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](http://www.execpc.com/~prairieu)

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**PRAIRIE CALENDAR**

**Sunday, October 14**
9:00am
Choir Rehearsal
10:00am
“Painting, Drawing and Printmaking”. Jean Matos presents the third program in her lay ministry dealing with Creativity and the Arts.
11:45am-12:45pm
Pledge Drive Kick-off Lunch
12:45pm
Book Club Meets Downstairs
7:00pm
Meditation with Peter Michie

**Tuesday, October 16**
7:30pm
“Choices For Sustainability”, first meeting.

**Wednesday, October 17**
7:30pm
Board Meeting

**Thursday, October 18**
7:30pm
“Voluntary Simplicity”, first meeting.

**Sunday, October 21**
9:00am
Choir Rehearsal
10:00am

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**October 11, 2001**

“How Homophobia Hurts Us All” presented by Bev Cann.
12noon

*Note: Fall Frolic is now scheduled for November 3.*

**Sunday, October 28**
9:00am
Choir Rehearsal
10:00am
“All Souls Day” presented by Ruth Calden.

**Next Prairie Fire deadline is Sunday, October 21, 2001**

**DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

**October 14:**
**Pledge Drive Kick-off Lunch**
After the service dealing with “Three Dimensional Art”, stay tuned for our annual Pledge Drive kick-off lunch. Sub sandwiches will be served with a requested donation of $6 per adult and $3 per child. While we’re munching, the Finance Committee will explain the financial realities of our congregation. Childcare will be provided! Time to consider how to support our adult and children's programs. Time to think what you can afford to contribute this year to keep us financially healthy. Pledge information and forms will be handed out at this time. Sending your pledge back within the week will save you a phone call from the friendly Finance Committee.

The Fall Meeting to vote on the budget will be held on November 11th.
~ Your Finance Committee - Orange Schroeder, Aileen Nettleton, Jean Matos, Sharon Scratish, Judy Skog, Susan Hagstrom, and Bob Reuschlein as chair.

Open Book Club
After the Pledge Drive, come join the Prairie Book Club as they discuss "The Naturalist" by E.O. Wilson.

October 21
Part II: How Homophobia Hurts Us All
Bev Cann will talk about issues of Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender inclusion in the schools, including further exploration of the impact of homophobia on children and families. She will share a model of youth empowerment and explore the roles of gay-straight alliances in creating more inclusive school environments during part II of the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) presentation.

Prairie's Fourth All Souls' Day Service
On Sunday October 28, Ruth Calden will lead a celebration of All Souls' Day with a service of remembrance. Sharing a memory of personal loss can not only give comfort and lighten grief but also can unite us on the profound level of common mortality. As someone said after an All Souls' Day service, "I was no longer alone with my grief, but part of a whole community who had also lost loved ones."

Any one wishing to share a memory of someone dear who has died is encouraged to bring a photo and/or a defining object, to speak briefly and light a candle. Or you may prefer to simply light a candle in silence. So that all those wishing to participate may do so, please limit your words to about a minute. As is our custom, the service will conclude with the reading of names of all the Prairie members who have died and the viewing of photos and objects brought by the congregation.

For comments or questions call Ruth Calden, 233-5717.

OUR SOCIETY

October 14, 7pm: Inner Focus and Reflection
You're invited to join Prairie Guided Meditation every Sunday at 7pm. We meet at Prairie and center ourselves on the upstairs stage. Our first meeting will be Sunday, October 14, at 7pm. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a pillow if you'd like to sit on the floor. Typical sessions last an hour. Any questions, call Peter Michie at 238-7482.

Circle Dinner Sign-Up
Now is the time to sign up for Circle dinners. If you are interested in breaking bread with other Prairie members, call Gary Giorgi or Kathy Helm for sign-up and information at 838-6818 or e-mail them at gggiorgi@facstaff.wisc.edu. Circle dinner groups can be large or small, with children and without, vegetarian or meat and potatoes. All are welcome.

Program synopsis, September 23: "Fire, Earth, Water and Air—Three Dimensional Art:
In this second service of her lay ministry on creativity and the arts, Jean Matos brought together a stimulating collection of 3D art objects and artists. Pottery, jewelry, books, and sculpture using a variety of media were displayed while the artists and an enthusiastic congregation discussed the creative process. Perhaps some of those in the congregation will be inspired to take up one of these media and release the artist in themselves.

If you admired the chiseled bear made by Metje Butler – here's a shortened version of her poem describing how she was inspired:

To Carve
Have you ever heard it said
It's a cinch to carve a horse
You just take away the stuff
That is not the horse, of course!

There is truth within these words
For you dig out what you see
In a broken piece of rock...
To envision is the key.

In this rock I saw a bear
To release him was my whim
And this little bit of dust
Is the stuff that wasn't him!!

Ecology Study Groups
Three study groups have been formed, based on interest of those who attended the Deep Ecology-DUA Resolution service September 30. If you are interested and did not get a chance to sign up at that time, please contact Aileen Nettleton, aanett@execpc.com or 238-6053. There are several openings, especially for the Choices group. The schedule for the groups is:

Deep Ecology - Sundays 12:00-1:30
Choices for Sustainability - Tuesdays 7:30-9:00
Voluntary Simplicity - Thursday 7:30-9:00

All of the study groups will meet in a classroom at Prairie. These promise to provide opportunities for us to share our lives and values with one another as we learn more through the readings and discussion.

Long Range Planning Committee Activities - Update by Ken Skog
The poll on Prairie growth indicated strong support for working on actions that would increase the number of children in the RE program and actions that would support the core value to provide an environment that fosters spirituality, reflection, and action based on UU principles. It also indicated support for working on increasing the staff before increasing Prairie space as ways to aid in growth. See the summary of results in this Prairie Fire on page 4.
In coming weeks the Committee will be evaluating alternatives for hiring non ministerial or ministerial staff that would help achieve our growth and core value objectives.

The committee and the Board will also be considering the offer of a number of Prairie members to purchase land at currently "lower" prices on the chance that Prairie might eventually want to built a larger building there. It is understood that Prairie may or may not use the land. This would be similar to the arrangement Prairie had when it was founded and land was held in case we wanted to build on it. The Long Range Planning Committee will work with the Board (and others interested) in developing guidelines for the land to purchase. If you think you may want to 1) provide funds for the purchase or 2) provide guidelines for the land or 3) be on a committee that looks for land please contact Ken Skog - 273-4813 or kskog@tds.net.

Shirley Grindrod Durkin, The Perfect Storm
We’re saddened to report that Shirley Grindrod Durkin, age 80, died October 3. A memorial service was held at FUS and at the Prairie Meeting House. Family members and friends shared memories. Shirley was a registered nurse, enjoyed sharing food with family and friends, and was active all her life in support of social issues, peace and benefits to humanity. Our deepest sympathy is extended to her husband, Bob Durkin and family members.

What does our Religious Education Program Have in Store?
This year we’ll be learning about the world’s religions and how Unitarian Universalism is influenced by the "truths" revealed in them.

High School
The high school "crew" began their journeys into Eastern religions by pretending to be cave people, sitting around the "ole" campfire inventing a religion. From that they launched into discussions of how one's beliefs can influence one's perception of current events.

6-8
The middle school class will be visiting their first "church across the street" this week, Temple Beth EL. Stay tuned to what their thoughts will be on the service there. They are well prepared to experience a Jewish service and then discuss its impact on them.

3-5
We laid a good foundation for learning more about Judaism and Christianity. We did this by finding the geographic origins of the major religions on a map. We then discussed the "Golden Rule" as it is played out in different religions. Our questions were quite thoughtful if we do say so ourselves!

K-2
We wasted no time in getting to know each other better. We created posters that told each other what we found interesting about ourselves. We also started our study of Judaism by learning about Sabbath and the Sabbath through story and song.

Pre-school
Wow did we have fun making paper butterflies. They really showed us how each of us is UNIQUE! and therefore can make special contributions to the lives of other people.

Scottish Country Dance Classes for Children
Norma Briggs is teaching a Scottish country dance class for children ages 8-13 at Prairie this fall, Saturdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. New members are welcome. Call or e-mail Norma (835-0914, brigglaw@execpc.com) if you're interested.

THE COMMUNITY

Ideas from UUA.org In Response to the World Trade Center/Pentagon Crisis
William Sinkford wrote a lovely letter and offered suggestions to access the web. You can go to the UUA page (http://www.uua.org/main.html) to access many links related to the tragedy.

Some ideas put forth:
• Show your support for Arabs, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Immigrants and others who are at risk for harassment.
• Patronize businesses and restaurants owned by people in at-risk groups (e.g., Middle Eastern Restaurants).
• Engage individuals who make hateful comments about these groups.
• Wear buttons that show your support and/or post signs at your home, neighborhood, etc.
• Talk to children and youth about racial profiling and the importance of standing up for innocent people during tough times.
• Learn more about the cultures and traditions of the at-risk groups.
• Get to the media. Write a letter to the editor. (see editorial by Lisa Glueck on our bulletin board.) Please also share it with the UUA Washington Office.

More at UUA.org

October 16, 7:30: Calling All Pagans!
A group will be meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 16th in the West Living Room of First Unitarian Society to organize a new CUUPs group (Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans). Anyone and everyone is invited.

October 20, 11am: Empty Bowls Dinner
The Madison Empty Bowls Coalition will sponsor a fundraising meal on Saturday, October 20 from 11am -2pm at Grace Episcopal Church, 116 West Washington Ave, on the Square. The event will feature hundreds of bowls created by local artists and a meal of soup and bread which local restaurants will donate and volunteers will serve. The bowls are available for purchase for $15. The meal is free whether one purchases a bowl or not. The money raised will benefit three local programs working to create food security in our community.
Results of the Informal Poll on Growth Issues - September 2001

- 65 people responded: 50 members, 12 friends and 3 youth
- More than 90% of members, 80% of friends, and 100% of youth agreed with developing and selecting a plan for increasing the number of students in the RE program and overall membership
- More than 90% of members, 100% of friends, and 100% of youth agreed with developing and selecting a plan for Enhancing core value 2: Providing an environment that fosters spirituality, reflection, and action based on UU principles
- More than 70% of members and friends and 66% of youth said our first step should be to consider hiring half or full time ministerial/non-ministerial staff and improve/expand space as a second step
- 75% of members, 100% of friends, and 100% of youth agreed with evaluating hiring of part or full time ministerial staff
  - 33% of members and 55% of friends strongly agreed
  - 12% of members and 0% of friends strongly disagreed
- 96% of members and 82% of friends agreed with working with other UU congregations in the area on actions to aid our growth
- 76% of the member respondents indicated they would be willing to support growth over the next 5 years by increasing annual pledges an average of 39% from $23,300 to $31,200
- 25% of friend respondents indicated they would be willing to increase annual pledges 144% from $901 to $2200
- 18 of 50 member respondents indicated they would make a one time gifts totaling $27,000, 2 of 12 friends indicated they would make a one time gifts totaling $3,000.

Support for evaluating alternatives to increase space for Prairie

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Friends</th>
<th>Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase the size of the current building</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase another larger building</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase land and build new building</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase house near Prairie for increased space at present site</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Willingness to volunteer over the next 3 to 5 years –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Number of members (pct)</th>
<th>Number of friends (pct)</th>
<th>Number of youth (pct)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RE Teacher</td>
<td>10 20%</td>
<td>4 33%</td>
<td>1 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of a Prairie Committee</td>
<td>33 66%</td>
<td>4 33%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair a Prairie Committee</td>
<td>8 16%</td>
<td>2 17%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President, Vice President</td>
<td>4 9%</td>
<td>1 8%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeter, setup for programs/potlucks, cleaning days, Nifty Gifty, other time to time tasks</td>
<td>28 56%</td>
<td>5 42%</td>
<td>2 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up Bethel Horizons program/site coordination</td>
<td>11 22%</td>
<td>2 17%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide Lay ministry/program(s)</td>
<td>20 41%</td>
<td>5 42%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9 18%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>