



Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

CALENDAR AT-A-GLANCE

(Details on Page 2)

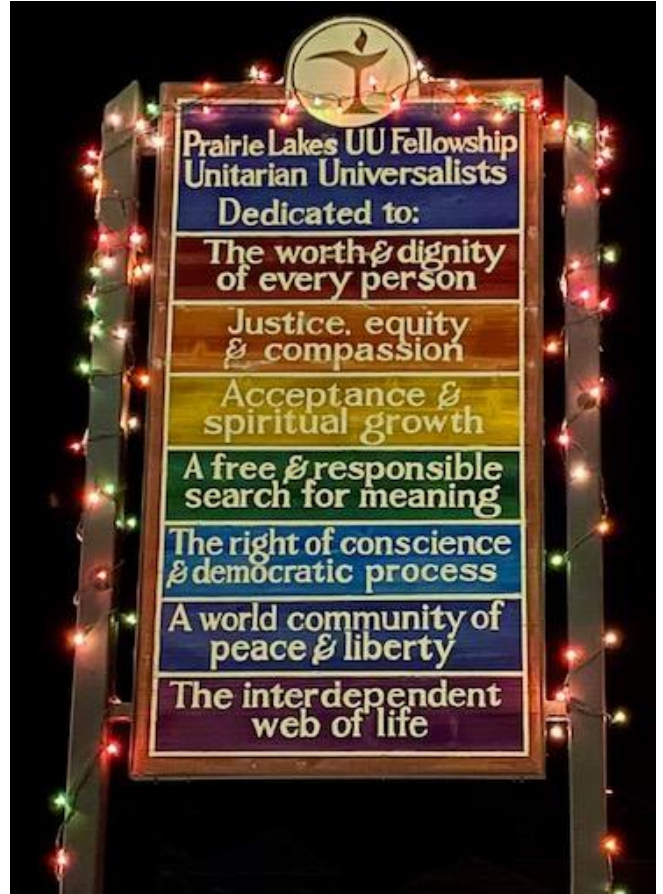
ENGAGE Sunday December 4 at 10AM
with **Becky Feyen**
Becoming the People We Want To Be

Sunday, December 11, Worship Service
10AM with Connie Ghinnazi
'Tis the Season of Expectations

Sunday, December 18, 10 AM
Festivals of Light
Please bring guests!

Saturday, December 24, 10 AM
Piano Music with **Jill Stiemsma** and
Walk the Winter Spiral with
Robyn Davis-Bartow

Reminder: PLUUF will be closed 12/25



Congratulations to PLUUF!
Rev. Michael J. Crumpler, LGBTQ and Multicultural Programs Director for the UUA, has notified Prairie Lakes that we successfully completed the Five Practices of Welcome Renewal for 2022! He congratulated Prairie Lakes on our ongoing commitment to LGBTQ+ welcome and inclusion in and beyond Ripon, WI.

DECEMBER ENGAGE & WORSHIP SERVICE EVENTS

ENGAGE is an acronym for

Explore | No Boundaries | Gather | Activism | Go! Be the Change | Educate



ENGAGE Sunday, December 4, 10:00 AM with Becky Feyen
Becoming the People We Want to Be based on Rev. Susan Fredrick-Gray's President report. The quotable points are, "Who will we be? How are we called? How is love calling us?" Closing with "We are the people we have been waiting for. May we be, may we be the people that we are called to be" (Rev. Susan Fredrick Gray). The journey we will take is from the outward want of actions based on external cues, basically the science & tools to form action. Then we move to an inward exploration of our 'birth-gift vocation' centered on a book by Parker Palmer. In conclusion we will seek insight from the history of Unitarian Universalism to foster a community approach to becoming the people we want (or better yet, ARE CALLED) to be.



Worship Service Sunday, December 11, 10:00 AM

'Tis the Season of Expectations with Connie Ghinazzi

December is the month that often slams us up against our expectations and our reality and can make this a most stressful season of the year. Connie Ghinazzi will help us understand what it means to be UU people of expectation. Ponder these words from Mary Oliver: "I don't want to end up simply having visited this world. To pay attention, this is our endless and proper work."

Prairie Lakes
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

FESTIVALS OF LIGHT

Sunday, December 18, 2022

Doors open:
9:30 AM

Program Begins:
10 AM

315 Eureka Street, Ripon, WI
pluufripon@gmail.com

Potluck to follow

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



Sunday, December 18, 10:00 AM

FESTIVALS OF LIGHT

This has become a beloved annual PLUUF event through the years. We'll celebrate 9 winter festivals with presentations, music and food! Please bring guests!



Saturday, December 24, 10:00 AM

A morning of music with Jill Stiemsma and a Spiral Walk with Robyn Davis-Bartow. During the Spiral Walk, we celebrate the turning point in the year when the days become their shortest and the night its longest, and we look for the light which comes from within. In the center of the spiral, a single candle is lit.

Each participant walks the spiral alone to the center of the spiral, where they light their own candle to place along the spiral. When all the participants have walked the path, the whole spiral is aglow with lights. This will be an indoor event.

A Message from the Moderator by Robyn Davis-Bartow



Normally I greet people with “Happy Holidays!” or “Merry Christmas!” this time of year. Upon reflection however, “Season’s Greetings” seems more appropriate. Not that I don’t wish joy and well being for you all, but I want to acknowledge that this time of year may mean many different things for many people. For some it may be a time of excitement and cheer. For others a struggle that emphasizes loss or grief. Some may find it simply overwhelming while others crave more. As I look ahead at the schedule our amazing Prairie Lakes members have put together this month, I am profoundly pleased to see that the services in store reflect the complexity of the season.

As some of you know, a few weeks ago I had the opportunity to spend some time on a retreat at Dai Bosatsu, a traditional Japanese Zen Buddhist monastery in the Catskill mountains of New York. It was a profoundly intense, difficult, and beautiful experience with many insights gleaned. As a staff member on this retreat, I had a number of responsibilities such as lighting and putting out candles at the correct time, scrubbing floors, and playing a wooden drum during services. While there were many opportunities to report and receive feedback on one’s mistakes, for me, the greatest lesson learned was the need to focus on the things I accomplished correctly throughout each day. If I only looked at the errors made by myself and others, I got to meditate in silence with anxiety and a spinning judgmental mind as companions. Not very pleasant! However, when focus was shifted to appreciating what worked well instead of the myriad mistakes, a sense of relaxed joy, wellbeing, and peaceful serenity filled my experience on the cushion. To summarize in the quote attributed to Voltaire, “The perfect is the enemy of the good”.

During this holiday season, the practice I wish for all of us is not letting the perfect get in the way of the good. For some, family gatherings often hold challenges that strain equanimity. For others, the lack of family gatherings during this season provides another kind of challenge. Similarly, as we all know, American consumerism goes into overdrive while others go without. But much good abounds during the holidays as well. Generosity and beauty flourish. As we enter this time, let us celebrate the season as a PLUUF family, with intention to seek out the positive and bright. Season’s Greetings to all.

Message from the Newsletter Editor

Suggested topics and content for the newsletter are always appreciated. If there’s anything you would like to add, contact Tanya at tanyapapermaker@gmail.com by the 24th of each month.



PLUUF December Birthdays

This month we celebrate the birth of Pat Dobrinska on the 1st!! Happy Birthday Pat!

Don't see yourself listed? Please let us know! Email Robyn at robynaudrey19@gmail.com.

Note: In an attempt to try something a little new, the Care and Concern committee is putting together a list of birthdays (month and day only) for all PLUUF members and friends. Please pass this information on to Robyn at robynaudrey19@gmail.com or 920-896-2770 Also, if you do not want your birthday noted in the monthly newsletter, please let us know.

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



On behalf of the Board of Directors of Prairie Lakes, we'd like to thank you for your contributions so far this fiscal year. Whether you've made arrangements for direct monthly transfers to PLUUF from your bank, write out monthly or bimonthly pledge checks or contribute to Sunday's Loose Offering, we are grateful!

During the holiday season we invite you to make a special offering. Your generosity will help Prairie Lakes continue to fulfill its vision, mission and goals.

Warmest Wishes from the
Board of Directors at
Prairie Lakes
UU Fellowship

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A Message from UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray

(Reprinted from the UUA Newsletter | November 2022)

This is a busy time of year for so many. Seasonally, we are in a transitional period, with possibilities for connection and celebration over the holidays, as well as experiences of grief and letting go. We are living in what I have come to call a liminal time. “Liminal” means a time in between, when what has been is no longer and what is next is not yet here.

The pandemic moved many congregations into virtual and hybrid gatherings and the ways in which people connect to religious community are changing. I can relate to that sense of liminality as I finish my last year as your UUA President and the UUA prepares to welcome a new President, to be elected by delegates at the next General Assembly (GA) in June 2023, online and in Pittsburgh, PA.

Another very significant change happening in Unitarian Universalism comes through the dedicated work of the UUA’s Article II Study Commission (A2SC). Article II is the section in our UUA bylaws that contains the Purposes, 7 UU Principles and our Sources. Charged to review Article II, the Commission has held thoughtful discussions online, at General Assemblies and with groups of leaders across our Association.

This fall, the A2SC incorporated the extensive input from individuals, groups and congregations and developed an initial draft of a new Article II. You are invited to review the new draft text and share your feedback with the Commission online. [Review Article II Draft](#)

Please share this conversation in your congregation! It is so important that all of our congregations and leaders are aware of the process to renew Article II. The A2SC will submit a final draft of Article II to the UUA Board of Trustees in January 2023. Then, both the Board and congregational delegates can offer amendments to the proposal in the lead-up to GA in June. More information will be available early next year, so please begin planning your congregation’s engagement in the process. The first vote on the A2SC’s proposal will occur at GA.

With so much change and transition, it can be easy to feel uncertain or anxious, and we can lean on one another for support. Recognizing all the ways we are in transition, I created a sermon exploring how we embrace possibility in times of change. There is always some grief in change, because it requires letting go. Yet, there is also possibility and growth that is only possible in times of change, so there is value in learning to open our hearts to this experience.

The sermon is part of a video worship collection available through UUA WorshipWeb at [UUA.org/change](https://www.uua.org/change). Each video can be used on its own or together to supplement congregational worship or other programming.

Your Unitarian Universalist Association is here because of the commitment congregations have made to each other to support a broader Association that can amplify and strengthen our shared values, support congregations and leaders in times of need, and be more than any of us can be on our own. We are committed, steadfast partners with you in this liminal time and in all that is ahead.

I send you all my love and blessings.

Love, Susan

Rev. Dr. 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.



In Case You Missed it in November

ENGAGE Sunday, November 6

***Reconciling Women's History With the Present and Looking to the Future* with Pat Dobrinska and Judy Morgan**

Judy & Pat presented an overview of the present and future of women's rights with regard to the workplace, financial freedom, education, equal pay, sexual violence and sexual freedom.



Worship Service Sunday, November 13, Plus Potluck & Children's RE

***Veterans Day: They Will Find the Streets of Heaven are Guarded by United States Marines* with Shane Beegle**

Shane Beegle (United States Marine Veteran, current Army National Guard Soldier) spoke about the history and purpose of Veterans day, the correct spelling of this National holiday, religious/spiritual freedom within the military and how Unitarian Universalists can support warriors while fighting for universal peace.



ENGAGE Sunday, November 20

***Asylum Seekers: True Stories From Our Border* with Kat Griffith**

Kat talked about what's really going on with the migrants coming to our southern border. She shared where they are from, why they are coming, and how they are faring. This presentation combined data, personal experience, individual migrant stories and lots of photos to illuminate the last few years of the situation at our southern border. An offering of \$431 was collected for an asylum seeker living in Ripon. Kat Griffith and Tanya Schwartz-Roeper delivered the gift in person. The asylum seeker was overwhelmed with gratitude. Thank you to all the generous donors.



Worship Service Sunday, November 27, and Children's RE & Potluck

***The Gift of Gratitude: The Virtue that Keeps on Giving* with Dr. Paul Jeffries of Ripon College**

We explored the nature of gratitude and why many consider one of the virtues that can bring much joy in its cultivation. It helps us rejoice in what has taken place and in what actually is. We examined if we can find more ways to make gratitude a more central element of our lives and journeys during this season of Thanksgiving. The service concluded with the children in attendance performing the song "You'll Never Walk Alone" in American Sign Language while Linda DeCramer sang and Jill Stiemsma provided piano accompaniment. A special 4th Sunday potluck was held.

