

# Prairie Fire

March 2014



## Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

- Sat. Mar 1** 9-11 am **WOW@Prairie**  
**Sun. Mar 2** 10 am **Service - "Race To Equity: A Baseline Report on the State of Racial Disparities in Dane County"** Erica Nelson  
12 noon - **Humanist Union potluck and discussion**  
5:30 pm - **Men's Group**  
**Sun. Mar 9** 10 am **Service - "Summer in Antarctica"** John Richards  
11:30 am **Soup Sunday**  
12 noon **Annual Service Auction** (see Prairie News section)  
**Sun. Mar 16** 10 am **Service - "Wild Women of the West"** Sandra Ingham  
11:45 am **Prairie Book Club**  
**Sun. Mar 23** 10 am **Service - "An Ex-Catholic's Take on Pope Francis's First Year as Pope"** Johanna Hatch  
**Mon. Mar 24** 6:30 pm **Spanish Speakers Potluck**  
**Tue. Mar 25** 1:30-3:30 pm **Prairie Elders**  
**Sun. Mar 30** 10 am **Service - "Madison Urban Ministry on the Move"** Linda Ketchum  
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**WOW@Prairie:** Women of Wonder meets every 1st Saturday of the month at Prairie. Bring a breakfast/brunch dish to share. Contact: Anne Urbanski 221-4053; aneu53714@gmail.com

**"Race To Equity: A Baseline Report on the State of Racial Disparities in Dane County":** Erica Nelson, Project Director, and Torry Winn, Consultant for Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, of the Race to Equity Project will share with us the findings of their comprehensive report.

**The Humanist Union** will hear Prairie member John Richards, recently back from Antarctica, talk to us about "The IceCube Project - Particle Astrophysics at the South Pole." The presentation and discussion will be from 12:30 to 1:30. We'll start with a potluck lunch a bit before noon. Everyone interested in this fascinating [neutrino observatory project](#), in which the UW plays a central role, is welcome to join us for both the presentation and the potluck. Contact: Bob Park 273-8775; humanistunion@gmail.com

**The Men's Group** meets the 1st Sunday of the month at Prairie. Bring a dish to pass. Contact: Dan Proud derrproud@att.net

**"Summer in Antarctica":** Prairie member, John Richards's idea of escaping a frigid Wisconsin in January, is to go to Antarctica. He will share his experience with the Ice Cube project looking for the elusive neutrino.

**"Wild Women of the West":** This service is a celebration of women's history month, in general, and of a little-known part of our Unitarian Universalist heritage, in particular. Although there will not be nearly enough time for me to tell you all of the fascinating stories about these women who played an important part in shaping who we are, I hope to give you enough of a broad picture of their exploits that you will want to find out more about them. One of the best sources for doing so is the book, *Prophetic Sisterhood: Liberal Women Ministers of the Frontier, 1880-1930*, by Cynthia Grant Tucker, a book that will be my "other voice" on this Sunday. Come and find out: just how wild they really were; what Transcendentalists have to do with these women; and why we are so very fortunate to have them as role models, even more than a hundred years later!

**The Prairie Book Club** will discuss *Final Salute: The Story of Unfinished Lives*, by Jim Sheeler. The book is an under-told story from the Iraq war, an account of how the families of the dead are notified, the lost loved ones enshrined and their memories preserved and honored. This book enters a number of homes and follows their occupants through the grieving process. Readers will learn how shielded we are from the casualties of war. We are reading this book in honor of Pat Watkins who recommended it to several of us a number of times for the book club. We meet upstairs. Bring food to share. Contact: Mary Mullen: 298- 0843; mmullen@chorus.net For a discussion of this book: [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/05/books/05maslin.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/05/books/05maslin.html?_r=0)

**"An Ex-Catholic's Take on Pope Francis's First Year as Pope":** March marks the first anniversary of the election of Francis as Pope. Johanna Hatch, a new Prairie member, will share her feelings about how he is doing.

**Spanish Speakers Potluck** meets at Prudence Barber's located at 124 S. Mills St. #1. Her phone is 251-0852. Please bring a dish to pass if you can. Everyone is welcome! Contact: Rosemary Dorney 238-4382

**Prairie Elders:** We Elders meet once a month to talk and to share warmth with you. Bring a snack to share if you wish. Topic this month: TBA. Our meetings are held in the Nakoma Room, Heritage Oaks building, Oakwood Village West on Mineral Point Rd. Newcomers welcome. Contact: Rosemary Dorney (238-4382) or Donna Murdoch (238-3802) for directions, parking or a ride.

**"Madison Urban Ministry on the Move":** Linda Ketchum will describe the variety of programs that MUM is spearheading to help homeless, people without health care and returning prisoners in Madison.

## **Prairie News**

**The Artist of the Month** is our own President, Barb Park. Besides being a talented knitter and singer/musician/music director, Barb also does still-life paintings, a few of which are now on display at the front of Prairie's meeting house, near the stage. Be sure to check them out the next time you're at Prairie.

**The Annual Service Auction** is scheduled for March 9, 2014, 12 noon immediately following the Sunday program. We will follow our fun-filled tradition of having Orange Schroeder as our auctioneer. We will also have a silent auction table again this year. Remember this is a service

auction, which means that you donate services you can do or item(s) you make.

We already have lots of great items offered. We could use some more special dinners or group activities for adults or kids. Of course we want everyone to attend, even if you can't donate a service, come bid on services offered by others! If you will be gone, you can get donated items to me.

The program will start with a Soup Sunday lunch and childcare will be provided during the auction. In previous years, donations have included homemade breads, cakes, cookies, liquors, and salsa; honey from local bees, knitted items, artwork, handmade cards and jewelry, musical evenings; several different home cooked dinners for 8 plus people, canoe trips, bike rides and picnics, guitar lessons, pet sitting, housecleaning, rides to the airport or medical appointments, child care, swim parties, portrait sessions, and assistance with various computer, CD and webpage projects. Got an idea? Send me an email or give me a call. Kathy Converse at conversekrtn@gmail.com, 608-238-1856, or 608-239-9385 (cell).

**Supporting Our Aging Parents:** The Caring Committee invites you to a “Supporting Our Aging Parents” group at 11:45-1:30 on Sundays, March 2 and March 30. We will meet in the large classroom promptly at 11:45.

The purpose of these sessions is for us to share our concerns about caring for or supporting our parents as they age. Each person will have a chance to share a special concern and others may share suggestions or resources that address these concerns, based on our experiences. Aileen Nettleton will facilitate the group on behalf of the Caring Committee. Please let Aileen know if you plan to come, so we can plan for space/seating, provide finger food for all, and if you need child care.

**Denominational Affairs:** REGISTRATION for the REGIONAL MEETING to be held in Wausau April 11th & 12th is now open. If you register by March 15, the fee is \$60.00; on-site registration is \$100. Registration for this year's GENERAL ASSEMBLY, to be held in Providence, Rhode Island, June 25-29, will open on March 3rd. You will receive a discount of \$50 or more if you register by April 30th. For more information on the regional meeting, go to midamericauua.org. For more General Assembly information, please go to uua.org/ga. For other information, contact Rev. Sandy or Phyllis Long, Chair of the Denominational Affairs Committee. ALSO, Sandy and Phyllis would like to remind you to please pick up a CHALICE LIGHTERS informational brochure at the front table in the gathering space at Prairie. Then, consider becoming a chalice lighter -- a quick, easy and inexpensive way to support Unitarian Universalism throughout our newly designated MidAmerica Region. THANKS!!

**Prairie Family Retreat** will be at Bethel Horizons in Dodgeville, June 6-8. Save the date, it will be tons of fun, more details coming soon!

**The International Women's Day** dinner will be held Friday, March 7, 4:30-8 p.m. at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 605 Spruce St., Madison. The dinner is sponsored by the local chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Musical entertainment will be provided by Mary Mullen's Dark of the Moon Contra-Band. Everyone is welcome!

**Prairie Youth Art Month** will be in the month of April. All youth from preschool through high school are invited to submit a picture or other piece of art to put on display. If you write poetry, we also welcome poetry as April is National Poetry Month. Bring your art or poetry to Prairie and give to Rebecca Malke by March 30th.

### **...and Now a Word from the Rev.**

- Musings from Sandy

Gazing wistfully at my bicycle recently, I wondered if I would ever ride it again -- before either it or I became too rusty to do so. When I first lived in Madison in the mid-1970's, there were many years when I bicycled all year round, right through the winter. Not this winter, though! I have reached a threshold made up of cold and ice, beyond which I am reluctant to go. I find it very difficult to get past this threshold even just to walk to the garage to get the car.

Thinking about this very real obstacle of ice and cold led me to wonder if there is an analogy between this physical threshold and the thresholds -- the obstacles -- we too often seem unable to get beyond in our human interactions. Do we sometimes reach a threshold of ice and cold in our relationships? Do our communication skills become rusty every once in awhile? Do we forget how to be kind and compassionate towards and caring of each other, no matter how irritated and frustrated the "other" makes us?

In the midst of all this pondering, I found a wonderful, perfect quote by Laila Ibrahim, from a book of meditations titled "Bless the Imperfect: Meditations for Congregational Leaders", which I share with you, slightly adapted...

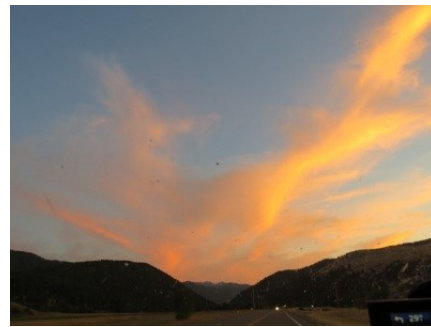
"We are not in church (or fellowship or meeting house or society!) to be with people who want to sing the same music, or rally for the same cause, or attend the same retreats. We are in church to learn to love better. And learning to love better can only happen when we love past our disappointments and return to a place of acceptance and affirmation. This is true in our personal lives, in our work lives, and in our church lives. It is a deep spiritual practice."

I invite all of you to enter into this deep spiritual practice with me in which we learn to communicate better and to love more deeply.

### **RE Circle of Friends**

**Spring Fling** is just around the corner! It will be held April 5, 2014 at Prairie. Activities start at 5pm with dinner, followed by games (Wink in particular). A special T-shirt activity will be led by Karen Deaton. There will once again be an overnight for youth over 10 years of age. Bring a T-shirt and if you have fabric paints you would like to contribute please do!

## Moments of Awe and Inspiration



Visit Prairie's website (see below) for further information.

 **Prairie Unitarian  
Universalist Society**

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