IDEALISTS CONFRONT AUTHORITY. Significant actions of courageous people who moved the systems in which they lived. Evil triumphs when good men and women stand idle. We shall look at the lives of some who acted. Ho Chi Minh Confronts Woodrow Wilson. David Carson is lay minister.


Pot Luck immediately following service at Portal Foster.

Foxtrot Follies. Dance at the First Unitarian Society to the music of the Original Hyperion Oriental Foxtrot Orchestra, Carlos Moser, band leader. Dance is from nine to midnight. Price, $3.50 per person. Tickets can be bought at the First Society, or call Linné Cain, 233-7949 and 263-5777, or Julie and Dick Bonser, 233-6481.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY: LISTENING TO OUR INNER VOICES. David Lisman, lay minister.


Board Meeting. Place to be announced.

Upham Woods weekend begins.

Parish Meeting at Portal Foster.

Last Minute Item: Allen Barkoff, 255-2819, would like to rent one or two rooms within the Prairie area, i.e. within walking distance of Portal Foster.
New Times, New Customs
An Announcement from the Program Committee

Awake! Awake! Awake! An important issue involving Prairie has been brewing all summer. No attempt will be made to water down the impact this issue has on the lives of our Prairie family, nor will the Program Committee pass the cup to another Prairie committee. We take full credit or blame for this decision. It happened thusly. The Program Committee expressed its hope that our Sunday services might start on time, 10:00 a.m., and finish at the announced closing time of 11:15 a.m. Thus we earned the role of facilitator in this ambitious plan. Well, the teachers perked up when they learned of our hopes for a timely opening and closing and boldly asserted that they would not be responsible for the children after the hour of 11:15 a.m. This knowledge became the grounds for our decision to serve coffee only at the conclusion of each Sunday service. We, the Program Committee, feel that the upcoming programs by our new lay ministers, the family services, and other specials will serve as adequate stimulants each Sunday morning to keep you alert.

Program Committee
Barbara Carson, Chairman

Lest Barbara be deluged with complaints, let us name the other members of the Program Committee responsible for this nefarious and no doubt inevitable decision: Dorothy Osteraas, David Lisman, Arthur Lloyd, David Carson, Theron Caldwell, Rose Smith, Galen Smith, George Calden, Ruth Calden, Avis Parrish, Veda Nomura.

And at the same time, the members of the Religious Education Committee who must be devoutly endorsing this change: Shirley Lake, Joan Hall, Galen Smith, Pete Huth, Bob Michler, and Kristen Slabaugh. Chairman, Veda Nomura.

Note also, that the Program Committee is not getting rid of coffee altogether, and is going to give us a fanfare to get us going. A sturdy Bach fugue might go a long way towards replacing a cup of coffee.

On Prairie's Playreaders

This is the seventh season of the Playreaders and it seems apropos to give a little background of the group. We first got together during Dave Meyer's minister in the fall of 1971. Dave and his wife, Pat, both great readers with strong foundations in the arts-history-poetry-drama, had been mumbling for some time about forming a drama group.

It was determined then, as now, to meet monthly at one another's houses, with only casual emphasis on refreshments: the play WOULD be the thing. Among early playreaders were Dave and Pat, Al and Aileen Nettleton, Bob and Lilo Koehl, Frank and Betty French, Rosemary Dorney, Rebecca French, Viv Meyer, Roland and Avis Parrish, Mona and Jack Birong, Jim and Naida Finane, Bill and Theron Caldwell, Bill Andrews, Jean Gordon, and Pat and Ev Werner.

Later came Pat Watkins, the Pluims, Elinor Loucks, Charles Harris, the Pratts, the Clearys, Dottie Osteraas, Rachel Siegfried, Mike Lyman, Bob Park and Debbie Doob, Sue Cohn, Beth and Richard Perry, and the older children of some of us.
When I said I wanted to put a history of Prairie playreading in the newsletter, Laura Smail commented that she would like to see announced in advance the play that is to be read. I explained how time-consuming choosing a play can be and that such announcements aren't always possible, suggesting that anyone interested call the host or hostess during the preceding week and ask, since plays have to be reserved in advance.

We've almost never repeated a play. I don't believe there's a one of us who has never missed a playreading. Sometimes we try to continue meeting during the summer; sometimes this is hopeless. We haven't officially kept track of what's been read, over the years, but when we all get to talking together we have a pretty good idea.

In direct response to the city's playreading groups, of which we are one of the most established and demanding, Madison Public Library has increased its play-reading collection. These generally include six identical copies of a play, and often there are extra similar editions in the library's general collection (we "regulars" always try to snatch those up, too; it's awkward sharing a book). When MPL hasn't got the play we want, they make every effort to locate it—from inter-library loan service, the Department of Public Instruction, the University, etc. (Reading unmatched copies can be pretty hairy. Our most notorious disaster along those lines was "Hamlet." Who would ever have dreamed there could be that many different versions?)

Our expertise, such as it is, hasn't been much used by the fellowship, although some of us could cite early Sunday morning frantic phone conversations whose basic burden was the plea: "You're one of the playreaders, aren't you? Well, I'm doing the service this morning, and I was just wondering if you'd read this poem for me..." ) Dave Meyer, Bob Koehl, and Roland Parrish once produced a full-fledged play (whose title eludes me; could it have been "Three Blind Men") which they performed before the entire parish. It was a most finished production, complete with costumes and staging (thanks, I am told, to the able co-direction of Eleanor Cautley and Dave Meyer).

En masse, Prairie's playreaders have attended performances by Madison Civic Rep, the Wisconsin Players, and Wilson Street East. Also, we've made two or three sojourns to Milwaukee for dinner and drama at the Performing Arts Theater. So far we've only talked about going up to the Guthrie in Minneapolis/St. Paul. If we could get enough people to rent a bus, it might be financially feasible, but as individuals the cost would be steep.

One pleasant annual tradition occurs when the Parrishes extend the hospitality of their cabin near Blue Mound to us. We can go for just the evening, or over night, with them supplying a big breakfast. A couple of years ago, young Robin, son of Debbie and Bob, was born only a few hours after his parents left the Parrish cabin. (Avis still wonders whether their bumpy driveway did the trick...)

With a changing group, our emphasis has varied, both as to type of play read and the stress we give to the playreading occasion as social or literary. Some years we are quite involved in the play's meaning, the author's goals, the play as representative of a particular culture. Other years we read, munch, and gab and get to know one another. As people come and go, we are always in need of new voices and fresh outlooks. And, too, with a greater supply of readers to draw on, we are less limited in our choice of plays. Invariably a play flows more smoothly when each reader carries only one part.

My apologies to anyone I omitted from among the playreaders, and for any inaccuracies in my memory. Avis and I, no one ever having taken notes, did our best.

See the Calendar for location of this month's playreading.

Rosemary Dorney