

# Prairie Fire

January 2017

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## Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

**Sun Jan 1** 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

**Sun Jan 1** 10:00 a.m.—**Hymn Sing/Request**

**Sun Jan 1** 5:30 p.m.—**Men's Group**—meets 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. There will be a potluck followed by discussion

**Mon Jan 2** 6:30 p.m.—**Program Committee**—meets

**Tues Jan 3** 1:30 p.m.—**History Committee**—meets in the Annex

**Wed Jan 4** 6:15 p.m.—**Finance Committee**—meets in the Annex

**Fri Jan 6** 6:00 p.m.—**Board Game Night**

**Sat Jan 7** 5:00 a.m.—**Men's Shelter Breakfast**

**Sat Jan 7** 9:00 a.m.—**Prairie WOW**—meets in the Annex

**Sun Jan 8** 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

**Sun Jan 8** 10:00 a.m.—**Loose Connections**—To what or to whom are you most connected? Can true connection only happen slowly over a period of time? If I connect with you for twenty seconds, how strong is that connection? For ten hours on an airplane? For decades as a member of your family? Do I have to know the ending of your story in order for a real connection to occur? When connections are severed by death, distance, disagreement, what fills the vacuum? And, the most difficult question of all in the twenty-first century, how do we connect with those with whom we disagree or do not like? We will consider these questions and many more as we ponder what might lie ahead in the year 2017. —Rev. Sandy

**Sun Jan 8** 10:00 a.m.—**RE Classes Resume**

**Sun Jan 8** 11:45 a.m.—Humanists hear about coming eclipse. John Rummel of the *Madison Astronomical Society* will be talking to the Humanist Union about **The Great American Eclipse: August 2017**. On August 21, 2017, the shadow path of the moon will span the United States from coast to coast, but the eclipse won't come to us. We'll find out what we need to do and where we need to be to experience the totality that day. We'll have our potluck lunch at 11:45 a.m. followed by John's program from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Meeting House.

**Sun Jan 8** 11:45 a.m.—**Prairie Board** meets in the Annex

**Mon Jan 9** 6:30 p.m.—**Spanish Speakers Potluck**—will meet at 404 S. Blount. For more information or to arrange a ride, call Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382.

**Sun Jan 15** 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

**Sun Jan 15** 10:00 a.m.—**Service**

**Sun Jan 15** 11:30 a.m.—**Soup Sunday**

**Sun Jan 15** 12:00 noon—The January selection for the book club is—**Lucy**—by Laurence Gonzales. Primatologist Jenny Lowe is studying bonobo chimpanzees deep in the Congo when she is caught in a deadly civil war that leaves a fellow researcher dead and his daughter, Lucy, orphaned. Realizing that the child has no living relatives, Jenny begins to care for Lucy as her own. But... she discovers that Lucy is... an entirely new Hybrid species - half human, half bonobo. Recommended by Barbara Park. 320 pp.

**Tues Jan 17** 1:30 p.m.—**History Committee**—meets

**Sun Jan 22** 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

**Sun Jan 22** 10:00 a.m.—**Service**

**Tues Jan 24** 1:30 p.m.—**Prairie Elders**—meets in the Annex. The topic this month will be **Dead of Winter Blues Busting**. This small Prairie group gets together on the 4th Tuesday each month for lively discussion and sharing. Low sodium snacks are always welcome to accompany the Prairie provided coffee and tea. Contact Al Nettleton (238-6053) or Penny Eiler (395-2423) for more information.

**Sun Jan 29** 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

**Sun Jan 29** 10:00 a.m.—**Service**

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## **MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER**

At a recent meeting of the Program Committee, we had a discussion about growth. If you had been a *fly on the wall*, though, you might not have realized that we were talking about growth. You would have heard conversation about these topics. Why don't we sit around the tables more often during Sunday services? Should we have a *Getting to Know You* intergenerational service sometime this winter or spring? Why does it seem as if we try to hold all out meetings and events on Sundays after the service?

Later, I realized that what we were really talking about in that Program Committee meeting was the transformation of Prairie Society from a family church/congregation to a more program-oriented one. People who study church dynamics and how congregations are organized use these terms as a rough guide to understanding how the institution of the church (or fellowship, synagogue, temple) evolves. A family church is loosely considered to be a congregation numbering up to about fifty people. Beyond that number, a congregation begins to be what is *known in the business* as a program church, one having between 50 and 100 members.

Growth is usually a good thing. And the fact that Prairie is changing into a slightly different type of organization means that there will be pluses and minuses as a natural part of that change. We should not fear getting bigger. Nor does growth mean that the positive aspects of being a so-called family church have to be lost in the transformation. We need to be creative in our response to higher numbers of people coming to Prairie. One way to do that is to have an intergenerational service where the *upstairs folks* intentionally meet the *downstairs folks* and get to know each other a little.

My sense is that most of the time we have too many people in the building on a Sunday morning to comfortably use the tables. Sometimes, though, that set up is perfect—an example being last year’s Auction. As for trying to cram everything we do into only one day of the week, Sundays—well, I had an *Auction Epiphany* moment when I was thinking about ways to broaden our horizons on this subject. Because of our very successful Auction in March of 2016, we **are** doing more and more things at times other than on a Sunday. And, we are getting to know others better in the process of taking part in events that we purchased at the Auction.

Light bulb moment! There I was thinking only in terms of how much the Auction helped us financially that I completely missed the fact that the Auction is also helping us through this transition period of moving from being primarily a family church to being a more program-oriented church (though still a family church in many ways). Duh!

With that in mind, I hope that we will continue our *new tradition* of aiming really high in our Auction expectations. We can do so by having another successful Auction this coming March. Now that we are entering 2017, March 5 is not very far away. Time to start thinking seriously about what you want to offer in the Auction, what you hope others will offer (or re-offer??) and, of course, to start *saving your pennies* (and larger items of currency!) for the only-two-months-away upcoming Auction.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Rev. Sandy

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## **CIRCLE OF FRIENDS—HOLLY TELLANDER, DIRECTOR RE**

### **Prairie RE January Happenings**

It’s the start of a new year in RE and we are excited to get back to our regular classes!

### **7th-9th Grade OWL@Prairie**

Prairie will host a 7th-9th grade OWL session this January through March. More information can be found at <http://www.uua.org/re/owl>.

From the website—

“Honest, accurate information about sexuality changes lives. It dismantles stereotypes and assumptions, builds self-acceptance and self-esteem, fosters healthy relationships, improves decision making, and has the potential to save lives. For these reasons and more, we are proud to offer Our Whole Lives (OWL), a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education curricula for use in both secular settings and faith communities.”

If you know of a student in this age range who might be interested in this opportunity, we still have space available. Please direct them to Holly Tellander for more information.

**Mark your calendars!**

**Sunday, January 8th**—RE classes officially resume. Can't wait to see the students in class again!

**Sunday, January 8th**—7th-9th OWL Parent meeting 11:30-12:30. Please share this info with anyone you think might be interested.

**Sunday, January 29th**—January PAD (Principal Action Day) Workshop—This one will be active! Our social justice theme for the month is HUNGER. Last year at our visit to the food pantry the tour guide informed us that January is one of the worst months for food banks. Donations are generally at their highest in November and December and drastically taper off in January and February. We wanted to highlight the issue of hunger this month as a means to combat this problem. Stay tuned to the Prairie News group, the RE Facebook page and church announcements and bulletin boards as planning for the activity develops. It will be a lot of fun! And don't forget—volunteers get a free lunch! Please contact Holly Tellander ASAP if you would be willing to volunteer between 11:30 and 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 29th.

⊕ As always, thanks for your support! ⊕



Amber Bruns playing the prelude at the Symbol Tree service

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***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](mailto:Wisconsinkaren@gmail.com)***