

Nov  
2019

# Prairie Fire



Prairie Choir sings at Oak Park Place during Sunday Service

## Prairie Contacts

**Rachel Long**, President—[president@uuprairie.org](mailto:president@uuprairie.org)

**Dan Klock**, Administrator—[admin@uuprairie.org](mailto:admin@uuprairie.org)

**Holly Tellander**, DRE—[dre@uuprairie.org](mailto:dre@uuprairie.org)

**Renee Deschard**, Prairie Fire Editor —  
[prairiefire@uuprairie.org](mailto:prairiefire@uuprairie.org)

Please see [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org) for other contacts, including board members and committee chairs.

## Table of Contents

Calendar & Calendar Notes	2
Calendar Notes Continued	3
First Meeting on Professional Ministry	4
RE: Each One, Teach One	5
Prairie: A Source of Information about Current & Former Members	6
Welcome Baby Berend	7
The Street Pulse: Offertory Partner	7
Remembering Mike	8 & 9

# November Calendar\*

Please see [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org) for detailed descriptions

*\*All events take place at Oak Park Nakoma, unless stated*

2

## Friday-Sunday 1-3 (Retreat @ Bethel)

- Prairie WOW (Sat)
- Humanist Union (Sat)
- Key Log Ceremony (Sun)

## Saturday 2

- 5:45a Men's Shelter Breakfast

## Saturday 9

- 9a Intro to Prairie (Annex)

## Sunday 10

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a RE & Service: "Pine Ridge Reservation Service Project" by Aidan Small

## Sunday 17

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a RE & Service: "Through the Looking Glass: Affirming and Living Our Values in a Dominance-Obsessed World" by Jennifer Parker
- 11:45a Board Meeting (Annex)

## Sunday 24

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a RE & Service: "The Grieving Process and Support" by Agrace

## Monday 25

- 7p Program Committee Meeting (Annex)



## Calendar Notes

### Two Humanist Union Meetings: Oct 27th & Nov 2nd

The Humanist Union's next monthly meeting will be in the Annex on Sunday, October 27, starting with a potluck lunch at noon. Then at 12:30 Masood Akhtar will join us for We Are Many - United Against Hate Q&A, a conversation about the group he founded carrying on from his morning presentation to Prairie at OPP. All who want to learn more about his group are invited to join us. In addition, at 11 am on Sat. Nov. 2 at Bethel Horizons we are bringing Rob Brink, who spoke at Prairie in May on his Journey from Pastor to Atheist, to Prairie's retreat to present a program on "Winnow, sift, simmer: the hidden value of a seminary education" from an atheist perspective. If you will be at the retreat, you are invited to attend.

## Prairie History Folks Speak at James Reeb Congregation

Barbara Park, Rosemary Dorney, and Mary Mullen, History Committee members who put together the Prairie history book set along with the late Ruth Calden, will be speaking at the James Reeb UU Congregation across town this coming **Sunday, October 27**. The topic of the month at the Reeb Congregation is "belonging." All three will be sharing of how they came to and then stayed at Prairie and what it has meant to them to belong to a mostly lay-led congregation. The Sunday service, at 2146 E. Johnson Street, begins at 10 a.m.



## Day of the Dead at our Retreat - November 3rd

Every year at our retreat, we have our Key Log ceremony, where we reflect on logjams in our lives that have broken up in the past year. This year's Prairie retreat coincides with another Prairie tradition – a service the first Sunday of November, when we remember our deceased loved ones. Both traditions will be observed this year at our retreat.

The Mexican tradition of Day of the Dead can be described as a celebration of the connections we still feel with loved ones who have died, as well as an acknowledgement that death is a part of life. Recreating the traditions related to the holiday could easily push us down the slippery slope into frivolous appropriation of Mexican Day of the Dead traditions, but I think we can be inspired by the idea of celebrating and sharing our connections to the dead who are dear to us without being disrespectful. (Let's just stay away from Day of the Dead costumes and commercialized merchandise).

At Bethel Horizons, we will have bulletin boards where we can post photographs of family, friends, and beloved pets we've lost, paper for writing letters to them, and space for displaying other mementos (but no food, drink, or candles). Letters may be left out for others to read or sealed in envelopes and kept private. One of our craft projects will be making paper flowers to decorate the display. It's my hope that many of us will engage each other in conversation around this display and share our memories with each other throughout the weekend.

On Sunday morning after breakfast, we will gather up the letters, adorn ourselves with the flowers, and go together to our fire circle, while singing "Will the Circle be Unbroken." When we arrive at the fire circle, we'll place our letters on the fire. Names of Prairie members who have passed will be read. A moment of quiet meditation will conclude our celebration of loved ones we've lost.

Then we will shift our focus and our tone to Prairie's traditional Key Log ceremony. To prepare for this ceremony, think about something that was not moving in your life, and how it came to be loosened and freed in the past year.

# First Meeting on Professional Ministry

Rachel Long, President

4

We had our first meeting to discuss what we want from professional ministry on Sunday 10/6, with 25 members present. Here are some of the takeaways.

What tasks do we want a minister to do? Those present ranked their top 5 tasks, and points 5-1 were allocated by rank. Here were point totals:

1. Pastoral care (68)
2. Deliver Sunday programs (59)
3. Help organize programs, draw from area resources (44)
4. Presence in the community, public face/profile (40)
5. Teach us to be better at leading & other congregational roles (31)
6. Greeting, welcoming before and after service (28)
7. Adult RE groups - educate and stimulate us (27)
8. Coordinate staff functioning, coordinate among committees (23)
9. Leader in and outside Prairie for social action (21)
10. Interfacing with UUA and other UU's in the area, bringing that back to us (13)
11. Conflict resolution (13)
12. Ceremonies, memorials (7)

How often do we want our minister to present on Sunday mornings?

Answers ranged from 1 to 3 times per month, flexibility was suggested if the minister was presenting a series or was away for a while. Desire for continuing frequent lay services was unanimous. Gmail

Presuming we could afford it, do we want full or part time?

100% (full-time) 11; Between 60% and full-time 6; 60% time 3

Possibly of sharing a minister with another congregation was also discussed.

Qualities we are looking for:

- Good at responding to emails
- Builds trust; not in competition with members
- Humorous, inspirational, gets to know the congregation
- Warm, kind, humorous, sharp-witted
- Infuse joy and excitement into our society
- Speaker who inspires us, not just teaches



Contract vs called ministry? Contract 15; Called 7; Abstain 1

Interested in later calling a minister who was initially contracted? Yes 19; Abstain 2

We also reviewed proposed bylaw changes that would clarify Prairie's relationship with contract vs called ministers and the role of the Committee on Ministry.

Whew! Lots of great discussion, and more to come. Join us for discussion #2 at the Retreat on Saturday!

Rachel Long, President  
Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society

# Each One, Teach One

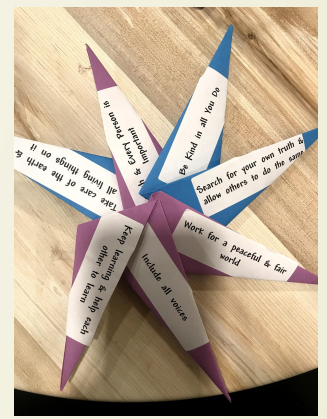
Holly Tellander, Director of Religious Education

5

During the month of October, RE students have been exploring & discussing the similarities & differences between Unitarian Universalism and Christianity.

Our **preschool & K-5 learners** have learned why stories are such good teachers, how Jesus was a great storyteller and teacher and that many stories are told about him. We talked about how some stories might seem unbelievable, but that doesn't mean we can't still learn a lesson from them. We talked about how Jesus was a voice for disenfranchised people and how UUs feel that it is important to do this work in the world as well. We experienced the 'miracle' of sharing loaves & fishes and we talked about how ethical agreements - like the 10 commandments and the 7 UU principles - give us a way to make decisions and interact with other people in a way that makes everyone feel safe and included.

Our **middle & high school learners** have been discussing Catholicism as well and had a chance to attend Mass at St. Bernard's in Middleton. They've discussed Jesus' contribution to the faith and explored some of the basic Christian tenets. This group is always happy to welcome new perspectives into the weekly discussions or on the field trips to visit different houses of worship.

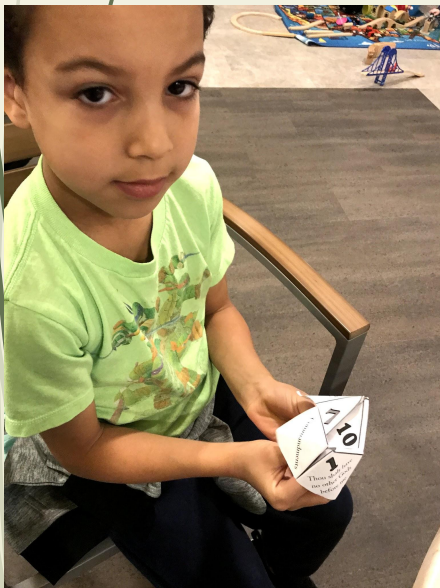


## Coming up in November & Reminders!

**First if you haven't yet.... [Register here for RE](#)**

If you choose the financial contribution rather than volunteering option - Holly can accept checks on Sunday.

**On November 24th please plan to visit the RE Social Justice Bazaar right after service! Many different gift items will be for sale - get a head start on your holiday gift shopping AND help us raise money for the [Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights](#).**



During the month of November all students will be exploring the religion of **Islam** and focusing on the theme of **Charity**.

**Thank you to Katrina Thompson & Rachel Long** for signing up to lead the religious exploration of Islam with our middle & high school learners. **Would you like to come spend time with our younger learners as we explore this faith tradition?** Please let Holly Tellander know if you think you have a great perspective to add to the exploration of Islam with our students - either those in elementary or in middle/high.

As always, **volunteers needed!** This [Google Form](#) will help me help you engage with our kids!

# Prairie, a Source for Information About Current & Former Members

**Mary Mullen**, History Committee

6

In the past, especially in Europe, churches were the repositories of life records, particularly marriages and baptisms, while families kept records in their Bibles which had special pages just for that purpose.

These days it's the state that records these vital records, and generally the public gets a window into the life of a person who has just passed through an obituary in the paper or published online. If a funeral or memorial service is held, obituaries are usually part of the materials available there.

Due to the work of the Prairie History Committee, Prairie is another place anyone may take a look at information about its members and former members. This is available in several resources as listed below.

1. Obituary binder: Prairie has an organized binder containing a list of members who have died, their birth and death dates, location and date of memorial service, usually an obituary and order of service, and sometimes even the planned remarks of some of the participants in the service.
2. Memorial service recordings: Recordings of the selected memorial services are available to members on the password-protected portion of the Prairie website, "For Current Members." Other memorial services may be available to members from our digital archivist Bob Park.
3. Sunday service recordings: Recordings of many of our services that were led by our members are available right online at <http://archives.uuprairie.org/>. There are links to the titles of nearly every Sunday service held by Prairie since its founding in 1967.
4. Member list: We have an alphabetical list of all of our members who have signed the membership book along with date of signing. Just ask our administrator or Prairie History and Archive Committee Chair Mary Mullen.
5. Member profiles: A binder from 1997-98 that contains "Member Profiles" provided by our members from that time.
6. History books: The history book set, Prairie UU Society: 50 Years in the Life of a Congregation, 1967-2017, is another fine repository of information. "Appendix VII, Prairie's Leaders, 1967-2019" lists 321 leaders and the positions they held. A year-by-year chronology is also full of details – though this part is not indexed. Try the index for further references to those who've been associated with Prairie. You'll be referred to individual mentions of our members which may include stories or articles written by the members, interviews, and, even better, pictures. The history book set may be purchased for \$37. Contact Mary Mullen.

# Welcome Baby Berend

7

Benjamin and Hannah Van Thiel welcomed Berend Alan Van Thiel into their family on October 3rd at 3:08am. Berend (who also goes by Bear) was born at 9lbs 1oz, 21 inches long. So far he is as sweet and happy as a baby could ever be. He is already smiling and enjoys taking baths. He loves to be held and sung to by his Daddy. The Van Thiels hope to make it back to a Sunday Service in the the near future. Prairie members provided a meal train for the growing family as organized by the Caring Committee.



## The Street Pulse: Offertory Partner

Molly Plunkett, Social Action Committee Chair

For the last quarter of the year, Prairie will share its offertory collection with [The Street Pulse](#), a weekly newspaper which contains articles, stories, poems, art and editorials largely written by homeless individuals. The newspaper is then sold by individuals who are themselves homeless or low income. Street Pulse has been in business since 2005 and has a simple model - vendors buy a paper for \$.25 and sell it on the street for \$1.00, keeping the profit.

Street Pulse Editor-in-Chief and Vendor Coordinator Karen Andro said the mission of the paper is to build community, empower, enlighten and educate. "We're bringing folks together around our core values," Andro said. "And the way we do that is by treating folks who've suffered the trauma of homelessness with dignity and respect."

The mission of Street Pulse extends to not only the homeless community but also members of the Madison community who are able to do their laundry, wake up in the morning to a pot of coffee and sleep in their own beds at night. What's necessary for change is understanding, according to Andro.



# Remembering Rosemarie

8

Prairie UU Society member, Rosemarie Lester, passed away September 23rd. [Here is a link](#) to Sunday Services she presented or helped to present.

Following are some words about Rosemarie from fellow Prairie members.



*From Mary Frantz*

We had many happy occasions with Rosemarie--singing together in the choir, playing recorders together, sharing circle suppers. She often had tales of woe regarding the people who shared her house--I tried to persuade her that her resentments might be more hurtful to her than whatever they were doing--I reminded her of the Latin phrase, which I learned in high school Latin class: "Illegitimi non carborundum" --rough translation is "Don't let the bastards grind you down." I have found the dictum a good reminder in my life, too. I admired Rosemarie's overall good sense as well as her kind hospitality.

*From Nancy Schraufnagel*

My memories of Rosemarie revolve around things German. Services on Germany, propaganda, and poster art. Finding out and visiting Buchenwald, where her father died. German song workshops at retreats. And most of all, for defining collective guilt. When I was a girl, and learned of the Holocaust, with a German last name, I felt guilt.



Al Nettleton, Mike Briggs, Rosemarie Lester and Ruth Calden making music at the Briggs home in 2003, (George Calden is in the background.)





# Remembering Rosemarie

*From Kathy Converse*

I think that Rosemarie and I initially connected through our love of art. One of the earliest art displays I coordinated at Prairie was a collection of her work. This friendship progressed to lunches together and long talks, often ending with tea and special German treats out on her deck in the sunshine. At that time we often walked to eating places on Williamson Street.

As the years went on she had many medical crises and several periods of rehabilitation when she needed my help. I became her POA for health care after Doleta Chapru (who had served in that capacity) died. Between restaurants, her home, and various hospital and other stays, our friendship continued. After Rosemarie began living at Oakwood Village about three years ago we still enjoyed our visits and excursions to restaurants, banks, and a variety of stores.

Rosemarie would often break into song and we would sing together as we walked along. A special memory I have of Rosemarie was several weeks ago on the day she fell and broke her hip. We had been in the Emergency Room all day and a Chaplain and helper came to see Rosemarie. After the Chaplain left, the helper stayed behind. As Rosemarie often did, she asked this woman about her heritage and she established the woman spoke Spanish. So they talked in Spanish for awhile then Rosemarie started asking her about music and they were off singing together. I decided to make my exit to go home and get some calls made and get food while she had this company. As I stood in the door to leave, I listened to Rosemarie and this woman passionately singing "De Colores". This was the last time I was to hear that deep throaty voice singing.



Raging Grannies: Rosemarie Lester, Gary Gates, Carl Wacker, Pam Gates, Nancy Schraufnagel, Bob Park, and Dorothy Krause are directed by Barb Park at the 2013 Bethel Horizons retreat talent show.