

Prairie Fire

December 2016

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Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

- Fri Dec 2** 6:00 p.m.—**Board Game Night**
- Sat Dec 3** 9:00 a.m.—**Prairie WOW**—meets in the Annex
- Sat Dec 3** 5:00 p.m.—**Men’s Shelter Breakfast**—offsite
- Sun Dec 4** 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex
- Sun Dec 4** 10:00 a.m.—**Sages, Seers and Superheroes—-in Search of Common Ground**—Part I—In the midst of despair and despondency, it is often helpful to look to the past for stories of people who also lived in troubled times and think about how they responded. A universal theme in such stories is the search for common ground. On the first and last Sundays of December, I will reflect upon that—the search for common ground, bracketing the month with stories about two people who were sages, seers and super heroes, at least to me. On this first Sunday, I will introduce you to Howard Thurman. I first met Thurman twenty years ago, though not in person. He died in 1981. A most remarkable human being, he is one of my “honeys”. What do I mean? Come and find out. Rev. Sandy
- Sun Dec 4** 11:45 a.m.—**Publisher of The Progressive Speaks To Humanist Union**—On Dec. 4th the speaker at our monthly Humanist Union meeting will be Norman Stockwell, publisher of *The Progressive Magazine*, talking about "The role of progressives (and *The Progressive*) in Trump land." We'll meet in the Annex for a potluck lunch at 11:45 am followed by our program from 12:30 to 1:30 pm.
- Mon Dec 5** 6:30 p.m.—**Program Committee**—meets in the Meeting Hall
- Sun Dec 11** 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex
- Sun Dec 11** 10:00 a.m. Prairie happily presents a very special holiday service on this morning: **Old Befana**, performed by Ken Lonquist and company. “Anyone could be the one to make a better world’, Befana sings. It could even be... you!” “Old Befana is based on an ancient yuletide story... and puts an illuminating spin on a familiar night of miracles, three Kings, a bright shining star, and a very special child.” This year marks the 30th season of “Old Befana”, with some intriguing changes in the script and song lyrics. Georgia Heise, past Executive Director of Madison Children’s Museum, said, “Old Befana has been presented at the Madison Children’s Museum as part of our holiday cultural series... it is refreshing to present a holiday tale that is secular and free of gender bias. We have numerous requests for Old Befana every year. The story is perfect for our needs because it appeals to all: children laugh and sing along with Ken while adults enjoy a professional and spirited performance.” **Don’t miss this special event at Prairie**
- Sun Dec 11** 11:30 a.m.—The December selection of the Book Club is **Windy City** by Scott Simon. This political novel “captures politics in the multiethnic tumult of today’s big city. The story takes a raft of colorful characters through City Hall corridors, neighborhood restaurants and clubs, weddings, sex scandals, gospel churches, police stations, and

sting operations to deliver an ending that is unexpectedly noble.” (Goodreads) Recommended by Phyllis Long. 384 pp.

Sun Dec 11 11:45 a.m.—**Board**—meets in the Annex

Mon Dec 12 6:00 p.m.—**Finance Committee**—meets in the Annex

Sun Dec 18 8:45 a.m.—**Choir Rehearsal**—in the Annex

Sun Dec 18 10:00 a.m.—**Symbol Tree**—This is an annual Prairie tradition. Help decorate our Holiday/Christmas Tree with thing(s) you bring that symbolize something from your life last year that is important to you and that you would like to share with your Prairie community. Also it is the Sunday when we collect the Guest At Your Table boxes.

Sun Dec 18 11:30 a.m.—**Soup Sunday**

Sun Dec 25 10:00 a.m.—**Sages, Seers and Superheroes—in Search of Common Ground**—Part II—Continuing the search for common ground, I find inspiration in the lives of brave souls who throughout history have fought to end oppression, those many people who have championed justice, inclusiveness, equality and the power of love. One such person, of course, was Jesus of Nazareth. On this Christmas Day Sunday, we will reflect upon his life and times, sing some carols, share stories and readings and perhaps even tap into our inner angels and wise men—and women!

Tues Dec 27 1:30 p.m.—**Prairie Elders**— The topic this month will be **Memorable Christmas-time experiences**. Elders meets in the Annex the 4th Tuesday of each month to chat and enjoy shared snacks, with coffee and tea provided. All retired or older Prairie folks are welcome. For more information, contact Al Nettleton (238-6053) or Penny Eiler (852-8750).

Sun Jan 1 10:00 a.m.—**Request Program**—Is there a hymn/song you wish we would sing more often? What is your favorite hymn? Let's welcome the New Year with a song. Get your hymn/song request in now. You can sign up on the clipboard in the Prairie lobby or email your requests to Penny Eiler at pennyeiler@gmail.com.

MUSINGS FROM THE MINISTER

“Are you saying that everyone who voted for Trump is a racist?” I have been asked this question more than once since the election. My answer: “No, many who voted for him are misogynists and many are both racist and misogynist.” Please continue reading as I attempt to explain what I mean. *Everyone* is an “...-ist” of some kind. While I might score okay on a test that measured how racist or misogynist I am, I have my own “...-ist” problems—intellectual elitist comes to mind. We all wrestle with prejudices, stereotypes, biases.

I have heard all the excuses for why someone might have voted for Trump. I think that I understand some of the reasons why many people have feelings of frustration and anger towards government and why many people feel abandoned by government and misunderstood and isolated in the so-called land of prosperity. I know that we have failed many people, failed to address very real economic concerns. But I do not agree that problems will be solved by a demagogue, which is what Mr. Trump is.

There is no excuse for voting for a bully who spews hatred, promotes it, legitimizes it. There is never a reason to vote for a demagogue. I don't believe that there will be or can be reconciliation in this country unless and until there is a genuine acknowledgement by Mr. Trump that he made a monumental, colossal mistake with his hateful, divisive words. He must recant; he must apologize to this country. The rest of us need to admit that the bot-

tom line is: we citizens of the United States have voted for hate, intolerance, meanness, exclusivity. We have now sanctioned a whites-only country, given the go-ahead to the dark side of human nature. We are *all* responsible for letting this happen.

How do people of good will respond to this? What do we do now, besides grieve? What can we do to push back against oppression, now that it is the official position of our “leaders”?

I am not sure, but I do know that I can't do *nothing*. I cannot be quiet and passively wait out the next four years. Some thoughts...we redouble, quadruple our social action work, go to meetings, give money, protest, go to rallies and demonstrations, wear safety pins or rainbows or whatever, work harder in the trenches. We have discussion groups here at Prairie, to vent as needed, but, more importantly, to plan *actions* to take to show solidarity in love, not hate. We practice dialoging, really listening, especially to people who don't think like we do. We combat tribalism however we can. Tribalism doesn't work anymore. We are all in the same tribe. To think otherwise is narrow, outdated, dangerous thinking.

The bottom line in this whole mess is that we have given free rein to hate. If we can admit that, then—and only then—we might be able to begin to find common ground and to work on the next layer of very real problems that challenge this country. One ray of hope for me is to remember that there are many, many people “out there” who believe, as I do, in the necessity of living in a multicultural world, people who know in their very bones that we are all connected and that we will not survive on this planet if we ignore that fact.

I don't think that I will be wishing anyone a joyous holiday season this year. That sounds so phony and superficial to me right now. I wish for us all a meditative, soul-searching season of reflection on hate versus love. Which one is really more powerful?—Rev. Sandy

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS—HOLLY TELLANDER, DIRECTOR RE

Prairie RE November Happenings

So much going on in RE and December will be even busier. Check out our RE Facebook page and calendar to stay up to date on all the happenings.

Guest At Your Table boxes? Don't forget to keep filling those boxes! For those who like a little structure – you can use the following checklist! It's a great way to remember to add to the box. Put it on your fridge!

Date	To do today
November 27th	Place 5 cents in the box for every room you have in your house.
November 28th	Place 3 cents for each piece of furniture in your bedroom in the box.
November 29th	Place 10 cents in the box for each pet you have.
November 30th	Place 25 cents in the box for each seat at your dining table.
December 1st	Place 5 cents in the box for every pair of shoes that aren't put away right now.
December 2nd	Put 2 cents in the box for every screen in your house
December 3rd	Put 10 cents in the box for each person in your family.
December 4th	Put 25 cents in the box for each vehicle (including bikes and boats!) that your family owns.
December 5th	Roll a die. Put that many dimes in the box.
December 6th	Put 4 cents in the box for each cabinet in your kitchen.
December 7th	Put 5 cents in the box for each door in your house.
December 8th	Put 25 cents in the box for each seat in your family's largest car.
December 9th	Put 2 cents in the box for each picture hanging on your walls.
December 10th	Put 5 cents in the box for each can in your pantry.
December 11th	Put 10 cents in the box for each bike your family owns.
December 12th	Put as many cents as your thermostat is set to in the box.
December 13th	Take the first number of your address—put that many dollar bills in the box.
December 14th	Put 25 cents in the box for each clock your family owns.
December 15th	Put 5 cents in the box for each suitcase your family owns.
December 16th	Put 10 cents in the box for each smoke detector in your home.
December 17th	Put \$1 in the box for each bathroom in your home.
December 18th	Put 1 cent for every mile you have to drive to Prairie in the box (AND BRING YOUR BOX TO CHURCH TODAY!!)

Mark your calendars! Sunday, December 4th – Nifty Gifty! Please contact Holly Tellander at prairie_uu_dre@outlook.com if you would like to volunteer or if you would like to donate the following items:

- * Juice
- * Cookies or pretzels
- * Wrapping paper
- * Bows or small boxes

Sunday, December 11th – Old Befana Holiday Musical – We are in for a special treat with this!

Sunday, December 18th – Symbol Tree and Santa Lucia procession.

Please remember there is no childcare provided at Prairie on Sunday, December 25th or Sunday, January 1st. Quiet activities will be provided for the meeting room on those dates.

7th – 9th Grade OWL @ Prairie

Prairie will run a 7th to 9th grade OWL class this January. There will be an informational parent meeting on Sunday, December 18th after service. Please share this info with any outside families who you think might be interested. Contact Holly Tellander, DRE for more information at prairie_uu_dre@outlook.com

☪ As always, thanks for your support! ☪



Please consider volunteering for and participating in one or more of Prairie's committees or groups. A full list is located on Prairie's website:

<http://uuprairie.org/aboutus/#com>

Or contact Karen Deaton for more information at:

Wisconsinkaren@gmail.com