

Prairie Fire

November 2017

Editor: Phyllis Long plong373@gmail.com

Pub. Date: 10/27/17

Rev. Sandra Ingham, minister—minister@uuprairie.org

Dan Klock, administrator—admin@uuprairie.org

Holly Tellander, DRE—prairie_uu_dre@outlook.com

Gary Gates, president—gig.gts@gmail.com

Andy Garst, vice-president—garst.andrew@gmail.com

Kathy Converse, treasurer—conversekrtm@gmail.com

Ann Urbanski, board secretary—anneu53714@gmail.com



Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

Nov 3 6:00 p.m.—**Board Game Night**

Nov 4 5:00 a.m.—**Men's Shelter Breakfast**

Nov 5 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

10:00 a.m.—**Free Speech vs Hate Speech—Where do we draw the line?**—by Robin Proud. We all support free speech, but what if the speakers are armed and yelling racial slurs? What about a comedian who jokes about killing a president? How do we balance rights and safety on college campuses? What about art museums who have removed exhibits after protests? Does it matter if someone sits or kneels during the national anthem? These are just a few of the questions in the news recently. We'll look at some examples and open it up for discussion.

11:45—The Humanist Union will hear a presentation on **Tragedy of the commons: declining vaccination rates and herd immunity** by Malia Jones, who got her Ph.D. From the University of California, Los Angeles, Department of Community Health Sciences, School of Public Health. She is an Assistant Scientist in the Applied Population Laboratory at the UW-Madison. We'll have our potluck lunch at 11:45 a.m., presentation and discussion 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Come and learn the implications of the anti-vaccination movement. See Malia's Wednesday Night @ the lab presentation on YouTube at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15GHePOiL_O.

Nov 12 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

10:00 a.m.—**A Cold, Hard Look at Reality**—Rev. Sandy will attempt to *bring you up to speed* on the trials and tribulations that our association has been struggling with and trying to work through since April 1st. What began as a controversy around the hiring process for the Regional Executive of the Southeast Region of the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) ultimately resulted in the abrupt resignation of the then-president of the UUA, followed by other resignations and charges of institutional racism. What has happened between April and November? Has our faith tradition been failing to live up to its highest ideals and standards? This is not the first time that we have been confronted with racist realities by our

brothers and sisters of color. Where do we go from here? **NOTE: This service is the first of a two-part series.**

Nov 19 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

10:00 a.m.—**Giant Leaps and Baby Steps**—Part Two of our look at racism within the UUA and within our congregations. Peter Anderson and Rev. Sandy want your input on how to bring about real, lasting change in a racist society. Is it possible to take giant leaps of imagination while, at the same time concentrating on practical, doable work? There are many facets to this conundrum. Peter Anderson will give you his perspective this morning and then invite your thoughts. Peter will consider whether or not the UUA is on the right path, one that will best provide a strategy to help minorities. Do we need to work on our own personal racism (workshops, seminars, training, for example)? Or, do we need to concentrate on doing good works out in the wider world (voter registration, getting to know people of color, peaceful protests, for example)? Or should we be working on both the personal and the societal aspects of racism?

11:45—**Soup Sunday**

Nov 26 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

10:00 a.m.—**You've Got to be Carefully Taught**—is the title of a song from a classic musical (*South Pacific*), a song that makes a powerful statement about racism. You've got to be carefully taught to hate, the song tells us. Can we be carefully taught to love instead? Why do some people intuitively *get* that we are all connected and others are unable to grasp this? On this Sunday, we will celebrate the work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) and its work building bridges between people. We will share stories about how, over many decades, the work of the UUSC has expanded the definition of neighbor. There might even be a real-life drama presentation this morning.—Rev. Sandy & Friends

11:45 a.m.—**The Botany of Desire**—by Michael Pollan is the November book club selection. We will meet in the Annex with lunch followed by a discussion of the book. Focusing on the human relationship with plants, uses botany to explore four basic human desires—sweetness, beauty, intoxication, and control—through four plants that embody them; the apple, tulip, marijuana, and potato. 287 pages. Suggested by Cynthia O'Neill

Nov 28 **Prairie Elders**—meets in the Annex. For more information contact Al Nettleton (238-6053) or Penny Eiler (852-8750).

Musings from the Minister—Sandra Ingham

Are you a white supremacist? I would bet money that you will answer, **NO!** and that your response will be vehement, defensive, angry. I would win this bet because that is the overwhelming response that I have gotten from people ever since I started asking the question after I returned from our annual General Assembly at the end of June. I would also win the bet because that was exactly my response to the question pre-General Assembly. Of course I am *not* a white supremacist. What kind of a question is that?

A question to get your attention, if nothing else. If you are offended by the question, good! There might be a possibility that by working through—and with —this question, we might begin to make real progress in both understanding what racism is and eradicating it. If we can get past our initial reaction to the white supremacist question and confront the pain and sorrow that it begs us to consider, then progress will be made. Here are two Sunday mornings, the 12th and the 19th, to the subject of racism within our Unitarian Universalist Association and within our congregations.

(1) Every way of being exists on a spectrum. There is not this or that way to be...there are many ways to be within different categories. White supremacy is a spectrum ranging from the end where the Ku Klux Klan resides to the other end of the spectrum where most of us would place ourselves. Most of us are kind, caring people. Kind, caring people who would not describe themselves as racists, let alone as white supremacists, yet...yet...here we are, all of us, at both ends of the spectrum and everywhere in between, swimming in a sea of white supremacy and white privilege that we are not even aware of most of the time. Without acknowledging this, how can we possibly make progress in race relations?

(2) If we are not even willing to put ourselves on this spectrum, try asking this question. What *has* worked that we white folks have tried over the centuries? Not much! Certainly, there have been gains for people of color...but...but...consider where we are right now, well into the twenty-first century—think: white police routinely shooting black men; income disparity; Charlottesville. We should be ashamed and we should recognize that shame. And we should think radically and creatively about why we have not made much progress in improving race relations in this country during all these years.

I believe that it is way past time for us white folks to get out of the way and follow the lead of our sisters and brothers of color. We need to stop thinking that we know what is best for everyone else. We need to stop assuming that everyone wants to be just like us. We need to step back and shut up for awhile and listened to people whose skin color is not white.

What kind of an epiphany did I have at General Assembly in June? What caused my light-bulb moment? Join me on November 12th and I will share my experience and my thought processes with you as best I can.—Rev. Sandy

Message from the President—Gary Gates

On December 31, 2017 I will have been Prairie's President for three and a half years. I've decided that that is long enough and will then be resigning.

Andy Garst, our current Vice-President, has agreed to fill out the remaining 6 months of my term, provided that I stay on the Board as Vice-President to help guide him. I have agreed to do so. Therefore, at the November 19 Parish meeting, we will be asking you to elect Andy to be President and myself to be Vice-President, effective January 1, 2018.

Nominations from the floor will also be accepted, of course. Both the President and Vice-President terms expire on June 30, 2018 and you will then be voting again on who you want for the next two years.

At the November 19 Parish Meeting we will also be voting on next year's budget. The pledge drive to support that budget is currently being conducted under the able leadership of Patty Stockdale, our Finance Chair.

To avoid making cutting the budget Andy's first chore, I urge you to respond generously to the current pledge drive for next year's budget. Due to deaths and people moving, we have lost some of our financial base. While Andy has indicated his top objective will be recruiting new members to restore our base, this will take time. To give him that time, we need current members to step up to be able to continue current activities and commitments.

I have been honored to serve you as your President. I will continue to be of service to Prairie in other ways. Thank you for your support.

Circle of Friends—Holly Tellander, Director RE

October was a great month for learning and making new friends in RE! I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the following folks who came down and shared their time and talents with RE!

If you are wondering whether volunteering your time in RE is a good fit for you, maybe try talking to one of these folks to get their perspective!

October RE Heroes!

Chris Porter	Johanna Hatch	Kim Tedesco
Nancy Wunderlin	Erin Bosch	Sophie Tedesco
Larry Hayslett	Brigid Walsh	Rebecca Strome
Ron Freye	Carl Wacker	Paula Pachciarz
Barbara Chatterton Freye	Elijah Richards	

And an ongoing thank-you to our AMAZING OWL INSTRUCTORS who are making the world a better place—one uncomfortable question at a time!

Karen Deaton	Randy Converse	Rick Reucking	Paula Pachciarz
--------------	----------------	---------------	-----------------

Prairie Youth Group (Grades 7 & up)

Rachel and Robin are still looking for movie buffs who might be interested in co-teaching—no planning necessary—for this age group throughout the year. We've created a Google Spreadsheet with the class dates and the films/themes that will be discussed each week. If you'd like access to that document to help you decide if you'd like to join them for their lively discussions, let me know.

Registration Reminder

This year we are launching online program registration. If you haven't yet done so, please register your students for RE as soon as possible. You can find the registration link on the RE page of Prairie's website. We need to have this information updated every year in order to stay in line with our Safe Church Policy. Additionally, if you are choosing to pay your

program contribution rather than volunteer—please submit checks as soon as possible as well.

Coming up in November!

Keep an eye on the website for weekly workshop offerings! We've got lots of fun stuff planned for November—plenty of choice-based, multi-age learning experiences that will empower our students to make meaning in their own unique way.

November's Theme: Discovery~

November's Core Belief: Discovery expands my experience and my contribution. (UU 3rd principle)

November's Core Question: Am I open to discovery?

November 5th Choices:

Maker Space—Sew Your Stuff! Do you have a favorite stuffed animal that has a rip? How about a jacket with a missing button? Sock with a hole for your toe to poke through? Join us in the Maker Space today to learn how to sew up your stuff from some of our crafty members. Judy Skog, Millie Moffat & Heidi Hughes have all signed up to help our students discover what they can do with a needle & thread!

Theater—Meditation Is An Open Sky! Thanks to Julie Lyne for signing up to help us discover the calm we carry within through the practice of meditation! Simple, kid-friendly mindfulness exercises will calm the mind, soothe the spirit and tame the tension of the upcoming Holiday season!

November 12th Choices:

Maker Space: Take Apart Class! Have you ever wondered what is inside a toaster? How a CD player works? Well, today, thanks to Al Nettleton, Gary Gates & Carl Wacker you will get to discover what is inside! Problem solving and communication are great tools for discovery! Let's build them together as we take things apart!

Kitchen: Six Sources in the Kitchen—Science Edition! A big thank you to Brigid Walsh for bringing this idea to our group! Making slime, dyeing flowers, nut butter playdough? Anything is fair game in this class where we practice our scientific skills to make new discoveries!

November 19th Choices:

Theater—Julie Lyne joins us again for a second round of meditation, because practice makes perfect! If you missed this class the first time around, this is your chance! If you were lucky enough to catch it the first time, you're even luckier to get a chance to take your practice of self-discovery even further!

Kitchen—Susan Hagstrom joins us to talk about Sustainable Chocolate! Did you know that chocolate has a rich history? Let's discover how we can enjoy our favorite treats while being mindful of the impact that chocolate has on our planet and its people!

November 26th—Thanksgiving Weekend—No workshops!

If you aren't traveling for the holiday weekend, join us for a holiday movie and popcorn downstairs with your RE friends!

Still Needed—We are still looking for:

-kitchen utensils (especially fancy or specialized items)	-oven mitts	-other baking paraphernalia
-big & small aprons	-cookie sheets	-small screwdrivers/other small tools

Other random items we are collecting:

- Toilet paper tubes
- Bottle caps (plastic & metal)

WE'VE GOT SPIRIT, YES WE DO! WE'VE GOT SPIRIT, HOW ABOUT YOU?!?

Lastly—we are still looking for **volunteers!** **I hope you noticed all those new names up there!** Everyone up there took a chance that they had something to teach and what a gift that is ☺ start small—come as a support person and see how you like it! Just be available to pitch in. It's a great way to check out whether it will work for you!

Thanks everyone, it's going to be a great month in Prairie RE!

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart"~Elizabeth Andrew

So long, farewell, auf wiedersehen, goodbye...

Dear Prairie Friends,

On Friday, November 10th, Lee and I will close on the sale of our home of the last 20 years and begin our journey to our new life in Santa Fe, New Mexico. As I look back on my 35 years at Prairie, I've realized that I am the person I am today because of Unitarian Universalism in general and Prairie in particular. The UU principles and sources speak to me in ways that my upbringing in Roman Catholicism never did. More than that, though, I can't begin to count the number of AHA moments I've had during Prairie services and activities, nor the number of laughs—and tears—I've shared with Prairie friends. As Lee and I continue packing for our move, I've found more photographs, including photos from Prairie activities more than 20 years ago, and I've had a pang of sadness seeing so many friends who are no longer alive. At the same time, I've also found photos of former Prairie youngsters who've grown up to be adults we can all be proud of. The circle of life continues, and I hope I'll continue to be part of Prairie's circle from a distance.

I'm blubbering on. Let me end by saying I LOVE PRAIRIE and I LOVE ALL Y'ALL If you find yourselves going to the southwest, please get in touch. I will share our new address once we have it. My email address will remain anneu53714@gmail.com(not yahoo!).

Prairie folks are the best:)

Anne Urbanski

Prairie has a library! And I am the de facto, Prairie librarian. Last spring, Gary Gates asked if I would organize the books around the building and annex. So, now the Prairie Library Collection is cataloged and shelved in two places.

The children's collection is housed in the RE office downstairs. This collection contains picture books, chapter books, as well as books that might be useful to RE teachers. There are books of folktales from all over the world and books about world religions as well as history, biography, and culture. The children's collection is a great resource for Sunday morning's *Story for all Ages*. There are even a few songbooks.

The adult collection is at the annex. This collection is mostly nonfiction books on a wide variety of subjects ranging from aging, culture, humanism, history, to religion and philosophy. The books are arranged by subject and then by title. There are a few continuing education-type CDs. On the opposite wall, the bookcase contains books and magazines provided by the Humanist Union. If you are looking for ideas on worship services, how to write wedding vows, or an explanation of Buddhism, the Prairie Library Collection has what you need.

Each collection has a notebook which lists all the titles and directions for checking out books. You are welcome to take home to read any of the Prairie Collection books. I really want the collection to be used!

If you would like to donate a book, contact me, Dawn Hayslett, at larrydawnhay@msn.com or call me at 608-636-5034. If you are looking for something, please don't hesitate to call or email me. I am a retired librarian and I love helping people find just the right book.

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 Andy Garst for more information at:

garst.andrew@gmail.com

