

Prairie Fire

October
2022



The Raging Grannies performed at a recent service. They were led by Prairie member Barb Park (far right) and accompanied by Prairie member Ron Frye (seated), who was made an honorary Granny for the morning, complete with his own fancy hat.

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

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Editor's note

Please contact the editor at 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.

Calendar

Please see www.uuprairie.org for detailed descriptions & public event links (where applicable)

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Saturday 1

- 10a WOW (Women of Wonder)

Sunday 2

- 10a Service: "Animal Blessing" by Prairie (Intergenerational service)
- 12p Humanist Union

Thursday 6

- 1p Mission/Vision meeting (O)

Friday 7, 14, 21, 28 (every Friday)

- 4:30p Dungeons and Dragons (O)

Sunday 9

- 10a Service: "Flashbacks" by Gene Kain
- 11:30a Bylaws Discussion (MH)
- 11:30a Mission/Vision meeting (A)

* A=Annex
MH=Meeting Hall
O=Online

Wednesday 12

- 1p Mission/Vision meeting (MH)
- 7p Bylaws discussion (O)

Saturday 15

- 1030a Mission/Vision meeting (O)
- 1p Mission/Vision meeting (O)

Sunday 16

- 10a Service: "Widening Prairie's Circle of Concern" by Prairie

Wednesday 19

- 7p Mission/Vision meeting (O)

Saturday 22

- 10a Creativity and Connection (O)

Sunday 23

- 10a Service: "UU and Elections" by Mark Richards

Sunday 30

- 10a Service: "All Souls' Day" by Prairie

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.

*Rev. Matt will be away from October 20-23.

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



Words from the President

Kathy Converse, President

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The past month Prairie did well maintaining Covid guidelines for in-person meetings while slowly returning to former activities and starting the RE program. The water ceremony helped bring us back as one.

This month we will enjoy the dedication and fall festival. A big thank you to the individuals who worked hard to make this happen. We are dedicating a wonderful new space that we are already filling with thoughtful services, music, art, kindness and laughter.

During the past three months the Board has been connecting the work and ideas of the previous Board while gathering many new ideas and activities for the upcoming year. Board liaisons are working with committees on completion of written Policies and Procedures to guide their work and use for future committee recruitment. The addition of an ad hoc bylaws committee will result in Prairie bylaws being ready for a vote of acceptance at the November Parish meeting. As we start our second year with our minister Matt Aspin we are setting new goals and priorities to fulfill our Society's needs.



New Member of the Committee on Ministry

Rachel Long, Nominating Committee

At a brief Parish Meeting on September 18, the congregation unanimously elected Anne Pryor to join the Committee on Ministry (COM). She is taking over from Mary Frantz, who is stepping down. Anne is joining Barb Park and Katrina Thompson on the committee. The COM is still developing its policies and processes and is a big commitment for those who serve. Please join me in expressing our appreciation to all four of these people.

Minister's Musings

Rev. Matt Aspin



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You can choose courage or you can choose comfort, but you cannot have both. -Brené Brown

We are entering one of the most vibrant seasons of the year. The days are getting shorter, the air is a bit crisper, and nature is reminding us that there is much to do as we begin to prepare our harvests, our homes, and our hearts for the darker days of winter ahead.

This is also an exciting time at Prairie. Our Building Dedication and Fall Fair on Sept 25th coincides with Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of the Jewish New Year. As our friends from this tradition gather together to celebrate new beginnings, they transition quickly into a period of reflection in preparation for Yom Kippur-the Day of Atonement.

Once we have taken time to celebrate the hard work and dedication that led to the creation of our beautiful new home, our community will be entering a time of reflection as well. Your Board and I will be hosting a series of meetings in October to invite reflection upon what this community means to each of us, along with our shared hopes for the future. I'm excited to engage in these conversations because it is your hopes and dreams for the future of Prairie that act as the compass for my ministry.

To that end...why wait for a meeting? If there is something you would like to see more of in this community...let me know! Based on prior requests we'll soon be launching another Covenant group, a meditation group, and some individual classes on leadership skills and multicultural awareness.

But maybe there's something else you'd like to see? That's the beauty of a community like this...you get to help write the next chapters! Our is a tale that stretches back through history and continues to be written through the efforts of each character who decides to join our collective journey.

So, brave souls...from many different paths we have arrived here together, on this day.

The question then becomes...where are we headed from here?



Photo credit:
unsplash.com

Religious Exploration

Alice Mandt, Director of Religious Exploration

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To start off the month of October in Religious Exploration, all children will be welcomed into the meeting room to join the rest of the congregation for an intergenerational service that will honor the contributions that our four-legged friends have made to the world we live in. On Sunday October 2nd, the Prairie community will participate in an Animal Blessing service in which children will be invited to share what gifts their animal friends have brought into their lives.

Blessing - of the - ANIMALS



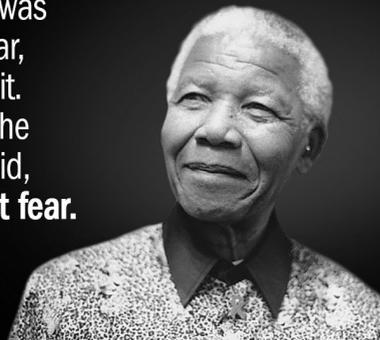
At many Unitarian Universalist congregations people come together to bless animals in an effort to show how we appreciate the animals who have touched us. These might be the pets in our families, animals we think are beautiful to look at or nice to pet on a farm, animals that give us wool for clothes, or even animals that give us their bodies for food. The blessing of animals gives us the opportunity to reflect upon how animals have enriched our lives and how, often, their companionship helps us be happy and healthy.

On Sunday October 2nd Prairie's children are invited to bring stuffed animals to either represent a specific animal in their lives or to represent their broader appreciation of animals. Each child will be welcomed to share with the congregation one thing that is special, valuable, or wonderful about the animal they choose to bring. They may pretend the animal they are holding is a real animal they would like to bless, such as a dog or cat that is at home, or they can think of something they appreciate about the kind of animal they are holding; for example, a tiger is beautiful and strong.

I learned that **courage** was not the absence of fear, but the **triumph** over it. The **brave** man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who **conquers that fear**.

– Nelson Mandela

AZ QUOTES



For the month of October our theme is Courage. This month the children will explore the many ways that courage can play a role in our lives. The workshops throughout the month of October will remind our children that courage is not just for their favorite superhero but comes from a place deep inside us and is an important part of being human. We will investigate how it takes courage to be ourselves, to ask

questions, and to affirm one's values and beliefs while trying to make changes in an unjust world.

There are times when we have to muster our personal courage and do something hard for us. It might be expressing a differing opinion from a group of people. It might be swallowing your pride and saying you are sorry. It might be jumping in the deep end of the pool or being the only one to raise your hand in class.

- October 2nd - Animal Blessing Intergenerational Service
- October 9th - Regular RE Workshop (Courage Session 1)
- October 16th - Regular RE Workshop (Courage Session 2)
- October 23rd - Regular RE Workshop (Courage Session 3)
- October 30th - Halloween Party!

Proposed Bylaw Changes

Rachel Long, Bylaws Committee

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Our temporary Bylaws Committee includes Alex Moore, Al Nettleton, Chris Porter, and me. We have finished our draft proposal for Bylaws changes, and the Board is reviewing our recommendations. The next step will be to bring the draft to the congregation for comment and additional tweaking if needed. Be aware that changes can't be made once the final proposal is published, in order for members to decide how to vote based on the wording they will actually be voting on. **Please consider attending one of these two meetings to discuss the proposal and suggest any modifications that you think are needed.**

- Sunday 10/9/22 after service, IN PERSON in the main meeting hall.
- Wednesday 10/12/22 at 7 pm ON ZOOM, link will be on the website.

Watch prairienews for a link to the draft proposed changes, which we will send as soon as we have Board approval. In brief, proposed changes are as follows:

1. Committee on Ministry (COM) – all members will be elected by the congregation, rather than two of three being appointed. COM members will have rotating 3 year terms, which start Dec. 1 st after election at the fall meeting. Limit of 2 consecutive full terms. The stipulation that the COM is only active when we have a minister has been removed.
2. Nominating Committee will again be responsible for recruiting committee chairs as well as elected leaders, as they did in the past, and will recommend these individuals to the Board for appointment.
3. Added clarification that members of the Committee on Ministry and Nominating Committee must be Prairie Members.
4. Sections 9 (currently on Nominations and Elections) and 10 (currently on Standing and Other Committees) are switched in order for clarity.
5. Finance Committee was added to the list of named standing committees details of its functioning are described elsewhere in the Bylaws. Bylaws state that standing committees are “not limited to” this list.
6. The Ministerial Search Committee will present its recommendations to the Membership rather than to the Board (this change was requested by our last Search Committee.)
7. Many minor changes - fixing punctuation and capitalization errors, numbering all sections, changing numbers to be spelled out or symbolic in keeping with accepted conventions (i.e., spelled if less than 10, otherwise symbolic.)

We hope to see some of you at the discussion sessions, and most of you at the Fall Parish Meeting on Sunday, November 20.



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