



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)

April 7, 2006

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 9

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
*10:00 a.m. "God, Torah, and Israel," presented by Rabbi Jonathan Biatch

Tuesday, April 11

7:00 p.m. Natural Step Class, at Prairie

Wednesday, April 12

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie

Sunday, April 16

*10:00 a.m. "The Wilderness Requirement for Change: Easter, Passover and the State of the Congregation," presented by the Rev. Jody Whelden
11:45 a.m. Long-Range Planning Presentation to the Congregation
*7:00 p.m. Humanist Union hosts Joel Pelletier concert and mural display

Tuesday, April 18

7:00 p.m. Natural Step Class, at Prairie

Friday-Sunday, April 21-23

*Central Midwest District Assembly 2006 at the Madison Concourse Hotel

Saturday-Sunday, April 22-23

Spring Fling overnight

Sunday, April 23

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
*10:00 a.m. Earth Day Intergenerational Program
*11:45 a.m. Annual Meeting at Prairie

Sunday, April 30

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
*10:00 a.m. "Sikhism: A Universal Religion," presented by Dr. Satwant Dhillon
*11:45 a.m. Right Relations presentation
12:00 noon. Humanist Union meets at Prairie

Wednesday-Sunday, June 21-25

UUA General Assembly, St. Louis, Mo.

(* = *Details follow in this issue.*)

DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, April 9

"God, Torah, and Israel: Three Pillars of an Ancient and a Contemporary Faith," is the fourth session of Rachel Long's 6-session lay ministry with Rebecca Malke-Eligenti, "World Religions—Know Your Neighbor." Our guest speaker for April 9 is Rabbi Jonathan Biatch.

The biblical book of Proverbs [3:18] declares that Torah is a 'tree of life' for those who grasp it tightly. Judaism is a living faith that provides comfort and solace, joy and exultation, social justice and ethical guidance. Judaism asserts the idea that we ourselves determine how we shape the soul that God has given us, through acts of free will, and by

NEXT PRAIRIE FIRE DEADLINE: SUNDAY, APRIL 16

following examples set for us by moral and ethical leaders throughout history, and we do so by looking at our relationship with God, by our understanding and exploration of the Torah, and through our connection with the people of Israel all over the world.

Rabbi Biatch served in synagogues in Virginia and California before becoming spiritual leader of Temple Beth El in Madison. He has served on the boards of the southern California region of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, and "Allies," a human rights advocacy organization supporting the gay and lesbian communities of the Shenandoah Valley. He is married to Rabbi Bonnie Margulis. They have two children, Samantha and Joshua, and reside in Madison.

Sunday, April 16

"The Wilderness Requirement for Change: Easter, Passover and the State of the Congregation" presented by the Rev. Jody Whelden.

Humans beings must travel through a wilderness of mind and spirit that is uncharted territory in order to grow. In addition to touching on the Passover and Easter stories, the Rev. Jody Whelden will share with us her perspectives on how the congregational year here at Prairie has gone: the wilderness part and the more concrete part.

Sunday, April 23

Mary Mullen and Larry Nahlik will lead an intergenerational celebration of Earth Day and appreciation of the natural world. There will be an outdoor component, weather permitting. Look forward to some fun!

Sunday, April 30

Dr. Satwant Dhillon, a Sikh who resides in Fort Akinson, will present "Sikhism: A Universal Religion." Sikhism is a religion related to Hinduism and has been influenced by Islam. Prairie members will be surprised to learn that they have more in common with this Eastern religion than they think!

OUR SOCIETY

RIGHT RELATIONS MEETINGS CONTINUE

On April 2, people at Prairie embarked on the exciting project of writing an "Agreement of Right Relationship" with each other. On Sundays, right after the service, the Prairie's Board of Directors' Task Force of Right Relationship will bring to you the first draft of the agreement. We need your input. Some of the areas we will be working with are Serving Our Congregation, Forgiveness, Embracing Differences, Working with Listening and Speaking, and Welcoming. We look forward to you joining us. Come to one, or both of the remaining dates— **April 30** and **May 21**, 11:45 at Prairie for about an hour. See you there!

The Rev. Jody Whelden

Consulting Minister

Office: 608-271-8218

Home Office: 608-231-9707

A LONG-RANGE PLAN FOR PRAIRIE

Please come to the information/feedback session on our draft 5-year plan on **Sunday, April 16** at 11:45 p.m. The Long Range Planning Committee would like your input on the draft long-range plan for Prairie at our information and feedback meeting (for an hour).

The plan is intended to cover activities from 2006 through summer 2011. We are particularly interested in your views on (1) critical issues facing Prairie over the next 5 years, and (2) objectives we should have to address those issues. The draft objectives are too long to list here but the draft critical issues are shown below.

We will send out the complete draft plan on PrairieNews and provide paper copies on April 16. We expect to have at least one more listening session in May. Please come and help make a plan for Prairie's future! Draft Critical Issues are to be addressed in the Long Range Plan.

Each issue is framed as a question (or questions) about Prairie's achieving particular outcomes. Our goals and objectives are the specific actions we should take to achieve the outcomes.

A. Membership growth—now to May 2007

Given our desire to have our congregation grow—can we change how we welcome, incorporate, care for visitors/new members so we can show evidence that we know how to grow in wisdom, strength, and actions that result in more members by May 2007?

B. New leaders—ongoing

Can we broaden the number of people who are willing and who are trained to take initiative in responsible positions so as to take action on our objectives and meet our goals/vision?

C. Programming and ministry—ongoing (conduct survey to evaluate each year)

Can we improve our programming so we can show that we are broadening/deepening the satisfaction members express for our collective ministry/support/caring for one another? Can we systematically address concerns about collective ministry by the goals and objectives we set each year for committees, board members, and minister (others)?

D. Funding for the new building (to August 2007)

Can we show sufficient evidence of progress toward support of funding construction and operation of a building at the Fitchburg site—from our congregation/(outside sources?)—that the deadline for breaking ground on construction can be extended beyond August 2007? OR can we come up with the needed funds to support construction AND the needed members to support an operating budget (and mortgage payments) after construction by August 2007?

E. Professional ministry

Can we decide as a community if we need a permanent part-time minister to deal with critical issues/ reach our goals and vision for our future, OR we need another year to answer that question OR we can meet our goals without a minister OR we no longer have goals that may require the aid of a minister. One result could be that next year could be a transition year—continuing with a consulting minister and doing a search for a called part-time minister.

F. Cooperation with other UU congregations (ongoing)

Can we collaborate more effectively with other UU congregations to support one another and the growth of liberal religion and engagement with other organizations to express our conviction and support on social justice issues?

THE VIEW FROM MY BRANCH



I hope you are considering going to the UU Central Midwest District's (CMWD) Annual Meeting, **April 21, 22 and 23** at the Concourse Hotel-Madison. The theme is "Taking Our Country Back from the Religious Right."

Rabbi Michael Lerner is the Saturday morning keynote speaker. Rabbi Lerner is a highly respected religious leader. He consults with political leaders and social justice leaders across the country. (You can go to his keynote address on Saturday morning for \$20. See the Web address below.) He has a new book out, *The Left Hand of God: Taking Our Country Back from the Religious Right*.

President Jimmy Carter has a book out regarding these kinds of issues, also. Of course, he won't be with us that weekend! But, views from many perspectives are helpful, and his are interesting. Sometimes called the "the other" born-again Christian President, President Carter has written *Our Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis*. He suggests that the priority of religion is love and the priority of politics is justice. Love can help us find what is just. He states the case for separation of church and state. Assuming religion provides us with a ground for moral insight, he suggests that we can mingle our morality with politics, without equating them.

Come and add your view to the dialogue! Along with Lerner's keynote, First Unitarian Society Senior Pastor Michael Schuler will lead the 1/2 hour worship service on Saturday morning. He will reflect on similar concerns. Many people from the five cluster UU congregations in Dane/Sauk County will be on the stage, singing in the choir or volunteering. There will be about 300 UU's from a 5-state area going to keynotes, attending workshops and exchanging ideas.

The meeting has not been held in Madison for over ten years. Who knows when it will be back?! Come join us. For additional information, go to the Web site <http://www.cmwd-uaa.org/DA.html>, or call your Denominational Affairs Committee: Larry Nahlik, Nancy Schraufnagel or Pat Watkins.

*The Rev. Jody Whelden, Consulting Minister
Office: 608-271-8218; Home Office: 608-231-9707*

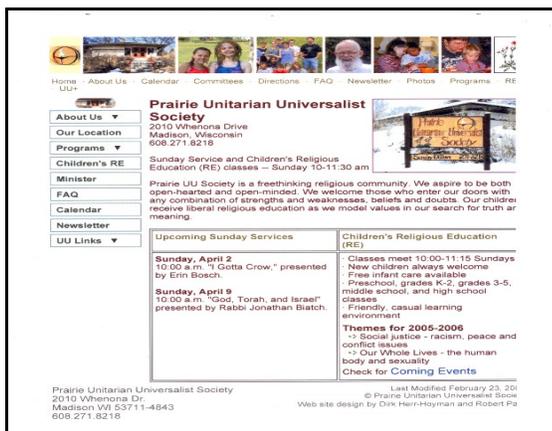
NEW WEB SITE AND CALENDAR

We are rolling out our new Prairie Web site:

<http://www.uuprairie.org>

The site reflects the winning design entry by Bob Park in last fall's contest. The Web site is attractive to look at and easy to navigate.

Please take a look at the Web site! It is full of color, pictures, useful links, and lots of information on how Prairie runs and who we are. It is becoming the new communication hub for our membership, and it is the first place that potential members look to learn about us.



The Prairie calendar will now be on the Web site. The calendar shows when the building is in use, and committees can enter their own meetings. See Dirk Herr-Hoyman for a short training session. Members or committees can also request meetings or calendar events by sending an e-mail to [calendar \(at\) uuprairie.org](mailto:calendar@uuprairie.org), and the Administrator will update the calendar. The Administrator will monitor calendar entries to ensure double bookings do not occur. The online calendar is the official calendar for Prairie.

The Prairie Fire newsletter, which is found on the Web site, can be opened as a text file (little formatting, a little faster to open) or as a PDF file using Adobe Acrobat Reader (looks like the paper copy, plus appears in color). We are moving to electronic distribution as the primary way to read the newsletter. If you need a paper copy, you can print it from the Web site. Those who must have a paper copy can request this from the Prairie Fire editor.

The new e-mail for the Prairie administrator is [admin \(at\) uuprairie.org](mailto:admin@uuprairie.org), in addition to [prouds \(at\) tds.net](mailto:prouds@tds.net).

WE NEED RAINBOWS!

The Communications Committee requests graphic images that indicate we are a welcoming congregation. The graphic selected by the committee will appear on our new Prairie UU Web site. Submissions may be electronic files or images on paper that can be scanned into a digital file.

We need a short, wide image, about 5 times as wide as it is tall. The image will be rather small on the home page of the Web site (about 120 pixels wide by 30 pixels tall, or about 1.25" by 0.25"), so it must be very simple and bold to show up well.

Submissions may be given to Karen Deaton by hand, by mail (22 Starr Ct, Madison, 53711), or by email ([karendeaton \(at\) tds.net](mailto:karendeaton@tds.net)).

Deadline is **Sunday, April 23**.

ROOMMATE WANTED

Roommate is wanted to share a 2-bedroom townhouse in a nice West side neighborhood. Fully furnished; bedroom on second floor; laundry on ground floor; parking available; large back yard. Rent is only \$220, plus 1/2 utilities. Please, non-smokers only; no pets or loud partiers.

Call Tom at 271-8365.

HOUSEMATE NEEDED

Fully furnished (right down to the linens!) 1-2 rooms available to rent in a member's home near Prairie. Includes many amenities... all utilities, cable TV and Internet in room, semi-private bath, kitchen privileges, and more. One room for \$500/month or 2 for \$800. Will also consider 2 people for a total of \$1000/month. Share with one adult and 2 cats. Photo and more info at <http://dorothyk.net/> or call Dorothy at 271-7532.

CALLING ALL STORYTELLERS

Calling all storytellers! Join Prairie members and friends to help form a cadre of people who will be better prepared to choose and tell/read the "story for all ages" at Prairie Sunday services. The Storyteller Workshop is a 2-session workshop that will meet at 7:15 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 10**, and **Wednesday, May 24**, at Prairie after the midweek meal.

Put these dates on your calendar now, and let Mary Mullen know that you plan to attend so that we can have enough materials for you (298-0843 or mmullen (at) chorus.net).

You are invited to bring a potluck dish to share at the midweek meal each of those nights as well. The potluck meal begins at 6:30 sharp each Wednesday night.

As of this writing, a dozen people have indicated interest. Because a number of people in this group have professional training and expertise in the skills we'll be practicing, I think we can look forward to a very stimulating experience at these workshops.

The tentative agendas follow. Suggestions for changes or additions to either agenda are welcome. The idea is to learn and to have fun.

The Rev. Jody Welden will be leading the second session.

Tentative First Session Agenda, 7:15 p.m.,

Wednesday, May 10

- Welcome
- Why we're holding the workshop sessions
- Sharing from all: past training & experience in storytelling, reasons for attending workshop
- Second round of sharing: best storytelling you've seen at Prairie or elsewhere, features you liked
- Preparation for visiting the library
- Visit to Sequoya Library to select books

Tentative Second Session Agenda, 7:15 p.m.,

Wednesday, May 24

(Preparation: Bring the books you selected at the library during the first session. If you were not present, books will be provided.)

- Welcome
- Sharing: Hopes for this session on storytelling techniques
- Presentation by Rev. Jody Whelden—Kinetic, Visual, and Auditory in Storytelling
- Small groups work up several ways of telling the stories they chose
- Storytelling practice: Individuals tell the stories they just worked on to the entire group

PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: prairie.madison.uua.org

News Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/

Views Group: groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/

Social Action: socialaction.madisonwi.us

Humanist Union: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>

Long Range Planning: www.execpc.com/~prairie/

MEMBERSHIP

Please welcome our new member to Prairie:

Sonya Sidky

5821 Tollman Terrace

Madison, WI 53711

sidky (at) charter.net

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A NEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

We are pleased to announce that as of **Sunday, April 16**, Rebecca Malke-Eligenti will be serving as Prairie's new Youth Religious Education Coordinator (YREC). Working with the RE Committee, she'll be the one to make sure everything in our youth program runs smoothly and is both fun and enriching for our kids.

Rebecca has been teaching the Middle School class all year, and is assisting in the World Religions lay ministry. We are expecting to draw on her skills as an educator as well as her education in religion and journalism. Look for her and say hello, and welcome her to her new role at Prairie!

Rachel Long, Chair

Religious Education Committee

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST NEWS

DISTRICT ASSEMBLY NEEDS ARTISTS AND VENDORS

The UU Central Midwest District Assembly will be held at the Concourse Hotel in Madison, from **Friday, April 21 to Sunday, April 23**. People from Wisconsin, Illinois and Missouri will be attending the meetings; 300 to 400 participants are expected. The theme of the Assembly is "Taking Our Country Back From The Religious Right" with Rabbi Michael Lerner the Keynote Speaker on Saturday morning from 9:15 to 10:45.

The Organizing Committee is inviting vendors to offer items for sale during the Assembly consisting of Fair Trade, Art, Fine Crafts, and Wisconsin Products. Eight to ten vendor tables will be located in the hallway on the 2nd floor. In addition there will be several display tables in the same area. There is no security in the hallway, so vendors are advised to remove their inventory when they are not present.

Schedule of Hours for Sales Tables:

Friday, April 21: 3–5 p.m. (setup); 5–7:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 22: 8–9 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.–5 p.m.
Sunday April 23: 8–11:00 a.m. (optional)

The above opening times are recommended, not mandatory. You may want to come earlier or later, stay longer, or leave early.

If you are interested in being a vendor at this event, you are required to reserve a table to display and sell your merchandise. The cost of a table is \$35.00. Vendors may register online at www.regonline.com/89851, or you can send a Mail-in Registration Form with a check made out to "UUA-CMwD" with "DA Vendor" in the memo line to:

Central Midwest District
4415 W. Harrison St., Suite 310, Hillside, IL 60162

If you have any questions or would like more information, please call or e-mail me.

Geke de Vries [pronounced Gayka]
Coordinator of Vendors
Telephone (608) 238-3425
E-mail: [hhfelste \(at\) wisc.edu](mailto:hhfelste@wisc.edu)

ASSEMBLY HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Full details are available at: <http://www.cmwd-uua.org/DA.html>.

To make your hotel reservations, you need to call the Concourse Hotel directly, at 1-800-356-8293. In order to get the special rate of \$79, you must mention the Central Midwest District Assembly.

MUUYACM SPONSORS CONCERT APRIL 22

The Madison Unitarian Universalist Young Adult and Campus Ministry will host a free performance by singer/songwriter Ellis on **Saturday, April 22** at 9:00 p.m. at First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Dr., Madison WI 53705. The concert is free and open to the public.

Ellis consistently receives favored recognition in Readers' Choice polls in Minnesota, most recently in February by the Minnesota Women's Press. At each of her previous performances in Madison, Ellis has earned an enthusiastic fan base.

About Ellis: After moving from Texas to Minnesota at age 16, Ellis founded her own record label and has recorded five solo albums, selling more than 25,000 copies to date. Touring nationally, with more than 130 concerts each year, she has been described as "Minneapolis' most ascendant folk singer" by the *StarTribune*. Ellis' current release is "Evidence of Joy" and her Web site is <http://ellis-music.com/>.

Independent Songwriter Magazine said, "with a voice as strong as thunder and a message powerful as a surge of lightning, Ellis pours her heart and soul into every word." Ellis has gotten great support from fans as well as critics—she's been voted "Best Musician" in Readers' Choice polls in the Twin Cities for the past five consecutive years.

"She's got real star power and audiences are utterly mesmerized by her," says *Curve Magazine*. The *Pacific Northwest Inlander* wrote, "Her sound is like the aural love child of Edie Brickell and Ani DiFranco; her lyrics evoke all the social consciousness and emotional vulnerability of the early Indigo Girls."

Stacy Harbaugh, MUUYACM Program Coordinator
[stacyh \(at\) fusmadison.org](mailto:stacyh@fusmadison.org), or visit www.muuyacm.org

JOURNEY TOWARD WHOLENESS NEWS

UUs MARK THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE WAR

Unitarian Universalists marked the third anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq last weekend with peace vigils, rallies, and sermons.

In Portland, Ore., about 350 friends and members of First Unitarian Church joined 10,000 others for a downtown rally and march Sunday, March 19, against the war. Despite the numbers, Robert C.A. Moore, founder of a peace group at First Unitarian, said he sensed less enthusiasm this year. Noting that 40,000 turned out in Portland when the war started in 2003, he said, "There seems to be some real fear among people that they'll do or say something that will get them investigated by the FBI.

But for those of us who remain active, we're motivated by the thought that we might do something that will end this war one day sooner."

For full article and other reports see

www.uuworld.org/news/articles/uusmarkanniversaryofiraqwar3040.shtml.

Rev. Arvid Straube of First UU Church of San Diego reports that "The Faith Leaders for Peace action was by far the most well covered and most effective action in San Diego this weekend about the Iraq war. Over 1,000 people attended the interfaith witness for peace. The new organization began by clergy talking to each other. See more about Faith Leaders for Peace at www.flfpeace.org. There are some great pictures, our platform, press coverage, and more."

Donald E. Skinner

WIN WITHOUT WAR CAMPAIGN FOR AN OPEN DEBATE IN CONGRESS ON THE IRAQ WAR

Members of Congress will be gathering on Capitol Hill on April 5 in support of H.R.543, a petition to discharge the Homeward Bound Act on to the House floor for debate. To support this congressional call for an open debate, Win Without War (WWW) on www.winwithoutwarus.org/—of which the UUA is a member—is launching an End the Congressional Rubber Stamp Campaign, allowing for the debate and vote on all alternatives to the Administration's failed policy in Iraq.

On the Third Anniversary of the Iraq War, President William Sinkford issued a statement that said, "As I said in a letter to Congress in December 2005, I believe that continuing to pursue a military-based strategy that has failed to produce peace—a strategy that has tragic human consequences almost every day—is ethically and religiously bankrupt. The time for a public debate is long overdue."

For President Sinkford's full statement---Call for Debate on Iraq--see www.uua.org/.

For the UUA Washington Office for Advocacy strategy, see www.uua.org/news/2003/iraq/060316_congress.html.

The campaign is continuing to develop, but here is the current schedule:

- * April 3-5 Radio ads are launched in Columbus and Minneapolis
- * April 5 Local press conferences are held to announce the launch of newspaper ads in Columbus *Post Dispatch* and Minneapolis *StarTribune*
- * April 5 WWW Coalition launches National Call-in Day urging members of Congress to end the rubber stamp for the Administration's war in Iraq and support an open and honest debate on alternatives.
- * April 5 A bipartisan group of members of Congress will hold a press conference announcing their support for H.R.543 and walk together to sign the discharge petition on the House floor.
- * April 6 Public launch of the End the Congressional Rubber Stamp Roll Call.
- * April 10-21 District Work Period: Continued grassroots district meetings with members of Congress.
- * www.openiraqdebate.org will feature information on the campaign with tool kits for press and grassroots campaigns, as well as a roll call of members who are for and against a debate on Iraq.

LET JUSTICE ROLL ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN FOR RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

Two significant actions on behalf of raising the federal minimum wage:

1. The first is a "citizens' co-sponsorship" campaign for the Fair Minimum Wage Act in the Senate. By going to the following computer link, you can sign on as a citizen co-sponsor of the Senate's Fair Minimum Wage Act which, when passed, will increase the federal minimum wage from \$5.15/hour to \$7.25/hour. The Web link is: <http://kennedy.senate.gov/newsletter/mwcitizencosponsor.cfm>. Please sign on to the "citizens' co-sponsorship" campaign as soon as possible.
2. The second is a campaign to force the House of Representatives to vote on the Fair Minimum Wage Act. Thus far, the House leadership has blocked all efforts to bring this bill to the floor of the House. Now, however, there is an opportunity to force a vote. House Resolution 614 is a "discharge petition" that will force a debate and vote on the bill if a majority (218) of the members of the House sign it. The House of Representative's version of the Fair Minimum Wage Act, like the companion bill in the Senate, will increase the federal minimum wage from \$5.15/hour to \$7.25/hour.

You can use the following Web link to see the names of those Representatives who have signed the petition:

<http://clerk.house.gov/109/1rc/pd/Petitions/Dis11.htm>.

If your representatives have signed, please thank them. If they have not, please urge them to do so.

COALITION OF IMMOKALEE WORKERS DAY OF PRAYER AND MEDITATION DURING MCDONALDS TRUTH TOUR

National and regional leaders of religious bodies are calling upon their members to pray for McDonald's and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) on Friday, March 31. On this Day of Prayer and Meditation to Advance Real Rights for Farmworkers, adherents will be praying for McDonald's Corporation, headquartered in Oak Brook, IL, to work with the CIW to advance the real rights of farmworkers in its tomato supply chain.

The CIW is a membership-led organization of agricultural workers based in Immokalee, Florida, that seeks justice for farmworkers and promotes their fair treatment in accordance with national and international labor standards. The farmworkers have launched a McDonald's Truth Tour and have been calling on the company to ensure improved wages, the full participation of farmworkers in protecting their own rights, and an enforceable code of conduct based on universally established labor standards.

"Prayer and meditation have the ability to change hearts and minds and offers sustenance to those who are suffering" said Fred Seidl [Fseidl (at) uua.org], from the Unitarian Universalist Association. "Today across the nation we surround McDonald's and the farmworkers with our thoughts and prayers.

Religious bodies, including the Unitarian Universalist Association, have been on the forefront, supporting the CIW's efforts to ensure that the food served by fast-food corporations is produced fairly. See www.ciw-online.org/UU%20Mcds%20letter.html. Many national faith bodies supported the CIW-led, four-year boycott of Taco Bell, which led to a ground-breaking agreement in March 2005 that significantly improved farmworker wages and established the first code of conduct for Florida agricultural suppliers which guarantees a meaningful role for farmworkers in the protection of their own rights.

"We've been calling on McDonald's to do what Taco Bell has already done: namely work with the CIW to improve wages and advance farmworkers' rights in its own tomato supply chain," said Seidl of the UUA.

Farmworkers continue to be some of the most exploited and impoverished workers in the U.S. Florida's tomato pickers earn 40-50 cents for each 32-lb. bucket of tomatoes they pick. At that rate, a rate that has remained virtually unchanged since 1978, workers have to pick more than two tons of tomatoes just to earn minimum wage. They receive

no overtime pay and no benefits, and have no right to organize in order to improve these conditions.

"The regularized exploitation faced by farmworkers picking tomatoes for McDonald's suppliers is a glaring example of unethical practice. As people of faith, we are called to ensure that our economic systems work for the well-being of all, not just some," insisted Dr. Seidl.

The Day of Prayer comes during the CIW-led McDonald's Truth Tour, which is visiting seventeen cities as it educates and mobilizes consumers. The Truth Tour culminates with a peaceful rally at the Rock 'n Roll McDonald's in downtown Chicago, on April 1 at 1 p.m.

Susan Leslie, Director for Congregational Advocacy and Witness, UUA; (617) 948-4607

OTHER NEWS

HUMANIST UNION HOSTS BENEFIT CONCERT AND MURAL DISPLAY

On **Sunday, April 16**, Los Angeles artist and musician Joel Pelletier will stop in Madison to entertain us with his music and educate us with his 8'x 14' traveling mural, "American Fundamentalists (Christ's Entry into Washington in 2008)," which can be seen at www.americanfundamentalists.com/. Joel says his work warns of the "dangers of loss of separation of church and state in America."

The music starts at Prairie at 7 p.m., Joel will talk about his mural, and there will be time for Q&A. Sponsored by the Humanist Union, donations are accepted at the door to help defray Joel's expenses as he heads to his next engagement at the University of Minnesota in a rented vehicle. For details, see <http://humanist.madisonwi.us/events.htm>.

