The deadline for the next issue of Prairie Fire will be Sunday, January 1. Submit items for January 7 and later.

Vol. 32, No. 22, 12–20–94

Sunday, December 25
MERRY XMAS
No service this morning
5:00 PM
CAROLS AND CANDLES and DEDICATION (See related story)

Sunday, January 1
11:00 AM (note time change)
NEWSPAPERS AND HOLIDAY FOOD, coordinated by Mary Mullen.
7:30 PM (or later?)
NEW YEAR’S EVE DINNER (See related story)

Tuesday, January 3
7:30 PM
PROGRAM COMMITTEE meets at the Nettleton’s, 645 Sheldon St.

Saturday, January 7
EVENING
WILD WINTERING GATHERING
(See related story)
7:30 PM
PLAYREADERS meet at Rachel Siegfried’s, 5209 Tolman Terrace. Mona Birong will co-host with Rachel. Phone 271-2173 for information.

Sunday, January 8
10:00 AM
SEEING THE AESTHETIC: Can It Be Religious? led by Ellsworth Snyder.

Monday, January 9
6:00 PM
SPANISH SPEAKERS POTLUCK at Prairie (upstairs)
7:30 PM
PRAIRIE BOARD MEETING at Prairie (downstairs)

Friday, January 13
6:30 - 10:30
SHAAREI SHAMAYIM meeting

Saturday, January 14
4:30 - 9:00 PM
SHAAREI SHAMAYIM meeting
Sunday, January 15
10:00 AM
FREDERICK DOUGLAS led by Bob Reuschlein
12:45 - 4:45 PM
SHAAREI SHAMAYIM meeting

Today’s Quote
“Cynicism is an unpleasant way of saying the truth.”
- Lillian Hellman

Christmas Day
Another reminder that there will be no morning service nor religious education classes on Christmas Day. Please plan to attend the 5 PM Candle and Carol Ceremony and participate in the candle lighting and the singing of traditional Christmas carols. Bring your candle (plus a holder for it) and finger foods to share after the singing. We will also be dedicating Will Hayes’ and Peg Barratt’s new son, Nicholas, and all of his brothers will attending the dedication.

Celebrate New Year’s Eve
Fran Zell (233-0213) would like to hear from anyone who would like to go out to dinner on New Year’s eve, followed by adjourning to someone’s home to welcome in the New Year. Rosemarie Lester has organized this rather successful gathering in former years, and Fran has volunteered this year. The time and location have not yet been decided upon, but call Fran to sign up, and you will be informed of the details before the event.

Celebrate New Year’s Day
Bring your newspapers and magazines to read, share and discuss current issues informally at 11:00 AM, on Sunday, January 1st (which allows you to still sleep in!). Please bring finger foods to share.

Prairie Patter
At the fall parish meeting the members of Prairie passed the budget as recommended with the directive that the Board make the decisions about which expenses to defer or eliminate. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of the finance committee—Judy Skog, Pat Cautley, Rich Ruecking, Jim Harvey and Jack Jallings—and the generosity of Prai-
Prairie Finances

Thank you for your support! Your pledges now exceed $31,000.

Congratulations

It was a beautiful baby girl for Dawn Ace and Phoebe Rosebear. Annie Morag Rosebear-Ace arrived on December 8th, weighing in at 7lb, 4oz. Mother and daughter are doing well, and we hope to see them soon at Prairie.

The Musician
by Philip Dacey

In the great nave of the church, we eat noodles and throw dice, while at lunch in the cafe a man sinks to his knees, muttering prayers and touching the floor with his head.

A minister delivers a sermon that sounds suspiciously like a recipe for coq au vin, while someone else has hung beautiful laundry out to dry on the wide-open arms of a cross.

We're confused but happy to be so, unclear as to whether that was God who just walked by or a musician on her way to a concert, the whole next world squeezed into her black case.

(The above was the text for Elizabeth Alexander’s “Music for St. Cecilia’s Day”)

“Retreat to Simpler Times”

The 1995 Central Midwest District Annual Meeting on March 31-April 2nd, promises to be unique and exciting. Co-hosted by the First Unitarian Church of South Bend and the U.U. Fellowship of Elkhart, it will also be a Spring retreat.

Camp Alexander Mack is a Church of the Brethren retreat center on Lake Waubee near Milford, in Northern Indiana Amish country. Rustic (but winterized) lodgings and a secluded setting create an atmosphere of relaxation and renewal. Camp Mack is handicapped accessible, environmentally responsible and lifestyle conscious. Delicious meals, served buffet style, include vegetarian options and low fat dairy products. Ample space is available for workshops and displays.

Dr. Jean Hardisty will be the keynote presenter on Saturday morning, discussing the “Radical Religious Right.” The weekend will also include an “Introduction to the Amish,” by Emeritus Professor Sam Yoder of Goshen College on Saturday evening and a Friday night coffee house/open mike gathering at which anyone who wishes to share a talent is encouraged to do so. If Prairie is interested in conducting a workshop, we must contact Gordon Gibson, U.U. Fellowship of Elkhart, P.O.Box 584, Elkhart, IN 46515, no later than January 6th. Mark your calendars now. More information will be forthcoming in the next newsletter.

Nifty Gifty

On December 11 we had our annual gift making morning. Special thanks to Cindy Hag for coordinating the event, and arranging for so many and varied items for the children to make. It was a lot of fun, and a very creatively productive morning! Thanks also to all those who either ran a station or created the ideas and collected the materials for them: Barbara Rames, Amy Owens, Judy Skog, Marilyn Peters, Metje Butler, Betty Jallings, Lilly Sandler and Emily Owens. Thanks too to Randy Converse for helping to clean after the event.

PYGs

(PYG=Prairie Youth Group: grades 6-7-8) Our first monthly social event will be on Saturday, January 7 for an afternoon of broom ball. Meet at Anne Pryer’s house at 4717 School Road (School Road is off Northport Ave., up past Warner Park. Carpool if you can). We’ll walk down to the Yahara River for the ice. Come at 3 PM, stay til 5:30. Bring a broom! Wear warm clothes! Prepare to have fun! At our last meeting we decided that we’d like to include middle school youths from the other UU societies too, so they are invited to join us for our social events also, starting with broom ball.

RE Sessions

Regular R.E. sessions (almost) will begin again on January 8. On that morning we will have an opening spirit circle followed by a service project. All the children from R.E. will be together for that morning. On January 15 regular R.E. sessions will begin again

Seeing the Aesthetic

While Ellsworth Snyder is best known to Madison UU’s as the Music Director of First Society, he is also a nationally recognized “minimalist” artist. Most of his work in this contemporary art form is in oils. Locally his work has been shown at the Grace Chosy Gallery. This service is part of the series addressing U.U. principles through the visual arts.
with the children upstairs for the opening part of the service, and then going to their separate classes downstairs afterwards.

Workshop Wanted!

Is there any Prairie person who works with wood, has tools and other equipment and would be willing to host some Prairie kids for an afternoon of bird house and feeder making? If so, please talk with Anne Pryor and we can discuss details.

Wild Wintering

With winter officially here, it's time for our annual R.E. Wild Wintering gathering! Mark your calendar for Saturday evening, January 7th. We'll have a grand time with outdoor and indoor fun, and an optional overnight sleep over. All Prairie kids, visiting cousins, friends (and, yes, parents, too) are warmly invited. More details to come. Call Dean Schroeder at 256-8813.

Tatonka-Kon is Coming

January 20-22 at Eliot Chapel, St. Louis, MO, for 9th graders and up to 20 year olds. Anne Pryor has registration materials or call Rebecca at (314) 968-8841 for information.

Consider Homeshare

Looking for low rent or free housing, or know someone who is? If you or someone you know would enjoy providing some companionship and household assistance to an older adult, that person could qualify for free or reduced rent. Contact Independent Living at 274-7900.

UN Population Conference

The UU Service Committee was instrumental in placing women's reproductive health at the forefront of this fall's UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt. Collaborating with several women's health organizations, UUSC sponsored a series of seminars which challenged demographically driven population analyses as the sole factor in the population debate. UUSC sponsored the attendance of several of its project partners and was represented by several staff members. Congregations across the United States and throughout the world were asked to include the topic of population in their services or programs between October 30-November 6, which had been designated World Population Awareness Week. Unfortunately, Prairie had already planned its program for October 30, and was on retreat on November 6th, and was unable to adjust to accept a volunteered population program. For more information on the UUSC involvement, contact Lou Witherite, UUSC, 130 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139-1845, or phone (617) 868-6600.

Volunteers Needed!

The Homeless Shelter needs your Prairie is responsible for staffing two shifts on the fourth Monday of each month at Grace Episcopal Homeless Shelter. The shifts are 7:15 PM to midnight, and 5 AM to 8 AM. The evening shift includes serving dinner and bringing a gallon of milk, and the second shift includes serving breakfast and bringing a box of cereal. Thanks to Barb Barley and Kate Tucker who worked the evening shift and Pat Cautley and Bob Nelson who worked the morning shift in November. These shifts are extremely hard to fill, so please phone Cinda LaMar at 259-1114 if you can take a turn.

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Food Pantry

Let's not forget to bring those food items for the Food Pantry of the Allied Drive area. Make sure that your contributions are non-perishable and, if you forget the food, money is also useful.

Chants for the Queen

is now available for $10.00 plus $2.00 postage and handling from Nancy Veder-Shults, 2810 Gregory Street, Madison WI 53711. It is also available at local feminist/spirituality bookstores.