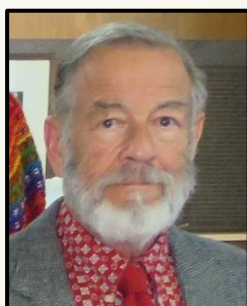


Prairie Fire

February
2023



Judy Skog
d. 12/6/2022



Ed Kolner
d. 12/17/2022



Rose Smith
d. 12/29/2022



Evelyn Kain
d. 12/30/2022



Phoenix Wardell
d. 12/30/2022

In Memoriam

Several Prairie members and friends passed in December. We remember them fondly. To read more, see articles on pages 7-9 and future editions of the *Prairie Fire*.

Photo credit: Photos of Judy, Rose, and Evelyn are from their obituaries. Photos of Ed and Phoenix by Mary Mullen.

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Published January 23, 2023

Corrected version with clarification of Judy Skog's memorial service location and correction of time (pages 7 and 8).



Calendar

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

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Friday 3, 10, 17, 24 (every Friday)

- 4:30p Dungeons and Dragons (online)
- 7:30p Meditation Group (hybrid)

Saturday 4

- 10a Women of Wonder (WOW)

Sunday 5

- 10a Service: "Lucy Stone" by Robin Proud
- 11:30a Soup Sunday

Sunday 12

- 10a Service: Valentine's Day, Love and Chocolate, by Renee Deschard

Wednesday 15

- 3p Spanish Speakers Potluck (Annex)

Thursday 16

- 7p Guys Group

Sunday 19

- 10a Service: "Listening to Marginalized Voices" by Interweave
- 11:30a Interweave Meeting

Saturday 25

- 10a Creativity and Connection (online)

Sunday 26

- 10a Service by Rev. Matt

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 Nancy Wunderlin's Office Hours:

Sun-Tue: working on site in the Annex
Wed-Fri: working remotely

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

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.



Photo credit: unsplash.com

Words from the President

Kathy Converse, President



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We started 2023 at Prairie with a positive spirit that indicates we are feeling at home in our new space and enjoy having fewer limitations posed by the Covid virus. Our new technology of Zoom has definitely opened our services and activities to others and increased our outreach. In the past month, attendance has increased, and I felt a distinct new energy during Prairie services. The importance of gathering to share food and beverages again after services is strongly evident.

The Board has also moved forward in several areas. Following adoption of the new Bylaws, the Board has been reviewing and rewriting the policies and procedures for this community. The Board members will continue to serve as liaisons to all committees. In response to advice given to the Board by the Committee on Ministry, we will post each Board meeting agenda a week before the meeting. The agenda will be posted along with Board and Parish meeting minutes in the Members section of the website. We are initiating some new methods for a more timely inclusion of Board and Parish meeting minutes on our website.

Minister's Musings

Rev. Matt Aspin, Minister



The Power That Holds Us Together

“Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values.” -an excerpt from the proposed Article II revisions presented to the UUA Board, January 20th, 2023

For the past three years, a small, diverse team of leaders from congregations, youth groups, covenanted communities, UU regional staff, and UUA staff has been following the charge presented by the UUA Board to complete the mandated periodic review of Article II of our Associations Bylaws (which currently includes our beloved Seven Principles and Six Sources).

A handful of us has been following this process closely, and I am happy to report that significant updates were made to the original draft that was shared earlier in the fall based on feedback gathered by thousands of engaged UUs around the country. I am inspired to even see specific suggestions that I made during one of the feedback sessions showing up in the current version, knowing that it was not my idea that led to the change but that my contribution must have aligned with feedback received from enough others that it became integrated into the final report to the UUA Board. Having reviewed this report in the Wisconsin UU ministers gathering yesterday and hearing from the members of the Commission's report to the UUA Board today, I am truly excited about the future vision that is beginning to emerge from our collective contributions.

My favorite story shared during the presentation of this proposal to the Board was about how the idea of “Values” emerged. One of the Commission members, Rev. Cheryl M. Walker, noted that as they made their way around the country and talked to more and more people, the same themes seemed to be repeated over and over again. When they asked the basic questions, “What do we UUs agree upon? What binds us together?”, they kept hearing the same things. Until suddenly one of the commission members said, “Wait! Those themes that keep emerging. Those must be our shared values!”

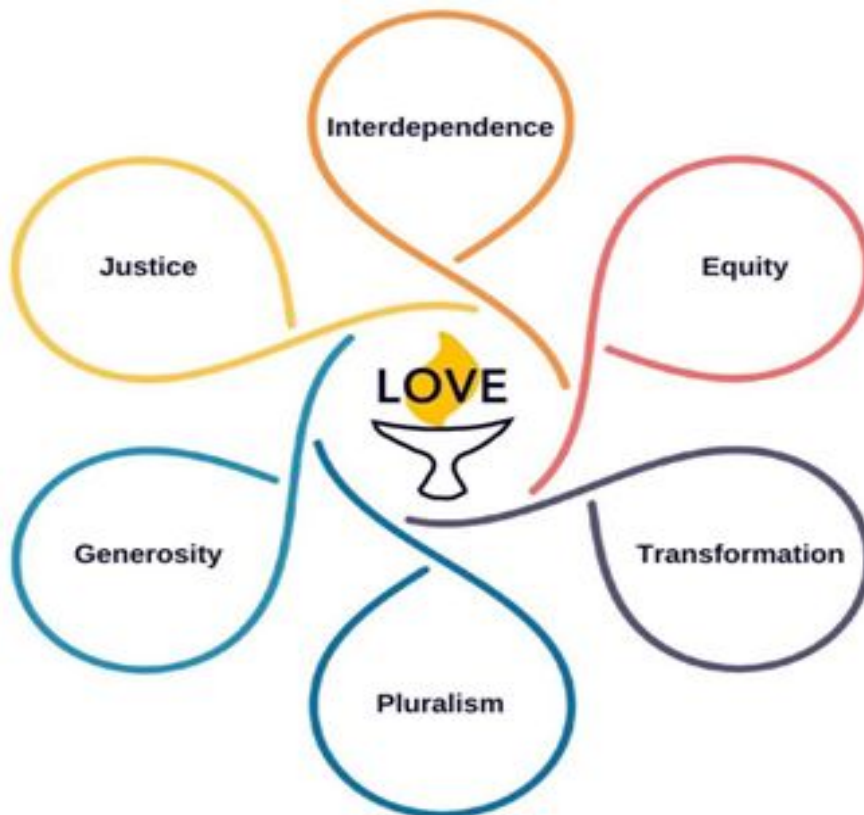
(cont. on next page)

Minister's Musings Cont'd

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To me, that is a beautiful story that highlights how a new idea can be birthed into existence from the collective conscience...

Click [here](#) to read a full copy of the report that was just presented to the UUA Board which includes the Article II revision proposal beginning on page 19. I invite you to read the proposal through first with an Appreciative lens. Take a look at each section and consider, "What do I like about this? What do I agree with?" Having gone through the document with this lens, you will have a general sense of how well aligned you feel with the document as a whole. You could then go back and consider what questions you have about any words, phrases, or sections that gave you pause during your first review.



As you review the Values, notice they all follow the same format. First the value, then a description of that value, and then the promises we make in covenant to support these expressed values. You will notice familiar language from the Principles and Sources. The idea is to help our values to become more actionable in community. Another way of saying this might be, "How do we actually bring our UU values to life in the world?"

The Values are not numbered or ranked. The Commission was very specific in their recommendation that these Values not be prioritized in any way, but rather that they are all vital components of a faith committed to Love.

If you are interested in contributing to the next phase of this process, sign up for the session

being advertised in PrairieNews called, "Influencing our UU Faith." We'll discuss current issues affecting the Unitarian Universalist Association, contribute to our community's review of the proposed Article II changes, forward amendments for consideration (if desired), and potentially share our votes in this historic motion at the UU General Assembly in June to determine if the Article II Commission's proposal should be granted a year of consideration ahead of a vote for approval, which will then provide another year for review, consideration, proposal of amendments, etc.

Don't worry. There will be many more chances to contribute to this conversation. Because, as the action portion found within the "transformation" value reminds us, "Openness to change is fundamental to our Unitarian and Universalist heritages, never complete, and never perfect."

Love is the power that holds us together. I know this sure seems to be true here at Prairie.

How timely that love is the theme we will be exploring together in February...

Religious Exploration

Alice Mandt, Director of Religious Exploration

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Hello Prairie Community!

I'm really excited for Religious Exploration in the month of February because this month's theme is LOVE. As I have started to prepare programming for our children for the month of February I have been able to reflect on how there are many paths of love. As a religious educator, I have been thinking about the great privilege I have of witnessing the love that is given and received by our children, families, volunteers and congregation as a whole. May the exchange of love continue to grow in our community and the world at large!

As always Prairie Religious Exploration wants YOUR contributions to create a comprehensive and all-inclusive church experience for our children. We are always looking for volunteers who are interested in not only enriching the lives of our young people but who are also interested in receiving the gifts of knowledge, love and understanding that our younger community members have to give! If you have ideas for activities that line up with the theme of love, especially if you'd like to lead an activity please let me know!

For the month of February our children ages 10+ will continue to meet in the youth room of our Annex building after the Story for All Ages on Sunday mornings. They will engage with questions central to an adolescents spiritual journey with their Religious Exploration teachers.

As for our children younger than 10, we will continue meeting together in the main building's basement and participating in activities, games, and crafts that revolve around a monthly theme. The theme for February is love.

See the schedule below for more details on what we will be focusing on each Sunday.

- 02/05 - For this lesson, we explore the ways that we must love ourselves in order to be able to love others.
- 02/12 - For this lesson, we explore the love we feel for family members and friends.
- 02/19 - In this lesson we explore the circle of love in the congregation and in their neighborhood. We give and receive.
- 02/26 - In this lesson we take a more playful approach and celebrate the world of children. Children will often tell their friends or grownups about stuff that they LOOOOVE! A butterfly collection, a special song or book, a game, a favorite food, etc. So, celebrate love and share the things they love together.



Adventure at The River Food Pantry

Pam Gates and Chris Porter, Social Action Committee

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Margit Moses, Katrina Thompson, Pam Gates, and Chris Porter (pictured below left to right) volunteered for sandwich making at The River Food Pantry on Saturday, Jan. 7. We got there at 8:30 a.m. Katrina and Pam filled several hundred lunch bags with prepackaged goodies, while Chris and Margit tried for several hundred ham & cheese and tuna salad sandwiches. Everything we made was taken immediately to Madison neighborhoods in a sort of traveling food pantry called the “Munch Truck”.

Our experience was a mixed success. We did more lifting, carrying, setup, and cleanup than we’d expected, and we didn’t make as many sandwiches as we’d hoped. But Chris and Pam have met with the director of operations and the volunteer coordinator, and we expect to have less of the heavy work next time. After all, our job description was “making sandwiches”!



You can be part of the next adventure on Saturday February 4! We’re putting together our next crew, so let us know ASAP if you’d like to give it a try. We’d like to bring six people next time, so we can finish the job in the time allotted: 8:30-10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4. If you’d like to join us in February or to volunteer for another first Saturday of the month, contact Pam at pml.gts@gmail.com. We welcome your help once, twice, or every month. It’s a worthwhile effort, and you’re working with Prairie folks: two good deals!

Shared Offering Finance and Social Action Committees

Each quarter Prairie shares half its Sunday offering with a local non-profit organization. In 2022, Prairie shared a total of \$4299.76 with the following organizations:

- Tenant Resource Center \$921.50
- Catalyst Project \$1161.37
- Wilma’s Fund \$1257.69
- Porchlight DIGS Project \$959.20



Photo credit: unsplash.com

Honoring our Losses

Mary Mullen, Archives Committee Chair

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When a member or friend of Prairie dies, we ordinarily provide a tribute to that person in the *Prairie Fire*, but so we lost so many in December that these tributes will be spread out over several issues.

Five beloved Prairie folks have died this past December: Judy Skog, Ed Kolner, Rose Smith, Evelyn Kain, and Phoenix Wardell. Both Evelyn and Phoenix were very active members until a few weeks before they died. In addition, in 2022, several others with Prairie connections have passed away and were noted in previous *Prairie Fires*: Bill Parmenter (PF April 2022) and Bob West and Donna Murdoch (PF November 2022). Our Prairie community was also affected by the death of Leslie Proud on November 8. She was the daughter of Robin and Dan Proud, and we had followed her struggle with cancer over three years through Robin and Dan.

For several weeks, obituaries and other information about these people has been on a table in the lobby at Prairie. It will be available near the welcome station for some time.

The memorial service for Judy Skog will be at the Friends meeting house at 1704 Roberts Court in Madison. Family will greet visitors beginning at 1:30 and a program will be held beginning at 2pm. Her obituary can be found at

<https://www.gundersonfh.com/obituaries/Judith-Judy-Skog?obId=26546007>

The service for Rose Smith will be at Prairie on the following Saturday, February 4, at 2:00 pm at Prairie. Her obituary is located at

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/madison/name/rose-smith-obituary?id=38657701>

If you need support as you work through your grieving process, please reach out to Reverend Matt or the Caring Committee.



Remembering Judy Skog

Mary Mullen, Archives Committee Chair

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Long-time Prairie members fondly remember Judy Skog, who died on December 6 after a lengthy illness. Although she had not actively participated in Prairie for some years, those of us who knew her remember her as a fierce supporter of many causes. Unlike many of us, she had no hesitation or compunction to pick up the phone and call political representatives of any level to lobby them. She was fearless.

She and her husband Ken joined Prairie on April 1, 1985. Judy was very actively involved in the running of Prairie from the late 1980s through 2011 as shown by pictures and references in the Prairie history volumes. She chaired the Social Action Committee for three years (1988-91) and served as treasurer for four years (1995-98 and 2000-2001). In addition, she helped choose our leaders by participating in the Committee on Committees (Nominating Committee) from 1992-93, and 1989-90. She also chaired the Housing and Property Committee from December 2005-2006. Judy wrote articles for the *Prairie Fire* and led Sunday services including a 4-week lay ministry in 1993 called "Unplug the Christmas Machine." In early 2006, she and minister Jody Whelden started a weekly meditation group, and at that same time she led a 10-week adult education for Prairie called "What Can the Natural Step Do For Your Church?" Later, when Prairie worked on being certified as a green congregation, Judy was the coordinator (and probably the instructor) for a course in planning a rain garden. This was sometime between 2008 and 2011.

Since the history books only list the formal leadership roles she took, there are probably many of her activities that aren't documented. She was a force of nature for the environment. Check the index of the history book for additional documentation of Judy's activism outside of Prairie.

The memorial service for Judy Skog will be on Saturday, January 28, at the Friends meeting house at 1704 Roberts Court in Madison. Family will greet visitors beginning at 1:30 and a program will be held beginning at 2pm. Judy's husband Ken suggests bringing refreshments for afterward and to take what's left home with you. She would not want anything to go to waste. Her obituary can be found at [here](#).



Far left: Judy and her 2 children, probably late 80s/early 90s, at the Prairie retreat talent show (photographer unknown).

Left middle: After a Sunday service about reducing CO₂. Judy is the woman with white hair just above the 3 of 350, 2/2/2012. Photo credit: Mary Mullen.

Right middle: Rosemary Dorney, Galen Smith, and Judy after loading the pickup with prairie grasses, 5/11/2009. Photo credit: Mary Mullen.

Far right: Judy and Ken on 6/18/22 participating in refreshments at Royce-Dallman Park on Lake Koshkonong after visiting the Milton House for a service auction event. Photo credit: Mary Mullen.

Remembering Rose Smith

Mary Mullen, Archives Committee Chair

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Our beloved Prairie member Rose Smith died on December 29. As soon as the news was out, Prairie people shared their fond memories of her. Some mention her as a greeter; the Prairie history book notes that she officially greeted people from the 2000s until 2015. She was also a lay minister in 2002-2003 on the subject of "Immigrant Stories." Check the end of this article for pages where she is mentioned or pictured in the Prairie history books. The photo on the right is from a group photo taken by Marty Drapkin at the Octogenarian Near - Thanksgiving Dinner held on 11/14/2015. For more information of Rose's contributions to Prairie, consult the Prairie history books where she is mentioned or pictured on multiple pages. There's much more to know about her.



A memorial service for Rose Smith will be at Prairie on Saturday, February 4, at 2:00 pm at Prairie. Her obituary is located [here](#).

If you didn't know Rose, after you read these testimonials, you will wish you had:

- From Molly Plunkett: "I loved and miss Rose. She was the perfect Prairie "Greeter" and lover and reader and sharer of books. I will be out state for a Memorial in February so will share my recent last exchange with Rose. I went to visit her at Agrace a week ago and played my harp (badly buzzing strings and all). She did not respond when I came to her bed, but as I played at the foot of her bed, I saw that her eyes were open, and then saw that she was smiling and then that she was softly clapping her hands. We laughed out loud together."
- From Rachel Long: "I have so appreciated and enjoyed Rose over the years. She had such a warm and welcoming way with people. I always felt better after being greeted by her on the way into Prairie. Our son Reuben interviewed her as part of a school project, and shared what he learned about her fascinating life with us. Thank you Nevenah for the wonderful care you gave her and your father. They are both dearly missed."
- From Mary Frantz: "I am saddened at the death of Rose--she was such an important part of our welcome to Prairie (from First) many years ago, and seeing her the entry to the church was so welcoming. She will never be replaced. I have appreciated [Rose's daughter Nevenah's] continuing loving care for Rose, and I am glad [she is] still a part of our church community."
- From Erin Bosch: "I have such a warm memory of Rose from about 20 years ago. In a Prairie book club meeting, we were discussing the book *The Secret Life of Bees*. I mentioned that I really loved the character of August and wished I could be enfolded in her big bosomy hug. Rose replied that she had a big bosom and she would be glad to give me a hug anytime. I was very touched by that. Another nice memory is when I enticed Rose and Galen to do the song 'I Remember It Well' from the movie *Gigi* for one of my Ages and Stages services at Prairie. Rose was enthusiastic but we had to convince Galen by telling him it was okay to sort of 'talk' his lines. They did a reprise of that song at least one other time for a talent show at a Prairie retreat. Rose really liked doing it. They were just as cute as Maurice Chevalier and Hermione Gingold."
- From Barbara Chatterton: "We went on Sunday afternoon to Agrace and she smiled at me looked at me for a good little amount of time. As Ron played Rudolph, White Christmas, and 1 more, she was listening and smiling but then faded and we left happy to have connected with her. She was a joy to be around. I delightfully shared some Alaskan salmon dinners with the whole family a couple of times. It was always a joy to see her smiling face at Prairie. Warmest wishes to Nevenah and her brothers. She is joining Galen now."
- From Barbara Bailly: "Rose was always so kind to me. I visited when she was at Capitol Lakes Convalescent Center, a few years ago. We commiserated over Mike Briggs leaving us so suddenly before his birthday party. Rose said, 'How inconsiderate of him to die the day before his birthday party.' She had a good sense of humor!"