

# Prairie Fire

August  
2022



Rocks painted to spread information about reproductive justice. To read more about this art, see the article on page 6. Photo credit: Pageen Small

## Prairie Contacts

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

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# Calendar

Please see [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org) for detailed descriptions & public event links (where applicable)

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## Saturday 6

- 10a WOW (Women of Wonder)

## Sunday 7

- 10a Service: "Wilma's Fund" by AJ Hardie
- 12p Humanist Union

## Thursday 11, 25 (every other Thursday)

- 1p Spiritual Exploration (online)

## Sunday 14

- 10a Service by Rev. Matt Aspin

## Friday 19, 26 (every Friday)

- 4:30p Dungeons and Dragons (online)

## Sunday 21

- 10a Service
- 1p Magic Pride Festival

## Sunday 28

- 10a Service by Rev. Matt Aspin

## Tuesday 30

- 6:30p Spanish Speakers Potluck

## Office Hours

### Rev. Matt Aspin's Office Hours:

Sun: In-person a minimum of 3 times per month. Available for meetings in the afternoon upon request.

Mon: Consistent in-person office day. Available for meetings upon request.

Tue-Thu: In office or working from home, depending on appointment schedule. Available for meetings upon request.

### Administrator Dan Klock's Office Hours:

Mon-Fri 11:30am – 2:30pm

### DRE Alice Mandt's Office Hours:

Mon: 3pm to 7pm

Wed: 3pm to 7pm

Thu: 3pm to 7pm

Fri: 3pm to 7pm

## Editor's note and call for social justice articles

Please contact the editor at [prairiefire@uuprairie.org](mailto:prairiefire@uuprairie.org) if you would like to submit an article or photograph to the newsletter. Submissions are due by the 21st of each month for the next month's edition.

Prairie's Social Action Committee is looking to highlight the social justice work of Prairie members and friends. If you would like to write an article or share your work, please reach out to the SAC chairs Pamela Gates and Chris Porter or the Prairie Fire Editor.



Photo credit: [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)



# Words from the President

Kathy Converse, President

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Summer is here, RE classes are over and people are taking vacations. But that hasn't kept the programming, hospitality, and RE committees from continuing to provide our Sunday programs and social connections. Thank you!

Many PUU members have stated they would like to join in with Madison and Sauk Prairie UU groups to work together and strengthen our effort and impacts in our communities. To begin this process, on July 24, we had our annual meeting with the Sauk Prairie congregation and shared a discussion of where each congregation has been and where we want to go next. Included were discussions of additional ways our two congregations can work together.

Prairie has many dedicated individuals who have worked in front and behind the scenes the past two years to provide technical support. They kept Prairie members in contact and made Sunday services and meetings available to as many as possible. We have increased our audience and membership. As the Sunday, July 17, service demonstrated, we can now connect with other congregations and speakers.

How are we going to use our new space and technical possibilities? To continue these successes, what if our committees could talk with other UU committees to share and gather ideas. What if we had joint circle groups or meals with people in other states?



It's also appropriate to step back to ask what our mission is for this year and the next few years. Is our mission clear or in need of update and change? Using this mission, we can establish goals for the year. I think it would be great to work on some specific goals with yearly accomplishments we could measure and crow about!



# Religious Exploration (RE)

Alice Mandt, Director of Religious Exploration

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Dear Prairie Families,

Summer is officially here and we have a lot of fun events planned for you and your children to experience!

Note that due to busy Summer schedules the format of Religious Exploration will shift a little. The tinies (ages 0-4) will continue meeting on the main floor of the Annex (outside in the backyard when weather permits). The rest of the children (ages 5-18) will have RE each Sunday all together, meeting in the basement RE space, in the backyard, or even offsite (for field trips) depending on each Sunday's plans. All children (including the tinies) will go to Marlborough Park (just down the street from Prairie) together on Park Days.

Here is what is happening in August:

- 8/7 Nature Scavenger Hunt
- 8/14 Adoption Day Kits & Adoption Posters for the Humane Society  
**(Please help us by donating items for Adoption Day Kits such as small beds, blankets, toys, and store-bought treats so the animal can have a great first night in their home.)**
- 8/21 Celebrate Pride
- 8/28 End of Summer Party/water play in backyard



**Religious Exploration needs you! Please join our group of amazing volunteers in laying a foundation for growing new UUs in a world that desperately needs them!**

We have opportunities this Summer and Fall for new volunteers to join us in this exciting and rewarding work.

- If you decide to teach in our Religious Exploration program, we will provide curriculum materials and supplementary resources, as well as all needed supplies and equipment.
- We will be clear in our expectations as to your time commitment and we will respect your need to be absent on occasion.
- We will plan a teacher orientation session and provide information about other opportunities for continuing education. Throughout the year we will respond promptly to your comments, questions, and requests.



**If you have any interest in volunteering with RE please mark your calendar for the teacher training on August 14th from 11:30am - 2pm!**

Photo credit: [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

# Save the Date: Building Dedication and Open House

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Join us Sunday morning for our Building Dedication and Open House, with tours. We will celebrate the creative work and efforts of the many. A Festive Fall Fair to follow welcomes families from the congregation and community with fun activities, food, and raffle.

## Building Dedication, Open House, and Fall Fair

September 25, 2022

10 am to 2 pm

2010 Whenona Dr

Madison, WI

[uuprairie.org](http://uuprairie.org)

Prairie Unitarian  
Universalist Society



# Reproductive Justice Rocks

Pageen Manolis Small

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A few months ago, a group of Prairie folks met to discuss how we might respond as a community to the potential (at the time) overturning of Roe v. Wade. Reproductive health is an important issue that directly impacts many women, non-binary folks, and trans men. We wanted to find a way to spread accurate information about reproductive rights. Because we have so many artistic folks in our community, it seemed very natural to set up a community “craftivism” (crafting and activism) project.

On July 16, sixteen members and friends of Prairie met at the Annex for an evening of rock painting. Much of the art was inspired by women’s rights or reproductive rights and ranged from messages about choice to a detailed drawing of a female reproductive system. All of the rocks had a QR code attached for the finder to scan. The QR code leads to Pregnancy Options Wisconsin’s website, which has information about pregnancy, abortion, and reproductive rights. Participants took their rocks home and will spread them around their communities to share information and promote reproductive justice.



Above: Some folks gathered inside (with masks) while others enjoyed painting outside on the porch.

Left: Amelia, one of the youngest artists to participate, shows off her work.

Photo credit: Mary Mullen

Below: QR code placed on the rocks.





# Pandemic Groups Continue

Kathy Converse and Pageen Small

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Early in the pandemic, Prairie folks developed some creative methods to meet up in small groups to enjoy some company and activities while still following pandemic precautions. Several of these groups continue to meet.

The weekly walking circle, started to combat Covid isolation in 2020, has passed the two year mark, and they are enjoying another summer of prairie flora and fauna! Some members have left, and new members joined. They have a social check in while walking, identifying plants and birds, and enjoying the dozens of trails they have traveled. They walk mornings when hot and afternoons when cold.

Another group meets regularly over Zoom to have virtual adventures by playing Dungeons and Dragons, a popular role-playing game. This group will take a few weeks off in August while the Dungeon Master (DM) is out of town and without internet, but will be back on August 19.

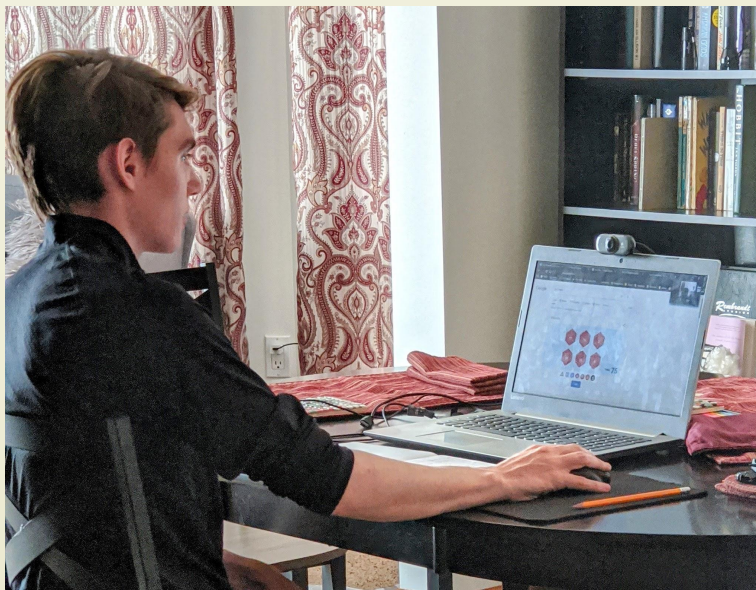
Several regulars have been playing together since their first adventure over two years ago, but the group has some newer players as well.

These are just two of several small groups that offer regular meetups. New groups and activities are always welcome, so feel free to reach out to the Prairie community if you have an idea or are looking to find people with common interests.



Above: Walking group members (from left) Margit Moses, Barbara Chatterton, Mary Franz, and Kathy Converse take a well-earned break on a bench.

Photo credit: Deesa Pence



Left: DM Harlan rolls virtual dice as the players work together to complete a quest.

Photo credit: Pageen Small

# Vacations: Time to Visit Another UU Congregation

Mary Mullen

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When Patty Stockdale and I are in another city on a Sunday morning, we often look for a UU church. We very much enjoy experiencing another congregation and seeing their buildings and grounds. This is also a good way to get ideas for what Prairie might do.

On July 10, we visited the UU Congregation of Phoenix, located in Paradise Valley, AZ. Here's a list of highlights:

- Framed posters on the front of the building that show what the congregation stands for
- Lots of art on the walls
- Screen up front on which were shown a variety of shots: the Zoom screen of Zoomers so the live congregation could wave at them, changing close-ups of the service participants, words for participatory readings and congregational hymns, and the broad image of the room that included the congregation
- Their covenant printed on a big white board in the lobby with members' signatures.
- Extensive grounds with accommodations for small groups to meet: circle of chairs, picnic tables, and benches
- A life-size sculpture garden
- A "living still in our memories" display of names of members who had passed on.



Left: The sign is very visible from the street.

Right: Colorful posters on the front of the building catch your eye.

Photo credit: Mary Mullen

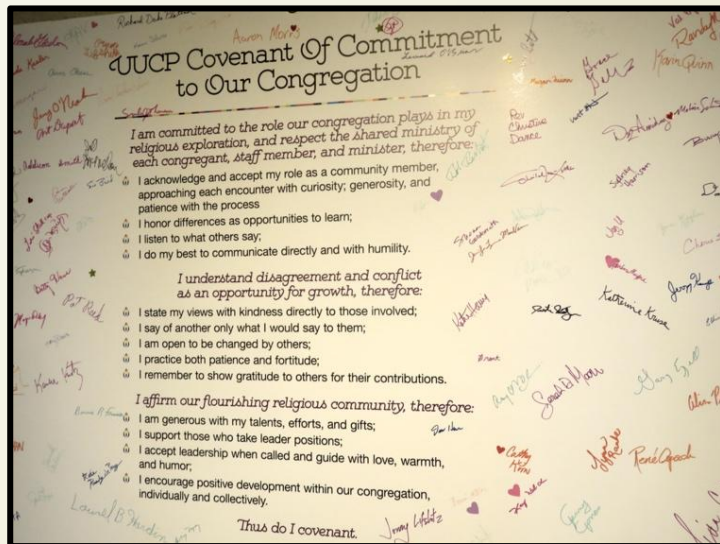
Photos continue on next page.



# Vacations: Time to Visit Another UU Congregation cont'd

Mary Mullen

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Left: At the beginning of the service this is the view up front. On the screen, Patty Stockdale and Mary Mullen are at the far left of the third row. Below the screen are the presenter, who gave a concert, and his accompanist. Notice the paintings on the front wall.  
Right: In the lobby, the congregation's Covenant is displayed. Members have signed it.  
Photo credit: Mary Mullen



The grounds are extensive. The sculpture circle also has a circle of benches. Behind the left-hand figure is a circle of chairs, and elsewhere there are picnic tables. It's easy to meet in small groups outside.  
Photo credit: Mary Mullen