... 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.

From our Bond of Union.
The Prairie Fire is the newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society and is published semi-monthly.
An e-mail version is available at http://www.execpc.com/~prairieu

May 9, 2000

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, May 14
10am: “In Praise of Bicycles”. Osh Andersen will discuss the merits of one of the greatest inventions known to mankind - two-wheelers. (The Ethnic Connection, formerly scheduled, has been postponed but not forgotten.)
12:15pm: Annual year-end Prairie Potluck/Picnic. Bring your favorite gear.

Friday, May 19
6:00pm: The Playreaders’ Annual Fish Dinner. See RSVP for further details.

Sunday, May 21
10am: Transition Sunday
12:15pm Prairie Women’s Group meets downstairs. Bring a snack to pass and enjoy the company of other women.

Tuesday, May 23
7pm: Board Meeting. Board members and any interested persons may attend.

Sunday, May 28
Memorial Day Picnic – time and location to be announced.

Wednesday, May 31
7pm Spanish Speakers Group meeting. See RSVP for further details.

Sunday, June 4
10am: “If Peacemakers Are Blessed, Is The Voice of the Minority Cursed?” This is the first in a series of programs on conflict resolution in UU congregations. Guest speaker will be Helen Bishop of the Central Midwest District.

Sunday, June 11
10am: “The War on Drugs”. Nancy Graham will continue her 1999 program aided by Marty Drapkin and Warren Hagstrom.

DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, May 14 How do you feel about the increase of auto and truck traffic in Madison? What are the alternatives, and how can we promote them? For starters, please plan to bike to Prairie on May 14 if possible! Osh Andersen has many years experience tooling around the city and is prepared in fill us in on the advantages of this mode of travel. If you don’t bike, find out what you’ve been missing. But you’ll look sweet upon the seat, of a bicycle built for two...

This year’s annual Prairie Potluck/Picnic will take place at Marlborough Park (near Prairie). Please bring a dish to pass, your own plates and utensils if you can and a blanket or lawn chair. A softball game is on the agenda, so bring your bat/ball/glove as well as any other sporting equipment. There will be organized games for all ages and possibly a folk dance. All are welcome.
Sunday, May 21

This year our Transitions service will be entitled "Ages and Stages" and will feature many children and adults doing poems, prose, skits, and songs. Some special people will also be recognized. Erin Bosch will coordinate the program.

Sunday, June 4

Dr. Helen Bishop, a dynamic presence at our conflict resolution workshop, has agreed to present a program. She will enrich our understanding of conflict within our organization and help us to weigh the common good against the individual good.

ADMINISTRATION — Marilyn Ruecking

Articles for Prairie Fire
If you have a message you want to communicate to other Prairie members, please send your e-mail to mruecking@hotmail.com (please label it Prairie Fire Article) or put your communication in the green folder located in the first floor office. Next Prairie Fire deadline is May 21.

Information
How may I help you? I can be reached at Prairie every Monday and Wednesday from 9a.m to 11am (271-8218). Administrative e-mail can be sent to prairieu@execpc.com and will be checked often. A message left on the answering machine will be addressed Monday and Wednesday.

OUR SOCIETY

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

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE
May 21
Coffee set-up
Phoenix (;
Greeting
Lisa Glueck
Program taping
Jim Glueck
Kitchen and cleanup
Phoenix (;
Lawn Mowing
Kathy Helm,
Gary Giorgi
Lawn Mowing
Phoenix (;

Many hands make light work — thanks to all.

First Call for Help
The Caring Committee has been established to help Prairie members in need. The support offered may include writing notes, rides, telephoning, preparing food, home visits, child care, support for people dealing with life crises (e.g., grieving), tape delivery, and providing a community resource list. Our primary contact person has a master list of volunteers with specific support roles. Currently call Rachel Siegfried, 271-2173.

Religious Education News In A Nutshell
What are the kids up to?
9-12
We had fun doin’ the bunny hop at the April 23 Intergenerational!
6-7-8
We pursued the truth (UU principle #4) by reading stories and determining the outcome by applying UU principles. We also played UU bingo! Had a great time.
3-4-5
We presented our ROY G BIV banner to the congregation. It is currently located in the front foyer. Please add your thoughts on a UU principle to our creation.

Spring Fling
We made our own personal pizzas. Rachel Long led us in a wild game of “brain teasers”. Metje Butler finished her “artist in residence” with the high school group as they completed their mural of “The Seasons” in the pre-school room. Come down and see it! It’s worth the trip.

Our Fling attracted 17 kids and 5 adults. We thank Erin, Metje, Rachel, Robin, Kay and Martin for contributing and having fun with us.

In the wee hours of the morning, we recovered the Prairie songbooks that are in the blue binders. This was a great idea for a service project – something close to home. Kudos to Orange Schroeder for helping Robin mastermind this project.

Don’t forget to come to the year-end potluck picnic on May 14th, after the service. Everyone is invited.

RE Teachers Needed for 2000-2001
The RE Committee has a few remaining slots for teachers for the next RE year (September 2000 - May 2001). They’re also searching for a preschool teacher, who can be an adult.
If you'd like to help, please contact RE Director Randy Converse or any RE committee member - Robin Carre', Rachel Long, Larry Nahlik or Anne Urbanski.

**Life, Camera, Social Action**

Our board of directors for next year is almost complete except for one post- the Social Action Committee (SAC) Chair. If you've been pondering your role in the total scheme of things, wanting to do something for society but aware there is a gulf between your aspirations and achievements, here's your chance to effect a change. If the Chairmanship seems too overwhelming, perhaps two or three people (or more) can take over SAC'S traditional activities (listed in order of priority) and leave the remaining tasks “in limbo”.

We're hoping the following description will inspire you to climb on board. Bear in mind, if no one volunteers, these activities will be dropped. Since we, as Unitarians, are committed to social reform, please consider what you can do to help.

- Coordinating Prairie's long-standing volunteer commitment to buy, cook and serve breakfast once a month at the men's homeless shelter *(Paula Pachciarz will continue to do this)*.

- Coordinating Prairie's volunteer commitment to the Madison Interfaith Hospitality Network. About every three months, we help Midvale Lutheran Church in a variety of ways in its hosting of homeless families during the course of a week. (Shannon Hayes' new job responsibilities keep her busy on Sundays so a new coordinator, or rotating coordinators, are needed to handle the scheduling of Prairie volunteers.)

- Delivering food pantry collections to the Allied-Dunn's Marsh food pantry *(Paula P. will continue in her role)*.

- Scheduling and facilitating regular committee meetings (?).

- Organizing the annual Guest at Your Table collection for the UU Service Committee (?).

- Participating in Prairie Board meetings (?).  

- Participating in Allied Partners a congregational cluster serving the needs of the Allied Drive neighborhood, and keeping Prairie members informed of its activities (?).

- Keeping the SAC bulletin board current and readable (?).

- Communicating re: SAC activities: handling correspondence, keeping Prairie members and friends informed of SAC activities via Sunday announcements and periodic updates in the Prairie Fire, responding to Prairie members' concern about particular issues (?).

- Coordinating the "Allied Wish List", Prairie members' purchase of gifts for children in the Allied-Drive neighborhood during the winter holiday season (?).

- Handling finances: replenishing the SAC's checking account by holding periodic fundraisers for the committee, balancing the checkbook, making deposits, and writing checks. *(Paula P. currently doing this, but hoping someone will take over)*

- Collecting and dropping off donations in the SAC's name to the Community Thrift Store on Park Street (?).

- Communicating re: SAC activities: handling correspondence, keeping Prairie members and friends informed of SAC activities via Sunday announcements and periodic updates in the Prairie Fire, responding to Prairie members' concern about particular issues (?).

The role of the SAC chair is not necessarily limited to the above tasks. A new chair may very well have a different focus and wish to take the committee in a new direction. That's the challenge, and the attraction, of this position--you have the opportunity to shape it into what you will. Any "takers"? Is this the job (or activity listed) for you?
Wheel of Life
Henry Pratt died on Sunday, May 7th due to the complications of stomach cancer. Henry was an active and well-liked member of Prairie. Condolences and support are offered to Annis Pratt, Henry’s wife and long-time partner. She can be reached at 1056 Larchlea Rd, Birmingham, MI 48009-2939.

Ceremony Information
Books and pamphlets relating to life’s passages can be found in the powder blue bookcase in the main room (where the high school students meet). There will be a sign-out sheet so we can keep track of the items. Please take the time to fill it out.

Promotions For Next Fall
Interested members met last Sunday to discuss how to attract new members to Prairie, especially those with children. We identified the things about our organization in which we take pride and consequently can advertise to others. Highlights included – the specific programs we have in RE, our diversified programs and speakers, how the entire congregation can take part in discussions of issues and ideas, music, firm foundation, a motley crew with a sense of humor (we know how to laugh at ourselves), informal, casual and welcoming: Perhaps you can pass these good-points on when you speak to friends and neighbors, encouraging them to pay us a visit (actually several visits would be better since it takes awhile to see what makes us special).
We discussed how to promote ourselves through advertising and when – before Labor Day.

THE COMMUNITY

Interfaith Hospitality Network
The week of May 14 – 20th is our time to help the interfaith network at Midvale Lutheran Church. You can volunteer for an overnight stay, breakfast or dinner. We participate with two other churches playing host to homeless families who are trying to get established in the community. It’s a chance to meet some very interesting people and contribute to our community. If you can assist, please call Shannon Hayes, 274-0553.

Sunday, May 14: ~The Madison Childrens’ Choir Concert will feature Prairie members Katrina Schroeder and Brian Glueck. The theme of the two concerts (older choirs in the evening) is “Oh Freedom”, featuring songs from the WWII woman’s camp on Sumatra. For more details, see the poster at Prairie. The concerts will be held at High Point Church at 3pm and 7pm, with tickets $4 and $6 at the door.

Monday, May 22: ~ Faith and Giving: Supporting Real Change Not Charity At 7pm Chuck Collins and Pam Rogers, authors of Robin Hood Was Right, A Guide to Giving Your Money to Social Change, will speak at the Unitarian Meeting House, 900 University Ave. The Wisconsin Community Fund has organized this event and it is co-sponsored by FUS Social Justice Committee and the Madison Urban Ministry.

RSVP/You’re Invited – The Social Events Calendar

Friday, May 19: 6pm ~ Playreaders’ Annual Fish Dinner at the Avenue Bar, 1128 East Washington Ave. Call Pat Watkins by 4:30 Wednesday 5/17 for reservations at 233-5795. Everyone is welcome.

Friday, May 19: 8pm ~ Playreading at the home of Pat Watkins, 230 N Meadow Lane. All may attend.

Wednesday, May 31: 7pm ~ The Spanish Speakers Group will be meeting at the home of Theron Caldwell Ris, 5542 Riverview Drive, Waunakee. Call Theron at 849-7341 for travel directions. If you need a ride or more information call Rosemary Dorney, 238-4382.

Epilogue:
Surgeons must be very careful When they take the knife! Underneath their fine incisions Stirs the Culprit – Life!

Shaarei Shamayim Calendar
Saturday, May 13 9:30-2pm Shabbat Services
Saturday, June 17 9:30-2pm Shabbat Services