



Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

315 Eureka Street, Ripon, WI 54971

pluufripon@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook!

Upcoming April Events



Saturday, April 6, 10:30-3 at Webster's Marketplace in Ripon

Please tell everyone you know about PLUUF's Brat Fry fundraising event and come join us for a bite to eat while supporting PLUUF! Thank you to everyone who signed up to volunteer. If you have questions please contact the lead organizer Becky Feyen at r.feyen@yahoo.com



ENGAGE Sunday, April 7, 10AM [Banning, Challenging, and Censoring Books](#) with Mika Chetto

Mika is the Educational Technology and Library Media Specialist in the Green Lake School District. Book bans & challenges in schools and public libraries reached a record high in 2023. Are there ever good reasons to ban a book? Mika will help us explore what it means to ban or challenge a book, the main 'reasons' a book gets banned, who the people are that most frequently ban books, and what we can do if a book is banned or challenged in our libraries.



Worship Service Sunday, April 14, [Why Endangered Species Matter - The Last Ones](#) presented by Brad Roost 10AM PLUS 2nd Sunday Potluck & RE/Youth Group

In honor of Earth Day (April 22, 2024) Brad will present the impact of the Endangered Species Act on preserving both species and their habitats. Despite facing criticism and political challenges, the Act remains a crucial tool in safeguarding biodiversity, highlighting the delicate balance between human development and the conservation of natural habitats essential for all life forms to thrive. Our 7th Principle of the "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part" makes this a critical topic to address.



ENGAGE Sunday, April 21, 10AM [The Spiritual Solution to Addiction](#) with Christopher Stoye

By sharing his experience, strength and hope using a 12-step program, Christopher will demonstrate that there is a daily reprieve from addiction based on a renewed spiritual condition. Chris says, "I can open others to enrichment through miraculous spiritual growth in fellowship with Unitarian Universalism."

Stoye is a new member of PLUUF and new to the Ripon area having lived in Detroit, New York, Chicago, and Milwaukee prior to relocating. He has spent most of his professional life as a chef working in high stress and fast paced environments. He has also struggled with addictions since his teens. He has been clean and sober for the past 10 years and he works daily on his motivation to stay sober through spiritual connection with his higher power.



Worship Service Sunday, April 28, 10AM with Connie Ghinazzi & RE/Youth Group. [Digging in the Dirt](#), will celebrate

Earth Day and the 75th anniversary of the publication of Sand County Almanac. You are invited to bring a small baggie of soil to take part in a dirt communion and contemplate together how we interact with the natural world. It is also a wonderful opportunity to read or reread Sand County Almanac.



A Message from the Moderator by Becky Feyen

April is a special month to honor & renew our commitment to the planet. April 22nd is Earth Day & April 26th is Arbor Day. I encourage you to do something special this month to help our Mother Earth. Prairie Lakes will be planting a Sugar Maple sapling on our property this spring, thanks to Cheri Salzberg. We will also create a butterfly & bee garden in the sunny area along the retaining wall. Please take a moment to connect with Mother Nature & do something to help heal our world, just a little bit.

I also want to share with you that the MidAmerica UU Region is holding their Annual Assembly & Business Meeting, April 19-20. The keynote address (streamed live from Denver CO) will be given by the Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, and Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. The program is being offered both online & at the First Unitarian Society of Madison, WI. Please let me know if you are interested in attending in person, or would like to meet at Prairie Lake for online streaming (you can also stream at home) – registration closes April 12th.

Please Mark Your Calendar: ANNUAL MEETING MAY 19, 2024 starting 10:00am

This year includes several important votes. Your Board of Directors is helping you to prepare by giving you the opportunity to ask questions BEFORE the Annual Meeting. Documents are available for you to review & your questions will need to be addressed before April 10 so we can finalize changes before voting at our Annual Meeting on May 19th. Any questions, concerns, requests can be directed to Becky r.feyen@yahoo.com before April 10, she will be available to review the information with anyone. We want you to be informed & feel comfortable with the decisions you make for the future of Prairie Lakes UU Fellowship.

UUA ARTICLE II | PLUUF BYLAWS | PLUUF BUDGET 2024/25

Printed documents are available in the Social Room & emailed versions can be requested at pluufripon@gmail.com (An email was sent to all voting members on 3/22/24 with the proposed changes to the bylaws and a 2024/25 Fiscal Year Budget Proposal).

Spring Landscape Project Discussed at the March Board Meeting

- Create butterfly & bee garden
- Assess trees for trimming & removal
- Plant new Sugar Maple sapling
- Outdoor storage needs
- Entrance steps & ramp rebuild.

Brand New Life: A Dust Bowl Musical With PLUUF Member Linda DeCramer playing the part of “Mama!”

Presented by Beaver Dam Area Community Theatre Thursday, April 11 at 7:30 pm | Fridays, April 5 & 12 at 7:30 pm | Saturdays, April 6 & 13 at 7:30 pm | Sundays, April 7 & 14 at 2:00 pm. Follow this link for more details:

<https://bdact.org/brand-new-life/>



Are You Interested in Exploring the Possibility of Serving on the Worship Service Team?

What Does the Worship Service Team Do?

Responsibilities:

1. Scheduling services on 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. This includes planning, overseeing the calendar of Sunday services and coordinating Worship Service leaders.
2. Responsible for leading the non-sermon parts of Worship and maybe the sermon, too. Able to lead the welcome and announcement segment of the service, deliver readings, initiate the offering, and officiate Joys and Concerns and other rituals.

Qualifications:

- Must understand the flow of worship services
- Close attention to detail and the ability to plan ahead
- Interpersonal skills, including excellent written and verbal communication

Things to remember about Worship (from *Big Ideas for Small Congregations* by Jane Dwinell and Ellen Germann-Melosh):

1. Be creative.
2. Don't be afraid of change.
3. Have two to three (or more) trained worship associates to provide backup.
4. Offer a diverse range of speakers and topics, holding onto our most important rituals.
5. Use music of all kinds to enhance worship.
6. Know that you can't please all the people all the time.
7. Find a way for children and youth to participate.
8. Act like we always have visitors, even when we don't.

If you're interested in receiving more information regarding the Worship Service Committee role please contact pluufripon@gmail.com

Are You Interested in Becoming the Children's RE/Youth Group Coordinator/Teacher for Prairie Lakes?

The RE/Youth Group Coordinator can be a role for a paid individual and/or a team of volunteers serving as teachers

Responsibilities of the Youth Group Coordinator:

- Coordinate 2nd and 4th Sunday lesson plans or delegate the task
- Recruit, train and evaluate teachers (both volunteers and/or paid)
- Teach the RE/Youth Group classes when teachers are unavailable

A complete list of responsibilities is available in the RE/Youth Group Procedure Manual available at PLUUF or by request by contacting Tanya at tanyapapermaker@gmail.com and she will be happy to discuss the details.



RE/YOUTH GROUP by Tanya Schwartz-Roeper

Children's programming takes place on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

2nd Sunday: We started part 1 of a 2 part lesson leading up to Easter Sunday. They learned about Mardi Gras, also known as Fat Tuesday, and that it's traditionally celebrated on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, which marks the start of the Christian season of lent.

4th Sunday: On March 24 the kids continued learning about the events leading up to Easter Sunday and also discussed ways to actively participate in PLUUF's Easter Sunday UU celebration. The lesson concluded with transforming simple paper lunch bags into decorative Easter egg gathering sacks.



Icecream Meditation at Sweet & Saulty's summer 2023

Summer Youth Group For Kids is Returning!

Liz Buchanan-Beegle created a new and innovative summer program itinerary for the kids of Prairie Lakes that took place once a month last summer. It included a variety of activities ranging from an ice cream meditation, to a nature hike and picnic, to a movie event! We are happy to report that Liz will be coordinating this program again this summer! More details will be available in the May edition of this newsletter. We hope your children can join us!

Photos from our Intergenerational Easter celebration - UU Style!

This was a great service for young, old and everyone in between! We learned about Easter's Pagan roots by the kids acting out a skit about the origin of the Easter bunny while Tanya narrated and Megan Morris handled the behind-the-scenes tasks. The kids led a Mardi Gras parade through the sanctuary with a float and handed out beads to all! Sherman Leatherberry read the Long Ago Easter Story, Connie Ghinazzi presented the Christian holy events leading up to Easter Sunday, Tom Zuhlke shared a Unitarian Universalist perspective on Easter and Jill Stiemsma provided beautiful piano music throughout the service. The event concluded with an Easter Egg hunt for the kids and delicious meatballs, cake, and more for all!





Stitched with Love: A Faith-Based Discussion for UUs on the Proposed Revision to Article II

(reprinted from the UUA website)

Unitarian Universalists and congregations have a few more months to study the proposed changes to Article II before the final vote at the General Assembly in June.

What follows are nine quotes from Rev. Dr. Sheri Prud'homme's theological analysis to help UUs engage more deeply with the Article II changes:

1. **On UU Theological Heritage and Expression Being like a Quilt:** “In a patchwork quilt, each piece of fabric contains a story in itself—where, when, and how it was made; what other garment or fabric it once was part of; who created and touched the fabric. Sewn together, the quilt collectively tells other stories and goes on to be part of yet more stories in the lives of many beings who interact with it.”
2. **On the Restorative Power of Love:** “We affirm the power of Love to heal what is broken, to hold us together across pluralities of diverse religious practices and beliefs, to hold us when things fall apart, to grow our capacities, and to guide us as we return again and again in our families and communities to side with Love.”
3. **On How Interdependence Shapes Unitarian Universalism:**“... increasing religious plurality in our congregations has brought in perspectives and practices from earth-based religions of many kinds, amplifying an understanding of humankind as one part of a great interconnected web of all existence and deepening our humility and reverence for the web of life.”
4. **On Embracing the Pluralism of Truth:** “We declare that there are many paths to the sacred. We hold fast to the notion that one religion does not hold all the truth for all time, not even Unitarian Universalism. We maintain that a free, open, and respectful dialogue is one of the primary ways our theological perspectives evolve and grow.”
5. **On Active Struggles for Justice:** “The religious responsibility of the faithful is to remove and dismantle the systems and structures that prevent the full flourishing of life and to enhance and side with the movement of creative and active love.”
6. **On ‘Abiding an Openness to Change’:** “Our religious communities at their best are places where we grow our capacities to be with experience in all its complexity and paradox, to listen deeply to one another, to allow ourselves to be seen and held in love, and to respond creatively and collectively.”
7. **On the Call for Urgent Generosity:**“In an era when it is becoming clear that industrialized nations under a system of global corporation-controlled capitalism need to change quickly and dramatically for the benefit of all life, we will be called to experience generosity, gratitude, and hope in new ways.”
8. **On Striving for Life-Affirming Equity:** “We understand there is a mandate emerging from our theological heritage to dismantle the structures and systems which silence, harm, and exploit human beings and the varied ecosystems of our planet as well as to work to create just and sustainable communities without barriers to belonging in our communities for all those who share our values and theological perspectives.”
9. **On Spiritual Growth and Maturity:**“The patchwork quilt of our theological heritage is torn and fraying in places, and it is stunningly vibrant in others. Some sections have been mended or wholly replaced. ... As we mature spiritually as a tradition and as people, we develop our capacities to be with the broken and the beautiful, the contradictions, and the complexities.”

Rev. Dr. Sheri Prud'homme—assistant professor of religion and education at Starr King School for the Ministry in Oakland, California— ***wrote a theological analysis*** of the potential revision to Article II. Her essay and other valuable congregational resources are on the UUA's website: uua.org/re/article2.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT IN March



ENGAGE Sunday, March 3, with Kat Griffith: *U.S. Immigration and Asylum*

1. Kat presented a myth-busting look at border statistics since the 1990s, challenging much of the current narrative about migration.
2. She shared the stories of several asylum seekers and we viewed personal photos of a migrant camp, a tent court and deportation flight at the southern border.
3. We explored current realities on the ground and in our political discourse on the subject.

Worship Service Sunday, March 10, *Spring Cleaning Body, Mind & Soul* presented by Becky Feyen

Becky explained that as we enter the season of spring, it is easy to identify our tie to the cyclical rhythms of the natural world. In early spring, nature begins to clean-up & clear away the debris that built up in fall & winter. Many cultures adopted the tradition of spring-cleaning; a ritual of clearing the dirt & clutter out of our physical surroundings. We reviewed practices that help facilitate in clearing our personal clutter & strengthen our resolve to take care of ourselves.

ENGAGE Sunday, March 17, *Mary Magdalene at the Tomb*



Pat Dobrinska and Ray Gurney teamed up to bring us this ENGAGE presentation. It was a fascinating presentation as Ray shared his research and interpretation of his favorite religious topic - the life, times, and personal spirituality of Mary Magdalene. He even shared a relic from the past: A clay oil lamp dating back 2000 years! (see 2nd photo)

Worship Service Sunday, March 24, *Spiritual Rejuvenation with Becky Feyen*

We continued our focus on the importance of spring. Becky explained that this is a natural time of change & growth, an opportunity to be inspired by nature to rejuvenate ourselves. She explained that we are part of the natural world & this is a wonderful time to refill what makes us feel alive. The concept of spiritual rejuvenation can take a religious or energy focus. We explored what spirit means to us, if anything and what practices help to rejuvenate & energize our mind, body and/or spirit.

March 31 | Easter celebration - UU Style! Recap on page 4.

