

Dec
2019

Prairie Fire



Playing Codenames at the 2019 Bethel Retreat

Prairie Contacts

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December Calendar*

Please see www.uuprairie.org for detailed descriptions

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

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Sunday 1

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Youth Program: Movie
- 10a Service: "The Jewish and UU Roots of Social Justice" by Rabbi Bonnie Margulis"
- 12p Humanist Union (Annex)

Saturday 7

- 5:45a Men's Shelter Breakfast
- 9a Prairie WOW

Sunday 8

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 9:30a-1pmish Youth Program: Nifty Gifty (Annex)
- 10a Service: "Climate Change & Water" by Stephen Carpenter
- 11:30a Fall Parish Meeting

Sunday 15

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Youth Program & Service: "Symbol Tree Intergenerational Service"

Sunday 22

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Service: "Singing Thru Our UU Values" All Ages Service

Sunday 29

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Service: "New Year's Resolutions" All Ages Service



Celebrating Rosemarie Lester's life on Oct. 27th

Calendar Notes

Humanist Union to Hear Report on FFRF Convention: Dec. 1st

The Humanist Union's next meeting will be Sunday Dec. 1st in the Annex. We'll start with our usual potluck lunch at noon. Then from 12:30 to 1:30 we will have a presentation from Susan Hagstrom on "Highlights from the Freedom From Religion Foundation's 2019 National Convention in Madison." Susan attended that convention Oct. 18 and 19 at Monona Terrace where she heard the speakers shown at <https://ffrf.org/outreach/convention>.

Parish Meeting & Construction Update

Rachel Long, President

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After our Service on Sunday 12/8/19, we will have our **Fall Parish Meeting** from 11:30 am to 1 pm at Oak Park Place. You are encouraged to bring finger food to share in order to sustain us through this important meeting. Child care and lunch for youth will be provided at the Annex, and we plan to "skype" the meeting with our volunteers there. Here is the agenda:

1. Welcome and Chalice lighting: Rachel Long, President
2. Minutes from Annual Meeting 5-19-19 - vote to approve: Dan Proud, Secretary
3. Committee reports - informational: Rachel Long and committee chairs
4. Budget for 2020 - discussion & vote to approve: Patty Stockdale, Finance Chair
5. Proposed Bylaws amendments - discussion & vote to approve: Chris Porter, VP
6. Ministry - discussion & vote: Rachel Long, President
 - Style of ministry (lay + professional)
 - Contract vs called ministry
 - Full time vs. part time
7. Minister Search Committee - elect members: Nominating Committee
8. Closing and adjourn: Rachel Long

Please check prairienews for text of proposed bylaws changes (also mailed to those who requested,) and other documents for your review ahead of the meeting. Please come, and be ready to participate in the good work of governing your Society!

Remodeling Project Funding Update - At our May 19, 2019 Annual Parish Meeting, we authorized spending on remodeling our building to a maximum of \$540,000, though at that time the projected cost was \$505,000. We also agreed that if more than \$505,000 was needed, the Remodeling Committee would have to get approval from the Board.



At our Nov. 10, 2019 Board Meeting, Tom Robinson presented the Remodeling Committee's case for more funding, and the Board approved additional spending up to the \$540,000 that had been authorized by the congregation, if needed. The Committee, architect, and builder are all working to keep our costs down, and still hope to come in under \$540,000. About 1/4 of our members have been directly involved in planning for this project, and the Board respects their decision making.

We are considering options for covering the additional costs. It would be absolutely wonderful if we could do this project without dipping into reserves or getting a mortgage, but it would be highly unusual for a small congregation like ours to be able to do so. Our amazing success so far has only been possible through the incredible generosity of our members and especially our anonymous matching donor. Please consider an additional pledge to our capital campaign to get us at least to our match goal, we are so close!

And thanks again not only to our donors of money, but to the many members of remodeling sub committees who have given so generously of their time. We are all eager to see the results!

Rachel Long, President
Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society

December RE News

Holly Tellander, Director of Religious Education

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“Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.”

~ Hamilton Wright Mabie

During the month of December, Prairie RE is full of traditions...

Nifty Gifty

When? December 8, from 9:30 until the parish meeting ends. It is okay to bring children later than 9:30, but no earlier, please.

What? It's an annual PRAIRIE TRADITION! Kids from toddlers through high school come, craft a variety of gifts, and wrap them up to take home and brighten someone's holiday season. Volunteer elves will have set up several gift-making stations for kids to rotate through and will help kids enjoy their crafts. More volunteers will help kids wrap their gifts. Snacks and cider round out our festive tradition. This year, because of the parish meeting, we'll extend the fun with videos and popcorn.

Where? There's always glitter spillage and other messes at Nifty Gifty, so it won't happen at Oak Park Place. Instead, it will take place a short drive away in Prairie's Annex (2006 Whenona Way). Drop your kids off on the way to Oak Park Place; pick them up after the parish meeting (or after the service if you're not attending the meeting). Childcare will not be provided at Oak Park Place on the 8th, but there will be quiet activities available in the meeting room.

How can you help? Donate snacks! Cookies, apple cider, cheese and crackers, fruit, pretzels, and pre-popped popcorn are welcome. Talk to your children about what to expect on this special day! Help them think of people they might want to make gifts for. At least one gift will be donated to local children in need. Keep an eye out on Prairie News for supply requests.

It's rare for younger children to be able to give parents a wrapped gift that is a surprise! For that reason, parents don't usually participate but you are more than welcome to be there if that suits your family. You don't want to miss this event - it's an annual favorite!

To volunteer or ask questions, contact Karen Deaton (608) 481-6284



Symbol Tree Service - Another sweet Prairie tradition. Plan to share a brief story and hang a symbol of something meaningful that passed for you this year on our community tree. Nursery care outside the meeting room & quiet activities inside the meeting room are provided for this intergenerational service.

When? Sunday, December 15 at 10 am. Children will gather in the RE area at Oak Park Place to prepare for their special role.

What? A special annual intergenerational service. It begins with a [battery-powered] candlelit Santa Lucia procession of our young people into the darkened meeting room. Then everybody has the opportunity to hang a symbol of something they want to share on our community tree and say a few words about it. Bring (or make!) a symbol. This is an excellent opportunity for our community to share and connect with each other as another year comes to a close.

RE-free Sundays - Attendance by families is usually quite low on holiday weekends, so we will not plan Religious Education programming on these Sundays (Dec 22nd & 29th are All Ages services):

December 1: We will screen a holiday movie in the Oak Park Place library. Quiet activities will be available for students who attend the service.

December 22: Holiday art and puzzle activities will be available inside the meeting room for students who attend the service.

December 29: New Year's resolution activities & crafts will be available inside the meeting room for students who attend the service

Regular Religious Education workshops will resume on January 5.

Our Whole Lives for Grades 4 - 6 Coming up in January!

- This well-regarded curriculum presents accurate, age-appropriate information about human sexuality. More information about the curriculum is available [here](#) and grades 4-6 coverage & principles can be found [here](#).
- Participation is not limited to member families! Do you know someone who might be interested in having their child participate? Let them know about this opportunity!
- The curriculum will take place on Sunday mornings between 10 a.m. and noon. The program will begin in January 2020.
- Interested parents can send an email to dre@uuprairie.org to receive more information. An informational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 12, in the Annex at 11:30.



Annual & Campaign Goals

Annual goal: We are almost there!!! The goal is \$113,274 and we have raised just short of \$110,000 in pledges.

Capital Campaign goal: We need \$11,555 to meet the match of \$250,000 and another \$5,000 to meet our total goal of \$505,000

Questions? Please contact Patty Stockdale at finance@uuprairie.org

Prairie UU Society Pledge for Drive 2020

Name _____

Address _____

Phone, email _____

Annual pledge for 2019 is _____

Amount paid-to-date for 2019 is _____

Capital campaign pledge for 2018-19 is _____

Amount paid-to-date for 2018-2019 is _____

 In support of the Prairie 2020 operating budget, our annual pledge is: \$ _____

 In NEW support of the Capital Campaign, our pledge is: \$ _____

Return completed pledge form as soon as possible!

BY MAIL: Prairie UU, 2006 Whenona Dr, Madison, WI 53711

DROP OFF: in offering basket on Sunday morning;

BY EMAIL: finance@uuprairie.org

Available payment options are:

- Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT): automatic withdrawal from my/our bank. If this is a new fund transfer, please include a voided check.
- Check or Cash Payment Schedule: Annually Quarterly Monthly Other
- Stocks: Prairie's broker is Benjamin Edwards & Co at 608-233-1000. Call Prairie office for details.
- I am interested in information on donating by naming Prairie UU as a beneficiary (insurance, wills, etc.).

A Wintry Retreat

Karen Deaton, Retreat Programming Chair

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Winter blew in early this year, but it did not stop more than 50 members and friends from making their way to Bethel Horizons for our 2019 retreat, held November 1st-3rd (Save the 2020 date October 2nd-4th!!!)

Trails were hiked, music and board games were played, bellies were danced, downward dog was yoga'd, and pings were ponged. Talent was shown, Key Logs were burned, and kites were flown. What Prairie wants from a minister and what we're willing to pay for it was discussed. So were books and the benefit of a seminary education for an atheist. Surprisingly, Christmas carols were sung.

As this year's program coordinator, I've decided to award the following:

- Youngest attendee: baby Audrey
- Strangest holiday mash-up: Halloween egg hunt
- Favorite hangout for kids: the loft with the pool table that has holes where pockets should be (who knew pool balls hitting the floor would be so very noisy?)
- Most convincing singing corpse: Rachel
- Most jingly activity: Renee taught some bellydancing moves and supplied coin belts for everybody to wear while they shook their hips.
- Most warm-blooded: Mingus, who was spotted climbing a snow pile in socks.
- Most popular craft activity: mitten-making in the large bedroom, where Kate and Jane had set up several sewing machines for making mittens from fleece or recycled sweaters. Scissors were flashing so fast that when Mary took off her sweater, she had to hang it outside the room to keep it from being mitten-ized.



Above: A costumed Ron Frye gives a report to Rachel Long

Left: Halloween Egg Hunt commences

Prairie Presentation at James Reeb UU

Mary Mullen, Archives Committee Chair

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Prairie members who spoke on the topic of belonging to Prairie to the James Reeb UU Congregation on October 27 were very well received. Mary Mullen, Barbara Park, and Rosemary Dorney of the Prairie History Committee spoke about how they came to Prairie and what it means and has meant to them to be members of a lay led congregation. They had been asked to speak because of their involvement in creating the Prairie history book set and because the monthly topic for the James Reeb Congregation was "Belonging."



The "field trip" gave Prairie members a glimpse of our sister congregation's facility on East Johnson Street as well as insight into how services are conducted there. It seems that there is a bit more ritual in their services and that sharing of joys and concerns occupies much more time than at Prairie.

(Photo: Prairie's Rosemary Dorney speaks. Barbara Park, left, and Mary Mullen, right, had already spoken. Far right is Virginia Scholtz, the worship leader.)

Unitarian Funeral

Mary Mullen, Archives Committee Chair

Prairie has been hit hard by the deaths of three long-time members: Ruth Calden on August 16, Mike Briggs on August 26, and Rosemarie Lester on September 24. Memorial gatherings were held for all three during the eight days starting on October 20 and ending on October 27. Terri Prudlo, another long-time member, wrote the following poem after the gathering at the Annex for Rosemarie on October 27th. The event included stories about Rosemarie, lots of music (pictured are The Raging Grannies), visiting, and delicious refreshments. The poem was also shared at Prairie's retreat at Bethel Horizons on the display where people shared memories and pictures of loved ones who had died.

WHEN THE TIME COMES

I want a Unitarian funeral.

No dirges.

No weeping.

I want a string band—accordion, guitars, mouth harp, fiddle—

I want my friends remembering my foolishness and imperfections and laughing-- I want them remembering all the outrageous things I've done and laughing, laughing, laughing.

I want stories of something good I did sometime for somebody.

I want one or two or maybe even three of my poems read aloud without any criticism.

I want them to sing "Let it be a Dance" and "How Can I Keep From Singing",

I want my cheesecake and Tony's biscotti.

I want coffee, lemonade, and wine.

I want chatting and hugging.

I'll be there, if I can,

loving you all

for loving me.

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Attendees listened to The Raging Grannies