



March 31st is International Transgender Day of Visibility

Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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MARCH 2025 ENGAGE & WORSHIP SERVICE EVENTS

ENGAGE Sunday, March 2, 10AM with Sherman Leatherberry & Pat Dobrinska:

“Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds” Part III. In "Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds" Part 3, titled "The Serpent and the Lotus," the focus is on the concept of the "inner serpent" representing our primal desires and unconscious patterns, while the "lotus flower" symbolizes the potential for spiritual growth and enlightenment that can arise from confronting and integrating these shadow aspects within ourselves; exploring how ancient myths and spiritual traditions across cultures often depict this duality through symbolic imagery, emphasizing the importance of balancing the two forces to achieve inner harmony and a deeper connection to the universe.



Worship Service Sunday, March 9, 10AM: “Living Our Values Courageously”

with Becky Feyen These times call for courageous communication & action. The basis of courage comes from understanding our values, & knowing how to share them. This Sunday we will explore our values & how to develop the courage that leads us to action. The actions do not need to be bold, yet it is imperative that we show who we are in a world that doesn't appear to share our values.



ENGAGE Sunday, March 16, 10AM “Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds Part IV Beyond Thinking.”

Brian Smith will lead the conclusion of this fascinating 4 part series that has been led by Sherman Leatherberry & Pat Dobrinska. According to *Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds*, a 2012 documentary directed and produced by Canadian meditation teacher Daniel Schmidt, it is believed that all religions are just different manifestations of the same universal ideas. The root belief of all religions is that there's a field of energy linking the inner spirits of individuals to the external world.



Worship Service Sunday, March 23, 10AM, “ Rethinking how to Repair our Broken World” with Connie Ghinazzi

One of our topics at the Board Retreat in January was about mending relationships among our families, our friends and acquaintances in these fractured times. Many of us feel exhausted. This service will explore some ideas about this topic from our new worship resource, Soul Matters. Here is the quote from David Levithan that got me started on this service. “...Then it hits me. Maybe we're the pieces... Maybe that's it. With what you were talking about before. [Tikkun olam] The world being broken. Maybe it isn't that we're supposed to find the pieces and put them back together. Maybe we're the pieces... Maybe, what we're supposed to do is come together. That's how we stop the breaking.



5th Sunday, March 30, 10AM, Sunday Fluff ‘N Buff Indoor (& maybe outdoor) Clean Day at Prairie Lakes.

Please join us for a morning of camaraderie as we make PLUUF shine! Weather permitting, we may try to get some outdoor work done, too, like picking up sticks and raking the leaves on the east side of the building.



A Message from the Moderator by Connie Ghinazzi



Good Morning, friends. I come to you from sunny Tucson, AZ. While here, I've been attending Mountain Vista UU with friends from my previous congregation. This morning the entire service was a history of love songs, from the troubadours during the middle ages to Taylor Swift. The reason I'm sharing this with you is because several of the songs chosen dealt with the pain of lost love and the ending of relationships. Tears came to my eyes as we all sang Spirit of Life and changed the word Life to Love as we sang it a second time. It is crucial that we think about those people in our lives who are

very important to us and let them know how valued they are in our lives, especially when things are difficult.

I'm glad I will be back in time for the wrapping up of the ENGAGE Sunday series. Many thanks to Sherman Leatherberry and his cohorts for bringing these ideas to us.

Lastly, with the moving of our Art & Service Auction to late April, that gives all of us more time to put together some unique items or services you are willing to do. Please bring auction items into PLUUF as soon as possible so they can be displayed. If you are unable to attend, proxy forms can be obtained from Tanya.

I leave you with this, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. Which is literally the next thing I'm doing today. See you soon. Connie



Webster Grant Awarded to Prairie Lakes

Prairie Lakes applied for and received a Grant from the Webster Foundation in the amount of \$1,500! Tanya Schwartz-Roeper and Board member Beth Howman-Combs attended the awards presentation event at Knuth's on February 19. Tanya along with 50+ other recipients, was given the opportunity to present a 30 second speech.

This is a transcript of the speech: *On behalf of the congregation of Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, we want to express our deepest gratitude to the Webster Foundation and family for accepting our Grant proposal. Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship embraces 6 values all centered around the concept of love. This grant will serve 2 purposes: #1: We care about kids and it will help fund our June-August religious education off site programming. #2: It will benefit the adults by making it possible to utilize the materials in the UUA Tapestry of Faith Program by implementing 8 multigenerational workshops. Again, our deepest gratitude to everyone from the foundation for making this possible.*

Other PLUUFers in attendance receiving Grants for other entities included Brad Roost, Liz Buchanan-Beegle, and Linda DeCramer. Members of Prairie Lakes were very well represented!

ART & SERVICE AUCTION

New Date: Sunday, April 27, 10AM

This is Prairie Lakes Biggest, Best (& only!!) fundraiser this fiscal year. Let's make it great! There will be entertainment and a multitude of great prizes to bid on and win! Please bring guests! If you would like to donate an auction items please pick up a signup sheet in the entry of PLUUF or contact tanyapapermaker@gmail.com

RE/YOUTH GROUP by Tanya Schwartz-Roeper



Children's programming takes place on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month and we welcome all kids who would like to participate. On the 4th Sunday in February the kids learned about the meaning and significance of Black History Month that takes place from February 1 to March 1. The theme for Black History Month 2025 was "African Americans and Labor". This theme highlighted the significant role that Black Americans have played in the history of the United States through their work.

Child Dedication Ceremony April 13 with Nicole Roost



In a Unitarian Universalist congregation, any child can qualify for a dedication ceremony, as it's not about religious affiliation or specific age, but rather a way for families to welcome a new child into the community and publicly commit to raising them with UU values; this means infants, young adopted children, children new to the congregation or children who have been attending for years are all eligible to be dedicated. If you are interested in having your child dedicated on April 13 please contact tanyapapermaker@gmail.com for more details.

Save the Date: May 11

“Love at the Center” with Rev. Phillip Lund

Phil Lund is the Congregational Life Consultant with the UUA MidAmerica Region



Phillip Lund has twenty years experience serving congregations in the areas of faith formation and spiritual growth, first as a religious educator in Bloomington, Indiana, New York City, and Chicago, Illinois, and most recently as a congregational life consultant working for the MidAmerica Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Meadville Lombard

Theological School in Chicago and a certificate in InterSpiritual Counseling from One Spirit Learning Alliance in New York. He currently lives in Saint Paul, Minnesota, with his wife, Julia, and their son, Henry David.

At the UUA General Assembly in June 2024, UUs voted to replace existing Seven Principles and Six Sources language in the UUA bylaws with language describing Unitarian Universalism through these shared values: **Interdependence** - **Pluralism** - **Justice** - **Transformation** - **Generosity** - **Equity**. Not everyone at Prairie Lakes was comfortable with this change and Rev. Phil Lund will not only lead a May Worship Service, he will be available to answer questions and discuss the change from the 7 principles to the 6 shared values. More details to come!

FELLOWSHIP NOTES

Prairie Lakes Member Receives Certificate of Recognition from Ripon College



Prairie Lakes member Becky Feyen received the LACE award that stands for Love, Authenticity, Courage & Empathy. The MLK spirit award recognizes a community member who gives freely of their time and service to advance the work of equity and inclusion. They work humbly and effectively for change through their own selfless service.

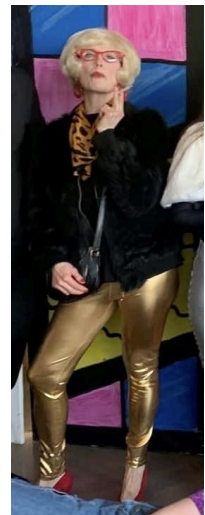
Congratulations and thank you, Becky, for all you do for Prairie Lakes and the community!

Ripon Community Theater Supported Ripon High School Student Key Club & Social Justice Alliance



Prairie Lakes member Linda Decramer had a leading role in the dinner theater, murder mystery, "Murder at the Midnight Hour" at Ripon High School on February 22. Proceeds benefited the Ripon High School student Key Club and Social Justice Alliance. Linda said, "I'm grateful to all the folks in our community that step up as helpers, doers, and believers in making the world a better place with their skills, passion and time."

The Ripon Area Community Theatre (RACT) is a sponsored program of the Ripon Noon Kiwanis. RACT produces main stage shows in the spring and summer, with additional, smaller performance opportunities (radio plays, murder mysteries, variety shows, etc.) at different times during the year. The Ripon Noon Kiwanis has served the children of the community since 1924.



Linda Decramer as sassy Auntie Gert

This Community Member Has Been Supporting Prairie Lakes Behind the Scenes



Many years ago Elizabeth Olson attended Prairie Lakes. Although she no longer attends services, she has remained on the PLUUF newsletter mailing list. When a Wish List first appeared in the Prairie Lakes newsletter several months ago, she didn't hesitate to donate the items needed and has continued to donate needed items ever since. Thank you, Elizabeth!

News From the Prairie Lakes Board of Directors



Connie Ghinazzi
Moderator



Michaela Meyers
Secretary



Jim Goyette
Treasurer



Nicole Roost
At-Large Rep



Beth Howman-Combs
At-Large Rep

February Board Meeting Minute Highlights by Board Secretary Michaela Meyers

At this month's meeting, the board got to enjoy a beautiful view of Little Green Lake while getting together at Connie's house for the February Board meeting and Annual Retreat. We had a lot of good discussion about how to keep moving forward at PLUUF with the best interests of the congregation in mind.

We talked about everything from the Sharing Garden and summer services to how to get involved in outside organizations, the possibility of creating PLUUF t-shirts, fundraising ideas, and maybe even a Sundy dedicated to how to have difficult conversations and stay in community with each other. We used our laser focus to nail down some dates for the future. So be on the lookout for the Child Dedication Ceremony on April 13th, the Art and Service Auction on April 27, the Town Hall on May 4th, and Phil Lund's presentation on the 6 values centered around love on May 11.

With energy from the new year holding strong, the Board brought a lot of enthusiasm and new perspectives to the conversations about the future of PLUUF. We hope you're as excited for what's coming up as we are!

Administrative notes:

- Agenda items discussed in the PLUUF Board retreat will be shared with the congregation at the upcoming Town Hall meeting on May 4 and at the Annual Meeting on June 1.
- Prairie Lakes will be filling one Board of Directors position for the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025. As much as Jim Goyette has enjoyed his role as Treasurer, the bylaws "only" allow for 3 two-year terms. Thank you Jim for serving on the PLUUF Board for the full allotted amount of 6 years!

If you are a member and are interested in joining this amazing team of Board members in guiding the future of our beloved fellowship, please contact tanyapapermaker@gmail.com

Not a Prairie Lakes member, but would like to become one? See Connie next time you are at PLUUF or email connieghinazzi@gmail.com

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT IN FEBRUARY



ENGAGE Sunday, February 2, with Sherman Leatherberry & Pat Dobrinska: “Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds Part I: According to *Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds*, a 2012 documentary directed and produced by Canadian meditation teacher Daniel Schmidt, it is believed that all religions are just different manifestations of the same universal ideas. The root belief of all religions is that there’s a field of energy linking the inner spirits of individuals to the external world. This was part one of a four part series. Part one was presented via video and was followed by an intriguing discussion.



Worship Service Sunday, February 9, 10AM with Marie Luna: “*Belonging, Community, and the Importance of Place*” will be rescheduled. When we discovered Marie Luna was sick, Jill Stiemsma jumped into action and created a meaningful Sunday morning Worship Service with a hymn sing event. Marie’s service will be scheduled for a later date. Date to be determined.



ENGAGE Sunday, February 16, with Sherman Leatherberry & Pat Dobrinska “Inner Worlds Outer Worlds Part II - The Spiral” “Inner Worlds Outer Worlds” Part 2 delved deeper into the concept that our inner reality is interconnected with the outer universe, exploring the idea of a unified field of energy that connects all things through vibrant visuals and scientific explanations, suggesting that by accessing this inner realm through meditation and mindfulness, we can tap into a deeper understanding of ourselves and the cosmos around us; it highlighted the historical figures who may have accessed this knowledge, emphasizing the potential for healing and spiritual growth through this connection. After viewing the video, discussion delved into the nature of gravity, the limitations of analytical thinking, the importance of patterns, and the spiritual implications of natural phenomena, and much more.



Worship Service Sunday, February 23, 10AM with Jill Stiemsma “Finding Hope in an Absurd Time. Jill resurrected a Valentine’s service entitled “Finding Hope in an Absurd Time,” a stay-at-home service she wrote for PLUUF attendees during the Pandemic. The service offered a message of hope from John Lewis, whose very life was seriously threatened in the Civil Rights marches, and from the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond’s own debilitating experiences as discussed in The Book of Joy, which some PLUUF members examined in an ENGAGE Sunday years back. Their messages are as potent today as when they were spoken long before this last election.