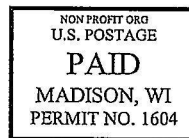




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# PRAIRIE FIRE

... 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.*

*The two most recent issues may be seen on Prairie's Web site at <http://www.prairie.madison.uua.org>*

**February 21, 2003**

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## PRAIRIE CALENDAR

### Sunday, February 23

10:00 a.m. "Come Before Winter" presented by Doug Smith. is the title of Doug Smith's talk for this coming Sunday's program on 2/23. Please insert this service in the calendar (NOT Race Study Circles) and the description is that Doug will be speaking about the importance of doing things now and not procrastinating.

11:45 a.m. Annual Prairie Service Auction immediately after the service. Pizza lunch available for \$4.00. Childcare will be provided. See additional information in the Our Society section.

### Tuesday, February 25

Breakfast at Men's Drop-In Shelter

### Sunday, March 2

9:00 a.m. Choir

10:00 a.m. "The Role of Community Media in a Democratic Society" presented by Norman Stockwell.

### Monday, March 3

7:00 p.m. WOW meets at Prairie.

### March 9-16

Interfaith Hospitality Network shift.

### Sunday, March 9

9:00 a.m. Choir

10:00 a.m. John Lewis presents his first lay ministry on "Science and Spirituality."

11:30 a.m. Book Club discusses "The Ecstasy of Owen Muir by Ring Lardner, Jr. Bring food to share.

### Sunday, March 16

9:00 a.m. Choir

10:00 a.m. John Lewis presents his second lay ministry "Equinox Celebration."

### Thursday, March 20,

7:30 p.m.- "Guitar Band" and sing-along. All instrumental players and singers are invited to sing peace songs and other selections from the RISE UP SINGING book and PRAIRIE SONG BOOK. We are calling this the "guitar band" in hopes that everyone who plays guitar will bring theirs. Other instruments are welcome as are any singers.

### Saturday, March 22

7:00 p.m Karaoke night at Prairie.

### September 12-14

Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society's Retreat.

**Next Prairie Fire deadline is  
Sunday, March 2, 2003**

## DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

### Sunday, February 23

"Come Before Winter" is the title of Doug Smith's talk in which he will be speaking about the importance of doing things now and not procrastinating.

### Sunday, March 2

Norman Stockwell will discuss with us the role that community media plays in a Democratic society. Mr. Stockwell serves as WORT's Operations Coordinator. He has been volunteering at the station in music and news programming since 1983. In addition to working as a journalist in the U.S., Cuba, Nicaragua and Mexico, Norm has been involved in the collective management of two Madison institutions - Lakeside Press and Mifflin Street Co-op. He is also former Director of the Old Town School of Folk Music-Madison, and served as Facilities Manager for the Northwestern University Archeological Program. Norm has been hosting programs of "A Public Affair" since 1989, covering such issues as the murder of the Jesuits in El Salvador, the Gulf War and its aftermath and the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico. His guests have included Noam Chomsky, Holly Near, Johnny Clegg, Sara Diamond, Paco Ignacio Taibo, Le Ly Hayslip, Alexander Cockburn, Fran Peavey, and many more. He has also written for the Wisconsin State Journal, the Capital Times, the Madison Insurgent, and other publications on Nepal, El Salvador, Cuba, and most recently covered the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

### Sunday, March 9

Cal DeWitt, Ph.D. is Professor of Environmental Studies, UW Madison and Director of the Au Sable Institute whose mission includes "...a better understanding of the Creator and the stewardship of God's Creation.." and whose academic programs prepare students to "...probe environmental beliefs, and to reach out to help people incorporate environmental integrity into their worldviews and beliefs ...". Dr. DeWitt will utilize this background

is presenting his program entitled "Science and Spirituality."

### Sunday, March 16

Nancy Vedder-Shults, Ph.D. is a musician, storyteller, educator, workshop facilitator and ritualist whose work is rooted in feminist theology and women's studies scholarship. She has been offering spiritual growth workshops, keynotes and concerts since 1987. Regarding her program, "Wicca As Nature Religion" Dr. Vedder-Shults offers the following preview: The ancient earth-centered religion of pre-Christian Europe has been revived in the last century. Like all earth-centered religions, Wicca honors nature as central and sacred. We will experience a Wiccan ritual honoring the Spring Equinox while learning more about the sacredness of nature within this new spiritual path with ancient roots.

Here is an excerpt from Nancy's writing "*Song to Gaia*"

*Gaia, you who unite earth, air, fire and water  
on this beautiful blue-green orb,  
Mother of us all, bless us today!  
You who birthed the two-leggeds and the four-  
leggeds,  
the creeping animals and those who swim and fly,  
Remind us that we are one with all our relations  
as we live our lives today.*

## OUR SOCIETY

### SERVICE AUCTION SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23

The Prairie Annual Service Auction is this Sunday, February 23, at 11:45 am, right after the service. A pizza lunch will be available for \$4.00. Childcare is available.

Did you know we have bakers, potters, writers, botanists, accountants, computer gurus, cooks and even makers of snakes among our group? Come see who they are on Sunday!! There are many wonderful donations, too numerous to fully list. However, allow this sampling to whet your appetite:

Weekend at cottage or farm;  
 Pet exam, physical exam;  
 Weekend of childcare;  
 Picnics, bonfires, sailing, horseback riding, hiking;  
 Many different types of dinners;  
 Portraits of people and pets;  
 Several artwork productions or classes;  
 Music and language lessons and tutoring;  
 Help with taxes, finance planning, writing and family tree;  
 Pies, cakes, sorbet, salsa;  
 Home repair and home cleaning;  
 Pottery bowls and mugs;  
 Guided walks; and  
 Help with clean up/dishes for an occasion.  
*For additional information call Kathy Converse at 238-1856 or conversekrtm@msn.com*

**What will be Prairie's role in growth of UU congregations in Dane County?**

*Submitted by Ken Skog*

This is the question that has been posed to Barb Park, Rick Ruecking, Norma Briggs and Mike Briggs and me as we participate in a "three congregations" subcommittee to propose plans for UU growth in Dane County. First Society has initiated a number of subcommittees to plan ways we can accommodate many more UUs in Dane county - up to 1000 more has been mentioned.

Many ideas have been generated ranging from a variety of changes to First Society buildings, starting a fourth congregation, to supporting growth of James Reeb and Prairie. (Prairie and Reeb members have been active in the "Seeding and growing subcommittee".)

All of the subcommittees met Monday February 10 to discuss the wide range of subcommittee ideas. Prairie members provided a growth scenario for Prairie developed by the Long Range Planning Committee that suggests we could hire additional professional staff, obtain a larger building, grow to 250 or so members, while retaining our lay led values. Members of James Reeb presented 3 scenarios which all involve more meeting space and growing to 300 members or more. It is the goal of these committees to form several broad alternate growth plans each with a mix of actions by FUS,

Reeb and Prairie. The intent is to have each congregation identify a growth plan they favor.

It is significant for Prairie and James Reeb that many FUS members on these committees are advocating having FUS support growth plans for Reeb and Prairie before starting a fourth congregation.

If Prairie is to take advantage of potential support from First Society we need to decide collectively where we would like to be in 2, 5 and 10 years and on what steps and support we need now.

**The Long Range Planning Committee will meet on Sunday March 2 after the Prairie Program** to continue to develop our proposals. All Prairie members are invited to attend. We may need an all Parish meeting prior to our April 27<sup>th</sup> Spring Parish meeting to have members endorse a plan to present to FUS and James Reeb for joint planning/support.

**Prairie Women to Meet with Reeb Women WOW!**

Aren't you sometimes curious about other UU's in Madison? Haven't you wished that we knew a little more about how the other congregations work and how they manage to grow? The women of WOW (the Prairie Women's group) have decided to allay some of our curiosity on these issues by inviting the women of the James Reeb Congregation to our next WOW meeting. The meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 3, 7:30 p.m. at Prairie. Prairie women should bring desserts to share. We will make coffee and tea on the premises.

In order to get acquainted and make the best use of time, we plan to start with a check-in like we do at the Sunday afternoon meetings among ourselves, and then later, swap ideas about growth in a more free-flowing discussion. Sure to come up is talk about what it is like to have a minister. Come join us for a stimulating evening of getting to know new people and hearing their ideas about growth.

**Sing-along for Peace**

On Thursday, March 20, 7:30 at Prairie there will be a "Guitar Band" and sing-along. All instrumental players and singers are invited to sing peace songs and other selections from the RISE UP SINGING book and PRAIRIE SONG BOOK. We are calling this the "guitar band" in hopes that everyone who plays guitar will bring theirs. Other instruments are welcome as are any singers.

### **Karaoke Night**

Prairie will host another Karaoke night! It is tentatively scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 22. All brave people with a generous heart and sense of humor are invited. Further details to follow. Keep reading your Prairie Fire.

### **SOCIAL ACTION**

#### **Promote Peace Globally, Volunteer Locally**

There is still hope that our local efforts toward peace can avert U.S. invasion of Iraq. It is certain, however, that other local actions can make a difference in the lives of people here in Madison. Volunteer opportunities are coming up for helping with the drop-in shelter for men at Grace Episcopal and participating in the Madison Interfaith Hospitality Network.

Prairie traditionally provides breakfast at the Grace Episcopal Drop-In Shelter the 4th Tuesday of the month. A volunteer is needed to buy and deliver breakfast supplies on Monday the 24th, reimbursement by the Social Action Committee. Two or more volunteers are needed to cook and serve breakfast early on Tuesday morning, February 25. Look for the sign-up sheet on the greeting table next Sunday. For more information contact Paula Pachciarz.

Midvale Lutheran, a host church for the Interfaith Hospitality Network, depends on Prairie as a buddy church to help host homeless families several weeks a year. Our next shift is March 9-16. Individual volunteers and families are needed to help in a variety of ways: cooking part of a meal, sharing a meal, staying overnight, helping with child care in the evening, doing laundry, setting up and breaking

down. This can be a personally rewarding community service. Look for the large sign-up board at upcoming services. Contact Paula Pachciarz for more information.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Keep Prairie Warm through Hospitality**

*Submitted by the Membership Committee*

Sunday mornings before and after the program are running smoothly thanks to the many people who pitch in with making coffee, bringing flowers, greeting friends and visitors, and washing up. This is just a reminder that the sign-up sheet for these light tasks is on the greeting table in the foyer. If you would like to help out, please take a moment when you enter the meeting house to sign up so that requests for volunteers do not need to be made during the service. The sign-up for the RE program is also on the greeting table. Thank you

### **For your Consideration**

*Submitted by Wendy Williams*

#### **Peace Remains**

By Barbara Abercrombie

Peace remains  
on paper  
like a prayer  
no war  
no war  
no war

#### **Office Hours for Office Administrator**

Tuesday and Friday: 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

#### **Shaarei Shamayim Calendar**

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sat 9am-2pm. Upcoming Religious Services will be on March 9, 16 & 23rd.  
Prairie Liaison: Bill Littman 829-1909