

Prairiewoods

A FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Grounded, Awakening, Becoming ...

As Prairiewoods enters its twenty-eighth spring and summer, we are conscious of three horizons present simultaneously. The first horizon is our past—the very ground of our being. The second horizon is our present—a time of great awakening and preparing for the next evolution. And the third horizon is our becoming—the future to which Prairiewoods is called. As we continue this beautiful journey, it makes sense that we should pause, honor what grounds us, attend to what is awakening in and around us, and prepare for the journey ahead.

Grounded

“Apprehend God in all things, for **God is in all things**. Every single creature is full of God and is a book about God. Every creature is a word of God. If I spent enough time with the tiniest creature—even a caterpillar—I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature.”

—Meister Eckhart

In the spring it is easy to think about the ground from which all things grow. We can smell the damp Earth and see the new green emerging from the Earth. We are also quite aware of the echoes of the seasons before and the richness they add to the soil.

Prairiewoods is grounded in profound truth and the wisdom of many generations. Influenced by the intersections of theology, science and ecology, Prairiewoods has emphasized not just spirituality but eco-spirituality.

The eco-theology of Thomas Berry and others within the Franciscan tradition have shaped us.

(continued on page 3)

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"The day of my spiritual awakening was the day I saw and knew I saw all things in God and God in all things."

—Mechtild of Magdeburg

Matthew Fox reflects on Mechtild's writing by saying, "Do you feel yourself moving from sleep and forgetfulness to an awakening?" This is a timely and provocative question for me in so many ways. We as humans often live in a state of forgetfulness. And this forgetfulness is often the source

of pain and struggle.

Three experiences have inspired me in the last couple of months. The first, reading Dr. Lisa Miller's book *The Awakened Brain*. Her research over decades now confirms what we have forgotten so often. Humans are spiritual beings. When we care for and cultivate our spiritual life, it offers us a pathway to resilience. And this spirituality, though not its expression, is core to all humans.

The second, participating in three different workshops and listening sessions focused on racial justice and healing. I discovered that I have been unconscious of important history that has shaped this nation and the community I live in. And while I cannot rewrite the past, I can choose a path forward that is restorative.

The third and most recent is the experience of spring. It is early this year, and that causes me concern for a whole host of reasons. And yet, the appearance of jaunty daffodils makes me smile. I am encouraged by the risks being taken by the early budding trees. Like the iris sending up their flags, I will believe in another summer and the possibility of new growth—for the land, for us as humans ...

I also know that this potential can only be realized by awakening to our relationships—and interdependence with each other and all Creation. It is the source of hope and abundance.

What are you awakening to this season?
Peace and all good,

Leslie A. Wright



early spring daffodils by Karla Ruth



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.

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(continued from page 1)

These principles are centered in our work: care for the Earth community, love for all people, a commitment to peace and reconciliation, justice and right relationships. These principles require Prairiewoods to be an agent of transformation.

Awakening

“Divinity permeates all things, and all things have the imprint of divinity, yet the sum of all things does not fully encompass the mystery of the divine.”

—AllCreation.org

The present time is one of awakening attention across traditions and disciplines. Where is change happening, and how will Prairiewoods respond? Diarmuid O’Murchu, in his new book *Ecological Spirituality*, reflects on the “complex and evolutionary nature of eco-spirituality” and its role in shaping consciousness that will positively impact the Earth and all who dwell upon it. The Prairiewoods team has been scanning the environment and paying attention to where there is suffering and disharmony. A powerful theme recently has cut across all our work and learning—the need for regeneration and restoration. There is a need for the restoration of the Earth, the repair of relationships and, by extension, the restoration of humans impacted by injustice and trauma.

Becoming

“We are now entering an enlarged horizon of our understanding of God and of how that same God, as energizing and creative Spirit, invites us into a deeper and wider engagement with the whole of creation.”

—Diarmuid O’Murchu, p. 32

How does this emerging future call to us? What will it require of Prairiewoods?

The authors of AllCreation.org describe two aims for Creation Spirituality that seem particularly suited to the work of Prairiewoods. First, “integrate the wisdom of indigenous, Eastern, and Western spirituality with the revelations of modern science to awaken mysticism, revitalize our culture, and promote social and ecological justice.” And second, “Inspire sacred work (shaped by) spiritual inquiry, creativity, and prophetic action” (www.allcreation.org/home/cs-intro?rq=creation%20spirituality). We need to expand our understanding and, at the same

time, make space for others to do the same. We offer the practices and experiences that cultivate greater capacity in all of us for “the benefit of Earth and all its creatures.”

We combine that with the guiding principles named by Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme: differentiation (the great diversity of life), interiority (the uniqueness of each being) and communion (the essential nature of life in relationship versus isolation). We seek blessings and abundance in the resulting diversity of experience and tradition.

But more is required. We have set an intention this year to create a refreshed Evolutionary Plan to help us respond to the call of this emerging future.

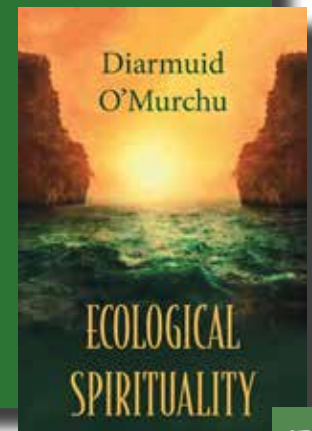
First, we will hold space for the endless creative potential available in our connection to this ecological spirituality. Prairiewoods will create safe spaces for discovery, for diverse perspectives and for deep learning. The words that resonate right now are *refuge*, *restoration* and *resilience*. Prairiewoods is called to be a dynamic partner in restoring and healing people, the environment and the community. To do that, Prairiewoods must be resilient and, more importantly, Prairiewoods must assist in cultivating and nourishing resilience in others. Spiritual resilience will be essential for the challenging days ahead. The world needs an army of change agents equipped with compassion, staying power and a vision of the common good.

As we cultivate this ecological spirituality in ourselves and in community, we cultivate our capacity for compassion, connection, creativity and positive vision. This is what a thriving future looks like. Please join us on this journey of restoration and regeneration.

Ecological Spirituality Book Study (Zoom) **Wednesdays, May 1–June 26, 7:30–8:30 a.m. or 7–8 p.m.**

Join us for a new book study focused on Diarmuid O’Murchu’s book *Ecological Spirituality*. This online book study via Zoom will be offered at two times to fit into various schedules. Join Leslie Wright from 7:30–8:30 a.m. or Rev. Jean Sullivan from 7–8 p.m. for nine Wednesday sessions, May 1–June 26. Together we will delve deeply into this book that will help us examine the human-Earth relationship in light of contemporary cosmological and ecological science.

Fee: \$25 for nine-week series, plus cost of book (available in the Prairiewoods Gift Shop)



As we lean into spring, Prairiewoods looks forward to new growth and the hope it brings. We're excited to host our annual Spirituality in the 21st Century conference on April 26–27, where we will discuss cultivating hope and taking action. So we invited a few of Prairiewoods' partners in mission to share:

What hope do you sense is awakening and where do you see that happening?

Carol Sudmeier, Engaged Global Citizen

The Iowa women's basketball team brings me JOY and HOPE!

The sport brings large groups of people TOGETHER for a COMMON CAUSE. Even homebound TV fans are one with those present in the arenas. It is about winning, but also CARING and CHEERING for the athletes, DISCERNING differences among cultures, INFLUENCING adults' and children's behaviors, and LEARNING about the power of TEAMWORK. The children have been watching. Worth noting are (1) Coach Bluder's LEADERSHIP and recognition of the LOVE among the team members and the SUPPORT of the fan base; and (2) Caitlin Clark's ATTENTION to the children who perhaps dream of emulating her achievements. Team members participate and enhance nonprofit activities by their presence.

Sports enables relationships. With a dying friend, I could share something we loved rather than the maladies of illness. We texted during games, talked about games at other times, agreed and disagreed (between us only) about coaching decisions. The athletes modeled RESILIENCE! How many times have they fallen, been knocked down, missed a shot or made a bad pass? They get up, if they can, and just keep trying! It has also helped bridge the distance between young and old, giving us a topic we both are excited about.



James Klein, President of Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust

As a lifelong banker, I definitely see Hope awakening in our local community. I see people being more aware of the divide between "the haves and the have-nots," and there is great concern around this inequity. Recently CRBT hosted a community forum with many area nonprofits around the challenge of housing options for all people in our community. While many great programs are rolled out—many policies that are rolled out from state or national governments have unintended consequences. I have seen and witnessed local people getting more involved and wanting to be part of a solution for our community.

Another huge change I have seen and heard from area residents is the concept of win-win versus win-lose. In the national arena—it is perceived that if one side wins ... the other needs to lose. Fortunately, more and more people are finding that it does not need to be that way. In many situations there can be a win-win outcome if people are willing to come together and talk (and listen) openly.

I see that in the financial world each day as people don't just accept the first answer they receive. They push to see if there are other ways to examine a situation for a better outcome.

Overall ... I see and hear more people with hope that if we all work together, great things can happen.





Rev. Jonathan Heifner, Lead Pastor at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Cedar Rapids

Faith communities are awakening to our need for awakening. Through ongoing seismic shifts in cultural and religious landscapes, the terrain is changing dramatically. No longer standing on the firm and familiar ground of the past, we can no longer rely on sleepy old patterns and systems. This is indeed a scary thing, but fear is also being met with a sense of new possibilities.

The faith community I serve is exploring the terrain by paying attention to the things that bring energy to the individual body as well as the collective Body. By listening intently and with our whole being, discernment practices are guiding us into the patterns where the Wind is moving.

What is on the horizon is yet to be seen, but as we ask what the Spirit is doing, we are awakening to new possibilities.”



Liz Matthis, Economic Development Coordinator for Hiawatha Economic Development Corp.

Hiwatha is a growing vibrant community—not only can you “feel” it, but you can see the growth driving around the community.

Our newly-elected Mayor of Hiawatha, Steve Dodson, says our town has more room to grow, and it's estimated our population will reach 9,154 by 2024 and 10,033 by 2029. So that means we need to be prepared to serve new residents who chose Hiawatha as a place to live.

We have awakened not only because of future growth, but we want to serve our residents in the best way possible. That responsibility comes in the form of building a strong infrastructure, providing excellent public safety (police and fire) and responsive city government.

Hiawatha is home to almost 400 businesses who employ more than 3,800 people. The Hiawatha BRE (business retention and expansion) interviews I've done indicate that several businesses have growth in their short-term and long-term plans, and most of them are talking about adding jobs and square footage.

Our forte is families. When looking at the metro, including Cedar Rapids and Marion, Hiawatha knows its role as a place where families are welcome, and the city is here to help large and small businesses succeed.



Elizabeth Callahan, Magnet School Coordinator for Cedar River Academy at Taylor Elementary

It's spring, and just as we see the blossoms in our garden, those of us in education are seeing our students blossom. We have worked all fall and winter to cultivate students who have a love of reading, find joy in math, and are curious about the world around them. In spring, we witness the fruits of our labor: students who struggled at the start of the year are grasping concepts they thought out of reach, students who were shy and kept to themselves have developed a network of friends, and everyone is begging for just a little more time to play outside.

For educators, spring is the time to enjoy the last few weeks we have with the class we grew into a family and marvel at how fast the school year went and how much our students have grown. Spring is when teachers everywhere are reflecting on a job well done, and looking forward to a season of rest before we begin again.



How are you awakening? Feel free to share your story at www.facebook.com/PrairiewoodsFSC. We'd also love to have you join us **April 26–27** at **Spirituality in the 21st Century**, where we'll be awakening hope and spurring action for the climate crisis. Learn more at www.Prairiewoods.org/Spirituality-in-the-21st-Century.

Garden Party: Growing Our Roots



PRAIRIEWOODS garden party GROWING OUR ROOTS

Saturday, June 8, 5–8 p.m., at Prairiewoods

Join us at our annual *Garden Party fundraiser* on Saturday, June 8, for a night of great music, food and nature! Proceeds from this event will go toward supporting and expanding our beautiful outdoor spaces as well as our gardens that produce thousands of pounds of fresh, organic produce each year. Once harvested, the produce is donated to local food pantries that serve those in our community facing food insecurity.

We have lots of fun things planned for our event, including our popular Dough for Dough raffle. Buy a wonderful fresh-baked loaf of bread for \$30 and have your name entered for chance to win a \$300 cash prize! Buy early because the loaves sell out fast. The event will include:

- A huge silent auction
- Live music by the Anji Kat Trio
- A tour of our grounds

Don't Miss Our Silent Auction!

We're finding some fantastic items for our silent auction that you'll want to bid on.

We'll Have Some Great Live Music!

During the evening you'll be serenaded with music by the smooth and classy jazz standards of the Anji Kat Trio.

Take A Tour of Our Beautiful Grounds

We encourage you to take a tour of our grounds to see everything that Prairiewoods has to offer. From 5–6 p.m., you can meander our trails where you'll find our labyrinth, Grandmother Oak, our new Natural Playscape and more. If walking isn't your thing, we'll also have rides on our ATV. If you get out to all of our stops, we'll put your name in for a fantastic drawing!

To register for our Garden Party or to donate, go to www.Prairiewoods.org/Garden-Party. The cost is \$60 per ticket and includes wine, beer or non-alcoholic beverages, as well as a delicious hors d'oeuvres buffet beginning at 6 p.m. We hope you'll join us!



For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Replenish: A Retreat for Caregivers (in person)
Friday, May 17, 6:30 p.m.–Saturday, May 18, 2 p.m.

Facilitator: Leslie Schwarting

Many of us are caregivers, whether for free or for a wage. We care for people nearby or those who are far away. Regardless of who you're looking after, whether it's children or elderly adults or if you work in healthcare, this retreat is for you. It is hard work, which makes caring for yourself while you are caring for others that much more important. Come to restore, recharge and replenish. Enjoy a contemplative walk through the woods or across the prairie. Bring whatever is on your heart and walk the labyrinth. Just sit under Grandmother Oak and commune with nature. Explore stress reduction and spiritual practices to find the calm within. Leave renewed and ready to savor the long summer days ahead!

Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Friday lodging, and Saturday breakfast and lunch

Commuter Fee: \$95 includes presentations and Saturday lunch



The Power of Silence: June Silent Directed Retreat (in person)

Sunday, June 9, 4 p.m.–Saturday, June 15, 1 p.m.

This retreat also offered July 7–13 & Oct. 6–12!

Facilitators: Rose Blank; Cindy Dunn; Ann Jackson, PBVM; Leslie Schwarting; & Lucille Winnike, FSPA

What's the deepest silence you've ever known? Silent Directed Retreats offer opportunities to enter into deep silence to sense what it feels like to awaken a quiet and palpable connection with the Source of All Being. Each day you will receive ongoing direction as you and a professionally-trained spiritual director intentionally listen to the movement of the Source of All Being in your heart. Silence assists you to get in touch with feelings, thoughts and actions as you reflect, meditate, pray and rest. Silence deepens the capacity to sense the movement of the Source of All Being within the whole of your life. Sharing with a professional may bring you clarity, deepen your commitment and accountability to the direction of your life. We try to hold any outside stimulation to a minimum so that everything—the silence, solitude, reflective activities, meals, etc.—supports your journey within. A daily centering practice is offered. Optional reflective activities such as artwork, yoga and singing bowl meditation are available throughout the week. Even meals are eaten reflectively in silence. Each day supports your individual needs. Stroll woods and prairie. Sense sunset quietly turn to dusk. Journal or read, if you choose. Nap. Engage in yoga, art expression, meditation. Notice how food nourishes your capacity for silence. Explore holding the silence with creation all



around you: humans, stone, tree, pond, squirrel, deer, turkey, star, moon, dawn, dusk ... Is the silence simply the absence of noise? Or is it also a presence unto itself? See for yourself! Come re-establish and remember the deep connection we share with all of Creation as we listen together to the GREAT SILENCE. Rest in silence and sense its wisdom. Author Carolyn Myss assures: "The soul always knows what to do to heal itself. The challenge is to silence the mind."

Fee: \$525 includes lodging, meals and spiritual direction (*Partial scholarships are available.*)

Earth Blessings: Reweaving Connections to Kith & Kin Retreat (in person)

Friday, June 28, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, June 30, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Leah Rampy, PhD

These are times of great challenge and loss in the living world. Although connections have frayed, our soul longs to reclaim the relationships we know are possible. Join us to explore how we can open more fully to kinship with the beings around us who have waited patiently for our return.

The rhythm of retreat will include small and large group discussion, practices for reconnection, and spacious silence for wandering and reconnecting in the woods and prairie.

Fee: \$250 includes presentations, Friday and Saturday lodging, and Saturday breakfast through Sunday lunch

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Save the Date!

Whole-Making with Our Ancestors with Cheryl Conklin, June 22

The Power of Silence: Silent Directed Retreats with Cindy Dunn; Eric Evans; Ann Jackson, PBVM; Leslie Schwarting; & Lucille Winnike, FSPA; July 7–13 & Oct. 6–12

Finding Peace in Mothering Retreat with Tammy Bayer & Jean Sullivan, July 26–28

Navigating Transitions: A Path to Reset & Renew Retreat with Jill Saunders & Leslie Schwarting, Aug. 2–3

Active Hope for a Troubled World Retreat with Kathleen Rude, Aug. 9–11

Becoming the Elder Tree: Purpose in the Second Half of Life Retreat with Thomas Dean & Chris Johnson, Aug. 16–18

The Book of Nature Retreat with Barbara Mahany, Sept. 6–8

World Labyrinth Day: Three Ways to Celebrate!

Pathways to Peace: Walking the Labyrinth One-Day Retreat (in person)

Saturday, May 4, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Leslie Wright

Join us for a daylong immersion in the contemplative practice of walking the labyrinth. Labyrinths are found throughout the world with the oldest dating back thousands of years. In contemporary use, labyrinths provide an opportunity for personal reflection, spiritual practice, or the reduction of stress in many different public and private settings. During this contemplative, daylong retreat, you will have an opportunity to walk a labyrinth, create your own finger labyrinth, enjoy a delicious meal and connect with others interested in deepening their spiritual practice. We will join in the public World Labyrinth Day walk at 1.

Fee: \$95

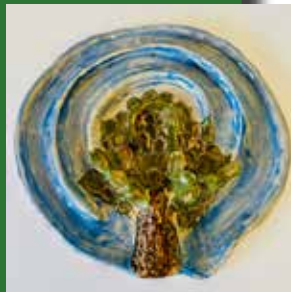
Create Your Own Finger Labyrinth (in person)

Saturday, May 4, 10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

Facilitator: Iowa Ceramics Center & Glass Studio

Create your own personal finger labyrinth. Using slabs of wet clay, you will carve a path for your finger to trace. You will then add color or pattern to your labyrinth. The labyrinth will be fired in the kilns at the Iowa Ceramics Center and be ready for pick up three weeks later. Labyrinths will be approximately ten-inch squares, perfect for your desk or table.

Fee: \$40 (This workshop is included in the daylong retreat.)



Walk as One at 1 (in person)

Saturday, May 4, 1–2 p.m. (gather by 12:45 p.m.)

On Saturday, May 4, thousands of people will participate in the sixteenth annual World Labyrinth Day as a moving meditation for peace and celebration of the labyrinth experience. Many participants will “Walk as One at 1” by walking a labyrinth at 1 p.m. local time to create a rolling wave of peaceful energy passing from one time zone to the next around the globe. Whether you are familiar with labyrinths or new to the idea of non-maze labyrinth paths, all are welcome to learn more and take part. World Labyrinth Day is an international event held on the first Saturday each May, sponsored by The Labyrinth Society in collaboration with partner organizations including the Australian Labyrinth Network, Legacy Labyrinth Project and Veriditas.

Fee: Free (This walk is included in the daylong retreat.)



Sacred Sight: See with New Eyes Photography Workshop (in person)

Friday, May 17, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Erin LaBelle

“How you see anything is how you will see everything.”

—Richard Rohr

You’re invited to join photographer Erin LaBelle for a daylong inner and outer exploration intended to forge deeper connections with self, other, nature and God. Together, we’ll slow down and spend time listening, observing, reflecting and sharing. Erin will facilitate group conversations and offer activities to open the heart and awaken the imagination, guiding participants to an expanded vision of themselves and the surrounding world. You’ll only need a phone camera, a journal, a writing utensil, curiosity and an open mind.

Fee: \$100

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) (in person)

Information Sessions: Monday, May 20, or Wednesday, June 5, 5:30–6:30 p.m. (via Zoom)

Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, June 18–Aug. 6, 5:30–8 p.m.

Retreat Day: Saturday, July 27, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Mindfulness is the power of mind to be deeply aware of what’s happening—without commentary or interference. Research reveals numerous benefits to the nervous system, emotions and general sense of well-being. Over eight weeks the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal meditation practices and informal integrative practices. This series consists of a two-and-a-half-hour class each week over eight weeks with one extended six-and-a-half-hour class. If you want to participate, please attend one of the free information sessions.

Fee: \$400 for the eight-week series (Those working in the human service field may register for just \$100!)

Joyful Teaching: Cultivating Hope through Mindfulness & SEL (in person)

Credit 1: Monday, June 24, 1 p.m.–Wednesday, June 26, 12 p.m.

Facilitators: Sarah Montgomery & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Would you like to cultivate more joy in your classroom, teaching and daily life? Would you like to learn about mindfulness and social and emotional learning (SEL) practices that you can use to support your wellbeing and the wellbeing of your students? In this one-hour credit course, learn practical, simple ways you can press pause, recenter and intentionally promote joy that will have ripple effects for your students, your family and the world.

Fee: \$75 to Prairiewoods and \$35 to GWAEA includes text *Practicing Presence*, overnight lodging is available for additional \$50/night

Credit 2: Wednesday, June 26, 1 p.m.–Friday, June 28, 12 p.m.

This course will offer practices of mindfulness, social and emotional learning (SEL), self-compassion, and neuroscience to develop a personal classroom toolkit for use with students. Deepening your own mindfulness and SEL skills also will be explored.

Fee: \$75 to Prairiewoods and \$35 to GWAEA, overnight lodging is available for additional \$50/night

Micro-Retreat for Mothers: Because You’re Worth It! (in person)

Tuesday, May 7, 5:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Leslie Schwarting

You’re invited to take the night off from chauffeuring the kids, cooking, cleaning, laundry, juggling appointments and all “other duties as assigned” that parenting brings. Come to Prairiewoods for an early

Micro-Retreat for Mothers. We will make it easy for you to plug in to a few hours of peace. First, enjoy a nourishing dinner cooked by someone else and bask in the serenity of Prairiewoods. Then learn accessible, easy practices and prayers of self-compassion to carry with you. Dinner is served at 5:30, and we'll have a program from 6:30–8. Why sign up? Like the folks at Loreal say, "Because you're worth it!" This would be a great early Mother's Day gift for any mom in your life!
Fee: \$35 includes dinner

Thelen-Benson Christophany Group (hybrid)
Wednesdays, May 1 & June 5, 5:15–6:45 p.m.

Facilitator: Steve Sovern
Based upon the belief that love is the fundamental energy of evolution, we gather in community, recognizing that we have the opportunity to co-create the universe and participate in the energy of evolution. These groups are formed as spaces of deep relationality with a vision to heal our world and transform lives through the real-world experience of communal reflection, shared friendship and collective spiritual practice based on the insights of Teilhard de Chardin and the authors who interpret and advance his vision. Group discussions incorporate a Lectio Divina-like process to assure the inclusion of perspectives of all participants.
Fee: Free-will offering

Exploring Spiritual Direction/Companioning Informational Session (hybrid)
Wednesday, May 1, 12–1 p.m.
Facilitators: Leslie Schwarting & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Learn about spiritual direction/companioning in a free information

session. Spiritual direction/spiritual companionship is a time-honored conversation and listening session between two people in which one person consults another spiritually experienced and trained listener about the ways in which the Source of All Being (God, Divine, Love, Universe, Holy, Buddha, Allah ...) may be moving in their life. It crosses all ancient spiritual traditions. Its aim is to empower us to explore a deeper experience of that Source of All Being through the experienced and compassionate company of another human being. The benefits include cultivating the skill of deep listening, articulating experiences of the Divine, exploring various spiritual practices and resources, and engaging in discernment and exploring spiritual questions. Come learn more about this incredible resource!
Fee: Free

Prayer Walk for Peace (in person)
Thursday, May 2, 6:15–7 a.m., 12:15–1 p.m. or 5:15–6 p.m.
Facilitator: Leslie Schwarting

The world is aching for peace: peace in our world, our community, our relationships and ourselves. Join us on a Prayer Walk for Peace on the National Day of Prayer. (Choose from a sunrise walk, a midday walk or an after-work walk.) Everyone is welcome, and registration is not necessary.
Fee: Free

Day of Self Renewal (in person)
Thursdays, May 2 & June 6, & Mondays, May 13 & June 10, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
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 meditation, a private guest room, a fresh lunch, and access to the labyrinth and all that Prairiewoods has to offer. (Services may include massage, head and shoulder massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, qigong, yoga or chair yoga. Visit www.Prairiewoods.org for details.) Registration, a nonrefundable/nontransferable deposit of \$50 and your top three service choices are required eight days in advance.
Fee: \$110 includes two services, guided meditation, singing bowls, private guest room and lunch (or \$95 without a private guest room)

Soul Care: Creative Arts Grief Support Groups (in person)
Family-Centered Soul Care (for children and the adults who support them): Wednesdays, May 8 & June 12, 5:30–7 p.m.

Soul Care for Adults: Wednesdays, May 15 & June 19, 5:30–7 p.m.
Facilitators: Jamie Siela, LISW, & Jackie Koster, BSW

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. These monthly grief groups are open to anyone grieving loss through death. In May, we'll do a reverse coloring activity, which can be a great way to release stress and anxiety and help us center ourselves in the moment. In June, we'll create dream catchers, which will help us reflect on our current and future dreams. Registration is required one week in advance.
Fee: Free includes all art supplies (dinner is provided for the family group)

Book Review

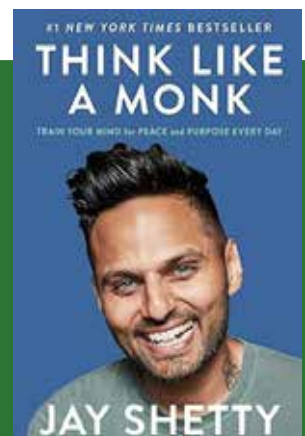
Think Like a Monk: Train Your Mind for Peace and Purpose Every Day by Jay Shetty

The group Men Exploring Faith meets the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 4 p.m. at Prairiewoods or can be joined by Zoom with entry beginning at 3:45 p.m. We currently are reading and enjoying *Think Like a Monk: Train Your Mind for Peace and Purpose Every Day* by Jay Shetty. Jay trained as a Monk in the Hindu tradition but incorporates teachings from the Buddhist, Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions as well. Jay has a warm and engaging writing style that is easy to read and understand. He has the ability to take ancient wisdom

and demonstrate how we can incorporate it in our daily lives. There is something for everyone. If you want tips and exercises on how to overcome negativity, fear, overthinking and a host of other problems that keep you up at night, this book is for you.

Consider joining Men Exploring Faith as we journey through this book and share our thoughts and experiences.

—review by Linzy Martin, group facilitator



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

On the Cusp of Change: Taking Part in Stillness & Navigating the Unknown (Zoom)
Tuesdays, May 14 & June 18,
7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Karen Hering

How can we pause to make sense of our changing world and better understand our choices in living with change, whether it's personal or global? This yearlong series of twelve stand-alone online programs and three in-person retreats takes a deeper dive into Karen Hering's book *Trusting Change*, exploring how to engage our memory and imagination when encountering the uncertainties of the present day. On the second Tuesday of each month, Karen will lead an online session of embodied practices, guided reflection and conversation with a specific focus of how to make change more trustworthy. On May 14, we'll talk about taking part in stillness, and on June 18, we'll talk about navigating the unknown.
Fee: \$15 per session

YOLO (Your Other Lunch Option) (in person)

Wednesdays, May 15 & June 19,
11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Desi Kerkman & Derek Doan

Tired of the same old lunch places? Let's renew our bodies and refresh our spirits in a beautiful setting! Join us for YOLO (*Your Other Lunch Option*)—a lunch choice celebrating wholesome, fresh food made from scratch by our chefs. We dine in a community setting with friends we bring with us or new friends we meet over a delicious themed lunch. Check our website for monthly themes. Feel free to arrive at 11:30, and the buffet line opens at noon. Registration is required by the previous Friday.
Fee: \$15

Drum Circle (in person)
Sunday, May 19, 2–4 p.m., &
Saturday, June 15, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Drum Iowa

Join Drum Iowa and Prairiewoods for a wonderful outdoor drum circle (weather permitting). Don't forget your drums! (We also will have instruments available for you to borrow.) You don't need to be a magnificent drummer or musician to enjoy this fun time. Spectators are welcome, and we'll have you drumming in no time! Registration is not necessary.
Fee: Suggested donation of \$10 (but this is a free event for all to enjoy)

Rock Mandala Painting for the Whole Family (in person)
Saturday, June 1, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
Facilitator: Andi Lewis

Spend a few hours creating art with your favorite people! Learn the art of rock painting with mandalas, which are sacred works of art in the form of a circle. Using smooth stones, paints and fine dotting tools, we will make beautiful, detailed mandalas. This is a fun, relaxing process that can be done by anyone, regardless of age. We will have time to paint several rocks. No experience or artistic skill is necessary, but kids 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. (It is ideal for ages 10 and older.)
Fee: \$15 per person includes all supplies



Ongoing Programs

Metta Yoga (in person)
Mondays & Thursdays; May 2–June 27 (except May 27); 9:30–10:30 a.m., 10:45–11:45 a.m. (chair yoga) & 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Experience the healing powers of meditative yoga.
Fee: \$120 for eleven-punch card, \$72 for six-punch card or \$15 for single class

Into the Oneness: Qigong for Energy, Equanimity & Peace (in person)
Thursdays, May 2–June 27,
12:45–1:35 p.m.

Participate in a gentle class that involves meditative, healing energy and compassion-based standing movement, breath work, visualization, acupressure and seated practice.
Fee: \$12 per session

Healing Sound Bath & Yogic Sleep (in person)
first Thursdays, May 2 & June 6,
1:45–2:30 p.m.

Rebalance mind, body and spirit through the soothing, penetrating power of healing sound and vibration via singing bowls.
Fee: \$10

Go Deeper Thursdays (Zoom)
Thursdays, May 2–June 27, 4–5 p.m.

Join this online community exploration and deepening of spiritual topics.

Fee: Free-will offering

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton (Zoom)
first & third Thursdays; May 2, May 16, June 6 & June 20; 7–8:30 p.m.

Practice contemplative living to respond to everyday experiences with greater awareness of our connections.
Fee: Free-will offering

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony (in person)
Saturdays, May 4 & June 22,
5:30–8:30 p.m. (setup begins at 4, ceremony at 5:30)

Participate in an ancient ceremony focused on prayer, purification, recognition and healing.
Fee: Suggested donation of \$10

Going Inward with Sounds & Vibrations (in person)
first & third Mondays; May 6, May 20, June 3 & June 17; 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Experience sound, stillness, playfulness and relaxation through the vibrations of Himalayan and crystal singing bowls.
Fee: \$12

Men Exploring Faith (hybrid)
second & fourth Thursdays; May 9, May 23, June 13 & June 27;
4–5:30 p.m.

Join with a group of reflective men in honest conversation about life changes.
Fee: Free-will offering

Singing Bowl Prayer (in person)
second Mondays, May 13 & June 10,
12:45–1:30 p.m.

Let the resonant sounds of singing bowls relax the body and create a pathway for clearer connection with the divine.
Fee: \$10

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitches (in person)
second Tuesdays, May 14 & June 11, 9:30–11:30 a.m.; & fourth
Wednesdays, May 22 & June 26,
6–8 p.m.

Practice knitting and stitching as we create items for charity. All are welcome!
Fee: Free

Evening Centering Prayer (in person)
second & fourth Tuesdays; May 14, May 28, June 11 & June 25;
5:30–7 p.m.

Practice a contemplative form of prayer to help deepen your relationship with God.
Fee: Free-will offering

Meet our Holistic Health Practitioners!

Prairiewoods is so fortunate to have some amazing holistic health practitioners. Whether you're receiving massage therapy, reflexology, healing touch or other services, our practitioners will help you on your journey of self-healing and wellness. To contact them and schedule an appointment, call Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, is one of Prairiewoods' foundresses and continues to provide massage therapy, healing touch, reflexology, spiritual direction and Tai Chi Chih'. When speaking about her practice and why she continues, Sister Nancy says, "How about a profession that you look forward to each day, where you meet some of the finest folks alive, where you often finish your day more energized than you began, and where you know what you're contributing to the total health and wellbeing of the client."

Sister Nancy says she "carries a sense of gratitude to all of my teachers who have contributed to my education." She has a certificate from Carlson College of Massage Therapy and many other degrees and certifications. She's also grateful for "the total staff and adjunct staff at Prairiewoods who help make my contributions possible and who are my teachers every day."



Sister Nancy Hoffman and Grace Hoffman, her holistic coach and mentor

Karen Sindelar provides massage therapy, healing touch spiritual ministry, reflexology and dream guidance to retreatants at Prairiewoods. Besides her holistic health services, she also facilitates a Dream Workshop series each September and an ongoing Dream Group throughout the rest of the year.

Karen says that "as an intuitive healer from a very early age, my curiosity and thirst for knowledge led me to find mentors and teachers throughout the world to further my studies. My calling is to help people deal with physical, emotional, spiritual and mental issues to relieve pain and quickly find balance."



Karen has earned many certificates and degrees and says, "I work with both your mind and your muscles to help you find health and balance."

Heather, one of her clients says, "As a massage therapist and Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry Provider, her treatments allow for deeper healing on physical, emotional and spiritual levels. Karen is professional and compassionate."



Paulette Canney is celebrating ten years as a holistic practitioner after 20 years in church ministry. She combines her faith, education and years in ministry with the gifts of empathy and intuition to create a one-of-a-kind session for her clients to help them self-heal.

Known for holistic techniques that are designed to enhance self-healing and wellness for all ages and backgrounds, what Paulette hears most from clients is that they leave with a renewed sense of peace. She hopes that her sessions with her clients "awaken the

best in the human experience and celebrate the divine in each soul."

Paulette's practice was established in 2014 after she came to Prairiewoods looking for renewal herself and took her first of many healing touch and aromatherapy classes. Since then, she has received her certifications as an American Board-Certified Reflexologist, Clinically Certified Aromatherapist, and Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry-Advanced Practitioner. Paulette says that she's "grateful to be able to provide services in collaboration with the amazing Prairiewoods staff for over eight years—it is a privilege and absolute joy!"

Looking for a great gift? Give the gift of time! Gift certificates are available in any amount, such as \$95 for a Day of Self Renewal, \$65 for an hour-long holistic service, \$15 for Rock Mandala Painting or \$10 toward a Gift Shop purchase. Call 319-395-6700 to purchase a gift certificate today!

We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money and other gifts to Prairiewoods! For a complete, up-to-date list of donors and volunteers, please visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate.



120 E Boyson Rd
Hiawatha IA 52233

Help Us Update Our Records

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

- Please send your mailings electronically to _____.
- Please take us off your mailing list.
- Please note the address change.
- We receive duplicate mailings; please send only one to this address.

Are you on social media? Find "Prairiewoods FSC" on:



Two Ways to Support Prairiewoods:

Join us at our Garden Party, or bring home a little piece of Prairiewoods with Nature Arrangements!



PRAIRIEWOODS
garden party
GROWING OUR ROOTS

Saturday, June 8, 5–8 p.m.

See page 6 for details.

Prairiewoods Nature Arrangements

Each month the Prairiewoods outdoors team will handcraft an arrangement of natural items from the land that represents the beauty of the season, similar to a flower CSA. Whether you're someone who wants to develop a deeper connection with nature or simply experience the beauty of the season, this program is a great way to do both and help Prairiewoods in its mission of stewarding our beautiful 72 acres of woods and prairie. Arrangements will be available for pickup on the first Thursday of each month during business hours. The cost is \$120 for 12 monthly bouquets, May 2024–April 2025.

