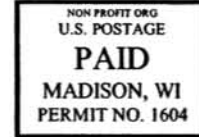


Prairie UU Society 2010 Whenona Drive Madison WI 53711- 4843
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Located off the south Frontage Rd. of the West Beltline Hwy near the Seminole Hwy exit.



Barbara & Bob Park
5610 HAMMERSLEY RD
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PRAIRIE FIRE

... 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>

January 10, 2002

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

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Saturday, January 12

7:30pm

Prairie Playreaders at Rachel Siegfried home.
(See RSVP for details.)

Sunday, January 13

9:00am

Choir Rehearsal

10:00 am

“Bridging the Gaps” – Sandy Ingham continues her lay ministry.

12:00 pm

Book Club meets downstairs – bring a snack to share.

12:15 pm

Showing of PBS video “Eyes on the Prize II - The promised land (1967-1968)”.

This film deals with Martin Luther King's poor people's campaign and the increasingly vocal opposition to the war in Vietnam. The 1 hr. video will be shown in the high school room downstairs

Monday, January 14

6:30pm

Spanish Speakers Potluck (see RSVP for details.)

Sunday, January 20

9:00am

Choir Rehearsal

10:00 am

“Martin Luther King - Nonviolent Peace Activist” presented by the Prairie Social Action Committee

12:00 noon

Women's group meets downstairs. Bring a snack to share and connect with other women.

Saturday, January 26

Wild Wintering with skating at Vilas Park.

Car pools leave Prairie at 5:00pm.

Sunday, January 27

9:00am

Choir Rehearsal

10:00 am

Amy Owen from James Reeb attended the South African UN Conference on racism and will share her experiences with us.

11:45 am

Prairie Potluck – have fun, bring a dish to pass.

Sunday, February 3

9:00am

Choir Rehearsal

10:00 am

Deep Ecology – the second installment in this lay ministry will deal with “Sustainable Living”.

**Next Prairie Fire deadline is
Sunday, January 20, 2002**

DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 13:

"Bridging the Gaps"

Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday week is a good time to think about not only racism, but also other oppressions. How did we get this way -- we humans, especially, we Americans? There seem to be so many gaps in our lives: the gap between the haves and the have nots; between knowledge and action; the gap between individualism and community; between consumerism and compassion. This Sunday we will explore ways we might bridge these gaps or at least begin to narrow the distance between them.

12:00 noon: Book Club Meets Downstairs

Bring a snack to share and join the discussion on "TALIBAN" by Ahmed Rashid. All are welcome. For more information, call Mary Mullen, 298-0843.

"Eyes on the Prize II - The Promised Land"

At 12:15pm you're invited to come to the high school room downstairs to watch this PBS video. This film deals with Martin Luther King's poor people's campaign and the increasingly vocal opposition to the war in Vietnam. The 1 hr. video will be shown in the high school room downstairs.

Sunday, January 20: "Martin Luther King - Nonviolent Peace Activist"

Bob Park and the Social Action Committee's program will include readings from the writing of The Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and George McGovern about the peace activism of Dr. King as well as readings and taped excerpts from anti-war speeches of Dr. King during the last fourteen months of his life.

An Invitation to A Baby Blessing and a Warm Welcome to New Friends at Prairie

Say hello to Denise & Jani. They are moms to two children, Rowan Kelly, born 6-26-98 and Gemma Rose, born 8-24-01 at 3 lbs. 4.5 oz .

They would like to extend a warm invitation to the members and friends of Prairie to Gemma Rose Koester-Jess' Wiccaning (baby blessing) on January

20 at 2:30 at Prairie. A wiccaning is a pagan ritual to bless a new baby and welcome her/him into a loving and supportive community of family and friends. The ritual will be about an hour long, including a short reception afterward. If you wish, bring a 3 foot long piece of ribbon to symbolize your blessing or wish for Gemma.

OUR SOCIETY

PROGRAM SUMMARIES

❖ **Sunday, December 30**

The First Annual Game Day,

Prairie's first annual Game Day was a great success on December 30th! The tables were set up and people paired off or joined a large table with a game going on. The tables of Boggle and Balderdash were particularly boisterous! Many people brought several games so there were many to choose from and something for everyone. (The only frustration was that a person could only play one game at a time with one group.) We even had a couple of newcomers who thought this service was a great way to get to know some Prairie folks in a casual setting and they plan on visiting us again in the near future. Many expressed hope that this service would be repeated again next year.

❖ **Sunday, January 6**

"Spirituality" led by Judy Skog

We were delighted with Judy Skog's program on spirituality last Sunday. The objects on each table inspired meditation and we could see spirit and matter go hand in hand. Our table had a Nautilus shell and a picture of a Norwegian Mountain Valley. My table companions enjoyed making their dolls; I was happy enough with my simple thing. If Judy can have those kinds of wonderful experiences, how can we deny them to ourselves?

~ Warren Hagstrom

Guest At Your Table

If you took home a Guest at Your Table box over the holidays, please bring the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee donations you collected to Prairie by Sunday, Jan. 20. It will help the Social Action Committee if each family will count the money in your own box and replace

the cash with a check payable to UUSC. If you did not take home a box, you will still have an opportunity to donate to UUSC on Jan. 20 by using the envelope marked "UUSC" which will be circulated in each collection basket that day. To learn more about the work of UUSC, visit their Web site at <http://www.uusc.org>.

WHAT'S GOING ON? (a new heading)

Do you have some news (knowledge about past members, a rite of passage in your family, when you're leaving for Bali or Sheboygen) and want to share it with other friends and members, please let Marilyn Ruecking know and she'll put an article in the next Prairie Fire.

Wheel Of Life

We were sorry to hear that a former Prairie member, **Lee Bullen**, died on December 19 from complications related to Alzheimer's. Lee was a conscientious objector during World War II. He was a Prairie Fire editor and made the printing plates for our "prairie smoke" logo on his printing press. His kind spirit touched us all and we extend our sympathy to his wife, Alice. Notes or cards may be sent to Alice at Tel Hai, Lakeview 403, Box 190, Beaver Dam Road, Honeybrook, PA 19344.

Kudos

❖ Thank You IHN Volunteers

Prairie was a "buddy church" for the Interfaith Hospitality Network during the week of 12/16 – 12/23/01. Our volunteers for this holiday period included Kathy Helm, Erin Bosch, Anne and Maya Urbanski, Rick and Marilyn Ruecking, Orange Schroeder, Paula Pachciarz and family, and Rosemarie Lester.

❖ Men's Drop-In Homeless Shelter

Thanks to the seven volunteers from Prairie (members, friends and visitors) who staffed the Christmas morning breakfast shift at the Men's Drop-in Homeless Shelter, starting at 5:00 am on Dec. 25. The group included Anne Pryor and her two daughters, Erin and Alana, Fran Zell, Bob Park and our holiday visitor from Houston, Patty Carr, and her sister Julie. They cooked for and served about 130 men. Fresh orange juice and 25 dozen eggs made breakfast a rousing success.

❖ Allied Drive-Dunn's March Holiday Project
Thanks to all who participated in this year's Allied Drive-Dunn's Marsh children's Christmas Wish List project, organized by Paula Pachciarz. This has become a yearly project and we thank Paula for her commitment.
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RE Journeys

❖ Nifty Gifty

At this time of the year the children can make a nifty gift for their family and friends to celebrate the winter solstice, Christmas, Hanukah, Kwansa, etc. Downstairs was quite busy, we had over 10 projects to choose from. Some of us tried to do lots of gifts, some of us just concentrated on a few.. We did angels, cinnamon stick santas, penguins from used cardboard tubes, ornaments from left-over felt stars from donated posterboard, sparkly fish using old glitter...all sorts of neat stuff with minimal purchasing!

Many thanks to Kathy Converse for coordinating the whole affair and to the teens and adults for their creative input: - Robin Carre, Carl Wacker (our faithful photographer), Jolien Conner, Tara Converse, Kate Skog, Erica Skog, Brian Kuzdas, Ian Park, Kerry Beheler. Thanks also to those who donated materials, they were anonymous so we cannot thank them personally!

Please begin saving stuff now for next year...
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Long Range Planning Committee

Report from Ken Skog, Chair

"Thank you" to everyone who offered comments about possible staffing for Prairie at our potluck lunch in December. Based on this input and input from our workshops, our polls, discussions with other small congregations, and with the Central Midwest District, the Long Range Planning Committee has developed two general recommendations for furthering our growth objectives. These are:

1. Continue to have various people with ministerial training provide Sunday programs on a recurring but limited basis as individual arrangements can be made.

2. Work with the Central Midwest District and UUA on steps needed to do Phase I (an evaluation phase) of the Extension Ministry program OR consult with the Central Midwest District separate from the Extension Ministry program to do an evaluation similar to Phase I of the Extension Ministry program. Phase I of the Extension Ministry Program is a Growth Orientation Phase for congregations who have a readiness for growth, meet many of the entrance criteria but may need some additional support/training/ consultation before moving into professional, growth-oriented ministry. This evaluation process will allow us to make a better informed decision about moving to Phase II of the Extension ministry program (having a minister under the program) or acquiring staff outside this program.

We will provide more information about how we may work with UUA and CMWD as it becomes available. At a potluck lunch in February (tentatively on Feb 24th) we will be asking for your comments concerning these recommendations. Our discussions with you are a critical part of our collectively deciding how we move ahead in this process.

Results of the poll on Potential general roles and responsibilities for ministerial or non ministerial staff. In December we conducted a poll where we asked the following question: - "In order to advance Prairie's core values for growth for the RE program and changes in programs and alleviate volunteer burnout, what roles and responsibilities do you agree that Prairie should pursue having for professional staff?"

Here are the results from the 39 people responding. The roles are shown in order of highest percentage:

1. Nurturing members and the Prairie community - 74% agreed, (with 42% strongly agreeing) and 5% strongly disagreeing.
2. Administration - 74% agreed (with 39% strongly agreeing) and 0% strongly disagreeing.
3. Counseling - 63% agreed (with 34% strongly agreeing) and 5% strongly disagreeing.

4. Religious education - 50% agreed (with 21% strongly agreeing) and 5% strongly disagreeing.
5. Sunday program presentations - 45% agreed (with 16% strongly agreeing) and 34% strongly disagreeing.
6. Involvement in social action - 39% agreed (with 11% strongly agreeing) and 13% strongly disagreeing.
7. Connection to the wider UU community - 37% agreed (with 5% strongly agreeing) and 16% strongly disagreeing

RSVP/You're Invited The Social Events Calendar

January 12, 7:30pm: Playreaders

This month's meeting will be at Rachel Siegfried's home, 5209 Tolman Terrace. Newcomers are always welcome. For more information, call Rachel 271-2173.

January 14, 6:30pm: Spanish Speakers Potluck

You're invited to join the Spanish Speakers at the Prairie Meeting House. Bring a dish to share if you can. All are welcome. If you have any questions or need a ride, call Rosemary Dorney at 238-4382.

THE COMMUNITY

January 27, 12:30pm:

Community Funding of Boy Scouts

On Sunday, January 27, at 12:30, the Social Justice Committee and the Welcoming Committee at FUS are hosting a forum on United Way's continued funding of the Boy Scouts. First Unitarian Society's interim minister, John Buehrens (who has been involved in this dialogue with United Way for years), will be participating.

Shaarei Shamayim Calendar

2nd, 3rd & 4th Sat 9am-2pm. Religious Services in January will be on January 12, 19, and 26
Prairie Liaison: Bill Littman 829-1909