

# Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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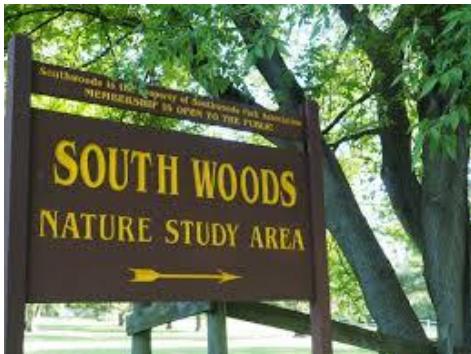
## Upcoming May Events



**ENGAGE Sunday, May 3, 10AM: Town Hall Conversation** A town hall forum will allow for the Prairie Lakes Board to discuss aspects of PLUUF's future and will create space for everyone to share their ideas, questions, and concerns. Please see page 4 for more details. We hope you can join us!



**Worship Service Sunday & POTLUCK, May 10, 10AM: "Rethinking Purpose: A Conversation on Meaning Without Religion" with Cheri Salzberg.** Cheri will lead a discussion on living a purposeful life without religion, drawing on Dan Barker's idea that "life doesn't need purpose; purpose needs life." The conversation explores how meaning can be created outside of belief, alongside Barker's journey from ordained minister to prominent secular activist.



**ENGAGE Sunday, May 17, A Walk through South Woods with Pat Dobrinska:** Join us for a refreshing morning in nature! We'll gather at Prairie Lakes by 10:00 a.m., ready to go in comfortable hiking shoes, and then either travel in your vehicle or carpool together to South Woods for a guided tour. If you'd prefer to meet us there directly, the address is N7974 Union Street in Ripon. Our guide, Pat, will lead us through the woods as we take in the beauty of spring wildflowers and the surrounding landscape. According to Pat, this is the most stunning time of year to experience South Woods, promising a peaceful and memorable morning outdoors.



**Worship Service Sunday, May 24, 10AM "Children's Books & UU Values" with Linda DeCramer.** This presentation explores how children's books can bring Unitarian Universalism values to life, highlighting themes of kindness, inclusion, justice, and respect. It offers examples and simple ways for caregivers and educators to use stories to nurture empathy and thoughtful conversations with children. She will incorporate excerpts and ideas from literature across all age groups, recognizing that the soothing and cathartic power of books extends to readers of every stage of life.



**5th Sunday, May 31, 10AM, Sunday Fluff 'N Buff Outdoor cleanup day:** Spring is here! Help us spruce up our fellowship grounds at our Outdoor Clean-Up Day. Bring your energy, your gloves. All our welcome, we would love to have you join us!



## A Message from the Moderator by Connie Ghinazzi

Hello friends! First I want to shout a big THANK YOU to all who participated in our Art & Service Auction on Sunday. It was a fun morning with beautiful items finding new homes, clever services offered and accepted, and lively conversation and laughter throughout. Wonderful music kept the event lively and the pace of the event kept the bidding active. Lots of yummy snacks, highlighted by Linda DeCramer's beautiful and delicious cupcakes. A special thanks goes out to Brad Roost, who was masterful in keeping the auction moving along and fun. And, as always, how can we ever thank Tanya Schwartz Roeper enough for pulling it all together.

Now to look forward. The month of May is when everything comes bursting back to life and it is a time of hope and anticipation. Sunday, May 3, the board will be hosting a Town Hall conversation. See the notes on the bottom of this page for some topics to be discussed. We look forward to hearing ideas and suggestions or concerns you may have. I hope to see all of you Sunday for coffee and conversation.

All this leads to our Annual Meeting on June 14. It is important to have a quorum to move forward the business of our congregation, so please plan to attend and have your voice heard. Thanks for all you do and I look forward to exciting plans for 2026-27.

### **Board to Host Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, May 3, 10AM**



Connie Ghinazzi  
Moderator



Cheri Salzberg  
Secretary



Beth Howman-Combs  
Treasurer



Nicole Roost  
At-Large Rep



Jim Goyette  
At-Large Rep

**A town hall forum on May 3 will provide an opportunity for the Prairie Lakes Board to hear directly from the congregation, fostering an open and inclusive space for all voices to be shared.**

Please see some of the discussion items on **page 4** of this newsletter. This will be a great opportunity for all members and friends to share their ideas, ask questions, and express any concerns.



**Prairie Lakes Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 14, 10AM**  
Not a Prairie Lakes member, but would like to become one? See Connie next time you are at PLUUF or contact her by email at [connieghinazzi@gmail.com](mailto:connieghinazzi@gmail.com) (To vote at the annual meeting you need to have been a member for at least 30 days).

## Art & Service Auction

OUR MORNING OF FUN and FUNDRAISING WAS WILDLY SUCCESSFUL!



What a wild and wonderful morning it was at our Art & Service Auction! The energy in the room was truly something special, filled with laughter, generosity, and a shared spirit of community.

We are deeply grateful to our live auction donors who contributed beautiful items and meaningful services, to the enthusiastic bidders whose generosity brought the event to life, and to the entertainers who added joy and vibrancy throughout the morning.

We're especially grateful to our auctioneer (Ohhh, Brad 😊), musicians, slide advancer, and cashier, whose time, talent, and care helped make the entire event feel seamless and joyful. We also want to thank everyone who supported us from afar by assigning a proxy to do your bidding.

Because of you, the auction was not only a success, but a celebration of what makes our fellowship community so strong—creativity, kindness, and connection. Our small (but mighty!) fellowship community never ceases to amaze with its generosity, and when we come together, amazing things happen. Together, we raised over \$3,700 (our goal was \$2,500!)

If you missed it this year, we hope you'll be part of the fun next time.



## PLUUF Supported the Ripon High School Social Justice Alliance at the Art & Service Auction



Charlie, president of the Social Justice Alliance at Ripon High School, gave a brief talk thanking PLUUF for sponsoring the SJA trip to CA last year by raising funds at this auction.

He also announced that plans are underway for the Ripon Pride Event on June 6th in which there will be a variety of different vendors. Instead of raising our paddles this year, we supported the RHS SJA by simply presenting a check for \$150.

Keep up the great work RHS SJA!!



# Our Fellowship, Our Future

Please join us for a Town Hall conversation on Sunday, May 3

## Below are some of the topics that will be discussed during the Town Hall Conversation:

- Discussion of our break from Sunday programming in July & August
  - Discuss possibilities for summer off-site events & activities in lieu of summer services
- Summer Youth Programming: June, July, August?
- Landing and ramp renovation update
- Gardens on the PLUUF grounds; plans for the future.
- Are we interested in building more of a relationship with the Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Fond du Lac? If so, in what ways?
- Community Events
  - Green Lake Area Animal Shelter September 18th event.
  - Will there be an Ice Cream Social the same day as a rummage sale June 19 and 20? Do we want to participate in the rummage sale this year?
  - Gatherings at Ripon Dough Co. 1st Friday of the month. Are people interested in continuing for the summer?
- Discussion of PLUUF's proposed Mission, Vision, and Covenant revisions.
- **Open forum for questions, ideas, and concerns**

## Revisiting Our Foundations: Updating Prairie Lakes' Vision, Mission, and Covenant for a New Era

Approximately every five years, the Prairie Lakes Board of Directors undertakes a thoughtful review of our Vision, Mission, and Covenant to ensure they continue to reflect who we are and who we aspire to be. In light of the adoption of Article II and the transition from the Seven Unitarian Universalist Principles to the Six Shared Values, the Board believes this is an appropriate time to revisit and update these guiding statements.

We invite you to carefully review the following outlining the proposed revisions. Should you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Board Moderator Connie.

**A congregational vote on the proposed changes is scheduled for our Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 14.**

## PROPOSED VISION/MISSION/COVENANT STATEMENT REVISIONS

**Current Vision Statement:** As a Fellowship, we strive to support, promote and exemplify the ideals of the Seven Unitarian Universalist Principles

**Current Mission statement:**

Individually, collectively, internally and externally we agree to be a transformative presence for our members, friends and the larger community by:

- Creating an atmosphere of love, compassion and caring for all ages and stages in life's journey
- Promoting intellectual curiosity and open-minded discussion
- Acting as stewards of the Earth
- Advocating for a more just and equitable world
- Honoring the worth and dignity of all beings
- Nurturing our communal spiritual journey
- Committing time, talent and treasure to promote positive change in ourselves and in the world

**Proposed Vision Statement:** A world rooted in love, dignity, justice, and care for all by striving to promote and support the ideals of the six Unitarian Universalist Values: Interdependence, Pluralism, Justice, Transformation, Generosity, and Equity.

**Proposed Mission Statement that weaves in the 6 UU values centered around love:** While we are a small congregation, love binds us together in a shared vision of mutual care, justice, and hope for the wider world.

- Rooted in love, we seek to foster compassion and care for all people, honoring our interdependence with one another and the Earth.
- We cultivate pluralism by encouraging open-minded inquiry, deep listening, and respectful dialogue across differences.
- We act as responsible stewards of the planet, recognizing that the flourishing of all life is bound together.
- We advance justice, equity, and the inherent dignity of every being, working to transform systems that harm into ones that heal.
- We nurture spiritual growth, shared purpose, and personal and collective transformation grounded in love.
- With generosity of time, talent, and resources, we commit ourselves to creating positive change within ourselves and throughout the world.

#### **CURRENT COVENANT:**

We each embrace our personal responsibility to choose respect and kindness, to the best of our human ability as we journey together. We strive to:

- Care for each other through deep listening and genuine kindness while assuming good will
- Create a safe environment by respecting and trusting one another
- Encourage each to express the authentic self; supporting, inspiring, and challenging one's quest for truth, meaning and spiritual growth
- Nurture a diverse and welcoming congregation

#### **REVISED COVENANT**

We, as a congregation rooted in love, covenant together to:

- Care for one another and all people, honoring our interdependence.
- Listen with open hearts, embrace pluralism, and seek understanding across differences.
- Be faithful stewards of the Earth, nurturing and protecting all creation.
- Work for justice and equity, affirming dignity and transforming harm into healing.
- Grow together spiritually, supporting one another in love and shared purpose.
- Give generously of our time, talents, and resources to bring hope and positive change to our community and the world.

Together, we commit to live these promises in love, guided by faith and strengthened by one another.

## Art & Service Auction Benefits Green Lake Area Animal Shelter,

Prairie Lakes not only raised funds for the Fellowship, but also featured an auction segment supporting an upcoming Green Lake Area Animal Shelter community event. The event, organized by Tanya, will celebrate the shelter's 33-year history and honor its founders and legacy of service.

A special tribute will recognize former Shelter Manager Janine Rubeck, who served for 20 years and profoundly shaped the shelter's impact in the community. Many will remember her from PLUUF's Animal Blessing services, where she shared her deep care for animals. In accordance with her wishes for no formal memorial, this celebration offers a meaningful way to honor her life and lasting contributions alongside the shelter's story.

Thanks to PLUUF's generosity at the auction—raising \$375 plus a matching gift—PLUUF will now serve as an official sponsor of the event. Save the date: Friday, September 18, 5:30–7:30 p.m.



### Green Lake AREA Animal Shelter

🐾 SAVE THE DATE 🐾

🎉 33 Years of Compassion:  
Honoring the Green Lake Area Animal Shelter (GLAAS) 🎉  
*Celebrating the Journey, the People, the Paws, the Community*

**Date: Friday, September 18**  
🕒 5:30 – 7:00 PM  
📍 **Town Square Ballroom**  
492 Hill Street, Green Lake, WI 54941

**Special Guests & Surprises Await!**  
**Heavy Appetizers Will Be Served**

*Visit the Town Square Lobby the month of September - GLAAS Merchandise will be available!*



## IN CASE YOU MISSED OUR OTHER EVENTS IN APRIL



### Happy Easter! Sunday, April 5, with Sherman Leatherberry: *Easter*

**Reflections** This reflection explored the Easter story through a Universalist lens that welcomes multiple interpretations and personal growth. Rather than a literal event, Easter becomes a metaphor for renewal, transformation, and re-examining beliefs. A powerful personal story—watching a friend face ALS with faith and joy—illustrates the strength of belief in resurrection, however it's understood. The message also highlighted inclusion and dignity, uplifting figures like Mary Magdalene and affirming everyone's worth. Ultimately, Easter calls us to move beyond ego, live fully in the present, and embrace inner transformation and new life.



### Worship Service Sunday & **POTLUCK**, April 12: *Embracing Possibility* with **Connie Ghinazzi**.

This was the title of our Soul Matters resource for the month of April which acted as a wake up call for her. Seeing how individuals come together and show up for each other is a powerful message of hope and possibilities. How can we get beyond our natural risk adverse nature to stop fearing what we might lose rather than dreaming of what we might gain? A thought to consider from wise Jane Goodall, "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make".



### **ENGAGE** Sunday, April 19: *Reaching the Religiously Disaffiliated* with **Brian Smith**.

Brian's book explores the rapid rise of Americans who identify with no religion—the "Nones," now making up over a quarter of the population and an even larger share of younger generations. Drawing on survey data, it examines why many are leaving or avoiding organized religion and the challenges this poses for the future of Christianity. Brian also highlighted emerging efforts to engage the Nones, especially relational, non-proselytizing approaches like the Nuns & Nones movement that emphasize dialogue, shared experiences, and spiritual accompaniment.