



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. *From
Prairie's Bond Of Union.* September 8, 1998

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PRAIRIE CALENDAR

Sunday, September 13

10:00am; **"Introductions to Prairie People, Programs, and Religious Education"**, coordinated by Erin Bosch.

Potluck lunch to follow the Service.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM BEGINS TODAY!!!

****2-6pm; Shaarein Shamayim's Torah Service and dedication. Prairie Members invited!**

Thursday, September 17

7:30pm; **Prairie Bylaws Meeting.**

Saturday, September 19

3:00pm; **"Working for a Just Economic Community Study Group"**, will meet at the home of Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow Lane.

Please phone 233-5795 if you are unable to come.

7:30pm; **Prairie Playreaders** will meet at the home of Susan Hagstrom, 916 Shorewood Blvd. Phone 238-4790 for more info.

Sunday, September 20

10:00am; **"Off the Top of Your Head"**, led by George Calden.

Habitat for Humanity International Day of Prayer.

Monday, September 21

7:30pm; **Prairie Board Meeting** at Prairie. Committee Chairs should bring 1999 Committee Budget Proposals.

Thursday, September 24

Habitat for Humanity 5% Day at Whole Foods Market. Whole Foods will donate 5% of their Sales on that day to Habitat for Humanity.

Sunday, September 27

10:00am; **"The UUA and the Struggle to Eliminate Land Mines"**, presented by Bob Alpern.

11:30am; **Prairie Bylaws Meeting.**

Saturday, October 3

3:00pm; **Denominational Affairs Committee**, home of Pat Watkins, 230 N. Meadow La. Phone 233-5795 if unable to attend.

Wednesday, October 7

7:00pm; **Finance Committee: budget and pledge drive meeting at Nettleton's home**, 645 Sheldon Street. 238-6053.

October 9-11

Upham Woods Retreat for Prairie Members and Friends.

October 16-18

Creating a Jubilee World: A Regional Anti-Racism Conference, hosted by the Racial Justice Committee of the James Reeb UU Society.

Sunday, October 18

10:00am; **"Sidney and God"**, a play by Anne Urbanski with a cast of Prairie members.

Saturday, November 7

Chicago Art Institute Bus Trip to exhibit "Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman." We will be asking Prairie members and friends to display posters for this fund-raiser at their places of business or other locations they frequent.

Sunday, November 15

11:30am; **Potluck Lunch following service.**
12:30pm; **Fall Parish Meeting.**

OUR SOCIETY

Robin Resigns

Prairie is saddened to announce its acceptance of Robin Carre's resignation as Director of Religious Education for Prairie U.U. Society. Due to his obligations with *The Madison Times*, his family responsibilities, plus his interest in pursuing a teaching career, he just no longer had the time. He will assist with the search and training of a new DRE, and he and his family will continue to participate in the life of the congregation. Good luck to Robin, Beth and Jonah. Robin has done an excellent job as the DRE and he will be sorely missed!!

Upham Woods

It is that time again! Upham Woods registration **DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 13.**

For those who have not been to Upham Woods, it is our annual fall retreat held at a UW Coordinated area just north of Wisconsin Dells. Here we unwind in the beauty of the Dells woods, walking the Island near the camp, conversing with our fellows, canoeing, working the creative juices, or just plain playing. It is to be held October 9-11. A map and registration form was in the last two Prairie Fires. If you missed it, copies will be at Prairie, come to a service or just call Susan Hagstrom or Kate Heiber-Cobb, and we will arrange for a copy to get to you.

The Program is up to YOU! While we have several excellent topics planned, more are always welcome. Organize a creative arts corner--a chance to read or create your favorite creative art, encourage others through your favorite exercise, whatever you would like. Sign up with Phoebe Rosebear (phone is 280-8990).

The Upham Woods Coordinating Committee is asking for Volunteers for two separate positions: **On-site Coordinator & Dining Room Setup Coordinator**. The On-site Coordinator will help the Upham Woods program committee in interfacing with the Camp staff, and the Dining Room Setup Coordinator will organize volunteers (or volunteer people!) to set dishes before the meals. We are trying to get

these positions filled beforehand to help the retreat run more smoothly.

Budget Requests

Do you have dreams or wishes for Prairie that have moneys attached? September is the time to think ahead to our program and building needs for 1999. Get your specific ideas or suggestions to the appropriate committee (Religious Education, Program, Housing and Property, Membership, Denominational Affairs, etc.) or to the Finance Committee (Aileen Nettleton, Chair).

Committee requests are put together as a "proposed budget" for the entire board. The Finance Committee will then ask for your help in our pledge drive during October. In November the congregation will vote on the finalized budget.

Any interested members are welcome to come to the board meeting October 7th. We need your support at all levels--from planning, to contributing, to voting!

Prairie Bylaws

Do you have any suggestions or concerns about the Prairie Bylaws? The ad hoc. Bylaws revision committee will hold two hearings to discuss potential changes on Thurs., Sept. 17th at 7:30pm and Sunday, Sept. 27th after the service. If you are unable to attend either of these meetings, please give any suggestions for revisions to Al Nettleton, Barb Park, or Rick Ruecking. Proposed Bylaws revisions will be published in the Oct. 18th deadline Prairie Fire.

Prairie Playreaders

Pat Watkins has been unable to host the annual organizational meeting of the Playreaders this summer and no one else has stepped forward to do it. Rosemary Dorney has made an excellent suggestion to keep this Prairie activity from falling through the cracks. If those play-readers who are regular participants would choose a date on which they could volunteer to host a playreading, and phone this information in to Pat at 233-5795, we will be able to come up with a partial schedule, from which we can then fill in the blank months. Please let Pat hear from you.

Next play reading is Sept. 19th at Susan Hagstrom's, 916 Shorewood Blvd. It starts at

7:30pm. We thought some nice light one acts by G.B. Shaw, or perhaps something else (definitely on the comic side!). Come and enjoy!

Torah Dedication

On Sunday afternoon, September 13, Shaarei Shamayim will be celebrating a milestone in the community's life: we will be acquiring, welcoming and dedicating our very own Torah Scroll. We would be honored if members of the Prairie UU Society could celebrate with us.

The Torah Scroll is the most sacred object in a Jewish congregation. It is made of parchment (sheep or goat skin) and contains the first five books of the Bible. Each Torah is written by hand by a specially trained scribe and takes the better part of a year to be completed.

In the life of any Jewish community, the arrival of a Torah Scroll is an occasion for gratitude, blessing and celebration. For Jews, the Torah is the means through which we teach and learn what it means to be human. The Torah is the symbol of the sacred covenant between the Jewish people and The Source of Life. In the language of our liturgy, Torah is the consequence of the abundant, eternal love in the universe.

The festivities will begin at 2pm with a procession around the block led by two musicians. The Torah will be carried underneath a huppa (wedding canopy) and people will be singing and dancing. Around 3pm we'll enter the sanctuary which will be decorated with flowers. There will be a brief dedication service, followed by some teaching. Because this particular Torah Scroll has never been dedicated, part of the festivities will include a Siyyum Torah ceremony, where, under the direction of Torah Scribe Jay Greenspan, members of Shaarei Shamayim will fill in the last 69 letters in the Torah Scroll.

Following the Siyyum Torah, the Torah Scroll will be fully unrolled. We'll sing and enjoy delicious sweets brought by members of the community. The sweets are in fulfillment of the traditional blessing that the words of Torah be sweet in our mouths.

*****Don't forget to give your suggestions to Al Nettleton and Anne Urbanski for improving the Prairie Fire. Thanks! Kate
Congratulations Prairie!***

The UUSC 1998 "Report to the Membership" listed our Society as a recipient of their Creating Justice Banner Society Award, for the fact that 10% or more of our congregation are members of UUSC.

Volunteer Schedules

Grass Mowers:

Sept. 13-19: ?? (can't read the name)

Hospitality Helpers:

Sept. 13: Greeting Visitors: Ruth Calden

Coffee Set-up: Phoenix

Coffee Clean-up: Al Nettleton & ???

Sept. 20: Greeting Visitors: *Need Volunteer*

Coffee Set-up: Kathy Helm/ Gary Giorgi

Coffee Clean-up: KK Anderson & ???

Program Taping:

Sept. 13: Paula Pachciarz

Sept. 20: *Need Volunteer*

RE Corner

The Religious Education program will kick off this weekend with a Welcome Back Party on September 13. Everyone will begin upstairs with Erin Bosch as she (re) introduces Prairie Youth to the congregation. Then we will proceed downstairs to celebrate the beginning of the new RE year.

On Saturday, September 12, from 2-5pm the RE committee will be cleaning up the RE area to prepare it for the upcoming year. Everyone is welcome to join us and will be rewarded with pizza and drinks. If you can't stay the whole time, just drop by for a short while.

Regular RE classes begin September 20.

Denominational Affairs

A Note from the Committee Chairperson: I

received last week the UUA preliminary resource packet for the Study/Action Issue (previously called a "resolution") on which all UUA congregations are to place special emphasis for the next three years. You may recall that last year's Study/Action Issue was "Fostering Interfaith Cooperation" which we should continue to emphasize for two more years. We are now on the third year of work

with the resolutions on "Anti-Racism, Working for a Just Economic Community", and "Toxic Threats to Children". Our new Study/Action Issue is entitled "**Economic Injustice, Poverty, and Racism**", and has ties with both the "Working for a Just Economic Community" issue and the "Anti-Racism" one. The study/action issue asks that we seek answers to the following questions: How can UUs better understand the links between economic injustice, poverty, and racism? And, How can we use that knowledge to develop a stronger anti-racist role for UUs? One way to get started is to plan to attend **Creating a Jubilee World**, the anti-racism regional conference being sponsored by the Racial Justice Committee of the James Reeb UU Society, here in Madison. Both the committee and the UUA in Boston are especially desirous of having teens attend this conference, so we ask the parents of teens to encourage their attendance. Scholarships are available if needed. Registration materials are located in the pamphlet box at the back of the meeting room, or call Pat at 233-5795. Application deadline is Sept. 25th. A sign-up sheet for volunteers to help and to provide home hospitality has been passed during services. If you can help out, please phone Pat Watkins.

Interfaith Hospitality Network

The Interfaith Hospitality Network is a national organization dedicated to helping the homeless. The premise- 12-13 churches take turns, a week at a time, providing shelter and meals to homeless families. This program is being organized here in Madison to supplement the already present shelters. The Madison Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (MAIHN) is well on its way to being a reality. However, it is still in need of churches to participate. The Social Action Committee feels that this would be a great project to be involved with. It is a wonderful way to provide a needed community service, become involved with other churches increasing our visibility in the community, and a project that can include the entire family. If there is enough interest we would become a buddy church providing volunteers to another local church. The commitment would be for one week, two or three times a year. Duties would include setting up for dinner, helping provide

dinners or breakfast, cleaning up, tutoring children, and being a good listener. There will never be more than 15 people in these shelters so we are talking about three or four small families, usually with young children. Look and listen for additional information in the coming weeks. For questions or to express interest call Shannon Hayes at 274-0553.

Adult Education at First Society

Several copies of First Unitarian Society's "Adult Education Offerings Fall 1998" brochure are now available at Prairie. Registration began Sept. 5th and the first weekly series AMERICAN TESTAMENT begins Sept. 14th. A variety of series of courses and events are scheduled. Registration forms are accepted by mail or in person at the RE office, First Unitarian Society.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Sunday, September 13

"Introductions to Prairie People, Programs, and Religious Education", coordinated by Erin Bosch. Potluck lunch will follow the service. *Religious Education Program Begins!*

Sunday, September 20

"Off the Top of Your Head", presented by George Calden. This service is intended to put your mind in high gear. George Calden will present a series of mind provoking opinions, sentiments and quotes for group discussion.

Sunday, September 27

"The UUA and the Struggle to Eliminate Land Mines", presented by Robert Alpern. He was Director of the UUA Social Justice Office in Washington, D.C., from 1975 to 1995 and attended the historic treaty signing in Ottawa this past December that banned the use of land-mines. Retired, he currently is the Field Secretary for the Friends Committee in Northern California and Oregon, part of the Quaker group lobbying national legislation.

October 9-11

Upham Woods Retreat for Prairie Members and Friends. Registration deadline is Sept. 13th.

Next Prairie Fire Deadline is 9/20