April 2020

Prairie

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Please see www.uuprairie.org for other contacts, including board members and committee chairs.

Carl, Halie, Jesse & Anne volunteer and puzzle during the Prairie Service Auction on 3/1/2020

Published March 25th 2020
April Calendar*

*All large group events cancelled, see organizers for meetings, Program Committee will be sending updates via Prairie News - online calendar located here

https://uuprairie.org/about/calendar/

Reflections from the President

Rachel Long, President

As we are hunkering down in our homes to help limit the spread of the coronavirus, I have been reflecting on a sermon Jane Esbenson gave several years back about winter in Sweden. I got the message that when darkness is imposed on us from the outside, we can make our own light. She spoke of the extensive use of candles through the dark northern winters, and of using that time to turn inward in reflection and contemplation, but also of finding joy in community. I find myself surprisingly appreciative of streaming the First Unitarian services. Even hearing joys and sorrows from UU’s I don’t know is strangely reassuring. But I do miss our own community! When we finally get back together, it will be in our beautiful, renewed space. What a celebration that will be!

I want to recognize all of those who continue caring for our community and working for justice during this challenging time. Our new Program Chair Renee Deschod and others on the Program Committee are working on creating the ability to stream Prairie services. Watch for more information about this on Prairienews. Our Social Action Committee continues to alert us to ways to stay engaged even when we are stuck at home. The Minister Search Committee and the Building Committee are busy, even if they can’t meet in person. I so appreciate folks who have volunteered to shop or run errands for those of us who can’t. Thanks for everything you do!

Last, I encourage you to share on Prairievews books, movies, online games or other activities from which you have found solace, wisdom, or just good entertainment. Pass it on!

Stay home if you can, and stay safe.

Rachel Long, President
Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
Move In Date Delayed

Rachel Long, President

Our move-in back to our main meeting house on 2010 Whenona is postponed from April 10th until sometime in late April due to a delay in getting the doors, decorative wood ceiling, and other trim pieces, which are expected to be delivered between March 31 through April 07. The construction team is continuing to complete other parts of the project. I have had a sneak peak, and am thrilled about the improvements to our space. We’ll let you know as soon as we have a firm date to take possession, and when we will need help moving in.

At the last design meeting on March 10th, the tile flooring was being put down (bathrooms mostly done). Kitchen cabinets were installed in both kitchens.
April - Creative Physical Distancing
Holly Tellander, Director of Religious Education

“Love thy neighbor -- but don't pull down your hedge.”
— unknown

March’s learning theme is CREATIVE CONNECTIONS...
Well, here we are in a time of unprecedented and rapid change. Surely, all of us are doing our best to just keep up with the news as it changes, keep our families safe, and keep our children quiet & engaged :)

To that end, I have a question for all of you. What hopes do you have for staying connected during the age of physical distancing? We have no idea how long this situation will last but one thing we are all realizing is how grateful we are for our connections and our communities.

I am so grateful to Renee for hosting an online meeting on Saturday, March 21st. I didn’t realize how much I needed to hear Prairie voices & see Prairie faces until they were there :) 

I have created a [Google Form](#) (It’s only 2 questions) to give families some options for how we might like to continue to stay connected throughout this time of uncertainty, though I also understand that, for many of us, it is difficult to commit to anything right now as we try to adjust moment by moment. Check out the aforementioned Google Form sometime when you’ve got a moment to think and weigh in on your thoughts and ideas about maintaining connections between our kids & families.

Please know that I stand ready to offer creative solutions to you all - I am comfortable with virtual learning and collaboration opportunities and I love to problem solve!

In the meantime, my best advice is to sleep well, eat good, stay home, reach out (after washing hands haha) and look for silver linings :)

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas you’d like to discuss.

Also - at some point, we will come back together again, and I’d love to have a robust list of volunteers to call on in our new space! If you haven’t yet, and are so inclined, please fill out this [Google Form](#) to share your preferences about how and when and with whom you might be interested in volunteering once we’re through the weeds and back on the sunny beaches of Sunday morning services! Thanks everyone :)


Program Committee Update
Renee Deschard, Program Committee Chair

First, I want to say thank you to Penny Eiler for all of her hard work as Program Chair. She has decided to step down (still on the committee luckily :) and I volunteered to be Program Chair. Please email program related things at program@uuprairie.org.

With covid19, the Program Committee is investigating online options. About 20 Prairie folk met virtually on 3/21 at 10am for a Prairie UU Check In with very positive feedback. Program will be sending out more information soon via Prairie News.

Search Survey Results
Search Committee

Thank you to the 69 people (about 68% response rate!) who responded to the Congregational Survey. (Click here for a summary of results). The Search Committee spent many hours modifying the UUA's example survey (49 questions) for Prairie. Several questions in the survey are asked on the Congregational Record (i.e. job posting, which is now up!). The Search Committee looked at responses in a summary format and gave equal weight to all answers. Thank you again to all who completed the survey.
We had an extremely successful service auction! Our budgeted goal of $10,000 was blown away with a total of $15,500 in bids (most of which has already been collected). Thanks to everyone involved in organizing, offering, and bidding generously!

You can now donate online to Prairie with zero fees! Click on the Donate button on the top of the Prairie website or go directly here [https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1590514](https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1590514). You will need to have or create a PayPal account. All online donations will assumed to be Offerings and split 50/50 with our offering partner. If you’d like to pay for service auction items, pledge, etc please email [treasurer@uuprairie.org](mailto:treasurer@uuprairie.org) along with your online donation.

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**WUUSAN Fundraising**

**Molly Plunkett**, Social Action Co-Chair

WUUSAN, (Wisconsin Unitarian Universalist State Action Network), is a newly formed chapter in Wisconsin and has a Faithful Campaign to raise $2000.00 for a website. The campaign can be found at [https://faithify.org/projects/wisconsin-uu-state-action-network/](https://faithify.org/projects/wisconsin-uu-state-action-network/). We need to have pledges totalling $2,000 by April 8. If we do not raise the total amount, we do not get any of the donations. So if you have any ability to make a pledge BEFORE APRIL 8, please help out.

WUUSAN has a Facebook page you can check out here [https://www.facebook.com/groups/175248579721529](https://www.facebook.com/groups/175248579721529)
Prairie Music Archives

Barb Park, Archives Committee

To get to the archived music programs, first go to https://uuprairie.org/connect/for-current-members/ (If you don’t already know the password you can contact Dan Klock or someone on the Archives Committee.) Click on “Members’ Page.”

At that point you can go to many interesting sections. Of course, I was drawn to the music in the lower left hand section to listen to the choir selections. Then I expanded my listening to pieces by the Ethnic Connection/ Ethnic Impurities. I realized how much I miss having an accordion player in our midst. Dipping back in time, I listened to a 1976 recording of the Prairie Chicken Pluckers. The quality of the recording isn’t great, but the music certainly can lift your spirits.

From the music section on the left, I wandered over to the ‘Selected Full Service Recordings from Past Years’ at the top right. I was delighted to revisit two programs given by my friend Jim Reilly from Minneapolis. As children, Jim and I both attended Betts Memorial Universalist Church in Syracuse, NY. We were good friends, sang in the youth choir together and went to camp in the summer at Unirondack, the Universalist camp in the Adirondacks which is still functioning as a UU camp to this day. Jim presented two wonderful programs on Women Composers. They can be found in the right column Music section, 5/10/2009 and 5/09/2010.

If you need a chuckle, try listening to George Calden’s 1995 program “Let Every Little Light Shine.” There is a very amusing story read by several people that has to do with angels, 7th Day Adventists and cleaning the bathroom. If you were still a bit blue from being stuck at home, this one should definitely improve your mood. So take the time to look, listen and explore the Members’ Page of the website. You will be surprised at what you will find. It is a wonderful chance to go down memory lane.

Karaoke party at Orange and Dean’s home
Member Spotlight
Karen Deaton & Andy Garst

What current Prairie positions (i.e. committees) do you hold/past positions?
Karen is chair of the Religious Education Committee and the Landscape subcommittee of the Housing & Property Committee. She’s also on the Building Committee working on the remodel. In years past, she has served on the board and on the communications committee. Andy has also served on the board. Karen teaches RE and Andy does tech support during services.

Where did you grow up? When and why did you move to Madison?
Andy grew up in Rockford, IL. Karen grew up in LaGrange Park, IL, in Chicago’s western suburbs. We moved from west Texas back to the midwest after Jessie was born, almost 20 years ago. We wanted to be closer to our families in northern Illinois, but outside the congestion of Chicagoland, and a job offer for Andy at the UW hospitals brought us to Madison.

What brought you to Prairie?
Destiny. Well, we were looking for an intergenerational community that would welcome atheists. Andy says his mother attended Prairie before we did. Karen disagrees.

Do you remember your first impressions of Prairie? Why did you join Prairie?
The prairie plantings and Mike Briggs’ concertina made strong impressions on us. Everybody was warm and welcoming. We met a bunch of interesting people at Prairie.

What do you do with your time when you’re not at Prairie?
We both like to garden. Some of our most intense disagreements have been about shrub placement. Andy plays tennis regularly with Erin Bosch and enjoys his record collection. Karen coordinates the Native Plant Sale at the UW-Madison Arboretum. She goes to Zumba class with Jane Richards and enjoys reading fiction, camping and hiking with friends, and making things.

What is something even long-time Prairie members might be surprised to learn about you?
Karen was a sickly and painfully shy child. Andy knows how to ride a unicycle and do trampoline tricks, though he hasn’t done either for a few years.