

**Prairie Circle UU Congregation**  
**November 1, 2009**  
**\*\* Religious Education Program News \*\***

**This Month in Children's RE – World Religions Program**

**11/01 - Native American Spirituality (Pre-Teen Group Meeting)**

For the last two weeks our classes have been studying Native American Spirituality and finding common links to our own UU faith, through music, crafts and discussion. We have been making our own tribal totem poles, talking about animal spirit guides and creating a communal sacred space.

For more information about Native American Spirituality, please see the RE handout for the week of 10/25. This link can also provide additional interesting information: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/nataspir1.htm>

Today - All children will be enjoying some special treats. The 5th grade and older students will be meeting during regular class schedule as part of our **Pre-Teens for Social Action group** to discuss upcoming events.

**Upcoming Children's RE World Religion Classes:**

11/08 – Baha'i Faith

11/15 – Intergenerational Service Practice

11/22 – No Class - Thanksgiving Intergenerational Service

11/29 - Christian Science

12/06 - Islamic Faith (Pre-Teen Group Meeting)

12/13 - Islamic Faith

12/20 - Pagan/Earth Religions

12/27 – Intergenerational Service Practice

01/03 – No Class - Church Anniversary/Fire Communion Intergenerational Service

Opportunities still available to teach, be a guest speaker, help out for a special event and/or join the RE Committee, if interested please contact Laura Tomsy at [re@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:re@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions related to the Religious Education program, please contact Laura Tomsy, DRE 847-871-7049 or any member of the RE Committee.

**For Adult Education Opportunities – please see other side of this notice.**

## **Book Group begins new selection – November 8th**

### **Book Discussion: Barbara Ehrenreich - Bright sided The Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking Has Undermined America**

Review by Emily Wilson, AlterNet. Posted October 10, 2009.

The author talks about how a plague of positive thinking is permeating our society, from medicine to business, and is even contributing to our financial crisis.

When Barbara Ehrenreich went to be treated for breast cancer, she was exhorted to think positively; and when she expressed feelings of fear and anger, she was chided for being negative. Ehrenreich, the author of 16 books, including *Nickel and Dimed* and *Bait and Switch*, which examine the blue- and white-collar job markets, took on what she sees as an epidemic of positive thinking in her new book: *Bright-Sided: How the Relentless Promotion of Positive Thinking Has Undermined America*.

Positive thinking is different, she says, from being cheerful or good-natured -- it's believing that the world is shaped by our wants and desires and that by focusing on the good, the bad ceases to exist. Ehrenreich believes this has permeated our culture and that the refusal to acknowledge that bad things could happen is in some way responsible for the current financial crisis.

In her new book, Ehrenreich examines how the positive-thinking movement was started by Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, and an amateur metaphysician named Phineas Parkhurst Quimby in response to Calvinism; how being positive became mandatory in corporate culture; and how she thinks prosperity preachers, such as Joel Osteen of Lakewood Church in Houston encouraged a culture of debt by telling their congregations that God wants them to have a big house and a nice car.

Copies of the book can be found at local libraries, book stores. For more information or to order a book (\$14.00) contact Laura at 874-871-7049 or RE@PrairieCircleUUC.org

**Book group meets every *second* Sunday of the month  
at 10:45 in the charter school classroom  
located next to the courtyard behind the barn.**

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**Book Discussion Coming Soon: Karen Armstrong's *The Case for God***

Moving from the Paleolithic age to the present, Karen Armstrong details the great lengths to which humankind has gone in order to experience a sacred reality that it called by many names, such as God, Brahman, Nirvana, Allah, or Dao. Focusing especially on Christianity but including Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Chinese spiritualities, Armstrong examines the diminished impulse toward religion in our own time, when a significant number of people either want nothing to do with God or question the efficacy of faith. Why has God become unbelievable? Why is it that atheists and theists alike now think and speak about God in a way that veers so profoundly from the thinking of our ancestors?

Answering these questions with the same depth of knowledge and profound insight that have marked all her acclaimed books, Armstrong makes clear how the changing face of the world has necessarily changed the importance of religion at both the societal and the individual level. And she makes a powerful, convincing argument for drawing on the insights of the past in order to build a faith that speaks to the needs of our dangerously polarized age. Yet she cautions us that religion was never supposed to provide answers that lie within the competence of human reason; that, she says, is the role of logos. The task of religion is "to help us live creatively, peacefully, and even joyously with realities for which there are no easy explanations." **If interested in joining this book discussion and/or ordering a book (\$16.00) please contact Laura at 874-871-7049 or RE@PrairieCircleUUC.org**