

# Prairie Fire

July 2017

Editor: Phyllis Long [plong373@gmail.com](mailto:plong373@gmail.com)

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## Prairie Calendar

(See descriptions of programs below)

**Sat Jul 1** 9:00 a.m.—**Prairie WOW**—meets in the Annex

**Sun Jul 2** 10:00 a.m.—**Open Doors for Refugees**—by Layla Kaiksow. With the recent Supreme Court ruling, this is a very timely topic. Our speaker, Layla Kaiksow, has been central in the development of Open Doors for Refugees. As an Arabic speaker, Layla has been one of our most active volunteers helping recently-arrived refugee families. Some background information on Layla can be seen in a recent article in *Brava Magazine* at: <http://bravamagazine.com/8677-2/>

11:45 a.m.—**A Man Called Ove**—by Fredrik Backkman. Book Club will meet in the Annex for potluck and discussion. A curmudgeon hides a terrible personal loss beneath a cranky and short-tempered exterior while clashing with new neighbors, a boisterous family whose chattiness and habits lead to unexpected friendship. Suggested by Al Nettleton, 337 pages

IHN week ends

**Mon Jul 3** 6:30 p.m.—**Program Committee**—meets in the Annex

**Fri Jul 7** 6:00 p.m.—**Board Game Night**

**Sat Jul 8** 5:00 a.m.—**Men's Shelter Breakfast**

**Sun Jul 9** 10:00 a.m.—**It Can't Happen Here-Or Can it?**—by Robin Proud. In 1935, Sinclair Lewis, alarmed by the rise of fascism in Europe, wrote a novel about a showman who becomes US president. Two of the characters reacting to his rise are a Unitarian activist and a Universalist newspaperman. We'll look at which characteristics of American society encourage authoritarian leaders, and how UUs can be both the easiest targets of, and the best defense against totalitarianism

**Sun Jul 16** 10:00 a.m.—**My Source, Kurt Vonnegut**—by Johanna Hatch. As part of our series on the six UU Sources, Johanna gives a presentation on the words and deeds of Kurt Vonnegut which challenge us to confront powers and structure of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.

11:45 a.m.—**Soup Sunday**

**Sun Jul 23** 10:00 a.m.—**Joint Service with the Free Congregation of Sauk County—A Fork in the Road**—at Park Hall, 307 Polk Street in Sauk City. More than just a Sunday service, this gathering also includes a yummy potluck picnic after the service. Thus Robin Proud and Rev. Sandy (who are planning the service together) need two things from you, the congregation. Obviously, one is a contribution to our shared meal. The other item that we need in order to make our morning a success is volunteers who are willing to briefly talk about a turning point in your life, a fork in the road of your life jour-

ney. If you wish to share a poem or a short reading about turning points, that is fine, also. **Please note: let Robin ([derrproud@att.net](mailto:derrproud@att.net)) or Sandy ([ingham\\_sandy@hotmail.com](mailto:ingham_sandy@hotmail.com)) know asap so that we can plan the program accordingly.** If you can't make it to Sauk City, join us for an English tea with scones, clotted cream and lemon curd. Penny Eiler will plan a program for the meeting house.

**Sun Jul 30** 10:00 a.m.—**Revolt, Resist, Rejoice**—Who are we, we Unitarian Universalists? What rests at the core of this tradition of ours? What, if anything, makes us unique in the world of faith traditions? And why does clearly defining who we are matter? After attending this year's General Assembly, I have changed my mind about using the words white supremacy when describing who we are. We are white supremacists, yes, but we are much more than that. We are also revolutionaries, resisters and rejoicers. Come and find out why!—Rev. Sandy

**A REMINDER:** The Committee on Ministry hopes that you will stay after the service for the first of several CAALT meetings. Don't know what that means? See *Musings from the Minister* elsewhere in this newsletter.

11:45 a.m.—a conversation with—**The Com**

**Fri Aug 4** 6:00 p.m.—**Board Game Night**

**Sat Aug 5** 9:00 a.m.—**Prairie WOW**—meets in the Annex

**Sun Aug 6** 10:00 a.m.—**My Source, Mark Twain**—by Penny Eiler. Continuing our series on the sources and prophetic men and women will be Penny's presentation on the words and deeds of Mark Twain

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## **Musings from the Minister—Sandra Ingham**

I write this at the end of General Assembly—the Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA) annual gathering when we take care of the business of our organization. General Assembly (GA) is much more than a business meeting, though. The best general assemblies challenge us, dare us to confront our fears, to reconsider and revisit what we believe, what we stand for and where we are going—or hope to go—in the upcoming year and in the following ones.

This was one of the best. This year's GA was, for me, transformative. I now understand why the words racism and white supremacy apply to us—yes, to us Unitarian Universalists. I want to have conversations about this here at Prairie over the next few months. And, what better time to talk about where we are, what we believe, what we stand for and where we are going—or hope to go—in the upcoming year and the next half century than a 50th anniversary?

I hope that our conversations—which must include careful, active listening to each other—will be a part of a larger conversation about ministerial and lay leadership, within the UUA, in general, and at Prairie, in particular. The first of these conversations will be after the service on **Sunday, July 30**, and is “sponsored” by Prairie's Committee on Ministry (COM). In addition to what I have already mentioned, this will be an opportunity to give me feedback, as part of my ongoing evaluation process, about my ministry with you. All comments on this subject (the “C's”, as I call them—comments, constructive criticism,

compliments, complaints) are welcome as long as they are offered with love and respect and gentleness. There will be another “CAALT” (Conversation And Active Listening Time) later in the summer and/or in the early fall.

I will be taking some study leave time in mid-July (17-21) while visiting friends and family in Wausau, then in northern Minnesota. During that time, I am still “on duty”, meaning that I can be reached by phone and/or email and that, of course, I can return within a day, if necessary. May you find quiet time for reflection during these summer months.—Rev. Sandy

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### **Message from the President—Gary Gates**

UNANIMOUS CONSENT! Prairie passed a motion by unanimous consent! Did anybody even know that Robert’s Rules of Order specifies that no motion, second, or vote is necessary for unanimous consent? That when an issue has been discussed, the chair can ask if there are any objections—and if there aren’t, the chair can declare the issue passed by unanimous consent?

That is what we did at the Parish Meeting with the question of continued planning for the remodeling to enhance the functionality of our Meeting House. As the rough draft of the minutes states “...is it worthwhile to spend a lot more hours working with the architect to achieve the changes we’d like to see?”

Based on this action, the Board directed that Prairie’s reserves be used to pay the architect’s fees, and further directed that the reserves would be reimbursed (assuming we go ahead with the remodeling) when we complete a fundraising for the remodeling.

But—surprise, surprise. Even with the unanimous consent, we can have controversy. After the Board’s decision described above, objection was raised that the Parish Meeting discussion did not specifically mention paying the architect for working with us. People might not have realized that he would want to be paid for his work.

Also, there was no discussion of using the reserves to pay architect fees. The Board’s authority to direct use of the reserves was also questioned.

I have been told that I must therefore call another Parish Meeting to clarify that we would need to pay architect fees and to specify where the money is to come from. I do not agree and will not call another Parish Meeting for this purpose. I believe that the action taken clearly authorized the steps we have taken to pay the architect’s fees, and that another meeting is therefore unnecessary.

I suggested that I would be willing to let the Board decide this issue. That idea was rejected, because it would have the Board deciding on its own authority on the use of the reserves.

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your point of view, we have time to work this out. Rachel Long and Martin Arnold, who are leading the Remodeling Group, will be gone much of the summer, and so no work will be done on finalizing the plans for two months. They suggested getting someone else to lead the effort, but I felt their continued leadership was necessary. After some pressure from me, they agreed to continue doing so.

Stay tuned for further developments.

## **Circle of Friends—Holly Tellander, Director RE**

### **Looking Ahead~**

**Summer Programming**—Our summer programming is off to a great start! You can keep up with all of our activities by checking the main Prairie calendar, the RE calendar, the RE facebook page, the Yahoo News site or the RE bulletin board upstairs.

We'd love to have you join us some Sunday. If you see an activity that looks like fun—just drop in! Better yet—let Holly know you are interested and available. Summer is a great time to get to know the kids!

### **Look what's coming up!**

July 2nd:STEAM Challenge #1—On our country's anniversary—let's celebrate American ingenuity. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math—and these activities are a big hit with kids for good reason! The focus of the day will be teamwork, innovation, cooperation & fun! We're still looking for helpers!

July 9th:Reverse Perspective Painting with Kathy Converse. UUs are called to consider different perspectives. Let's apply that concept to art! We'll reflect on how we can expand our perspective in our own lives and broaden our acceptance of others.

July 16th:Everybody's favorite—Ice Cream in a Bag! This was a big hit last summer and it is back by popular demand. One place that UUs find inspiration is in the mystery and wonder we all share. How does the combination of cream, sugar, and vanilla when exposed to rapidly cooling ice turn into ice cream? Let's postulate—and then let's eat!

July 23rd:Kindness Rocks! There is a larger movement around the world to spread a message of kindness and an appreciation for diversity through rocks painted with inspiring messages and then hidden around town. Using the hashtag #kindnessrocks kids can track the rocks they find, engaging with a much larger community of peacemakers.

July 30th:Super Soaker Day! Get ready to get wet—it will be a water celebration! We'll work on cooperative and communication skills and brainstorm ways to conserve water in our everyday lives. Water is a gift—we'll enjoy it and riff on how to protect it as well.

### **Sneak Peak:PrarieTube**

I'm currently working on a new way to communicate what's happening in RE. Stay tuned...

### **Pontoon Porch**

It's our second annual Pontoon Porch Trip! We had so much fun last year we just had to do it again. RSVP ASAP for Saturday, September 9th at 8:30 a.m. for a cruise and a swim. Summer's not over 'till you've dived off the Pontoon Porch!

### **Stay cool everyone!**

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## **Make Music Madison, Another Successful Music Day at Prairie**

Except for two embarrassing faulty CD players, Make Music Madison at Prairie on June 21 was another satisfying afternoon and evening of free music outdoors. This year the weather made the day even more enjoyable than usual. (Some other years it was excruciatingly hot or everything had to move indoors for a while when it rained.)



# Make Music Madison 2017, at Prairie



Anaguma Eisa: UW Taiko Club



Vets on Frets



Rex Loker



Volunteers Andy Garst and Erin



The audience came by wheelchair, walker, on foot, by bicycle, by taxi, pushing strollers, and, of course, by car.



Kaia Fowler



Ballet Folklorica dancers had at least 5 changes of costume. Here are 2 of them.



Molly and Dad



Willie Wright



Grandpa Squeezit, aka Mike Briggs, played for the Maypole dance. The dance brought out a mix of ethnicities and ages, all laughing and smiling as they did their best to braid the ribbons.





All 8 acts showed up and made a variety of music starting with the drumming and dancing of Anaguma Eisa, Okinawa style, and ending with a Maypole dance accompanied by Grandpa Squeezit (Prairie's Mike Briggs) that brought a lot of smiles and laughs to the mostly-inexperienced dancers. In between, the Vets on Frets entertained with sing-along oldies; Rex Loker made us think with the lyrics of his numbers while soothing us with his smooth voice; Kaia Fowler, who often appears at Café Carpe, gave a thoroughly professional set; the girls of Ballet Folklorica wowed us with their amazing, colorful dresses and flashy Mexican dancing; Molly and Dad did some Bossa Nova numbers; and Willie Wright filled out a multi-cultural event with progressive rap.

As noted in the opening, the only fly in the ointment was the CD players on which our sound man, Andy Garst, tried to play the CD for Ballet Folklorica. The CD on the sound cart kept skipping. The stand-alone player from the RE department was hardly any better, since it kept fading in and out, sometimes playing good-n-loud, sometimes sinking to inaudible tones. Hint: Do we need a new CD player that is dependable?

Thanks to Gary Gates, the audience gave and gave—to the tune of \$202.85. Gary passed the bucket for each act. Ballet Folklorica received the most, \$39, due to their excellent performance and the girls' persistence in the face of adversity. One of the day's performers earmarked his donations to Prairie and another gave his to the Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood Association, the co-sponsor of the event.

Average attendance was 31 in the audience plus the performers. The audience came on foot, on bicycles, in wheelchairs, pushing baby strollers, and, of course, in cars.

Thanks to these Prairie helpers for making a success of the fifth Make Music Madison at Prairie: Rick Reucking, Andy Garst, Deesa Pence, Anne Urbanski, Gary Gates, Carl Wacker, Patty Stockdale, Erin Bosch, Karen Deaton, Randy Converse, and Mary Mullen. We might note that this is over 10% of our members.

It should also be noted that Prairie members Judy and Ken Skog hosted a Make Music Madison venue on their front deck that featured quite a number of Prairie performers including Carl Wacker, Paula Pachciarz, Mike Briggs, Mary Frantz, Barb Park and Rosemarie Lester. This venue was engineered by Bob Park, who arranged for a live broadcast on WIDE-LP, which emanates from the Skog garage. Bob reports that three of the five board members of Madison Mainstream Radio, which owns WIDE-LP, are Prairie members and a 6th member from Prairie will be added next month.

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## ***Mark your calendar for Prairie's 50th anniversary, September 16 & 17***

Now's the time to put a great big star on your calendar for the dates of Saturday, September 16, and Sunday, September 17. Prairie will be holding events to celebrate the big FIVE-O, its 50th anniversary. September 17 is 50 years to the day since the first Prairie

Sunday service.

The History Committee has been working furiously since December 2014 on researching and writing about Prairie's history including our symbols, our traditions, and much, much more. We are determined to have a nice big history book available for purchase by the time of the celebration. Some of you may have already previewed write-ups and photos for the book at our Bethel Horizons retreat since binders of drafts were available for browsing. Actually quite a few members outside of the immediate committee of four have also contributed to the book. In that respect this history book will be a faithful reflection of Prairie which has relied on the volunteer spirit and many talents of its members over the years.

The Program Committee will be planning the anniversary events, and right now is the time to let former Prairie members and friends know that we'd like to see them during the festivities. If you know current addresses, emails, or phone numbers of former members, please send them to History Committee Chair Mary Mullen who will pass them on to the people who will be working on sending out invitations by mid-July.

OK. Now don't forget. Don't procrastinate. Write "Prairie anniversary" on September 16 and 17 on your calendar and put a note on your electronic calendar as well.

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### **Homeless lockers—at Prairie??? By Pam Gates, Social Action Committee co-chair**

Back in February, Barb Park and Molly Plunkett attended a presentation on providing lockers for homeless people in various places around Madison. This proposal was made by the Friends of the State Street Family, a 501(c)(3) organization that focuses on services to homeless people. The benefits to the homeless are obvious: a safe place to store possessions, so they don't have to drag them around while working on getting their lives in order. The locker would give them some feeling of permanence; a place to keep valuable papers such as IDs, driver's licenses, and birth certificates so they don't get lost; and a feeling of being trusted.

Benefits to locker providers: satisfaction that they are helping deal with a sad, pervasive problem in this wealthy city, by respectfully providing a means to help a few homeless people work on resolving their dilemmas. You know the old adage: If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. Barb and Molly came back to Prairie quite excited about the possibility of Prairie as a homeless-locker site. Since then, Tami Fleming, executive director of Friends of State Street Family, has made an excellent presentation to the congregation and the board of trustees in April, outlining in great detail the responsibilities of host and recipient and assuring us that there would be backup and monitoring of the site on an almost daily basis. In addition, Molly held a session on the lockers proposal at the Prairie retreat May 13, which about 10 people attended. On May 16 and 21, Patty Stockdale, Molly, and Pam Gates brought a one-page information sheet to about 10 of our immediate neighbors and talked to them about the proposal. Reactions ranged from enthusiasm to "fine with me" to expressions of concerns. We also discussed the proposal at

the May 21 parish meeting. In spite of all this, in June there were still Prairie members who hadn't heard about the proposal. So President Gary Gates decided not to urge the board to approve it at the June meeting, as had been his original intent, but instead to request that this article from the Social Action Committee appear in the Prairie Fire and on Prairie News and Views.

Answers to some basic questions:

1.Q: Are there homeless people in our neighborhood?

A: There are homeless people all over the city, including in our neighborhood.

2.Q: Aren't the main services for homeless people downtown?

A: In our neighborhood, Allied Drive has lots of services for homeless people.

3.Q: Where would the lockers be located? How many would there be?

A. Outside, in a place agreed upon by Prairie's Housing and Property Committee and Friends of the State Street Family. Three lockers are proposed. The recipients will be people comparatively close to moving into housing.

4.Q: What about vagrancy, drugs, drinking, etc?

A: The privilege of having a locker will be revoked by Friends of the State Street Family if behavior is not appropriate. The site will be monitored on an almost daily basis by the above Friends group and Madison Police. No sleeping on site, and of course no drugs or drinking.

Every Sunday, Prairie's service presider declares that Prairie strives to be an open-minded and open-hearted congregation. Every Sunday, the presider declares that we welcome you, no matter what. Let's check our hearts: Is this really true? Do we, really? Or do we let fears and doubts dominate our thinking? What do we stand for? Ourselves? Or something beyond ourselves?

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***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:***