



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)

December 7, 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

Saturday, December 11

7:30 p.m. Prairie play readers at the Caldens', 4606 Waukesha St.

Sunday, December 12

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

☞ 10:00 a.m. "What Can We Learn from the Jesus Myth?" presented by Warren Hagstrom

10:00 a.m. Nifty Gifty program for kids

Monday, December 13

7:15 p.m. Prairie Web Committee meeting at Ken Skog's.

Sunday, December 19

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Symbol Tree" Service presented by Erin Bosch.

☞ 6:00 p.m. WOW women's group at Prairie.

Sunday, December 26

10:00 a.m. Intergenerational Celebration coordinated by the Converse family.

Tuesday, December 28

2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meet. Details TBA.

Sunday, January 2

10:00 a.m. Service TBA.

Sunday, January 16

☞ 10:00 a.m. "Is Tolerance Always a Virtue?" presented by Rev. Sarah Oelberg.

☞ = Details follow in this issue.

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: DECEMBER 19

DETAILS OF COMING EVENTS

Sunday, December 12

"Great are the myths—I too believe in them"
—Walt Whitman

This program, "What Can We Learn from the Jesus Myth," won't be debunking, only a little. Warren Hagstrom, the speaker, thinks it mistaken to treat the Gospel story of Jesus as narrative history, accounts of particular people in particular times and places. Understanding the story as myth, we become enabled to take it apart and use it creatively. Since the myth inspired people like Michelangelo, Bach, and Thomas Jefferson, it has sometimes (not always!) been great. There will be time for discussion, and appropriate music for the season.

Sunday, December 19

Our traditional Symbol Tree service begins with the RE students in a candlelight Santa Lucia procession. After a story and some singing, we have the symbol tree ceremony. You are invited to bring a symbol of some noteworthy event from your life in the past year, to say a few words about it, and then place your symbol on the tree.

OUR SOCIETY

PRAIRIE WOW MEETS DECEMBER 19

The next meeting of the Prairie women's group is Sunday, December 19, at 6:00 p.m. at Prairie. Bring substantial food to share.

VISIT TO POTENTIAL BUILDING SITE

Larry Nahlik will host a visit to the Fitchburg Center site currently being considered as a location for Prairie's new home immediately after our service on Sunday, December 12. He will plan to be there from 11:30 to noon (at least) to answer questions.

Directions from Prairie: take Seminole Highway south to McKee Road (PD). Turn left (east) on PD to Fish Hatchery Road, then left (north) on Fish Hatchery. Take the first right onto Glacier Valley Road. Glacier Valley turns south and is the route of the Capital City bike trail. Go about half a mile and turn to left on Gunflint Trail. Ahead of you, you'll see Eagle School. The proposed site is just west of Eagle School, overlooking the bike trail.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Prairie Members and Friends will be receiving an important letter from the Religious Education Committee this week about our Religious Education program. Please watch your mail for it and reply to it as soon as possible. Thanks so much!

- Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky, DRE

NIFTY GIFTY NEEDS HELPERS

Calling all crafty Prairie members! We are looking for ideas for Nifty Gifty projects for December 12. We are also very in need of volunteers to staff each project table and assist children with creating their gifts! Please contact Kathy Converse or Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky if you can help out!

We also need 5-6 inch square gift boxes and gift bags for Nifty Gifty! Please leave them downstairs on the counter if you are able, or leave them on the bench at the top of the stairs and I will pick them up!

Melissa Gjestvang-Lucky

And, according to Kathy Converse, other needs are:

- Beads larger than 1/4" & seed beads like the ones that are used in Indian jewelry.
- CD's that can be recycled, with pictures OK
- Any old necklaces bracelets, or costume jewelry that can be taken apart.
- Used travel Atlases or road maps.
- Buttons, not white 1/2" - 3/4".
- Colored saran wrap, (a 1 ft length is OK) or

other colored transparent sheets.

- Strips of lace, ribbon or decoration materials. Thick or thin.
- Sparkly tinsel like yarn.
- Googley or wiggly eyes for projects.
- New standard 6-10" taper candles, any color.
- Loan of, labeled, small regular or needle nosed pliers or small wire clippers.

Call Kathy or Susan Herr Hoyman if you can provide any of these materials.

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

UUSC HOLIDAY CARDS ARE ON SALE

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee cards are available from UUSC at: www.uusc.org/store or:

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139-1845

UUSC GUEST AT YOUR TABLE BOXES

This annual UUSC fundraiser is underway. Please give generously. Contributions from individuals exceeding \$50 are matched and UUSC contributions over \$25 automatically entitle you to membership. Leverage your power by joining 25,000 other members of the UUSC.

Return boxes or checks to Dan Proud, our project coordinator. *Congratulations, Dan, for your efforts in Prairie's designation as a UUSC "Creating Justice Banner Society."*

Also, Thanks, Dan, for your wonderful Prairie Fire Editing. All Prairie members should sit in your chair for an issue. It lets us appreciate your work even more. Have a wonderful vacation this week.

MEMBERSHIP

Please note this update:

Barb Bailly has a new email address, BrbbL9-aol.com. (Note, to avoid having spammers pick up email addresses from the Prairie Fire, @ is replaced with a dash in the address above -Ed.)

PRAIRIE OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR HOURS

Mondays 8-10 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 noon

SHAAREI SHAMAYIM CALENDAR

Saturdays 8:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

Prairie Liaison: Celeste Robins 249-5933

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Prairie UU Society:

prairie.madison.uua.org

Prairie News Group:

groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/

Prairie Views Group:

groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/

Social Action:

socialaction.homestead.htm

Long Range Planning Committee - new:

www.execpc.com/~prairieu/planning (no space)

(This is a web site intended for Prairie internal use developed by the Long Range Planning Committee.

It contains additional information on Building sites - including a link to the architects that will be doing concept drawings for the Fitchburg center site, additional information about other sites, and summaries of growth workshops, discussions and polls since 2001. - Ken Skog To keep it from becoming a public site, the address above needs to be directly typed into the browser, not including any space between the "/" and "planning" - Ed.)

MINISTER SEARCH

News from the Minister Search Committee Members - Doleta Chapru, Aileen Nettleton, Patty Stockdale, and Ken Skog (Chair)

The congregation approved funds for obtaining a Part time Consulting minister for a period of one year at the November 14th Parish meeting. The Minister Search Committee will be contacting and interviewing candidates in the coming weeks. When we believe we have a candidate that would meet our needs we will invite them to come for a weekend to meet Prairie members and friends in many activities, and to speak at a Sunday service. After the Sunday service we will have a parish meeting and vote on whether or not to offer the position to the candidate and proceed to negotiate an agreement. We expect the process could continue in to January or possibly February depending on arrangements that may be needed to interview the candidates and also hear them speak.

Thank you to everyone who responded to our Ministerial Survey. We had a very good response – 66 members and friends. The survey is part of our preparation to advertise for our position and provide

materials to candidates that explain the many characteristics of the Prairie community and its members and friends. We are preparing a summary of the results to provide to everyone. We will be aided in preparing interview questions and screening candidates by the survey information on what roles and features of a minister are most important to members and friends.

Information on the activities of the Minister Search Committee may be found on the Prairie Long Range Planning Web site - www.execpc.com/~prairieu/planning.

If you know if candidates to suggest please contact a member of our committee.

PRAIRIE BOOK CLUB NEWS

Sunday, December 12 - THE OTHER SIDE OF TRUTH by Beverly Naidoo is the story of 12-year-old Sade, who must flee her native Nigeria with her younger brother after their mother is killed in a shooting. Their father, a muckraking journalist in trouble with the military government, was the target. The siblings are stranded in London, abandoned by the woman paid to smuggle them into the country. Read & recommended by Sarah Lord.

Sunday, January 16 - THE PIANO TUNER by Daniel Mason, is set in Burma in the late 1800's. A shy piano tuner from London sets out with an unusual commission from the British War Office to tune a piano in the middle of the jungle in what is now Thailand. A fascinating setting and intriguing story of political adventure and unforgettable characters, says Barbara Chatterton.

Meetings are held at Prairie after the Sunday service, around 11:30 a.m. Bring food to share but come even if you forgot food). Anyone may attend on a drop-in basis. This is an open book club.

Border's Book Store, 3750 University Avenue, gives a 20% discount if you mention they are book club selections. The information desk even keeps a listing of the books we are reading, in case you are there without remembering to take the title along. And, of course, they are available through the South Central Library system, including Sequoia & Monroe St. branches of the Madison Public Library.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

What a wonderful program Bob Lawrence and Cindy Haq organized for us last Sunday! The subtitle of the program was: "Are there enough commonalities among the traditions of Judaism and Islam to form a basis for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?" Bob & Cindy suggested that the similarities of ideas of social justice and values of these two Abrahamic religions are sufficient to allow for solution of this conflict, which does not center around religious differences. Then they had us break into small groups for a role-playing exercise, assigning each of us either Jewish or Palestinian roles. - Thought provoking and stimulating.

Home to Share: Cindy, Isaac, and Heather will be working and studying in Uganda January through May. Bob is wondering if anyone would like to join him and Molly (dog) in the big house between Verona and Mt Horab while they are gone. Call 845-8065, if interested.

Have a wonderful trip, Cindy. Can we get a program on your work when you return? - Ed.

ALLIED EMERGENCY PANTRY

We are still collecting food pantry items for Allied Partners. Suggested items for bags, which you can leave at Prairie:

canned tuna	coconut milk	rice
canned salmon	peanut butter	cereal
macaroni & cheese	powdered milk	flour
spaghetti, sauce	meals in a can	sugar
canned veggies (especially corn)		oil
Goya brand products (e.g., beans, greens, black-eyed peas)		

SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Visit UUSC's online store at www.uusc.org/store to find gifts. Or give the gift of UUSC membership, to help strengthen UUSC's work, and reaffirm our shared belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all people. See www.uusc.org/info/vsmemgift.html Or, consider a donation in memory of a loved one. See: www.uusc.org/info/vsmemorial.html.

TWO GOOD REASONS TO JOIN THE UUSC

Action alert: Tell Congress U.S. must respect Geneva Conventions in Fallujah. - United States forces invaded Fallujah in Iraq amid a storm of international criticism about severe violations of human rights and the Geneva Conventions. The reports are grim. Please contact your U.S. representative and senators and insist that our forces comply with the basic humanitarian requirements of international law. Our policy-makers need to know that the voters firmly support human rights for all people, not just for U.S. citizens. For an action alert, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/news/alert111804.html>.

Activists gain victory in campaign for rights of migrant farm workers A five-year boycott of the Mt. Olive Pickle Co. has ended in victory for both migrant farmer workers in North Carolina and social justice advocates who supported their campaign to gain the right to unionize. UUSC was among more than 300 organizations to endorse the boycott, which also was the focus of UUSC work camps in 2002 and 2003 in Greenville, N.C. To learn more about this victory, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article120104.html>.

OTHER NEWS

Maggie "Catfish" Siegfried & Jeff Costello - "*The Too Tall Margarets*" are performing New Year's Eve in Stoughton from 9 p.m. To 1 a.m., at Stella's Speakeasy, 201 Water Street. Timeless music for the New Year. For further information, call 274-4535

WOMEN'S WINTER CONFERENCE

WomanSpirit 2005 Winter Conference, "Choosing with Purpose—Living with Conscience—Women in Community," will take place on Friday, January 21, through Sunday, January 23, at the Springfield Hilton in Springfield, Illinois. Anna Blythe Lappe, coauthor of *Hope's Edge: the Next Diet for a Small Planet*, is the keynote speaker. This conference is presented by the Women and Religion Committee, Central Midwest District, and Women of the Central Illinois Planning Committee. Check the website: www.womenandreligion.org.

For last year's words belong to last year's language. And next year's words await another voice. -- T.S. Eliot