

PRAIRIE UNITARIAN CHURCH  
Madison, Wisconsin  
SEPTEMBER 29, 1991  
Melinda Morris Perrin

*Sharon - Seneca  
Hinsdale*

PRELUDE                      Drumming & Chanting

Members of the congregation are encouraged to help themselves to rattles, sticks, and drums and help center and cleanse. If you don't have an instrument, voices, feet, hands, and bodies make beautiful sounds.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SAGE WATER

While we are drumming, a bowl will be passed sunwise around the circle. It contains water in which sage has been soaking. Dip your hands into the water. Dry them on the accompanying towel, and then hold the bowl for your neighbor. If you have arthritis, let your hands rest in the water for a moment; it will feel good. The bowl will be passed throughout the service until everyone has had a turn.

RESPONSIVE READING        "The Words That Come Before All Else"

An ancient Iroquois sacred oral tradition dating back 10,000 years, the Opening traditionally starts every gathering of the People. This shortened version comes to us from Pamela Danby. I will start it off, and ask that you join me on the italicized portion.

"We gather our minds together in good health & peace.

    We see that our cycle continues and  
        that our ways are kept strong.

    All that we need has been left here for us

        And we have been given what to do;

    Before all else, we are to begin with thanks

Living in harmony with ourselves, each other, and the earth.

        Supporting all of creation

        With our good thoughts and good words

We give greetings and thanks to our Creator who has given us

*Our Families: those here with us now and those away.*

*Our Elders, who nurture us into the future*

*Our Women, who bring forth new life*

*Our Men, who let us know all is well*

*Our Children, who bring joy into our homes*

*Our Mother Earth from whom our happiness comes*

*All the Waters that strengthen the Earth*

*and refresh the People*

*The Seeds sent to sustain us*

*and Her blanket of green grasses*

*The Flowers and their warm sweet smelling breezes*

9-29-91  
Prairie

The Medicine Plants and People  
that cure our sickness and distress  
The low and high hanging fruit that purifies us  
The foods that sustain us:  
Our Three Sisters-Corn, Beans, & Squash  
The trees, older than us, standing firm to the sky

The Wild Animals and Fish:  
Our Brothers who volunteered their aid  
The Birds who sing to let us know of life's joy and purpose

Our Father, the Blue Sky,  
and the Clouds, His thoughts of rain  
The Thunderers, our Grandfathers,  
protecting us from the monsters below  
The Air & Winds from the Four Directions.  
They are just right for us  
Our Faithkeepers,  
helping us to maintain this good atmosphere  
The Stone People, the keepers of the records

Our Elder Brother, the Sun, making each day a new miracle  
Our Grandmother Moon watching over us in the nighttime sky  
Our Cousins, the Stars,  
whose dancing satisfies us without end.

INTRODUCTION

Where you learn who I am and what exactly we've been  
doing and are going to do this morning.

STORY FOR THE CHILDREN IN ALL OF US "Jumping Mouse"

MEDITATION & DRUMMING

A STORY FOR OUR ADULT SIDE

"What's a white girl like you doing drumming & chanting?"

Q & A

THANKSGIVING

Let's say these words together:

"From the Ever-Living, our Creator watches and listens  
Let there be gladness day and night, for we are loved and  
pitied, and have been given the means  
to set right all that divides us.

We Humans are to waste no life, and are to be ever grateful  
for all of life

So let that be our thought: To be Grateful  
For our People's Way is true & beautiful & strong  
And we are happy,

For our minds have come together and our hearts are as One."

CLOSING

revised & instructive  
shot not to etc. why you  
doing things, & the reasons  
local, written, you can do  
do (remember) for doing to