

July/August 2023

# Prairiewoods

A FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

## SUMMER'S *Spiritual* INVITATIONS

“Each day, and the living of it, has to be a conscious creation in which discipline and order are relieved with some play and pure foolishness.”

—poet May Sarton

**N**ature comes to its fullness during summer. We plant seeds, start projects and embark on new beginnings in spring. As summer radiates the sun's de-light and energy, we experience the life those planted seeds produce, and we embrace inspired and newly cultivated ways of living. Perhaps the greatest invitation of summer for human nature is to learn to live the balance of which Sarton speaks: the fullness of summer's creative light and life, time for relaxation, creativity, joy, leisure, "play and pure foolishness."

*Summer invites us to the pause of "timelessness"*—to be fully present in the moment, to stop long enough to awaken, to really see and hear what lies around and within us. Routines defer to disruptions: quiet days in the mountains or beach, lake activity,

sweltering under the stars, and perhaps frenzied vacations from the normal and expected.

Summer reminds us that there is hope in the world. That light shines within and beyond us, spreading to the far reaches of the globe. It inspires growth. We nurture others and all of creation, just as Sun nurtures us. In the Christian tradition, summer follows a heavy liturgical lineup—Advent, Lent, Easter, Pentecost—and sits within "Ordinary Time" when the days are to be "counted ordinary," though not in the sense of commonplace. The liturgical calendar suggests that each day of this time is meaningful and worthy of being counted. Each day matters!

*Summer invites us to be grateful for the cultivation of abundant beauty and bounty.*

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I gathered with a few others for a community conversation this week. The question we were exploring was about the meaning we attach to winning and losing. It didn't take long to find ourselves talking about how our story-telling and meaning making is connected to our human desire to belong, to find safety and a "good life." We soon became clear that our cultural emphasis on winning was built upon our beliefs about scarcity. "Winning" is essential when there isn't enough to go around—enough love, enough money, enough time, enough significance. Accumulation becomes the measure of our success. As we talked together, we discovered that all of us desired a different

way to experience and measure a good life.

What if, as this month's feature article suggests, we took our cue from summer? What if we learned from nature's exuberant response to the season and the moment? Summer invites us to invest in possibility and patience. We plant our gardens and patiently tend them. Let's do the same for ourselves. Let's plant some seeds for new growth. In order to do that, we need to prepare the ground. What do we need to do to make room for this new growth? What old ideas do we need to examine and remove?

In our community conversation, we realized that an important step in creating new possibilities was to examine the stories we tell ourselves and the meaning we assign to our experiences. Again, we have the opportunity to learn from the season and the land. Each summer, the land responds without regard to what happened the summer or the season before. Each summer is a new beginning. And often, we respond in the same way! If our tomatoes didn't do well, we try a new location, a new variety, more water. We plant our zinnias again, even though we know they will only last a season.

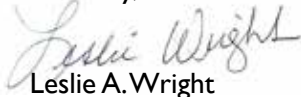
In our gardens, we savor variety and experimentation. We admire different approaches. The land rewards us with great beauty when we attend to different climates and growing conditions. The growth, fruit and flowering of plants, trees and shrubs become our measures of success.

This summer I will challenge myself to stop racing and to be present to each moment. I will nurture growth and healthy fruit in my life. I will put down strong roots for the seasons ahead.

During summer I am much more aware of savoring each moment and each day because I know they are precious and few in the Upper Midwest. I try to drink it all in—whether it is spending time with my hands in the dirt, watching my garden grow or sitting in the soft twilight on my screen porch watching the fireflies blink in the grass under a summer moon. I love to listen to the soft whisper in the trees when there is an evening breeze.

All of us here at Prairiewoods invite you to find some time to savor summer, here on the land or wherever you find yourself.

Sincerely,

  
Leslie A. Wright



Prairiewoods is an ecospirituality retreat and conference center in the Franciscan tradition. It is a nonprofit ministry sponsored by Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of La Crosse, Wisconsin.

**Mission:** Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center is a sacred space where people of all faiths and cultures are invited to explore and nurture their relationships with the Source of All Being, Earth, Self and Others with an increasing awareness of the story of the Universe.

The Prairiewoods staff collaborates to publish this newsletter bimonthly. Content, except where otherwise noted, is created by our staff in consultation and with care to offer a uniquely Prairiewoods perspective.

Please address all correspondence to:

Prairiewoods  
120 E Boyson Rd  
Hiawatha, IA 52233  
319-395-6700

[www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org)  
[Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org](mailto:Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org)



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Summer teems with activity—endless hours: basking in lush gardens, taking in vibrant flowers galore, visiting beautiful orchards and farmers markets ... all gifting us with light and energy! Given our ties to the land, summer creates spaces that allow us to spontaneously recognize, engage and express gratitude. As we grow our own food, we cultivate virtues and qualities of mind, body and spirit in order to develop new ways of being. We may drop by a roadside produce stand to buy corn, apples, green beans “picked just this morning” ... We savor and taste summer in sweet buttery corn, sun-ripened tomatoes, scrumptious strawberries, raspberries—summer tastes, scents and vibrant colors bless us! Even corn husks and cucumber peels, overripe plums and watermelon rinds strewn on the compost pile create a work of art!

For some, *summer invites retreat and return*. In the Islamic tradition, July 30 marks the first day of the new year. Muslims celebrate by making an obligatory, sacred, month-long pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca to strengthen personal values and set spiritual goals and plans for the future. Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice, is among the biggest Islamic holidays of the year, reminding all of Allah's mercy and blessings. The fest's main ritual emphasizes the importance of sharing the meat of a goat, sheep or camel. One-third of the meat goes to people who have no such food, one-third is distributed to friends and neighbors, and family enjoys the final third. This festival is also joyously celebrated by dressing up, visiting friends and relatives, preparing special dishes and desserts, gifting children with gifts and money, and hosting parties.

*Summer invites de-light and spirited play!* Both are essential elements of our sanity. With abundant life and long, lit days, summer is a pause in “the grinding schedule” where, as Lily Tomlin says, “Sometimes I feel like a figment of my own imagination.” Summer humbles us if we dare to step back for a moment from our self-importance and driven-ness, to reel in the fullness of life within and around us. We play for the pleasure of another's company, for the joy of community and to share the mutuality of the moment.

*Sounds of summer invite us outdoors into the community of nature:* buzzing lawn mowers; the birdsong of cardinals, robins, and lake loons; humming locusts and cicadas;

children's voices in splashing pools and parks; crooning crickets; gentle rain; squirrels chattering; adults laughing at barbecues and block parties; waves drawing a slow tug of the fishing line beyond shore ... With kindness, we mow for a neighbor, take time to drive someone to an appointment, host a picnic, celebrate together.

Indigenous people around the world have celebrated for thousands of years the Summer Solstice, the longest day of light in the year when Earth's northern hemisphere tilts closest to Sun. This seasonal shift prompts a revolution from within, a spark that lights one's soul on fire. In ancient cultures and still today, communities gather to share and celebrate languages, traditions and ceremonies to celebrate and thank Mother Earth for her abundant gifts. First Nation, Celtic, Slavic and Germanic people light bonfires in the hope of boosting the sun's strength for the remainder of the crop season and to ensure a healthy harvest.

A psychological link actually exists between happiness levels and the amount of sunlight humans receive. As daylight decreases, people actually tend to suffer greater levels of depression than they do during the summer. Exposure to sunlight releases serotonin, the chemical responsible for feelings of happiness and elation, in our brains. As a result, the more the sun shines, the happier people tend to be.

*Summer welcomes an interior spirit of reflection, too.* Summer stillness gives way to enlightenment and spiritual growth. The sacred texts of people practicing in the Jewish tradition refer to “kayitz,” the Hebrew word for *summer*. It shares a root with the word for *end*, “ketz,” and the word for *chopping wood*, “katzaz.” In Ancient Israel, this was the time when

the journey of the trees was complete. Trees were chopped and brought to their true purpose: to be used for firewood at the altar in the Temple of Jerusalem. This is what summer is all about: putting the finishing touches on all that we've experienced throughout the rest of the year and stepping closer to completion, peace and fulfillment—all of which share the Hebrew root “shalom” ([www.jewishedproject.org/news/jewish-secrets-summer-success](http://www.jewishedproject.org/news/jewish-secrets-summer-success)).

*Summer is indeed a time to integrate and celebrate life.* All of which is to say what Poet Hafiz says in his lovely poem *Laughter*.

## Laughter

What is laughter? What is laughter?  
It is God waking up! O it is God waking up!  
It is the sun poking its sweet head out  
From behind a cloud  
You have been carrying too long,  
Veiling your eyes and heart.

It is Light breaking ground for a great Structure  
That is your Real body—called Truth ...

O what is laughter, Hafiz?  
What is this precious love and laughter  
Budding in our hearts?

It is the glorious sound  
Of a soul waking up!

—Hafiz

# Souls Waking Up!

## Cultivating & Nurturing

Cultivating, growing, nurturing, tending fragile shoots of life, virtues and qualities of mind, body and spirit become new ways of being. "We plant so others can eat. This year we are planting things we've never grown before: ginger, leeks, etc. We love the challenge! It's fun to talk and learn with other gardeners as we share our produce."

—cook Brydon Hill & garden volunteer Gina Sison



## Living Balance

"Spiritual direction with Sister Lucille has given me the opportunity to intentionally pause, reflect, ponder my life choices and take next steps. Our conversations and time together have supported me realizing the power of unplugging from work and technology to instead get outside with my family to soak up the beauty of creation. I am grateful for the many ways that she has positively impacted my life and reminded me to make space for rest—and fun!"

—Sarah Montgomery (with Zak, Lucia and Xavier)

## Making Time for Play

"A goal of ours is for kids to learn how to play in a natural environment and also learn about the nature around them."

—Isaac, Kyle & Cole, students from Iowa

BIG who are creating a natural playscape in our Four Winds Food Forest



## Nature & Grace

Many a yogi practice at Prairiewoods with yoga instructor Heather English. The Monday morning yogis say: "We co-create family here as the practice brings us inner peace physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally. Sessions are filled with FUN, JOY and laughter. It's uplifting! We depend on Heather for our health and well-being. She's excellent! AND we are surrounded by beauty and connected to nature."



## Family & Community

Amber walks with her family through the woods regularly. “We come out here to do a bit of foraging so that I can teach my girls how to figure out what’s safe and what’s not, and there’s just a lot of great opportunities. You can find golden oysters and pheasant backs (mushrooms) and then there’s the edible gardens that they love being able to come and snack on.”

—Amber (with Luna)



## Community

“Prairiewoods is a place apart from the demands of daily life. For our group of pastoral and diaconal interns and their supervisors, the time and space provided by Prairiewoods gave us what we needed not only to rest in God’s abiding presence but to spark our personal and professional imaginations. We can’t wait to return.”

—Stacey Nalean-Carlson, Wartburg Seminary

## Making New Friends

Sheila Streeby and Mary Jane Knight met for the first time at Prairiewoods’ Awakening Awareness of Energy through Meditation. “We now meet to play regularly for the pleasure of company, for the joy of community, and for the support and learning from each other’s journeys.”

—Sheila Streeby & Mary Jane Knight



## Retreat & Return

Sister Anna Phiri, OSF, returns and retreats to Prairiewoods annually just to visit her friends in prayer. She says, “For the past 20 years, I have come here for different reasons, one of them being nature. In nature God meets me and I God, and this kind of retreat continues long after the actual retreat is over. Nature is all around us and we are reminded of God wherever we are and in whatever we are doing. Retreat becomes a daily experience.”



The following are retreats and programs that Prairiewoods is hosting online via Zoom or in person in the next two months. For more information or to register, visit [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) or call 319-395-6700.

## The Power of Silence: July Silent Directed Retreat Monday, July 31, 4 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 6, 1 p.m.

**Facilitators:** Lucille Winnike, FSPA; Rev. Rose Blank; Deb Hansen; & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Perhaps you've participated for years in Prairiewoods' Silent Directed Retreats. Or maybe you have seen these advertised and considered scheduling one for yourself, but aren't sure what a Silent Directed Retreat is. If you've made a silent, directed retreat, we welcome you back. If you've never made a retreat like this, we invite you to consider this question:



*What's the deepest silence you've ever known?* Silent Directed Retreats offer opportunities to enter into deep silence in order to sense what it feels like to awaken a quiet and palpable connection and deepen your relationship with the Source of All being.

Each day you will receive ongoing direction as you and a professionally-trained spiritual director listen intentionally to the movement of the Source of All Being in your heart. Listening in such profound silence assists you to get in touch with feelings, thoughts and actions as you reflect, meditate, pray and rest. The practice of this daily meeting assists in developing the capacity to discern, notice, sense the movement of the Source of All Being in light of your motivations, attachments, responses to that movement within the whole of your life. To share with a professional your divine experiences brings clarity, deepens your commitment and accountability to the direction of your life, surprises and offers insight into that direction.

**Fee:** \$495 includes lodging, meals and spiritual direction (*Partial scholarships are available.*) **Only a few spots remain, so register today!**

## Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.) 16 Retreat

**Fridays, monthly beginning Oct. 6, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.**

**Facilitators:** Rose Blank; Ann Jackson, PBVM; & Lucille Winnike, FSPA

Do you long for GOD? Do you desire time to reflect on your spiritual path and the movement of the Spirit within your life? Do you wish to enrich your spiritual experience through monthly prayer and reflection? Would you like a framework in which to explore and pray your "heart's desire"? Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.) is an eight-month retreat based on the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius explored a number of different kinds of prayer in creating the Exercises. He recognized that emotions and feelings in addition to the intellect help us to sense the movement of the Spirit in our lives. The Exercises develop dispositions of the heart for prayer, which then become part of daily life.

Retreatants in S.E.E.L. become increasingly aware of the presence of and activity of God in all things. They learn to discern that movement of God in their lives and in the world and to integrate meditation, contemplation and action. We invite you to commit to one hour of prayer each day for eight months, at least one monthly meeting with a spiritual director and eight monthly Friday sessions (Oct. 6, Nov. 10, Dec. 1, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 8, April 5 and May 10). This retreat is best suited for those who have or are interested in establishing a discipline of regular personal prayer, have experience sharing their spiritual journey with others, and are called and committed to deepening personal faith.

**Fee:** \$400 (payable in October or in monthly installments of \$50) plus monthly spiritual direction sessions paid separately

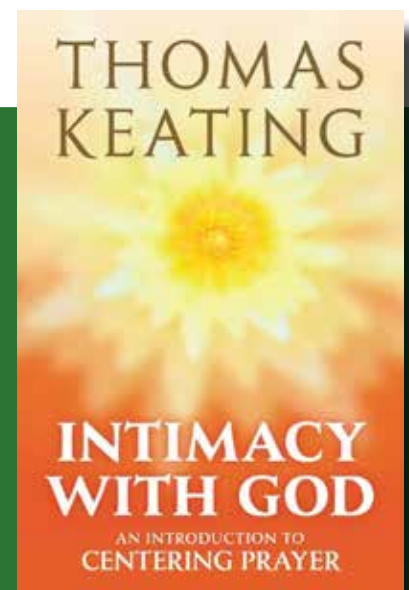


## Book Review

***Intimacy with God: An Introduction to Centering Prayer* by Thomas Keating**

Centering prayer is a traditional practice that brings us into the presence of God and fosters contemplative attitudes of listening and receptivity. Over time centering prayer can take us to a spiritual level of our being. Centering prayer requires intentional times of silence and practices each day over a lifetime to achieve a level of contemplation. The results of practicing centering prayer is that we can experience the Divine presence that is always with us.

—review by Dennis VanAuken



You will find many great reads in our Gift Shop. Come in to find new inspiration!

## Day of Self Renewal

**Thursday, July 6, & Mondays, July 10 & Aug. 14, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.**

*This popular program is being offered twice in July!*

**Facilitator:** Rev. Jean Sullivan

Find rest and relaxation for mind, body and spirit! This tranquil day features your choice of two services, group guided meditation, Singing Bowl Prayer or Healing Sound Bath & Yogic Sleep, a private guest room, a fresh lunch, and access to the labyrinth and all that Prairiewoods has to offer. (Depending on the date, you may choose from massage, head and shoulder massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, qigong, Nature & Forest Therapy, yoga or chair yoga. Visit [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) for details) Registration, a nonrefundable/nontransferable deposit of \$50 and your top three service choices are required eight days in advance. (Masks and vaccination may be required by the holistic provider.)

**Fee:** \$110 includes two services, guided meditation, singing bowls, private guest room and lunch (or \$95 without a private guest room)

## Into the Oneness: Qigong for Energy, Equanimity & Peace

**Thursdays, July 6–Aug. 17 & Aug. 31, 12:45–1:35 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel

Based on age-old Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), this gentle and accessible class involves

meditative, healing energy and compassion-based standing movement, breath work, visualization, acupressure and seated practice. We begin by opening, rebalancing and cultivating Qi (universal life force energy-Spirit) throughout the body's energy pathways, centers and organs to assist with mental, emotional, physical and spiritual well-being. Wisdom from the Tao Te Ching, TCM 5 Element Theory and beyond is sprinkled in to assist your practice of living life with greater ease, peace and harmony with the rest of nature in this One Reality



of which we all are part. Class ends with seated meditation, which includes sending healing compassionate intention to others and the planet. Also vibrational sound medicine played near your heart to re-tune and raise your vibration. *There will be no Qigong on Aug. 24.*

**Fee:** \$12 per session

## Healing Sound Bath & Yogic Sleep

**Thursday, July 6, 1:45–2:35 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel

Rebalance mind, body and spirit through the soothing, penetrating power of healing sound and vibration via singing bowls. Then drop into deepest levels of relaxation and peace through authentic, age-old Yogic Sleep (Yoga Nidra)—a reclined, meditative experience used by stress reduction clinics, integrative health care and mystics who savor resting in blissful Oneness with The Sacred. We will close with prayerful sound healing, including a lower-octave bowl played on or near (your choice) the shrine of your heart.

**Fee:** \$8

## Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony

**Saturdays, July 15 & Aug. 12, 4–7 p.m. (setup begins at 3, ceremony starts at 4)**

**Facilitator:** Kerry Batteau

The Sweat Lodge Ceremony pre-dates recorded history and was practiced in some form by every culture in the world. These sweats were held for reasons ranging from relaxation and socialization to healing and purification. Join us for a sweat focused on prayer, purification, recognition and healing. During the ceremony, we sit on the earth in the lodge, a small dome-shaped structure. Heated stones are placed in the center of the lodge and the water pourer, or leader, pours water over the stones to create steam. There are four rounds that include the singing of sacred songs, and after each round the lodge door is opened for more stones to be brought in.

*Please note that the lodge is a small enclosure that is dark and extremely hot inside.*



## Sabbatical in Everyday Life

**Opening Retreat:** Friday, Sept. 29–Saturday, Sept. 30

**Sabbatical Days:** Fridays; Oct. 27, Dec. 1, Jan. 26, Feb. 23, March 22, April 19

**Closing Retreat:** Friday, May 17–Saturday, May 18

We all need dedicated breaks to rest and rekindle our energy and sense of direction. According to the testimony of those who have done it and the Harvard Business Review, sabbaticals can be transformative. Sabbaticals offer time to heal, reconnect with important relationships, explore and ultimately embrace a more authentic life. But not everyone can take extended leave from their everyday lives. When you participate in Sabbatical in Everyday Life, you will have the opportunity to integrate rest and renewal into your life and enhance your wellbeing and resilience. Participants will enjoy two overnight retreats at Prairiewoods, one at the beginning of the program and one at the end. In between, step away for six sabbatical days, designed to renew your energy, enhance your perspective and provide opportunities to learn practices that will help you build a life you don't need to escape from. Each sabbatical day will include the chance to learn new skills, spend time in quiet reflection (indoors and out) and receive two individual services such as massage or spiritual direction. Join the cohort that begins in September!

**Fee:** \$1,500 (deposit of \$250) Register by Sept. 1 for a 30% discount!

*If you have claustrophobia or any medical conditions that prevent you from going into a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony. Please visit our website for safety protocols and to register. You will be asked to sign a release form.*

**Fee:** Suggested donation of \$10 to Prairiewoods for materials

## Threshold Conversations

**Tuesday, July 18, 7–8:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Karen Hering

Whether you're living through significant personal transitions or navigating a world reshaping itself faster than ever, you are invited to join a yearlong online conversation about

how to make change more trustworthy. Each session focuses on one of the ten threshold skills featured in Karen Hering's book, *Trusting Change*. Karen will present selected content from her book and offer a focusing question and silent time for writing or reflection. Then we'll move into small groups to share how we each experience and engage the threshold skill in the context of change. The July topic is Claiming Companions. You are invited to join all the monthly offerings or attend selectively. Your voice will bring wisdom for others, while theirs may offer just the perspective you need on your threshold.

**Fee:** \$15

**Y.O.L.O. (Your Other Lunch Option!)—Summer Theme  
Wednesday, July 19, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Daniel Sutherland

Tired of the same old lunch places? Let's renew our bodies and refresh our spirits in a beautiful setting!



Join us for Y.O.L.O. (Your Other Lunch Option!)—a lunch choice celebrating wholesome, fresh food made from scratch by chefs Dan Sutherland and Brydon Hill in Prairiewoods' no-waste kitchen. We dine in a community setting with friends we bring with us or new friends we meet over a delicious themed lunch. On July 19, our theme will be a fun summer picnic. Arrive at 11:30, and the buffet line opens at noon. Registration is required at least two days in advance, and each lunch is limited to 35 people.

**Fee:** \$15

**Seasonal Tree Rock Painting  
Saturday, July 29, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Andi Lewis

At different times in life and even various times within the same year, we may find ourselves in different seasons of the heart. We may be in the rush of promise, hope and possibility present in spring, or withdrawing inward during the challenges of grief, loss or turbulence in winter. In this contemplative and

creative workshop, we will read passages from John



O'Donohue's book *Anam Cara* to help us discern which season of the heart we are in. Then we will delve into that season and express our emotions through painting on smooth rocks. We will use a paint brush and fine dotting tools to create a beautiful, one-of-a-kind seasonal tree. This is a fun, relaxing process that can be done by anyone, but it may be too contemplative for young children. This class is aimed at both those who have painted rock mandalas and those who are totally new to rock painting.

**Fee:** \$13 includes all art supplies

**Summer Mindfulness Meditation Retreat Day  
Sunday, Aug. 13, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Chris Klug

"Dwelling in stillness and looking inward for some part of each day, we touch what is most real and reliable in ourselves and most easily overlooked and undeveloped," writes Jon Kabat-Zinn in *Wherever You Go, There You are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life*. "When we can be centered in ourselves, even for brief periods of time in the face of the pull of the outer world, not having to look elsewhere for something to fill us up or make us happy, we can be at home wherever we find ourselves, at peace with things as they are, moment by moment." This day will be spent in silence practicing mindfulness through sitting meditation, walking meditation, mindful movement and mindful eating. There will be time for sharing and questions during the final 30 minutes. Please bring your own lunch.

**Fee:** \$50

Experience the healing powers of meditative yoga through regular hatha-style yoga classes. RYT-200 Hour Certified Yoga Alliance Instructor Heather English offers Gentle/Beginner's Yoga every Monday and Thursday. People of all fitness levels and abilities are encouraged to participate whenever available. Registration is required for each session. *There will be no yoga on July 3, Aug. 21 or Aug. 24.*

**Fee:** \$120 for eleven-punch card, \$72 for six-punch card or \$15 for single class

**Going Inward with Sounds & Vibrations**

**Mondays, July 17 & Aug. 7, 6:30–7:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Kathy Broghammer

Experience sound, stillness, playfulness and relaxation through the enigmatic vibrations of Himalayan and crystal singing bowls. During this hour, we connect with our inner selves through the song of bowls. We are invited to sit or lie down to listen and just be. Registration is required. *There will be no singing bowls on July 3 and Aug. 21.*

**Fee:** \$10 per session

**Go Deeper Thursdays  
Thursdays; July 6–Aug. 17; 4–5 p.m.**

**Convener:** Ellen Bruckner

Go Deeper Thursday is an ongoing personal exploration and deepening in community. This group began during the pandemic as an opportunity to be in community while physically isolated. Topics emerge from the conversations and maintain a general focus on our spiritual lives. Registration is required to get the Zoom link.

**Fee:** Free-will offering

**Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton**

**Thursdays; July 6, July 20, Aug. 3 & Aug. 17; 7–8:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Carole Butz

The practice of contemplative living helps us respond to everyday experiences with greater awareness of our connections with God and others. It becomes a positive force in our lives and provides direction for our journey, enabling us to embrace our truest selves. This group meets via Zoom on the first and third Thursdays of each month. We use the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series. The process involves readings,

## Ongoing Programs

**Metta Yoga  
Mondays & Thursdays; July 6–Aug. 17 & Aug. 28–31; 9:30–10:30 a.m., 10:45–11:45 a.m. (chair yoga) & 5:30–6:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Heather English



reflections and contemplative dialogue. Please register for your first session to get the Zoom link. Book purchase is required after your first session.  
**Fee:** Free-will offering

**Singing Bowl Prayer**  
**Mondays, July 10 & Aug. 14,**  
**12:45–1:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Kathy Broghammer

Throughout history, singing bowls have been used around the world to foster

meditation, relaxation, prayer and mind-body-spirit wellness.

In these in-person sessions, we let the

resonant sounds of Himalayan and crystal singing bowls relax the entire body and create a pathway for clearer connection with the divine. Registration is required by noon.

**Fee:** \$8



**Afternoon Nature & Forest Therapy Experiences**

**Mondays, July 10 & Aug. 14,**  
**2:30–3:45 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Emelia Sautter

Join certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide Emelia Sautter and the land for a walk with the natural world. Experience Forest Therapy, a sensory-focused practice that invites us to slow down and be present with self and the natural world around us. According to the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy, “Forest Therapy is a practice that supports health and wellness through guided immersion in forests and other environments to promote the well-being of both people and the land.” Registration is required by the previous day.

**Fee:** \$15

**Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers**

**Tuesdays, July 11 & Aug. 8,**  
**9:30–11:30 a.m.; & Wednesday,**  
**July 26, 6:30–8 p.m.**

**Facilitators:** participants

Practice knitting and stitching in the company of new friends! This is a group of crafters of various skill levels



who create handmade goods for charity. New participants are always welcome, including those who are new to knitting and crocheting. Together we create hats, mittens, blankets and baby items for charity. Grab your needles and join us! This group meets in person on the second Tuesday morning and fourth Wednesday evening of each month. *There will be no Knitters & Stitchers on Aug. 23.*

**Fee:** Free

**Pause, Connect & Reflect**  
**Tuesdays, July 11–Aug. 29,**  
**11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Rev. Jean Sullivan

Join with others as we pause in the midst of our week for a half hour of connection and reflection. Inspired by seasonal changes, concerns that surface in our daily lives and in our world-wide community of connection, each session is unique, drawing on poetry, music, prayer, imagery and meditation. All are welcome to stop in via Zoom. *There will be no Pause, Connect & Reflect on July 4.*

**Fee:** Free-will offering

**Evening Centering Prayer**  
**Tuesdays; July 11, July 25 & Aug. 8;**  
**5:30–7 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Judith Smith

Join a supportive group of people for Evening Centering Prayer. This contemplative prayer form assists people in deepening relationships with God or Source of All Being. Each evening invites participants to an opening check-in and two twenty-minute silent, centering sessions. Together we relax and attune our body, mind and spirit to the Indwelling Presence. At the end of each gathering, we have an opportunity to share insights regarding our experience and practice. These Centering Prayer gatherings are open to all! Centering Prayer is offered on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, and sessions stand alone. *There will be no Centering Prayer on Aug. 22.*

**Fee:** Free-will offering

**Men Exploring Faith**  
**Thursdays; July 13, July 27 & Aug. 10;**  
**4–5:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Linzy Martin

Behavioral scientists and spiritual guides have noted a major transformation in the life direction of many men as we mature. It may happen gradually or abruptly, as early as our 20s or in our 50s or 60s. Some men never make this shift, described as a change from goal drivenness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom. The transition can start from the inside (*Why am I doing what I'm doing?*) or the outside (from a loss or threat), and it may seem disruptive while on the way to being life-enhancing. Join with a small group of reflective men in honest conversation about these changes.

This is a hybrid group that meets both in person and via Zoom on the second and fourth Thursdays monthly. *There will be no Men Exploring Faith on Aug. 24.*

**Fee:** Free-will offering

**Soul Care: Creative Arts Grief Support Group**

**Wednesdays, July 19 & Aug. 16,**  
**5:30–7 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Jamie Siela, LISW

*Offered in Partnership with UnityPoint Hospice*

In grief, our very foundation can be rocked. Take time to connect with others in grief and engage the creative spark. This monthly grief group is open to anyone grieving loss through death. On the third Wednesday of each month, explore a different creative art medium. On July 19, we will use acyclic paint to make unique flowers through dot painting. This technique will use dots that we blend and shape into petals. On Aug. 16, we will do a dissolving paper activity. Are there things you wish you would have said to your loved one? It's never too late. In this session, we will have the opportunity to use dissolving messages to express those things that we wish we would have said or would like to say now. Then we will have the opportunity to dissolve our messages in water. Registration is required nine days in advance. This group is a hybrid, offered both online and in person.

**Fee:** Free includes all art supplies



## Day of Caring 2023

On Thursday, May 11, we were thrilled to host corporate teams here at Prairiewoods for the United Way Day of Caring. This year's Day of Caring involved 56 different companies in the metro area doing projects at 49 nonprofit organizations. According to United Way, over 1,300 employees took part this year. Here at Prairiewoods, we had 48 corporate volunteers, and the teams came from Collins Aerospace, United Fire Group and Simmons Perrine Moyer Bergman Law Firm.

The weather was absolutely perfect for our teams, and they worked incredibly hard accomplishing many projects for us. We had teams working on our walking trails, pulling invasive species out in the woods, doing landscaping around our Hermitages and other buildings, cleaning all of our upholstered chairs and much more! Our teams put in 310 volunteer hours, which made a huge impact, and we're so grateful for all of their help.



If you'd like to volunteer here, visit [www.Prairiewoods.org/Volunteer](http://www.Prairiewoods.org/Volunteer) or contact Sandy at [srosenberger@prairiewoods.org](mailto:srosenberger@prairiewoods.org).

We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money and other gifts to Prairiewoods! For a complete, up-to-date list between newsletters, please visit [www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate](http://www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate).

## DONATIONS

Jacqueline Bailey  
Marcia Baumert, FSPA  
Karie Buss  
Cedar Rapids Retired  
Teachers  
Cindy Chicoine & Morgan  
Rivers  
Matthew Clay  
Ed & Peggy Dettmer  
Angela Doty  
Bob Engler & Carol Nilles  
Laurie Erlacher  
Shannon Foster  
Jill Grandia  
Terese Grant  
Isabella Grumbach  
Nancy Hauserman  
Carol Hedberg  
Kaye Hennessey  
Gerry Hopkins  
Eric Jones  
Becky and Tim Kresowik  
Suzanne Mahmoodi  
Sherry Mangold  
Gene & Judy McCracken  
Micail McPhee  
Evalee Mickey  
Bunny Morrison  
Craig Mosher  
Colleen & Jim Nieman  
Patty Nolan  
Loretta Pershin  
Rev. Catherine Quehl-Engel &  
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Mary Rasmussen  
Dena Rauch  
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Paulette Risher  
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Barbara Schmitz  
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Lisa Skemp  
Renee Sneitzer Kooker  
Amy Starr  
Hether Stauffacher  
Brenda Steinke  
Mary Gayle Stowe  
Jan Swander  
Diane Swanson  
Kelly Tamborski  
Sandy West  
Leslie Wright

## HONORARIA

*In honor of Nancy Hoffman,  
FSPA, & Ann Jackson, PBVM*  
Anonymous  
*In honor of Nancy Hoffman,  
FSPA; Ann Jackson, PBVM; &  
Lucille Winnike, FSPA*  
Sheila Rouse  
*In honor of International  
Women's Day* Anonymous  
*In honor of Laura Weber*  
Gina Sison

## MEMORIALS

*In memory of Martha Barry*  
Mary Ann Barry  
*In memory of Betty Daugherty,  
FSPA* Doug Beadle  
*In memory of Pat Day*  
Bette Niccolls  
*In memory of Mary Linn Fedler*  
Linda Bechen, RSM  
*In memory of Hank Godwin*  
Nancy Schrimper

*In memory of Tara King*  
Andrea Nus  
*In memory of Mitch  
McWhinney*  
Jon McWhinney

## IN-KIND DONATIONS

Mary Jane Knight  
Charles Luster  
Trish Peebles

## VOLUNTEER SERVICE

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Nancy Allen  
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Duane Beaudry  
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Here are two ways you can help us be good stewards of our resources and produce a beautiful, informative and inspiring newsletter:

- 1. Contribute a free-will offering of \$10.** Your gift of \$10 pays for a full year of your newsletters delivered to you electronically or by mail. If you would like to make this gift, please visit [www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate](http://www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate) and mark "Newsletter" in the notes field.
  - 2. Read your bimonthly newsletter online.** If you are willing to switch from paper to electronic, please scan the QR code at left with your phone's camera and give us your name, address and email address. We'll do the rest! (You can also call us at 319-395-6700 or email [ecospirit@prairiewoods.org](mailto:ecospirit@prairiewoods.org) and we can make the change for you.)
- Thank you in advance for all you do to support our mission!*



120 E Boyson Rd  
Hiawatha IA 52233

### Help Us Update Our Records

You may send this by mail, email [ecospirit@prairiewoods.org](mailto:ecospirit@prairiewoods.org) or call **319-395-6700**. If mailed, please include this address label.

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- Please take us off your mailing list.
- Please note the address change.
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## Friends & Family Day

**W**e have a very special day planned for *Sunday, Aug. 6*, here at Prairiewoods! From *1-4 p.m.* we invite you to take in all of our beautiful outdoor spaces that we have to offer. You can choose from a variety of activities throughout the afternoon:

- Start off by walking our 2.5 miles of trails, where you can rest by our gently winding stream, meander through peaceful woodlands and explore the tallgrass prairie.
- As you walk our trails, you'll come to our beautiful outdoor labyrinth. Labyrinths have been part of every culture and religious tradition in history. The labyrinth isn't a maze but is a single path that leads to the center of the circle and back out. Many people find that walking a labyrinth helps them reduce stress, calm their mind or bring about changes in their lives. We'll have a staff member there to help you learn about our labyrinth and everything it has to offer.
- We'll also have our brand new natural playscape available that both kids and adults will love! Spend time climbing our play structures that are all made from things found in nature.
- Kids are also welcome to take part in a rock painting class at 2 p.m. in our Art Room. The class is limited to 20 (including adults that are accompanying kids 12 and under), and we have a suggested donation of \$10.
- Have you always wanted to try tai chi? We'll have three short sessions on our grounds led by our own Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, at 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. Tai chi is slow, gentle movements that improve your muscle strength, flexibility and balance.
- Maybe you'd like to give yoga a try instead? We'll have short introductory yoga classes for everyone at 1, 2 and 3 p.m.

We look forward to a fun afternoon at Prairiewoods on Aug. 6 and hope that you can join us! For questions contact Sandy Rosenberger at [srosenberger@prairiewoods.org](mailto:srosenberger@prairiewoods.org) or 319-395-6700, ext. 216.



image by Alda Silva on Flickr