... 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.
The two most recent issues may be seen on Prairie’s Web site at http://www.execpc.com/~prairie

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**PRAIRIE CALENDAR**

**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
“Risking for a Better World”. 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.
7:00pm
Meditation group meets at Prairie. You may want to bring slippers and possibly a blanket or afghan if you tend to get cold. (from Judy Skog)

**Sunday, February 3**
9:00am
Choir Rehearsal
10:00 am
“Choices for Sustainability”.
Presented by the "Sustainability" Study Group as part of the Deep Ecology lay ministry.
7:00pm
Meditation group meets at Prairie. Tonight’s organizer is Paula Pachciarz.

**Sunday, February 10**
9:00am
Choir Rehearsal
10:00 am
Valentine’s Day Intergenerational presented by Robin Carre. Children from First Unitarian Society (FUS) will be joining us as part of their study of other churches in the area.
12:00noon
Book Club meets to discuss HOMESTEAD by Roseanna Lippi. Bring a snack to share. For more information, call Mary Mullen, 298-0843.

**Wednesday, February 13**
7:15 pm
Board Meeting.

**Thursday, February 14**
7:30pm
Valentine’s Day Drum and Song Circle with Taku Ronsman  (See RSVP for details.)

**Saturday, February 16**
7:30pm
Playreading at Nettleton’s, 645 Sheldon St.
All are invited. (See RSVP for details.)
Next Prairie Fire deadline is Sunday, February 3, 2002

DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 27:
"Risking for a Better World"
with guest speaker Amy Owen.
Amy Owen is a young adult member of James Reeb Congregation, and a graduate student in educational psychology at the UW. She is focused on studying the process of forgiveness.

This summer at General Assembly, she was invited to attend the UN World Conference Against Racism in South Africa with Rev. Olivia Holmes, Director of International Relations for the UUA and Rev. Melvin Hoover, Director of Faith in Action for the UUA.

The service will highlight some of her experiences at the conference as well as some reflections about race and the challenges we face in acting on our dreams for a world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.

Sunday, February 3: Choices for Sustainability”
This presentation by the "Sustainability" Study Group (Paula Pachciarz, John Lewis, Kathy Converse, Judy Skog, Aileen Nettleton) is the first "report" back to the congregation in the lay ministry series addressing the UUA Responsible Consumption Resolution.

Along with the congregation, we’ll explore some of the challenging environmental issues we studied, discuss principles for sustainability and give examples of sustainable practices, both personal and business.

This unique lay ministry series consists of three study groups reporting their reflections from readings and discussions held over a three-month period. The discussions have generated as many questions as answers as we have been challenged to face some of the most important issues confronting us today.

OUR SOCIETY

Service Auction Donations Needed
March 10th is the Sunday for the Annual Prairie Service Auction, so start thinking about what you would like to offer. Last year we had 37 donations. exotic dinners, foods, drinks, cottages or cabins, childcare, legal or professional services, nature, music and art among many offerings. We had websites, house repair, photosession, garden tilling, horseback rides, clothing repairs, home repair, stamp art, flower notecards, folk music, family trees, and a will. Lots of laughs! Call or leave a message with Bob Reuschlein 848-5248 or email earlwal@ittis.com.

This year’s event will feature bidding during lunch with our, (some might venture to say), “world famous”, auctioneer, Orange Schroeder!

What’s Going On?
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 that information in the Prairie Fire.

For example, Ruth and George will be leaving us for three weeks to join their friends in Florida; Pat Cautley celebrated her 88th birthday; a letter from Rob Steinhofeuer, former Prairie member, appeared in the Friday Capital Times. It was a critique of the so-called campaign finance reform bill. The clipping is on the Prairie bulletin board.

A Wiccaning (Baby Blessing)
On Sunday, January 20 something magical happened at Prairie. A wiccaning was held for a small, new human being. Gemma Rose Koester-Jess, brought together a community of people in joy and love. In the central ritual, as each of us spoke to Gemma our blessing for her, we tied a ribbon onto her hoop, creating a beautiful symbol of the wishes we held in our hearts for her. We also celebrated with bubbles, music, cake and lemonade. Gemma’s parents are Jani Koester and Denise Jess. Thank you, Gemma and your family, for holding this meaningful ceremony at Prairie.
Volunteer Opportunities, Kitchen General:
It would be very helpful if there was a person at Prairie who would volunteer to be a "Kitchen General". This person would make sure that we have the kitchen supplies we need (paper plates, dish soap, etc.) and also be the contact person for people renting the building who want to know how many dishes etc. we have, and also be available for consultation etc. when we have Prairie weddings or memorial services. Please call Erin, 238-6285 if you are willing to volunteer in this way. This notice was placed before but no one has come forward to take on this task.

Red Cross Liaison
Barbara Rames used to serve in this capacity and she has asked that someone take on this task since she has moved. (There are many ways that we are missing Barbara.) This volunteer would contact Prairie blood donors either to thank them after giving blood, or possibly to remind them that enough time as passed so they can give again. The Red Cross would contact you with the information you need. Call Erin, 238-6285 if you are willing to volunteer for this task. This notice was placed before but no one has come forward.

Art at Prairie!
Rose and Galen Smith are the first to exhibit some paintings in the meeting room. The artist is Grace Perreiah, of Louisville, Kentucky. And who will be next?? Call Rosemarie at 255-7039 or e-mail rklester@facstaff.wisc.edu

KUDOS
❖ UUSC Guest At Your Table
Thanks to all those who participated in the Guest At Your Table fund raiser through this past holiday season. From our pocket change, we filled the boxes to the tune of $238.61 in support of the international projects of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. With the matching grants of the Stone Creek UU Congregation, the UUSC will receive almost $500! WhoooHooo!!

❖ Shoveled Sidewalks
On January 15, our first significant snowfall was ably handled by Al Nettleton and the team of Paula Pachciarz and her daughter, Toby Wacker. Thanks for clearing the Prairie walkways.

❖ Men’s Drop-In Homeless Shelter
Thank you to Barb Park and Dave Johnson for volunteering at the Men’s Homeless Shelter this month. Barb bought and delivered the groceries and Dave showed up bright and early on Tuesday to help cook the breakfast.

❖ Pre-school:
Our two themes this month were celebrating differences and the interconnectedness of all living things. To celebrate differences we read “Top of the Pizzas” and made all sorts of yummy "paper" pizzas! To rejoice in the interconnectedness of which we are all a part, we read “Who Is The World For?” and made people-animal collages. Much fun!

❖ K-2:
We got immersed in the Jewish festival of Tu Bishvat (tree planting) and the Christian festival of the Epiphany (gift exchange). To experience Tu Bishvat we looked at tree buds, sang "Stand Like A Tree" and ate seeds. We spoke about Epiphany being a time of gift giving and receiving as exemplified by the Wise Men in Jesus' time.

❖ 3-5:
We continue to gain wisdom from the Old Testament. We read or re-enacted several Old Testament classics: - Solomon, Samson/Delia, and David/Goliath. WOW, we are really good actors and actresses. We also can come up with some really constructcive alternative endings to these stories...

❖ 6-8:
We have been learning about the Black Baptist Church. We talked about Martin Luther King's relationship with the Black Baptist Church. On the 20th of January we will be attending the Baptist Church in our neighborhood. Stay tuned for our reactions to this experience. We also had a chance to learn about life as a Buddhist monk, thanks to our friend Larry Nahlik.

❖ 9 and Above:
We participated in Judy Skog's spirituality service. It was great fun learning about all the various aspects of spirituality. We also learned lots about the lives of Buddhist monks from Larry Nahlik who was a "monk for a week" in Thailand in 1998.
RSVP/You’re Invited
The Social Events Calendar

February 14, 7:30pm:
Valentine’s Day Drum and Song Circle
Come celebrate Valentine’s Day by sharing
rhythms, dances, and songs with heart. All ages
welcome! Come to Taku Ronsman’s house at 6318
Hartford Drive, Madison WI from 7:30-9:30.
Please RSVP by phone (608) 442-3552 or e-mail
tronsman@charter.net
Directions: From Madison, take Verona Road south
to Highway PD; go west (right) to Manchester St,
turn left (south); 1st street off PD is Hartford Drive,
turn right. 6318 Hartford is on the right side of
the street.

February 16, 7:30pm: Playreaders
This month’s meeting will be at Aileen and Al
Nettleton’s home, 645 Sheldon St. All are invited.
For more information, call Aileen at 238-6053.

THE COMMUNITY

Learn CPR Free of Charge
Every year about 220,000 American adults die from
sudden cardiac arrest, 95% die before they reach the
hospital. What would you do if someone you love
suffered a heart attack? Invest just two hours and
learn CPR. Knowing CPR could save their life.

Check the flier on the Prairie bulletin board or call
the American Heart Association 221-8866 for
registration information. These community
programs are being offered on Saturday from
February 2nd through February 23
Health risk screenings are also available for those at
risk for heart attack or stroke.

February 9, 2:30: Militarism and Conscientious
Objection Discussion at Orchard Ridge UCC
The Youth Group and the Peace and Justice
Committee of Madison Mennonite Church want to
extend the invitation to the youth at Prairie
(and their adult supporters) to hear Eric Meyer talk
about Militarism and Conscientious Objection. Eric
is a young man from Indiana with an
Anabaptist/Mennonite background. After the talk,
there will be pizza and games. Please RSVP by
contacting Carola, 873-0613 or
cbreckbill@yahoo.com

March 8-9, Social Justice Conference
The First District Wide UU Social Justice
Conference will be held at First UU Society (FUS)
on March 8-9. If you are interested in being
involved or can volunteer home hospitality to a
visiting U.U. attending the conference, please
contact Wendy Cooper at 233-9774
(wendyc@fusmadison.org), or Leila Pine at 233-5566 (lpine@tds.net).

Economic Globalization, UUA Study/Action
Issue Topic
Economic Globalization Study Circles are being
planned at First Society. Their purpose is to learn
more about the topic and to explore the ways in
which it impacts human rights and economic
justice. We are called to study, act upon, and
provide input to for the 2002 General Assembly. If
interested in participating in a study circle, contact
Wendy Cooper at 233-9774
(wendyc@fusmadison.org).

Human Rights Film Series
The following films will be shown at FUS on
Sunday afternoons either in the Gathering Room of
the Lower Meeting House or the West Living Room
from 3-6pm:
February 17    American History X
March 17      Snow Falling on Cedars
April 21      American Tongues

Discussion will follow each presentation.
Refreshments and child care will be provided.
Please let Suzie deBeers, 833-0506, know the
names and ages of children that require child care.

Shaarei Shamayim Calendar
2nd, 3rd & 4th Sat 9am-2pm. Upcoming
Religious Services will be on January 26, and
February 9, 16, and 23
February 26: Purim Party, 4:30-8:00pm
Prairie Liaison: Bill Littman  829-1909