

PRAIRIE FIRE

Newsletter of the Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society

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CALENDAR

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: The Board, the Program Committee, and the Lay Minister have resolved to conduct Sunday programs on schedule. Programs will begin promptly at 10:00 A.M. and end promptly at 11:15 (with informal discussion following at coffee).

SUNDAY 26 Dec.	10 AM	VARIETIES OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC: FROM POPE GREGORY TO ODETTA. Led by George Calden
WEDNESDAY 29 Dec.	8 PM	ANNUAL PRAIRIE CHRISTMAS PARTY at the Calden's, 4606 Waukesha (off Segoe Rd.). Please bring one of the following to pass: either an hor d'oeuvre (dip, cheese, etc.) or Christmas goodies (cookies, bread, or cake). The Caldens will provide coffee and a non-alcoholic punch. Any revelers desiring stronger spirits (wine, whiskey, whatever) should bring their own.
FRIDAY 31 Dec.	8:30 PM	NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY and CHOIR PRACTICE at the home of the "Public Exploder," Joe Laurence, Route 7, Verona (845-7817). We will shoot off bottle rockets to welcome the New Year. Bring your own drinks and refreshments.
SUNDAY 2 Jan.	10 AM	CONTRAVERSIAL LIFE STYLES, led by David Lisman
SUNDAY 2 Jan.	10 PM	DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT <u>PRAIRIE FIRE</u> .
TUESDAY 4 Jan.	7:30 PM	PROGRAM COMMITTEE meets at the home of John Lewis, 2145 Commonwealth Avenue (238-8666).
THURSDAY 6 Jan.	8 PM	TWELTH NIGHT PARTY at Fran Remeika's Farm. Beer and refreshments will be served. Bring your old Christmas tree (or somebody else's, or anything flamable) for an Epithany Bonfire and bring the words to "Brightest and Best," and "We Three Kings of Orient Are." Also bring food and drinks and a copy of <u>Twelfth Night</u> , if you have one.
SUNDAY 9 Jan.	10 AM	RELIGION AND SOCIAL CLASSES: THE RELEVANCE OF KARL MARX, led by Warren Hagstrom.
MONDAY 10 Jan.	7:30 PM	BOARD MEETING, at Portal Foster. Everyone welcome!

SUNDAY 10 AM FOUR HINDU HOLY MEN. A film produced by Joseph Elder and the U.W. South Asian Studies Department, and a discussion of religious rejections of the world and their direction. Led by Warren Hagstrom.

SUNDAY 10 AM WHAT DOES RELIGION MEAN TO YOU? DO YOU DEFINE YOURSELF AS RELIGIOUS? Discussion coordinated by Warren Hagstrom. Everyone will have a chance to talk, so come prepared to discuss your ideas of what "religion" means and how "religious" or "non-religious" you would characterize yourself.

SUNDAY 10 AM RELIGION AND THE DECLINE OF MAGIC: THE RELEVANCE OF MAX WEBER, led by Warren Hagstrom.

SUNDAY 10 AM PROGRAM TO BE LED BY JANE FARWELL from Folklore Village. Games etc. starting at 10 AM. Potluck dinner at noon. Games etc. following after dinner into the afternoon.

SUNDAY 10 AM NATURE AND THE AMERICANS--Lois Hagstrom's Bicentennial Slide Show.

WARREN HAGSTROM has a paper on "The Decline of the Saturnalia, from Rome to Contemporary Christmas Parties." He's willing to duplicate copies for interested Prairie people. Call him at 238-4970.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Having hit that "one day at a time" part of the year, spare, please, a second to hear of the church school's immediate plans.

December 26th (how ridiculous, Christmas on Saturday!): Arnie Clay and myself will be with all the kids. Hopefully they will bring their Christmas games, books, etc. and we'll have an unwinding time together. George Calden invites children upstairs to join him if they wish to hear and talk about the less familiar Christmas music.

Semester break (January 2,9, and 16) electives will go like this: Experimental and traditional cooking with Dave Namura and Veda Melvin in the kitchen; batik and tie-dye with Margaret Cleary; and music and dance with Rosemarie Lester and Mike Briggs. The kids may change from Sunday to Sunday, but stick, please, with the subject for that week. Nursery care available.

Regular curriculum for Spring semester is planned and resumes on January 23rd. All details in the next issue of Prairie Fire.

Until then, with joy and peaceTheron Caldwell, R.E. Director.

DANE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES is looking for volunteers to act as friendly visitors, child care workers, and drivers. You may choose your own hours (at least two per week), your own assignments, and transportation costs will be reimbursed. If interested, please contact Carol Henry at 249-5351, ext 267.

U.U. SINGLES-- treat yourself to a late Christmas present. Come to a SPECIAL singles retreat on January 14, 15, and 16th at Haimo Woods, near Kenosha. Fee for all three days: Adults--\$20; ages 10-16--\$12; ages under 10--free (not including meals). Bring food to share for the three days, as we will do our own cooking. Motel style accomodations, indoor pool, Jacuzzi whirlpool, cross country skiing, sharing, workshops, fun. Call John Zahn at 274-0183 (evenings) or 257-2211 (days). Registration deadline is January 7th.

A NOTE FROM LAY-MINISTER WARREN HAGSTROM CONCERNING JANUARY PROGRAMS:

Our January 9th service will take off from Karl Marx. On the one hand, he argued, "Religious suffering is at the same time an expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." On the other hand, he argued, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force." I have been trying, without much success, to view Unitarianism, in history and the present, from this perspective. E.g., we are the best educated U.S. denomination (over 75% of U-U adults have college degrees, over half have graduate or professional degrees) and one of the wealthiest. Do our beliefs reflect our privileged position? Have they? If so, how? Come prepared to disagree.

Our January 16th service will start with a film produced recently by my colleague Joseph Elder and his associates in the U.W. South Asian Studies Department, "Four Hindu Holy Men." It is a beautiful film, and it leads naturally into the sociology of religion of Max Weber, also to be discussed on January 30th. The film is about 45 minutes long and will leave time for discussion.

NEWS FROM THE DECEMBER 13th BOARD MEETING: The purchase of additional chairs is contemplated and Dean Schroeder is in charge procuring information on models and prices. . . . The need for a good record player was discussed (or, two record players--Theron felt that a better one than we now have is needed in R.E.). If anyone has one to donate, the Society would be very appreciative. . . . Theron Caldwell will be taking a year's leave of absence as Director of R.E. at the end of this school year. A new director is being sought. . . . Sydney Mannering has agreed to take on the chairmanship of the Membership Committee. Please note this change in your directory. . . . Pat Watkins has agreed to take on the interim editorship of the newsletter until Feb.1st., by which time we will need someone who is willing to carry on for the rest of the year. We invite volunteers for the editorship, but will pay for the typing involved. It is highly desirable that one person do both. Please contact Pat Cautley (238-5373) if interested.

The faculty of the Univ. of Wisconsin School of Nursing is looking for volunteer families who would like a student nurse to visit with them during the spring semester. See church bulletin board for more information or contact Marsha Barney at 262-6929.

WISCONSIN CHILDREN'S THEATER will present The Prince and the Pauper on December 26th -- 30th. Directed by Rebecca Jallings Sandler, Prairie people in the cast include Jeff and John Laurence, Geoffrey Sandler, and Jonathan Jallings. Tickets, which are \$1.00 for children and senior citizens, and \$1.50 for others, are available at the Oakwood Village Theater or by calling 271-4040.

A liberal religious group has existed in Madison since about 1879, but in Sauk City, the Free Congregation Church has been going strong since 1852. Last Sunday, Orrie and Elinor Loucks attended their annual Christmas program. They were invited by Carla and Harold Kruse of Loganville, who were guest speakers at Prairie once when they showed slides of their prize-winning, organically-grown farm operation.

The church in Sauk City has long been a hub of community activities. The present building, erected in 1884, has been used for graduation ceremonies, 4th of July celebrations, and town dances, as well as regular Sunday services until the early 1900's. The building is large and attractive with simple stained glass windows central on all four sides. There are several finished rooms in the basement, including one that was originally a German tap-room.

The group, which has been a Unitarian Fellowship since 1955, is interested in getting to know Prairie and hopes to arrange for us to spend a Sunday with them in the spring.

from Elinor Loucks.

NEWS ABOUT PRAIRIE PEOPLE: Since the holiday season is upon us, a lot of Prairie people seem to be traveling or entertaining guests. SARAH KOEHL left for the southwest, where LILLO will be meeting her in San Antonio, and the two of them will spend a month traveling in Mexico and Texas. . . . The WARREN HAGSTROM family will be spending the holidays in the British Virgin Islands. . . . MARTHA WILLARD has returned from several cruises with the Merchant Marines (one down the coast of South America, the second to several ports in northern Europe), and will spend the holidays with the family before returning to King's Point, N.Y. . . . BETH PERRY will be off to Scranton to join Richard on or about the 10th of January. . . . ROLAND and AVIS PARRISH have left on a freighter trip for South America. . . . The NETTLETONS have taken off for South Dakota, and the PRATTS for Michigan. . . . The GALEN SMITHS expect their sons Peter from the Yukon, and Damon from Michigan. The CARSONS are off to Traverse City, where they will meet Laurel. . . . DORIS GAINES was one of the senior citizens chosen to have lunch with Mrs Lucy at the Governor's Mansion on Dec. 20th. . . . and we are happy to report that DOROTHY OSTERAAS is home from her stay in the hospital.

THE PRAIRIE SITE

Norma Briggs of the Long Range Planning Committee reports that Prairie members have the opportunity to invest up to \$ 3000 in the Prairie Site. The Prairie Site is a 9.9 acre parcel of agricultural land on the southwest corner of Raymond and Gammon Roads, in the town of Verona.

The land is presently held in trust by sixteen Prairie and First Society individuals against the hoped-for time when Prairie Society or another liberal religious group might use it as the building site for a church. Now a total of five owners, three of them Prairie Society members wish to sell some of their shares.

If you are interested in sharing in this form of philanthropic investment (with the opportunity to withdraw your money at some future date, should you really need it), write or call the following people for fuller information on background, terms, expectations, and ways of joining the group:

- Roland Parrish--302 Glenway (238-1725) after 10th of January)
- Charlie Davidson --2210 Waunoma Way (222-4280) after 10th of January

NOSTALGIA

BY Jane Cloak (October '76)

A looking in dry leaves and
 earthy places, tracing here
 and there roots of a tree.
 Damp earth smells of mold and
 leaf-acid.
 Tracing back inside these houses
 as they were. The elms
 Tardy bell ringing in ears pump
 roaring, running to school.
 Stand up, brush the leaf mold
 from knees and palms
 Continue the long flight
 from death.

Omission from calendar: Saturday, 8 January, 7:30 PM. The Prairie Playreaders will meet at the home of Pat Watkins, 2419 Norwood Place (233-5795). There will be a pot-luck dinner before reading Butley, by Simon Gray--a recent drama about the bitter and futile life of a homosexual English professor and the disintegrating affair with a former pupil. If you can bring sympathy and understanding to the reading and would like to participate, call Pat at 233-5795 or 263-3806. Cast requires 4 men, 3 women, and a narrator.

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