

Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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Upcoming December 2025 Events



ENGAGE Sunday, December 7, 10:00AM: Sherman Leatherberry & Pat Dobrinska present, [Richard Rohr and The Universal Christ](#). Richard Rohr, born in 1943, is an American Franciscan Priest and writer on spirituality. In 2011, PBS called him "one of the most popular spirituality authors and speakers in the world." He has been quoted as saying, "The key is to fall in love with the divine presence, under whatever name. For Sherman & Pat, they replace the term Christ in Rohr's talk, with the term universal consciousness. They feel that the term "Christ" is limiting, as it refers to only Christianity and its doctrines. The divine is beyond labels that refer to only one religion. Rohr's essential message focuses on the union of the divine reality with all things, and the human potential to know the true self (spiritual being) and not the false self (Earthly presence) Resource-Wikipedia



[FESTIVALS OF LIGHT](#) December 14, 10:00AM with a special Holiday Potluck to follow.

This has become a beloved annual PLUUF event through the years. It's a time to celebrate winter festivals through stories, music, and food.

Please spread the word and bring friends and family! (See page 4 for more details)



Worship Service Sunday, December 21, 10:00 AM, Sherman Leatherberry presents, [Awe in Music](#) Awe in music is the feeling of wonder and amazement evoked by a piece of music, which can provide a sense of perspective and connection to something greater than oneself. This emotion is triggered by the music itself, sometimes leading to physical reactions like goose bumps and chills, and can improve well-being by reducing stress and increasing openness to the world. Many examples of differing musical styles will be listened to and examined.



ENGAGE Sunday, December 28, 10:00 AM: A morning of music with [Jill Stiemsma](#) and a [Spiral Walk](#) with [Robyn Davis-Bartow](#). 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.

Moderator Message by Connie Ghinazzi



Hello Friends,

I hope your Thanksgiving offered you time to connect with family and friends. In a tumultuous world, it felt healing to share gratitude and hopes for those who are less secure. Our own gathering included two Grinnell College students who couldn't travel home; it was a joy to introduce them to traditional dishes and hear about their own holiday customs.

Last week I invited those interested in helping plan ENGAGE and worship services to a programming meeting. In just 45 minutes, we drafted a solid plan for January through May. I'm grateful for everyone who contributed ideas and energy. If you're interested but couldn't attend, we'd still love your input and involvement.

Please start thinking now about how you'd like to contribute to our Arts & Services Auction, tentatively scheduled for late April. "Services" are always popular, and past "services" have included airplane rides, lake retreats, yard work and much more. Consider the talents you might share to be auctioned off that might be of great value to someone else.

We also welcome Cheri Salzberg as board secretary, completing the term for Micheala Myers. Thank you, Cheri. As last year, the board will hold a winter retreat in January and a town hall before the Annual Meeting. If you have ideas or concerns, please reach out—we are a community, together.

I'll close with a quote we shared at our Thanksgiving table: "If the only prayer you ever said in your whole life was 'thank you,' that would suffice." —Meister Eckhart

May it be so.

Connie

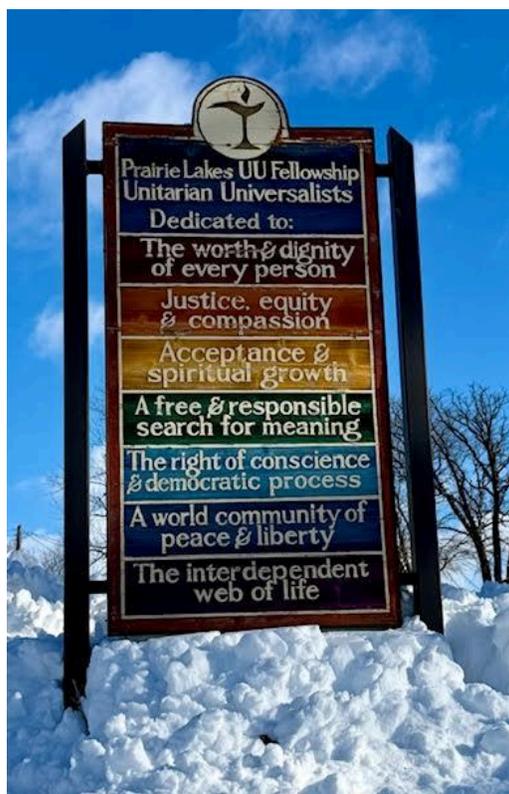


If You Would Like to Make A Special Holiday Donation to PLUUF, We Have Made It Easy

You can use your credit card by donating via PayPal on the Prairie Lakes website <https://pluuf.org>

A Holiday Message of Gratitude and Hope

As we look back on the past year at Prairie Lakes, we're filled with gratitude—for your presence, your ideas, and the spirit you bring to our community. Thanks to YOU, our congregation has continued to grow in energy, connection, and purpose. Here are just a few highlights that your support made possible in 2025:



- More PLUUFers than ever coordinating and leading Worship Services and ENGAGE Sundays.
- Renewal of our Welcoming Congregation status.
- Donations supporting the Ripon High School Social Justice Alliance and the Santa Club.
- Dedicated service through Adopt-A-Highway cleanup.
- Summer programming for children & offsite events.
- 25+ years of giving the full ask amount to the UUA.
- Joyful events and beloved traditions like Water Sharing, the Gratitude Service, our uniquely meaningful Day of the Dead gathering, the upcoming Festivals of Light event, and many more!

This community thrives because of YOU—your participation, your creativity, and yes, your financial generosity.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who gives throughout the year—whether through automatic bank contributions or Sunday offerings. As the tax year comes to a close, we invite you to include PLUUF in your December giving. Every donation, no matter the amount, strengthens our shared spiritual home and keeps our community connected and vibrant. You can give at a Sunday service, or send a check, or donate with your credit card via PayPal on the Prairie Lakes website <https://pluuf.org>

*Thank you for being part of Prairie Lakes UU Fellowship
May the season bring you peace, warmth, and renewal.*

Santa Club Donations!

Prairie Lakes is collecting everyday essentials through 12/14 that **SNAP benefits don't cover but families use every single day**. If you're able, please consider bringing an item to support our neighbors. A donation box is available in the entryway at PLUUF.

Most-needed items include:

- Toilet paper
- Shampoo
- Body wash or bar soap
- Deodorant (men's & women's)
- Paper towels
- Dish soap
- Napkins

Your contributions make a real difference —
Thank you for giving so generously.



*A **BIG** thank you to all the generous donors who contributed cash to the Santa Club at the Worship Service Collection of the Offering on 11/23. Special thanks to PLUUF member Beth Howman-Combs for bringing this opportunity to Prairie Lakes. She's been involved with the Santa Club of Ripon for many years.*

Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship proudly presents

Festivals of Light



Sunday,
December 14, 10AM

We Hope You Can
Join Us For One of
PLUUF's Biggest
Events of the Year...

Music - Food - Stories

Please invite
friends & family!

Meditation With Robyn Davis-Bartow



WHERE: Prairie Lakes UU Fellowship

All are welcome to join Robyn Davis Bartow for the remaining two Zen meditation practices of the year in the Prairie Lakes sanctuary.

December 3 & December 17 from 5:30-6:45 (No session on 12/10)

Sitting practice will be supported by 20 minutes of qigong followed by two 20 minute concentration meditation periods. Wear comfortable clothing and bring your mediation cushion if you have one. No prior experience necessary. Questions? Feel free to reach out at 920-896-2770 or robynaudrey19@gmail.com.

Thank you for considering a holiday gift to Prairie Lakes!

Your generosity helps brighten the season for our entire community.



Below is a Treasurer Report to let you know where PLUUF is at so far this fiscal year:

Treasurer Report At-A-Glance –Balances as of 11/30/2025

10100 AST-BMO checking	\$3,093 (operating budget)
10111 Golden Rule Savings Vision	\$30,008 (short term savings)
10112 Golden Rule Checking for Debit Card	\$414 (for debit card use only)
10202 AST-UUA CEF Vision	<u>\$53,863</u> (long term savings)

Total Assets \$87,378

	Nov. 2025	YTD 2024	YTD 2025	2025/26 Budget
Member/FriendContributions	\$1,310	\$6,325	\$5,407	\$27,100
Total Income (includes UUA CEF increases/decreases & Golden Rule Savings interest))	\$1,310 Nov. CEF NYA	\$8,956	\$8,685	\$31,875
Expenses	\$2,009	\$10,438	\$9,321	\$31,875

If you would like a complete copy of the minutes or treasurer reports, contact tanyapapermaker@gmail.com or pluufripon@gmail.com

Next PLUUF Board Meeting Wednesday, December 10, at 5:30PM

If you would like anything added to the Board Agenda please contact: connieghinazzi@gmail.com

In Case You Missed it in November



ENGAGE Sunday, November 2, 10:00 AM Movie: “Bad River” part II with

Kathryn Severson *Bad River* is a documentary that follows the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa’s fight for tribal sovereignty and environmental justice against corporate and governmental interests, particularly focusing on their battle to shut down the dangerous Enbridge Line 5 oil pipeline that threatens Lake Superior. The film chronicled the band’s history of struggle, including the traumatic legacy of Indian Boarding Schools, and highlighted their resilience and determination to protect their ancestral lands and waters. Discussion followed with emphasis on how to spread the word about the issue, the status of the court cases, and how we could contact organizations in and out of the state with protests. Senator Tammy Baldwin is working hard to facilitate positive outcomes for the Bad River Band and Clean Wisconsin is circulating a petition.



Worship Service Sunday, November 9, “Celebrating Our Welcoming Congregation” with Connie Ghinazzi

It was a joyful and inspiring intergenerational service as we celebrated our fifth consecutive year as a Welcoming Congregation! There was a beautiful display of books in the entryway leading up to the service. Both Linda DeCramer & Brad Roost participated in this service, plus two Ripon High School students gave a brief presentation on the RHS Social Justice Alliance trip to California.



ENGAGE Sunday, November 16, “Love, Liberation and Forgiveness in the Midst of Christian Nationalism” with Elliott Luedke

Elliott’s presentation and the discussion that followed centered on the intersection of Christian Nationalism and oppression, emphasizing the need for radical love and compassion. Elliott highlighted the historical and contemporary oppression faced by marginalized groups, including Native Americans, African Americans, and immigrants. The conversation referenced biblical passages and figures like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Oscar Romero to illustrate the importance of love and justice. The group also discussed the role of education in addressing these issues and the challenges of combating Christian nationalism within our communities. The meeting concluded with a call to action for continued advocacy and support for the oppressed.



Worship Service Sunday, November 23, “Revolutionary Gratitude” with Becky Feyen -

Becky created and led a service on turning gratitude into action—revolutionary gratitude. It’s about moving from comfort to courage, from prayer to action. Because love — radical, accountable, and abundant— demands more than sentiment. It asks us to see beyond ourselves, to recognize the threads that bind our well-being to the struggles and hopes of others. While Becky led the service Tanya led a Children’s RE session with the same theme. The 7 kids in attendance made a gratitude chain and presented it to the congregation while reciting a poem.



5th Sunday Fluff ‘N Buff Clean-Up day: Sunday, November 30

This amazing crew of 3 braved deep snow and slippery roads to help make PLUUF shine! A BIG thank you to Sherman, Pat, & Grace. Also, thanks to Beth for decorating the outdoor planter pots with pine boughs and red dogwood branches before the snowstorm.