



Prairie Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

315 Eureka Street, Ripon, WI 54971

pluufripon@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook!

September 2026 NEWSLETTER



5th Annual Jean Johnson Memorial Kayak Event on Sunday, September 6

On Sunday, September 6, kayak or canoe from the Spring Lake landing at Spring Valley Park in Green Lake and paddle the scenic perimeter of Spring Lake with other PLUUFers & guests..



When we are finished paddling, we'll all meet up at the landing to say a few words about Jean Johnson and maybe even sing (or listen to) Jean's favorite song, "Blue Boat Home."

Here's the plan:

- Kayak/Canoers will meet at the Spring Lake landing at Spring Valley Park: W2290 Spring Lake Road, Markesan by 9:45. (You can Google Map it by typing in Spring Valley Park, Markesan, WI). Be sure to bring a life jacket. **Need a kayak?** Ask Tanya tanyapapermaker@gmail.com.

The Water Sharing/InGathering Service officially kicks off programming for our new fiscal year. To celebrate, there will be a potluck following the service.



Worship Service Sunday, September 13, 10:00 AM **Plus Potluck:** Annual Water Sharing/In-Gathering (Intergenerational)

This time of year begins another season of Ingathering, when Unitarian Universalists come together to renew our commitments to each other and to our communities. PLUUF Moderator Connie Ghinazzi will lead this service. Bring water from your summer expeditions or

that is meaningful to you and take this opportunity to share your thoughts. We'll co-mingle the waters as a symbol of our solidarity. Don't have water? No problem. We'll provide some for you.

More details on the bottom of page 2



ENGAGE Sunday, September 20, 10:00 AM: The Afterlife in World Religions and How to Prepare for It with Brian Smith

All major religions despite differences on what ultimate reality is all agree that the human spirit survives bodily death. They also agree that the beginning of the afterlife is experienced now in this bodily life depending on the way we live.



Worship Service Sunday, September 27, 10:00 AM Harvest Sharing Celebration with Becky Feyen *Harvest Sharing Celebration*

Fall is a beautiful time to celebrate our bountiful life by sharing with others. Our service will honor the growing season & explore food insecurity. Since we are people of action & making a difference, we will have a food drive for a local food pantry. Please bring food from your garden, farmer's market, or grocery store. Your participation & generosity is greatly appreciated; we truly need each other.



A Message from the Moderator by Connie Ghinazzi

Welcome back, friends.

Our summer sabbatical is concluding and I hope all of you feel refreshed and excited to be back together. We have had several gatherings over the course of the summer that brought pluuf-ers together in new ways, beginning with a potluck at my home on Little Green Lake in June. In July and August, Pat led us in exploring two properties that are part of the Green Lake conservancy. Also in August, Brad and Nicole Roost took us on a cruise of Green Lake to become more familiar with its ecology. We will wrap up our alternative programming with the Jean Johnson Annual Kayak event on Sunday, September 6. PLUUF members also continued with meeting for coffee on the first Friday of the month at Ripon Dough Company. Thanks to all that took part in this summer fun.

So we are ready for all of us to gather on Sunday, September 13 for our Water Sharing Intergenerational Service.. Interesting topics are being planned for our Worship and ENGAGE Sundays in the next few months. Please take note of the special request for volunteers on Sundays to help out in the next couple months. Our fellowship needs all of us to take part to flourish.

As has been announced over the summer, Laird DeCramer and Dennis Galatowitsch will be rebuilding the ramp and steps to the entrance to our building this fall. You will see they have already begun work by tearing out the old ramp. The estimate for this essential project is about \$14,000. We have the funds in our savings to cover this. However, the board would like to make a special ask this month for donations from our members and friends to help pay for this project. Please earmark your donation as a ramp fund. Your generosity in helping offset some of the cost of this project is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Connie Ghinazzi connieghinazzi@gmail.com

Let me close with these words from John M Higgins.

Welcome to this place. This is a home where no revealed truths are promoted and no scripture or human being accepted as infallible. This is a place for searching for truth.

But we are believers. We believe in intellectual freedom; we believe in justice; we believe in compassion and concern for each other and the whole world. We believe in commitment to those ideals which make us caring and active in the struggles for human dignity. We are Unitarian Universalists.

Welcome Back!

Sunday, SEPTEMBER 13, 10:00 AM

Water Communion Worship Service In-Gathering/Water Sharing

"Members bring to the service a small amount of water from a place that is special to them. During the appointed time in the service, people one by one pour their water together into a large bowl. As the water is added, the person who brought it tells why this water is special to them. The combined water is symbolic of our shared faith coming from many different sources." - UUA.ORG

If you don't have water, no worries, we'll have symbolic water available.

Help Make Sundays Happen! 🌈

Our UU fellowship is something we create together and there are lots of simple, meaningful ways to help make Sunday mornings run smoothly!

We're looking for volunteers to:

- Teach RE/Youth Group on 2nd & 4th Sundays
- Open and close the building on Sundays
- Make coffee and help with hospitality
- Become familiar with the sound system
- Fill in as a musician
- Lend a hand wherever an extra set of hands is needed

You don't need special experience, **and you don't have to commit every Sunday**. Tanya is available most anytime to train you, answer questions, and help you feel comfortable in any of these roles.

Whether you can help once in a while or want to take on a regular role, your participation helps make our fellowship welcoming, vibrant, and truly shared. Come join in, we'd love to have you! Please contact Tanya anytime tanyapapermaker@gmail.com or text 920-960-8874 or pluufripon@gmail.com

Green Lake Area Animal Shelter Legacy Event Friday, September 18 in the Ball Room at the GL Town Square!

Prairie Lakes is proud to be a generous sponsor of this special event!

The shelter is in its 33rd year and this legacy event honors the founders of the shelter, pays tribute to the late Janine Rubeck, who once led the PLUUF Animal Blessing services, and celebrates the dedicated Board members, staff, and volunteers who continue to carry the GLAAS mission forward today.

Friday, September 18, 5:30-7:00pm

Be among the first to experience the premiere of a deeply moving documentary chronicling the shelter's 33-year journey, featuring rare footage of the founders who started it all.

Plus, enjoy special appearances by a few surprise 4-legged guests as we celebrate the community that has made every second chance possible.

All September at Town Square: Pet-inspired Art Exhibit in the Town Square Lobby by the artists of Art MidWisconsin. (PLUUF member Pat Dobrinska is one of them!) Questions? Contact event organizer Tanya tanyapapermaker@gmail.com



Green Lake AREA Animal Shelter

Celebrate With Us!

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

Time:
5:30 - 7:00 PM

Town Square Ballroom
492 Hill Street
Green Lake, WI 54941

Special Guests

- Video Documentary Premiere
- Heavy Appetizers
- Cash Bar

Questions?
Contact: tanyapapermaker@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting animals. 🐾 Together, we make a difference.



Our Fellowship saved hundreds of dollars because of your generosity during the 2025/26 fiscal year. Thank you!

September marks the first “ask” of the new fiscal year and we are seeking the following items:

1. Batteries: AA & AAA
2. Toilet Paper
3. Paper Towels
4. Breakfast Bars

An Opportunity For ALL to Participate in a Weekly Zoom Book Discussion with Brian Smith

Retired Ripon College Religion Professor Brian Smith and Pastor Karen Gygax Rodriguez of the Federated Church in Green Lake co-moderate weekly ZOOM book discussions during the academic year on issues of social justice and spirituality. They have been doing this together since COVID and now have about 30 regular participants from seven different states in the country.

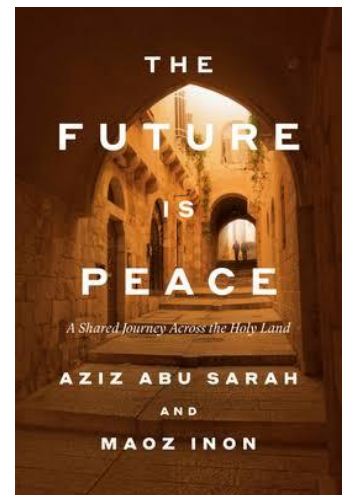
They will meet online on **Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 beginning the Thursday after Labor Day, Sept. 10th.**

The book for the first seven weeks of the fall will be on the Israeli- Palestinian conflict co-written by an Israeli and a Palestinian - both of whom lost family members in the conflict but who have come together to promote peace between both groups.

Their book is:

The Future Is Peace: A Shared Journey Across the Holy Land,
by [Aziz Abu Sarah](#) and [Maoz Inon](#) . New York: Crown Publishers, Hardcover \$27.96.

If you reach out to Brian, he will give you more information about the book and the weekly readings for seven Thursdays in the fall. He sends out chapter summaries and questions for discussion before each session and they video record discussions for participants who may miss a session.



If anyone would like to participate please send Brian an email and Pastor Karen will include you in the weekly ZOOM invitations for discussions. Contact Brian at bhsmith801@gmail.com



The Prairie Lakes Programming Team Planned the September to December Schedule!

The Worship Service & ENGAGE Sunday programming team has been working hard planning upcoming events and services. The schedule will be announced soon.

Are you interested in leading an RE/Youth group Lesson on a 2nd or 4th Sunday?

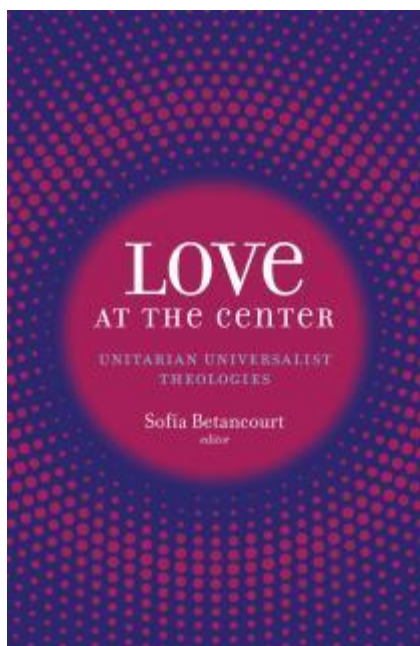
You can create your own lesson or we have pre-made lesson plans ready to go. Our pre-made lessons have everything you need to present the topic, questions for discussion and story to read. There is a sign-up sheet in the Social Room at PLUUF or contact Tanya at tanyapapermaker@gmail.com if you would like more information.



UUA Common Read

Each year, the UU Common Read invites congregations into shared reflection, learning, and action through a common book and accompanying resources.

Love at the Center



2026–27 UU Common Read: Love at the Center: Unitarian Universalist Theologies

The UUA's Common Read for 2026–27 is *Love at the Center: Unitarian Universalist Theologies*, edited by Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt.

More than two dozen UU leaders explore what it means to place love at the center of our faith and practice.

[Purchase *Love at the Center*](#) from inSpirit: the UU Book and Gift Shop

Love at the Center [audiobook](#) and [ebook](#) options are also available from other retailers.

Pardon Our Progress!



Dennis and Laird have started renovating the Ramp Landing stairs—out with the old, and soon, in with the new!

When we return to services in mid-September, the project will still be a work in progress. Please pardon the mess and use the side door. Thanks for your patience as we improve our space!



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT IN AUGUST

Summer Adventures with PLUUF

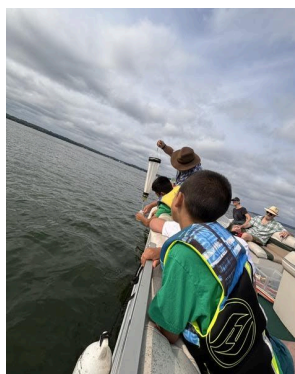
PLUUF members and friends have been making the most of summer with fun off-site adventures in place of our usual on-site programming!

We've enjoyed beautiful hikes led by PLUUF member Pat Dobrinska, and on August 15, we took to the water for a special morning on Green Lake, made possible in part through our **Webster Grant**.



Taking off from the dock of the beautiful Daycholah Center, Brad and Nicole Roost led a wonderful boating and ecology adventure, blending nature, learning, and plenty of summer fun. We're grateful to the Daycholah Center for welcoming our group and providing the boat and driver.

It was a memorable day of connection, exploration, and summer fun for all ages!



What is the Daycholah Center?

As an Open and Affirming outdoor ministry, UCCI welcomes people of all faith backgrounds — or no faith background — and celebrates the diversity of God's creation. We strive to create an inclusive environment where people of all races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, abilities, and life experiences feel valued, respected, and at home

