

Prairie Lakes
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
315 Eureka Street, Ripon, WI 54971
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DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

ENGAGE is an acronym for

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

ENGAGE Sunday, December 3, 10:00 AM with Becky Feyen



Joy to The World – The Unitarian Approach This proclaimed season of joy can be difficult to embrace for countless heartbreaking & infuriating reasons. It is especially complicated if you do not embrace the glorious religious celebrations of this time of year. It is so easy to be down about life in general without the pressure to feel & act joyous. Yet, joy is what is needed to progress beyond the challenges of our world & this dark cold season. We will discuss what joy is, why it is vital to our existence and how as UU's we can embrace this holiday season to create joy & share it with the world.



Worship Service Sunday, December 10, 10:00 AM 2nd Sunday Potluck **Finding Our Balance** with Connie Ghinazzi

At this very busy time of year, it can feel like we are being pulled in multiple directions. This service will allow us to examine what is balance for each of us and what we need to do to achieve it. A quote to consider from psychologist, Erik Erikson. "The richest and fullest lives attempt to achieve an inner balance between three realms: work, love and play."



ENGAGE Sunday, December 17, 10:00 AM **FESTIVALS OF LIGHT** and special Holiday Potluck to follow

This has become a beloved annual PLUUF event through the years and this year we will have special musical guests. We'll celebrate winter festivals with presentations, music and food! Please spread the word and bring friends and family! (See page 2 for more details)

Worship Service Sunday, December 24, 10:00 AM

Please join us for a **Spiral Walk** with Robyn Davis-Bartow and fresh made **Cinnamon Rolls** with Liz Buchanan-Beegle. 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.



5th Sunday, December 31, No Programming scheduled at this time.

Prairie Lakes
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
FESTIVALS OF LIGHT

Sunday, December 17, 2023



The presentation of 9 winter celebrations
observed around the world.
Live music, food & refreshments

Doors open at 9:30
Program begins at 10 AM

315 Eureka Street, Ripon, WI
Potluck to follow

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

Please Bring Friends and Family to our Annual Festivals of Light Event. Special music coordinated by PLUUF friend Sherman Leatherberry. Presentation of the Winter Celebrations by members and friends of Prairie Lakes.

Youth Group Holiday Party!

When: Tuesday, December 19

Time: 4:00 - 7PM.

All kids are welcome to join us for pizza, holiday movies, cookie decorating and ornament making.

If you have questions contact Liz at liz.buchananbeegle@gmail.com



PLUUF December Birthdays

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

Don't see yourself listed? Please let us know! Email Robyn at robinaudrey19@gmail.com



ENGAGE Sunday Programming to Continue

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

Last month, it was announced that PLUUF's 1st & 3rd ENGAGE Sundays were going to go on hiatus beginning in January and until the end of the fiscal year on June 30. ENGAGE programming began in 2016 when time and funds for coordinating 4 Worship services a month was no longer feasible. ENGAGE Sundays were proposed as a

way to allow members and friends to share their interests, concerns & ideas with the community. The change from an every Sunday Worship Service format to the new ENGAGE Sunday format revitalized the Fellowship.

Becky Feyen created this concept seven years ago and with the assistance of Judy Harris, the two chaired the ENGAGE committee from 2016 to present with consistent 1st & 3rd Sunday programming. Recently, however, the model of 2 Worship Services and 2 ENGAGE Sundays per month has proved challenging for our small congregation. It was decided to put ENGAGE Sundays on hold beginning in January and conduct a vote at the Annual Meeting in May to decide if 1st & 3rd Sundays should continue.

We are delighted to announce that five Prairie Lakes members have stepped up to serve as ENGAGE organizers and keep the ENGAGE Sunday format on 1st & 3rd Sundays at least until the end of the fiscal year. Continuation of the program will be determined at the Annual Meeting in May.

How ENGAGE Sundays work:

If you want to reserve the space for a book discussion, presentation, meditation, dinner gathering, whatever aligns with the Principles (or Values) of this Fellowship & Unitarian Universalism, this space is yours. It will be managed like a rental agreement, where you are responsible for set-up, activities & clean-up. Beginning in January, there will be a schedule posted in this newsletter each month and a copy at PLUUF with open dates. Thank you to Connie Ghinazzi, Judy Morgan, Pat Dobrinska, Christopher Stoye and Katherine for stepping in to be ENGAGE Sunday organizers.

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



Thank You Liz Buchanan-Beegle!



For 15 years, PLUUF member Jill Stiemsma served as volunteer Worship Service Coordinator & Music Leader for Prairie Lakes and retired from her position in early 2022. Beginning in July of 2022, Liz Buchanan-Beegle was contracted as a Program Consultant to coordinate 2nd & 4th Sunday Worship Services and Children's RE/Youth Group. In addition to coordinating Worship Services and Children's RE/Youth Group, she kept the PLUUF website up to date, created FB events to promote Worship Services, coordinated PLUUF's first ever Brat Fry Fundraiser, plus coordinated Summer off-site programming for the kids AND is currently in the process of planning a Youth Group holiday gathering! With a busy family life and many obligations outside of Prairie Lakes, Liz has determined that she needs to leave her position at the end of the year. We express our sincere appreciation for all her hard work and positivity.

Note: Beginning in January of 2024, members of the Prairie Lakes Board of Directors will be coordinating 2nd & 4th Sunday Worship Services and Tanya Schwartz-Roeper will serve as the interim Children's RE/Youth Group Coordinator.

New Member Spotlight

We welcome our newest member, Michaela Myers

We welcome you as once we were welcomed ourselves. We seek to be open and inclusive; respecting your inherent dignity, your ideas and your vision,

*in times when it is easy
and in times when it is difficult.*

*We seek to be supportive,
not only when you reach out in courage to us, but also when you need us to reach out to you.*

*In return we ask that you recognize our humanity: We will not always live up to our ideals.
And, when we fall short
we invite you to stay in relationship with us
and help us more fully bring alive the spirit of love.*

*We welcome you as an equal member of this congregation,
of this faith,
and of our shared spiritual journey.*

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, December 13, 5:30 p.m. If you'd like anything put on the agenda, please contact Board Secretary Robyn at robynaudrey19@gmail.com

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.



Veterans Day: Armistice for Veterans with Shane Beegle was presented on November 12 and a Missing Man Table was set up in the sanctuary.

The symbolism of the Missing Man Table:

- The cloth is white, symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to serve.
- The single red rose; displayed in a vase, reminds us of the lives of these Americans and their loved ones and friends who keep the faith while seeking answers.
- The red ribbon symbolizes our continued determination to account for our missing.
- A slice of lemon reminds us of their bitter fate; captured and missing in a foreign land.
- A pinch of salt symbolizes the tears of our missing and their families who long for answers after decades of uncertainty.
- The lighted candle reflects our hope for their return, alive or dead.
- The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain us and those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God.
- The glass is inverted, symbolizing their inability to share a toast.
- The chair is empty, the seat that remains unclaimed at the table.



Thank You to all the kids who participated in Children's RE/Youth Group last month! Plus, thank you to Ripon College senior and former PLUUF kid, Jonah Roeper, for co-leading the group!

On November 12, Jonah & Tanya led an RE/Youth Group session. After two books on gratitude were read, the kids wrote down what they were grateful for. At the Gratitude Service on November 26, the kids in attendance (Lilly, McKinley & Vivi) read their words of gratitude. Youth Group teacher Jonah Roeper read the names, ages and words of gratitude from the kids who couldn't make it that day.



In Case You Missed it in November



ENGAGE Sunday, November 5

Presentation of Changes at PLUUF: Led by PLUUF Moderator, Becky Feyen

Becky presented a plan for Prairie Lakes beginning January 2024. She explained how our Sunday schedule will transition to 2nd & 4th Sundays only and how the 1st & 3rd ENGAGE Sundays will be on hiatus January through June. She gave members an opportunity to vote for 4th Sundays to remain as a Sunday Service or change to the ENGAGE Sunday format. (See ENGAGE Sunday, November 19 below* and page 3 of this newsletter).



Worship Service Sunday, November 12

Veterans Day: Armistice for Veterans with Shane Beegle

Veterans carry a lot including the men and women who didn't come home. While this isn't Memorial Day, it's important when understanding veterans, what all they carry. They stand on the soldiers of those who came before them. So they are always trying to do better and do more. The best way to thank a veteran is to live your life in a way that makes their sacrifices worthwhile. And when you say all are welcome, mean it. So we can close the divide in our country.



ENGAGE Sunday, November 19 Resilience & Growth with Becky Feyen

Becky presented a short program on resilience & growth. "Resilience is something you do, more than something you have" – Al Siebert. She reviewed actions we can take to enhance our resilience, & maintain a growth mindset.

*The 2nd part of the hour transitioned to the vote result on the structure for our 4th Sundays; either a Sunday Worship Service or ENGAGE format. The congregation voted overwhelmingly to keep the 2 Worship Services a month. We also learned that 5 PLUUF members have stepped forward to organize 1st & 3rd ENGAGE Sundays.

(See page 3 for the details)



Worship Service Sunday, November 26, *Elusive Gratitude and the Power of Perspective, Cultivation & Kindness*

Linda DeCramer created a beautiful program, but was unable to lead it due to a recent COVID diagnosis. Wishing Linda (and Laird) a speedy recovery! Becky Feyen and Robyn Davis-Bartow stepped in to lead this beautiful service.