

# ***Prairie Fire***

**February, 2018**

**Pub. Date 01/27/18**

## **Prairie Calendar**

**(See descriptions of programs below)**

- Fri Feb 2** 6:00pm—Board Game Night
- Sat Feb 3** 5:00 am—Men’s Shelter Breakfast—Contact Paula Pachciarz to volunteer  
9:00 am—Prairie WOW—meets in the Annex
- Sun Feb 4** 8:45 am—Choir Rehearsal—meets in the Annex  
10:00 am—Service  
11:45 am—Humanist Union—meets in the Annex
- Mon Feb 5** 6:30 pm—Program Committee—meets in the Annex
- Sun Feb 11** 8:45 am—Choir Rehearsal—meets in the Annex  
10:00 am—Service
- Mon Feb 12** 6:30 pm—Spanish Speakers Potluck—meets in the Annex. For more information contact Rosemary Dorney or call 298-0843
- Sun Feb 18** 8:45 am—Choir Rehearsal—meets in the Annex  
10:00 am—A Mystery Guest—What weighs forty pounds, measures 34” x 7” x 26”, is spending part of February and March in Madison, and will be a Prairie on February 18<sup>th</sup>? Why the famous *Travelling Chalice* of course! You won’t want to miss this special event. When a chalice travels, where does it go? Why does it travel? How does it get from place to place? Is it flaming as it travels? Where did this flaming chalice concept come from anyway? Why do we light it every week? Why do we have the honor of hosting it on this particular Sunday morning? Join me on this Sunday for the answers to these and other flaming questions!—Rev. Sandy  
11:15 am—Soup Sunday  
12:00 noon—*A gentleman in Moscow*—by Amor Towles—A transporting novel about a man who is ordered to spend the rest of his life inside a luxury hotel. This is the Book Club selection for this month. After *Soup Sunday*, join us at the Annex for discussion of the book. You do not need to have read the book to join in!
- Sun Feb 25** 8:45—Choir Rehearsal—meets in the Annex  
10:00 am—Service
- Sun Mar 4** 10:00 am—Service (brief) followed by Service Auction

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## **Musings from the Minister—Sandra Ingham**

Why do you go to Prairie? For community? Because you want your children to be a part of our religious education program? To learn something during a Sunday service? To be uplifted and/or inspired during that time? To be challenged, maybe even feel uncomfortable, by controversial ideas and issues? To grow and expand your awareness? To be with like-minded people? Some of the above? All of the above?

Is one of the reasons that you are a part of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society because of its social justice work? Is it even possible to have a church, a fellowship, a society, a faith tradition that does not get involved in social justice? Yes. I have known congregations that don’t *do* social justice.

Such a place would not work for me...and I hope not for many of you, either. I believe that we are here on earth to take care of those less fortunate than ourselves...to spread the wealth around...to end oppression...to take care of this precious planet. Of course there will be times in our lives when we have to focus on ourselves, times of pursuing education or a career or raising a family, times of grieving when we lose family and friends, times of doubt and even depression when we lose our way. For the long haul, though, I believe that we are here to work towards creating a more just and humane world.

That is why I am hoping that Prairie will participate in two programs in the coming months, work that we are being asked to do with Unitarian Universalist groups across the state, in general, and with the other two UU congregations in Madison—First Unitarian and James Reeb, in particular. One undertaking is WUUSAN, Wisconsin Unitarian Universalist Social Action Network, a way for us to actively influence work on social justice throughout the state of Wisconsin.

The other program that I hope Prairie will become involved in is Beloved Conversations, a series of meditations and reflections on race and ethnicity that will prepare us to more effectively dismantle systemic racism by doing the inner work that has to be done before we can truly understand white supremacy and white privilege. The formation of WUUSAN is happening right now. Two goals that WUUSAN is considering are: the creation of a lobbying presence in the Wisconsin State Legislature and the formation of teams that would go wherever needed in the state to focus on issues at the grassroots level. To make WUUSAN happen, Prairie will need to commit more money to its Social Action Committee part of the budget. I have no doubt that we are capable of doing this.

For the Beloved Conversations to take place at Prairie, we will need eight-to-ten people who are willing to commit to several weeks of intense personal, inner work. Even though this undertaking probably won't become a reality until the spring of 2019, we need to start planning for it now. To make this happen— you guessed it!—Prairie will need a larger budget for its Social Action Committee in 2019. Let me know if you might be interested in being part of either or both of these groundbreaking programs! In the meantime, keep on keeping on!—Rev. Sandy

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### **Circle of Friends—Holly Tellander, Director RE**

Currently looking for volunteers for our February programming!

Prairie RE is first and foremost about building community. It's about meeting the needs of our students and families and providing programming that provides support and enrichment.

There are four main pillars of our program, three as consistently requested by parents and families in surveys collected at the end of each RE year, and the fourth a new addition this year to address the needs of our community of learners. These pillars are:

- 1) Unitarian Universalist Identity
- 2) Social Justice Work
- 3) World Faith Literacy
- 4) Social Emotional Learning

Every single one of our workshops ties in to one or more of these program pillars. We've had so many folks come down and share their gifts with our students and families. It's been a real treat to see the new connections made.

If you are wondering how you can get involved, please reach out. There are seasoned volunteers to help you with the technical details so that all you have to do is share your time and your interests with our students. Check in with some of the folks below if you have questions about what to expect as a once-in-awhile RE volunteer.

A big thanks to the following folks for coming down this year:

Gary Gates  
Chris Porter  
Al Nettleton  
Karen Deaton  
Carl Wacker  
Heidi Hughes  
Paula Pachciarz  
Judy Skog  
Deesa Pense  
Nancy Wunderlin  
Susan Hagstrom  
Dan Proud  
Brigit Walsh  
Kim Tedesco  
Randy Converse  
Eli Richards  
Johanna Hatch  
Sophie Tedesco  
Julie Lyne  
Erin Bosch  
Barbara Chatterton  
Ron Chatterton  
Rebecca Strome

**Our Program is only as strong as the volunteers who show up with ideas to keep our content fresh, engaging and progressive.**

*“Great things are brought about and burdens are lightened through the efforts of many hands engaged in a good cause.”—Elder M. Russell Ballard*

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### **From Molly Plunkett**

The social action committee has been discussing having a focus for energy as a congregational group. Much of the outreach Prairie already does (with the Road Home and serving breakfasts at Grace Episcopal Church) has related to homelessness in Madison.

So we are thinking of having homeless issues as a central focus. Pam Gates and Faith Cholvin already volunteer at The Beacon, a day shelter for homeless in Madison. Prairie contributed \$1300 to the shelter from offertory collections the end of 2017. We will investigate preparing lunches on a regular basis for folks who come to the shelter and collecting personal items and needed winter clothing. Stay tuned for more.

If you are interested in joining us, we would love to have you. Contact Pam Gates or Molly Plunkett. If you want to make a suggestion about local charities we should dedicate our Sunday offertory collections to, again, please contact us.

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### **Social Action Committee News**

**Allied Partners**, of which Prairie is a long time member church, continues to support the Allied Neighborhood by providing cash subsidies to people facing eviction and/or utility cut offs; it has been sponsoring \$500 scholarships for neighborhood association (Prairie cohosted in September 2017), staff a food pantry at the Boys and Girls Club, help provide Christmas presents for kids, there was a job exploration program, and support the Wellness Center which helps with transportation assistance and prescription copays, as well as an essentials pantry and offers workshops on health issues. Molly has applied for numerous grants for the Wellness Center and groups under its umbrella and the Center has been awarded grant money for the last several years. The neighborhood is currently strategizing to create a grocery for the area, which has been a virtual food desert since Cub Foods closed.

**WUUSAN**, or the Wisconsin Unitarian Universalist state Action Network, aims to build a statewide advocacy network employing the power of the collective voices of Unitarian Universalists in Wisconsin. This group has been organizing for a year and seeks to involve UU congregations from all areas of the state. The three Madison congregations have been participating for the past six months. Bylaws are being developed, as well as defining the social issues that member congregations want to address. Any thoughts, contact Molly or Rev. Sandy.

**Social Justice Series at First Baptist:** First Baptist Church (518 N. Franklin Avenue, Madison) is holding a series on social and economic justice discussions with some great speakers in January and February. Discussions are held from 9:30-10:30 in Room 306.

January 28/Madison Police Department—Speaker: Police Chief Michael Koval  
February 4/Madison Urban Ministry & Healing House—MUM Director Linda Kethum  
February 11/Mentoring Positive Program—Will Green, Founder February 18/Cit of Madison—Mayor Paul Soglin  
February 25/Urban League and Centro Hispano—President Ruben Anthony and Karen Menendez Collar

Any or all of these are definitely worth attending.

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## **Prairie History Book**

Is the Prairie History book still in the works? When will it be published?

Answers: Yes, still in the works. When to be published? At latest, we hope by sometime this summer. Although this is turning out to be a bigger job than we thought, we are nearing the end. It may go to two volumes, but since we don't have it all in place in the template, we don't know.

When it is done, we plan to have a gala book reading and signing event. The History Committee—Ruth Calden, Rosemary Dorney, Barbara Park, and I—are really looking forward to this. We love our job of writing and hearing the “articles” that are part of the book, but we are really ready to bring the book to a successful finish. Please note that preparation and “debriefing” related to the September 16 and 17, 2017, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary set us back about two months, since we had to focus on that for a while. Keep posted. It's going to happen!—by Mary Mullen

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