... As the prairie stretches out until it becomes one with the sky, let us reach out to touch and be one with the natural world and with one another.

March 21, 2000

President: Nancy E. Schraufnagel (608) 273-3195

Editor: Marilyn Ruecking (608) 838-8540; mruecking@hotmail.com

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, March 26
9am, Choir rehearsal
10 am, "Emily Dickinson: Musical Settings of her Poems," coordinated by Doleta Chapru and Warren Hagstrom

Sunday, March 26
12pm, Potluck

Sunday, April 2
9am Choir rehearsal
10 am, "Domestic Violence: Challenges We Face in the Future." Guest speaker, Brent Bailey from Domestic Abuse Intervention Services.

Sunday, April 9
9am Choir rehearsal
10am, "Our Spiritual Journeys" - panel of distinguished Prairie members led by Barbara Park.

Sunday, April 9
11:30am - Spring Parish Meeting!! (see OUR SOCIETY)

Sunday, April 16
10am, - Kay Frazier will continue her lay ministry dealing with "Hunting for Hope". The program will include Rosemarie Lester and others delving into life and literature. 

Wednesday, April 19
7 pm Spanish Speakers Potluck, see RSVP

Sunday April 23
10 am: "All About Bunnies: Easter Intergenerational Program," with contributions from Warren Hagstrom, KK Anderson, and others.

Next Prairie Fire deadline is Sunday, April 2, 2000

UPCOMING

Sunday, March 26 - Doleta Chapru and Warren Hagstrom will lead a service on the Musical Settings of Emily Dickinson’s Poems. The choir will sing and many Prairie musicians will perform.

Sunday, April 2: A guest speaker from Domestic Abuse Intervention Services will present “Domestic Violence: Challenges We Face in the Future.” From challenge, the Domestic Violence (DV) movement has grown wiser. What are the current areas of difficulty facing the movement? What must the movement do to continue providing a voice and place of healing to the hundreds of thousands of domestic abuse survivors they assist each year? The speaker will discuss current challenges facing the DV movement including issues of women who use violence and joint custody of children in violent homes.

Sunday, April 9: A panel moderated by (and including) Barb Park, Larry Nahlik and Lisa Gluck will discuss spiritual growth and discovery. Contributions from the high school group will be read.

Sunday, April 23: On Easter Sunday our intergenerational program will be about BUNNIES. We need more bunny stories, songs, and activities. (In fact,
we have no bunny songs at all.) If you would like to contribute in person or with an idea, please contact Warren Hagstrom, 238-4970 or warrenolaf@aol.com

ADMINISTRATION – Marilyn Ruecking

Articles for Prairie Fire
If you have something you want to communicate to other Prairie members, please send your e-mail to mruucking@hotmail.com (please label it Prairie Fire Article) or put your communication in the green folder located in the first floor office. Next PF deadline is April 2.

Information
Something on your mind? I can be reached at Prairie every Monday and Wednesday from 9a.m to 11 am (271-8218). Administrative e-mail can be sent to prairieu@execpc.com or mruucking@hotmail.com. This will be checked daily. A message left on the answering machine will be addressed Monday and Wednesday. My PF editing is a little green, but bear with me.

OUR SOCIETY

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE
The Society has a few regular activities for which we need help at each Sunday service. These include staffing the visitor’s greeting table, and doing the coffee set-up, program taping, and kitchen clean-up. Please come prepared to pitch-in and get these jobs done.

Hospitality
Greeting
Coffee set-up
Program taping
Kitchen and cleanup
Snow Shoveling

Pat Cautley
Phoenix Wordell
Pat Cautley
Kathy Converse
Robin Carre

Many hands make light work – thanks to all.

HEAR YE! HEAR YE! SPRING PARISH MEETING
The Spring Parish Meeting will be held Sunday, April 9, accompanied by a community pot luck. Committee reports will be presented and elections will be held. In addition, the Mission Statement will again be reviewed. The meeting’s agenda will be:

-Fall Meeting Minutes reviewed
-Treasurer’s Report
-Committee on Committees Board Elections and Lay Ministry
-Committee Reports
-Budget Reallocation Proposal & Development of Contingency Fund
-Mission Statement Review
-President’s Report

PRAIRIE BOARD NOMINATIONS
Spring 2000

President- Erin Bosch
Vice-President- Rick Ruecking
Secretary- KK Anderson
Treasurer- Judy Skog
Denominational Affairs – Nancy Schraufnagel
Finance-Bob Reuschlein
Religious Education-Robin Carre
Program Co-Chair- Nikki Bromberg
Program Co-Chair- Dean Schroeder
Social Action-?
Housing and Property- Al Nettleton
Membership- Mary Mullen
Long-Range Planning- Ken Skog

GA Delegates
The Denominational Affairs Committee proposes the following slate of persons for Prairie’s delegates to GA: Rosemarie Lester, Nancy Schraufnagel, and Pat Watkins.

Revising the Prairie Mission Statement
At the Parish meeting on November 22, 1999 we adopted a mission statement (shown at the end of this section). Preparing and adopting a mission statement is part of a national UU effort, called Fulfilling the Promise, to clarify and strengthen the links within and among UU congregations.

The Mission statement is intended to answer the questions:
Why does our congregation exist and who do we exist for?, and 2) In what ways do we live out and give expression to this sense of purpose, among ourselves and in the surrounding community? At the Fall Parish meeting there was interest in making revisions, so an ad hoc committee met, and developed a proposed revised Mission statement to be voted on at the Spring 2000 Parish meeting. (see below) However, we did not reach consensus on wording in two places. We request that votes be taken to decide wording in two places and that the resulting whole statement be voted on and adopted. Alternate choices for wording are shown in brackets [ ]. People involved in the review and revision include Mary Mullen, Kerry Behler, Metje Butler, Lisa Glueck, Pat Watkins, Doleta Chapru, Erin Bosch, Warren Hagstrom, Rachel Sigfried and Ken Skog.

Draft revision of the Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society Mission Statement (March 19, 2000) with choices for the Spring Parish meeting

Prairie is a lay-led congregation with a diversity of philosophical and spiritual views. We aspire to be both open-hearted and open-minded. We reach out to those who enter our doors with their combination of strengths and weaknesses, beliefs, and doubts and who desire to learn and [appreciate, follow, live by] the Unitarian Universalist Principles.
With our small size and wide range of ages we aspire to be like an extended family. We also seek to support one another and nurture the growth of each of our members. By sharing our joys and sorrows, [we hope to accompany, we accompany] one another on the journey through life.

We seek to learn with and from each other in an atmosphere that respects diverse ideas, lifestyles, cultures, and wisdom traditions. Our shared values include respect for all forms of life and stewardship of the environment. Helping our youth understand and appreciate these values is part of our mission.

We seek to promote dignity, worth, and justice for people worldwide by supporting individual and collective social action.

Current Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society Mission Statement Adopted November 21, 1999

Prairie is a diverse, lay-led congregation. We aspire to be both open-hearted and open-minded. We welcome all who enter our doors with any combination of strengths and weaknesses, beliefs and doubts.

Our small size allows us to be like an extended family: we aspire to support one another and nurture the growth of each of our members. By sharing joys and sorrows, we keep each other company on the journey through life.

We seek to learn with and from each other in an atmosphere that respects diverse ideas, lifestyles, cultures, and wisdom traditions. Our shared values include respect for all forms of life and stewardship of the environment. Helping our youth understand and appreciate these values is part of our mission.

We seek to promote dignity, worth, and justice for people worldwide by supporting individual and collective social action.

SERVICE AUCTION THANKS:
Thank you everyone for the great effort on the Service Auction March 19th! Special thanks to Cindy Haq as restauranteur and Orange Schroeder as auctioneer, the teenagers, lunch crew, auction crew, and finance committee members for all your efforts. Thanks to the whole congregation for a great group effort and a lot of fun for all. We raised over $2,700!
Gratefully yours, Bob Reuschlein, Finance Chair.

FIRST CALL FOR HELP
The Caring Committee has been established to help Prairie members in need. The types of support offered are writing notes, rides, telephoning, preparing food, home visits, child care, support for people dealing with life crises (e.g., grieving), tape delivery, and as a community resource list. The primary contact person has a list of volunteers with specific support roles. The current primary contact is Marilyn Ruecking, 838-8540.

THE RE EXPERIENCE
High School
On March 5th we conducted a Tea Ceremony. We each shared a part of ourselves through a creative activity. Great Fun! On March 12, we talked about our plans for the future with the aid of a questionnaire developed by Rick Ruecking. We also spoke about how the biblical story of the Prodigal Son and other stories could inspire us toward the spiritual growth discussed in UU Principal IV.

Sixth - Eighth
We spent time talking and making drawings, centering our thoughts on how our ideas have changed and how we have grown spiritually, i.e., how UU Principal IV has affected us.

Third - Fifth
We worked hard on making UU Principal III come alive. We talked about acceptance of one another and learning from each other. These ideas will become part of the book we’re creating that highlight UU principals.

K - Second
To experience UU Principal I (each of us is valuable), we read books about people with special needs and learned some sign language. We also learned that it is important to go to a church that accepts us for what we are (UU Principal III). We experienced this by constructing a “Meeting House” complete with furniture!

SECRET FRIENDS
We had such a great time getting to know our secret friends at the Secret Friends Party on March 12. We ate, drank and were merry having a “go” at cooperative creative drawings (dragons et. al) and playing a game called “Outburst”!
THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU to all those young people and adults that participated and made it so successful.

CENTRAL MIDWEST DISTRICT ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
APRIL 28-30 2000 IN APPLETON
The theme of the upcoming Central Midwest Annual Assembly is “Music: Our Unifying Spirit.” You won’t want to miss the keynote speaker, Carolyn McDade, composer of “Spirit of Life”. Also participating will be Trevor Stephenson, keyboard artist of 18th and 19th century instruments. There will be lots of great food and fun. Registration brochures can be found at Prairie. Apply by March 31, and the cost is $55 per adult ($75 for late registrations). Margit Kindl at Fox Valley UU mkindel@pop3.famvid.com has added information.
Chenille Sisters.
Dean and Orange Schroeder have two prime tickets to see the Chenille sisters in a jazz concert at the Civic Center on Saturday, April 15. Tickets are $20 each (regularly $23). Please contact 256-8813 or appelsin@aol.com if you are interested.

Spring events at Circle Sanctuary
The Circle Sanctuary, near Mt. Horeb, WI, will hold a Welcome Spring Festival on Saturday, March 25 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., as well as an Earth Day Festival on Saturday, April 22, from 10 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. For each event, the suggested minimum contribution is $20/adult, $10/youth (ages 5-17). Pre-registration is required by phone, (608)924-2216, or by e-mail, circle@mhtc.net.

March is Red Cross Month
There are some big reasons why you should give blood: a co-worker’s accident, a parent needing surgery, a neighbor fighting cancer. There are a lot of little reasons too: hundreds of children are facing life-threatening diseases, but may beat the odds with your help. These children can grow up and be anything they want to be; they just need a little help from you to get there.

Al Nettleton is our first Prairie Society donor this month. Will you be part of “the ripple effect”?

Auditions for New Musical “Lavender Rose”
Fran Zell has written the lyrics to a musical based upon her book Lavender Rose. The audition of 12 to 15 parts for women of all ages will be auditioned at 5 pm Sunday, March 26 and 7 pm, Monday, March 27 at Neighborhood House, 29 S. Mills. For info call Fran at 283-0983. Casting will be as multicultural as possible.

AMUUSE Yourself Single adults: Adult Midwest Unitarian Universalist Singles Enrichment (AMUUSE) will again host summer camp retreats for singles. Brochures for these vacations at Saugatuck, MI (6/26-7/2), (8/7-8/13), (8/21-8/25) and Lake Geneva, WI (7/16-7/22) are available at Prairie. Make your reservations now. For more info call Sharon Spencer at 847/816-3356 or e-mail: AMUUSE@compuserve.com

RSVP/You're Invited – The Social Events Calendar

Spanish Speakers Potluck
Wednesday, April 19 at 7 pm at the home of Prudence Barber, 1050 Jennifer St, 251-0852. For more information call Rosemary Dorney, 238-4382.

Prairie Playreaders
April 15 7:30 pm Rosemary Dorney & Tim Fast 4205 Odana Rd, 238-4382
May 19 Playreaders Annual Fish Supper Coordinated by Pat Watkins. Call Pat 233-5795 to RSVP.

KARAOKE GATHERING
Dean, Erin and Marty invite you to an evening of karaoke on Saturday, March 25 at the Karaoke Kid, 614 University Ave. We'll meet at 9:00 pm when the place is pretty empty so we can sing a lot. Later, it gets really crowded with boisterous college students—and that’s fun too. Teens and non-Prairie friends are welcome to join us.

Reid Miller on Stage
Reid Miller is preparing to play Zeller, the antagonist in “The Sound of Music” - a CTM production at the Oscar Mayer Theater - next month. Pass the word. Get your tickets early from the Civic Center Box Office. Shows are April 8 & 9. This may be the only time you will get to see him portray a Nazi.

YOUR TRUSTED GUIDE TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Do you want to visit the DR, a Spanish speaking island in the Caribbean and stay at the modest home of a culturally seasoned friend? In 2001 I will make my modest home available to visitors of the island. Expenses such as airfare and food are not included. But, you need not be on your own in a strange land. You may be a couple, a young adult, retired or a rainbow, I will give you the tout de force of the island, show you interesting out of the way places, introduce you to natives, exotic food and share this warm Spanish culture with you. You can communicate with me via hotmail to firm up your plans and to let me know your preferences before you leave the states; such as do you want to be meet at the airport, spend more time shopping, the beach or just hanging out etc. This is your opportunity to experience a specialized tour of an exotic Caribbean local and live among the real people (not just tourist) in a culturally and historically rich land.

Shaarei Shamayim Calendar
Saturday, March 25
9am – 2pm Shabbat Services