President's Column

Our ability to communicate and teach communication skills inform and define our humanity. We are constantly striving to improve our skills to listen and express ideas. Behind the podium at last Sunday's service was a sign reading "I pledge to listen to children." Someone asked me what my signature meant. My pledge affirms a willingness to hear and consider those ideals (the fundamental utterances of childhood) as goal statements of the world as it should be. It does not pledge me to regard them as the tenants of paradise, but as markers on the hard road back to Eden. Perfect communication is impossible to achieve.

Prairie Society is developing an expanded relationship with the Shaarei Shmaoyim Reconstructionist Jewish Congregation. We are accepting this congregation's increased use of the Prairie Society building with a "good-faith agreement" between religious societies for greater mutual participation in the maintenance and operation of the building. They will be increasing the amount of payment for the use of the building and assuming a role in regular maintenance. Prairie will keep the calendar and welcomes their larger participation.

—Rick Ruecking

Want to know all about Unitarian-Universalism?

During the month of November, we are conducting a series of Thursday evening get-togethers whose main thrust is: "An Orientation to Prairie Society." Anyone who wants to get better acquainted with Unitarian- Universalism is welcome to attend. We especially encouraged new members and new friends to attend. The meetings will be at Prairie at 7:30 P.M.

November 7 -- Personal History: We will get acquainted and have a general discussion of our religious backgrounds, our current thinking, and what we hope to find at Prairie and in our spiritual lives.

November 14 -- Unitarian-Universalism: Here you'll get acquainted with the history of Unitarian Universalism, what UU's believe, the organization of the UUA, and how Prairie fits into the Association.

November 21 -- Prairie Society: The highlights of this program will be how Prairie works, its organization and structure and, most important, what you expect of Prairie. What you would like Prairie to be and how you can make it a personal place.

We hope new and old members alike will come to these orientations. For more information call Marilyn Peters at 838-8540.

O GOD

WHO ART OVER ALL

I humbly ask Thee, with tremendous gratitude in my heart, to bless these, my co-workers, serving, humanity for the betterment of all. Do not overlook, even the smallest of their efforts and visit them with tenderness they have truly added to this existence. Give to them the spirit of love and light to refresh and encourage them, for there are indeed many needs. I thank Thee for the eyes to see their positive works. I thank Thee for the ears to hear the wisdom of their work. I thank Thee for the honor to serve beside them. Grant them peace of mind and heart. Grant them prosperity, according to Thy infinite wisdom. All of this I ask in Thy Holy Name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

PRAYER OF GRATITUDE FOR CO-WORKERS 1996
A special prayer for all you have done this past year.
God bless and keep you always. THANK YOU! —Rev. John Brian Paprock

Barbara & Bob Park
5610 Hammersley Rd
Madison, WI 53711

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 BOARD OF UNION

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To subscribe, change address or cancel, call Arleigh at (608)273-9811, or e-mail birchler@students.wisc.edu

Sunday, November 03, 1996

http://www.execpc.com/~prairieu/
An Invitation to A Dedication

All Prairie members and friends are invited to attend the dedication of Maya Theresa Urbanski on Sunday, November 24, 1996, immediately following the service. Although Maya’s adoption won’t be finalized till March or April 1997, we thought that the Thanksgiving season would be a good time to officially welcome her into the Prairie family. Please bring a page with words of wisdom, memories, songs, or whatever you want to include in Maya’s dedication book. NO GIFTS, PLEASE!!

—Anne & Lee Urbanski

Men’s Homeless Shelter

Each Month, members of Prairie Society furnish food and serve breakfast for 80 to 100 men at the Shelter for the Homeless, Grace Episcopal Church, on the 4th Monday night, and the following Tuesday morning throughout the year.

We are in need of volunteers who are willing to provide food and/or help serve dinner or breakfast at the shelter for the Homeless at Grace Episcopal Church for the upcoming months.

If you are unable to be a host or hostess at the shelter, you can help by giving dollars to our Social Action committee (or buy a Bucky Book!) to defray costs of the breakfasts we serve. See Fran Zell or Rob Steinhofer.

Thanks to Betty Jallings, Rick Owens, Pat Cautley and Frank Illis for volunteering in September, and to Fran Remelka, Meta Butler, Rachel Siegfried and Ann Pryor for October.

— Social Action Committee

Allegra Willow Larson

...was born on October 26 to Laurie Larson and Dennis Presser. Congratulations to Laurie, Dennis and Hunter!

Many Thanks...

...to Barbara Rames and Judy Pachciarz-Wacker for raking my leaves last Sunday. It was very useful and I appreciate it very much.

—Rachel Siegfried

Room for Rent

Need a place to live? Are you a good roommate? Call Jennifer Parker at 246-4304.

Program                           $2,645
Religious Education               7,206
Denominational Affairs            6,409
Membership                         2,370
Housing and Property              19,484
Administration                    7,286

Total                             $45,400
**UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

**November 10**
"Promise Keepers"
Doleta Chapru
The men's organization "Promise Keepers" merits close security by those of us who believe people can be good without "God," women and men are entitled to equal rights, lesbians and gays are not sinners who need to repent, and unquestioning obedience to Biblical authority is an insult to human reason.

My service November 10 will outline the strengths of Promise Keepers and explore aspects I find most disturbing.

**November 17**
"Annual Meeting"
All Members
Each fall we meet to plan the new year, and to conduct the business of the Prairie U.U. Society. This is a good opportunity to consider the future of our group. Do we want to grow? Do we want to stay the same? Do we want to develop closer ties to other UU societies in our area? To other liberal religious groups? To Shaarei Shamayim?

**November 24**
"Thanks for the Generations"
Reid Miller
This is an inter-generational service of sharing stories of wonder, wit and wisdom.

Bring a precious object – an artifact – of your own and be ready to share your story of where it came from, what happened to it or what happened when you got it, how it was used, who gave it to you, or used it, and why it is precious to you.

Count on having fun!

**December 1**
"Religious Belief and Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Germany"
Hans Adler
The decade before the March revolution of 1848 in Germany not only witnessed growing political and social problems, but religious tensions as well. The German Catholic movement was founded in 1844, the Protestant "Lichtfreunde" (Friends of the Light), and the "Freie Gemeinden" (Free Communities) were founded in 1845 and 1846. All three of them were secessional groups, originating from a protest against the powerful Roman Catholic or the Protestant churches. Since state and church still were closely related at that time, these religious movements were considered dangerous and subversive. Metternich, the main figure of the "Ancien Régime" Europe, sent out his informers to observe and denounce these dissidents, the churches either excommunicated priests or at least suspended them from their duties. Very quickly, the "Ancien Régime" discovered that these new religious groups had democratic, egalitarian, and socialist leanings. Hans Adler will talk about these movements in nineteenth-century Germany.

"The world is not a prison house, but a kind of spiritual kindergarten where millions of bewildered infants are trying to spell 'god' with the wrong blocks

Edwin Arlington Robinson

**December 8**
"The Second German Reformation"
Max Gaebler
In the ferment of the 1840's, Germany, experienced what has been called a second reformation, complete with its 19th century Tetzel and its 19th century Luther. In this 'second reformation' are to be found the roots of the Free Religious Movement. Many of the leaders of this movement were so deeply involved in the democratic revolutions of that decade that they sought refuge in America - the famed, 'Forty-eights.' They founded numerous congregations in America, of which the only one remaining is that in Sauk City. Meanwhile, the Free Religious Congregations in Germany continue to play a part in the on-going religious life in that country.

**December 15**
"Experiences of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual People"
Mary Mullen
Panel discussion by people identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, followed by questions from the congregation. (Preparatory reading for next service is available: "Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality," "What Does the Bible Say About Homosexuality?" and "Inclusive Liturgy and Preaching."

**Das Gedanken sind frei**

These days, when the religious fundamentalists make all sorts of claims to historic roots, it is well to take a look at our own history, the history of free religious thought. Two programs in December, coordinated by Rosemarie Lester, will focus on our free-thinking, free-spirited forebears in Germany. On December 1, Hans Adler, Professor of German literature and history here at UW Madison will present a program on "Religious Belief and Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Germany". A week later, on December 8, our own Max Gaebler, retired longtime minister at First UU Society, will talk about the 'Second German Reformation.'
Calendar

Sunday, November 17

Annual Meeting -- Agenda

1) Minutes of Spring Meeting
2) Committee Reports
3) Treasurer's Report
4) Presentation, Discussion, & Decision -- 1997 Budget
5) Underwriting Wisc. Public Radio programming
6) Other Business

--- Rick Ruckman

PYG!

Anyone in grades 6 - 12 is invited to the next PYG meeting on November 17. Bring a game to play and a lunch for yourself. We're just getting started and hope you'll join us.

We're also trying to earn money for the upcoming year. If you need odd jobs done, please let a Prairie youth know. We will have a bake sale coming up on November 17.

Thanks!

--- PYGs