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2020



Prairie Lakes
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
A small but mighty congregation!

CHECK OUT OUR
COOL WEBSITE!

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Ripon, WI 54971
920-745-2446

pluufgmail@ripon.com

Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Safer-At-Home during the Covid 19 pandemic

This, too, shall pass

With time, we will be together again and bring our
empty sanctuary back to life.



Message from the Administrative Manager, Tanya



I was having a productive, happy morning in my Prairie Lakes office the other day until I walked through our empty sanctuary. It made me profoundly sad. If only we knew when we would be able to resume our Sunday gatherings. We'll continue to wait and see. In the meantime, please stay healthy and safe.

On a brighter note, welcome to our first ever mid-month newsletter. I want to thank Jill Stiemsma and Judy Harris for keeping PLUUF alive through at-home Worship Services and ENGAGE Sundays.

Soon I will be sending you a document in the mail regarding our No Service/No Talent Do-It-Yourself Auction fundraising event info with a self-addressed envelope (Details on page 3). Thank you to Ellen Mueller for coming up with a creative alternative to our "live" auction.

Please continue to stay healthy and safe. If you are in need of anything, please contact me anytime at tanyapapermaker@gmail.com We have volunteers ready to run an errand, deliver a meal, write a letter, make a phone call, etc. Just let us know.

Message from the ENGAGE Sunday Chair, Judy Harris



At-Home ENGAGE Sunday, April 19, 10AM: Please join me for a discussion about our recent election. Let us be pleased to see that our belief in the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process can be found in the society at large.

If you'd like to be part of the discussion, e-mail me at jdlake@centurytel.net.
(Judy's presentation can be found on pages 5 & 6 of this newsletter)

Message from the Worship Service Chair, Jill Stiemsma



Although I'm the Worship Service Coordinator, I do not have to be the only PLUUF'er developing services. Volunteers welcome — for just the Reflection or for more elements of the service. I'll help fill in the gaps where necessary. Just let me know your interest and availability. Thanks!

To join the virtual worship services at Open Circle UU Fellowship
(Open Circle Fellowship-Fond du Lac shares a part-time minister with Stevens Point; each Sunday virtual services begin at 10AM)

If you have access to a computer with video and audio capability, you may use this link to join the meeting:

Enter <https://zoom.us/j/4044103110> and when prompted, enter this password: 795520 or call 312-626-6799 and provide Meeting ID 404 410 3110

Open Circle is getting pretty savvy utilizing Zoom features to create a truly interactive service!

ANNOUNCING: THE FIRST EVER

“NO SERVICE/NO TALENT Do-It-Yourself AUCTION”

(Did you ever notice that “PLUUF” rhymes with “spoof”???)

Yes, we will all miss the raucous fun of our traditional Art & Service Auction this year. These are trying times, but we can still financially support our wonderful Fellowship as we all know “the bills go on.” This NEW EVENT, a first-ever **No Service/No Talent Do-It-Yourself Auction**, will be NON-TRADITIONAL and as much FUN as you can pack into an envelope and drop in the mail!

How, you might be asking, does this all work?

First of all, **pick your own date, pick your own time!** Prepare your favorite snack (or a multi-course lobster dinner?) and have the beverage of your choice (a cosmopolitan or a premium coffee?)

Now you’re ready to dive in whole hog to the **No Service/No Talent Do-It-Yourself Auction** action:

- ✓ Bid on as many (empty) baskets as you would like (you can even pick your own theme!)
- ✓ Look around your house and start bidding on any (silent auction) item you want. No worries about someone sneaking his/her signature in to snag a silent auction item away from you with a higher bid (unless any housemates are outbidding you!)
- ✓ No paltry 50-50 raffle to be found here: For this event we are featuring a “100% to PLUUF and 0% to you” raffle. Set your own ticket price -- how about 100 for \$10.00? (At only 10 cents a ticket your non-odds of winning will be greatly increased!)
- ✓ Looking for live auction action? Your “art” and “service” choices are literally limitless: Cook your own ethnic dinner? Order a delicious meal to be delivered by your favorite local restaurant? Do your own household chores? Declutter the basement or attic? Get out the finger paints or watercolors? Crochet yourself a tea cozy?
- ✓ Last but not least, let’s not forget the laughter: Tell a few jokes or amusing stories to your housemates or friends/family over the phone or FaceTime. Go “all in” and dress up crazy to entertain them. (Just a guess from observations made on traditional auction nights, but some boxed wine could be a big help. And wigs--in colors not found in nature--are mandatory!)

Let’s be generous as a way to show our appreciation to the people who put so much effort into making our (traditional) auctions fabulous events that have entertained us and generated thousands of dollars for our Fellowship. We owe the Cler, Bruce-Allington, Bruce-DeMuri, DeCramer, and Roost Families a big thank you for all they have done through the years.

Sooooo, please tally up all those items you have “won” (as you are also your own cashier) and write out your check.

Hope you’ve had a good time with this first ever
PLUUF “NO SERVICE/NO TALENT Do-It-Yourself” AUCTION

This form along with a self-addressed envelope will appear in your mail box before the end of the month.

(Thank you to Ellen Mueller for creating our first-ever No Art & Service Auction!)

A Message from Susan Frederick-Gray, UUA President

Editors note: Each week the UUA President sends messages and updates to over a 1000 UU Congregations. This is just a brief excerpt:

"I hope you are making time to care for your well-being. I learned a long time ago that in order to provide care for others, one also must care for oneself. A dry well offers no water. Taking care of yourself matters. Your life and well-being are valuable and needed."

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray spends her days strengthening the thriving mission of this faith. In her spare time, she enjoys being with her family and playing with their dog, Hercules.



Hello, PLUUF members and friends:

Tanya had asked me to share my thoughts about my social isolation. And I thought, "What could I write about that no one else has experienced?" In reality, nothing! I live alone; having put my last pet to sleep two years ago, I am truly hunkered down alone. That's probably true for a number of you as well. Others may be hunkered down with partners and family members – which might be going very well...or not. You might be envious of my solitude in that case. Today, I left the house twice: once, to do my bi-weekly grocery shopping; the other, to donate blood. This was an exciting day!

This past cycle in El Salvador, I took turns leading an afternoon Conversation Class in English. One student whom I'll call Martha was probably in her 60's. Martha lost her job in her 50's — a crisis in El Salvador which has no laws prohibiting age discrimination. (Most job descriptions list as a requirement: "...in his/her 30's." No kidding.) She tried desperately for five years to find work: "I would have done anything." Finally, she moved in with her parents even though her father had been extremely abusive of her.

Now, with both parents diagnosed with Alzheimer's, Martha has sole responsibility for their care. In the early weeks of our Conversation Class, she had help during the day Monday through Friday. At some point, the help quit. Unfortunately, then, Martha could not continue with the class. While she has two sisters, the one in El Salvador provides absolutely no support to her. The other, who now lives in Canada, somehow "supervises" the family finances, questioning every penny Martha spends.

To make matters worse, along came Covid-19 and absolute isolation for every single Salvadoran who's not in "essential services". In short, it is almost impossible to hire help because if you are out on the street without a very specific pass, you will be arrested and jailed. Period. So, Martha – who might weigh a 100 pounds wringing wet – must care for two wheelchair-bound parents, toileting them, getting them in and out of bed, cooking, laundering, feeding, bathing, etc. She does all this without any physical, emotional, or social support.

While we may feel antsy, desperate to see our friends and family, for most of us our challenges are far easier than Martha's. Let us be ever mindful that "this too shall pass" and remain grateful for whatever advantages we might have at our disposal. And ever mindful of the serious circumstances that others face—whether in our congregation or outside. Blessings on all.

Jill Stiemsma



ENGAGE Sunday Conversation: April 19, 2020

With Judy Harris

If you would like to be part of a group discussion,
e-mail Judy at jdlake@centurytel.net prior
to 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 19 so she can add you to the list or e-mail her for a
one-on-one discussion anytime between 10AM-11AM.

5th UU Principle: *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.*

The April 7th election was a disgrace. From our own Tammy Baldwin to Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, “horrific” and “outrageous” were words used to describe the horrendous mess. John Nichols, Associate Editor of the Capital Times, called it “the cruelest election in the history of Wisconsin...forcing voters to choose between sheltering at home and protecting themselves from the coronavirus pandemic, or exercising their right to vote.” Economist Paul Krugman wrote a column (“American Democracy May Be Dying”) that indicated WI was the beginning of the end of democracy in our country. Nonetheless, we saw “use of the democratic process... society at large” taking risks by standing in line for up to four hours to vote. Rather than “Democracy Dying,” the results of this determined effort on the part of our fellow Wisconsinites illustrate the “right of conscience and the use of the democratic process....”

While we hope to never hear that any one of the brave voters has contracted COVID-19, we need to acknowledge the courage and the positive results of their votes. First, a Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice whose values and decisions coincide close to those of many of us was elected despite the plethora of negative ads on TV. Big money and lots of negativity have invaded our airways for a decade now. Though not yet broadcast, a very important victory for the elimination of corporate monetary donations supporting candidates and the interests of their corporations instead of the rights of people has been fought since the U.S. Supreme Court ruling a decade ago: United to Amend, a nonpartisan group of Wisconsinites, has been working to pass community referendums and resolutions since 2010. The April 7th election ballot asked voters in 17 communities whether they would vote “yes” or “no” that “only people have a constitutional right to free speech” and “money is not ‘political speech.’” The results were overwhelming: All 17 passed, resulting in a total of 164 communities passing referendums to date, all with over 70% majorities. Both Ripon and Fond du Lac passed these referendums. Whether UU or not, the right of conscience and the democratic process have been at work in this election.

A 3rd result of the election on April 7th also offers hope: 22 additional communities supported an end to gerrymandering, “a process to

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manipulate the boundaries of (an electoral constituency) as to favor one party or class." As a result of gerrymandering, one political party has dominated both of WI Legislative Bodies. The April 7th WI election shows signs of hope: The Fair Elections Project notes "that Wisconsin wants to end partisan gerrymandering....In 2021, we have an opportunity to eliminate gerrymandering in Wisconsin, for action will begin after the Census data is collated." Marquette County is one of the 22 communities voting for the elimination of gerrymandering in this election, and Fond du Lac has passed this referendum. Once again, there is hope, for some Wisconsinites are using their consciences and the democratic process.

Despite the headlines noting the WI April 7th election is a "Precursor to the End of Democracy in America," we saw brave Wisconsinites determined to vote. They did, we did, and the result is a possibility to bring back fair government in Wisconsin. Certainly, voters on April 7th came from a variety of backgrounds from atheists to fundamentalists-- from rich to poor, from fed up to supporters. Certainly, UU's were a small minority. Let us celebrate the not-so-small victories of election April 7, 2020, and be pleased to see that our belief in the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process can be found in the society at large."

Judy Harris
4/18/2020

Sources:

Fair Elections Project Team
Fair Maps/Wisconsin Voices
Google Dictionary
Krugman, Paul "American Democracy May be Dying"
McCabe, Mike Executive Director "Our Wisconsin Revolution"
Nichols, John Capital Times



PRAIRIE LAKES UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CARE & CONCERN SIGN-UP SHEET

You can print this form, fill it out, and send it to: PLUUF 315 Eureka Street Ripon, WI 54971 or send an email to tanyapapermaker@gmail.com with a list of any way you would like to help

This document will be kept on file at Prairie Lakes and referred to as needs arise. Please remember: This is non-binding so don't be afraid to check several boxes ☺. Also, this document is not specific to care and concern during the pandemic, but a general form that will be used now and in the future. Any help you can offer will be greatly appreciated.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Email or Cell Phone Number

What time of day are you more generally available? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Daytime
- ☐ Evenings
- ☐ Overnight

I can provide the following supports: (Remember, this is non-binding. Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Meal preparation (daytime)
- ☐ Meal preparation (nighttime)
- ☐ Meal preparation (large batches)
- ☐ Making doctors appointments, calling about medication refills, similar scheduling tasks
- ☐ Running errands (picking up groceries, medications, etc.)
- ☐ Childcare (daytime)
- ☐ Childcare (nighttime)
- ☐ Childcare (overnight/extended)
- ☐ Childcare (experienced care for a child with high or specialized needs)
- ☐ Check in on elderly and/or disabled nearby
- ☐ Pet-sitting/dog-walking, etc.
- ☐ Emotional support (e.g., talking over the phone or in person with someone who's worried)
- ☐ Household cleaning
- ☐ Laundry
- ☐ Dishwashing
- ☐ Medical response
- ☐ Spare bed or comfortable couch
- ☐ Tech support
- ☐ Translation (Please list language under the "Other" option below)
- ☐ Translation (ASL)
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Religious/Spiritual ministry
- ☐ I can help donate to a common resource fund
- ☐ Other:

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If you marked any meal prep options on previous page, please list any particular cuisines that you are used to cooking (e.g., Italian, Vegan)?

Your answer _____

Are there any types of specialized meals for which your kitchen is particularly well suited (e.g., if your household doesn't use nuts, it would be a good pairing for someone who has a nut allergy)?

- ☐ Nut-free
- ☐ Dairy-free
- ☐ Gluten-free
- ☐ Other: _____

Are there any other supports that you think we should offer that aren't on the list above?

Your answer _____

Are there any supports that you've offered above for which you normally charge as part of your livelihood? Please list each one and your typical rate (while we want to offer these supports to each other for free, we also recognize the potential burden if this is a part of your livelihood, and we would like to make a plan to compensate you).

Your answer _____

What are some potential needs that you may have that would make it difficult for you to isolate at home? (e.g. lack of childcare, need for chronic disease medication, your work doesn't offer paid sick leave, you need regular deliveries due to a mobility disability, you have a personal care attendant for a disability who might also have specific needs as well, financial issues from loss of income, etc.)? What are some non-coronavirus related needs that you might have that currently make life difficult?

Your answer _____

Thank you for reviewing this form!

This form also appeared in our original April newsletter.
Thank you to all who have responded so far!

If you have a chance, please complete the form and send it to
Prairie Lakes 315 Eureka Street Ripon, WI 54971 or send an e-mail to
tanyapapermaker@gmail.com with a list of ways you would like to help.