



September 2023 Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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SEPTEMBER ENGAGE & WORSHIP SERVICE EVENTS



Saturday, September 2: 2nd Annual Jean Johnson Memorial Paddle & Picnic Event launching from Spring Valley Park at W2269-W2299 Spring Lake Road, Ripon (Green Lake County). A picnic potluck brunch will be set up near the Spring Lake landing. Details on page 3.



ENGAGE Sunday, September 3, Article II Study Commission Report to UUA Board of Trustees - Video Presentation & Discussion. To follow up the 8/20 presentation on Article II, we will view a video by the group of people commissioned to review the current UUA bylaws & find a way forward for Unitarian Universalists. After 35(+) years, the guiding foundation of UUA bylaws are being adapted, taking into consideration several challenges made to the current 7 Principles for several years.



Worship Service Sunday, September 10, 10:00 AM Plus Potluck Annual Water Sharing/In Gathering (Intergenerational) This time of year begins another season of Ingathering, when Unitarian Universalists come together to renew our commitments to each other and to our communities. If you've not participated in this service previously, the service provides an opportunity to share your summer expeditions and water from those places you visited. We'll co-mingle the waters as a symbol of our solidarity. Don't have water? No problem. We'll provide some for you. Liz Buchanan-Beegle looks forward to leading this service.



ENGAGE Sunday, September 17, 10:00 AM with Jill Stiemsma. Parliament of World Religions 2023 – A Call to Conscience: Defending Human Rights Jill Stiemsma attended this year's Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago. We are fortunate to have a first-hand account of the experience. Jill will spotlight the threats to human rights in China, Myanmar, and India specifically; although these situations are bell weathers to the threats posed here in the US by (supposed) Christian nationalists. "This was not a cheery Parliament!"



Worship Service Sunday, September 24, 10:00 AM Celebrate the Harvest with Mandy Kimes (Intergenerational) Bring fresh produce from your garden or from the Farmer's Market to share with local food programs. Let's show our gratitude for the fall harvest and our ability to share with others. *(Editor's note: Many Kimes has been the Executive Director of the Ripon Area Chamber of Commerce since June 2022. We look forward to her visit to PLUUF!)*

A Message from the Moderator by Becky Feyen



Happy Fall! How is it possible that we are already at this seasonal change? It is repeatedly stated, the only constant is change. The progression of life is change. Along with the cycling of season is the transformation of all that exists on this planet & beyond. Every aspect of our life changes throughout the years. Some changes we consider good, others we consider bad & as the old fable states, “Good thing, bad thing, who’s to say?” Yes, truly some things are bad/painful & other are good/joyous, with the most critical aspect of good or bad being our perspective & reaction to the changes.

Unitarian Universalists & our Fellowship are addressing BIG CHANGES to the guiding structure of our religious organization. The UUA bylaws Article II containing our 7 Principles & Living Tradition re-write has passed step 1 of a 2-step voting process that will be finalized June of 2024. If you, like me, missed ENGAGE Sunday 8/20 outlining the changes we will revisit this important topic. Essentially, the new Article II is directing the focus away from Principles toward Values & Covenant. The Sources of our Living Tradition is transitioning to Inspirations of the sacred & secular.

6 UU values based around *Love*: *Interdependence* | *Pluralism* | *Justice* | *Transformation* | *Generosity* | *Equity*

I will be happy to forward detailed information, or the UUA website has extensive background & explanations, just search “Article II”. The crazy thing is, when the proposed 8th Principle was in the forefront of our discussion, I thought the UUA should re-visit all 7 Principles for a complete restructure. Be careful what you wish for. Yes, there are aspects I wish they had maintained to make the transition easier – mostly the visuals: colors & number. The content is similar with an updated expansive yet personal responsibility.

I am closing with a January 2023 message from former UUA President, Susan Frederick-Gray, “My hope for us as Unitarian Universalists is that we approach this discernment about Article II with... openness. May we enter our conversations with a spirit of curiosity, holding off attachment to outcomes, and listen with our whole hearts and to the fullness and diversity of voices in our community. May the process itself deepen our understanding of and commitment to our faith.”

Love to all –

Becky

(Editor’s Note: To read past UUA President, Susan Frederick-Gray’s newsletter in more detail see page 4)



PLUUF September Birthdays

This month we celebrate the birth of Spud Hannaford on 9/28! Happy Birthday Spud!!

Don’t see yourself listed? Please let us know! Email Robyn at robinaudrey19@gmail.com. 920-896-2770.

2nd annual Jean Johnson Memorial Paddle & Picnic Adventure

Let's celebrate the memory of Jean Johnson! Arrive at the Spring Lake landing at Spring Valley Park, Ripon (Green Lake County). Participants will paddle beautiful and serene Spring Lake and return to the landing for a potluck picnic brunch and an opportunity to learn more about Jean Johnson.



When: Saturday, September 2

Time: 9:30 AM arrival | On the water by 10AM

Where: Spring Valley Park W2269-W2299 Spring Lake Road, Ripon. (You can Google Map it by typing in Spring Valley Park, Ripon, WI)

What to Bring:

- Your beverage of choice
- Life jacket (a few extras will be available if you don't have one)
- Canoe or kayak or rowboat (please no motorized boats). *Paddling is optional, you can join us just for the potluck if you wish.*
- Something for the Potluck (opt)
- A limited number of chairs will be provided so bring one if you can
- A memory of Jean Johnson to share if you knew her

An RSVP is recommended but not required. If you have questions or would like to RSVP, contact tanyapapermaker@gmail.com

Volunteer Spotlight: Judy Morgan



2023 marked the 2nd year of PLUUF's Sharing Garden. Tomatoes, peppers, carrots and more were planted in the spring by Judy and others and kept weeded and watered during this dry summer. When there are enough vegetables to collect, Judy harvests and delivers to the Ripon Food Pantry.

SHARING GARDEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR 2024!

Judy has announced she will be unable to chair the Sharing Garden Committee next year and we're looking for more volunteers. If you're interested in joining Beth Howman-Combs and Becky Feyen on this committee, please contact tanyapapermaker@gmail.com

From the UUA President: New Proposal for UU Principles and Purpose

Reprinted in-part from the UUA January Newsletter by Susan Frederick-Gray

We are currently in a multi-year process to consider changes to our UUA Principles and Purpose. This process formally began in 2020 when the UUA Board appointed an Article II Study Commission. This is a dry name for such important work. The reason is our Principles, Purpose, covenant and Sources are contained in Article II of the UUA Bylaws.

Our seven Principles and six Sources, adopted in 1985, represented a substantial change from what preceded them. Our seven Principles and six Sources – which we know and love – were adopted in 1985. They offered a substantial (even radical) change from what preceded them. The changes came through years of effort by UU women, particularly the UU Women’s Federation, to push for gender equality in UUism, support for women in the ministry and to eliminate sexist language from our bylaws, hymns, and yes, from the version of Article II passed in 1961 (at the time of merger).

But the changes didn’t just address gender, they made significant language changes that reflected the times. It removed language of God, man, and brotherhood, but also added the language of interdependence and added sources reflecting the growing theological diversity shaping our tradition.

As a lifelong UU, coming of age after these changes, I am grateful. They changed our movement in ways that were important for the success of women leaders, ministers, and for me, as our first elected woman president. These changes, at the time, brought fierce dissent. But more, they inspired excitement and possibility.

Why Review Our UU Principles and Purpose?

In the mid-2010’s, the ground began to shift again – much as it did in response to the women’s movement. The emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement, the election of Donald Trump with his racist and misogynist campaign, and the urgent calls to confront white supremacy culture in our own movement – all of these compelled UUs to ask questions about whether our Principles reflected fully who we are and who we need to be.

By the 2017 General Assembly, there were multiple grassroots efforts to change our Principles. The first was overwhelmingly adopted – to change “prophetic women and men” to “prophetic people” to move beyond gender binary. There was also a proposal to change the first principle from “the inherent worth and dignity of all people” to the “inherent worth and dignity of all beings.” This proposal was ultimately tabled as delegates grappled with the reality that we still had a lot of work on living the first Principle for people. Discussions of the Eighth Principle were also taking place and by 2020, hundreds of UU congregations had adopted it! The Eighth Principle recognized the need to go beyond aspirational Principles to articulate commitments to dismantle systems of oppression – calling us from aspiration to action.

It was within this context that your UUA Board appointed an Article II Study Commission to integrate these conversations and lead a discernment process for our whole Association about our core values, covenant, and purpose. The Board gave the Commission [a broad charge](#) to review, change, or reimagine Article II to “enable our UUA, our member congregations, and our covenanted communities to be a relevant and powerful force for spiritual and moral growth, healing, and justice.”

After two and a half years of study and conversations with thousands of Unitarian Universalists, the Article II Study Commission submitted their final report and proposal to the UUA Board for its January 20th meeting.

The final proposal will require a two thirds majority vote at GA 2024 to be adopted.

My hope for us as Unitarian Universalists is that we approach this discernment about Article II with openness. May we enter our conversations with a spirit of curiosity, holding off attachment to outcomes, and listen with our whole hearts and to the fullness and diversity of voices in our community. May the process itself deepen our understanding of and commitment to our faith.



A Message from Dr. Brian Smith

(Editor's note: Dr. Brian Smith led the 8/27 Worship Service. Below is a message from Brian to the congregation that includes the information regarding the upcoming book discussion he'll be leading with Pastor Karen from the Federated Church. This will take place on Thursday nights from September 14- November 16 via ZOOM from 6:30-7:30pm. (Details are in the pdf attachment)

Brian's message:

Such a joy to be with you all yesterday at PLUUF. You are very special people and I always enjoy visiting the fellowship, especially the conversation after my talks. What thoughtful members you have, all seekers of wisdom.

Keep up the fine work you all are doing to promote wisdom and spirituality in the fellowship.

Here is a paragraph about the ZOOM book discussion I will be doing with Pastor Karen at Federated Church, [A Theology of Migration: The Body of Refugees and the Body of Christ](#). It is written from a Christian/Catholic perspective but offers much for reflection for all.

I am also attaching a (PDF) document with more information about the author, book and reading schedule. Feel free to share that as well if you wish.

Brian Smith, retired professor of Religion at Ripon College, invites members of PLUUF to join him in a ZOOM discussion of a book focusing on the biblical, theological and sacramental implications of migration. Brian and Rev. Karen Gygax Rodriguez, Pastor of the Federated Church in Green Lake, will moderate an online discussion for 10 Thursday evenings in the Fall (6:30 to 7:30 PM) from Sept. 14th to Nov. 16th on Fr. Dan Groody's book, [A Theology of Migration: The Bodies of Refugees and the Body of Christ](#). Fr. Groody teaches at the University of Notre Dame and has done extensive pastoral work among migrants and refugees. Anyone interested can contact Brian at bhsmith801@gmail.com or at home (920)748-9229.

Peace!

Brian

Brian H. Smith is a Lecturer in the Online and Continuing Education (OCE) program at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (UWO) where he teaches courses in world religions to nontraditional adult students. He is Professor Emeritus of Religion at Ripon College where he taught from 1987-2020. He was an Associate Professor of Political Science at MIT.

On August 27, Brian led a PLUUF Worship Service entitled, "Religion VS Spirituality." (See summary on next page). It was a wonderful morning at Prairie Lakes! We were delighted with the turnout and surprise visitor, Barbara Lukas! Barbara was one of PLUUF's co-founders but lives in Fond du Lac and no longer attends PLUUF on a regular basis. She's standing next to a wall hanging she made many years ago.



In Case You Missed it in August



ENGAGE Sunday, August 6, Field Trip to Oshkosh Public Museum

We were inspired by the presentation of Emily Rock from the Oshkosh Public Museum so a few individuals took a 'field trip' to the Oshkosh Museum to see *The Voices of Native American Art – Telling Our Story* exhibition is currently on display at the Museum through October 8.



August 8: Youth Group Summer Programming: Movie at the Ripon Public Library with snacks.

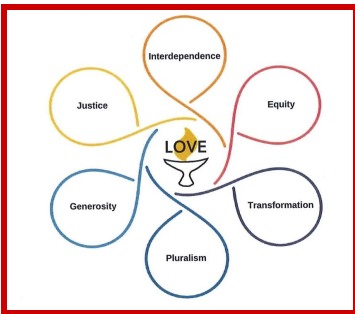
Our first ever summer Youth Group programming was a hit! Program Coordinator Liz Buchanan-Beegle scheduled once-a-month events for the kids of Prairie Lakes throughout the summer. August concluded the programming with a showing of the new Mario movie at the Ripon Public Library. The kids were treated to fresh popped popcorn, beverages and other snacks. It was an afternoon of FUN!



Worship Service Sunday, August 13, Plus Potluck with Connie Ghinazzi "Sacred spaces." Connie Ghinazzi shared her lifelong fascination with the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright and how his unitarian upbringing informed his work. Via slideshow, Connie shared some of his most iconic work and also explored what makes a space sacred for each of us. After the presentation, members of the congregation described their own sacred places.

ENGAGE Sunday, August 20: What's New at the UUA created by Becky Feyen & led by Judy Harris

Judy presented the UUA Article II study commission proposal (see page 4) and gave the congregation an opportunity to comment and discuss. She also shared background information on the new UUA president, Dr. Sofia Bentancourt. The proposed image to the left depicts love as the center of UU theology. The conversation will continue on ENGAGE Sunday, Oct 1.



Worship Service Sunday, August 27 with Dr. Brian Smith: Religion vs Spirituality.

Religion and spirituality should reinforce one another. Religion (literally "tying together again and again") grows out of a mystical experience of the mystery and beauty of the universe, which is spirituality. Religion is a human effort to "tie up repeatedly" or rekindle this mystical experience with several constructs among members over time -- stories, doctrines, rituals, ethical teachings, institutions and communities. Spirituality or mystical experience, however, is the

purpose and soul of genuine religion. When the constructs of a religion fail to nourish the mystical among its members, they seek spirituality elsewhere. Religion is but a means for something more profound and necessary for human life – spirituality. We do not live by bread alone.

Brian's Reflection served as a catalyst for a very meaningful discussion during Congregational Sharing. If you would like a transcript contact tanyapapermaker@gmail.com