

PRAIRIE FIRE

Newsletter of the Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society

Sunday Services in the Portal-Foster Center

1806 West Lawn Ave., Madison, WI

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

SUN FEB 22 10 AM FAMILY SERVICE led by Joe Hoffman. 257-9595.

SAT FEB 28 7:30 PM PLAYREADING GROUP will meet at the home of Lilo Koehl, 3907 Fern Court. For more information about the play to be read, call Lilo at 233-7383.

SUN FEB 29 10 AM "FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT CHANGES THE FACE OF ARCHITECTURE" led by Joe Hoffman. This will be Joe's last Sunday as layminister. 257-9595

SUN MAR 7 10 AM "EVERYTHING GOES IN A CIRCULAR MOTION" Much of what we enjoy is based on the rhythm of things that recur: heartbeat, song rhythms, poetry rhythms, dance and the celebration of the seasons. Starting with the beat of the mother's heart heard from within the womb, human beings seem to have a need for listening to and moving with rhythms as a way of bringing them back to peace with themselves from too much stress in the social world. When people develop rhythmic things they like to do together a new dimension is added, a sense of release in participating in some event which is connected to the way that we understand the world. This is the origin of myth and ritual, which are not static-historical forms, but things we make up every day. This program will be led by our new layminister, Annis Pratt.

TUES MAR 9 7:30 PM PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING at 2218 West Lawn, the home of Pat Johnson. Newcomers are always welcome. 256-5343

Osteraas Case Removed to State Court

U. S. District Judge James Doyle ruled last week that the case, involving the burial site of Jana Osteraas, be returned to Iowa County for a hearing before the county court there. In a hearing on February 11th the Osteraases sought relief from the Federal District Court in the form of a preliminary injunction restraining the Iowa County officials from actively enforcing a zoning regulation. Barbara Willard and Chuck Dykman, attorneys of record, argued that the regulation was an infringement of certain federally guaranteed constitutional rights including religious freedom, due process of law, and right of privacy, [see story in February 5th edition of the Prairie Fire]. The zoning regulation in dispute is an ordinance which forbids burials on land zoned agricultural.

Judge Doyle's decision turned on the issue of standing. The Osteraases were without standing in court because the state court had not yet applied or con-

strued the zoning regulation in question. Though Judge Doyle, in his decision, recognized certain merits of the case he determined that judicial procedure required that the state court be allowed to act in the case first. He indicated the need for further elaboration and definition of the word "cemetary" in the enforcement of the ordinance in order for a determination to be made in this case. The case will be heard in the Iowa County Court this week.

Comings and Goings

George and Ruth Calden will be traveling to Israel for two weeks. They will be returning March 7th....Avis and Roland Parrish have returned from a relaxing vacation in the south.

Bicentennial Corner

In an article entitled "Forgotten Women of the Revolution," a number of women's contributions are uncovered. These women are not the central characters of history we often read about, the "Great Men" of history. They are the unseen contemporaries of the "Founding Fathers."

Sybil Ludington rode the 30 mile route throughout the Connecticut countryside to warn the neighboring civilians that the British were burning the nearby towns.

Mary Ludwig worked beside her husband in peace and in war. She helped at first to bring water to thirsty soldiers. Then, when her husband died on the battlefield, she took his place in the fighting.

Margaret Cochrane married John Corbin and followed him to war. When he fell in the fighting she took his place and was nearly mortally wounded herself. Later, in 1779 Congress granted her half pay for life.

Deborah Sampson became a soldier from the outset. Dressed as a male she enlisted as "Robert Shurtleff" in the 4th Massachusetts Regiment in 1782. Though wounded many times she managed always to treat herself. Finally, she fell victim to camp fever and her gender was discovered by a doctor--she was honorably discharged.

Others fought as well--with words and thought. --Mercy Warren was "allowed" an education and used it to write for the Boston newspapers, write patriotic plays, and participate in political strategy meetings. Her opinions were respected and her judgement sought on political issues.

Perhaps more widely known is the role of Abigail Adams. Abigail not only ran her family's affairs but ran her husband's law firm during his absence. She was a capable and forceful influence in her husband's (and his compatriots') affairs of state. She clearly and consistently aligned herself on the side of the revolutionaries and spoke eloquently for her cause. What is often forgotten is the position taken by Abigail Adams on the rights of women in relation to the revolution. Writing to her husband she states:

"While you are proclaiming peace and good will to men, emancipating all nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over wives. But you must remember, that arbitrary power is like most other things which are very hard, very liable to be broken; and, notwithstanding all your wise laws and maxims, we have it in our power, not only to free ourselves but to subdue our masters, and, without violence, throw both your natural and legal authority at our feet....In the new code of laws which I suppose will be necessary for you to make, I desire that you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."

The message was as clear then as it is today and the quality and diversity of women's contributions are becoming recognized factors in the events of history and current events.

--Vivian Meyer