

Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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Find us on Facebook!



Upcoming April Events



ENGAGE Sunday, April 6, 10AM with Robyn Davis-Bartow: “A Taste of Zen”

What is meditation and why bother? Come and find out. After a brief introduction to concentration meditation and some basic instruction, give meditation a try during this unique Engage Sunday at PLUUF. Instead of talking about it, attendees will have the opportunity to get a taste of meditation practice for themselves. Two 15 minutes of silent sitting will be divided by 5 minutes of silent walking meditation. This practice will be followed by group reflection and discussion.



Worship Service Sunday & POTLUCK, April 13, 10AM: “A Dedication” with Nicole Roost.

The Unitarian Universalist Child Dedication honors the life of a young one and the love and guidance offered by those raising the child. In this season of renewal and birth, join us in exploring the many cultural and spiritual traditions of welcome for children, parents and loving support communities.



ENGAGE Sunday, April 20, 10AM “Awe” with Pat Dobrinska. (There will be a Special Easter lesson for the kids followed by an Easter egg hunt!)

Awe is an emotion we experience when we encounter vast mysteries outside of ourselves. It transcends current understanding of the world. Wadsworth, Emerson, Thoreau, & Carson portrays the self as dissolving in experiencing natural awe. You will have an opportunity to share your own stories of experiencing awe during congregational sharing.

APRIL 27, 10AM is the ART & SERVICE AUCTION & Karaoke

A MORNING OF FUN and FUNDRAISING



This is Prairie Lakes Biggest, Best (& only!!) fundraiser this fiscal year. Let's make it great! Brad Roost returns as the auctioneer, there will be entertainment, and a multitude of great prizes to bid on and win! See a list of some of the auction items on page 3 of this newsletter.

- **Please bring guests!** Food & refreshments will be available.
- Karaoke will be performed by PLUUFers and a couple special guests!
- If you would like to donate an auction item please let us know by April 15.

Questions about the Art & Service Auction contact pluufripon@gmail.com or tanyapapermaker@gmail.com



A Message from the Moderator by Connie Ghinazzi

Hello friends, first I want to thank all involved in making our ENGAGE and Worship Sundays sources of inspiration and insightful conversation. These sessions are wonderful. It truly has helped us get ourselves into healthy and caring places as we deal with events around us.

Next, it is so exciting to see spring beginning to pop out around us this week. I began raking the blanket of leaves out of one of my gardens to see some tulips beginning to pop through.

Seeing that bright spring green against the wet brown leaves is very invigorating!

Just as invigorating, our lineup of events and activities for April and May can help us continue the momentum we've been building. We hope everyone will participate in our Art & Service Auction on Sunday, April 27. If you are interested in bidding on items in advance, contact Tanya to submit your bid at tanyapapermaker@gmail.com. You can also assign a proxy to bid for you at the Auction if you are unable to attend.

The next Sunday, May 4, the board is hosting a Town Hall meeting on an ENGAGE Sunday. We want to share some of our ideas for 2025-26 with you and get your input on ideas you might have in advance of the annual meeting on June 1. This is a time for conversation, not decision making. A few things we will want to discuss are managing our gardening beds, alternative programming for July and August, what we as a community can do to support each other, and what improvements we need to make to our physical structure. If you have other items you want to be discussed, please feel free to contact me or any other board member to make sure it gets included. You are also welcome to bring up your idea at the Town Hall gathering. Your attendance means your voice will be heard and we celebrate our gathering with as many of our PLUUF family as possible.

I'll end this with a quote I used to end my reflection last Sunday coming from bell hooks. (lower case of her name is intentional). "Rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion."

I look forward to seeing all of you in the next few weeks. Enjoy the beginning of a beautiful spring.
Connie

*** Note from Connie, not as the moderator. In the reflection on Sunday, I made reference to the work of Bayo Akomolafe. He has a wonderful piece on YouTube called "What if the way we look at things is part of the problem?" and an essay called "The Phantoms of the Maze" that are very thought provoking. I said I would put additional info in this newsletter so people could find his work.

Support the Social Justice Alliance by Brad Roost

You'll have an opportunity to support the Ripon High School Social Justice Alliance at the Art & Service Auction at Prairie Lakes on April 27 and possibly meet some of the SJA members!

The Social Justice Alliance (SJA) at Ripon High School is embarking on an unforgettable journey to West Hollywood, California, in June 2025. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity will allow students to deepen their understanding of civil rights, social justice, and civic responsibility through immersive experiences. This trip will empower students to connect classroom learning with real-world issues, inspiring the next generation of leaders and changemakers.

💰 A donation at the Art & Service Auction will support travel, lodging, and educational experiences for the students! A generous anonymous donor will match the A & S donation up to \$250!

Thank you for investing in our students' future and helping us create a more informed, empathetic, and socially conscious community! ❤️

ART & SERVICE AUCTION & KARAOKE - April 27

The items listed below and more are in the entryway at PLUUF for early bidding. On April 27 the bid sheets will be transferred to the Live Auction and the highest bid on the sheet will be the opening bid. If you can't make it and don't want to miss out on the item you bid on, proxy sheets are available so you can have others do your bidding! 100% of the proceeds from this event will support Prairie Lakes and the causes PLUUF supports.

Check out these AWESOME Auction items:

1. Airplane flight
2. Lake Shore getaway for up to 6 people on Little Green in Markesan (3 days & 2 nights)
3. Hand-knit personalized socks by Cheri
4. Hand carved cutting boards
5. Scrumptious decorated cupcakes by Linda + made to order cupcakes
6. Pottery from Tonala, Mexico
7. Paper making workshop for 1-6 participants
8. Pottery by Rita Mueller
9. Master Gardener Consultation
10. 4-hours of decluttering service
11. 2-hour landscaping consultation
12. Inflatable paddle board
13. Cookies/bars by Beth made to order
14. Shamba Safari tour
15. Kids items: Plug in keyboard, games, & more
16. Themed baskets
17. Glass block decorative lighting
18. 2-hrs of Tech support
19. Vintage blue textured glass dessert cups & saucers
20. ...and MORE!!!

Please invite family, friends and anyone else you think may be interested in attending the auction. It will be a fun way to spend the morning. Food and refreshments will be available.

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. We look forward to his visit to PLUUF on 4/11!

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!

Board to Host Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, May 4, 10AM



Connie Ghinazzi
Moderator



Michaela Meyers
Secretary



Jim Goyette
Treasurer



Nicole Roost
At-Large Rep



Beth Howman-Combs
At-Large Rep

A town hall forum will allow for the Prairie Lakes Board to share their vision of PLUUF's future and will create space for everyone to share their ideas and concerns.

Agenda items may include:

- In the months of July & August take a hiatus from Sunday morning programming
 - Possibly schedule other activities and events outside of PLUUF such a picnic, bike ride, etc.
- Adopt-A-Garden volunteer program (See next page)
 - This is a way to keep our garden beds thriving this summer and give members an opportunity to grow veggies, herbs, or flowers
- Nominations for Board Treasurer
 - 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!
- Webster Grant: Tapestry of Faith Program & Children's Summer Programming
- **An opportunity for all members and friends to share their ideas & concerns**



Prairie Lakes Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 1, 10AM

Not a Prairie Lakes member, but would like to become one? See Connie next time you are at PLUUF or connieghinazzi@gmail.com (To vote at the annual meeting you need to have been a member for at least 30 days).



March Board Meeting Highlights by Michaela Meyers

In this month's meeting, the board kept up to date with many of the ideas covered during the retreat, including plans for the Town Hall meeting (see top of page) and the upcoming Art and Service auction. There was also discussion around how to get more involved in Ripon's local food pantries through the Ripon Area Ministerial Association (RAMA) as well as Phil Lund's upcoming visit on May 10th to go over the transition from the 7 principles to the 6 values with love at the center.

Speaking of love, Jim also shared his experience of attending the Grounded, Resilient and Responsible webinar as part of the Side with Love series and he said it had lots of good information in it, much of which was in line with Becky Feyen's service on how to live our values courageously that was presented on March 9 (see recap on next page).

The board also celebrated receiving \$1500 from the Webster Grant with the money going to Summer RE/Youth Group and Tapestry of Faith materials!

And of course, we all enjoyed the last little bit of light that was still out when our meeting ended and looking forward to the longer days as we move into spring!

Would You Like to “Adopt” a Raised Garden Bed at PLUUF?

Many thanks to Judy Morgan for creating the PLUUF Sharing Garden several years ago. She donated the raised garden beds, tended the beds, harvested, and donated the veggies to the Traded Treasures Food Pantry.

Now that Judy has retired from tending the garden beds, we are looking for individuals to take over by adopting a bed (or two). By adopting a bed, you decide what to plant (vegetables, herbs, flowers) and how you would like to use what you grow. For example, the flowers you grow could be picked and taken home or maybe used as a bouquet for a PLUUF service. The same with vegetables and herbs. You can grow them for yourself, or share with PLUUFers, or donate to the food pantry, etc.



The veggie garden is on the Town Hall Agenda scheduled for Sunday, May 4. The Board welcomes your questions and ideas. If you would like to share your feedback before the meeting, please contact Beth Howman-Combs at mbcombs@charter.net

Living Our Values Courageously

HOW to TALK
about YOUR BELIEFS
(with people who don't share them)

KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE.

SCRUTINIZE YOUR SOURCES.

CHANNEL YOUR COURAGE.

BE CLEAR AND HONEST.

SPEAK WITH COMPASSION.

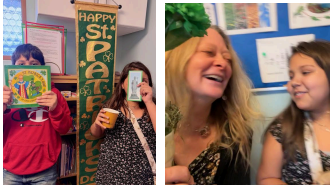
LISTEN. REALLY LISTEN.

RESPECT BOUNDARIES.

TAKE POSITIVE ACTION.

FIND A CREATIVE OUTLET.

At a recent Worship Service Becky Feyen led a reflection called, "Living Our Values Courageously." The discussion emphasized the importance of values as the bedrock of personal identity and behavior, and encouraged participants to stand up for their beliefs courageously. It highlighted the need for inclusivity, equity, and diversity, and the challenges of addressing injustice amidst threats and persecution. The conversation stressed the importance of channeling anger positively, speaking truth to power, and being visible in support of others. Techniques for effective communication are highlighted in the illustration to the left.



Children's RE/Youth Group

In March Tanya led a lesson plan about the life of St. Patrick and some of the traditions associated with celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

There will be a special lesson for the kids on Easter Sunday, April 20, followed by an Easter egg hunt!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT IN MARCH

ENGAGE Sunday, March 2, 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 was 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: "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. The discussion emphasized the importance of values as the bedrock of personal identity and behavior, and encouraged participants to stand up for their beliefs courageously. The conversation stressed the importance of channeling anger positively, speaking truth to power, and being visible in support of others. (More information on the previous page)



ENGAGE Sunday, March 16, "Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds Part IV Beyond Thinking." Pat Dobrinska and Sherman Leatherberry led the conclusion of this fascinating 4 part series. Brian Smith was originally scheduled to lead the conclusion, but unfortunately he was unable to make it. 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, " 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 explored 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, Sunday Fluff 'N Buff Cleanup Day

at Prairie Lakes. Six PLUUFers showed up and made PLUUF shine! THANK YOU! 😊

