



Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

DECEMBER 2020

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May the Spirit of this Holiday Season Bring you Hope, Peace & Love

PRAIRIE LAKES CALENDAR AT-A-GLANCE

ENGAGE Sunday, December 6: TBD

Worship Service Sunday, December 13: 10:00 AM Jill is creating a stay-at-home service focusing on Resilience, but we need your help. Tell us what you're doing to maintain your sanity during the pandemic. The details are on page 3.

ENGAGE Sunday, December 20: 10:00 AM TBD

Sunday, December 27: 10 AM: Although the filmed version of the Festival of Lights event will be available prior to this date, kick back, relax and enjoy the presentations of the 9 winter celebrations.

On November 19, PLUUF member Liz Buchanan had an idea: She suggested that PLUUF participate in the Ripon Chamber's Nights of Lights event. 10 days later Liz's family and many PLUUFers hammered, nailed, hung, strung and assembled a multitude of lights and decorations. Thank you to everyone who participated to make PLUUF shine bright for the holidays!



A Message from the Moderator by Linda DeCramer



I am grateful for inspiration and all those through whom it emanates and spreads into the world. During these dark and uncertain times, I am constantly inspired by the human experience, from the mundane to the grand. For some, simply getting out of bed and meeting the barest necessities of the day is a Herculean effort. The will and grit to face the day despite depression, sickness, physical pain, anxiety, etc., is HEROIC. Through struggle comes perspective and often great wisdom. I am inspired by the bravery of those who live through such challenges, and by their trust in sharing that experience with our PLUF community. It makes me proud of the "chosen family" we are to each other and inspires me to keep reaching out, to keep finding the light, and to be kind, kinder than is necessary.

I am also inspired by, and beyond grateful for, the many ways, big and small, PLUUFERS are hanging in, staying strong, and forging ahead. To all those who are keeping our Worship Services and ENGAGE Sundays going, to those creating safe in-person options, and to those who add energy by attending and participating - you are a constant source of inspiration and gratitude. I choose not to mention anyone specifically by name, as no matter who you are, or how you are contributing, the fact that you show up to share your passion, your struggles, your fear, your love, your frustration, your knowledge, your experience, your skills, etc., etc., the sharing of your humanity is inspiring.

Life, the Earth, the human condition are replete with unobserved effort. Consider a crocus growing up out of the snow, a tree growing from the side of a cliff - the effort in relation to the challenge is somewhat preposterous, yet the effort continues. That is PLUUF and the people who inhabit it - past, present, and future.

It is Time for a New Banner by Linda DeCramer



Then



Now

One of our PLUUF goals is to replace the faded LOVE banner on the south side of the building. It could be replaced with a preprinted banner purchased from the UUA or other UU organization. We previewed some electronically this past spring and could be happy with one or two of the identified favorites.

Or, we can think and act more expansively and impactfully in the community by creating a mural to share our messaging and / or history by showcasing famous Unitarians. Sam Luna of The Heist (remember the BLM mural on his building and the successful campaign to keep it) is keen to continue adding murals with messaging and imagery to celebrate positivity, history, and inclusivity in our community. PLUUF could be part of that movement too and a committee to chart that path is needed.

Are you interested in participating, via Zoom meetings, on this committee?

If yes, contact lindadecramer@yahoo.com

December Worship Services by Jill Stiemsma



Oh, this strange and challenging year is coming to a close. May there be much rejoicing and reunion in the next few months!!! I do want to thank all of you who contributed to our annual Gratitude Service. Your messages were so heartfelt. Blessings!

Because of your many contributions, I'm asking you to contribute one more time. The December 13th service will focus on Resilience...especially the resilience we'll need to weather an isolated Christmas. As I requested in my emails,

Tell me what you're doing to maintain your sanity during the pandemic. Please avoid giving others "advice". Rather, what are you doing that keeps you mentally alert, physically and spiritually well, and emotionally stable. As with the Gratitude Service, I'll publish your responses in the next service. However, not to be Pollyanna-ish, feel free to describe how you're struggling, what pressing issues most limit your resilience.

Thanks! Due date: Friday, December 4

As you're aware, Tanya has been diligently working on development of a videotaped Festivals of Light. Thank you, Tanya!! We will use a link to it as our December 27th service.

May you find peace in this holiday season, whether you remain almost totally isolated or in the company of the few in your "bubble". Stay well, my friends.

Jill Stiemsma

Move to Amend Ballot Results Are In

About a month ago Judy Harris of the Social Justice Committee sent members of Prairie Lakes information about Wisconsin United to Amend (wiuta.org) and Move to Amend (movetoamend.org) organizations working to overturn the Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in a case known as Citizens United vs FEC, which struck down as unconstitutional a federal law prohibiting corporations and unions from making expenditures in connection with federal Elections. Commonly referred to as "Citizens United," Judy explained that this ruling runs contrary to our UU principles by paving the way for greed and profit-oriented power to infuse exorbitant levels of money into political campaigns.

A ballot was included with the information and members of PLUUF voted "Aye" or "Nay" to join with other organizations statewide and nationally to instruct our state and federal representatives to enact resolutions and legislation to advance this effort.

Out of the 75% of PLUUF members who returned their ballots, 100% voted "Aye"

Collection for the Food Pantries



Every December PLUUF collects items or monetary donations for the Ripon Food Pantry. Since we will not be gathering in-person please consider making a donation to your local food pantry. Here are a few suggestions:

- Nut butters, including peanut, almond & walnut
- Canned fish, such as tuna or salmon
- Canned vegetables and fruit
- Canned or boxed soups & stews
- Pureed foods, such as sweet potato, pumpkin and applesauce
- Consider a monetary donation

What Is Chalica?

Chalica is a week-long celebration of our Unitarian Universalist Principles. The holiday first emerged in 2005 out of a wish to have a holiday organized around Unitarian Universalist values.

Chalica begins on the first Monday in December and lasts seven days. Each day, a chalice is lit and the day is spent reflecting on the meaning of that day's principle and doing a good deed that honors that principle. Not all Unitarian Universalists celebrate Chalica, but it has a growing following. There is a Chalica Facebook page, blog, and many Chalica-themed videos on YouTube. Find out more about Chalica in the Prairie Lakes Festivals of Light video. See below:



**Prairie Lakes
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship**
proudly presents

FESTIVALS OF LIGHT
Video Premiere
Coming Soon!

Chalica
Kwanzaa
Winter Solstice
Las Posadas
St. Lucia's Day
Diwali
Bodhi Day
Hanukkah
Christmas

A behind the scenes sneak peak:



In Case You Missed It In November

ENGAGE Sunday, November 1

Part II of Faith and Politics: Trying to Mix Oil and Water
With Rev. Ben Konecny and Brian Smith on YouTube



In October we shared a Zoom conversation between Rev. Ben Konecny and Brian Smith titled "Faith and Politics." They had another discussion and PLUUF shared the link to "Part II of Faith and Politics: Trying to Mix Oil and Water."



Stay-at-Home Worship Service November 8

Buddhism and UU Principles
With Jill Stiemsma



Jill created a do-it-yourself worship service that examined the intersection of Buddhist and UU Principles. We hope it brought you hope and comfort in this stressful political environment.

If you would like to discuss the service with Jill or would like a copy, she can be reached at: jstiemsma@icloud.com

Rev. Ben and Brian were inspired to have these discussions because the country is very much divided as we approach the elections and religion is one major factor causing division in politics.

Faith and politics – part two (49 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnXz0QVhHOI>

ENGAGE Sunday, November 15

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe with Jerry Davidson & Judy Harris via ZOOM



Judy Harris and Jerry Davidson led a discussion via Zoom to learn the history of the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe, the tribe that greeted the first Pilgrims arriving in our country. They explained why PLUUF chose to support them financially and gave suggestions on action we can take to support the tribe. The full discussion can be found on PLUUF's Facebook page.



Stay-at-Home Worship Service November 22

Annual Gratitude Service
With Jill Stiemsma and

Members & Friends as Contributing Writers

This excerpt was taken from Jill's Reflection, "The Koran suggests that followers have two obligations, one of which is 'gratitude' (actually, the Arabic word "infidel" is shaded more toward "one who lacks thankfulness" than one who disbelieves). The more gratitude one feels, the more natural it feels to let the bounty that has entered flow through one's life and on to others, for to hoard it would be as unnatural as trying to dam a waterfall. The ingrate, hiding or covering up God's blessings, thereby fails to enjoy the link with the Creator that every moment provides" (Huston Smith in *The World's Religions*).

5th Sunday, November 29

Decorating PLUUF for the Nights of Lights Event



McKinley and Lilly took a much-deserved cocoa break after a busy morning of decorating.

Thank you to everyone who helped!



Administrative Manager Report by Tanya Schwartz-Roeper

It has been so much FUN working on the Festivals of Light video production! So far we have had four filming sessions and I'm grateful to everyone who has participated. As I type this, the final filming session takes place tonight! I'm estimating approximately a week to finish editing. We hope to have a film debut sometime in mid-December.

I realize this is the time of year we accumulate stacks of envelopes from non-profits requesting monetary gifts. Soon you will find that PLUUF, too, has sent a card to you with an enclosed envelope. We have so much to be proud of at Prairie Lakes, please consider making PLUUF one of your giving priorities. Whether you send a check, make a monthly pledge, or write a note indicating how you would like to volunteer, you will be making PLUUF a priority in your life for which we are grateful.



Every Spring Beth Howman-Combs fills the PLUUF planter with an array of beautiful flowers. After the Nights of Lights decorating event on November 29, she returned to fill the pot with a gorgeous array of Evergreens, dried Hydrangea, dogwood and more.

Thank you Beth; it is gorgeous and festive!

Board of Directors*

Moderator

Linda DeCramer

Secretary

Robyn Davis-Bartow

Treasurer

Jim Goyette

At Large Representative

Joe Hatcher

At Large Representative

Jessica French

Staff Position

Administrator Manager

Tanya Schwartz-Roeper

Treasurer's Report as of November 30, 2020

	November 2020	Year to Date	Annual Budget
Income	\$1,345	\$6,638	\$26,610
Expenses	\$1,600	\$8,256	\$31,610

Detailed monthly financial reports are always available at PLUUF or by request: tanyapapermaker@gmail.com

*Past and present board minutes and detailed treasurer reports are available for viewing at the fellowship or obtain a copy by request.

Board meetings take place on the Wednesday after the 2nd Sunday of the month. If there is anything you'd like to put on the agenda, please contact Linda DeCramer lindadecramer@yahoo.com or Robyn Davis-Bartow robinaudrey19@gmail.com least one week in advance.