

# Notes from the Prairie



PRAIRIE CIRCLE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

December 2010

## Upcoming Services

### December 5

#### *Communion with the Spirit of Place*

Ed Collins

Is ecological restoration best defined by land management techniques, species list and unbiased scientific observation? Or, are we engaged in a more profound dialogue with the natural world? Explore the experiences of land stewards that begin to articulate deeper experiences with restoration and the intimate connections between humans and nature that involvement in stewardship creates. How does the act of caring for creation unleash the power and realization of that ancient intuitive connection? What are the implications of actively seeking out and cultivating the esoteric and the spiritual as part of the restoration experience for us as individuals and for the larger stewardship movement?

The PCUUC Choir will be singing.

### December 12

*TBA*

Jim Jaeger

Please check our website for more up-to-date information:

<http://www.prairiecircleuuc.org/worship/worship-calendar/>

We will also be welcoming new members into our community with a New Member Recognition Ceremony.

### December 19

#### *The Unbearable Ecstasy of Waiting*

Bruce Moon

The service will address the reality that the cynics are right, the whole Christmas

season is dreadfully over-done and lost in greed. Still, the story stands as a warning and a promise, as critic to the wanton consumerism and self-righteousness of the season that it is caught in the demand for more, more for me, for us. Warning, warning, that wanting will never fill us but kill us wholly. Promise, promise, that even in this madness love is born.

We will also experience the great joy of a Child Dedication.

### December 24

#### *Christmas Eve Celebration*

Rev. Dr. Clare Butterfield

We will be sharing a service of lessons and carols for Christmas Eve with a homily by Reverend Dr. Clare Butterfield. Nothing in it will surprise you at all, but we all need the little uplift that the story holds.

The PCUUC Choir will be singing.

### December 26

#### *Clear your Mind, Prepare Your Spirit*

Matt Meyer

The holiday season is incredibly hectic for many of us. This Sunday we will work to clear our minds of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and prepare our spirits for new beginnings, an approaching new year, new opportunities, new joys and new challenges. Matt Meyer will lead us with soulful drumming and inspiring words.



## Our Caring Circle

Cares of concern were expressed by: Norine Fendrych for a co-worker being treated for breast cancer, Petros Petridis for the many local families presently in need of our help, and Tonia Becker VerShaw for a friend's well being. Recovery wishes are extended to Martina Shaneyfelt and Phil Swartz following recent surgeries.

An expression of condolence was expressed by Karen Achtemeier whose friend passed away and also Cathy and Bruce Moon whose brother-in-law passed away.

Congratulatory wishes to: Mike Merritt who recently retired and Quinn McKenzie who participated in a successful high school talent show.

Announcements of Joy were expressed by: the Klicks whose son was home for the holiday, Laura Hebert who met a favorite author, Mike Dooley, and the Kratoskis who will be vacationing in Jamaica.

*Let us each be filled with the joys and sorrows of our PCUUC family.*

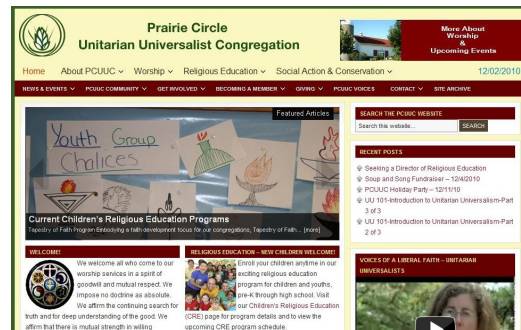
If you have a joy or concern to be published, contact the Caring Committee at: [Caring@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:Caring@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

## Announcing the New Website

On November 11<sup>th</sup>, the PCUUC Web Team consisting of Tonia Becker-Vershaw, Sara May, Dayle Kozlowski, Andrea Mills and Rich Fendrych happily announced the launch of the new PCUUC website! The website address remains the same: <http://www.prairiecircleuuc.org>. If you have not already visited the new site, please take a moment to do so. It has been designed to be a more effective, efficient and timely electronic medium for informing members, visitors and the larger community about our Congregation. The new website is an easy-to-use resource providing valuable information, including details of upcoming church and committee events, activities and resources in the broader UU

community, and other happenings of interest to like-minded people.

One of the many benefits of the new website is that there will no longer be a central Webmaster who makes all additions and changes to the site. Instead, the website will be maintained by Board Members, Committee Chairs, the DRE and, on an as-needed-only basis, by our Administrator, Andrea Mills. Future requests for additions or changes to the website should now be directed to one of the aforementioned people. General oversight of the website will be the responsibility of Tonia Becker VerShaw and Rich Fendrych. As website administrators, Tonia and Rich will be able to answer questions about the website and make changes to the underlying structure of the website, if necessary.



During the month of December, Rich and Sara are offering face-to-face and over-the-phone website training to Board Members, Committee Chairs, the DRE and anyone interested in learning how to post, update and maintain their portion of the website (adding content to the calendar, posting articles, etc.). The training will be available Monday through Thursday evenings through the end of December and requests for three available evenings can be directed to Rich at: [Membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:Membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

We would love to hear what you think about the new website! There is a simple feedback form on the site that you can use to submit your comments – we hope you will take a moment to do so on your next visit. To get to the form, you can click this link: <http://www.prairiecircleuuc.org/submit-feedback/> or click “Submit Feedback” in the “Contact” menu at the top of any page.

## Fundraising Forum

### Are you a Hero?

Prairie Pennies participants are the silent heroes of the PCUUC fundraising strategy. Each member or friend who participates on a regular basis raises a steady stream of revenue for PCUUC simply by participating. Last year these heroes quietly raised \$2000. **Our goal for this church year is \$2400.**

The holiday season is the biggest season of the Prairie Pennies year. Please take the time to think through your holiday shopping needs. There are Prairie Pennies cards for all of them.

### Holiday Order Schedule

<u>Order Date</u>	<u>Delivery Date</u>
12-5	12-12
12-12	12-19
12-19	12-26

**Stock Up on Stocking Stuffers:** They're small, they're convenient and everyone loves getting them. Prairie Pennies gift cards make the perfect stocking stuffers for everyone on your list. Car washes for Dad, Starbucks for Mom, Jamba Juice for the kids, and Gap for the babysitter. There's something for everyone!

**Holiday Meal Planning:** We have Jewel, Dominick's, Sunset, Sam's Club, Wal-Mart, Gordon Food Service, Pea Pod, Piggly Wiggly, Omaha Steaks, Honey Baked Ham, and many more.

**Gifts of Appreciation:** We are all very fortunate. Show your appreciation for the people who make your life easier. Teachers, neighbors, nannies, the cleaning crew, the lawn crew, plumbers, computer geeks, garbage men, hair stylist, mail carrier, friends, co-workers and anyone who carried some of the load to get you through the year. There are Prairie Pennies for them all. Amazon for the teacher, Claire's for the babysitter, iTunes for the college kid next door, Starbucks for the mail carrier. The list goes on and on.

Taking the time to purchase Prairie Pennies cards for the shopping you already do could make you one of our silent heroes AND help us reach our goal.

**Please commit to using Prairie Pennies this holiday Season. For questions or concerns, contact**  
[Scrip@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:Scrip@PrairieCircleUUC.org)

### A Great Taste of Wine!!

The "Getting Ready for the Holidays" wine tasting was a grand success. The Fundraising Committee hosted the second annual Holiday Wine Tasting and Sale event on November 6<sup>th</sup> at Wine Knows in Grayslake.



There were 37 of us in attendance and PCUUC earned \$824 dollars from the entrance fees, pre-event wine sales and day-of-event sales. There were scrumptious complimentary food pairings, door and raffle prizes and knowledgeable wine stewards pouring samples from a full menu of wines and craft beers.



And, we will proudly donate \$45.50 to each of our social action charities: PADS Crisis Services and the Avon Township Food Pantry.

The Fundraising Committee would like to extend a special thank you to the PCUUC families who ordered wine and/or attended the event and to everyone who volunteered time to make this event possible.

## Intro to UU Class Starts January 16th

The Adult Religious Education Committee will present the three-part course "Introduction to Unitarian Universalism" in January and February 2011. If you are a member, prospective member or just someone who would like to gain a deeper understanding of Unitarian Universalism's principles, its beliefs-in-common, its "heretical" history, our shared spirituality and present-day actions to create a more just and environmentally-sustainable society, this course is for you. Each part of the course will cover different information about Unitarian Universalism and will be held on the following dates:

- January 16th - Part I: Who We Are: Unitarian Universalist History and Principles
- January 30th - Part II: UU Spirituality, Beliefs, Core Values
- February 13th - Part III: Community, the Wider World and Change for the Future

Course sessions will run from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. and will be held after the Sunday services and the children's religious education classes.

There is no fee for the course or course materials. Infant and child will be provided as needed. Classes will be held in a Prairie Crossing Charter School classroom next to the Byron Colby Barn. John and Inge Crowley, lay members of the congregation, will serve as the course facilitators. If you would like to register, please use the sign-up sheet in the back of the Barn. Registration

for each session will be limited to 12 adults. This basic-level course for adults is different and more in-depth than the PCUUC Orientation presented by the Membership Committee.



## Circle Dinners 2010-2011

During the 2010/2011 church year, there will be Circle Dinners on October 9, January 15, March 12 and June 11. Circle dinners are small group dinners in members' homes in groups of approximately 8 to 12 people. When you sign up, please indicate whether or not you would be willing to host one of the dinners. Please contact Sally Merritt at [merritt69\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:merritt69_99@yahoo.com) to sign up.

## Dia De Los Muertos Party



Dia De Los Muertos is the Mexican holiday that celebrates death as a transition from one life to another and acknowledges communication between the living and the dead.



Mark Wilson and Margie Rader hosted a Dia De Los Muertos or Day of the Dead celebration at their home on the evening of October 29th. Many adults and children attended the festivities, dressed in costume including the very clever “Cereal” Killer and Black Eyed P’s. Margie provided a fun activity of Day of the Dead skull model decorating. Wonderful food and beverages were shared as well as great conversation. Photos of the event were provided by Teresa Aguinaldo and Patrick Gonder.



## Greeters Needed

We are looking for Greeters to welcome guests to our Sunday morning worship service. It is an easy and fulfilling way to help the Congregation. You will work with an experienced greeter for guidance and help direct new visitors to the New Visitors table. Only one or two Sundays per person are requested. If you are interested, please contact Rich Fendrych at: [membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

## Welcoming a Guest at Your Table

PCUUC’s annual program in support of the Unitarian Service Committee is now

underway. Participating in the UU tradition of Guest at Your Table helps bring us closer to our shared UU principles. Celebrate your power to help change the world and share your blessings. Guest boxes and information are available in the Barn during services. Learn more at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org).

Celebrate UU faith in action!

## Covenant Groups

A covenant group is a small group that meets to discuss topics of interest and develop bonds of friendship. Interested in starting a new covenant group? Contact Interim Director of Religious Education Julie Palumbo for more details: [re@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:re@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

### Mother/Daughter Group

There has been interest in forming a mother/daughter based on the book “The Mother/Daughter Project: How Mothers and Daughters Can Band Together Beat the Odds and Thrive Through Adolescence”. If you have a daughter of any age and would be interested in forming a group, please contact Julie Palumbo at: [re@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:re@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

### Men’s Group

Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. Please contact Rich Fendrych for more information: [membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

### Father/Son Group

If there is any interest in a Father/Son group, please contact Julie Palumbo at: [re@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:re@PrairieCircleUUC.org).

### Prairie Women’s Covenant Group

The PCUUC Prairie Women’s Covenant group meets twice each month on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Location rotates. Topics are varied. New members are always welcome! Contact Norine Fendrych at: [nativeheart27@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nativeheart27@sbcglobal.net) or Sally Merritt at: [merritt69\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:merritt69_99@yahoo.com) for more details.

# Our Wider Community

## NSUC Film Series

You are invited to join the North Shore Unitarian Church for their December adult education film offering, [A Serious Man](#), on Friday, December 10th. The film will be screened in NSUC's Fellowship Hall at 2100 Half Day Road in Deerfield. Wine and treats will be served at 7:00 p.m. The film will begin at 7:30 p.m. followed by a discussion led by noted film instructor and critic, Reid Schultz.

This dark comedy, produced by the Coen Brothers, tells the story of an ordinary man coping with trials that challenge his acceptance of an orderly universe overseen by an attentive deity. The film received an Academy Award nomination for best picture as well as a Golden Globe nomination and placement on the Top 10 Film List of 2009 both for the American Film Institute and the National Board of Review.

## Faith in Place Winter Farmer's Market

The Winter Farmer's Market at NSUC will be held on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Winter Farmers Market:

- Provides options: you can buy wholesome, regional farm stand food and goods in the winter.
- Promotes justice: small-scale farmers receive fair wages while using environmentally friendly practices.
- Helps farm families: market vendors donate a portion of their sales to the Farmer Crisis Fund, which provides emergency financial assistance to farmers in need.

As people called to love one another and to care for creation, buying from local sustainable farmers can be a great expression of faith, love and justice. For more information about sustainable farming, visit [www.faithinplace.org](http://www.faithinplace.org).

## Winter WomanSpirit 2011

Winter WomanSpirit 2011 will welcome Margot Adler to keynote a weekend about Balancing Our Power: Spirit, Self and Earth. It will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Elkhart, Indiana. The dates to save are February 25th through February 27th.



## Soup and Song Fundraiser

On Saturday, December 4th, 6:00 – 11:00 p.m., Bruce and Cathy Moon will be hosting a Soup and Song house concert to benefit the Global Alliance for Africa's Therapeutic Arts Program for children affected by the AIDS pandemic. Music, food, good company and the opportunity to buy arts and crafts from East Africa or jewelry made from bicycle parts.....what could be better?

A \$10 donation is requested. More Information about the Global Alliance can be found on their website:

<http://www.globalallianceafrica.org/home>

# Final Notes

## Newsletter Submissions

All submissions for the January 2011 newsletter are due by the end of the day on **December 25th**. The newsletter will be posted on the website at the beginning of September. Please send submissions as attachments to Andrea Mills, PCUUC's Church Administrator at: [office@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:office@PrairieCircleUUC.org).



## To Discontinue Receiving Monthly Email Notices of the Publication of the Newsletter:

Please send your request to the Office Administrator at [office@PrairieCircleUUC.org](mailto:office@PrairieCircleUUC.org) and include your name and email address in your request. Thanks.



Visit PCUUC on the Internet at  
[http://www.prairiecircleuuc.org!](http://www.prairiecircleuuc.org)

## List of PCUUC Contacts

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Julie Palumbo	Interim Dir. of Religious Education	<a href="mailto:RE@PrairieCircleUUC.org">RE@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Joyce DeWitt	Choir Director	<a href="mailto:Choir@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Choir@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Mark Wilson, Jim Cubit & Scott Helmke	Music Committee	<a href="mailto:Music@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Music@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Tonia Becker-Vershaw	Worship Committee	<a href="mailto:Worship@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Worship@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Laura Franz	Children's RE Committee	<a href="mailto:RE-Committee@PrairieCircleUUC.org">RE-Committee@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Mike Honegger	Adult RE Committee	<a href="mailto:Adult-RE@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Adult-RE@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Inge Crowley	Social Action Committee	<a href="mailto:Socialaction@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Socialaction@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Peg Fredrickson	Social Action Committee	<a href="mailto:Socialaction@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Socialaction@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Rich Fendrych	Membership/Publicity Committee	<a href="mailto:Membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Membership@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Mark Wilson & Diana Fox	Long Range Planning Committee	<a href="mailto:Planning@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Planning@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Ric Sarmont	Nominating Committee	<a href="mailto:Nominating@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Nominating@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Teresa Aguinaldo	Hospitality Committee	<a href="mailto:Social_events@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Social_events@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Jan Kirch	Caring Committee	<a href="mailto:Caring@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Caring@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>
Rory Klick	Ministerial Study Committee	<a href="mailto:RKlick@CLCIllinois.edu">RKlick@CLCIllinois.edu</a>
Jan Kirch	Fundraising Committee	<a href="mailto:Fundraising@PrairieCircleUUC.org">Fundraising@PrairieCircleUUC.org</a>