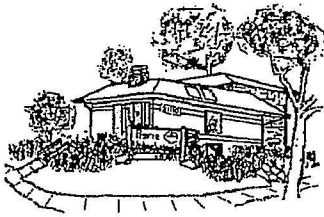


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PRAIRIE FIRE

... 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, November 17, 1996

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

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

Religious Education

Prairie Religious Education has been busy since the last time I wrote for the Fire. Many thanks to all who helped with the young people at Upham Woods! Fall Frolic! and the Children's Sabbath and Hope Chest! Don't know what I'm writing about? Let me enlighten those who could not attend these exciting events and activities.

Of course, much has been said already about Upham Woods and the fine work volunteers did with the over 20 youth in attendance, (and the fine work the youth did with us "elders").

RE Service Sunday (10/20/96) was a bit "rocky" at the beginning, but the "Hope Chest" was decorated beautifully by the younger students. The "Hope Chest" is a box to be filled with things a child in poverty might hope for. Items are either store bought (usually with the help of parents) or items belonging to the young person that are given to children in poverty. The first load of 'Hope' will travel to St. John's Lutheran Church Emergency Assistance Program the first weekend of November and be given to children in poverty, whose families are seen regularly at the East Washington Church. The "Hope Chest" can be donated to through November.

The 6-7-8 Class focused on the beautiful and meaningful posters for adult pledges to youth. Adults began to sign the pledge for youth on Sunday Evening, at a sweet service, honoring children (part of the National Children's Sabbath Celebration, nationally coordinated by the Children's Defense Fund). The local service was cosponsored by Madison Area Interfaith Network and,

although attendance was small, ten different faith traditions were represented! (UU, Christian -- 4 different traditions, Hindu/Vedic, Muslim, Baha'i, Sikh, and Jewish.) Adults are encouraged to sign the ten commitments to our youth over the next few weeks.

At the Fall Frolic, I noticed some of the older youth, reading over the names that had signed the commitments. Of course, some of them were the artists that created the pledge cards. The Fall Frolic was enjoyed by everyone. If you find a stray peanut in the corner, you will know the truth, the evidence is irrefutable we went "nuts" for a short while. We also "fell back" in time (one hour) and banished evil and darkness with scary screams and belly laughter. I am purposely vague, so that the curious will ask one of the fine youth that made a special overnight at Prairie.

Well, back to the "thank you"s. Upham Woods: everyone! Service Sunday (Hope Chest/Pledge Cards: teachers, RE Committee members in attendance and, especially, the fine artists and craftspeople among our youth. Children's Sabbath Service: Rick Ruecking (for taking a lead role in the service), the members and friends of the Madison Area Interfaith Network, Prairie folk that helped in the search for an accompanist, Prairie folk in attendance, and the children present, who, by reading and playing, were an added inspiration. Fall Frolic: Carl Wacker, Dean Schroeder, Erin Bosch, Ned Frey, and Arleigh Birchler.

—John-Brian Paprock

Pledge Drive Successful!

Thanks to everyone who made their 1997 pledge, we are very near our goal! With 64 pledge units, we have commitments of \$36,200 (out of \$38,000). Congratulations to all of us.

Remember to complete payments for 1996 pledges. Bring your checks on Sunday or send to Judy Skog, Treasurer.

—Aileen Nettleton

ANNUAL FALL MEETING

NOVEMBER 17, 1996

(Excerpts from minutes)

RE Committee: John-Brian Paprock stated the number of children registered in RE classes this year is close to 50; average attendance is 55%. About half are in middle school.

Social Action Committee

(Rob Steinhofner): In order to encourage involvement, Social Action Committee meetings will be held after the first service of each month. Committee members include Fran Zell, Nancy Graham, Metje Butler, Judy Skog, Rachel Siegfried. Priorities of the committee are community involvement, especially with Allied Dr. Neighborhood Center. Would like to see people get involved in Christmas Wish List for children in this area. Last spring had joint effort between Prairie and Allied Neighborhood Center at their Community Picnic. Will continue to hold letter writing Sundays -- next one is December 1. Would like to have Bake sale then. (Anne Pryor will tell PYGs not to have one then to avoid conflict.) Would like to request space on Bulletin Board for Committee announcements. Fran Zell is continuing to coordinate volunteers for Homeless Shelter. Have \$250 from fundraising (\$90 from Bucky Book sales). Ask that people buy Bucky Books from them (\$35) instead of elsewhere.

Housing and Property (Rick Owens and Al Nettleton): Installed lights; hope to install a doorbell within the next few weeks so that people working downstairs know if someone wants to enter. Tile was installed downstairs thanks to suggestion of Barbara Rames. Shaarei Shamayim will increase use of the building. They will share stewardship with Prairie -- will work out details of this with them. We

can attend their services and vice versa. The Rabbi will rent office space elsewhere. Al announced that no coffee grounds should be put down garbage disposal during coffee cleanup -- very costly to repair. Much thanks to Housing and Property committee and those who helped them for all their hard work during the flood.

Membership Committee

(Marilyn Peters): committee members include Barbara Rames, Arleigh Birchler, Linda Sheehy. Question about affinity groups brought up, discussed later. Newspaper ads are now better, thanks to Rick communicating with newspaper co. Trying to keep website calendar up to date.

New Business:

Aileen presented proposed budget for next year. UUA Fair Share has increased again -- costs \$36 per member. We need a new computer; need to build up capital reserve (preferably to \$1,000) for major crises (occur every year). We've almost paid off first mortgage; \$7,000 still outstanding due to loan for addition, etc. Shaarei Shamayim will pay \$2,400 this coming year for new arrangement with them; will examine after first year to as to how much to increase rent. Orange will coordinate service auction to raise money next year. Aileen moved adoption of budget; Pat seconded. Motion adopted.

Wisconsin Public Radio underwriting: Pat Watkins reported that UUA in Boston has asked various organizations to think about underwriting various programs of Public Radio. Denominational Affairs Committee recommends we underwrite "To The Best of Our Knowledge". Dick Prest spoke to WPR about prices. Proposal: we'd like to have people who pledge to WTR pledge the minimum amount

in order to get their program, and anything above that minimum amount that they would have donated to WTR give to Prairie to donate so that Prairie can underwrite and have announced "To The Best of Our Knowledge" is brought to you by Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society, a liberal religious society in Madison, WI. All 3 societies could do this together. Pat moved that Prairie agree to do this underwriting. Al seconded. Motion adopted.

Other Business:

Arleigh Birchler offered to replace Anne Urbanski as Long Range Planning Chair. Rick moved to elect Arleigh. Aileen seconded. Motion adopted.

Affinity groups came about because of need to develop ability to nurture others without pastoral care. Nothing was in the Bylaws, so Arleigh, when Administrator, came up with idea of Affinity groups. Recommend committee to oversee circle dinners, affinity groups, caring committee, should not be the Administrator's job to do this. Committee will include Marilyn Peters, Doleta Chapru, Rosemarie Lester, Nikki Bromberg, Kathy Converse, Bob Park, Al Nettleton, and Linda Sheehy. They will meet 3 times before next Annual Meeting to discuss this.

When asked how people feel about Annual Meeting being held during service time instead of service- more people were present because it was held at this time and people were glad they didn't have to stay after service for meeting. However, most would rather have Annual Meeting after service rather than during service time.

—Jan Howe

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

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!

Please Join Us at Maya's Dedication

All Prairie members and friends are invited to attend the dedication of Maya Theresa Urbanski on Sunday, November 24, 1996, toward the end of the Sunday 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--especially since Sunday's service will be on "Thanks for the Generations." NO GIFTS, PLEASE!! Instead, please bring a page with words of wisdom, memories, songs, or whatever you want to include in Maya's dedication book.

There will be a potluck following the service and dedication.

—Anne & Lee Urbanski

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 secessionist 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.

Following Service

Social Action Committee

Fundraising Bake Sale and Letter Writing Session on the subject of the Abuse of Corporate Power and Campaign Finance Reform.

December 8

"The Second German Reformation"

Max Gaebler

In the ferment of the 1840's, Max explains, Germany, experienced what has been called a second reformation, complete with its 19th century Tetzels 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-eighters.' 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."

RE Teaching Opportunity

A volunteer co-teacher is needed for the K-1-2 RE class, to plan and teach about 8 classes from January through mid-May. The schedule is flexible, and can be worked out with Amy Wilcox, co-teacher, and Rachel Long, backup teacher. Teaching materials and planning support will be provided. The curriculum this year explores cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity. 3 to 6 kids usually attend class.

This is a great opportunity to contribute to the RE program and benefit from the support of 2 enthusiastic and experienced teachers! Please call Carl Wacker, RE committee (273-4806), or John Brian Paprock, RE director (274-4405), if you are interested.

Calendar

Friday, November 22

7:15 PM

Shaarei Shamayim

Saturday, November 23

9:30 AM

Shaarei Shamayim

**Sunday, November 24

10 AM

Thanksgiving Intergenerational
Reed Miller

after program

The Dedication of
Maya Theresa Urbanski
PYGs Bake Sale
Potluck Lunch

Monday, November 25

7:45 -- 11:30 PM

Men's Homeless Shelter
Grace Episcopal Church

Tuesday, November 26

5 -- 8 AM

Men's Homeless Shelter
Grace Episcopal Church

**Sunday, December 1

9 AM

Choir Practice

10 AM

Religious Dissidents and
Politics in Nineteenth
Century Germany
Hans Adler

after program

Social Action Bake Sale
& Letter Writing
Social Action Committee

Saturday, December 7

7 -- 10 PM

Contra Dancing
Mary Mullen

**Sunday, December 8

9 AM

Choir Practice

10 AM

The Second Reformation:
The German Free-Thinkers
Max Gaebler

after program

PYGs Bake Sale

2 -- 5 PM

Shaarei Shamayim

6 PM

Salad Bar Movie
George & Ruth Calden
Please call by Fri, 12/6
233-5717

Saturday, December 14

9:30 AM

Shaarei Shamayim

**Sunday, December 15

10 AM

Experiences of Gay,
Lesbian, and Bisexual
People
Mary Mullen

after program

Women's Discussion
Group
PYGs Bake Sale

Monday, December 16

7:30 PM

Board Meeting

**Sunday, December 22

10 AM

Intergenerational Pagan
Celebrtion & Symbol Tree
Nancy Graham
& Cinda Lamar

after program

PYGs Bake Sale

Friday, December 27

7:15 PM

Shaarei Shamayim

Saturday, December 28

9:30 AM

Shaarei Shamayim

**Sunday, December 29

10 AM

Newspaper Reading

after program

PYGs Bake Sale

Saturday, January 11

7:30 PM

Prairie Playreaders
Rachel Siegfried
& Mona Birong
271-2173

**Sunday, January 12

9 AM

Choir Practice

10 AM

W.E.B. DuBois
Pat Watkins

Sunday, January 19

after program

Women's Discussion Group



Barbara Rames



Kerry Behler-Amass



Ned Frey

*Special
Thanks
to the
3-4-5 grade
RE teachers*