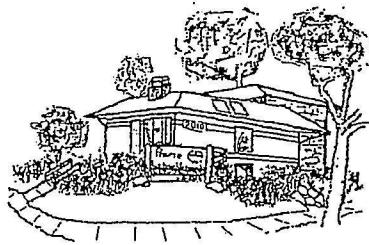


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PRAIRIE FIRE

... 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

Sunday, September 1, 1996

To change address or cancel, call Arleigh at (608)273-9811, or the Prairie Meeting House at (608)271-8218

<http://www.execpc.com/~prairieu/>

President's Column

Welcome back for the 1996-1997 church year! The Religious Education program has started with enthusiastic teachers and the second-year leadership of John-Brian Paprock. The RE Committee has cleaned and prepared the classrooms for our students. The Program Committee has organized an exciting year of Sunday Services. Our lay ministers are "Storytelling" directed by Reid Miller, "The Welcoming Congregation" organized by Mary Mullen, and "Technology and People" structured by Al Nettleton. We will share our fall **Upham Woods** retreat (October 11-13) at the height of leaf season. This is among our best activities. I hope all will attend and remind you that scholarships are available to assure all can attend.

The Board has been discussing issues related to improving our inclusiveness and warmth. Many have noticed the changes wrought by Arleigh Birchler, our Administrator. He has provided updated directories and begun several processes designed to help us (and the wider community) come together. The Affinity Circles promote caring activities amongst us in the absence of

established pastoral leadership; Outreach Circles extend our social network; and Phone trees give order to our needs for immediate communication. Arleigh seeks help in continuing innovations to Prairie activities.

Prairie is a non-ministerial, volunteer led Society that counts on your regular participation. To succeed the Committees need your help. Prairie holds its **second All Committee Night** on Monday, September 9. Come to a potluck at 6 PM and we will break into committees at 7:15. Check us out, enjoy the socializing, and then see what service you can provide this year.

Annual Fall Meeting is scheduled for November 17. This year we will conduct the meeting following a short service during our regular meeting time – 10 AM. As we approve a budget it is most important that this is a Sunday you elect to attend Prairie.

So welcome back to the new church year. It's your Society, after all.

— Rick Rueckling

It's a Girl!

Anne and Lee Urbanski are in Texas meeting their adopted baby, Maya Theresa. Maya was born August 20, a healthy 8 lb., 8 oz. Baby. They will all be back in Madison sometime after labor Day. Congratulations, Anne and Lee, and
"Welcome Maya!"

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

September 8

"Education Strengthens Communities – Builds Futures"

Candidate for U.S. Congress, Paul Soglin

The Strength of the United States can be tracked to a commitment to invest in the future. That commitment is seen in our transportation and communications systems, our national parks, and our rivers and waters.

Nowhere is that commitment more critical than in the area of education. Without an education the individual has little opportunity to care for themselves or their families. Lack of education deprives one of access to health, safety, and the pursuit of happiness and endangers our democracy. Education should be and must be a priority.

September 15

"The Dance of the Storyteller"

Reid Miller

With the telling of stories, humans chronicle experience, heal wounds, predict the future, resolve disputes, educate and entertain each other, and much more. The Dance of the Storyteller explores what stories we are, how they are told, and their power in our lives. Bring an artifact from home, an object of your own, with meaning to you in your life.

September 22

"Criminal Justice"

Esther Heffernan

Sister Heffernan is coordinator of the Criminal Justice program at Edgewood College, and professor in the Department of Social Science. She is also a consultant for the Alaska Department of Corrections and Federal Bureau of Prisons in the use of co-corrections. Sister Heffernan has recently finished a published history of women in federal corrections.

In Wisconsin, Heffernan has served as a member of the Legislative Council Committee examining the criminal code and other correctional issues, testified on correctional problems before the legislature, and has also appeared on a number of talk shows dealing with correctional issues.

September 29

"Virtual Chicken Soup"

Bob Dopp

Bob will share with us his personal journey through the Internet in search of cures for cancer, on-line chatting with widows and widowers, and using electronic mail as a form of therapy. This program is the first in a series on informational technology coordinated by Lay Minister Al Nettleton.

October 6

"Virtual Medical Records"

Judy Faulkner, president of *EPIC Data Systems*

Ms. Faulkner will talk about electronic medical records for managed care and integrated community health networks. Epic is a supplier of systems to some of the largest health care providers, and Judy has some unique insights on the role of automation in health care and the impact on the quality of medical care. She will also address issues of privacy and confidentiality related to electronic records. (Program two in the series on information technology.)

Upham Woods!

October 11 - 13



Each fall since 1970, Prairie members and friends have scheduled an annual retreat which usually takes place in October. This year's retreat will take place October 11 - 13 at Camp Upham Woods near

Wisconsin Dells. The retreat provides an opportunity for members and friends to join together in canoeing, nature walks, crafts, discussion groups, games, dancing, singing, meditation--you name it! The highlights of the weekend are the Talent Show on Saturday night and the Sunday morning service featuring a "key log ceremony."

Last year's retreat was held November 10-12. Some of the activities available included a hike on Blackhawk Island, an expedition through the "Peanut Butter Mountain" obstacle course, apple carving, a visit to the Nature Center, poetry reading, a country line-dancing lesson, a long-range planning focus group, and slides of Japan. Our all-ages talent show on Saturday night was followed by an informal dance. Sunday's service was held indoors due to cold, snowy weather.



Saturday, September 14, 3:30-6:30 – CUUPS Fall Equinox Celebration

At Jim Harvey's farm. Take Hwy 12/18 east, 4 miles past interstate; turn left on Cty N toward Cottage Grove; first road to left; first house on left; 3479 Natvig. Bring dinnerware, dish to share, rhythm instruments and items for the altar.

Religious Education

Even though the sun has not marked its equinox, officially bringing the next season, summer is over. The governmentally developed recognition of the common worker – Labor Day has replaced the solar transition. It does say something about our society when a created "holiday" replaces the source of light ...

It has been the tradition of Religious Education at Prairie to begin the weekend after Labor Day. So we begin.

The Religious Education Service (social action) theme this year will be: Acts of Kindness. For the monthly Spirit Circles, the theme will be "Meditation". We will be exploring some of the fundamentals and look at different styles throughout the year. It looks to be another exciting learning and growing opportunity. Every year the curricula is rotated as well as some of the teachers. Here's what 1996-97 looks like in RE:

Grades K-1-2 will be "Celebrating Roots and Branches" with Rachel Long and Amy Wilcox.

Grades 3-4-5 will be "Beginning Unitarian Universalism" with Barbara Rames, Kerry Behler-Amass and Ned Frey.

Grades 6-7-8 will be answering the question, "How Can I Know What to Believe?" with Reid Miller and Randy Converse.

Grades 9-12 (yes, the teens are back!) will be "Exploring Sexuality" with KK Anderson and John-Brian Paprock.

Additionally, "About Your Sexuality" will be a weekend in February for those in Grades 7-10. We're still in the planning stages using a weekend model called "Operation Snowball." There will be a need for adult co-facilitators who will need to be trained.

This year, all the traditional "fun stuff" has been scheduled – Fall Frolic, Wild Wintering, Nifty Gifty, Spring Fling – and the ever popular Prairie Youth Group (better known by the acronym, PYGs – "pigs") will be back with the same team of advisors – Rick Owens and Gary Giorgi.

More information is available in the RE Program, which includes the calendar.

Please try to arrive ½ hour before RE begins on September 8 to register children and become familiar with the new room arrangements.

Many thanks to all the volunteers that helped clean up and re-arrange during and after the early flooding!

— John-Brian Paprock

Donations Needed

(check with Kathy Converse or John-Brian before donating)

- small, foldable crib or bed with soft rails for infants
- large pillows & cushions to sit on
- good, safe toys for 0-4 yrs
- throw sheets or covers for the couches (full, queen, or king size)
- construction paper & brushes, finger paints & paper
- free-standing flip charts (2)
- double-sided tape for hanging posters

Finance

Pledge Drive Kick-Off Lunch

Coming September 29: A "Kick-Off Lunch" to start the pledge drive will be held immediately after service on Sunday, September 29 (11:30.) Pizza and salad will be served to you (donations accepted.)

All members and active friends are urged to attend this brief event to find out about Prairie's financial needs for the 1997 budget year and how you can help. The U.U.A. motto for fund drives this year is: "Give What's Right, Not What's Left." Come find out why!

'96 Pledges Continue to Come In

Thank you for the wonderful response to pledge updates mailed out earlier this summer. Over \$6,000 was contributed in one month! \$21,400 has now been paid toward pledges of \$30,000 for 1996. We are on target, but continue to need all your pledges and contributions.

With an upcoming Art Institute Bus trip and one remaining garage sale, we are getting close to making ends meet.

— Aileen Nettleton

Social Action

YOU SAVE, WE SERVE ! - The Social Action Committee has a BUCKY BOOK waiting for you. This is our biggest fund-raiser of the year to restore the Committee operating funds and continue our mission of community service. The super discount book is the best around at \$35. Ask a Committee member to show you how this small investment pays back in many ways or ORDER NOW from:

Rob Steinhofer (221-9417) or Paula Pachciarz (273-4806).

Men's Homeless Shelter

Many thanks to those who volunteered at the Grace Episcopal Men's Homeless Shelter in August. They were Mike Briggs, Phoenix (Tom) Wardell, Ann Pryor, and Rob Steinhofer. Upcoming dates are Monday evening, September 23, and Tuesday a.m. shift, September 24.

Please call Fran Zell at 233-0213 if you can volunteer.

Thanks.

****Sunday, September 8****10:00 AM**

Education Builds Futures
 Mayor Paul Soglin
 (Religious Education
 Classes Start)

Monday, September 9**6:00 PM**

Potluck at Meeting House

7:15 PM

All-Committee Meeting

Friday, September 13**Garage Sale**

Barb & Bob Park
 273-8775

6 -- 10 PM

Rosh Hashanah
 Shaarei Shamayim

Saturday, September 14**Garage Sale**

Barb & Bob Park

6:30 PM

Salad Bar Movie
 Dick & Susan Prest
 3444 Lake Mendota Dr.
 232-9919

8 AM -- 10 PM

Rosh Hashanah
 Shaarei Shamayim

****Sunday, September 15****10:00 AM**

The Dance of the Story Teller
 Reid Miller

after program

Women's Discussion Group

1:30 -- 6 PM

Rosh Hashanah
 Shaarei Shamayim

Monday, September 16**7:30 PM**

Board Meeting

Saturday, September 21**10 AM -- Noon**

MSN Intergroup ACA
 Prairie Playreaders
 Rosemary Dorney & Tim Fast
 238-4382

****Sunday, September 22****10:00 AM**

Crime
 Esther Heffernan

5:30 -- 10 PM

Yom Kippur
 Shaarei Shamayim

Monday, September 23**8 AM -- 10 PM**

Yom Kippur
 Shaarei Shamayim

7:45 -- 11:30 PM

Men's Homeless Shelter
 Grace Episcopal Church

Tuesday, September 24**5 -- 8 AM**

Men's Homeless Shelter
 Grace Episcopal Church

7:00 PM

Social Action Committee

Thursday, September 26**7:00 PM**

Program Committee

Friday, September 27**Week of Sukkot begins**

Joint observance
 Prairie & Shaarei Shamayim

Saturday, September 28**9 AM -- 3:30 PM**

The Great Goddess
 Around the World
 First Unitarian Society

****Sunday, September 29****10:00 AM**

Virtual Chicken Soup
 Al Nettleton

after program

Pledge Drive Kick-Off Lunch

****Sunday, October 6****10:00 AM**

Virtual Medical Records
 Al Nettleton

Friday, October 11 --**Sunday, October 13**

Upham Woods!

Saturday, October 12

Prairie Playreaders
 Upham Woods

Wednesday, October 16**7:00 PM**

Dunn's Marsh Association

Saturday, October 19**9 AM -- 4PM**

NCAC/CMD
 Small Societies Workshop
 At Prairie

****Sunday, October 20****10:00 AM**

Welcoming Congregation
 Mary Mullen

after program

Women's Discussion Group

Speaking of Moving...

I'm looking forward to becoming one of Jean Matos' house-mates at the end of September. I'll be bringing some of my furniture to her house but would also like to farm out a few things (in particular a two-cushion sofa bed, antique monastery style oak desk, table and chairs) until such time as I have my own place again. If you're interested in adopting one or more of these things let me know. Also, I'll welcome any and all help with the actual move. Thanks. —Fran Zell, 233-0213

Letter from the Editor :

I will be going to school full-time this semester. I will not be accepting pay as the administrator of Prairie. I do, however, plan to continue to volunteer to edit Prairie Fire. We need several volunteer reporters who have access to e-mail or 3 1/2 in diskettes. I will remain very active at Prairie, including presenting a workshop on *Assimilating New Members* at the NCAC/CMD Small Societies Workshop. I plan to contact the U.U.M.A. Fellowship committee about doing a full-time ministerial internship beginning in January '97. —Arleigh B.