

Jan
2020

Prairie Fire



Our Symbol Tree pre & post service on 12/15/19

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January Calendar*

Please see www.uuprairie.org for detailed descriptions

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

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Saturday 4

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

Sunday 5

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Youth Program: Wool webs, vision boards, sparkly slime
- 10a Service: "The Gospel According to...Me," by Erin Bosch

Sunday 12

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Youth Program: Group Negotiation Challenge, Emotion Masks, Show & Tell
- 10a Service: "Who Saved the Electric Car" by John Wunderlin
- 11:45a Board Meeting (Annex)

Saturday 18

- 9a Prairie UU Parents (Annex)

Sunday 19

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Youth Program: MLK Crafting, Islam Wrap-Up for Big Kids & OWL starts for 4th-6th graders
- 10a Service: "Bayard Rustin: Troublemaker for Justice" by Jacqueline Houtman

Sunday 26

- 8:45a Choir Rehearsal
- 10a Youth Program: Egg Drop Partner Challenge, Minute to Win It Challenges
- 10a Service: Pre-Parish Meeting Service
- 10:45a Parish Meeting



Pre Symbol Tree service on 12/15/19

Calendar Notes

NEW Group!!! Prairie Unitarian Universalist Parents (PUUPs)

Come and join fellow Prairie parents/caregivers (non-members are welcome as well!) to snack (please bring a snack to share) and talk with fellow parents/caregivers. We will have free on-site childcare upstairs. Please mark if you plan to attend on Facebook so we plan accordingly. Located at The Annex, 2006 Whenona Drive the 3rd Saturday of every month 9-11am.

Parish Meeting Results & 1/26 Meeting

Rachel Long, President

We had a very productive meeting with excellent attendance and lots of participation. For those of you who missed it, here are the highlights.

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- Tom Robinson presented an update on the remodeling project. Due to unforeseen structural issues, we are a little behind schedule, and don't expect to be finished until April. (Fortunately Oak Park has agreed to let us stay until then)
- Budget for 2020 was approved as presented.
- Bylaws amendment 1 was tabled due to a difference of opinion on what should be capitalized. The Board will reconsider and likely bring another proposal in the spring. Amendments 2 and 3 (addressing primarily the Committee on Ministry and professional ministry) passed.
- Ministry discussion was fruitful but incomplete. There was considerable diversity of opinion about what percentage time we should be aiming for, with roughly equal numbers preferring full time, 80%, 60%, and less than 60%. Members generally supported the Board's recommendation to look for a contract minister at this time with option of offering that person a called (or "settled") position in the future if they are a good fit for us.
- We elected a large and diverse minister search committee to begin the process.

Because we didn't finish our decision making, we will have a **Parish Meeting Sunday January 26 at 10:45 am** after a shortened service. The search committee has already gotten to work, and has new information on the process to guide us. Please come and help your Society with this important work!

Fun at Nifty Gifty!



January RE News

Holly Tellander, Director of Religious Education



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The best way to solve problems and to fight against war is dialogue."

~ Malala Yousafzai

January's learning theme is COMMUNICATION...

All month we will be offering opportunities for kids of all ages to build skills in communication and listening. How can we change the world when we use our voice? What types of practices help us grow into better listeners? What does it mean to be a good listener? What stops us from speaking our truth sometimes and how do we get better at doing it respectfully? These are the types of questions we'll be exploring this month in RE through group activities, games, crafts and discussions.

If you are interested in joining an **opening circle** on any Sunday - please feel free to drop in! No need to check in first. For planning purposes, our opening circles are as follows:

10:00 - 10:20 a.m. ~ Our 4th-6th grade learners have a sharing circle with a discussion related to the monthly theme. Bring your coffee and join us ~ we'll have hot chocolate :)

10:00-10:20 a.m. - Our 7th-12th grade learners have an opening circle for trivia & current events. Feel free to bring your coffee and drop in on these discussions anytime - these kids have lots of opinions and love to debate :)

10:30 (after story for all ages) - **10:45 a.m.** ~ our youngest learners LOVE show & tell!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Here's an overview of our month of learning! Please reach out anytime with questions or to inquire about joining us!

January 5th: Wool webs, vision boards & sparkly slime

January 12th: Group Negotiation Challenge, Emotion Masks & Show + Tell

January 19th: MLK Crafting, Islam Wrap-Up for Big Kids & OWL starts for 4th-6th graders

January 26th: Egg Drop Partner Challenge, Minute to Win It Challenges ** PARISH MEETING**

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](#). More info about the curriculum coverage & principles for grades 4-6 can be found [here](#).

The curriculum will take place on Sunday mornings between 10 a.m. and noon at our Annex building. The program will run from January 19th-March 22nd on consecutive Sundays.

Parents who have indicated interest will receive an email reminder in early January about our mandatory parent informational meeting which will be held on Sunday, January 12, in the Annex at 11:30. Child care & lunch will be available. The meeting will conclude by 1 p.m.



Remodeling Update

Heidi Hughes, Interior Committee Chair & Mary Mullen, Archives Committee Chair

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I am totally willing to share lots of information with you about all sorts of decisions that have been made, but I am overwhelmed at the moment with shopping, card sending, wrapping gifts and welcoming my kids back from school. Thus, I promise a good, detailed update in the February Prairie Fire. Thanks for understanding,

Heidi Hughes, Chair of Interior Committee

Members: Karen Deaton, Renee Deschard, and Paul Pachciarz

At our December 8th Parish Meeting, we learned that the date for returning to our building at 2010 Whenona will be April 2020 instead of December 2019. The written report delivered at the meeting stated that, "Due to some unscheduled structural problems, there was a delay in the framing of the new addition. All of the structural problems were resolved, and our new projected completion date will be approximately April of 2020."

Anyone on Facebook may follow the progress of the remodeling by friending Mary Mullen who has been documenting the project. To find the remodeling album, click on Photos, then Albums, and find the album called "Prairie UU Society, 2019 – Before and during remodeling." Most of the photos are taken from outside, but indoor pictures come from May 19 which was the last service there, May 24 when nearly everything had been cleaned out, July 14 when Prairie folk removed the siding inside the lobby, September 22 when a tour was conducted by Remodeling co-chairs Tom Robinson and Al Nettleton, and November 28 when Al graciously showed two of us through the building again.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| 6/4/19 Design committee looks at Meeting Hall after floor and ceiling treatments removed | 7/14/19 Lobby wall covering removed | 8/28/19 Excavation, stairs ripped out | 9/16/19 Forms going up for foundation & walls of additions |
|  |  |  |  |
| 11/16/19 One section (storage) covered, the other just roughed out | 11/18/19 Path roughed in | 12/11/19 Sidewalk in | 12/18/19 Roof & soffit done |

UUs Unite (or at least Meet :)

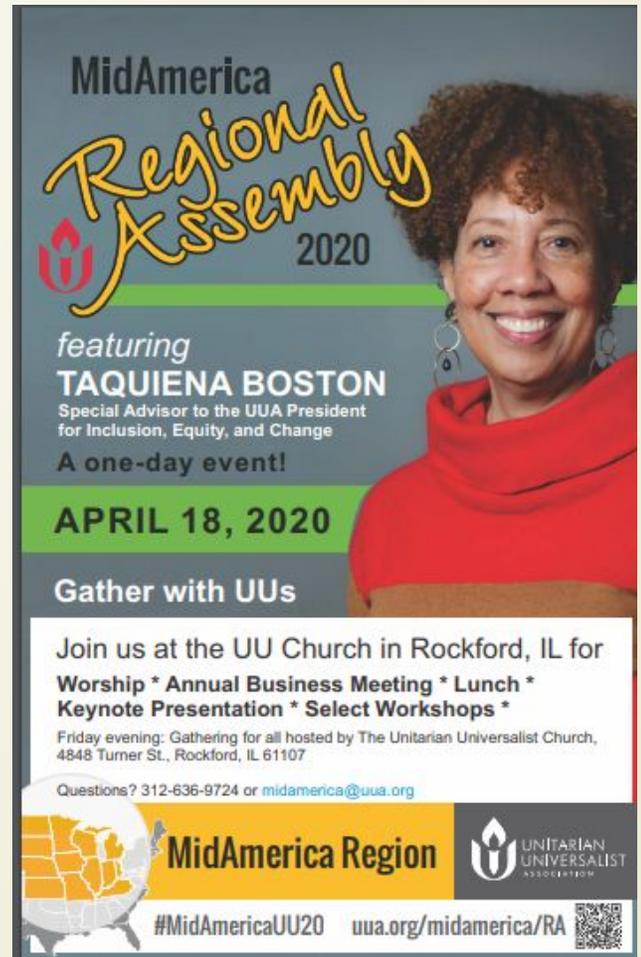
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MidAmerica Regional Assembly will be just 1.5 hours away in Rockford, IL on April 18th 2020 (and only \$100 if registered by March 20th). See the poster to the right and their website for more info:

<https://www.uua.org/midamerica/ra/2020>

Also the UUA General Assembly will be June 24th-28th in Providence Rhode Island and registration is open now. For more info:

<https://www.uua.org/ga>



Serendipity

Mary Mullen, Archives Committee Chair

Talk about serendipity. On Sunday, December 1, as part of the service we were treated to two readings by David Breeden. On Monday, in looking at old Prairie Fires, I came upon an illustration of a sculpture in the 5/19/1999 issue. The caption said, "David Breeden, Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church, Charlotte, VA. Family, Soapstone Sculpture." Kate Heiber-Cobb edited our newsletter at that time. Currently, the Rev. Dr. David Breeden is the Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Society in Minneapolis. It also just so happens that Prairie members Patty Stockdale and Mary Mullen attended the Minneapolis FUS on November 24 where they saw Rev. Breeden who took part in their all-music Sunday service on that day. The UUA website notes that "He has written several books on theological topics and translates the writings of philosophers of classical antiquity." Prairie members often make a point of attending UU churches when they travel, and sometimes find that someone there knows them or other Prairie members. At FUS Minneapolis, a former Camp Unistar staff member came up to Mary to say hi to Mary who had worked at the camp in the 1980s.



Retreat Survey Results

Thanks to the 29 people who filled out the survey! Here are the results with some comments. Save the dates for October 2nd-4th 2020 and October 1st-3rd 2021.

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For those who rarely or never attend what would make them attend: 3 people = timing doesn't work, 1 person = knowing more about it, 1 person = specific programming request
Look into the programming request for 2020, continue to publicize in a variety of ways

79% want to keep the general schedule the same (i.e. both nights off-site)
General schedule is the same for 2020 & 2021

Of 20 people who answered this question: everyone thought the activities were accessible, 17/20 felt the overnight location met their needs, 11 want to continue at Bethel, 8 are neutral and 1 wants to look elsewhere (Upham Woods was mentioned in alternate years).
Because desirable Bethel dates book up quickly, we secured the 2021 dates at Bethel; but future retreat planners could investigate an alternate location/s.

Area of improvement: enough activities for kids and a childcare schedule that works for people.

Future retreat planners will work on this.

Get to Know New Member

Margit Moses

I retired not quite 4 years ago. Since retiring, my two closest friends moved out of state, and I found myself searching for something. I had been a member of Bethany United Methodist for many years (and still volunteer with them at Luke House), and missed the community. I started visiting First Unitarian about 8 months ago, but ultimately did not feel a tie. When I walked into Prairie for the first time, I felt as if I belonged. I look forward to getting to know the membership better and getting involved in activities.



For the past 15 years or so, I have made jewelry and done art fairs, and I continue to do that - making jewelry is a way to set the rest of the world aside. It's the closest thing to meditation for me. I'm on the board of WAAC, which puts on Art Fair Off The Square and the Monona Terrace Holiday Art Fair. I enjoy that, but drafting board minutes is pure torture.

In retirement, I'm making up for not seeing many movies during my working life - so I go often. Some of my recent favorites have been: Dark Waters, JoJo Rabbit, Harriet, Peanut Butter Falcon, Parasite, Motherless Brooklyn, and Once Upon a Time in Hollywood.

I have one daughter, who lives in Monona. I have joked (not really) that if she moved elsewhere, I would have to follow. My household includes two Burmese cats, who think they run the place. Bossy and very vocal little critters.

Member Spotlight

Get to know Kathy & Randy Converse

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Kathy and Randy were both born in Vermont where Kathy lived through age 21 while Randy's family lived in Ohio, Iowa then Connecticut. Kathy completed an RN degree followed 10 years later with a BS, MS and then PhD in biology. Kathy worked as a Wildlife disease Specialist for the Federal government. Randy completed an undergraduate degree in Psychology, and then Master degrees in Social Work and Nutrition. Randy worked as a child and family therapist, energy auditor, a preschool teacher for 10 years then an assistant special needs teacher in a middle school for 16 years.

Kathy and Randy met at the University of Connecticut in 1973, lived in Connecticut for three years then Massachusetts for 8 years. They came to Madison in 1985 for Kathy's job at the USFWS National Wildlife Health Center. They moved to Madison with daughter Tara now 37. Daughter Mei-lien now 30 joined the family in 1990. They discovered Prairie while the preschool that Randy worked for was renting space at Prairie. Randy read the bulletin boards and decided...this place sounds like us.

Kathy enjoys watercolor painting, photography, gardening, yoga and knitting. She loves all things crafty and thrift shopping. She does sewing for non-profits. Randy volunteers at the Allied food pantry and Habitat for Humanity Restore, tutors

a Mexican woman in English for the Literacy Network, attends monthly vigils demanding an end to drone warfare, and creates mandalas with poetry.

We love going on extended trips with camping and hiking. We can survive days on peanut butter, jelly, crackers and cheese. We have gone on month long road trips to the Northeast, Northwest and Southwest US, Canada, Japan and Europe. We have lifetime Federal passes and love visiting Federal and State Parks. We are thankful for our health and mobility that we know many others do not enjoy.

Things people might not know about Kathy is she has spent time working in 49/50 US states, Canada and Mexico. Kathy did research on snowshoe

hare, Canada geese, pelicans and frogs along with many other creatures. You might not know that Randy attended Divinity School in Boston followed by community

service as a Conscientious Objector during the Vietnam war.

Randy's involvement at Prairie has included RE Director, RE teacher, Green Sanctuary participant, OWL facilitator and current co-chair of the Housing and Property Committee. Kathy helped start the Women's group (WOW), has been an RE teacher, coordinated Nifty Gifty for kids for 20 years, worked on the Social Action Committee, served for many years as Finance Chair then Treasurer and Board member, and currently is on the Program Committee.

Prairie welcomed us from the start and became our family. Our kids embraced all aspects of the RE Program and still spend time with friends they made during that time. Our kids also still have friendships with the adults they got to know. I think we have embraced all the Prairie has had to offer...RE, retreats, auction items, circle dinners, men and women's groups, adult RE courses and our Committee commitments. We have gained so many personal friends that we share time with in and out of Prairie on a regular basis.

