



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 Bond of Union)

April 9, 2004

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

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, April 11

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Spring Renewal Meditation,"
presented by Judy Skog

Sunday, April 18

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. Intergenerational Earth Day Service,
presented by the Religious Education Committee

Friday, April 23 through Sunday, April 25

☞ Central Midwest District Annual Assembly, Lisle,
Illinois

Sunday, April 25

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Rollback of Environmental Laws: An
Inside Story," presented by Robert Martin, former
EPA Ombudsman

11:45 a.m. Potluck

☞ 12:30 p.m. Annual Prairie Spring Business
Meeting

April 25 - May 2:

☞ Prairie's shift with Interfaith Hospitality Network

Tuesday, April 27

Prairie cooks at men's drop-in shelter breakfast

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS

Sunday, April 11

Wonder what Zorba Paster did to get through the ordeal of his kidnapping? Experience the personal and spiritual renewal of meditation, or just come because it feels good. Join Judy Skog for a variety of meditations, including guided meditation and toning.

Sunday, April 18

An intergenerational Earth Day service will fall on the Sunday after Easter this year. Although preparations for the service have been ongoing, they've been shrouded in mystery! We're going to be in for surprises—although we have heard something about worms, and a mechanical frog. All ages are urged to attend this special program.

Sunday, April 25

Robert Martin will relate anecdotes about the White House, Congress, and the Environmental Protection Agency under the Clinton and Bush administrations. During his nine years as Ombudsman and as independent watchdog to the EPA, Mr. Martin advocated for citizens in pollution cases, including those involving Superfund sites. He resigned in 2002 after EPA officials undermined his ability to determine which cases of alleged EPA impropriety to investigate.

The Program and Social Action committees engage Robert Martin in keeping with Prairie UU Society's mission statement, which includes "respect for all forms of life and stewardship of the environment."

Next Prairie Fire Deadline: April 18

OUR SOCIETY

SPRING PARISH MEETING AGENDA

Prairie UU Society will hold its 2004 Spring Parish meeting on Sunday, April 25, after the Sunday program and a potluck lunch.

The agenda is:

Call to order

Silent meditation

Song

Election of officers for 2004-2005

Resolution to investigate hiring a temporary part-time minister in 2005-2006 (Long Range Planning)

Resolution to apply to CMD for a MOD student minister in 2004-2005 and to provide funding (Long Range Planning)

Resolution to limit Prairie's debt service cost to 25 per cent of its budget (Bob Park)

Proposal to hire architect to review possibility of remodeling existing building (Metje Butler)

Resolution that Prairie opposes constitutional or legislative limits on the definition of civil marriage, or other civil matters, that endanger the full civil rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons. (Social Action Committee)

Reports of officers and committees

Other business at the call of at least 10 members

Song

Adjournment

Mike Briggs, Secretary

MEMORIAL SERVICE SCHEDULED

A memorial service for Timothy Fast, who died March 18, will be held on Saturday, April 4, at First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, at 12 noon. It would have pleased Tim to know that friends from all parts of his life were gathering to honor his memory. Please join our family in a final farewell to a man we dearly loved.

Rosemary Dorney

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CLASSROOM NEWS

Easter Sunday is usually the intergenerational program...the meditation program Judy is doing might be interesting to teenagers, but Jeanie will plan an activity for the younger kids that show up. We'll combine ages and do an outdoor activity, weather permitting.

The RE committee decided to move Spring Fling to May 15th instead of the Mother's Day Weekend.
Jeanie Trigg

SOCIAL ACTION

HOSPITABLE HEARTS

In 2004, Prairie will work with the Madison Interfaith Hospitality Network for four week-long shifts. This valuable agency helps families find homes and jobs. Prairie last volunteered in February and the next shift will be from Sunday, April 25 to Sunday, May 2. There are opportunities for both adults and children to be involved with this effort. Look for the sign-up board and information sheets at Prairie on Sundays. Please contact Paula Pachciarz if you would like to volunteer or would like more information.

OFFICE HOURS FOR THE PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Mondays 7-9 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 noon

SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR

Tuesdays 3:45 - 6:15 and Saturdays 8:45 - 1:15

Prairie Liaison:

Celeste Robins 249-5933 / CelestialR@charter.net

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Prairie UU: my.execpc.com/~prairieu/

PrairieNews Group:

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

PrairieViews Group:

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

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

LETTERS

YOUNG UU'S TAKE BUSES TO DC MARCH

My name is Colette Montoya-Humphrey and I am the regional organizer for Choice USA's Young People's All-Access Contingent to the March for Women's Lives. The March is in Washington, DC on April 25th.

With more anti-choice laws targeting young women and low-income women passed every year, *Roe v. Wade* is not enough to protect reproductive freedom for everyone. We want a pro-choice future where our laws and policies guarantee all people access to reproductive health information and services. We can build the power we need to turn the tables on the anti-choice movement, through youth leadership, grassroots organizing, and a broader vision of what it means to be pro-choice.

Choice USA is inviting young people nationwide to join us to march on Washington the weekend of April 25th. We provide transportation via coach bus to and from Washington, with snacks and movies onboard. Saturday, we will host workshops to give young people the tools they need to create change back in Wisconsin. That night, we will have a study jam as well as a rented nightclub available for marchers. We will provide housing for youth on Saturday night. Sunday, we will attend the march, wearing the orange t-shirts we give each participant. After the march, we'll return to Wisconsin. In the month following the march, I will help youth design an action, event, teach-in, workshop, or some sort of follow-up activity to help youth use what they learned at the march.

The cost for each participant is \$75. I would love to have youth from your congregation join us. Please contact me via e-mail (cmhumphrey@choiceusa.org) or via phone (608) 347.4734. I look forward to hearing from you!

In Solidarity,
Colette Montoya-Humphrey

April 9 is Good Friday or Holy Friday (Eastern Orthodox), commemorating the Passion of Jesus Christ, that is, his submission to death by crucifixion. The day before is Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday (Eastern), observance of the Last Supper.

PROGRAM

The following excerpt from "Church and Family" may be of interest to Prairie members. It is another sermon by last Sunday's speaker, Dr. Sarah Oelberg.
Bob Park

"I have just come from a three-day training session for Prairie Star District Resource Liaisons. These are people who will be available to small churches for assistance in many areas. It is an interesting and exciting idea....

"My task at the training session was to talk about the culture of small congregations, and to bring the good news about being small. It is too bad that so many of our small congregations have been made to feel inferior, or somehow less than, the larger ones the UUA seems to focus on and consider the desirable "norm", for the truth is that over 50% of our UU congregations have fewer than 75 people; 25% have less than 50! So, statistically at least, small is the norm!

"I could give an entire sermon on the joys of small churches, but that is not my intent today. My topic is somewhat related, however, for one of the most constant, visible and positive characteristics of small churches is their feeling of being a family. They are, to a large extent, church as family. Small churches tend to be more intergenerational and more relational. Everybody knows everybody else, and people's presence is missed when they are absent.

"The small church cares more for people, its members, than for program or performance. And it cares for its children. It may not, as Hilary has written, take a whole village to parent a child, but as any mother will tell you, it surely is nice to have some help in raising in children, and the small, family-oriented church is a wonderful support system!"—*Dr. Sarah Oelberg*

LITERARY INFLUENCES ON PRAIRIE

At the March 21 Sunday program, those in attendance filled in a poll, answering several questions. One question was, "What books and authors have significantly influenced your religious career?"

The most common responses, with more than one vote, follow.

The Bible
Emerson, Thoreau and company
Science fiction writers
Mark Twain
Kahlil Gibran
Zen of various sorts
Camus and existentialism
Tillich and Niebuhr
Anthropologists
Erich Fromm
Carlos Castenada
Robert Fulghum

Warren Hagstrom

MEMBERSHIP

OUR NEW PRAIRIE DIRECTORY

The new membership directory is ready to pick up by members at Prairie!

Changes:

Dorothy Krause e-mail: DorothyK@TheOffice.net

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

CMWD ANNUAL ASSEMBLY APRIL 23-25

The Central Midwest District Assembly online registration site is up and running! It is an easy way to register for this year's big event. To register, go to www.regonline.com/?12577

Anyone interested in Social Action should not miss this year's District Assembly. A series of presentations might especially interest you, including a two-part workshop on media activism, a workshop by David Riley of the UU Service Committee on "Defending Democracy: Elections and Hanging Chads," a workshop on creative conflict management, "Energy Depletion Reality: A Challenge to Faith," a workshop on globalization by members of UUs for a Just Economic Community, and a workshop on developing strategies to end world hunger.

You can see the registration brochure on the District website at www.cmwd-uua.org and can download and print the brochure from either the .pdf file or the Word file. The Word file does not hold the formatting like the .pdf file does but it downloads faster and contains all the information you will need to register.

To take advantage of the early bird fee, your online registration must be entered by midnight Friday, April 9 at www.regonline.com/?12577. Your hotel reservation must be made by April 9 also. You need to call the Hyatt directly to make those reservations at 1-800-233-1234 or go to www.lisle.hyatt.com and click Make a reservation. As a reminder, the cost per room is \$69 per night regardless of whether 1, 2, 3, or 4 people stay in the room. Please reference Central Midwest District, UUA when making your reservation.

If you mail your registration in, the envelope must be postmarked no later than Friday, April 9 to take advantage of the early bird fee.

REQUEST FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY DELEGATES

Individuals who would like to attend the General Assembly in Long Beach June 24-28 as a delegate are encouraged to notify Mary Somers at asomers@execpc.com or call 276-8397. Prairie provides registration fees for GA and some money for expenses.

Featured programs at the GA: Immigrants, the New Civil Rights Movement, This is What Democracy Looks Like, Creating a Progressive Pro-Family Agenda, Responsible Consumption, Signature Project (celebrating the interconnectedness through the arts), Reason: Why Liberals Will Win the Battle for America. Holly Near, entertainer and activist, will give the Ware Lecture.

MUUYACM SEEKS HELP GETTING TO GA

MUUYACM (Madison Unitarian Universalist Young Adult and Campus Ministry) members are very excited to attend the upcoming General Assembly. However, many of us would benefit greatly from some financial support. We are looking for more financially established adults to sponsor MUUYACMers for GA.

If you are interested in helping a young adult experience GA by donating money, please contact Scott Prinster at scottp@fusmadison.org.

Thank You!

Lynn Ann Czarnecki

UUSC HOLIDAY CARDS CONTEST 2004

Submissions deadline: **April 15, 2004**. For submission guidelines, see www.uusc.org.

Mail submissions to: UUSC Holiday Card Contest, 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139-1845

E-mail submissions to: volunteerservices@uusc.org

Rachel M. Binderman

Associate for Member Development, UUSC

OTHER NEWS

INVITATION TO FUS FILM SERIES PRESENTATION

The Human Rights Committee of First Unitarian Society will present **Being Hmong Means Being Free** on Friday, April 16, at 7:00 p.m. in the West Living Room. This film highlights the history, culture and identity of Hmong immigrants who have settled in the United States as seen through the eyes of 17-year-old Lia Vang. Refreshments will be served and a discussion will follow the film. Questions? Call Suzie deBeers at 833-0506.

RAINBOW FAMILIES WISCONSIN 4TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

"Learn, Connect and Rejuvenate to Continue the Fight for Our Rights"

Dates: April 2 - 4, 2004

Workshop Day: Saturday, April 3, 8:30- 4:30

Location: J.F. Friedrich Hotel and Conference Center, UW-Madison Campus, Madison, WI

Explore and expand your understanding of family diversity, diversity within families, parenting, creating families, and building powerful communities across the state. This weekend is designed for families to spend a weekend relaxing with like minds in a hotel and conference center next to beautiful Lake Mendota.

Conference Web Site

www.geocities.com/rainbowfamilieswisconsin/

Conference Chairperson

Patti Thompson: pattithompson@charter.net or 244-5258



(RE)CONNECT WITH YOUR INNER POET

Date: Sunday, April 25, 3 – 5 p.m. at James Reeb

Please join a poetry workshop at James Reeb UU for a fun and welcoming time to get your poetic juices flowing for Spring! People with all levels of poetry experience and confidence are welcome to participate in the individual and group exercises.

Contact: Paul at 251-3187 or email pterranova@mindspring.com

Register: Bring a check for \$16 payable to James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

GROWING UP IN AN OASIS OF PEACE

Talks on "Growing Up in an Oasis of Peace" will be given in Madison on April 19 and April 20 by Laila Najjar and Adi Frish, a Palestinian woman and a Jewish woman, both 21 years of age, who grew up in an integrated village called Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam (Oasis of Peace).

The program on Monday, April 19 at 7:00 p.m. will be held at Grainger Hall-1100 Margridge Auditorium, 975 University Avenue. It is sponsored by several Jewish, Middle Eastern, and Christian organizations.

The program on Tuesday, April 20 at 7:30 p.m. will be held at Temple Bethel, 2702 Arbor Drive. It is sponsored by the Social Justice Council of the First Unitarian Society and by Shaarei Shamayim.

For more information, see www.oasisofpeace.org.



FREE LECTURE SERIES ON SAUK CITY'S PARK HALL

The Sauk City UU fellowship meets in an historic building, Park Hall, which needs restoration. The Park Hall Preservation Foundation is raising money so that work can start. A lecture series, "Historic Park Hall: A Symbol of Freedom in America," will be given on three dates in April and May. Members of Prairie UU, James Reeb UU, and First Unitarian Society are especially invited to attend.

April 6, 7:30 p.m. "Germany, 1848 (Freedoms There?)," given by Max Gaebler, Emeritus Minister, First Unitarian Society of Madison

April 20, 7:30 p.m. "America, 1848-1884 (Freedoms Here?)," given by Peter Shrake, Director, Sauk County Historical Society

May 4, 7:30 p.m. "Park Hall, A Symbol of Freedom," given by Paul Wolter, President, Sauk County Historical Society

The lectures will be followed by discussion, and refreshments. They will be held at Park Hall, 307 Polk Street, Sauk City.

METJE ON WISCONSINPORTAL

The photographs of Prairie's own Metje Butler are now featured on the portalwisconsin Web site: http://www.portalwisconsin.org/online_gallery_artists.cfm?sort=recent

Here is one of Metje's photographs:



UUSC E-MAIL BULLETIN

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee: advancing human rights and social justice in the United States and throughout the world.

Action alert: Urge president, Congress to ease tensions, end Cuba travel ban

As U.S.-Cuba relations deteriorate to the worst point since 1996, the Bush administration has taken many steps to tighten the trade embargo against Cuba. These actions are making Cubans fearful that the administration is laying the groundwork for regime change in Cuba. We urge members and supporters to contact President Bush

and their members of Congress and to urge them to ease the trade embargo and lift the travel ban against Cuba.

More info: www.uusc.org/news/alert031604_2.html

International community observes 10th anniversary of Rwanda genocide

For one hundred days 10 years ago, the world watched silently, unmoved, while nearly 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were brutally killed. The Rwandan genocide was one of the most intense and atrocious campaigns of mass slaughter perpetrated in the 20th century. The United Nations has marked Wednesday, April 7, 2004, as the "International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda."

Photo essay: www.uusc.org/info/rwandaessay.html

"Enemy combatant" Padilla to meet with lawyer

The Bush administration recently reversed its long-time stance regarding José Padilla, an American citizen held without charge by the Defense Department, allowing Padilla to meet finally with counsel. As a part of our work on civil liberties and free speech, UUSC has been following this case and publicly advocating for Padilla's constitutional rights. UUSC and other colleague agencies have been deeply concerned over the unilateral powers the Bush administration is claiming for itself in the name of the war on terrorism.

More info: www.uusc.org/info/article032904_2.html

Young activists register Fla. voters on spring break

Eight youth and young adult activists and UUSC staff spent spring break learning about and participating in voter registration and get out the vote campaigns. UUSC is committed to making sure that U.S. voters-especially youth and young adults-are educated and participate in the upcoming election process. We are creating opportunities through our Defending Democracy initiative for our members and supporters to register, educate, motivate and mobilize voters across the nation.

More info: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article032604.html>

Murder of Cambodian union leader condemned

UUSC staff members, as members of UNITE! Local 2661, together with UUSC management condemned the assassination of Cambodian union leader Chea Vichea, which took place Jan. 22, 2004. Chea Vichea organized campaigns to enforce wage laws in Cambodia factories.

More info: www.uusc.org/info/Cambodiaunionleader3-04.pdf