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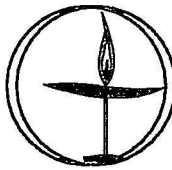
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Prairie Fire



Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
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Vol. 31, No. 19, 10-26-93

The deadline for the next issue of Prairie Fire will be Sunday, November 7. Submit items for November 11-25, 1993.

CALENDAR

Thursday, October 28

6:00 PM

PRAIRIE MEN'S GROUP MEETS at the Meetinghouse. All men are invited to attend.

Sunday, October 31

10:00 AM

"THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE: UN SUNDAY," led by Pat Cautley. We will also have the opportunity to hear from Martina, a Quechua Indian from Ecuador.

R.E.-Fall Frolic. This will be a special event to celebrate the season. It will be held during regular RE time but will replace regular RE sessions for the day.

Sunday November 7

9:00 AM

Choir Rehearsal.

10:00 AM

"UNPLUG THE CHRISTMAS MACHINE: Holiday Inventory, or Who Does What?" Presented by Judy Skog.

11:30 AM

POTLUCK LUNCH. Please bring a dish to share!

1:00 PM

FALL PARISH MEETING. Child care provided.

Monday, November 8

6:00 PM

SPANISH SPEAKERS' POTLUCK meets at the home of Amy Schulz, 2304 S. Syene Road, in Fitchburg. All levels of skill are represented and new people are always welcome. For further information, call Amy at 273-2639, Orton at 273-4041 or Rosemary at 238-4382. ¡Hasta la Próxima Reunion!

Tuesday, November 9

7:30 PM

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETS at the Nettletons, 645 Sheldon Street.

Sunday November 14

9:00 AM

Choir Rehearsal.

10:00 AM

"UNPLUG THE CHRISTMAS MACHINE: What's Really Important?" Presented by Judy Skog.

Friday, November 19

6:00 PM

THE FISH DINNER CIRCLE MEETS at the Avenue Bar, 1128 E. Washington Avenue. Everyone is welcome, but MUST phone Pat Watkins at 262-7960 for reservations by Wednesday, November 17 at 4:30 PM.

Sunday November 21

9:00 AM

Choir Rehearsal.

10:00 AM

"UNPLUG THE CHRISTMAS MACHINE: My Dream Holiday." Presented by Judy Skog.

Sunday November 28

9:00 AM

Choir Rehearsal.

10:00 AM

"THANKSGIVING INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE" led by Ann Pryor.

11:00 AM

POTLUCK LUNCH. Please bring a dish to share!

Sunday December 5

10:00 AM

"UNPLUG THE CHRISTMAS MACHINE: Plans For Change." Presented by Judy Skog.

Today's Quote

"A cynic is not merely one who reads bitter lessons from the past, he is one who is prematurely disappointed in the future."

-SIDNEY J. HARRIS

NEWS & VIEWS

The End of Myths (for now...)

I'd like to thank everyone who contributed to my lay ministry on mythology, especially Allen & Aileen Nettleton, Marian Thompson, Fran Zell, Rosemary Dorney, Susan Hagstrom, Warren Hagstrom, Doleta Chapru, Rachel Siegfried, Pat Watkins, Maureen Gerarden, Elizabeth Alexander, Erin Pryor Ackerman, Mike Briggs, and the double-sided copy machine at Kinko's! I'd also like to thank everyone who did the readings during the first four services—they helped make some myths "come alive."

...As the prairie stretches out until it becomes one with the sky, let us reach out to touch and be one with the natural world and with one another. PRAIRIE'S BOND OF UNION

The Oldest and Largest Lay-Led Society in the UUA

Finally, I'd like to say our last two services went really well. On 10/17, we presented snippets from "Back to Methuselah," "Antigone" (J. Anouilh), and "The Apollo of Bellac" (J. Giraudoux), with "greek chorus" of "The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe" (J. Wagner). The Playreaders did a great job and the audience enjoyed it a lot.

On 10/24, my series ended with a discussion of myths in modern life. We collected a list of "modern myths" suggested by people in the congregation. They're listed below:

- You can't be too rich, too thin, or too beautiful.
- The President is a hero.
- Technology solves all problems.
- America is the best.
- New is better.
- The boss knows best.
- The private sector is always better.
- The only family is the nuclear family.
- Money/Stuff equals happiness.
- Religion has value.
- The USA is the world's policeman.
- A PhD = expertise = money.
- Money = Success.
- The Little Engine that Could.
- Welfare recipients are lazy.
- Experts know best.
- Psychoanalysis works.
- Sports matters.
- Modern Art has meaning.
- Technology creates more time.
- Soldiers die for their country.
- Humanness is unprofessional.
- Naps are bad and work is good.
- Life is mythical.
- Ecology will save us.
- Buying things on sale saves money.

I did do a bibliography, finally. If you are interested in a copy, please call me. I'm going to take a break from mythology for a while. In the spring I'll lead a UU series on mythology (a five evening discussion group). If you'd be interested in discussing myths further and would want to take part in this group, please let me know by January 15th.

-Anne Urbanski

Unplug The Christmas Machine

The Christmas Pledge

Believing in the true spirit of Christmas, I
commit myself to:

Remember those people who truly need my
gifts,

Express my love in more direct ways than gifts,
Examine my holiday activities in the light of
my deepest values,

Be a peacemaker within my circle of family
and friends,

Rededicate myself to my spiritual growth.

Do you get stressed out every year at Christmas? Are you dissatisfied with the quantity or quality of your holiday preparations? Do you, like me, hate Christmas and wonder what's wrong with you? Well there's hope. My 4 week lay ministry will give you the chance to consciously examine your holidays, to be intentional about what you do or don't do, and to have choices. In preparing for these services, I became aware of things about Christmas that I enjoyed, things I didn't like and could change, and things I didn't like and no control over. I also realized that it's okay to hate Christmas.

Please understand that I use the word "Christmas" deliberately. I use it as the symbol for what happens during the holiday season and I intend it to evoke negative as well as positive images. Whether you are single or in a committed relationship, with or without family, Christian, Pagan, Jew, or agnostic, "Christmas" has an impact on your life. Come explore what it means for you.

Sunday, November 7, we will take a Christmas Inventory about holiday preparations, what we do with family and friends, and what our holiday traditions are. On November 14, we will visualize our preparations. Then we will center our discussion on what's important to us and rank 10 Christmas Values. We will also discuss holiday spirit (or spirituality). On November 21, we will do a Christmas Fantasy. We will visualize a personal and deeply satisfying holiday celebration, parts of which we may choose to share with each other. Finally, on December 5, we will put it all together to make a Christmas plan, with one or two things you can change this year to get the Christmas you really want. Each service builds on the previous services, so to get the greatest benefit, you may want to attend them all. If you miss a week you may want to come early to the next service to catch up on what you missed.

The materials for these services come from the book Unplug the Christmas Machine, by Robinson and Staeheli. The book goes into much more detail and is a must if you want to go further in your search for a personally fulfilling holiday celebrations. It will probably be available during the holidays from Pooh Corner, Canterbury, Borders, and University Book Store.

Prairie Patter

When I started preparing for the talk I gave last Sunday to the Peoria Universalist Unitarian Society about Lay Led Societies, I asked several Prairie Members what songs they identified with our Society. They named "The Garden Song." This is how *Tending the Prairie Garden* became the title of my talk. In extending the metaphor I

started talking about all the plants we weed out of our Prairie, such as Purple Loosestrife. I hadn't thought through what plants we might want to uproot from our Society. I was thinking more in terms of what acts we take to cultivate Prairie Society to be what we want and need. Good care for our Prairie Garden and Society, however, may require some thoughtful weeding.

"The Garden Song" is not in the new Song Book. Songs are one of the first things I identify with the spirit of Prairie. For the service, I selected three to illustrate our Society. I chose "Die Gedanken Sind Frei," which reflects our ties to the humanist and free thinkers traditions. The other two were "This Little Light of Mine" and "Simple Gifts." It is difficult to choose only three songs to convey our essence. What three would you choose?

Blessed be
-Julie Bonser
President

CMD Annual Meeting

The theme of this meeting is "Growing into the 21st Century: Building UUUnity in CommUUUnity". The CMD Annual Meeting begins on Friday night, Nov. 12, with a keynote address—"To Gaze Upon the World with Sacred Eyes: The Role of Our Religious Faith"—by the Rev. Makaanah Morris, UUA Director of Religious Education. Saturday the Rev. David Bumbaugh, minister at the UU Church, Summit, NJ, will speak on "The heart of a Faith for the 21st Century" There will be Workshops (11 each in the morning and afternoon) covering growth, denominational governance, families, diversity in worship, fund raising, spirituality, software, feminist theology, and Racial Justice among others.

We will meet at the UU Church West, Brookfield, WI a short drive away for us Madisonians. Registration is \$25 before Oct. 18, after Oct. 18 \$35 each and \$40 for walk ins. Meals are extra. Julie Bonser has the registration forms if you are interested in attending.

Fall Parish Meeting Agenda

Nov. 7 1993

I. Minutes of Spring Meeting.

II. Committee Reports.

III. Budget for 1994.

IV. Old Business.

V. New Business.

VI. Adjourn.

Upham Woods Lost and Found

Lost: small tan solar powered calculator.

Found:

1] Child's necklace, blue with flowers cloisonné style.

2] Hooded Nike windbreaker, size medium, black/purple/teal.

Phone: Judy Skog 273-4813



Halloween Fall Frolic!

On Sunday October 31 we will be celebrating the season with a Halloween party during the regular RE time. All RE kids are invited to come in costume. We'll have games, food and activities, including singing Pumpkin Carols and decorating (not carving) pumpkins. We'll put the pumpkins up for sale at the end of the party so to raise some money for UNICEF.

Preschool/Nursery

During the past two weeks the children have made leaf prints and played in the park on these wonderfully warm fall mornings. Emilie Dickson, Lili Sandler and Nora Bosch lead this group.

Treasure Hunting (K-1-2)

Led by Larry Murdock, this group one week explored the treasure of families. After hearing a story the children and Larry talked about all the people and pets who make up families of different designs. They then made paper chains to represent each child's own family. They gathered together inside them for their closing circle.

The following week they focused on making friends of our fears. They read the book "Aminal," a story about a monster that was actually just a turtle. They took advantage of the beautiful weather and played the game "Monster" outside. Larry also led them in a visualization exercise called "Monster Trouble."

A Stepping Stone Year (3-4-5)

Paula Pachciarz and Jan Howell led the group in an exploration of the two different versions of creation that are in the Bible. First they read two different versions

of "Little Red Riding Hood" and discussed the differences. Then they arranged "genesis cards" in the order of creation as the creation stories were read. Lots of enthusiastic discussion followed.

The following week Rick Ruecking and Paula led the group in finding out about the forest based religion of the African Pygmies. They also had a lot of fun playing outside, and finding a snake in the process.

We Believe (6-7-8)

This group focused on the topic of world peace, under the leadership of Bob Purvis and Randy Converse. First they passed around a globe, with each person saying they like about the world or what they think the world needs. Then they cut out pictures from magazines to make collages of what's interesting in the world, and ended with a story about Samantha Smith. There were lots of thoughtful comments on the current teachers' contract dispute, preserving the environment, having fun and other themes.

YRUU Notes

YRUU will meet regularly from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at First Unitarian Society and at James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Society. Prairie youth are welcome to attend either group, but are requested to choose one and stick with it thereafter.

The Fall conference (PumpKon!) will be hosted by the Evanston IL church over Halloween weekend. Attendees will be back in Madison in plenty of time to participate in trick-or-treating.



Coffee Service Volunteers

The following persons have volunteered to set up the coffee service on Sunday mornings.

Oct. 31 Mary Mullen
Nov. 7 Kerry Bauer

The following have volunteered to wash dishes after Sunday services.

Oct. 31 Randy & Kathy Converse
Nov. 7 Al Nettleton & Kerry Bauer

The following have signed up to greet visitors on Sunday mornings.

Oct. 31 Richard Bonser
Nov. 7 ??

Descriptions for each of these volunteer jobs are on the bulletin board over the microwave oven in the kitchen. Any volunteers who cannot work on the day they've signed up, please let Heidi Oliveren know so she can locate a substitute.

Just a Reminder

If you're going to use the building, check with Rachel Siegfried at 271-2173 to be sure the building is available. We need advance notice, preferably two weeks, to schedule the use of the building. Building use rules are posted in the kitchen.

Play to Open

"Don't Take It Personally," an original play by Wisconsin playwright Edith Peterson, will be produced at The Brave Hearts Theatre, 1988 Atwood Avenue (Schenks Corner), Madison, on Saturday November 6, at 8:00 PM. Tickets are \$5.00 and can be purchased from the Alliance for the Mentally Ill-Dane County office (255-1695) or AMI-WI office (257-5888). The play is based on the real experiences of a family coping with their son's mental illness. Donna Murdoch, the director, is president of the Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Dane County. She received her degree in Speech from UW-Madison where she performed in and directed many plays. One of the first readings of Ms. Peterson's play was done by the Prairie Playreaders.

After the performance, Nancy Abraham, the first president of AMI-Wisconsin, will facilitate a discussion of the play and mental illness. The Alliance for the Mentally Ill is grateful to the actors and actresses from the Madison theatrical community who joined AMI members in producing this event. The Brave Hearts Theatre is a new small venue performance space in Madison. The Artistic Director is Tom Peterson, known locally for the creation of the Barrymore Theatre and known nationally for the coordination of the influential Guthrie 2 theatre in Minneapolis.

