOSES continues its efforts to support former prisoners after release, to reduce the use of crimeless revocation, to expose solitary confinement for what it is, torture, and to reduce its use in the prisons. It's becoming increasingly clear to people on both sides of the political aisle what our mass incarceration policy is doing to our country, particularly to populations such as African Americans. I am beginning to feel hope as I continue my work with MOSES; I'm now assistant secretary.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for Sunday, December 11, when the Program and Religious Education Committees will present a very special holiday service -- "Old Befana" with Ken Lonquist and company. Find out more and read the reviews of this spectacular show at kenland.com.

Please consider volunteering for and participating in one or more of Prairie's committees or groups. A full list is located on Prairie's website:

<http://uuprairie.org/aboutus/#com>

Or contact Karen Deaton for more information at:

wisconsinkaren@gmail.com

