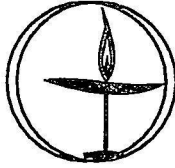


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Prairie Fire



Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society
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To Change Address Or Cancel PRAIRIE FIRE, Call Richard Bonser, Editor.....274-3248

Production Assistants - Susan Hagstrom and Pat Watkins
Vol. 32, No. 20, 11-22-94

The deadline for the next issue of Prairie Fire will be Sunday, December 4. Submit items for December 9 and later.

CALENDAR

Sunday, November 27

10:00 AM
"THANKSGIVING INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE" led by Orange Schroeder.
11:30 AM
Potluck Lunch.

Friday, December 2

6:00 PM
ETHNIC DINNER CIRCLE, Essen Haus. Call Pat Watkins BEFORE Thursday, December 1st, at Prairie or at home (233-5795) for reservations.

Saturday, December 3

8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
C.M.D. Conference on Extension Leadership and Growth, U.U. Church of Evanston, Ill.

Sunday, December 4

7:30 AM - 9:45 AM
PANCAKE BREAKFAST (See related story).
10:00 AM
"LIFESTYLES OF THE NOT SO RICH AND FAMOUS" led by George Calden.

Children meet downstairs at 10 AM for an all-RE Spirit Circle opening service.
11:30 AM-1:00 PM
First meeting of the Middle School Youth Group. Pizza and pop will be provided.

Monday, December 5

6:30 PM
FRIENDLY SUPPER CLUB, the monthly interracial and multicultural dinner group meets at Prairie for their Holiday Potluck. Bring a dish to pass. For information, call Shirley Grindrod at 238-4422 or Lance Green at 249-5979.

Tuesday, December 6

7:30 PM
Program Committee meets at Nettleton's, 645 Sheldon (238-6053).

Sunday, December 11

9:00 AM
Children should arrive to work on Nifty Gifty.
Adult choir rehearsal.

10:00 AM
"CHALLENGES OF MULTIPLE MEDICAL THERAPIES" led by Dr. Michael Schinitzky.

11:30 AM
PRAIRIE WOMEN'S GROUP will meet in the upstairs meeting room for a potluck lunch.

Thursday, December 16

7:00 PM
Contra Dancing.

Saturday, December 17

8:30 AM - 12:45 PM
SHAAREI SHAMAYIM services.

7:30 PM
PLAYREADERS meet at Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane.

Sunday, December 18

9:00 AM
Choir Rehearsal.
9:30 AM
"Holiday Breads" and Coffee.
10:00 AM
"WINTER INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE (with Symbol Tree), led by Mike and Norma Briggs (see story).
12:45 - 4:45 PM
SHAAREI SHAMAYIM meeting.

Sunday, December 25

MERRY XMAS
No service this morning.
5:00 PM
CAROLS AND CANDLES (See related story).

Today's Quote

"Unlike plagues of the dark ages or contemporary diseases we do not yet understand, the modern plague of overpopulation is soluble by means we have discovered and with resources we possess. What is lacking is not sufficient knowledge of the solution but universal consciousness of the gravity of the problem and education of the billions who are its victims."

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 1966



...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



Pancakes, Pancakes, Pancakes!

Are you hungry for pancakes? It's been two very lean years since the last pancake breakfast at Prairie. Come on Sunday, December 4th, between 8:00 and 9:15 AM, and be prepared to feast on your favorite flapjacks (with all the trimmings!) for the modest sum of only \$3.00 for the short stack (3 pancakes, 2 sausages or bacon), or \$4.00 for the full stack (4 pancakes, 3 sausages or bacon). Both stacks come with applesauce or syrup, orange juice, and coffee or milk. Please come early, if possible, as we must begin to arrange the room for the morning service at 9:30. Those donating food would make Judy immensely happy if they brought it to Prairie by Saturday, December 3. Folks will be at Prairie at 7:00 PM on Saturday to get things organized and to do setup, and would appreciate having all donations on hand at that time. Don't make Judy panic and run to the grocery store because your donation is not there when she arrives at 7:30 AM on Sunday morning.

Bring a friend. Bring your neighbor. Bring your mother. Bring your teacher. Bring someone who might like Prairie. What a great introduction to us! For additional information, call Judy at 273-4813.

Prairie Patter

Last week the members of Prairie UU Society voted to pass the proposed budget and to instruct the Board to decide which items to cut as our anticipated pledge income was insufficient to meet our needs. We were also instructed to contact members and friends of Prairie to request they pledge some money to Prairie or to increase their pledge. They also asked for more information about expectations. I did some research about UU's giving patterns. The pledges in other societies for 1992/93 averaged \$954 per pledging unit. Generally speaking people donate about 2 to 2 1/2 percent of their gross income to churches and charity. That would mean a family with income of \$40,000 would donate \$1000 a year to church and charities.

Our pledges range from \$15 a year to \$2640 a year for 1995. Last year we had 65 pledging unit for a total of 29,089. As of today we have 38 pledging units with an average of \$372 per unit. The median pledge is \$300 which means half of our pledges are

less than \$301 a year. Another way to look at our range of giving is two pledges are over \$2000, 6 pledges between \$1000 and \$2000, 4 between \$500 and \$1000, and 25 pledges under \$500.

The strengths of Prairie cannot be measured by the amount of money pledged to keep us going. However it can be a measure of weakness. This is an area where we are not up to standard. All the indications are we have enough members and friends to support a budget twice the amount of our current proposal. We choose to volunteer our labor more than our income because we want to be a lay led society that emphasizes our ministry to each other. We also need your fiscal support to help us minister to each other in a more organized way so that we don't overlook the needs of anyone within our congregation.

Blessed be-
-Julie Bousier
President

Lifestyles...

...of the Not-So-Rich-and-Famous. On December 4th, George Calden's service, like several of his previous programs, is dedicated to the celebration of the interesting lives of "ordinary people" like us. With the help of Prairie folks, we will hear dramatic readings of three of George's recent stories: "Partial Justice" is a story to dig you teeth into. Are the creatures of the wild striking back at humans because of the injustices we have done them? "Soul Food" deals with George's love-hate relationship with cream cheese omelettes, corned beef sandwiches, potato pancakes, chicken fat, and other artery clogging delicacies. "Frank Lloyd Wright and I" portrays George's many exciting and intimate "encounters" with the great master architect. The program will also feature the exuberant music of the Ethnic Connection.

Intergenerational Service

As part of our Winter (Christmas/Winter Solstice) Intergenerational Service, we will include our traditional "Symbol Tree." All who wish may hang a special item on our tree and tell about its significance. It may relate to an important event in your life during the past year, a memory of the season or something else of importance to you. Bring holiday breads or fruit to share at 9:30 AM before the service.

Carols and Candles

There will be no morning service nor religious education classes on Christmas Day.

However, we hope you will plan to join us at 5 PM for a Candle and Carol Ceremony, at which we will light candles and sing traditional Christmas carols. Bring a candle in a holder to place on a table to give us light and warmth. Bring finger foods to share after the singing.

Congratulations!

Thanks and appreciation are due to our musicians and to the choir for their wonderful Bach performances on Sunday, November 20th. And, a special thanks to Warren Hagstrom and Doleta Chapru for their planning and coordination. A beautiful tribute to human creativity.

Choir Practice

You will notice that choir practice does not appear on the calendar until December 11th. That's because the choir worked so hard and gave such an outstanding performance at the Bach program, that they earned a two week vacation! On December 11th, the choir will begin rehearsal of the "Advent Meditation" for Christmas. Anyone who wants to sing is welcome to join the choir, and the next rehearsal would be the ideal time since they are starting to learn new music.

Prairie Finances (not good!)

—or, How Can I Help? On Sunday, November 13, we adopted a budget of \$42,119 for 1995. So far, we have about \$20,300 in pledges, of the \$34,824 we need to make the budget. We voted to give the Board discretion for what to retain and what to cut. Even if we eliminate the "administrative" position, we will not be even close to meeting our needs. Each MEMBER (NOT pledging unit, or family) costs Prairie \$63 a year (or \$5.25 a month) in dues and Prairie Fires. In order to meet our budgeted pledges, each MEMBER would have to pledge \$314 a year or \$26 a month. Every single one of us must think carefully about how important Prairie is to our lives. PLEASE reconsider how much you can afford to give to Prairie next year. If each of our 111 members increased their monthly pledge by only \$5.00, it would make an additional \$66600 available to Prairie.

And, while on the delicate matter of contributions, your Finance Committee urges you to pay the remainder of your 1994 pledges before the end of the year. Prairie CANNOT afford to begin the new year with a deficit.

Bed and Breakfast

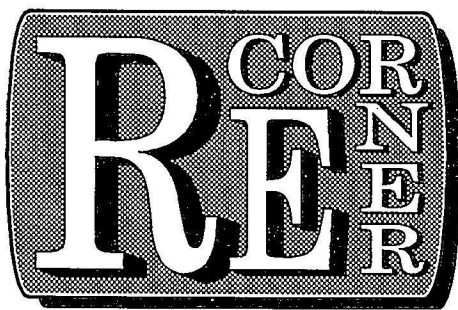
Are you interested in hosting other U.U. families? You are invited to become part of the HOMECOMINGS Bed and Breakfast network by listing your home in the 15th edition (April '95—April '96) Travel Directory. Applications are due by January 31st. See Pat Watkins if interested.

Absent Friends...

Bunny Wilkening, a former member of Prairie was in Madison last week, and sent her greetings to many of her long time friends and acquaintances. Bunny is now living in Burlington, Vermont, and would love to see and hear from anyone who remembers her. Write her at 20 Airport Road, #10, Colchester, VT 05446. Phone is (802) 865-2404.

Alaska, Anyone?

Nine U.U. churches from California to Alaska have created a series of one week to 10 day low-cost travel programs with naturalists, based on whalewatching and special events (such as the Mardi Gras in Baja, CA -in Feb, Big Sur, Boating and hiking in California's offshore islands, and a land/sea/air tour of Alaska. Pat Watkins has more detailed information and names of contact people if you are interested.



In Our Hands, grades 6, 7, 8

Last week Randy Converse led this group in exploring the life and actions of Susan B. Anthony and Henry D. Thoreau, and especially how their actions are tied to UU principles. To do this the group first played "Whip" where they went around in a circle with each person saying in one sentence what they would change in their school and

then what they would change in the world. Then they read the plays, *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail* and *Susan B. Anthony*. The readings were followed by discussions of how the actions of these two UUs were based on UU principles; of decisions to break laws and accepting the consequences of law breaking; of working to change laws; and of how to change things without hurting others.

Timeless Themes, grades 3, 4, 5

Welcome to Bob Purvis who has joined the teaching team for this group!! Bob led this session on the Old Testament story of Joseph and his brothers. After reading and listening to the story, the kids drew designs for coats for Joseph and talked about relationships with brother and sisters, and how they deal with anger and jealousy.

Caring Hands, grades K, 1, 2

This was the Converse week to lead RE sessions, with Randy with the oldest group and Kathy leading this younger one. The theme here was caring and uncaring which they explored by trying to understand what the word *caring* really means. Some meanings they derived were helping, nice acts, sharing feelings. They played three cooperative games to explore the theme: tossing a yarn ball across a circle to make a great spider web that connected everyone and needed everyone's care to keep it intact; "Silly Bones," where each person chose two body parts to connect the circle, such as ear to knee or foot to elbow (gentle care was needed to keep this game fun); and animal drawings, where each person drew just one part of an animal before passing it to the next person to draw the next. The resulting whale/penguin and bunny/person were delightful and fun. They each also made a gift certificate for an act of caring to give to someone they care about.

Preschool/Nursery

Attendance for this age group has been low for the past few weeks, with only one child present again last week. But she (Toby Wacker) is very happy about that and says she likes being the only one there. Nora Bosch spent time with Toby last Sunday.

Thank You Ken!

Special thanks to Ken Skog for taking this year's RE photos. They're marvelous! Come

downstairs and take a look at the bulletin board in the large center room. There are lots of beautiful smiling faces displayed there. It's also a great place to learn the names that go along with those faces!

Middle School Youth Group

Because of expressed interest by both middle schoolers and adult volunteers, we will be starting a youth group for 6th-8th graders. The plan is to meet on Sundays following the service for fun and social action. The first meeting will be on December 4, from 11:30 AM-1:00 PM. Pizza's on the menu for lunch, some games are in store, as well as making some decisions:

- How often should we meet: every other week? Once a month?
- Should we open this group up to the other two societies, as they have done for us in the past?
- What's a good name for the group?

Parents of middle schoolers: if you have any input regarding the group, especially about logistics, please let Anne Pryor know.



Blood Donations

John Elder of First Society reports that among Red Cross blood donor "One-A-Week" totals this year, U.U. societies surpassed all other churches! But, we are THREE societies now. James Reeb has raised our total significantly, while Prairie has given less in recent months. Several of our Prairie Society donors are unable to give because of health problems. If YOU have not given a pint "from the heart," try it, and experience that good feeling! There is no formal membership in "One-A-Week," Our community needs your help, your cash-free gift. Information about apheresis donations is on the Prairie Bulletin Board. Frederika has been an apheresis donor; feel free to talk to her about it.

My pledge to Prairie UU Society for 1995:

\$ _____ Signature: _____ Date _____

Please mail to Finance Committee Chair Jack Jallings, 4561 Schneider Drive, Oregon, WI 53575, (Phone: 835-3746) by DEC. 12.
Thank You.