

Prairie UU Society, 2010 Whenona Drive, Madison WI 53711-4843
(608) 271-8218 prairieu@execpc.com
Located off the south frontage road (West Beltline Hwy Rd.) near the Seminole Hwy exit.



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." Bond of Union)

January 23, 2004

Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. The two most recent issues may be seen at <http://www.prairie.madison.uua.org>

President: Ken Skog; (608) 273-4813

Editor: Dan Proud, prairieu@execpc.com; (608) 661-0776

PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, January 25

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. Al Nettleton, continuation of his lay ministry on hymns in "The Living Tradition II."

Sunday, February 1

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. Marilyn and Rick Ruecking present "Ancient Passions, Strange and High."

11:45 a.m. Potluck and presentation on potential building alternatives with a city planner.

Sunday, February 8

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. Sarah Lord leads a program on criminal justice.

February 8-15

Interfaith Hospitality Network volunteer week

Sunday, February 15

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

10:00 a.m. Valentine's Day intergenerational program, "Gifts from the Heart." Followed by a potluck meal and a discussion of possible building sites. Please bring food and personal hygiene articles for Tyson striking families.

DETAILS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, January 25

This is the second program in Al Nettleton's Lay Ministry series examining the authors, composers and words in our UU hymnal. Emphasis is upon the threads that the UU principles take throughout the book.

After service this coming Sunday, there will be a viewing of the tape of Bill Dalrymple's presentation, for those who missed it. We'll begin as soon as we can after things quiet down after the service. The tape runs a little less than an hour. Let's think of it as a "brown bag" session. You might want to bring a sandwich—there is no plan to make it a potluck.

Sunday, February 1

The Sunday service, "Ancient Passions, Strange and High," will explore our spiritual needs. The program will be followed by a Prairie Potluck and a presentation by Archie Nicoletti, a city planner, on building alternatives in Madison.

Sunday, February 8

The Prairie Book Club will discuss *THE TIPPING POINT* by Malcolm Gladwell after the Prairie service. This is an easy-to-read non-fiction book that compares commercial successes with the model of epidemics. It is available in paperback and should be available at Borders with a 20% discount when you mention to them that this is a Prairie Book Club selection.

Next Prairie Fire deadline is

Sunday, January 18, 2004

OUR SOCIETY

LAY MINISTRY PROPOSALS

Please submit your ideas for Lay Ministries for the 2004-05 Prairie calendar to Barbara Chatterton, Paula Pachciarz, Susan Hagstrom, or Dean and Orange Schroeder for the Committee on Committees consideration.

Barbara Chatterton

A GUEST AT YOUR TABLE DEADLINE

It's time to return those boxes and write those checks! Please bring in your Guest at Your Table donations any Sunday this month.

In addition to helping UUSC accomplish its important programs

- \$10 will gain one student, youth or senior a UUSC membership
- \$25 will gain one person of any age a UUSC membership
- \$60 will gain one person, or two people, a UUSC membership, and will be matched by the UU congregation at Shelter Rock.

Dan Proud

PLAYREADING MOVED TO MARCH 27

Playreading originally scheduled at the home of Paula Pachciarz and Carl Wacker at 7 p.m. on February 7 will be held instead on March 27. We will read Lynda Barry's *The Good Times Are Killing Me*, a moving play about the friendship between two girls of different races during the 1960s. This is an intergenerational play and has many roles for teens and adults. It includes music from that era, which we will be playing. Please let Paula or Carl know in advance if you will attend (call 273-4706).

DOROTHY WETHERBY MEMORIAL FUND

This is a reminder about the Dorothy Wetherby Memorial Fund at Prairie, whose purpose is to provide small cash awards to active members and friends who temporarily lack housing, food or clothing.

Dorothy Lee Wetherby was a vital, creative Prairie UU member who understood that maintaining one's dignity is important to surviving serious challenges. She preserved that dignity in many whose lives she touched.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

BILL DALRYMPLE ON FITCHBURG CENTER

Bill Dalrymple, Managing Director of Fitchburg Center, presented information on possible sites for Prairie's new building following a potluck lunch at Prairie on the afternoon of January 11.

Mr. Dalrymple came prepared with maps, charts, and photographs. He told us about Fitchburg Center's plans and standards for development of the land they own. He spoke for more than an hour, with ample opportunity for questions from the audience.

Mr. Dalrymple explained that the heart of their philosophy is to take the long view. Profit is not Fitchburg Center's objective in developing this land. They are interested in leaving something lasting that will be in place 50 to 100 years from now. Fitchburg Center has stringent design requirements. One of those requirements is that building designs be environmentally responsible.

Fitchburg Center has adopted the "Radbourne Concept" as central to its plans. That is, they hope to encourage development of a town center of businesses and other community space, surrounded by housing of varying density, while preserving greenspace. The community will be served by a network of bike and pedestrian trails, many of which are already in place.

The land that Fitchburg Center has discussed most with Prairie UU lies in the planned town center surrounding a swale or storm water easement/flood system containment system. The 6½-acre prairie growing there was planted to serve as a rain garden for the development. Like any rain garden, the prairie swale serves to store water and clean it before it flows downstream. Koi ponds are at each end of the swale, with gravel paths.

We videotaped most of Mr. Dalrymple's presentation (thanks to Carl Wacker and Paula Pachciarz). We encourage all Prairie members to see them. Please speak to Larry Nahlik to borrow one of the tapes, or e-mail him at lnahlik@wisc.edu.
Larry Nahlik

SOCIAL ACTION

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK TRAINING IN 2004

Our first shift this year with the Interfaith Hospitality Network will be Feb. 8-15. IHN is the network of churches that take turns hosting homeless families while they seek housing and better employment. Prairie helps out at Midvale Lutheran, the host church for next week and the site of the volunteering.

You may participate even if you have never volunteered for the IHN before, though you are encouraged to attend a two-hour training session at some point. It's usually possible to make some time during the week for one of the jobs, and your contribution is very much appreciated.

Volunteers can help by cooking and delivering part of a meal, helping to host and share a meal, staying overnight at the church one night, and helping with child care in the evening. Families are especially welcome to help host and share an evening meal. Those who wish to sign up or find out more may contact Paula Pachciarz (at 273-4806 or pachwack@sbcglobal.net).

Upcoming training sessions:

- January 20, Tuesday 7–9 p.m. First Unitarian Society, 900 University Ave.
- February 15, Sunday 12:00–2:00 p.m. McFarland UCC, 5710 Anthony St., McFarland
- February 17, Tuesday 7–9 p.m. Day Center, 1121 University Ave.
- March 17, Wednesday 7–9 p.m. Day Center
- April 1, Thursday 7–9 p.m. Day Center
- May 3, Monday 7–9 p.m. Day Center

Prairie Web Sites

Prairie UU: <http://my.execpc.com/~prairie/>.

PrairieNews Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/>.

PrairieViews Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/>.

Social Action: <http://socialaction.homestead.com>

WANTED: BREAKFAST SPECIALISTS

We already have a volunteer shopper and cook for this month's breakfast at the homeless men's shelter (January 27). Two or three more volunteer cooks would be ideal. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Paula Pachciarz (273-4806, pachwack@sbcglobal.net).

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

WORKSHOP PROPOSALS DUE TODAY

Central Midwest District workshop proposals are due for the District Assembly April 23–25, 2004. Workshop proposals must be received in the District Office no later than Friday, January 23, 2004, to be considered. You'll have to e-mail it to:

Lena Neal
331 Camarie Court, Naperville, IL 60540
lneal@packereng.com

or to

Central Midwest District, UUA
4415 W. Harrison St., Suite 310, Hillside, IL 60162
708-236-0829 (fax)
cmwd@cmwd-uua.org

UUA URBAN MINISTRIES CONFERENCE

The UUA's Conference on Urban Ministries carries the theme, "Resistance and Rebirth: Cities and the Future of Our Faith." It will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Boston, adjacent to the Hynes Convention Center from March 18–21, 2004. The keynote addresses for the conference will be delivered by Professor John A. Powell, executive director of the Kirwan Institute for the study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State University, and Mary Elizabeth Hobgood, author of the book, "Dismantling Privilege: An Ethics of Accountability." A variety of workshops on topics including faith-based community organizing, community partnerships, youth in the city, and many others will be offered.

For registration information, go to www.uua.org/urbanuu/resistanceandrebirth.pdf.
Deadline for registration: February 13, 2004.

LETTERS

Dear Prairie Fire,

I was delighted to run across your latest edition, and find that my latest book had been listed as a sure-fire "good read." The X PRESIDENT has had some nice things said about it so far, as well as some not-so-nice things, but none of those things means as much as that sort of word of mouth, from readers who really enjoyed it.

You seem to have a dynamic and positive-thinking group there, judging from your recent edition. Thanks again for allowing me a small part in it.

All the best,
Philip Baruth

HUMANISM IN MADISON

I would say that First Unitarian is no longer the humanist bastion it was -- I would venture that Prairie tends to be more humanist than we at this point, and FUS has moved much closer to Reeb's "spiritual" bent.

I am offering a sermon series this winter about our religious humanist heritage, though, to calm the worriers that our congregation's humanism is entirely a thing of the past.

I'd also be more than happy to issue a special invitation for Prairie folks to join us for the sermon series -- Dec. 28 (Sun. only), Jan. 31-Feb. 1, and Feb. 7-8.

Sincerely,
Rev. Scott Gerard Prinster
Assistant Minister for Young Adult and Campus Ministry, First Unitarian Society of Madison

APPEAL TO HELP PALESTINIAN CHILDREN

To the Congregation of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society:

Because of the events of the past few years, including curfews, lack of transportation, military presence and action, home demolition and a high unemployment rate, Palestinian children are being deprived of a normal and healthy growing environment. This is especially distressing to me. This is why I am sponsoring a girl in Nablus and

why I am appealing to you to consider helping through the United Palestinian Appeal (UPA), a non-profit, non-political, tax-exempt American charity independent of any ideology, based in Washington, D.C. Donations are tax-deductible, the federal tax-exemption number is 11-2494808.

If you would like to find out more, their Web site is www.helpUPA.com, phone number is (800) 892-6183, e-mail address is upa@cais.com. Please ask them for an Annual Report.

Thank you for listening. Please, either as a congregation or as individuals, consider helping one more children.

Katie C. Voit
Walnut Creek, CA
e-mail: ccvoit@cs.com

EARTH STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCE

Hello,

Don't miss this opportunity to register for the statewide conference on the next steps for earth stewardship, "At the Tipping Point, From Global Warming to Global Sustainability." The event is being hosted by the UW-Oshkosh at the university's Gruenhagen Center, Feb. 8-9, 2004 (Sunday afternoon - Monday).

The event is sponsored by the Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign, www.wicec.org. For more info, call Rev. Dr. David Steffenson, 920-623-4260 or e-mail him at dsteffe@powerweb.net.

The registration brochure and an editorial on the need to address climate change by Sarah Streed, WICEC board chair, is posted at www.loppw.org. Register by Friday and save \$10 on the registration fee!

Also, there will be a study guide for congregations on climate change and our faith response.

Peace,
Sue Larson

Prairie Office Administrator Office Hours
Mondays 7-9 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 noon

Shaarei Shamayim Calendar

Tues. 3:45–6:15 p.m. & Sat. 8:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249–5933
CelestialR@charter.net

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Here are more photos from Nifty Gifty, taken at Prairie last December. Can you find yourself in a picture?



UUSC NEWS: A NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As we welcome the new year, we are energized by both the challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead. Our nation is still dealing with the fallout from the war with Iraq. The enormous costs of this war – both human and financial – have diverted precious resources away from pressing social needs at home and around the world.

Looking forward into the new year, we know there is one event that will impact our work and our nation more than anything else in the foreseeable future – the 2004 presidential and congressional elections. And it is why we at UUSC are making a special effort to ensure that Americans educate themselves about the issues and participate in this vitally important exercise in democracy. The election will not only reflect our nation's approach toward war and peace, but also will influence our policy-makers' attitudes toward pressing human rights issues at home and around the world.

As the Service Committee prepares to launch an important new initiative – Defending Democracy Drive 2004 – I want you to know how moved I was by my experiences in Guatemala this past November where I participated with other members of our UUSC delegation as monitors of the presidential election.

I saw thousands of people, many of whom had walked for up to four hours to get to their polling places, wait for hours in long lines for their chance to vote. All of this happened in an atmosphere of fear, threats and uncertainty because of the candidacy of former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt. Gen. Ríos Montt took office as president in the early 1980s through a military coup, and it was during his short but brutal regime that more than 100,000 indigenous people were murdered.

I asked one woman what motivated her to persevere through so much to vote. She replied, "Because today we are defining our country's future." It was estimated that more than 60 percent of eligible voters in Guatemala participated in the election, which saw Gen. Ríos Montt finishing third in the balloting. He failed to qualify for the runoff election and therefore, also lost his immunity from prosecution for crimes committed during his reign of

terror. He now must face charges of genocide and crimes against humanity for his role in the 1980s' massacres.

Compare this with the apathy displayed by American voters. In the 2000 presidential election, barely 50 percent of the eligible voters went to the polls in one of the closest and most hotly contested elections in U.S. history. This means that the president was elected with the support of only 25 percent of the voters.

This year, we are planning a cross-country campaign that will stress the urgency to defend democracy against indifference and cynicism.

We are especially reaching out to youth and young adults, who typically turn out in fewer numbers than any other age group. Despite the tremendous impact they can have on public policy issues, many college-age students don't think politics has any effect on their daily lives.

As we monitored the democratic process in Guatemala, we will seek to make it work more effectively in the United States. We invite you to join us in this exciting journey.

Charlie Clements, President and Chief Executive Officer, UUSC

AID TO IRANIAN EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

To all UUSC Volunteers and Ambassadors:

The recent earthquake in Bam, Iran, was lethal and destructive. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to the victims and their families.

During the days immediately following the disaster we explored the possibility of UUSC becoming involved in the relief and recovery effort. However, we became aware that because we have no project partners based in Iran we are not well-equipped to administer such assistance. We know that many supporters of UUSC would like to give donations to assist those affected in Iran. We suggest that you direct your donations to: Doctors without Borders, <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/pr/2003/12-27-2003.shtml>; or American Friends Service Committee, <http://www.afsc.org/emap/iran.htm>

For questions, call Rachel Binderman at 617-868-6600 x307 or rbinderman@uusc.org; or Bill Docker at 617-868-6600 x206 or bdocker@uusc.org