

Prairie Fire

November 2015

Editor: Phyllis Long plong373@gmail.com

Pub. Date: 10/27/2015



Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|--|
| Sun | Nov 1 | 2:00 a.m. Daylight Savings Time ends |
| Sun | Nov 1 | 8:45 a.m. Choir rehearsal meets in the Annex |
| Sun | Nov 1 | 10:00 a.m. service— All Souls Day Celebration lead by Ruth Calden |
| Sun | Nov 1 | 11:45 a.m. Humanist Union meets |
| Sun | Nov 1 | 5:30 p.m. Men's Group meets |
| Sun | Nov 8 | 8:45 a.m. Choir rehearsal meets in the Annex |
| Sun | Nov 8 | 10:00 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Service Committee by Maxine Niel |
| Sun | Nov 8 | 11:45 a.m. Board Meeting in the Annex
Interfaith Hospitality Network week begins |
| Mon | Nov 9 | 6:30 p.m. Finance Committee meets |
| Mon | Nov 9 | 7:00 p.m. Program Committee meets |
| Sat | Nov 14 | 9:00 a.m. Introduction to Prairie meets in the Annex |
| Sat | Nov 14 | 2:00 p.m. Octogenarian Dinner |
| Sun | Nov 15 | 8:45 a.m. Choir rehearsal meets in the Annex |
| Sun | Nov 15 | 10:00 a.m. Transgender Day of Remembrance by Anne Urbanski |
| Sun | Nov 15 | 11:30 a.m. Soup Sunday |
| Mon | Nov 16 | 6:30 p.m. Spanish Speakers will meet at the home of Prudence Barber, 124 S. Mills Street, Apartment #1. Please use kitchen entrance. There will be a pot luck dinner, but if you are not bringing something, please come anyway. All Levels of Spanish speakers are welcome! Call Rosemary Dorney (238-4382 if You need a ride. |
| Sat | Nov 21 | Build Your Own Theology (Adult RE) |
| Sun | Nov 22 | 8:45 a.m. Choir rehearsal meets in the Annex |
| Sun | Nov 22 | 10:00 a.m. Head in the Clouds by Rev. Sandy Ingham |
| Sun | Nov 22 | 11:30 a.m. Parish Meeting |
| Tues | Nov 24 | 1:30 p.m. Prairie Elders meets in the Annex |

Sun Nov 29 8:45 a.m. **Choir rehearsal** meets in the Annex
Sun Nov 29 10:00 a.m. **Service**—to be announced
Sun Nov 29 11:30 a.m. Book Club:**The Lowland** by Jhumpa Lahiri

November 1—On Sunday, November 1, Ruth Calden will lead a participatory remembrance of the dead service. It's a chance to briefly speak about your memories of someone you have lost and to light a candle in their honor.

If possible, bring a photo and/or an object of the person you are remembering. Before lighting your candle, place these on the table at the front so that others can view them after the service over pan de muertos. Also, there will be a reading of the names of all our Prairie members who have died.

So often in our culture grief is a lonely and private experience, unspoken and unknown to others. This service is an opportunity to share our losses with our Prairie friends. However, if it is more comfortable, you may light a candle in memory of someone in silence.

November 8-November 15—Interfaith Hospitality Network Week. One of Prairie's social action commitments is being a buddy church for Midvale Lutheran as they house homeless families as part of the Interfaith Hospitality Network, which is part of The Road Home. Please consider volunteering to serve dinner or various other jobs to help Prairie honor its commitment to this wonderful organization. You can call Erin Bosch for more information about IHN (238-6285) or you can go to this website to find info on the volunteer jobs and a link to the signup grid: <http://midvalelutheran.org/share/our-community/road-home>.

November 8—Maxine Neil, the director of Institutional Advancement (Development) at UUSC, will help us kick off our annual Guest at your Table by sharing the latest on the activities of the UUSC.

November 14—We try to do an informational meeting for new members and recent visitors twice a year, spring and fall. Our fall session will run from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Child care can be provided if requested. Following is what typically happens at these gatherings. The meeting will be attended by newcomers plus a few veteran Prairie members. First, the veterans will share their personal religious backgrounds and journeys, but it's okay to pass if you would rather just listen. Next, Rev. Sandy and Rick Ruecking will briefly share some UU history, some Prairie history, and how Prairie is currently organized and operates. There will be a continental breakfast. Please contact Erin Bosch to RSVP (hillfarms2002@yahoo.com).

November 14—Join families and friends in celebrating with Prairie's Octogenarians on Saturday, November 14, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. Prairie has HOW MANY members over 80? We are so privileged and honored to have ten (or more!) 80-somethings with us most Sunday mornings at services. The menu will be traditional Thanksgiving with all the

trimmings. These include turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, cranberries, green beans, and pie. Also healthy alternatives with tofu, green salads, and lentil casseroles. There will be a program of special acknowledgments. BYO wine/beer. This event is part of Prairie's Service Auction. Please plan on a \$17 donation per person (Octogenarians eat free!). All proceeds go to pay for the meal and as a general donation to Prairie.

November 15—Transgender Day of Remembrance, which occurs annually on November 20 is a day to memorialize those who have died as a result of transphobia (the hatred or fear of transgender and gender non-conforming people) and to bring attention to the continued violence endured by the transgender community. Members of the transgender community will share their stories.

November 22—*Head in the Clouds*—No, not that cloud—the internet-related one..nor do I mean anything weather-related. On this Sunday, I will consider that great cloud of witnesses. Don't know what I mean? Here is a clue. On November 1, the Sunday service was about All Souls Day. Reflecting on the cloud of witnesses is, in a way, another version of that . There is a cloud of witnesses behind each and every one of us. This cloud is the vast numbers of people who have made us the people we are today—ALL of those folks who influenced us and created the world in which we find ourselves. Most are no longer living, but some could be. I hope you will join me for what I hope will be some great stories and fascinating exploration!

November 24—The Prairie Elders will meet at 1:30 Tuesday, November 24, in the Prairie Annex, 2006 Whenona Drive. The meetings are always on the 4th Tuesday of the month. Prairie Elders' meetings are strictly a social event and all older persons in Prairie are invited to attend. We meet in the wonderful new Annex meeting room, have coffee or tea (provided), bring and share snacks, and chat. The first half hour is used to check in and let others know how we are doing. Each month we also have a discussion topic. We ask that only one person speak at a time and keep his/her comments brief. For more information, contact Al Nettleton (238-6053) or Penny Eiler (852-8750).

November 29—The Book Club will discuss *The Lowland* by Jhumpa Lahiri (novel, 339 pages)(suggested by Pam Gates) Two brothers bound by tragedy; a fiercely brilliant woman haunted by her past; a country torn by revolution. A powerful new novel—set in both India and America—that explores the price of idealism and a love that can last long past death. (Goodreads review)

Musings from the Minister—Reverend Sandra Ingham

November is, surprisingly, one of my favorite months. November is a time of transition, a time of rediscovering favorite sweaters, mittens, blankets. November means coziness, hunkering down, at least pretending that I am ready for the really cold months coming up quickly. November brings us less light, but can also bring comforting darkness. November begs us to curl up with a great book or indulge in some "junk" TV, where mindless plots almost always bring satisfying, straightforward endings, so unlike the often messy and murky realities of so-called real life.

November can be a particularly important time for congregations. It is a time of pledge drives, new budgets, trying to wrap up both the fiscal and the calendar years before the crazy business of the holiday season swoops down on us. November brings enough of a pause in our institutional life to let us think about new things we can do together, to plan for adult religious education offerings, to do fall housecleaning and tackle projects that have been put off or avoided for way too long.

I am very pleased to share this information with you: our wonderful Board is working on Prairie's Policies and Procedures, one of those too-long-neglected tasks. In fairness to past Boards, I will state the obvious -- in my experience, working on policies and procedures is not something that excites or interests the vast majority of people! Plus, you need an extended period of time to do this work, uninterrupted by considering such things as whether or not to buy another piece of property. KUDOS TO THE BOARD for its effort, energy, time to get us up to speed on policies and procedures.

If you have been paying attention to the *Prairie Fire* newsletter and to the weekly calendars and to the Sunday programs, you should have a sense of some of the activities going on at Prairie -- some, such as our First-Ever Flash Flea Market, will have already happened by the time you read this. Many events are happening in November. MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

The next Introduction to Prairie will be Saturday, November 14, from nine to Noon. The first session of BYOT (Building Your Own Theology) will be the following Saturday, November 21, beginning at 10 a.m. We will probably end around noon; that could be determined by how many people attend. The Prairie Elders Thanksgiving Dinner will be on Saturday, November 14, at 2:00.

And, I haven't even mentioned two big activity areas: Sunday Morning Programs and Religious Education Programming. (more information in other parts of this newsletter) On Sunday mornings in November, you will find -- upstairs and downstairs at Prairie -- exciting, varied, challenging programming week after week. MANY THANKS TO THE FANTASTIC VOLUNTEERS WHO HELP MAKE ALL OF THIS HAPPEN!

Enjoy November! Rev. Sandy

Message from the President—Gary Gates

At the Parish meeting on November 22, we will be voting on our proposed budget for 2016. While the final results of the pledge drive are not yet known, it appears we are likely to be about \$14,000 short of the tentative budget distributed with the pledge forms.

The Board will meet Nov. 8 to decide how to adjust the budget to fit available revenues and recommend a final budget to be considered at the parish meeting. Based on last year, when we had even bleaker numbers, these are apt to be very difficult decisions. At the 2014 fall parish meeting, we chose to delay a vote until a special parish meeting in January 2015, both to provide more time to solicit pledges and to close out the 2014 budget, so that we had precise information about prior year carryover

Fortunately, additional pledges and a fairly significant carryover of unspent funds did allow us to avoid the most draconian cuts in 2015. This year we may not be so lucky.

Please consider increasing your pledge so we can continue being the very welcoming place Prairie has been, as expressed so well by the testimonials given during our services.

From Ruth Calden—Historical Tidbits

In digging about in an old Prairie newsletter of May 20, 1970 your scribe, Ruth Calden, found this enticing little item.

May 24 (1970) Second Annual “Go Fly a Kite” Sunday led by Aileen and Al Nettleton. Kite flying at the Prairie site, corner of Gammon and Raymond roads, at 10:30 a.m. Bring your kite, let down your hair and join the fun. Awards will be given as follows:

Junior Division (kite flyers through junior high)

Smallest	Most Decorative
Largest	Highest Flying
Most Unique Shape	Best Box kite

Adult Division (kite flyers from high school on)

Most absurd flying object
Most unique attempt at getting an object to fly
Kit bearing most thoughtful message

Preference will be given to homemade kites in each division. A family picnic will conclude the activities.

It’s forty-five years later, but doesn’t that sound like fun fun fun! Our congregation never built on that Prairie site. Instead, it became part of Madison’s Elver Park.

Your Prairie History Committee is seeking YOUR memories of Prairie events and people. If you would like to be interviewed, please contact a committee member.

Mary Mullen—chair, Ruth Calden, Barbara Park, Rosemary Dorney

Circle of Friends—Holly Tellander, Dir. Religious Education

1. MONTHLY THEMES

October’s theme was Mystery & Wonder. Keep an eye out for our ‘Big Question Box’. Students can write down questions they ponder and put them in the box, I will then share the questions with the congregation via Prairie News. Answers can remain anonymous and in true UU fashion are given in the spirit of ‘these are my thoughts, or this is something interesting I read about this topic, or I once heard someone say ____ and I thought it was profound...’ rather than “this is the answer”. I will also post the answers downstairs for our students to read and think about. The “Big Question Box” will stay up all year long – because our questions never end!

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. **Nifty Gifty** – Sunday, December 6th will be our annual gift making extravaganza! No need to pre-register! Just show up on that day ready to be creative. Keep an eye on the Prairie News to see what items we are looking for as donations this year. So far, we know we need metal zippers in all colors!
2. **Symbol Tree & Santa Lucia** – Sunday, December 20th will be our annual symbol tree service. Bring items that are representative of something meaningful to you from the passing year, share your memories and hang your item on the tree. You won't want to miss this sweet Prairie tradition.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION – HELP NEEDED!

November kicks off our next social justice project! We will be partnering up with the **Pregnancy Helpline of Madison to collect items from their 'wish list' which we will organize and donate at the beginning of December.** Check the RE Events Bulletin Board in the front lobby for a list of needed items and other ways to participate. November's theme is Unity – students will have the opportunity to stand in support for newborn and not-yet-born babies and their families this month. More information about this great opportunity to make a social justice impact right here in our own city will be available on our Prairie RE bulletin board, on our Facebook page, and on the Prairie News site. I will be stopping in to each of the classrooms to speak to the students about the needs of the organization, so please ask your student questions and keep this conversation rolling. Donations can be made between now and Sunday, December 6th. Donation boxes will be placed upstairs under the 'coffee table', also downstairs in the main meeting area, and in the kitchen in the Annex. Printed lists of needed items can be found at Prairie - small so you can tuck them in your wallet! You can also find a list of the needed items here: <http://www.pregnancyhelpline.net/donate.cfm>

Thanks in advance for helping make this a great outreach opportunity for our students!

ITEMS WANTED

We are still looking for donations of warm mittens, gloves, hats and snow pants. Our classes will be working in the backyard this year through the winter. Having these items available to borrow at Prairie will make outdoor time possible, even when those items are not brought from home.

From the Program Committee

This year the program committee wanted to start the New Year on a fun note. This is for those of you who want more music. On January 3, 2016 we are going to have an all hymn/song request program. You get to pick your favorite hymns/songs from *Singing the Living Tradition*, *Singing the Journey* or *The Prairie Songbook*. You can dedicate your choice if you like. You can explain why you love a particular hymn or remain anonymous. If you'd like to do some research on your favorite, you can share it's history. Because coordinating this program with our accompanist will take some time, we are taking requests now. See the yellow legal pad in the entrance to register your request.

From Molly Plunkett

Allied Neighborhood Coop. 4 members of Prairie attended an open meeting mid September: Faith Cholvin, Paula Pachiarz, Molly Plunkett and Jim Lyne. There has been an organizing group in place for a few years. Recently, the group has gotten a boost. They are the only applicant for the \$300,000 city incentive grant designed to lure a new grocery into Allied. Willy Street Coop is advising the group as is another professional cooperative consultant working with the group. Faith and Jim signed up for subcommittees. As a first step the group plans to start a buyers club and grow into a retail store from there.

Allied Partners (a consortium of churches that support the Allied Neighborhood) . Joining Forces for Families /Allied Unit (satellite office of Dane County Dept. of Human Services) honored Prairie and 3 other congregations at a dinner on 10/22 for our support of the office and neighborhood. Allied Partners is also sponsoring a trial "Job Bop" alternate Friday mornings, which is patterned on job Shop in the Meadowood Neighborhood. Volunteers and staff from Forward Services are available in the computer lab at the Boys and Girls Club to help people find potential jobs, complete an online application, develop a resume and cover letter. We are also looking at offering a 10 week computer training course as so much job applications are required to be online. Customers are coming slowly. A Spanish translator is needed. The Allied Wellness Center has received some large cash gifts from local hospitals

Madison Urban Ministry. (MUM) Hosted a lovely breakfast on 10/6 to thank organizations/churches who use Just Bakery as Prairie does. The breakfast was cooked and served by Just Bakery staff. A new class of bakery students is graduating.

From Karen Deaton

Thank you to all who donated books to our book drive. We collected almost 200 beautiful books, mostly children's books, in our fight against illiteracy! The books we collected will be given away to families who come to the Allied Drive food pantry and the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry. The next evil we will fight, using the magic of our creativity, is HUNGER.

Sincerely,

Twrch House (Hogwarts' satellite school at Prairie)

Pictured left to right:
Professor Carl, Simon,
Professor Karen, Rowan
T., Ava, Professor Maya,
Liam. Not pictured:
Rowan B., Torin B.,
Faith, Gil.

