

Prairiewoods

THE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF PRAIRIEWOODS, AN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER



Celebrating Christmas in the Heart of the Universe Story

by Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM

Adventing into Christmas, we are compelled by a star toward a cave in Bethlehem: an infant in a manger, his mother Mary and her husband Joseph, oxen and sheep, shepherds, kings and angels. As we position crib figures with the ease of recurring ritual, we cannot help but be stirred by the question: *Who is this Jesus we welcome into the world?* Faithful to the gift of evolving human knowledge and experience, we seek meanings adequate to engaging our minds and hearts and inspiring action in our time.

Steeped in the New Universe Story, Bethlehem becomes fluid, dynamic. As we gaze into the manger, the wooden trough gives way, the walls of the cave collapse and the entire scene opens up in the way of an icon. *We find ourselves at the heart of a fourteen-billion-year unfolding event of God*, who is bent on becoming one with us and unifying the whole of

creation in a single community of love.

In the beginning there is only uncontainable love: God pouring God into hydrogen and helium, primal stars and galaxies, planets and earth, sun and moon, ocean waves and desert sands, snow-capped mountains and mineral-rich mines, oak and pine, roses and tulips, goldfinch and robin, salmon and halibut, whale and seal, zebra and giraffe, multi-colored human countenance and unique texture of each human life. Birthing each particle of creation, God takes up residence in the universe and draws the whole of creation close, as one household related in a common family of origin.



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With the dawning of the first Christmas, new life entered the world. The coming of Jesus so many years ago changed *everything*. Again and again he comes to us. He is God's love, the image of the invisible God, incarnated with us.

Our pausing each December to celebrate that first Coming opens our hearts again to all the "comings" for which we hope. Our carols are of peace and joy, even though deep in our hearts, we know how much our world is in great need of both. Old paradigms based on separation and division are difficult to overturn; new patterns that will create a more positive future have not yet taken shape.

But as we enter into the beginning of another year, we join with peoples everywhere in hopes that our small efforts can make a difference. We find sanctuaries where our souls can be invigorated and where we can connect with one another in finding better maps into the future.

Like jewelers who choose the materials, colors and designs to create beauty, we can as groups of people select the elements that will enhance our lives for the future. There are many programs and retreats that you can choose at Prairiewoods to deepen your relationship with God and your connections with the earth and others. We can turn to the insights of scripture, the prophets, the poets, theologians, scientists, the saints and the ancient wisdom of the indigenous peoples. We can choose to take down barriers, to come together in communities, to explore what it is that we care about most. Creative responses are possible.

John Haught, one of our former *Spirituality in the 21st Century* speakers, speaks of God as mystery, but also as God of the future. Haught, a leading thinker in the world of science and theology, believes that the God of love, the God of the future, lures us forward. God promises new possibilities. As we dwell in this unfinished world, God offers us a way to live in goodness and love. It is we who need to choose how to live in this world. It is we who can choose to create a world with more light, unity and beauty.

So, as we live in the mystery of Christmas and look forward to all the possibilities that God offers to us in the year ahead, we offer our hearts, swelling with gratitude, for all the goodness of our lives together. We welcome the blessings before us.

Peace and joy,

Laurie Harris, Director

We're All Ears!

How do you
help create
a world of
peace and joy?

Email us at
alewis@prairiewoods.org



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.

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

Prairiewoods publishes this newsletter bimonthly. Content focuses on happenings and opinions that support Prairiewoods' mission and vision.

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CHRISTMAS AND THE UNIVERSE STORY

(continued from page 1)

Having inherited communion as our defining identity, human beings yearn for one to open up love at the heart of the world from inside the human experience. God's inexhaustible love for us and our insatiable love for God intersect in mutual longing for fuller intimacy: *And the Word became flesh and lived among us* (John 1:14). In Jesus, God breaks into human consciousness as the embodiment of communion. Seeing divine love incarnate everywhere, Jesus delights in the regal beauty of a lily and a catch of fish; seeks out desert and garden as companions to his soul; evokes the greatness of small things like seeds and yeast, little children and a widow's mite; grants healing and places of honor without regard for merit; draws tax collectors out of hiding and welcomes prodigals home; sets inclusive tables dissolving lines of race, gender, social class and religion; releases the worship of God from confinement in law and temple and locates it in lives lived in the truth of love.

Stretched between the poles of the cross in an embrace reaching to the ends of Earth, Jesus makes visible the cruciform cost of communion. Life-long self-gift, all the way to handing over one's life in death, is integral to the expansion of love. Resisting confinement to a single moment in history, specific geographical locale and one physically defined human body, *Jesus' all-inclusive love breaks through entombment.* Gathered in an upper room, enjoying breakfast on a beach, walking along a road ... those who have been caught by Jesus' contagious communion sense his life rising in them and surprising them with his all-pervasive presence. Recognizing the Body of Christ alive within them and in the whole of creation, they create communities of one mind and one heart known by their love.

With eyes illumined by the unfolding story of God's union with the universe, we revisit the cave in Bethlehem. There, as always and everywhere, the "angels of heaven" co-mingle with Earth in an overflow of

love impossible to contain within any "inn"; yet, dwelling in each person and thing, generative of communion among stars and wood, oxen and sheep, shepherds and kings. At the heart of it all is an event of birth in which we are no longer onlookers but participants. *Kin to Mary, pregnant with God, we bear the Body of Christ in a universe laboring from the beginning to birth the God within it.* When, in the particular circumstances of our lives, God in us lovingly meets and touches God in the other, something new is born. Our communion brings the Risen Christ in the universe to visible incarnation.

From within the New Universe Story, Bethlehem is a moveable feast, an ongoing cosmic advent. Its star—always proceeding ahead—beckons individuals and communities to *remove boundaries, letting the curtains of our habitation be stretched out without holding back* until the full glory of Emmanuel God-with-us *shall be revealed and all shall see it together.* In the meantime, in our time, this is Jesus the Christ whom we birth, welcome and await as we make our approach to Bethlehem, *mountains and hills bursting into song before us and all the trees of the field clapping their hands* (Isaiah 54, 40, 55).



photography courtesy of Lydia Bridges of M[e]braldy Photography

Are you intrigued by the Universe Story? Want to learn more? Prairiewoods offers a Cosmic Walk, a symbolic journey representing the Story of the Universe and its emergence through 14 billion years of evolutionary history. Beginning with the Great Flaring Forth—sometimes called The Big Bang—this journey to the emergence of Planet Earth, and all life as we know it, is mysterious and intriguing. The Cosmic Walk will help you to reflect on this journey. Beginning under the oak tree behind the Prairiewoods Center, the walk features 13 markers, each signifying a "moment of grace" in our cosmological journey. Feel free to stop in the Center for a descriptive brochure and then hit the trails for a walk through history!

Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center presents

Spirituality IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Engaging Community, Narrating Change

featuring Walter Brueggemann, John McKnight & Peter Block

Thursday, April 4, 7–9 p.m. (at St. Pius X Catholic Church)

Friday, April 5, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m. (at The Hotel at Kirkwood Center)

The work of “building community” is a complex and life-long journey; relationship resides at its core. This work is challenged by our culture. Though individuals are very connected technologically, many experience enormous isolation.

We have developed a dependence on systems and institutions to solve problems and meet needs, rather than engaging ourselves collaboratively with others. Currently, conversations about challenges in our neighborhood, workplace, church, city, state or country often start from what we do not have, what we lack, what we need. Such conversations have limited power to create lasting change.

Come, experience a conversation that will offer and inspire new possibilities! A new worldwide movement is emerging, made up of people with fresh vision. Leaders, as understood within this new movement, call forth a capacity to connect people with people in the service of something greater than themselves, and with an overall goal to transform what currently exists. They sense a calling. They are called. And together they invite us and one another to embody a culture of care that emerges by engaging conversations that can lead to an alternative future.

Sustainable, abundant community conversations shift the context from retribution to restoration; from problems to possibilities; from fear and fault to gifts, generosity and abundance; from law and oversight to choice and accountability; from corporation and systems to relational life! *Experience how together we can co-create sustainable environments, welcoming and tapping the gifts of all.*

Spirituality in the 21st Century: Engaging Community, Narrating Change will challenge and inspire people to change each and every conversation they have. We will weave new insights into community to awaken a new vision of what our families, workplaces, neighborhoods, faith communities and cities can be. Participants will experience these new conversations in real time and begin to understand how, as leaders, engaging everyone can help to transform community.

What will participants do?

The wonderful connections and collaborations established among people attending this event will linger long after and lead us each to something greater than any one of us can imagine. Participants will learn to:

- invite and convene conversations so that others commit to the success of community;
- help others and ourselves declare new possibilities with the faith that we can live out our personal intentions and also serve the community;
- create ownership by moving the conversations from complaining and waiting for others to change to ones in which we realize we have helped create the very place we thought was owned and operated by others;
- focus on strengths, assets and capacity rather than problem-solving or deficiencies and
- hold a stance wholeheartedly while accepting the diverse stances of others.

Who are the presenters?

This conference will feature internationally known speakers Peter Block, John McKnight and Walter Brueggemann—thought leaders from very different disciplines who have spent their lives illuminating a pathway toward creating a different future that emerges out of community, neighborliness and vision for the common good. Music will be provided by Barbara McAfee.

Peter Block is a consultant and citizen of Cincinnati, Ohio. His recent book, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, and his work emphasize empowerment, stewardship, chosen accountability and the reconciliation of community. Peter offers a methodology for shifting conversations from one of problems to one of possibilities.

John McKnight, emeritus professor of education and social policy and co-director of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University, has been a community organizer and serves on the boards of several national organizations that support neighborhood development. John offers practical wisdom and experience building communities from the inside out using local resources, capacities and relationship. Long-time colleagues and friends, Peter and John have walked numerous neighborhoods and communities to co-author *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods* in 2010.

Peter and John recently have become scholars of the work of **Walter Brueggemann**, a renowned Old Testament scholar and an important figure in Progressive Christianity, who most recently authored *Journey to the Common Good*. Through his passionate exploration of the Old Testament, he inspires a deeper understanding and commitment to neighborliness.

Barbara McAfee is a singer/songwriter, keynote, author and voice coach who merges lessons from 12 years in organizational development with the transformative power of music. “She brings a quality to thinking and speaking that is fresh and accessible,” says Peter Block. “Few others have so integrated organizational insight and profound speech. Barbara gives great care to all she does.”



Peter Block



John McKnight



Walter Brueggemann



Barbara McAfee

Why might this appeal to you?

This conference will appeal to anyone interested in creating more powerful partnerships with people around them or improving the community in which they live. It is for individuals and organizations who are:

- committed to helping neighborhoods grow;
- seeking pathways that promote connections and engagement;
- eager for new perspectives and approaches to advance communities and workplaces and
- looking for ways to get started, gain momentum or renew existing efforts.

This conference is about caring for the whole, where the whole may be a community or family, government or education, nonprofit or for-profit, church or volunteer association, or anything in between.

What resources are available?

If you are interested in more information about the presenters and theories behind the conference, visit www.AbundantCommunity.com or check out the following books (available in the Prairiewoods Gift Shop):

- Peter Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2008).
- John McKnight and Peter Block, *The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2010).
- Walter Brueggemann, *Out of Babylon* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010).

Tickets cost \$65 for both days if purchased by March 15 (or \$75 after March 15). To register, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or www.Prairiewoods.org.

RETREATS

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For a complete list, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Tending our Marriages: Using the Enneagram for Insight and Renewal Retreat

Friday, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Feb. 24, 11 a.m.

Facilitators: Mary & Roy Nilsen

We spend our days swinging between satisfaction and disappointment with ourselves and with our closest relationships. During this weekend



retreat, we will look at ourselves and our marriage through the powerful lens of the Enneagram—a tool for self-understanding. Through exercises and small group discussion, we will see each Type's potential for living a more spiritually and emotionally healthy life. Beyond that, we will explore the challenges and possibilities that various Type combinations bring to a marriage.

If you are not familiar with the Enneagram, before coming to the retreat, please visit the Enneagram website (www.EnneagramInstitute.com) and take the full RHEI Enneagram Test for \$10. (There also are two free tests that would be helpful if you are unable to take the full test.) If you are confused about your Type after taking these inventories, Roy or Mary will try to spend some one-on-one time with you during the retreat.

This retreat will be a chance to get away with your spouse for some quality time. The Prairiewoods environment offers a beautiful natural setting for you and your spouse to enjoy cozy space in front of the fireplace, quiet space to rest and walk outside, fine dining, and comfortable optional fun activities that will help you tend the space between you.

The retreat will be led by Roy and Mary Nilsen from Des Moines who, after 52 years of muddling through the lows and celebrating the highs of their marriage, consider themselves survivors, thanks, in part, to the wisdom of the Enneagram. The Nilsens were introduced to the Enneagram in the early 1990s, received their certification in Enneagram instruction in 1995 at Loyola University and have studied with Helen Palmer and Russ Hudson. They have been leading workshops and retreats on the Enneagram ever since and have taught Enneagram continuing education courses at Luther Seminary and Columbia Theological Seminary. They are both spiritual directors.

Fee: \$450 per couple includes presentations, activities, lodging and all meals

Reclaim Your Transformational Breath Retreat Friday, March 15, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, March 17, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Aubree Saia

Would you love to embrace life more fully, have more energy, and radiate health and wholeness? Gather with others to experience the sacred power that lies within your very own breath. Breath is our direct connection to the divine, to energy and to life. Without it, we are not alive!



Transformational Breathing is a complete self-healing system using conscious breathing to facilitate improved well-being, inner peace and greater joy in life. Transformational Breath uses a connected breath pattern that awakens the infinite wisdom and healing possibilities found within our breath. This process of breathwork: facilitates the natural healing of all types of trauma; brings about greater physical, mental and spiritual health; and assists in maintaining optimal health and well-being. Tremendous insight and transformation can be gathered in just one sacred breath. Profound healing and resolution may emerge from simply breathing.

During this retreat, you will:

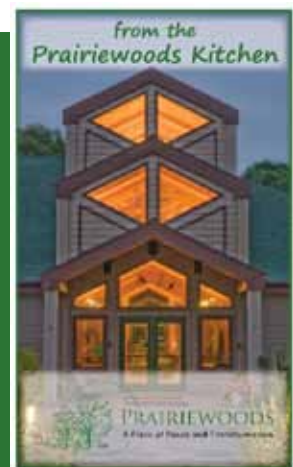
- experience various breath sessions,
- deepen your understanding of the three levels of Transformational Breath,
- discover your unique breathing pattern and how it affects your life,
- explore how to correct restricted breathing patterns,
- tend your own personal intentions to create change in your life,
- gain tools to manage stress,
- reconnect with the divine source and
- actively participate in your own healing process!

Please bring a couple of bed pillows, a heavy blanket and a yoga mat. Register now to take advantage of the early registration discount!

Fee: \$275 (or \$325 after March 2) includes presentations, lodging and all meals

Prairiewoods Cookbooks Make Great Gifts!

How many times have you visited Prairiewoods and reveled in the amazing food produced by the on-staff chefs? Now is your chance to get all their best recipes! The first-ever Prairiewoods cookbook, *from the Prairiewoods Kitchen*, is on sale now for just \$12. Stop by the Gift Shop or call us to have a copy shipped to you or anyone on your Christmas list (for an additional \$4).



Lenten Series at Prairiewoods: Birthing a New Creation



Looking for a meaningful way to journey through Lent this coming year? How about a new approach to this traditional time of spiritual renewal? Let's look at Lent as a time of birthing, a time of new life and growth.

In Lent of 2013, Prairiewoods will offer an original path through those 40 days. It will be a path that offers a broad, global vision, a consideration of how the mystery of the Christian Story of life, death and resurrection is connected to the on-going Story of Creation. We will integrate these two stories using Scripture and discoveries from the scientific world to see how understanding both leads to new insights and spiritual growth.

Our exploration will include questions, such as: *Where is God in the new story of Creation? Where is Jesus?* We will address the connections and look for contradictions.

We will consider the good news in both of these stories: we are bathed in God's presence, a presence that holds everything that exists in connection. On four Monday evenings, we will explore how the new understandings that arise from our study can be transforming for the human community and can lead us to a profound relationship with the natural world.

This program is the work of an interdenominational planning committee and will be facilitated by members of this group. The focus is on deep themes of the Lenten and Easter seasons, including:

- the Christian view of our origins and God's work of transformation,
- the mystery of the Incarnation: Christ in an evolutionary universe,
- embracing Christian traditions within the framework of the Universe Story and
- acknowledging the human role in Earth stewardship.

All four sessions will include Scripture, prayer, input, group discussion and practical suggestions for care of Earth. Although we encourage you to come for the entire series, you may attend any of the individual sessions. Please register for this series by Feb. 1.

Fee: Free-will offering

Birthing: God's Labor of Love

Monday, Feb. 18, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Fred Darbonne (long-time friend of Prairiewoods); Betty Daugherty, FSPA (staff) & Andrea Jilovec (staff)

The symbolism of ashes becomes a stark promise of rebirth and transformation. Since the beginning of creation, God has continued to lead us through the wilderness, constantly birthing newness within us. Our story involves more than human redemption; it is the redemption of all creation. Nothing is beyond God's providential care and concern. Through our Lenten journey we become new people, ready for resurrection.

Scripture: Genesis 1, Matthew 3 and Romans 8

Seeing God in a Grain of Sand

Monday, Feb. 25, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Betty Daugherty, FSPA (staff); Marj English, OSF (staff) & Linda Lundahl (St. Joseph Church in Marion)

The whole world reflects God's love. Our understanding of Incarnation is bigger than the mystery of Bethlehem. It includes the teachings of the Epistle

to the Colossians that it is Christ who holds all of creation together. In our contemplation of the meaning of the Incarnation, we do not abandon the richness of the Christian tradition but seek to understand the significance of Christ within the story of creation. In Franciscan theology, Jesus Christ is the summit of God's creative work. He came not because of sin, but because of God's love.

Scripture: Epistle to the Colossians and Wisdom Literature

Communion with Creation

Monday, March 4, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Rev. Tom Capo (Peoples Church) & Sharon Dendurent (Stewardship and Faith Formation Commission, St. John's Church in Mt. Vernon)

As Christians we are called to honor our relationship with Earth and see nature—along with Scripture—as a word of God, one critical to human meaning and welfare. Our role is to plant seeds of hope for the future sustainability of all life systems. We are to be stewards, acknowledging that we are in a moral

and spiritual crisis that cries for transformation. We use the ritual of sharing bread, a gift from the land, to recognize and honor our connections to the whole of life. Our spirituality includes celebrating the vibrant life of the Earth community.

Scripture: Proverbs

Joining in the Journey of Creation

Monday, March 11, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Rev. Tom Capo (Peoples Church); Marj English, OSF (staff) & Emy Sautter (staff)

Creation stories from Genesis and ancient cultures are human reflections on how God created the universe. Now we have another story—the New Story of the Universe—that comes to us from new physics. It is a story of connections, relationships and interdependence. Within this story, humans have a significant role involving redemption and resurrection. We have an ethical responsibility toward the planet and all people, a responsibility reaching into all social, economic and political decisions.

Scripture: Genesis

PROGRAMS

For the latest information on upcoming programs, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Soap Making Workshop **Saturday, Jan. 12, 10 a.m.–noon**

Facilitator: Sandy Rosenberger

Are you spending a fortune at bath and body stores or worried about some of the ingredients in the soaps you're using? At this class, you'll learn how simple and inexpensive it is to make your own glycerin-based soaps with simple, nourishing ingredients. All materials will be provided. Registration and payment are required by Jan. 9. (The snow date is Jan. 26.)

Fee: \$20

Circle Cinema **Fridays, Jan. 18 or Feb. 15,** **noon–1 p.m.**

Facilitators: Andrea Jilovec & Emy Sauter

You are invited to join a monthly lunchtime screening of films from the *Spiritual Cinema Circle* and *Earth Cinema Circle* series. This is a casual gathering in which staff and guests view a film over the lunch hour. As time permits, there may be short discussions following the films. Bring your brown-bag lunch and join us for this free viewing party!

Jan. 18 will feature *Mother Nature's Child*, a one-hour film exploring nature's role in children's health and development. Feb. 15 will focus on *Crossword*, a 13-minute film about listening to our hearts as well as our heads.

Fee: Free-will offering

Hatha Yoga with Anji **Mondays, Jan. 21–March 11,** **9–10 a.m.**

Facilitator: Anji Kozikowski

Anji Kozikowski's mission is to model and teach self-love, so that all people may live the abundantly happy and healthy lives they deserve. She will share her gifts as she leads you through gentle Hatha yoga, emphasizing Vinyasa, in which each movement is synchronized to your breath. The emphasis will be on gentle yoga poses that flow from one movement to the next. To meet the

needs of all participants, poses will be modified to fit individual bodies.

Anji is a personal trainer and Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher through Yoga Alliance. She received her master's degree in Health Promotion and Wellness Management from Missouri State University and has been working in the health and wellness industry for more than 17 years. For more information about Anji, visit www.SingingSpiritWellness.com.

Please bring your own mat and props. Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required by Jan. 17.

Fee: \$100 for 8-week series or \$13 per session

Day of Self Renewal **Mondays, Jan. 21 or Feb. 18,** **8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.**

Facilitator: Andrea Jilovec

You know that peaceful, calming feeling you get as you drive onto the Prairiewoods grounds? Imagine letting that feeling seep into your bones during a full day of rest and relaxation!

Our monthly Day of Self Renewal features two 30-minute holistic services of your choice, group Guided Meditation, a private guest room, fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, paraffin bath treatment with hand massage, foot soak with exfoliation scrub and foot massage, or head and shoulder massage.)

Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance, so call today to register!

Fee: \$90 includes group guided meditation, two holistic services, room for the day and lunch

Candle Making Workshop **Saturday, Feb. 9, 10 a.m.–noon**

Facilitator: Sandy Rosenberger

Candles set the mood for any occasion. Come learn how fun and easy it is to make soy candles just in time for Valentine's Day! In this class, you'll learn how to make container and pillar candles, as well as votives, tea lights, tarts and wax melts. All materials will be provided. Registration and payment are required by Feb. 6.

Fee: \$20



Prairiewoods Introduces **Tuesday Take-Aways** **Beginning** **Jan. 15**

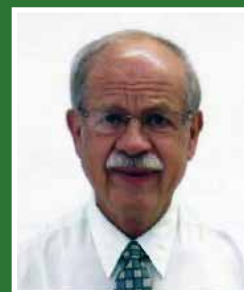
Prairiewoods is excited to announce a new monthly program—*Tuesday Take-Aways*—on the third Tuesday of each month, beginning Jan. 15. This series will pair delicious Prairiewoods lunches with topical presentations by local experts. To honor your schedule, hot lunches will be served promptly at noon and presentations will conclude at 1 p.m. If you wish to linger longer, the presenters will stay for additional conversation. All are welcome, but registration is strongly encouraged. Please join us and invite your friends and colleagues for fellowship. All will be sure to find something to “take-away” from this monthly offering!
Fee: \$13 per session includes presentations and lunch

Tuesday Take-Away: Working **through the Winter Blues** **Tuesday, Jan. 15, noon–1 p.m.**

Facilitator: Tony Wobeter, MS

Tony Wobeter, MS, will present thoughts about how to counteract depression and the winter “blahs.” He will discuss helpful

strategies to creatively meet life challenges in the new year. Tony was an ordained Catholic priest and served for 21 years in the Dubuque Archdiocese. While serving as a hospital chaplain, he received his master's degree, became a licensed psychologist and left the priesthood. For the past 24 years, Tony has provided psychological and hypnotherapy services in the corridor.



Tuesday Take-Away: Dreams Tuesday, Feb. 19, noon–1 p.m.

Facilitator: Joann Gehling, FSPA

Joann Gehling, FSPA, will provide information and insights on dreams.

This is a perfect lunch for you if you long to know more about

dreams and how they can help us come to wholeness and healing!

This introductory session may whet your appetite for further exploration, such as the March *Dream Workshop Series*. Sister Joann is a Prairiewoods foundress and continues to offer spiritual direction, pastoral counseling and healing touch spiritual ministry here. She is completing the two-year Dream Leader course at the Haden Institute in North Carolina.



Tuesday Take-Away: The Celtic Green Scene

Tuesday, March 19, noon–1 p.m.

Facilitator: The Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter

The Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter will share insights from her ongoing studies of Celtic spirituality. As climate change impacts

our country and world, what understandings about nature and life do early Celtic Christian ancestors have to offer? We will look at simplicity of life, harmony with nature and community connectedness. Barbara is an Episcopal priest retired from parish ministry and doing pastoral counseling and spiritual direction in Iowa City. She has been involved with Celtic studies and pilgrimages for 15 years and will co-lead a pilgrim group to Scotland this summer.



The following classes are offered by the Institute of Spiritual Healing & Aromatherapy (ISHA). For more information or to register, contact ISHA at 303-467-7829 or www.ishahealing.com.

Reserve lodging and meals through Prairiewoods at 319-935-6700 or ajilovec@prairiewoods.org.

Introduction to Healing Ministry, HTSM Course 101

Saturday, Feb. 2, 8:30 a.m.–6 p.m.

Facilitator: Gayle Mohr, RN, CHTP, LMT, HTSM-CP/I, CCA

This eight-hour course details the history of healing in Christianity with the opportunity to experience the laying-on of hands. The roles of prayer, belief and the development of a healing presence are presented, along with guided meditations that make this a truly inspiring day. This course can be taken at any time in the curriculum. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 8 CEs).

Gayle Mohr is a Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry Certified Practitioner/Instructor and a Certified Clinical

Aromatherapist with more than 45 years nursing experience. She has worked in orthopedics, labor and delivery, massage, and complementary and alternative therapies. Gayle has a private practice in Illinois, where she uses Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry techniques, massage, aromatherapy, trigger point therapy and various other techniques. She also offers non-surgical face lifts and teaches throughout the United States.

Fee: \$150 for early registration, \$175 within three weeks of class (other discounts are available)



Introduction to Judeo-Christian Anointing, HTSM Course 102

Sunday, Feb. 3, 8:30 a.m.–6 p.m.

Facilitator: Gayle Mohr, RN, CHTP, LMT, HTSM-CP/I, CCA

This eight-hour course explores anointing in the Judeo-Christian story and how it was lost through history. Nine essential oils traditionally used at the time of Christ are introduced, as is anointing with healing oils, the laying-on of hands and other simple healing techniques. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 8 CEs).

Fee: \$150 for early registration, \$175 within three weeks of class (other discounts are available)

Essential Oils for Massage Therapists, HTSM Course 506

Monday, Feb. 4, 1–5:15 p.m.

Facilitator: Gayle Mohr, RN, CHTP, LMT, HTSM-CP/I, CCA

This four-hour course is directed at massage therapists who would like to use essential oils safely and effectively in their practice. You will learn ideas for using essential oils for general emotional and physical concerns, as well as with practical applications. Basic essential oil blending and practical experience also will be shared. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 4 CEs).

Fee: \$75 for early registration, \$100 within three weeks of class (other discounts are available)

Look for the following programs coming this spring:

Dream Workshop Series, March 6, 13, 20 & 27

Using Your Hands to Heal, HTSM Course 103, March 9–10

Essential Oils for Cancer Care, HTSM Course 502, March 21

Sent to Heal & Anoint, CCA Course 301, March 22–24

Forming a Healing Practice, HTSM Course 104, March 23–24

Dream Groups, April 3, 10, 17 & 24; May 1 & 8

Creating with the Spirit through Nature, April 13–14

Do you love the snow?

Watch our website for opportunities to play on the Prairiewoods trails this winter!

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

Every other Thursday (including Jan. 3), 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

The *Bridges to Contemplative Living* group focuses on this series of booklets that include writing by Thomas Merton and other authors. The group uses the text to explore living a more contemplative life. As a participant, you will read, reflect and discuss various topics related to contemplative living. This practice can help you respond to everyday experiences with greater awareness of your connections with God and others. You may join at any time.

Fee: \$5 per session

Green Living Group

3rd Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Maggie Anderson, Emmy Ball and Emy Sautter

If you are committed to reducing your impact on the environment, join the Green Living Group, a support group for happy and healthy green living. This group will not meet in January, but new participants are always welcome.

As a participant on Feb. 20, you will view *I Am*, an engaging non-fiction film that poses two practical and provocative questions: *What's wrong with our world?* and *What can we do to make it better?* The filmmaker, Tom Shadyac, is known for directing comedies like *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*, *Liar Liar*, *The Nutty Professor*, *Patch Adams* and *Bruce Almighty*. In this film, he turns the camera on himself and on a number of remarkable men and women from science, philosophy, academia and faith (including David Suzuki, Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Lynne McTaggart). *I Am* explores our preconceived notions of science, evolution and animal behavior. It also seeks to move beyond our world's ills of war, poverty, the environmental crisis and greed in an effort to get at a root cause in the hopes of eventually solving these problems. After watching this film, you likely will feel empowered to effect positive change in the world and feel more aware and connected to all the good that already exists.

Fee: \$5 per session

Women's Sacred Circle

1st Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Andrea Jilovec

This group meets monthly within a framework of understanding that, while our personal spiritual journey is uniquely ours and is ongoing, each of us can learn from the lessons and perspectives others share with us. Bring a story, a quotation or text, an object, or an image that has inspired or reminded you recently of your journey with the Divine. We may watch film shorts, discuss text and share epiphanies that we have found along our paths, and will discuss what those messages mean in our respective spiritual journeys. We occasionally invite noteworthy speakers to share their insights. Please join us anytime to share, listen and learn with others as we seek guidance and understanding.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$5 per session

Evening Centering Prayer

2nd & 4th Tuesdays monthly, 5:30–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Judith Edwards

Come for a time of silence and centering prayer in which you can relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you. This is a prayer/support group for people who enjoy centering prayer—a form of meditation focused on praying in silence. The group meets in room 113 of the Prairiewoods Guest House, and new participants may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Do you enjoy knitting or crocheting? Have you run out of friends and family to whom you can give your works of art? You can spend a few hours a month knitting and crocheting for people who can really use your hats, mittens, blankets and baby items. Join the Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers—a group of crafters of various skill levels who create handmade goods for charity twice a month. New participants are always welcome, and donations of materials are gratefully accepted!

Fee: Free

Wednesday Women

Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m. (exceptions noted below)

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women that meets every Wednesday to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged—you are welcome to come any time! Please note that the group will not meet Jan. 2 due to the holidays.

On Jan. 9, the group will focus on Volume 3 of the DVD series *Uppity Women of the Bible* presented by Rev. Dr. Lisa Wolfe. The third volume focuses on Esther, so please read the book of Esther before Jan. 9. This Biblical book involves power, corruption, violence and courage, and you will study how the beautiful and courageous Queen Esther tries to avoid disaster for her people. The weekly topics are:

- Jan. 9: *Who's Who*
- Jan. 16: *Setting the Stage*
- Jan. 23: *The Defiant Queen*
- Jan. 30: *From Coronation to Doomsday*
- Feb. 6: *The King's Scepter*
- Feb. 13: *Uppity Esther?*

Beginning Feb. 20, this group will begin discussing *The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See* by Richard Rohr. (You can purchase this book from the Prairiewoods Office for \$20.) Please be prepared to discuss the following pages:

- Feb. 20: pp. 9–38
- Feb. 27: pp. 39–66
- March 6: pp. 67–97
- March 13: pp. 98–128
- March 20: pp. 129–162

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session (but please come even if you cannot afford to pay!)

We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money or other gifts to Prairiewoods!
For a complete, up-to-date list between Newsletters, go to www.Prairiewoods.org/Contact/Donate.

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Used Book Sale

It's almost time for Prairiewoods' annual Used Book Sale! It will be held in February and March in the Prairiewoods Center anytime the Center is open. (Call 319-395-6700 for hours.) This is a great opportunity for you to recycle books that you have read and left to collect dust on your shelves. Or you can get good reads at the bargain price of \$1!

You can donate any used books during the month of February. You can purchase donated books throughout February and March. Come and choose books on a variety of topics, including spirituality, nonfiction, novels and cookbooks.

The Used Book Sale is a great way to refresh your library and to care for Earth through recycling.





120 E Boyson Rd
Hiawatha IA 52233

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You may send this by mail, email alewis@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:



Prairiewoods Earns LEED Gold Certification

Prairiewoods has earned the gold! The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) has awarded LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification to the Gold level for the Prairiewoods Center (the main building on our grounds). This certification is a recognition of building design and operations that meet sound ecological principles.

While many newly constructed buildings are LEED certified, achieving certification of existing buildings is less common. Only seven existing buildings in Iowa are LEED certified. Of these, only one other has received Gold, and Prairiewoods is the only nonprofit to do so!

LEED certification of existing buildings is focused on the policies and practices in place for the use of energy and water, the maintenance of air quality and the purchasing of consumable materials, cleaning products and food. Over an extended time period, Prairiewoods staff logged energy use, the amount of local and organic food purchased, the avenues used for solid

waste disposal and the purchasing of paper, cleaners and other materials.

Here is what the data showed:

- Our solar panels generated 24,600 kilowatt-hours (kwh) of energy in one year, which is 50% of the energy used in the Center.
- 100% of light bulbs, 48% of food, 73% of cleaning materials and 100% of ongoing consumables met USGBC criteria for green products.
- The Prairiewoods Center has an Energy Star rating of 91 out of 100 for energy efficiency.

This data is a testament to the commitment to conservation and respect for Earth that our foundresses had in 1996—long before LEED criteria were established. We are very proud of this certification and look forward to continuing the green practices that made it happen!



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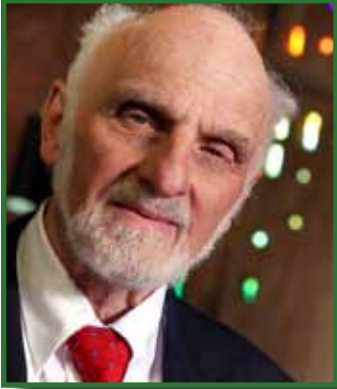
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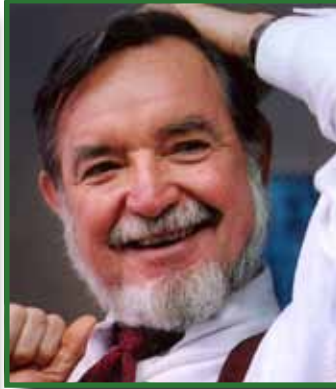
THE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF PRAIRIEWOODS, AN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER



Brueggemann



Block



McKnight



McAfee

Spirituality in the 21st Century: Engaging Community, Narrating Change

Thursday, April 4, 7–9 p.m., at St. Pius X Church
and Friday, April 5, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m., at The Hotel Kirkwood Center

Join internationally known Walter Brueggemann, John McKnight and Peter Block, thought leaders from various disciplines who illuminate a path toward creating a different future that emerges out of community, neighborliness and vision for the common good. Together with musician Barbara McAfee, they will demonstrate that restoring a citizen society rather than a consumer society is simple. Here are a few ways to co-create an abundant, sustainable community. *Any takers?*

Each family cares for those who are vulnerable.

Are there people in the area who are lonely and can be introduced to one another? What do people on the margin like to do? Who in our family struggles, and what support do they need from all of us?

Protect the environment and our health.

What is our commitment to eliminating waste? What food can we eat that is local and consciously grown? How do we reduce packaging when we buy things? Can we walk or bike instead of drive? Who around us has traditional wisdom about health?

Each person in the family supports the household economy.

Reduce or stop certain purchases? Part-time jobs? Could we grow our own food? Support clothing exchanges? Contact merchants and neighbors to find local sources of income? Start a home-based business? What would it take for all members to be financially literate, know what a budget is, comparison shop, monitor income and expenses? How could we reinstitute savings as an economic good and debt as something to be reduced to zero?

Entertain ourselves. Which black boxes are sucking the life out of family? How do we spend our evenings? What do we do together regularly? What can we do to replace electronic boxes? Anyone for slow food?

Value the gifts of young people.

How do we help youth recognize their gifts? Can we invite them to teach the Internet to seniors? Can we host gatherings where they learn about music, painting or poetry from artistic neighbors? Which neighbors can help young people learn about carpentry, wallpapering, cooking, auto and small engine repair, house painting, making videos, pruning trees, talking to the elderly, sewing?

Please see the related story on pages 4–5.

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Laurie Harris

The season of Lent offers us once again time to rethink, reconnect and renew our journey of faith both as individuals and as a community. This journey is one that moves us to be the compassionate, loving and transforming presence of Christ to all people in our lives. From the Letter to the Hebrews, these words open the pathway to God, charity and community building:

“Let us be concerned for each other,
to stir a response in love and good works,
not neglecting to meet together...
but encouraging one another.” (Hebrews 10:24–25)

In her book *And Morning Came: Scriptures of the Resurrection*, author Megan McKenna includes a litany of practices that remind us of who we are and what we are called to do in the world. She invites us to:

“Wash the feet of those who may not walk tomorrow.

Stand with the victim, the outsider, the left out, those different.

Live simply, abhor greed, trust other people, and live a life worthy of mutual trust.

Bear the burden of the cross and seek to share the anguish and pain of others so that the pain stops here.

Do not deny reality. Face it down and accept what is wrong with you, the groups you identify with, your economic and racial group, your nation.

Think universally and act locally.

Forgive all, everyone, and ask for it, bend and offer it graciously; learn the art.

Treasure the Word of God, the Scriptures, and look to the Gospels for alternatives to what the world and nations say should be our response to any situation.

Learn the basics of another religion and practice some of its prayer and disciplines to better understand others.

Remember to dance resurrection in the face of death.”

McKenna challenges: “We must practice devotedly the virtues of forgiveness and reconciliation, peacemaking and nonviolent resistance to evil and sin as expressions of our baptismal promises. These are the ways we stand in solidarity and communion with, stand for and stand behind, what we believe.”

May the Spirit renew in us a loving concern for all of creation and build up one another with love, peace, joy and faith.

Alleluia!

Laurie Harris, Director



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.

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

Prairiewoods publishes this newsletter bimonthly. Content focuses on happenings and opinions that support Prairiewoods' mission and vision.

Please address all correspondence to:

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

www.Prairiewoods.org
Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org



Celebrate Seasonal Changes around Cedar Rapids

Prairiewoods, Indian Creek Nature Center, Matthew 25 and Ushers Ferry Historic Village come together to honor the changing seasons in 2013. Please join us for these seasonal celebrations!

Spring Equinox **Wednesday, March 20,** **6:30–8:30 p.m.** **at Prairiewoods**

Spring is here, spring is here! Celebrate equality on the Spring Equinox, the day on which day and night are equal length. Join us at Prairiewoods to celebrate rebirth and renewal, the reawakening of all things. Come together to celebrate this shift toward light and longer days! Participate in a variety of spring-themed activities, both indoors and out, such as making miniature kites for flying or miniature flower pots for seedlings. Weather permitting, the group will walk outdoors and share reflections about this lovely time of year. For more information, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or www.Prairiewoods.org.
Fee: Free-will offering

Summer Solstice **Friday, June 21, 7–9 p.m.**

at Indian Creek Nature Center
Humankind has celebrated the sun's journey on the longest day of the year for centuries. Join us at Indian Creek Nature Center for an evening of music as you create a suncatcher, discover some of the unique prairie plant "suncatchers" that grow along our prairie labyrinth and enjoy a salute to the sun as you view the setting sun from our prairie landscape. Learn about traditional solstice celebrations from various world cultures. The program will be held indoors if there is rain. For more information, contact Indian Creek at 319-362-0664 or www.IndianCreekNatureCenter.org.
Fee: Free-will offering

Winter Solstice **Friday, Dec. 20, 6–8 p.m.** **at Ushers Ferry Historic Village**

The changing of the seasons is an optimal time to come together in community, giving thanks for Earth and all of creation. Join us at Ushers Ferry Historic Village for a traditional midwinter celebration as we leave the long nights behind us and look forward to the lengthening of the days. Chase away the cold of winter with a hike followed by a bonfire. Enjoy cocoa and music beside the fire at the village hotel, and try your hand at the old fashioned winter pioneer skill of dipping candles. For more information, contact Ushers Ferry at 319-286-5763 or www.Cedar-Rapids.org.
Fee: Free-will offering

Fall Equinox Harvest **Sunday, Sept. 22, 4–6 p.m.** **at Matthew 25**

Join us at Matthew 25 to celebrate the many blessings of fall and harvest! Rustic fall colors offer the perfect setting for a community potluck full of fellowship and appreciation of Earth's gifts of harvest. The potluck will include a contest for the best seasonal dish (so bring yours!) as well as urban farm tours and fall-inspired children's activities. Please bring your own dish and serving ware. For more information, contact Matthew 25 at 319-362-2214 or www.Hub25.org.
Fee: Free-will offering

living in Abundant

For Prairiewoods, this is an evolutionary moment. Our upcoming conference, *Engaging Community, Narrating Change*, will propel the center into a new arena, one that opens opportunities for a broad engagement with the surrounding faith and civic community.

Even so, it should be noted that this movement into the area of community building emerges naturally out of the founding mission of Prairiewoods, one that has always centered on relationships. The earliest mission statement describes Prairiewoods as *a sacred space for people of all faiths, a place to explore and nurture relationships, relationships with a God who is both transcendent and imminent, with the sustaining and sacred Earth, with one's own inner life and with others.*

This describes a community of total inclusivity, one based on the belief that all is connected, that the path forward includes everybody, and the created world is an essential component.



"My best vision of an abundant, sustainable community is one without silos. I have been involved in many community agencies that work for the underserved and are isolated from each other; it would seem they live in their own silo. The silos might be religion, social services, academia or public service. If we could bridge the silos with communication and respect as well as challenge each other to build healthy lives, well that would be an abundant sustainable community for me."
— Theresa Keller, FSPA (University of Iowa College of Nursing in Iowa City)



"I think it's absolutely essential that we shift from a mindset of scarcity to a mindset of abundance. Our communities contain all the solutions and resources they need within themselves, but seeing and living that requires us to nurture a culture of engagement and tell inspiring stories of the future we want to create together. I'm excited to have McKnight, Block and Brueggemann here to share with us their knowledge and help us to continue on our path of co-creation."

— Ben Smith (Source Media in Berlin, Germany)

Looking back at the earliest days of Prairiewoods, one of the most amazing facts recorded in its history is the response of the larger community to this new spirituality/ecological center.

First to come were the great many volunteers who planted trees, created a network of trails and began the work of restoring the prairies.

Another early benefit was the encouragement from organizations like Trees Forever in the form of donated seedlings and prairie plants, along with their valuable professional support. The Iowa Renewable Energy Association (I-Renew) actively supported Prairiewoods in so many ways—from promoting workshops on environmental topics and installing solar panels to bringing their annual Expo, an event which brought new friends and collaborators who joined the already growing community.

Members of the Native American community came with an offer to build a sweat lodge, a blessing to the land and to all who continue to join with them in this sacred ritual. Scout leaders brought troops of young workers, some of whom created Eagle Scout projects that continue to enhance the land. Churches and schools responded by encouraging participation in programs and by sending busloads of energetic students to help in the development of the outdoors.

These early connectors were a welcome and

Community

“As a church Business Administrator, I felt that a workshop on building community and working as a community was essential. Especially as our two parishes (St. Peter and St. Joseph) will be merging within a year. Tools to assist with that merger and the subsequent issues that arise would be welcome.”

— Genevieve Fiedler (Churches of St. Peter & St. Joseph in Delano, MN)



extremely vital gift for the center in its early stages of growth. In return, Prairiewoods could offer gifts of its own to the surrounding community. Among these was the land itself: seventy acres of natural prairie and woods in the midst of a busy

city. This land, which already embraced a vibrant community of plants and animals, served as witness to the essential interdependence of all beings. The land offered a welcoming space, a place to connect with the healing power of the natural world. It had long been a habitat for living beings.

Land like that at Prairiewoods gathers us. Long before the groundbreaking in 1995, neighborhood children built tree houses, rode their sleds and created a pattern of biking trails. People came for bird watching and to discover those hidden places where mushrooms could be found in early Spring.

With its actual founding, Prairiewoods could provide hospitable access to the land for anyone seeking solitude, silence or reflection. It could house guests for long and short stays, as well as provide a focus for both spiritual and environmental studies and practices.

As time went on, the center grew both through staffing and programming to meet many needs of the community. The community continued to bring the gifts of presence, of financial help, of volunteering, of participation on many levels. Board members brought increased community outreach and church leaders offered cooperation and support.

For some Prairiewoods became a place to be with people of differing faith traditions, a place where conversations are stimulating and where questions are safe. Amazing dialogues have happened here. And many questions have been asked.

Peter Block, in his book *Community: the Structure of Belonging*, points to the importance of having a place where questions can be asked, when he writes, “Questions create the space for something new to emerge.” Block says that, in coming together to ask questions of one another, we are lead into accountability and commitment.

It is this desire to be accountable and committed that urges Prairiewoods to sponsor a gathering around the building of community with three leading thinkers who bring extensive knowledge to this topic. Taking a step into this arena is a natural progression for an ecospirituality center built on the solid foundation of our relationships with God, the Source of All Being; Earth; self and others.

On April 4–5, we will offer this major event in gratitude for the support this broader faith and civic community have given to us, and to deepen even more the bonds that unite our neighborhood.

“The core of our work at Matthew 25 is to strengthen community in struggling neighborhoods. Prairiewoods has always been a helpful partner in that work. Likewise, the writings of Block, McKnight and Brueggemann have impacted my own thinking about how strong, healthy communities function. I was thrilled to learn that Prairiewoods was bringing these thought leaders here for their *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference.”

— Courtney Ball (Matthew 25 in Cedar Rapids)



RETREATS/PROGRAMS

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For a complete list, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Prairiewoods now offers *online registration* and payment! Visit the calendar page at www.Prairiewoods.org to try out our new system. And if you have any feedback, please feel free to contact us at 319-395-6700.

Reclaim Your Transformational Breath Retreat

Friday, March 15, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, March 17, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Aubree Saia

Would you love to embrace life more fully, have more energy, and radiate health and wholeness? Learn about Transformational Breathing, a complete



self-healing system using conscious breathing to facilitate improved well-being, inner peace and greater joy in life. It uses a connected breath pattern that awakens the infinite wisdom and healing possibilities found within our breath. This process facilitates the natural healing of all types of trauma; brings about greater physical, mental and spiritual health; and assists in maintaining optimal health and well-being. Tremendous insight and transformation can be gathered in just one sacred breath. Profound healing and resolution may emerge from simply breathing.

Aubree Saia will help you deepen your understanding of the three levels of breath, discover your unique breathing pattern, explore how to correct restricted breathing patterns, gain tools to manage stress, reconnect with the divine source and actively participate in your own healing process!

Fee: \$275 (or \$325 after March 2) includes presentations, lodging and all meals (*Commuters will not be accepted.*)

Full Voice: Unleashing the Power of Your Vocal Presence Retreat

Saturday, April 6, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Barbara McAfee

How can you speak so people will listen? Are you using all of the resources in your voice for your intentions, visions and purpose? Get answers to these questions during *Full Voice*, which offers a



pragmatic way to ensure that your voice is congruent with your message. You will study five distinct vocal sounds using the Five Element Framework™ and explore how sound can enhance your everyday communication. In this dynamic, experiential retreat, you will learn the most common vocal habits that interfere with powerful communication, access five essential leadership qualities through the voice, increase awareness of your own vocal habits and discover practical ways to use your voice more effectively.

Given her own remarkable recovery from paralyzing stage fright, Barbara McAfee is walking (singing) evidence of the transformational power of the voice. Rooted in twelve years as an organizational development consultant, she has directed retreats throughout the country to restore vitality and balance. She is the author of *Full Voice: The Art and Practice of Vocal Presence*.

Commuter Fee: \$100 includes presentations and Saturday lunch (add overnight lodging for \$50 per night)

Dream Workshop Series

Wednesdays, March 6, 13, 20 & 27, 1–3 p.m.

Facilitators: Marj English, OSF, & Joann Gehling, FSPA

Dreams can open you into your inner landscape and help you to grow spiritually.

Working and playing with your dreams can bring transformation and inner healing. As a participant in this Dream Workshop Series, you will be exposed to a Jungian approach to deciphering your dreams.

You will be prepared to work with your dreams individually or in a group.

Marj English, OSF, and Joann Gehling, FSPA, are Haden Institute-trained dream group leaders. Both have years of experience doing spiritual direction, facilitating retreats and small groups for various purposes. **Fee:** \$80 for four-week series, whether present or not (payable in advance or \$20 at each session)



Dream Group

Wednesdays, April 3, 10, 17 & 24, May 1 & 8, 1–3 p.m.

Facilitators: Marj English, OSF, & Joann Gehling, FSPA

After completing the Dream Workshop Series (see above for complete details) or something comparable, you are eligible to join the Dream Group. This is a six-week opportunity to work with dreams and to glean the wisdom present in them. It also will be facilitated by Marj English, OSF, and Joann Gehling, FSPA. **Fee:** \$120 for six-week series, whether present or not (payable in advance or \$20 at each session)

On four Monday evenings in Feb. and March, we invite you to join an innovative interdenominational *Lenten Series* at Prairiewoods. For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.



This is a repeat of a popular class!
The Mandala: A Pathway to One's Center

Tuesdays, March 12 & 26, April 9 & 23, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Joellen Price, PBVM

Mandala

is the Sanskrit word for “circle.”

Today, the word *mandala* is used for sacred artworks created in the form of a circle.

As a participant in this four-week series, you will

lay the groundwork for creating your own mandalas in order to tap into the holiness of deep listening within you and in the world around you. No previous experience is required.

Joellen Price, PBVM, is a Pastoral Associate at St. Pius X Parish with an emphasis on Social Justice/Pastoral Outreach. Sister Joellen uses mandalas as a preparation for her own spiritual direction sessions and for spiritual practice, exercise and meditation.

You may bring your own pens and pencils, but other supplies will be provided. Please register by March 1. **Fee:** \$50 for four-week series

Circle Cinema: Engaging Community, Narrating Change
Friday, March 15, noon–1 p.m.

Facilitators: Andrea Jilovec & Emy Sautter

Prairiewoods invites you to bring a brown-bag lunch and join us for a film over your lunch hour. This is a casual gathering in which you watch a film and discuss it, as time allows.

On March 15, view a series of short clips on *Engaging Community, Narrating Change*. This is a special sneak peak at this year's *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference via a variety of clips from the



presenters. These videos broach topics that will be discussed at the conference: sustainability, building community, co-creation, institutional assumption, disconnection and sharing our gifts.

Fee: Free-will offering

Tuesday Take-Away: The Celtic Green Scene

Tuesday, March 19, noon–1 p.m.

Facilitator: The Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter

The Rev.

Dr. Barbara Schlachter will share insights from her long-time and ongoing studies of Celtic Spirituality.

As we see climate change

impact our country and world, what understandings about nature and life do our Celtic Christian ancestors have to offer us? Things to be considered are simplicity of life, harmony with nature and community connectedness.

Barbara is an Episcopal priest retired from parish ministry and doing pastoral counseling and spiritual direction in Iowa City. She has been involved with Celtic studies and pilgrimages for 15 years and will co-lead a pilgrim group to Scotland this summer. Please register by March 18.

Fee: \$13 includes lunch and presentations



Spring Equinox

Wednesday, March 20, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

See page 3 for complete details.

Fee: Free-will offering

It's in the Bag!

Tuesday, March 26, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Sue Martinek

Have an old pair of jeans that you don't wear any more but hate to get rid of? Make them into a new purse or tote bag! Join Sue Martinek as she shares ideas and instructions for different types of bags, which can be constructed by hand or finished later on a sewing machine. Please bring scissors and a pair of sturdy jeans (or a jean skirt) to cut up. (The size of the jeans will determine the size of the bag.) Needles and thread will be provided. Sue also will have her

new book, *Alterations the Seams Easy Way*, available for purchase.

Please register and pay in full by March 22. You may choose to purchase a pre-made, medium-size kit for an additional \$5. (Please request at registration.)

Fee: \$10

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony

Wednesday, March 27, 7 p.m. or

Wednesday, April 24, 7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Mike Maynard

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. Prairiewoods offers a sweat focused on prayer, purification, recognition and healing.

The lodge is a small, dome-shaped structure in which participants sit on the earth around heated, steaming stones. Please note that the lodge is a small enclosure that is dark and extremely hot. *If you have claustrophobia or any medical conditions that prevent you from using a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony.*

Registration is required and participants need to be notified of proper protocols, so please contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or www.Prairiewoods.org.

Fee: Free-will offering

Almost Full Moon Owl Hike

Tuesday, March 28, 6:30–9 p.m.

Facilitator: Chuck Ungs

Whoooooo cooks for you?

Whoooooo cooks for you all?

While you may not answer the barred owl's questions, you will get some of your questions answered about these

local residents. Join Linn County Conservationist and expert owl caller Chuck Ungs for this evening about owls. The class will begin indoors with a lesson about owls. Then take your new knowledge to the woods on a moonlit hike and owl-calling escapade.

Fee: \$5 per person or \$10 per family



PROGRAMS

Women in Interfaith Dialogue Saturday, April 6, 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Virginia Melroy, The Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter & Karen Grabowski

Women in Interfaith Dialogue meets quarterly to explore questions of faith and spirituality. All women are welcome! On April 6, you can take part in an “enchancing” day as you focus on chants. Many religious traditions involve some kind of chant in their rituals. How does your faith community practice chant?

Virginia Melroy leads Dances of Universal Peace, and Barbara Schlachter is an Episcopal priest and facilitator for the group. Karen Grabowski will present on chanting in yoga practice.

Feel free to bring drums or other rhythm instruments. Register by April 1 by contacting Barbara at 319-351-4380 or b.schlachter@mchsi.com.

Fee: \$15 includes lunch

The Second Half of Life: Men’s Perspective

**Wednesdays, April 10, 17 & 24,
7–8:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Rev. Mel Schlachter

Many men undergo a major transformation as they mature, described as a change from goal drivenness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom, from self-directed



to gaining a deeper sense of Self. This three-week series for men will illuminate this change and discuss its implications.

Rev. Mel Schlachter is an Episcopal priest recently retired from parish ministry. Over the years, his work has included pastoral counseling, prison and

Are you trying to *save money* on home heating costs? Contact Green Iowa AmeriCorps at 319-784-2735 or greeniowaCR@gmail.com today for your *free* Energy Assessment. They also offer *free* complete weatherizations for low income households, veterans, senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

college chaplaincy, and spiritual direction.

Registration is required by April 5. Please read Richard Rohr’s *Falling Upward: a Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life* (available in the Prairiewoods Gift Shop).

Fee: \$36 for three-week series

Creating with the Spirit through Nature

**Saturday, April 13, 9 a.m.–Sunday,
April 14, 1 p.m.**

Facilitator: Ruth Ipsan-Brown

Ruth Ipsan-Brown’s enthusiasm for creating is contagious when she shares her insight for observing beauty in the smallest bits of nature.



Find yourself transformed as you work with gifts of the Divine Spirit to create beautiful and wondrous works of art!

Ruth has been an artist for more than 35 years. With an art degree and teaching certificate from the University of Iowa, Ruth holds classes in Iowa and Arizona. She resides and has a working studio in Mount Vernon.

Fee: \$145 (or \$170 after March 29)

includes presentations, materials, Saturday lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$125 includes presentations, materials, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

Conscious Breathing for Health, Harmony and Spiritual Growth

**Mondays, April 15, 22 & 29,
6:30–8:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Robyn Krell

Retreat from your busy life into the peacefulness of conscious breath meditation.

Through the use of gentle breathing techniques, you will learn to restore your breath to opened, balanced



and healthy. The breath contains the spiritual life-force that makes possible inner peace, healing and connection to the Divine.

Robyn Krell is the Eastern Iowa Coordinator for Experience Works, a national nonprofit training and employment program.

Fee: \$40 for three-week series (or \$36 if registered by April 8)

Tuesday Take-Away: Youth Suicide Prevention

Tuesday, April 16, noon–1 p.m.

Facilitator: Foundation 2

While springtime can be a time for happy anticipation of warming weather, graduations and fresh emergence, many youth struggle with deep issues and dark thoughts. Spring signals a marked increase for youth suicides. On April 16, learn from the wisdom of Foundation 2, a local nonprofit agency that helps to prevent suicide. Please register by April 15.

Fee: \$13 includes lunch and presentations

Growing and Using Culinary Herbs

Wednesday, April 17, 6:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Judy Bemer

Learn how to use and preserve fresh herbs from Master Gardener Judy Bemer. Start off with a “cuppa tea,” a plate of herbal goodies and some informative handouts. Then discuss how and where to grow herbs, and learn about “new kids on the block” in the herb world.

Fee: \$5

Circle Cinema: Bag It

Friday, April 19, noon–1 p.m.

Facilitators: Emy Sautter & Andrea Jilovec

Bring a brown-bag lunch and join us for a film over your lunch hour. This is a casual gathering in which you watch a film and discuss it, as time allows.

In this *Circle Cinema*, you will ask yourself: *Is my life too plastic? When was the last time I went a day without using something plastic?* This multi-award winning documentary is a serious but funny film that looks at the complexities of our plastic world.

Fee: Free-will offering



Good Green Fun, Eco-Fest 2013 will be held Saturday, April 20, in the New Bo District. www.EcoFestCR.WordPress.com has all the details!

Earth Day

Leading Lives of Passion, Purpose and Power: Turning Compassion into Action Monday, April 22, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Julia Butterfly Hill

Celebrate Earth Day at Mount Mercy University with Julia Butterfly Hill. Julia brought international attention to the plight of the world's last remaining ancient forests when she climbed 180 feet into the branches of a 1,000-year-old redwood tree and refused to come down. Her historic protest of the environmental destruction caused by the clear-cutting of ancient redwoods culminated after 738 days with an agreement that provided permanent protection for the tree known as Luna and the three-acres around it. Julia also is a writer, a poet and the founder of the nonprofit organization Circle of Life.

Fee: Free

An Evening of Poetry

Friday, April 26, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Jean Junis

Come celebrate National Poetry Month at Prairiewoods' *Evening of Poetry*. Bring your own poems or a favorite poem by another poet to read—or just come to listen and enjoy. Simple refreshments will be served, and all are welcome.

Jean Junis has enjoyed reading and writing poetry for years and is now beginning to share her poems. She resides in Iowa City, where she teaches young children how to read and write. She has been a familiar face at Prairiewoods since its beginning.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$5

Save the date for:

Journaling Our Life: Mining Our Own Jewels of Wisdom with Kathy Petsche on Sunday, May 5

The following classes are offered by the Institute of Spiritual Healing & Aromatherapy (ISHA). For more information or to register, contact ISHA at 303-467-7829 or www.IshaHealing.com.

Reserve lodging and meals through Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or ajilovec@prairiewoods.org.

Using Your Hands to Heal, HTSM Course 103

Saturday, March 9, 8:30 a.m.–Sunday, March 10, 6 p.m.

Facilitator: Gayle Mohr, RN, CHTP, LMT, HTSM-CP/I, CCA

This two-day course is aimed at those who want to do healing work from a spiritual ministry perspective. It incorporates a variety of healing modalities that spring from the laying-on of hands found in the Christian tradition. Bio-energetic healing principles are introduced within a spiritual ministry focus. Topics include distance healing, healing of memories, meditation, working with the human energy field, simple documentation and the path of the healing practitioner. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 16 CEs).

Gayle Mohr is a nurse with more than 45 years of experience. She is certified in Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry and Clinical Aromatherapy. **Fee:** \$325 for early registration, \$350 within three weeks of class (other discounts are available)

Essential Oils for Cancer Care, HTSM Course 502

Thursday, March 21, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Gayle Mohr, RN, CHTP, LMT, HTSM-CP/I, CCA

This six-hour course explores the healing qualities of certain essential oils helpful for the physical body with a focus on those living with cancer. The historical and current use of essential oils for cancer care are reviewed. The essential oil chemistry, quality standards, safety and research are discussed, especially as they relate

to specific cancers and symptoms. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 6 CEs).

This course also will be taught by Gayle Mohr.

Fee: \$125 for early registration, \$150 within three weeks of class (other discounts are available)

Sent to Heal and Anoint, CCA Course 301

Friday, March 22, 6 p.m.–Sunday, March 24, 6 p.m.

Facilitator: Kate Petree, BME, LMT, CCA, HTSM-CP/I

This two-and-a-half-day course explores the healing traditions of essential oils from ancient cultures, Biblical experiences, medieval healers and today. The science of aromatic oils and their vibrational frequencies are explored. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 20 CEs).

Kate Petree's background is in music education, and she is certified in massage, Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry and Clinical Aromatherapy.

Fee: \$425 for early registration, \$450 within three weeks of class (other discounts are available)

Forming a Healing Practice, HTSM Course 104

Saturday, March 23, 8:30 a.m.–Sunday, March 24, 6 p.m.

Facilitator: Gayle Mohr, RN, CHTP, LMT, HTSM-CP/I, CCA

This two-day course is aimed at those who want to deepen their heart-centered healing ministry practice. It presents advanced intervention methods to help with specific healing needs, including intake interviewing, documenting client sessions and bio-energetic assessment. Emphasis is on models of healing within present day church and ministry settings. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 16 CEs).

This course also will be taught by Gayle Mohr.

Fee: \$325 for early registration, \$350 within three weeks of class (other discounts are available)

CONTINUING PROGRAMS/DONORS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton **Every other Thursday (including March 14), 6:30–8 p.m.**

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

This group focuses on the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* booklets that include writings by Thomas Merton and other authors. As a participant, you will read, reflect and discuss these texts and various topics related to contemplative living to help you respond to experiences with greater awareness of your connections with God and others. You may join at any time.

Fee: \$5 per session

Green Living Group

3rd Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Maggie Anderson, Emmy Ball and Emy Sautter

If you are committed to reducing your impact on the environment, join the Green Living Group, a support group for happy and healthy green living. New participants are always welcome. On March 20, this group will join the *Spring Equinox*. (See page 3.) On April 17, they will take part in *Growing and Using Culinary Herbs*. (See page 8.)

Fee: varies based on monthly program

Evening Centering Prayer

2nd & 4th Tuesdays monthly, 5:30–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Judith Edwards

Come for a time of silence and centering prayer in which you can relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you. This is a prayer/support group for people who enjoy centering prayer—a form of meditation focused on praying in silence. The group meets in room 113 of the Prairiewoods Guest House, and new participants may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitches

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Spend a few hours a month knitting and crocheting for people who need your hats, mittens, blankets and baby items. Join the Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitches—a group of crafters of various skill levels who create handmade goods for charity twice a month. New participants are always welcome, and donations of materials are gratefully accepted!

Fee: Free

Women's Sacred Circle

1st Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Andrea Jilovec

Women's Sacred Circle meets monthly within the framework of understanding that our personal spiritual journey is uniquely ours and is ongoing. Together we share and learn from one another's pathways and perspectives.

March 6 will focus on *Touch*, a short Spiritual Cinema Circle film that explores what happens when a connection is sparked by two strangers. On April 3, Mary Kay Kusner, MA, CC, will share the story of her spiritual journey. She has been a chaplain for more than 20 years and has witnessed the open way in which people react to her as a female minister.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$5 per session

Wednesday Women

Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women that meets every Wednesday to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged—you are welcome to come any time!

On Feb. 20 the group began reading and discussing *The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See* by Richard Rohr (available for \$20 in the Prairiewoods Office). Please be prepared to discuss the following pages in March:

March 6: pages 67–97

March 13: pages 98–128

March 20: pages 129–162

On March 27, the group will begin viewing and discussing the DVD *Discovering Everyday Spirituality* with Thomas Moore. Like his bestselling books, this eight-part DVD series will help you get in touch with the sacred in everyday life, gain a truer sense of community and understand what it means to be human.

March 27: Parts 1 & 2 on Story

April 3: Parts 3 & 4 on Place

April 10: Parts 5 & 6 on Activity

April 17: Parts 7 & 8 on Ritual

In honor of Earth Day, the group will view and discuss *Bag It* on April 24. This multi-award winning documentary takes a broad look at how plastics have become a constant companion in our daily lives. Join us to find out if your life is too plastic!

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session

We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money or other gifts to Prairiewoods!
For a complete, up-to-date list between Newsletters, go to www.Prairiewoods.org/Contact/Donate.

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER DONORS

(continued from p. 10)

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In memory of deceased friends in FSPA & PBVM communities Marlys Graettinger
In memory of mother & father Bonnie Thorn
In memory of my deceased children Monica Schany

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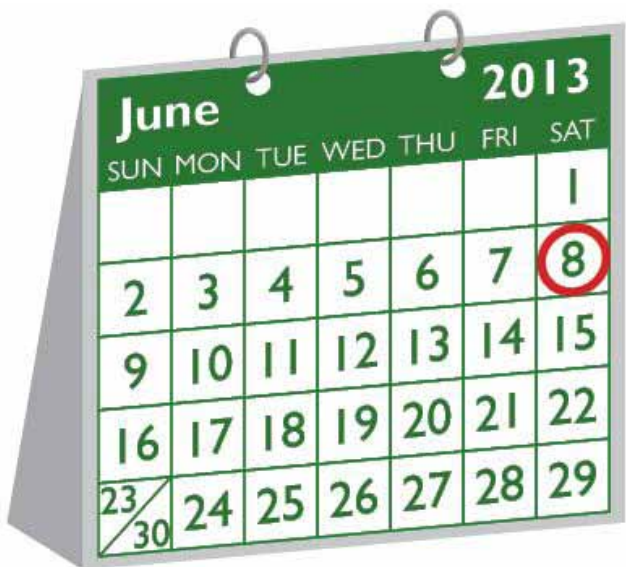
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Save the Date for the 2013 Prairiewoods Garden Party

The annual Garden Party is our largest fundraiser of the year, and it is always a lively evening full of good food, entertainment, raffles, and live and silent auctions. The eighth annual Garden Party will be held on *Saturday, June 8*, at Mercy Medical Center in Cedar Rapids. This is one party you won't want to miss, so mark your calendars today!

Phone Extensions/ Email

319-395-6700

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Prairiewoods

May/June 2013

THE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF PRAIRIEWOODS, AN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Support Prairiewoods: Attend Garden Party, June 8

by Katie Giorgio, Garden Party Co-Chair

Come to the Prairiewoods Garden Party this June, and join us in continued support of the mission of Prairiewoods. The annual Garden Party is the biggest fundraising event of the year for Prairiewoods and is always a fun-filled evening. Mark your calendar and make plans to join us Saturday, June 8! The event will again be held in the lovely Hallagan Education Center at Mercy Medical Center in downtown Cedar Rapids.

The Garden Party begins at 4:30 p.m. with a social hour and musical entertainment so you can socialize with other guests. You'll also have the chance to peruse and bid on fabulous silent auction items.

The buffet dinner, prepared by the chefs at Mercy Medical Center, lends a gourmet feel to this evening. And exciting plans are being made as you read this for the huge variety of items you'll be able to bid on in our silent and live auctions. This year's auctions will include irresistible items, such as *tickets to community events, gift certificates for Prairiewoods programs and retreats, handcrafted wooden doll cradles and a stunning handmade afghan* ... just to name a few! Our live auction will culminate with a *stay in Paris for New Year's Eve!*

We also will sell raffle tickets for a chance to win an *iPad*. (Look for information about purchasing raffle tickets in upcoming Prairiewoods' e-newsletters and on our Facebook page.)

Tickets to the Garden Party cost \$40 per person (a portion of which is tax-deductible). We also invite guests to purchase a table of eight for \$320, so start thinking about getting a group of friends together for this enjoyable evening.

We are currently seeking sponsors for the Garden Party to help underwrite the cost of the event. Sponsorships are at the heart of making the Garden Party successful each year, and we would be thrilled to include any company or individual as a supporter. If you would like to know more about becoming a sponsor of the Garden Party, please contact us.

Remember, the Garden Party is the main fundraising event for Prairiewoods and helps to support the wonderful variety of spiritual and ecological programming we provide throughout the year. We hope you'll plan to join us!

For more information, please contact Andi Lewis at 319-395-6700, ext. 206.



by Theresa Keller, FSPA,
Garden Party Co-Chair

As I sit at my window looking out at the snow-covered land at Prairiewoods this early March, I find it hard to think of June and the Garden Party. I know the season will change gradually from shades of gray to shades of green. The Garden Party has been for me a time of celebration and a time of relationships.

Much like the gardens we plant in late May and June, this fundraising event for Prairiewoods ensures that financial stability remains planted at Prairiewoods.

Traditionally, the Garden Party has been a gathering for life-long friends of Prairiewoods and supporters of its mission. Thanks to the generous donations and the charitable giving of our friends, family and supporters, the Garden Party continues in the best tradition of Prairiewoods.

This year the committee working on the event wanted to *touch on the theme of relationships* at Prairiewoods. As you all are aware, Prairiewoods' mission is deeply grounded in relationship with Earth, with the Divine and with one another. In keeping with this mission, the auction items are centered around the theme of relationships.

We hope you will join us and help us deepen our relationships with all of you.

PRAIRIEWOODS OPERATING BOARD

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Laurie Harris

Love of neighbor is one path that leads to our encounter with God. The Peace Prayer of St. Francis sums it up: "in giving we receive, in consoling we are consoled, and in trying to understand we are understood." It refocuses the lens off ourselves and onto others, to community, to creation. Francis of Assisi, beloved saint and co-founder of the Franciscan order with St. Clare, received people where they were and called them to authentic gospel living.

Building strong community requires everyone to contribute as many of their gifts as possible to each other and to the whole. Collectively and collaboratively, we have the capacity to provide what we need. I am so grateful for speakers Peter Block, John McKnight, Walter Brueggemann and Barbara McAfee and all who attended the thirteenth annual *Spirituality in the 21st Century: Engaging Community, Narrating Change* for enspiriting kindness, generosity and cooperation to realize the power in utilizing diversity to create unity.

Knowing the needs of others challenges us to walk with others, share our gifts and receive theirs. These times call for a new readiness to assist neighbors in need. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Jesuit priest-anthropologist, in his *Hymn of the Universe*, wrote with confidence and faith about the "potential energy" contained in suffering.

Human suffering ... is potential energy ... for if all the sick people in the world were simultaneously to turn their sufferings into a single shared longing for the speedy completion of the kingdom of God ... what a vast leap toward God the world would thereby make! If all those who suffer in the world were to unite their sufferings so that the pain of the world should become one single grand act of consciousness, of sublimation, of unification, would not this be one of the most exalted forms in which the mysterious work of creation could be manifested to our eyes?"

We witness a conversion of hearts, a realization that what we all need is right here in the collective gifts waiting to be used to transform the world. Our hope is that the seemingly small ways we reflect God's love, goodness, mercy and generosity will surge, and that the connection and collaboration established among people will grow and lead to something greater than any one of us can imagine.

Peace,

Laurie Harris, Director

We're All Ears!

What gifts can
you give for
the good of
the community?

Email us at
alewis@prairiewoods.org.



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.

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

Prairiewoods publishes this newsletter bimonthly. Content focuses on happenings and opinions that support Prairiewoods' mission and vision.

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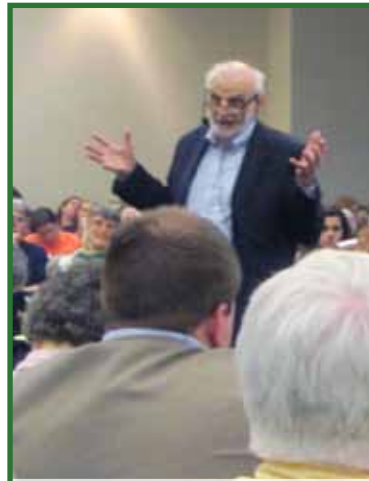
Prairiewoods Launches Phase II of Engaging Community, Narrating Change

Building community is a complex and life-long journey with relationships residing at its core. *Engaging Community, Narrating Change*, Prairiewoods’ annual *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference, held April 4–5, affirmed just that—relationships! Nearly 500 people “circled up” and leaned into synergetic conversations to find connections in the service of something greater than themselves. Their overall goal was to transform the current socio-economic and civic systems into a more ideal and equitable community-oriented reality.

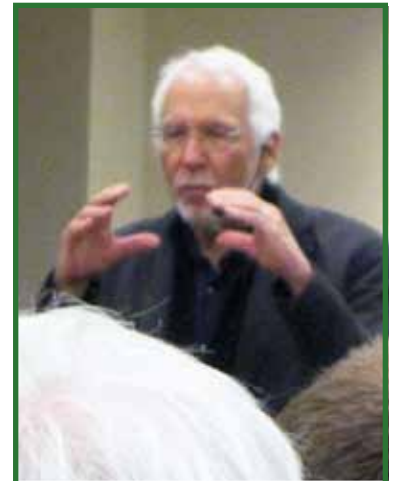
Presenter/facilitators Walter Brueggemann, John McKnight and Peter Block and musician Barbara McAfee challenged and inspired eager participants by modeling the process to change conversations to engage others and narrate change for the common good. Conference attendees met in small circles to share thoughts around topics of need and interest, challenging one another to identify personal gifts and lift long-held dreams. In conversation on these areas of need, narrating positive change now seems possible!

More than 50 organizations committed to hosting six monthly conversations in their own locale between May and October. In November Prairiewoods will welcome Peter Block back to facilitate the culmination of activity, learning, challenge and next best steps.

We remain grateful for the overwhelming response to the conference. If you want to start your own circle of monthly conversations or join an existing group, please visit www.Prairiewoods.org.



Walter Brueggemann



Peter Block



John McKnight



Barbara McAfee

presenters and participants during Phase I of *Engaging Community, Narrating Change* on April 4 and 5



photo courtesy of Tom Peter

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FRANCISCAN

A Franciscan Vision of Nature: A Community of Being

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA

*We have forgotten who we are.
We have alienated ourselves from the
unfolding of the cosmos.
We have become estranged from the
movements of the earth ...
We ask for the gift of remembering.
We ask for the strength to change.*

—taken from “A Prayer of Sorrow” from the United Nations Environmental Sabbath Program

When our inner spirit signals a need for change, when we feel deserted, separated and without a firm footing in life, we sometimes feel an urge to take off for new lands. So where do we go? Will we find that for which we yearn in books, with new friends or with old familiar companions? Or might we simply go to the woods?

Going to the woods, or the mountains, or the back yard, is a matter of planting us firmly in a web of community. There we may find, in that great, vibrant, on-going and life-saving reality that is the natural world, a deeper sense of who we are. Something, someone, at the heart of it all speaks with a thousand voices.

When we are in nature, what is required is the ability to see, not just with our wonderful five senses, but, as Franciscan spiritual teacher Richard Rohr tells us, with our “third eye.” This way of seeing is an experience of presence. Rohr describes it as “remaining in awe before an underlying mystery, coherence and spaciousness” that can be found in nature. It is the kind of seeing that speaks not so much of *I* but of *we*.

Rohr’s thoughts fit into a Franciscan theological frame that emerges from the life and teachings of Francis, who spoke of the sun as Brother and connected with Sister Moon and Sister Water as his kin and companions. In Francis’ *Canticle of the Sun*, we find more than beautiful poetry, we find a mystic speaking of community and relationship, of God’s word expressed in a diversity of living beings.

Franciscans have carried this tradition throughout history, especially through the writings of Bonaventure, a man living in the 13th century but who already spoke of the Book of Creation as the first revelation.

Bonaventure says that “creation is a beautiful song that flows in the most excellent of harmonies but it is a song that God freely desires to sing into the vast spaces of the universe. Creation,” he says, “is simply the loving outflow of a loving God whose infinite dynamic goodness is shared in a limited dynamic way.”

This beautiful song excludes nothing of the created world. Everything and everyone belongs.

Every being within this song has its own unique identity, its story, all held within the sacred Word. This is home. How we relate to it all, how we sense our connection, our belonging, is the context for our spiritual journey.

We find ourselves in our relationship with the night sky, with the flower just beginning to open, with vast sweeps of prairie, with the rivers and woodlands. So when we walk in the woods, when we put our feet in a stream of clear, running water, rest against a towering tree and welcome the voices of the community of life, we are remembering who we are.

So we step out, taking deep breaths, knowing that, although we may have forgotten who we are, we are not really lost. We have our place in this community.

And so we adapt “A Prayer of Healing,” also from the United Nations Environmental Sabbath Program:

*We join with the earth and with each other:
to bring new life to the land
to restore the waters
to refresh the air
to renew the forests
to renew our spirits
to create the human community
to remember our children.*



Almost as long as Prairiewoods has been in existence, its grounds have been graced by an amazing dog named Hildegard. She watched over all of Prairiewoods and served as the beloved pet of Nancy Hoffman, FSPA. Hilde often stood outside her doghouse near the entrance to Prairiewoods, greeting all who entered this holy space. Just before Easter, Sister Nancy said goodbye to her fifteen-year-old friend. She says, “Thank you for all the kindness shown to Hilde, to me and to Prairiewoods over the years.”

Woodland Restoration at Prairiewoods

by Emy Sautter

Here at Prairiewoods, we are so fortunate ... fortunate in our gift of caring for the land and fortunate in friends that help us care for the community of life that surrounds us. Mark Vitosh, district forester with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, is one such friend. In 2003 Mark helped us develop a forest stewardship plan. This plan helped us identify the types of trees we have and how to take care of them well. This plan has helped us identify our objectives and our vision for our woods and includes:

- conserving forest cover
- providing space for hiking, prayer/meditation and enjoyment
- promoting wildlife habitat and land stewardship

Just last month, Mark visited again to assess our work in the woods and to help us revise our forest stewardship plan. We added two additional objectives:

- restoring open oak-hickory habitat in select locations
- encouraging healthy tree species diversity

This year we will begin removing a number of medium to large trees that are not native to Iowa, including Siberian Elm and White Mulberry. These trees are here not due to natural causes, but because of human impact. Currently, they are hampering the growth of native trees and plants that grow on the woodland floor. We are in the process of removing these trees to open the woodlands and to promote the re-growth of native trees, such as oak, hickory and walnut. This process will open the woodlands quite a bit behind the Center, and the landscape will look different in this area for quite a while.

If you want to learn more about trees and woodland restoration, join us for a *Backyard Field Day* on Saturday, July 13, from 9 a.m.–1 p.m.



“Around me the trees stir in their leaves and call out, ‘Stay awhile.’ The light flows from their branches. And they call again, ‘It’s simple,’ they say, ‘and you too have come into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled with light, and to shine.’”

— Mary Oliver, *When I Am Among the Trees*



Visit iRenew.org/Renewable-Energy-in-the-City for information about the upcoming Renewable Energy in the City conference!

RETREATS

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For a complete list and *online registration*, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Beginner's Eye: A Refreshing Way to Cultivate Clear Seeing Photography Retreat **Friday, May 3, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, May 5, 1 p.m.**

Facilitator: Thomas Roberts, LCSW, LMFT

This retreat is a delightful blend of mindfulness, contemplation, meditation, photography and Haiku, all combined to enhance your connection with your true self and the world around you. You will use photography as a method of opening your senses to the way you relate to the world. It is not about *what* you see, but *how* you see. No photography experience is necessary, nor is fancy camera equipment; cell phone cameras are completely acceptable!

Thomas Roberts has his own psychotherapist and hypnotherapist practice in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and is an adjunct professor at Viterbo and St. Cloud Universities.
Fee: \$225 includes presentations, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Basket Weaving Retreat

Sunday, June 2, 5:30 p.m.–Friday, June 7, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Ruthanne Reed, OP

Focus on reflectively learning the art of basketry, the oldest art in the history of civilization, thus connecting us with all people and with Earth. Creativity leads to deep reflection and contemplation. In this retreat, you will use prayer, basket-making, the beauty of nature and reflection to engage becoming, healing and growing.

Ruthanne Reed, OP, is a Racine Dominican who has ministered as pastoral associate, itinerant missionary preacher, retreat director and Montessori educator.
Fee: \$425 includes presentations, materials, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$375 includes presentations, materials, Sunday dinner and daily lunch



Silent Directed Retreats

Sunday, June 2, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, June 8, 1 p.m. or
Sunday, July 21, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, July 27, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Betty Daugherty, FSPA; Lucille Winnike, FSPA; Marj English, OSF; & Ann Jackson, PBVM

These week-long retreats provide extended time for prayer, solitude, quiet and peace. Find quiet time and space to experience more deeply the God within you, within your

relationships and in all of creation. The time is yours to spend in silence in any way that helps foster your spirituality. Each day, you will meet one-on-one with a spiritual director to reflect on your spiritual journey.

Fee: \$400 includes spiritual direction, lodging and all meals (*Commuters will not be accepted for these retreats.*)



The Mandala: A Pathway to One's Center Retreat **Friday, June 21, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, June 23, 1 p.m.**

Facilitator: Joellen Price, PBVM

Mandala is the Sanskrit word for circle. The origins of the mandala tradition cite it as a source or reflection of spiritual energy. Today, the word *mandala* is used for sacred art created in the form of a circle. Come create mandalas, tap into the holiness of deep listening within you and in creation, and learn to utilize mandalas as a form of prayer. No previous experience is required.

Joellen Price, PBVM, guided by materials from Judith Cornell, Ph.D., began praying with mandalas years ago and finds them helpful to integrate spiritual life within daily life.

Fee: \$250 includes presentations, materials, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$200 includes presentations, materials, and Saturday and Sunday lunch



Nurturing the Sacred Within Retreat

Sunday, July 21, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, July 27, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Corrina Thomas, FSPA

We are as multidimensional as the universe. We have bodies, emotions, thoughts and ideas. We ask ourselves, *Who are we? What are we?* One way of answering these spiritual questions is to get in touch with a sacred system that lies within each one of us, known as the *Chakra system*. In this retreat, you will learn to honor and pay attention to the concepts and theories of this God-given gift. You will learn to merge your sense of self on various levels and live based on what is authentic and unique to you.

Corrina Thomas, FSPA, is a spiritual director and retreat facilitator. Born and raised in India, Sister Corrina brings a wealth of interreligious/cultural experience and a harmonious blend between eastern and western spiritual practices.
Fee: \$400 includes presentations, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$375 includes presentations, Sunday dinner and daily lunch



Yoga Retreat**Sunday, July 28, 6:30 p.m.–Friday, Aug. 2, 1 p.m.****Facilitator:** Mary Morrow, E-RYT, PRYT, MBA

Active yoga postures, breathing techniques and relaxation methods will bring harmony between your body and your heart. You will learn and practice optimal physical alignment to strengthen and stretch muscles; breathing techniques to invigorate, cleanse and soothe the body; and guided meditations to further align with the flow of health and wholeness. All are welcome, however those with some yoga experience will find the posture practices more accessible.



Mary Morrow, founder of Laughing Cobra Yoga, teaches with humor and compassion to help each student discover the benefits of yoga. Certification in Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy and more than 3,000 hours of teaching qualify her retreats for Yoga Alliance Continuing Education Units. To learn more about Mary visit www.LaughingCobraYoga.com.

Fee: \$425 includes yoga instruction, lodging and all meals
(Commuters will not be accepted for this retreat.)

Growing into Wholeness by Dreaming Retreat**Friday, Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 4, 1 p.m.****Facilitator:** Olga Wittekind, OSF

Dream work offers opportunities to begin a conversation with your soul—to begin an inward journey toward the truest part of the self. In this retreat, you will engage universal images (the hero/heroine, Wise Old Man/Woman, Divine Child, Shadow, Trickster ...) that show up in our dreams. These *archetypal* dreams, also referred to as “mythic” or “grand” dreams, usually occur at significant times in life. By studying these images and stories that speak so meaningfully to us in our dreams, we may grow in wholeness, connecting more deeply with others, with God and with all of creation.



Olga Wittekind, OSF, is a clinical psychologist and Jungian analyst. She studied at the Jung Institute in Zurich and Chicago. Sister Olga is the Director of the Oldenburg Franciscan Center in Oldenburg, Indiana.

Fee: \$225 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

Drum Wisdom, Drum Making Retreat**Friday, Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 4, 1 p.m.****Facilitator:** Wayne Manthey

This amazing, spiritual opportunity invites retreatants to create the sacred gift of a hand drum and drum stick. You can choose the size and frame of your drum and discover how to customize your drum by learning about different variables

that impact the sound. Deepen your understanding of the sacred role of drums as creative conduits for healing, insight and spiritual connection.

Drum maker and story teller Wayne Manthey lives out of the simple assumption that all living things vibrate at unique frequencies and that the connection between drums and people is a natural one. This retreat will be limited to 12 people, so please register early.

Fee: \$290 (13-inch drum) or \$315 (16-inch drum) includes presentations, materials, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$240 (13-inch drum) or \$265 (16-inch drum) includes presentations, materials, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

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

Saturdays, Sept. 14 & May 3, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. and Saturdays, Oct. 12, Nov. 2, Dec. 7, Jan. 18, Feb. 22, March 15 & April 19, 9 a.m.–noon

Facilitators: Betty Daugherty, FSPA; Lucille Winnike, FSPA; Marj English, OSF; & Ann Jackson, PBVM

“Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life offers a way to reflect and sift through life’s experiences and to discover in them the leading thread of God’s longing and desire to make us a holy people who are given in service to others.”

—Smith and Merz, *Moment to Moment*

Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.) is a nine-month retreat based on the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius recognized that not only the intellect but also the emotions and feelings help us come to a knowledge of the movement of the Spirit in our lives. There is no one method of Ignatian prayer; Ignatius drew on a number of sources, and the Exercises contain different kinds of prayer. A readiness to pray with Scripture is important. Group discussion, individual reflection, and individual spiritual direction also are part of the Ignatian Exercises, which are oriented to mission and rooted in contemplation. The Exercises develop dispositions of the heart, which then become part of daily life.

Do you long for GOD? Do you desire time to reflect on your own spiritual path and the movement of the Spirit within your life? Would 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”?

Retreatants in S.E.E.L. will become better able to discern their inner desires, see how God is working in their lives and in the world, learn how to bring together contemplation and action, and become increasingly aware of the presence of God in all things. We invite you to consider participating in this retreat over a nine-month period—September 2013 to May 2014.

Fee: \$450 (payable to Prairiewoods in September 2013 or \$50 monthly), plus cost of monthly spiritual direction

PROGRAMS

Singing Spirit Yoga Partners with Prairiewoods

Mondays–Thursdays beginning May 13, 4–5:15 p.m., 5:30–6:45 p.m. or 7–8 p.m. Sundays beginning May 26, 5–6:15 p.m.

Facilitator: Anji Kozikowski, E-RYT

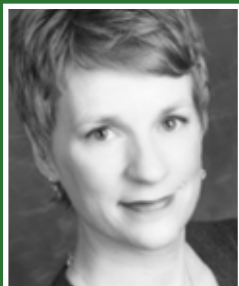
We are pleased to offer regular courses of yoga in partnership with Singing Spirit Yoga! In May, we will begin offering thirteen yoga classes a week to meet all schedules. You are welcome to attend one or all.

Yoga is a practice that links movement with breathing for a meditative practice that cultivates strength, flexibility and relaxation in body and mind. People of all fitness levels and abilities are encouraged to give yoga a try.

Anji Kozikowski, E-RYT, is the owner of Singing Spirit Yoga. She models and teaches self-love so that you can live the abundantly happy and healthy life you deserve. She will foster this self-love through gentle Vinyasa yoga. These yoga poses flow from one to the next and are modified to fit individual bodies so that you can have a personalized yoga experience.

Anji received her master's degree in Health Promotion and Wellness Management from Missouri State University and has been working in health and wellness for more than 17 years. Anji has extensive experience working with clients with issues of diabetes, obesity, arthritis and other chronic conditions. She also has received additional training and holds certifications including: Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher through Yoga Alliance since 2004, ACE Certified Personal Trainer since 2007, Certified Integrative Nutrition Consultant and Reconnective Healing Practitioner. For more information or to register, visit www.SingingSpiritYoga.com.

Fee: \$108 for a Three-Month Unlimited Class Pass if purchased by May 31 (Other payment options are available at www.SingingSpiritYoga.com.)



Day of Reflection: A Day of Healing for People Who Grieve

Friday, May 3, 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Facilitators: Rita Heires, FSPA, & Andrea Jilovec

Grieving is an ongoing process of healing. This new, one-day program is designed for anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one. As a participant, you will watch a film, share your reflections and participate in short exercises including guided meditation and journaling. You will be welcome to stroll through Prairiewoods' grounds to experience the healing power of nature. Please register by April 26.

Fee: \$15 includes program and lunch

Journaling Our Life: Mining Our Own Jewels of Wisdom

Sunday, May 5, 2–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Kathy Petsche, CCA, RCR

Journaling can give you a better understanding of your own point of view, as well as what others think of a situation. It can be your "life's story" or help you align your hopes for the future. When you look back on things you have written, you may realize that your experiences are more interesting and deeper than you thought. Journaling is a great way to discover that your life is inspiring and creative!

Kathy Petsche is a lifelong journaler, starting with "Dear Diary" when she was eight. Today she is a mom, wife, Nana, working woman and volunteer. She will demonstrate benefits of journaling that can be a gift to yourself. Please bring photos, greeting cards, sayings or anything that you would like to be part of your journal.

Fee: \$15 includes journals

Raised Bed Gardening Workshop

Saturday, May 11, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Facilitator: Phil Pfister

Raised bed gardening is fast becoming the most popular form of gardening. Join Prairiewoods and local Master Gardener Phil Pfister to learn about raised bed gardening. This hands-on class will include classroom time as



well as time in the Prairiewoods garden preparing a raised bed. Topics covered will include best crop choices, proper soil amending and much more! Please register by May 8.

Fee: \$15

Circle Cinema

Fridays, May 17 or June 21, 12–1 p.m.

Facilitators: Andrea Jilovec & Emy Sautter

Bring a lunch and enjoy a film and conversation over the noon hour. On May 17, watch *Touch*, a short film about the difference that making a single personal connection can make. This 15-minute film of compassion won the Grand Jury Award for best short film at the Florida Film Festival.

June 21 will focus on *A Thousand Suns*, a movie about the Gamo Highlands of the African Rift Valley and its people. The film explores the worldview of the Gamo people as fundamental in achieving long-term sustainability.

Fee: Free

Day of Self Renewal

Mondays, May 20 or June 17, 8:30 a.m.–4:15 p.m.

Facilitator: Andrea Jilovec

Come for a day of rest and relaxation! Experience the peaceful and natural grounds of Prairiewoods, a deeply holistic service and group meditation. The day will begin and end with a brief group gathering; the rest of the day is yours for quiet reflection. (Optional activities will be offered.) You will be assigned a guest room and may schedule an individual 50-minute session of massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, paraffin bath treatment with hand massage, foot soak with exfoliation scrub and foot massage, or head and shoulder massage. Please register at least seven days in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and choice of holistic service

Tuesday Take-Away: Thomas Merton and Hildegard—Guides on the Sacredness of Nature

Tuesday, May 21, 12–1 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

In their writings, Thomas Merton and Hildegard of Bingen—two great mystics, prophets and creative thinkers of the past—speak of their experiences of nature as revelatory of God. In the

silence and solitude of nature, Merton found relief from his deep sense of alienation, feasting on the beauty all around him. A prolific writer, Hildegard leaves us rich images of the healing and regenerating forces found in creation. Over a delicious hot lunch, we will enjoy the creativity that these mystics offer us through their writings and art, followed by questions and reflections as time permits. Please register by May 17.
Fee: \$15 includes presentations and lunch

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony **Wednesdays, May 22 or June 19, 8 p.m.**

Facilitator: Mike Maynard

Join a historic and sacred ceremony focused on prayer, purification, healing and recognition. The lodge is a small, dome-shaped structure in which you sit on the earth around heated stones. Please note that the lodge is a small enclosure that is dark and extremely hot. *If you have claustrophobia or any medical conditions that prevent you from using a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony.* Registration is required.
Fee: Free-will offering

Tuesday Take-Away: Mindful Eating **Tuesday, June 18, 12–1 p.m.**

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Become aware of the process of eating, especially as it involves the five senses. Chris Klug will teach basic mindfulness and provide reminders to maintain moment-to-moment awareness of what is happening while you eat. Then eat mindfully in silence to enhance your sense of being alive, enter fully into the richly sensual (tasting, touching, smelling, seeing, hearing) experience of eating and open your heart in gratitude. After lunch, there will be questions and reflections as time permits. Please register by June 14.



Fee: \$15 includes program and lunch

Summer Solstice **Friday, June 21, 7–9 p.m.**

Facilitator: Indian Creek Nature Center

For centuries, people have celebrated the sun's journey on the longest day of the year. You can celebrate at Indian Creek Nature Center with an evening of music as you create a suncatcher, discover unique prairie plant "suncatchers" and salute the setting sun from the prairie. Learn about traditional solstice celebrations from various world cultures. For more information, contact Indian Creek at 319-362-0664 or www.IndianCreekNatureCenter.org.

Fee: Free-will offering

The following classes are offered by the Institute of Spiritual Healing & Aromatherapy (ISHA). For more information or to register, contact ISHA at 303-467-7829 or www.IshaHealing.com. Reserve lodging and meals through Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or ajilovec@prairiewoods.org.

The Art of Listening to Spiritual Guidance, HTSM Course 105

Wednesday, May 8, 8:30 a.m.–Friday, May 10, 6 p.m.

Facilitator: Jan Halbach, OSF, RN, BSN, NCTMB, CHTP/I

This three-day course is aimed at students who have completed courses 103 and 104. Students will be introduced to the role of spiritual guidance in healing work that flows from our Divine Source. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 24 CE's).

Fee: \$475 for early registration, \$500 within three weeks of class, plus lodging and meals



Sent to Heal & Anoint, CCA Course 301 **Friday, June 28, 6 p.m.–Sunday, June 30, 6 p.m.**

Facilitator: Pat Springer, RN, BSN, MA, CHTP/I, CCA

This two-and-a-half-day course explores the science of aromatic oils and their vibrational frequencies. Students integrate essential oils with heart-centered energetic healing techniques. This is the first of three classes in that may lead to Certification in Clinical Aromatherapy (CCA) or be used only for personal knowledge. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 20 CE's).

Fee: \$425 for early registration, \$450 within three weeks of class, plus lodging and meals



Introduction to Healing Ministry, HTSM Course 101 **Saturday, June 29, 8:30 a.m.–6 p.m.**

Facilitator: Kate Petree, BME, LMT, CCA, HTSM-CP/I

This eight-hour course details the history of healing in Christianity with the opportunity to experience the laying-on of hands. The roles of prayer, belief and the development of a healing presence are presented. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 8 CE's).

Fee: \$150 for early registration, \$175 within three weeks of class, plus lodging and meals



Introduction to Judeo-Christian Anointing, HTSM Course 102

Sunday, June 30, 8:30 a.m.–6 p.m.

Facilitator: Kate Petree, BME, LMT, CCA, HTSM-CP/I

This one-day course explores anointing in our Judeo-Christian story and how we lost it through history. Nine essential oils traditionally used at the time of Christ are introduced for spiritual and physical healing. Anointing with healing oil is then combined with the laying-on of hands and other simple healing techniques to give participants experience in healing and anointing for ministry settings. Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses and Massage Therapists: 8 CE's).

Fee: \$150 for early registration, \$175 within three weeks of class, plus lodging and meals

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton Every other Thursday (including May 9), 6:30–8 p.m. Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

This group focuses on the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* booklets that include writings by Thomas Merton and other authors. As a participant, you will read, reflect and discuss these texts and various topics related to contemplative living to help you respond to experiences with greater awareness of your connections with God and others. You may join at any time.
Fee: \$5 per session

Evening Centering Prayer 2nd & 4th Tuesdays monthly, 5:30–7 p.m. Facilitator: Judith Edwards

Come for a time of silence and centering prayer in which you can relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you. This is a prayer/support group for people who enjoy centering prayer—a form of meditation focused on praying in silence. The group meets in room 113 of the Prairiewoods Guest House, and new participants may join at any time.
Fee: Free-will offering

Green Living Group 3rd Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m. Facilitator: Emy Sautter

If you are committed to reducing your impact on the environment, join the Green Living Group, a support group for happy and healthy green living. New participants are always welcome, but registration is appreciated.

On May 15, the group will discuss Greenscapes, the green alternative to outdoor living spaces. Conventional urban lawns contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, reduce water quality, increase storm water runoff and provide little habitat for wildlife. These negative impacts can be reduced through greenscaping.

On June 19, Sheri Mealhouse (Hawkwoman) will talk about Earth Based Healing. Do you feel disconnected from yourself and the world around you? Perhaps you feel as if something is missing from your life? In today's world, many of us are caught up in the busyness of schedules and deadlines and rarely, if ever, take time to slow down. Come connect with and through nature and Earth to reconnect with who you are. You will discuss various ways to feel more aware, more peaceful and more deeply connected with your true self.

Fee: \$5

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers 2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Spend a few hours a month knitting and crocheting for people who need your hats, mittens, blankets and baby items. Join the Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers—a group of crafters of various skill levels who create handmade goods for charity twice a month. New participants always are welcome, and donations of materials are gratefully accepted!
Fee: Free

Wednesday Women Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m. Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women that meets every Wednesday to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged—you are welcome to come any time!

On May 1, Kris White will present a brief overview of several spiritual perspectives, including Shamanism, Islam, Buddhism's Four Noble Truths, Yoga, Unitarian Universalism, Kabbalah and Hybrid Spirituality. Join us and notice common themes among these perspectives.

Beginning May 8, the group will read and explore *The Essential Enneagram: The Definitive Personality Test and Self-Discovery Guide* by David Daniels, M.D. and Virginia Price, Ph.D. The book can be purchased through the Prairiewoods Office for \$13. Please read and be prepared to discuss the following pages:

- May 8: pages 1–18
- May 15: pages 19–70
- May 22: pages 71–81
- May 29: pages 82–110

In the summer, Wednesday Women meets only once a month on June 12, July 10 and Aug. 14. On June 12, you will watch *A Walk of Wisdom*. This documentary is about Mae Chee Sansanee, a Buddhist nun from Thailand who shares her philosophy, beliefs and spirit.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session (but please come even if you cannot afford to pay!)

Due to low attendance, we will no longer offer *Women's Sacred Circle* on the first Wednesday of each month. If you enjoyed *Sacred Circle*, we encourage you to find your home in one of our other Continuing Programs!

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We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money or other gifts to Prairiewoods!
For a complete, up-to-date list between Newsletters, go to www.Prairiewoods.org/Contact/Donate.

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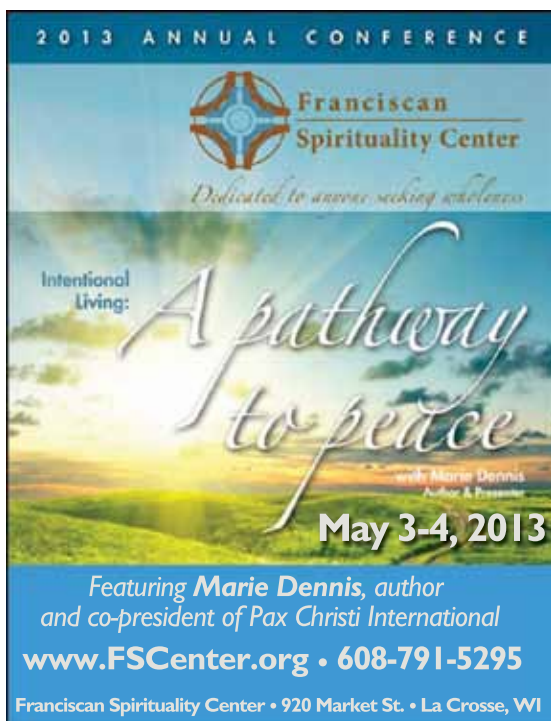
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In honor of forgiveness
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In honor of Maryam Gossling,
FSPA
James & Ann Dunnigan
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FSPA, & *Ann Jackson, PBVM*
Anonymous
In memory of the Dunbar family
Dorothy Dunbar, FSPA
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Prairiewoods Honored for LEED Certification



On April 10, the Corridor Business Journal hosted its annual Green Symposium at the Hotel at Kirkwood Center. The event included a unique partnership with the Eastern Iowa Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council to honor buildings that were LEED® certified in 2012, including Prairiewoods. In November, the Prairiewoods Center was awarded LEED Gold certification for existing buildings,

making it the first nonprofit in Iowa with that honor.



Prairiewoods' LEED team members Jean Wenisch; Helen Elsbernd, FSPA; and Bruce Hamous admire the plaque that now hangs in our Atrium.



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- Please send your mailings electronically to _____.
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Are you on social media? Find "Prairiewoods FSC" on:



Celebrate Summer with a Movie Under the Stars!

Bring your family, bring your friends or make new friends as you celebrate warmer weather, summer break and a chance to be outside under the stars! On Friday, May 31, at 7:30 p.m., all are invited to our first ever *Starlight Movie Night* featuring the recently released film *The Lorax* on the big screen.

This is a great opportunity for the whole family to welcome summer with fun outdoor activities and a movie under the night sky.



“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.”

— Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*

Green Iowa AmeriCorps will start the evening off with family-friendly activities at 7:30 p.m., and the movie will begin around dusk at 8:30 p.m.

Popcorn will be available for purchase, but you are welcome to bring a picnic or other snacks and a blanket or camping chairs. At just \$5 per person or \$10 for a family, this is a fun way to spend a memorable evening with those you love!

Prairiewoods

THE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF PRAIRIEWOODS, AN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Welcoming Incoming and Celebrating Outgoing Staff



Laura Weber begins as the *associate director and retreat coordinator* at Prairiewoods July 1. She was previously Director of Campus Ministry at Creighton University. Educated at St. Louis University and Marquette University, Laura received degrees in Philosophy and Theology, certificates in Classical Studies and Spiritual Direction, and her doctorate in Theological Studies. Laura has been

flourishing as a minister and educator in Ignatian higher education for 26 years, having served in Campus Ministry and Theology with great affection for students and colleagues. She has loved walking with others as a spiritual companion, accompanying those who are seeking healing, renewal and enlightenment. She loves Cardinals baseball, musical theater and playing outside in the heat and humidity. Her passion for finding the divine in creation and helping others to do so has inspired her vocational emphasis on ecospirituality, in loving care for Earth and all her creatures. Laura has traveled to 30 ecospirituality retreat centers across the nation over the past year. She is exuberant about joining the Prairiewoods team, embracing the Franciscan sisters' founding vision and continuing the outstanding mission of offering spirituality for those who seek God in the beauty of the cosmos. Along with her Husky, Wolfie, who helps to keep her close to Earth, Laura is so grateful and delighted to begin this new adventure.

We welcome **Rodney Bluml** on July 1 as the *program and hosted group coordinator*.

Rodney grew up in Dubuque as the oldest of three children. For the past 17 years, he has lived in the Marion area, where he served as Pastoral Associate at St. Joseph Catholic Church. He is a graduate of Loras College in Dubuque. Rodney is a life-long learner with a Master of Arts in Sacramental Theology and Liturgical Studies and a Master of Divinity from St. Thomas University. More recently, Rodney completed his certification in Spiritual Direction and Retreat Ministry through the Franciscan Spirituality Center in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. Rodney loves to bicycle, cook and taste naturally exotic foods and beverages, have adventures with inquisitive people, listen to live music, garden, travel, play games and sports, and walk the spiritual journey with seekers. Rodney and his wife, Bonnie, have two teenage children, Mitchell and Kealey.



Nick Janda began serving as the *cook and food service manager* at Prairiewoods on June 10. He has worked in the food service industry for 15 years and has lived in the Cedar Rapids area for about 12 of those years. Most recently, Nick worked in the kitchens at the Cedar

Rapids Country Club and the Hotel at Kirkwood Center. He and his wife, Shayna, will celebrate their first anniversary in August and will welcome their first child next February. Nick enjoys camping, traveling, reading, entertaining guests and cooking. He focuses on hospitality and an open-door policy in which all are invited to contribute their thoughts. He says, "Come into my kitchen, and I'll take care of you." Please join us in welcoming Nick to the Prairiewoods family!

Thank you **Jill Jones**, for sharing your gifts of conceiving creative dishes, baking bread and serving delicious meals at Prairiewoods for the past four years. We all wish you much peace and all goodness in your retirement!

With gratitude in our hearts we also give thanks to **Ann Jackson, PBVM**, for ten years of love and faithful service coordinating retreats, planning *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conferences and offering spiritual direction. We congratulate you, Sister Ann, on being elected Leadership Councilor of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary sisters. May your ministry be blessed abundantly! We remain grateful to you for your continuing service and presence at Prairiewoods.



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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Laurie Harris

*"Humanity is being taken to the place where it will have to choose between suicide and adoration."
—Pierre de Chardin*

As human beings, we benefit when we remain mentally and physically connected to nature. A recent guest relayed, "I come to Prairiewoods to play and connect with the Divine." This resonated with me. When I was a girl, summer was a time of exploration and playing outside until the fireflies came out and the screen porch light alerted me to return home.

As one scientist puts it, we can now assume that just as children need good nutrition and adequate sleep, they need contact with nature. Nature and mindfulness are gateways to God. When my daughter was two, we lived in the foothills of Denver. Her favorite color was pink—everything was pink. One day I looked out the window to catch the most glorious fuchsia sunset. I scooped her up in my arms and covered her eyes, while announcing, "I have a surprise for you."

We scurried outside. I instructed her, "Open your eyes."

She exclaimed, "Oh, Mommy, did you paint that for me?"

Moved at her confidence in me, I confessed, "No, God painted that sunset."

"Oh, thank you, God!" she shouted.

Gratitude abounds at Prairiewoods these days. Thomas Merton says, "Living is the constant adjustment of thought to life and life to thought in such a way that we are always growing, always experiencing new things in the old and old things in the new. Thus life is always new." In this season of summer wonder, Prairiewoods eagerly anticipates new staff members, fresh garden vegetables, soon to be birthed red fox kits ...

Summer is an invitation to leisure and sabbath, a reminder to be intentional and mindful of the fullness of all of creation. Father Ron Rolheiser reminds us to "honor the wisdom of sabbath, know that when you aren't doing something that is 'productive,' you are giving your soul the time and space it needs to quietly take in the nutrients it requires to remain 'productive.'"

We invite you to some summer sabbath and adoration of the greatness and the beauty of God in all of creation. Come out and play at Prairiewoods. Join us on the patio for simple, summer supper and conversation about how we can narrate positive change in our communities. Come cultivate the gardens. Explore the woods with your kids. We have over 14 hours of daylight and gorgeous starry nights in the summer. God will leave the lights on. Peace,

Laurie Harris, Director



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.

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

Prairiewoods publishes this newsletter bimonthly. Content focuses on happenings and opinions that support Prairiewoods' mission and vision.

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More than 200 people joined us Saturday, June 8, for the eighth annual Prairiewoods Garden Party. The event featured live music by The Summit Band, wine tasting by Daly Creek and Cedar Ridge Wineries, an iPad raffle and live and silent auctions. We also introduced two new games, Dough for Dough and Heads or Tails. The Garden Party took in more than \$32,000 to help Prairiewoods further its mission in the community, which is nearly 20% more than last year! Thank you to all who contributed items, money, time or blessings to make this such a great event.



*The Prairiewoods
Garden Party*



Art and the Spiritual Life

by Fred Darbonne, *Prairiewoods friend*

Beauty catches the eye, moves the heart and speaks to something deep inside that we cannot clearly grasp. At best, we might note something about it that strikes or draws us, but we can never completely explain why we are moved so deeply or drawn so compellingly to what we see or hear.

I admit my love of many forms of beauty. Whether it is a graceful piece of hand blown glass, the colors and patterns of a painting, the lines of certain architecture or the astounding vocals of Handel's *Messiah*, the human capacity to create beauty captivates me. I can get lost for hours in art museums, especially those near the Plaza in my hometown, an area that is itself an architectural gem.

All beauty ultimately expresses some aspect of God, the primal source of all beauty and of every good gift. The human creation of beauty is a process of "meaning-making," as the artist interprets reality or experience through her chosen medium, whether that is oil, acrylic or watercolor, glass or stone, or words arranged on paper in a way that moves another profoundly. Meaning-making is the essence of the spiritual life. God is continually expressing beauty and order, whether through an inspiring landscape, the breathtaking beauty of a human being or the intricate patterns and symmetry of a graceful plant.

In my twenties I noticed a seminary class entitled "Art and Spirituality," and at the time I wondered how these two realms could possibly be related. I had gotten the message from my earlier tradition that since this world was doomed to perish, we should focus mostly on the "hereafter;" that the beauty of this life and even human beauty was only a passing "vanity." Still, I could not reconcile this with God's statement in Genesis that creation was good, and I noticed how desirable both human beauty and beautiful things were to even the most ardent of dualists. If the beauty of this life was vanity, why did they pursue it so diligently?

I found the certainties of that period woefully inadequate in the face of life experience, and I wrestled with God in my own process of meaning making. Ideas earlier accepted uncritically failed under scrutiny. Brash certainties melted into more subtle nuances as I learned that God was much bigger than I had ever dreamed, more loving than I had dared to imagine and more ready to do good than I ever could have hoped. I encountered the words of Abbe Henri de Tourville (1842–1903), which spoke poignantly to what was happening within me:

"Be bold enough always to believe that God is on your side and wholly yours, whatever you may think of yourself ... Accustom yourself to the wonderful thought that God loves you with a tenderness, a generosity and an intimacy which surpasses all your dreams."

The development of the spiritual life seems to closely parallel one's expanding appreciation of beauty. The stillness and the deep listening of contemplation cultivate the ability

to see the patterns and connectedness of our lives, to see the coherence of God's continual work, to perceive God's providential care and God's abiding presence in the times we had thought we were alone. This cultivation creates a new way of seeing—much the way art presents a different perspective of reality, inviting the viewer or hearer to see or hear in new ways. This new way begins to transform us, slowly at first, until one day we realize that we have become different persons.

All beauty reveals some aspect of God, the giver, who is always beyond our finite intellectual grasp, but who breaks into our everyday existence through our inner perceptions—perceptions we can miss if we are not using the ears and eyes of our heart. Beauty bypasses our rational or conscious mind and speaks to us in our depths, moving us in ways we could not anticipate, catching us off guard and leaving us with a feeling of catching our breath. While I appreciate how the curator's comments expand my understanding, often explaining what moved the artist to use that particular form or the life experience they worked from, they can never explain why a particular piece captivates my attention, draws me from across the room and leads me into reflection and meaning-making that I never could have expected that day.

God moves within us in similar ways through insights that float to the surface of our thoughts apart from our rational minds. In our depths, God plants a mix of interests, aptitudes and cherished longings that is unique to us and consistent with how we can express certain slices of God's beauty in our own time and place. We really can't explain why we have these interests, abilities and enduring desires, but we know that they move us from somewhere deep within, and they consistently lead us into certain pursuits. Artists, musicians, writers and craftspeople use their particular medium to express a piece of God's beauty, but so do all human beings who draw on their unique gifts to create a life that is unique to them.

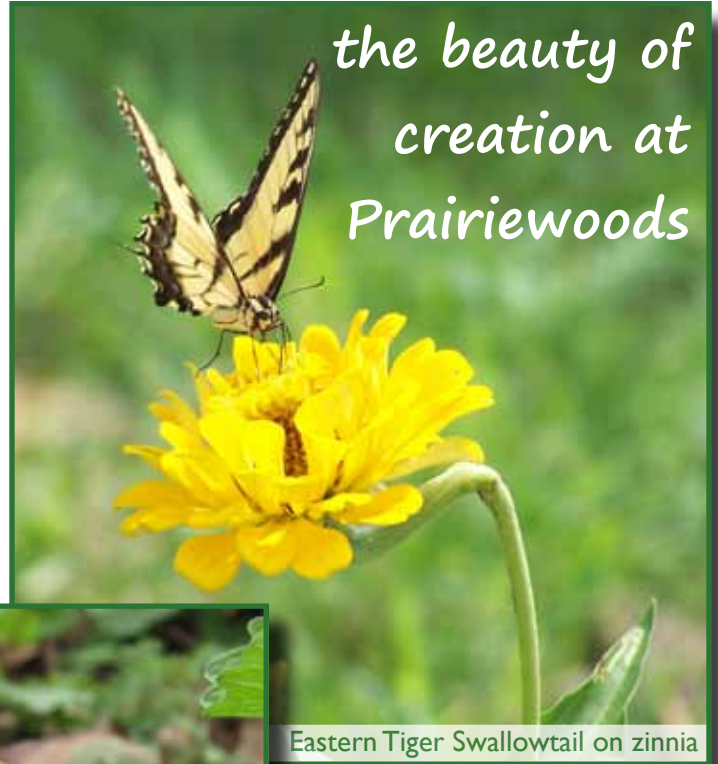
The gift of perception is perhaps one of the greatest of gifts, enabling us to apprehend the others, to appreciate fully what we uniquely have. We can cultivate this gift, which we all have in some measure, and ultimately it can lead us to discover who we really are. *Whether art feeds the spiritual life, or the spiritual life nourishes art*, the two realms are two parts of a living whole locked in an enduring embrace.



the prairie at Prairiewoods
by M[e]braldy Photography



garter snake



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail on zinnia



bumblebees on allium



Dutchman's Breeches



creek behind Prairiewoods

Alliant and Rockwell Continue to Support Prairiewoods

We would like to say a huge *thank you* to Rockwell Collins and Alliant Energy for their continued support of Prairiewoods! The Alliant Energy Foundation recently awarded us a \$1,500 grant for Phase II of *Engaging Community, Creating Change*. This grant will help hundreds of people in our community work together to co-create the world we dream of having.



Rockwell Collins' Green Communities grant program awarded us \$2,500 for a new project called "Improving Our Community Watersheds, One Project at a Time." This grant will help Prairiewoods in its ongoing improvement of stormwater systems and water quality on our property. (If you want to help support this project, contact Ecospirituality Coordinator Emy Sautter.)



RETREATS

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For a complete list and *online registration*, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Silent Directed Retreat

Sunday, July 21, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, July 27, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Betty Daugherty, FSPA; Lucille Winnike, FSPA; Marj English, OSF; & Ann Jackson, PBVM

This week-long retreat provides extended time for prayer, solitude, quiet and peace. You will find quiet time and space to experience more deeply the God within you, within your relationships and in all of creation. The time is yours to spend in silence in any way that helps foster your sense of spirituality. Each day, you will meet one-on-one with a spiritual director, who will help you reflect on your spiritual journey.

Fee: \$400 includes spiritual direction, lodging and all meals (*Commuters will not be accepted for this retreat.*)



Nurturing the Sacred Within Retreat

Sunday, July 21, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, July 27, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Corrina Thomas, FSPA

We are as multidimensional as the universe. We have bodies, emotions, thoughts and ideas. We ask ourselves, *Who are we? What are we?* One way of answering these spiritual questions is to get in touch with a sacred system that lies within each one of us known as the *Chakra system*. In this retreat, you will learn to honor and pay attention to the concepts and theories of this God-given gift. You will learn to merge your sense of self on various levels and live based on what is authentic and unique to you.

Corrina Thomas, FSPA, is a spiritual director and retreat facilitator. Born and raised in India, Sister Corrina brings a wealth of interreligious/cultural experience and a harmonious blend between eastern and western spiritual practices.

Fee: \$400 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$375 includes presentations, Sunday dinner and daily lunch



Yoga Retreat

Sunday, July 28, 6:30 p.m.–Friday, Aug. 2, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Mary Morrow, E-RYT, PRYT, MBA

As a participant in this week-long retreat, you will learn active yoga postures, breathing techniques and relaxation methods to bring harmony between your body and your heart. You will learn and practice optimal physical alignment to strengthen and stretch muscles; breathing techniques to

invigorate, cleanse and soothe the body; and guided meditations to further align with the flow of health and wholeness. All are welcome, however those with some yoga experience will find the posture practices more accessible.

Mary Morrow, E-RYT, PRYT, MBA, founder of Laughing Cobra Yoga, teaches with humor and compassion to help each student discover the benefits of yoga. Certification in Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy and more than 3,000 hours of teaching qualify her retreats for Yoga Alliance Continuing Education Units. To learn more about Mary visit www.LaughingCobraYoga.com.

Fee: \$425 includes yoga instruction, lodging and all meals (*Commuters will not be accepted for this retreat.*)

This retreat is almost full, so register today!



Growing into Wholeness by Dreaming Retreat

Friday, Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 4, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Olga Wittekind, OSF

Dream work offers opportunities to begin a conversation with your soul—to begin an inward journey toward the truest part of the self. In this retreat, you will engage universal images (the hero/heroine, Wise Old Man/Woman, Divine Child, Shadow, Trickster ...) that show up in dreams. These *archetypal* dreams, also referred to as “mythic” or “grand” dreams, usually occur at significant times in life. By studying these images and stories that speak so meaningfully in dreams, you can grow in wholeness, connecting more deeply with others, with God and with all of creation.

Olga Wittekind, OSF, is a clinical psychologist and Jungian analyst. She studied at the Jung Institute in Zurich and Chicago. Sister Olga is the director of the Oldenburg Franciscan Center in Oldenburg, Indiana.

Fee: \$225 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Drum Wisdom, Drum Making Retreat

Friday, Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 4, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Wayne Manthey

This amazing, spiritual opportunity invites retreatants to create the sacred gift of a hand drum and drum stick. You can choose the size and frame of your drum and discover how to customize your drum by learning about different variables that impact the sound. Deepen your understanding of the sacred role of drums as creative conduits for healing, insight and spiritual connection.

Drum maker and story teller Wayne Manthey lives out of the simple assumption that all living things vibrate at unique frequencies and that the connection between drums and people



is a natural one. “People are drawn to drums for different reasons,” says Wayne, “and whether that attraction is guided by spirit, emotion, intellect or natural instinct, the effect is always the work of some deeper wisdom.”
Fee: \$290 (13-inch drum) or \$315 (16-inch drum) includes presentations, materials, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$240 (13-inch drum) or \$265 (16-inch drum) includes presentations, materials, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

This retreat will be limited to 12 people, so please register early.

Living the Power of Our “Teaching Stories” Retreat Friday, Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m.–Saturday, Sept. 14, 5 p.m.

Facilitator: Cindy Chicoine

“Teaching stories” carry layers of deep meaning and help us remember who we are in the largest sense. Cultural anthropologist Angeles Arrien once said that the indigenous people believe that if we have 100 teaching stories, we are a healer. This retreat provides a nourishing environment for you to recognize, claim, harvest and live your own teaching stories. You will approach this exploration through quiet, rest, journaling, movement, music, art, gentle sharing and listening.

Cindy Chicoine—a psychotherapist, spiritual director and body worker—believes in the power of teaching stories and their healing potential. In her book, *Turning Around the Heart: Stories of Possibility, Connection and Transformation*, she offers inspirational teaching stories and invites the reader into their own stories.

Fee: \$150 includes presentations, lodging and Saturday meals

Commuter Fee: \$100 includes presentations and lunch



Following the retreat, stay for a book reading and signing by Cindy from 6:30–7 p.m. Then join Morgan Rivers for *Dances of Universal Peace*—simple meditative joyous, multi-cultural circle dances that use sacred phrases, chants, music and movement from the many spiritual traditions.

Dances of Universal Peace Fee: \$15



Please join us in welcoming *Gina Sterk* as our third **summer intern**. Gina recently graduated from Coe College with a degree in psychology. The highlights of her time at Coe include a semester abroad in Southeast Asia, serving as a peer minister to create programming for the Christian community on campus and performing songs she wrote on her guitar. Gina was raised in Duluth, Minnesota,

and enjoys camping, hiking and biking. Her parents instilled in her an understanding of spirituality and of God that is rooted in, and inseparable from, an appreciation for the natural world. Her passion for appreciating and experiencing nature and for experiencing her spirituality through the natural world led her to Prairiewoods. At the end of her time here, Gina will depart for Mongolia to spend a year teaching English as a Fulbright scholar, and then she plans to work on a Master of Divinity degree at Luther Seminary.

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

Saturdays, Sept. 14 & May 3, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
 and Saturdays, Oct. 12, Nov. 2, Dec. 7,
 Jan. 18, Feb. 22, March 22 & April 12,
 9 a.m.–noon

Facilitators: Betty Daugherty, FSPA; Lucille Winnike, FSPA; Marj English, OSF; Ann Jackson, PBVM; & Laura Weber

“Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life offers a way to reflect and sift through life’s experiences and to discover in them the leading thread of God’s longing and desire to make us a holy people who are given in service to others.”

—Smith and Merz, *Moment to Moment*

Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.) is a nine-month retreat based on the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius recognized that not only the intellect but also the emotions and feelings help us come to a knowledge of the movement of the Spirit in our lives. There is no one method of Ignatian prayer; Ignatius drew on a number of sources, and the Exercises contain different kinds of prayer. A readiness to pray with Scripture is important. Group discussion, individual reflection and individual spiritual direction also are part of the Ignatian Exercises, which are oriented to mission and rooted in contemplation. The Exercises develop dispositions of the heart, which then become part of daily life.

Do you long for GOD? Do you desire time to reflect on your own spiritual path and the movement of the Spirit within your life? Would 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”? Retreatants in S.E.E.L. become better able to discern their inner desires, see how God is working in their lives and in the world, learn how to bring together contemplation and action, and become increasingly aware of the presence of God.

We invite you to consider participating in this retreat over a nine-month period—September 2013 to May 2014.

Fee: \$450 (payable to Prairiewoods in September 2013 or \$50 monthly), plus cost of monthly spiritual direction

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony
Wednesdays, July 10 or Aug. 14, 8 p.m.
Facilitator: Mike Maynard

Join a historic and sacred ceremony focused on prayer, purification, healing and recognition. The lodge is a small, dome-shaped structure in which you sit on the earth around heated stones. Please note that the lodge is a small enclosure that is dark and extremely hot. *If you have claustrophobia or any medical conditions that prevent you from using a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony.* Registration is required.
Fee: Free-will offering

Herbal Salves and Bug Repellents
Thursday, July 11, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Sandy Rosenberger

This is the time of year when you get scrapes, bug bites, sunburns and sore muscles. Why not learn how to go to Mother Nature's medicine chest instead of using a chemical-laden alternative? In this class, you'll learn about some simple solutions to common problems. You also will make healing salves and all-natural bug repellents. Registration is required by July 8.
Fee: \$15



Community: A Sense of Belonging Summer Series
Fridays, July 12, July 26, Aug. 9 & Aug. 23, 5:30–7:30 p.m.
Facilitators: Ann Jackson, PBVM, & Laurie Harris

Prairiewoods invites you to join us on the patio for conversations about co-creating community. Come with your experience, uniqueness, passions and sense of summer leisure. Wind down your week by discussing the book *Community: A Structure of Belonging* by Peter Block. Who knows what will emerge from the collective wisdom? Expect to nourish relationships over a simple supper and learn, support and encourage one another on narrating the changes you want to see in your communities.
Fee: \$50 for four-week series includes dinner

Backyard Field Day
Saturday, July 13, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Facilitators: Trees Forever & Iowa Department of Natural Resources
 Small woodland owners are encouraged to join Trees Forever and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources at Prairiewoods for a backyard field day. This is a great opportunity for anyone with 2–12 acres of woodlands. Topics will include tree and shrub identification, non-native invasive species identification and management, forest stand improvement, prairie maintenance and tree/forest health. Please register by July 10 at www.TreesForever.org.
Fee: Free, includes light refreshments

Day of Self Renewal
Mondays, July 15 or Aug. 19, 8:30 a.m.–4:15 p.m.
Facilitator: Rodney Bluml
 Come for a day of rest and relaxation! Experience the peaceful and natural grounds of Prairiewoods, a deeply holistic service and group meditation. The day will begin and end with a brief group gathering; the rest of the day is yours for quiet reflection. (Optional activities will be offered.) You will be assigned a guest room and may schedule an individual 50-minute session of massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, paraffin bath treatment with hand massage, foot soak with exfoliation scrub and foot massage, or head and shoulder massage. Please register at least seven days in advance.
Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and choice of holistic service

Blessings for Leaders: Wisdom from the Beatitudes
Thursday, July 18, 6–8 p.m.
Facilitator: Dr. Dan Ebener
 Learn thoughtful and encouraging examples of how the teachings of Jesus can be applied in any workplace, as well as practical ways to lead faithfully and effectively. Reflect on the inward journey of leadership through the virtues associated with the Beatitudes, specifically that it takes wisdom, empathy, humility, justice, mercy, service, peace and courage to lead as a Christian. Then consider how these virtues might be extended outward in the challenges of leadership.
 Dr. Dan Ebener is Associate Professor of Managerial Studies at St. Ambrose and author of *Blessings for*

Leaders. He will inspire the leader in you by examining servant leadership through straightforward, practical applications and illuminating stories.
Fee: \$30 includes presentations and signed book



Circle Cinema
Fridays, July 19 or Aug. 16, 12–1 p.m.
Facilitator: Emy Sautter
 Bring a lunch and enjoy a film and conversation over the noon hour. (Or if you would like a hot Prairiewoods lunch for \$8, call at least two days in advance to see if we are serving.)

On July 19, watch *The Story of Change*, which urges you to put down credit cards and exercise your citizen muscles to build a more sustainable, just and fulfilling world. On Aug. 16, watch *The Heart of Religion*, in which an Ecuadorian priest describes a place deep in the heart where all religions meet and where you can find the strength needed to put “we” above “you” and “I.”
Fee: Free (\$8 if you request lunch)

Conscious Breathing for Health, Harmony and Spiritual Growth
Mondays, July 22, July 29 & Aug. 5, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Robyn Krell

Retreat from your busy life into the peacefulness of conscious breath meditation. The breath contains the spiritual life-force that makes possible inner peace, healing and connection to the Divine. Through the use of gentle breathing techniques, you will learn to restore your breath to opened, balanced and healthy.
 Robyn Krell is the Eastern Iowa Coordinator for Experience Works, a national nonprofit training and employment program.
Fee: \$40 for three-week series (or \$45 if registered after July 15)



Integrative Nutrition and Life Balance Strategies

Wednesday, July 24, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Anji Kozikowski, E-RYT

Are you interested in learning how to eat healthy, nourish your emotional health and discover ways to balance your life? Join this informative and interactive seminar based on ayurveda, an ancient tradition spanning thousands of years. Ayurveda is a philosophy for living that includes healthy nutrition and life balance strategies.

Anji Kozikowski, E-RYT, has a master's degree in Health Promotion and Wellness and is a certified ACE Personal Trainer, Certified Integrative Nutrition Coach, Reconnective Healing Practitioner and Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher (E-RYT) through Yoga Alliance.

Fee: \$25

Nourishing Cosmetic Clays

Tuesday, Aug. 6, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Sandy Rosenberger

Clay has been used around the world for centuries as an important medicinal and cosmetic tool. Clays absorb oil, dirt and toxins from the skin while simultaneously exfoliating and improving skin circulation. These benefits make clay a great ingredient for body scrubs, facial masks, baths, mineral make-up, tooth powders, and foot and body powders. Join this class to make mineral make-up, a take-home facial mask and foot powder. Registration is required by Aug. 1.

Fee: \$20

Youth Nature Fun Day

Thursday, Aug. 8, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Explore Prairiewoods' 70 acres of woodland and prairie! Hike, get creative with nature-inspired activities and learn about how deeply connected humans are to Earth and the Universe. This will be limited to 15 children ages 8–12. Please register by Aug. 2.

Fee: \$5



Outdoor Hiking with a Franciscan Twist

Saturday, Aug. 17, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Do you connect with your spirituality through activity or nature? Participate in a new outdoor program for those who want to hike and pray in communion with others. Breathe in the fresh air outdoors and quietly pray, alone and with others, while connecting to the teachings of St. Francis of Assisi, a revered protector of all of creation. This is ideal for individuals of all ages who can participate in low-level physical activity.

Fee: \$35 includes lunch



The Mandala: A Pathway to One's Center

Wednesdays, Aug. 21, Sept. 18, Oct. 16 & Nov. 20, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Joellen Price, PBVM

Mandala is the Sanskrit word for "circle." Today, the word *mandala* is used for sacred artworks created in the form of a circle. As a participant in this four-week series, you will create your own mandalas to tap into the holiness of deep listening within you and in the world around you. No previous experience is required.

Fee: \$50 for four-week series includes art materials

The following classes are offered by the Institute of Spiritual Healing & Aromatherapy (ISHA). For more information or to register, contact ISHA at 303-467-7829 or www.IshaHealing.com. Reserve lodging and meals through Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

Advanced Healing Practitioner Development A, HTSM Course 202
Thursday, Aug. 22, 12 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 25, 12 p.m.

Facilitator: Jan Halbach, OSF, RN, BSN, NCTMB, CHTP/I

This 34-hour course is for those who have completed the Healing Practitioner Program in Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry and who desire to become an Advanced Healing Practitioner in a healing ministry setting. As a participant, you will have an opportunity to develop a vision and mission for a Christian ministry practice of prayer, hands-on healing and anointing. Emphasis is on case management, mentor/apprentice relationship, and advanced skill development. Having a Basic Healing Practitioner Certificate is a pre-requisite for taking this course.

Fee: \$580 for early registration, \$605 within three weeks of class, plus lodging and meals

Advanced Healing Practitioner Development B, HTSM Course 203
Thursday, Aug. 22, 4 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 25, 12 p.m.

Facilitator: Margaret Leslie, MS, CHTP/I, LMT, HTSM-CP/I, CCA

This 30-hour course is for students who have completed Advanced Healing Practitioner Development A and a 6–12 month mentorship in Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry. It focuses on course completion and group healing work. As a participant, you will have the opportunity to present your ministry practice, vision and mission for an advanced healing practice focused on spiritual healing.

Fee: \$540 for early registration, \$565 within three weeks of class, plus lodging and meals

Save the Date for these ISHA Courses:

Essential Oils for Physical Health and Well-Being, CCA Course 302, Sept. 6–8

Essential Oils for Cancer Care, HTSM Course 502, Oct. 18

Sent to Heal & Anoint, CCA Course 301, Oct. 18–20

Introduction to Healing Ministry, HTSM 101, Oct. 19

Introduction to Judeo-Christian Anointing, HTSM 102, Oct. 20

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton
Every other Thursday (including July 18), 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

This group focuses on the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* booklets that include writings by Thomas Merton and other authors. As a participant, you will read, reflect and discuss these texts and various topics related to contemplative living to help you respond to experiences with greater awareness of your connections with God and others. You may join at any time.
Fee: \$5 per session

Green Living Group
3rd Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitator: Emy Sautter

If you are committed to reducing your impact on the environment, join the Green Living Group, a support group for happy and healthy green living. New participants are always welcome, but registration is appreciated.

On July 17, join Iowa Senator Rob Hogg for a reading from his new book, *America's Climate Century*, in which he calls on Americans to make the fight against climate change the new national purpose. He argues that climate change is the defining historical issue of the 21st Century. After the heat and drought of 2012, Hurricane Sandy and other recent climate disasters, it is time for America to take action. Books are available for purchase in the Prairiewoods' Gift Shop or can be purchased at the event. Registration is requested.

On Aug. 21, join us for *Energy Wise* and learn what every homeowner or renter should know to both save money and lessen their carbon footprint. The class will cover air sealing, insulation, lighting, heating/cooling, appliances and more.
Fee: \$5

Evening Centering Prayer
2nd & 4th Tuesdays monthly, 5:30–7 p.m.
Facilitator: Judith Edwards

Come for a time of silence and centering prayer in which you can relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you. This is a prayer/support group for people who enjoy centering prayer—a form of meditation focused on praying in silence. The group meets in room 113 of the Prairiewoods Guest House, and new participants may join at any time.
Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers
2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Spend a few hours a month knitting and crocheting for people who need your hats, mittens, blankets and baby items. Join the Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers—a group of crafters of various skill levels who create handmade goods for charity twice a month. New participants always are welcome, and donations of materials are gratefully accepted!
Fee: Free

Wednesday Women
One Wednesday each month, 10–11:30 a.m. (begins at 11:30 a.m. on July 10)
Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women that meets monthly during the summer (and every Wednesday during the school year) to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged—you are welcome to come any time! Wednesday Women will resume its weekly meetings on Sept. 4.

On July 10, the group will meet at 11:30 a.m. for a summer pitch-in salad luncheon (instead of their usual meeting at 10 a.m.). At noon, the group will eat together on the Prairiewoods patio, weather permitting. Please bring a bottle of wine, an appetizer, a salad or a dessert.

On August 14, the group will watch and discuss *Rumi: Poet of the Heart*, a documentary that brings to life the poet Jelaluddin Rumi, who has been gone from this Earth for more than 800 years. Known for his deeply spiritual love poems, Rumi was a Sufi mystic with many devoted followers, when an unlikely and mysterious muse named Shams came into his life. When Shams disappeared, the grieving Rumi gave life to beautiful poetry that still lives on today.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session (but please come even if you cannot afford to pay!)

Confused by Medicare? Take steps to a healthier life with your Medicare benefits. Nurse practitioners from the University of Iowa College of Nursing will begin seeing patients in July in the Prairiewoods Guest House. For an appointment, please call 319-248-1267.

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For a complete, up-to-date list between Newsletters, go to www.Prairiewoods.org/Contact/Donate.

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In honor of Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, & Ann Jackson, PBVM
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Save the Date for Nature Fest

Nature Fest—our annual celebration of families, fall and fauna—will take place *Sunday, October 6*, at Prairiewoods. Mark your calendars now so that you don't miss this fun (and free!) outdoor party. You are invited to bring all the members of your family (including the furry, scaly or feathered ones) for a Blessing of the Animals, family-friendly games and nature-inspired activities.

Nature Fest at Prairiewoods
Free!
Outdoor Family Fun for People and Pets!



It has been three months since Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, lost her beloved dog Hildegard. Hilde is buried on the Prairiewoods property behind the Residence, and you are welcome to visit her grave. Sister Nancy would like to express her gratitude for all the cards, kind words and memorials during this time of loss. Your love is so appreciated!





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



Engaging Community, Narrating Change—Phase II

To Talk with Peter Block: Peter Block has graciously offered to meet via conference call with individual circles! If you are interested, please contact Ann Jackson, PBVM, at ajackson@prairiewoods.org.

To Initiate a Circle:

1. Invite 4–5 people.
2. Select a place and date to meet. Schedule an hour and a half to two hours for each conversation.
3. Bring a plant and a piece of art.
4. Arrange chairs in circles of six initially, and then break into circles of three as discussions develop.

To Glean the Context of the Conversations:

Prior to the first gathering, invite participants to read the following sections from *Community: The Structure of Belonging* by Peter Block:

- Welcome, Introduction & Book at a Glance
- Chapter 13, "Bringing Hospitality into the World"
- Chapter 14, "Designing Physical

Space that Supports Community"
Chapter 15, "The End of Unnecessary Suffering"

To Set the Context for Future Conversations:

Ask participants to read the following chapters prior to the specified meeting:

- Invitation Conversation* in May: Chapters 1–2
- Possibility Conversation* in June: Chapters 3–4
- Ownership Conversation* in July: Chapters 5–6
- Dissent Conversation* in August: Chapters 7–8
- Commitment Conversation* in September: Chapters 9–10
- Gifts Conversation* in October: Chapters 11–12

The overall topic of your conversations might be:

What is possible for this community (organization, school, church, etc.)?

How do we want to live into the future?

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org and click on "Community."

Spirituality
IN THE 21ST CENTURY
**Engaging Community,
Narrating Change**

Prairiewoods

THE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF PRAIRIEWOODS, AN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Find Outdoor Family Fun at Nature Fest on Oct. 6

St. Francis of Assisi was born in Italy more than 800 years ago, and his love of all creatures, joyful approach to life and unique way of following Jesus without limit or self-importance remain a wonderful example for us today. We invite you to Prairiewoods' annual Nature Fest to walk in spirit with St. Francis on the path of peace, openness, mysticism, poverty, reverence for nature and love of animals. Join us as we honor St. Francis's life and memory at Nature Fest on **Sunday, Oct. 6, from 1–4 p.m.**

Celebrate with an afternoon of live music, games, children's activities, locally made frozen custard, face painting, family photo opportunities with your pets, cosmic walks and lots more. And for the first time, Nature Fest also will include photo opportunities with live donkeys and a Castle Bounce House for children!

This pet- and family-friendly event celebrates our human connection with Earth and the Universe. Experience Prairiewoods in its natural fall splendor and know that we are all one with the Divine Creator. You may choose to wander our prairie and woodland trails or spend some quiet time on the labyrinth. And we hope you will participate in what truly makes this celebration of St. Francis unique: the **Blessing of the Animals!** (All animals—whether furry, winged, scaled or finned—are welcome.) As part of the procession of animals led by

ministers from the local Christian community, St. Francis will invite you to introduce your pet and share what you love about him or her. Top off the blessing by taking a “family

resemblance” photo of you and your pet.

We will honor a tradition that was part of Prairiewoods' very first Franciscan Fest in 1997: a **Gift Blanket Sharing** ceremony. This ceremony comes from the wisdom tradition of some Native American cultures. A blanket containing a few gifts will be spread on the ground. You are welcome to take something from the blanket or leave a gift you make or bring for others to take. These gifts may range from a poem to a small token from nature, from a song to an item you no longer need. This ceremony serves several purposes: it allows participants to become conscious about breaking habits of accumulation, teaches lessons of abundance in the world and shows that all are part of ONE family in which each has something to offer.

In addition to a leash or carrying case for your critter, you might want to bring a blanket or chair for comfortable outdoor seating. For more information, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or visit www.Prairiewoods.org. We hope you will join us for this **free**, festive celebration of life!



Nature Fest Schedule

- 1:00 Welcome & Opening Introduction
- 1:10 Live Music by Deep Dish Divas
- 2:00 Storytelling by St. Francis
- 2:10 Procession, Introduction & **Blessing of the Animals** with Music by Bob Ballantyne
- 3:00 More Live Music by the Deep Dish Divas, Games, Face Painting and Fun
- 3:50 Closing



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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



We are leaning into fall with active hope at Prairiewoods. There is great anticipation of Nature Fest on Oct. 6, which celebrates St. Francis (our patron and the patron of ecology). Francis found his true meaning and identity in God, and in all of creation he saw God's goodness and love. The spirit of Francis is alive today.

"Active Hope is not wishful thinking.
Active Hope is not waiting to be rescued
by the Lone Ranger or by some savior.
Active Hope is waking up to the beauty of life

on whose behalf we can act.

We belong to this world.

The web of life is calling us forth at this time.

We've come a long way and are here to play our part.

With Active Hope we realize that there are adventures in store,
strengths to discover, and comrades to link arms with.

Active Hope is a readiness to engage.

Active Hope is a readiness to discover strengths
in ourselves and in others;

a readiness to discover the reasons for hope
and the occasions for love.

A readiness to discover the size and strength of our hearts,

our quickness of mind, our steadiness of purpose,

our own authority, our love for life,

the liveliness of our curiosity,

the unsuspected deep well of patience and diligence,

the keenness of our senses, and our capacity to lead.

None of these can be discovered in an armchair or without risk."

—eco-philosopher Joanna Macy, who recently co-authored with Chris Johnstone
Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in without Going Crazy

We invite you to visit us at Prairiewoods and wake up to the beauty of life all around—in God, the Source of All Being and Creator of all, within your own pure being, in the giftedness of others and in nature. May we let go and rest in the mystery of new beginnings, making room for the unexpected, living with purpose and active hope.

Peace,

Laurie Harris, Director



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.

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

Prairiewoods publishes this newsletter bimonthly. Content focuses on happenings and opinions that support Prairiewoods' mission and vision.

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Mindful

by Mary Oliver

Every day
I see or hear
something
that more or less
kills me
with delight,
that leaves me
like a needle
in the haystack
of light.
It was what I was born for—
to look, to listen,
to lose myself
inside this soft world—
to instruct myself
over and over
in joy,
and acclamation.
Nor am I talking
about the exceptional,
the fearful, the dreadful,
the very extravagant—
but of the ordinary,
the common, the very drab,
the daily presentations.
Oh, good scholar,
I say to myself,
how can you help
but grow wise
with such teachings
as these—
the untrimmable light
of the world,
the ocean's shine,
the prayers that are made
out of grass?

Musings on a Summer of Gardening

by Emy Sautter

I have had a variety of experiences thanks to the Prairiewoods garden this year ... joy, happiness, peace, hard work, anger, contemplation, disappointment, teamwork, laughter and tears. Garden work began in early spring with a new gate and three new raised beds. Next came the planning—what to plant, where and how much. I was anxious and unsure about getting started. I would go out to the garden and just look around. It seemed so big! Where would I start? How would it all work out? Thanks to some lovely Master Gardener volunteers, we eventually created a plan. In just one morning, two volunteers and I had almost the whole thing planted! Ahhh, the relief ...

One lovely day, I was in the garden digging and planting a few more seeds in the beautiful, rich soil. I remember a deep feeling of contentment and peace. The soil was so cool to the touch, its color so rich, I could imagine the complexity of life within it. The soil reminded me of life's cycles of living and dying.

Slowly, little green plants began to pop out of the soil—beans, beets, squash, cucumbers and more. Tomatoes, peppers and eggplants showed signs of life. The lettuce, however, barely grew, and nary a spinach leaf could be found! What could the problem be? One day, I went out to find that many of those tender little baby plants had been eaten—oh no!

I searched for holes in the ground; I searched for holes in the ten-foot fence—nothing! And, yet, everyday more plants were gone. First the peas and beans and then the kale, broccoli and brussels sprouts. Even the squash. It was a mystery! Experts came and went, but everyone was stumped. We put up more fences and I had my first experience with “liquid fence.” (Pee-yew!) Still it came, that darned little varmint, and ate away at my blood, sweat and tears.

Next we tried a live trap, but to no avail. Then one Sunday evening, two sisters walked by the garden and saw two baby groundhogs caught in the trap—one for each sister! But catching and releasing the groundhogs didn't stop the problem. Those plants continued to be eaten, until one day a volunteer saw another groundhog. That little stinker crawled up and through a tiny gap in the fence! Since patching the gap, some of our crops have come back. The tomatoes are flourishing in our hoop house. What a summer!

Looking back, I smile at all that I have learned and experienced in one summer of gardening. Gardening is life-filled. As I harvest the beautiful tomatoes, I remember the tiny plants they once were. I am amazed by the beautiful and abundant fruit. As I pick the fruit, I become more mindful of the moment, more mindful of the plants and my interaction with these beings. I thank the plants for their work and generosity. You, my friends, amaze me! Such nourishment for body and soul!

Thanks to our friends,
our garden now has a name:
Green Prairie Garden.
Thanks to Laurie Erlacher for
the great suggestion and to
all who offered names at our
Garden Party!





For the Beauty of the Earth ... and its Preservation

*“We humans are evolution
come to consciousness.”*

This quote by Iliia Delio, OSF, in a recent article in the magazine *Human Development*, expresses a widely accepted truth to those familiar with the scientific story of evolution. It is a simple statement but profound in its meaning.

Iliia Delio is a Franciscan and, though it may not be apparent, her message is deeply Franciscan. That becomes clear when we accept St. Francis as an example of a very evolved person, of someone conscious of his own intimate connection to the sacred community of Beings around him, of someone totally aware that he is kin to all that is.

In reading the life of Francis, we can't miss his ecstatic joy, the amazement and love of creation that floods his soul and swells into song. His connections to creation are spoken in the language of the sacred.

Iliia relates how Francis, immersed in prayer before an icon of the crucified Christ, is opened “to the reality of God's presence in the human person and in nature.” *To him everything is related because “everything is created through the divine Word.”*

Francis is all about relationship; not a relationship based on hierarchy, power and control, but one of sisterhood and brotherhood, of connection and engagement. His stance is one of humility and gratitude.

The view of the cosmos in the thirteenth century was certainly different than it is today, but Francis, the mystic, knew within himself that he and all of creation emerged out of the same Love. Without knowledge of quantum physics and all the ways in which the new cosmology reveals the connections between spirituality and science, he saw that all things are related. All created things—not just human beings, animals, the birds he preached to or the wolf he tamed, but also the sun, moon, water and wind—were his sisters and brothers.

In his spirituality we find the same understandings that science highlights for us today: the sacredness and interconnectedness of all existence, the interdependence of all life.

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA

We can see the relevance of this spirituality as we look at all the challenges before us today: millions of people living in brutal poverty and without hope while a very small percentage enjoy an opulent style of living; a culture based on run-away consumption with little regard for the resulting degradation of the planet; fear and anxiety winning out over a sense of peace and security.

Were Francis here now, he would be as disturbed as any of us at what Ilia calls the three *major crises* we face today: “an overstressed planet, excess energy consumption and global warming.” We are, she says, “on the brink of catastrophe,” destroying God’s creation that Francis praised so lyrically.

No doubt, Francis would be amazed and puzzled at how alienated we have become from the planet and its ecosystems, not just physically separated from the created world but lacking any sense of a common sacred origin.

We often read that the environmental crisis we are experiencing is really a moral or religious issue. This has been stated over and over in past years by popes, bishops and a whole range of spiritual leaders, people who are convinced it is a religious issue because it is fundamentally a crisis of meaning. If the crisis we are in is a moral and spiritual issue, Ilia suggests, then the remedy must be seen in those same terms.

Ilia points out that Christianity has often been more absorbed in a future life beyond this one with a focus on personal salvation, rather than on cherishing and protecting a creation that is sacred and still evolving. We are just beginning to realize that all is connected; spirituality and religion, economics and ecology, politics and social issues are connected. All are part of a great and intricate web of Being.

It was Francis’ deep understanding of the presence of the divine in nature that gave him such a sense of right relationship with creation. And as a human being with the capacity for self-conscious reflection and the ability to make moral decisions, he chose *a path of reverence and inclusion*.

For us today, we are coming to understand that it will only be through a spiritual relationship with Earth and all its creatures that we will have the strength and courage necessary to live in what Thomas Berry calls “a mutually enhancing” relationship with the natural world.

This way of living an incarnational theology in a world that reveals God’s beauty is traditionally Franciscan. The well-known liberation theologian and former Franciscan Leonardo Boff, in his book *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*,

writes that what we need is a “true revival of the sacred,” a re-enchantment and reverence.

He says that only a sense of the sacred can bring us back from our exile and alienation.

We need a “personal relationship with Earth,” one of love. Boff says that we cannot continue to think of ourselves as separate from Earth since “we are the sons and daughters of Earth, we are the Earth itself become self-aware.”

Murray Bodo, OFM, author of *The Way of St. Francis*, finds Francis’ *sacramental view of reality*—one that sees everything as a sign of the presence of God—as the only way to unify our lives. It demands a realization of our interconnectedness to creation and to Christ as its source and goal.

Bodo says that in 1224, Francis articulates in *The Canticle of the Creatures* how to “integrate the depths of the self by leaving self and entering into what you can see and hear and touch and feel and smell. God dwells in ‘deep down things,’ and you find God when God finds you loving the world.”

In the *Canticle*, Francis, the poet and mystic, tries to express what is happening within the depth of his being, the union of everything with God:

Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures, especially Brother Sun, Who is the day and through whom You give us light.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, In heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, Who is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire through whom You light the night, And he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through our sister, Mother Earth, Who sustains and governs us.

Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks.

Nine-Month Retreat Provides Spiritual Road Map

Sometimes we need a road map ... just something to keep us from losing our way, to assure us that we are traveling in the best possible direction. That's what one retreat experience at Prairiewoods intends to offer. *Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life* (S.E.E.L.) is a road map to our own interiority. It's about experiencing God's grace in our busy lives and responding from the heart.

Although Ignatius of Loyola, the creator of the Spiritual Exercises, lived in the sixteenth century, what he came to believe and hand on to others about the basic human spiritual quest is as true today as it was in his time. What Ignatius desired, we too desire. Just as he yearned to respond to God from the core of his being, we find ourselves drawn to listen and respond from the center of our hearts.

In September, when another group of women and men enter the S.E.E.L. experience, we will begin a journey of nine months, a journey that includes both walking as individuals while relating to the presence of God in our own everyday lives and walking with a group that meets monthly for prayer, presentations, reflective time and sharing. This experience can be described best as a present-day journey in basic Ignatian spirituality, a journey based on an adaptation of the spiritual exercises to contemporary culture.

The uniqueness of this retreat dwells in this: basic insights of Ignatius are not lost, but are presented in a more understandable language and enriched with knowledge that comes through other well-established theologians and spiritual writers. After all, the human race has done some evolving since Ignatius' day. We know so much more about psychology, science and the importance of the natural world in our spirituality. Centuries of scholarly study in Scripture and Christology can make our prayer more meaningful.

The wisdom found in the Exercises is expanded through reflections provided for each day of this nine-month experience. These are reflections from dozens of diverse writers, such as Marcus Borg, Elizabeth Johnson, Donald Senior, Barbara Brown Taylor, Eugene Peterson and Ronald Rolheiser, to name only a few. With them come knowledge and insights not available to people of the sixteenth century. Spirituality, theology and science each tell us something about how miraculous is our existence.

It is the genius of Ignatius in a modern framework with all the elements of the traditional 30-day retreat incorporated. The entire retreat rests on a basic belief: God does, without question, act in our lives. Our hearts are truly moved within us. It all begins with a reflection on what is called the Principle and Foundation:

*God who loves us
creates us
and wants to share life
with us forever.*

The Ignatian vision is of a God in love with each of us. God is not remote, but close, speaking to us in all the experiences of our lives, not just those we might think of as religious. All the things of this world are also created out of God's love and help us to know more about such a wondrous Creator.

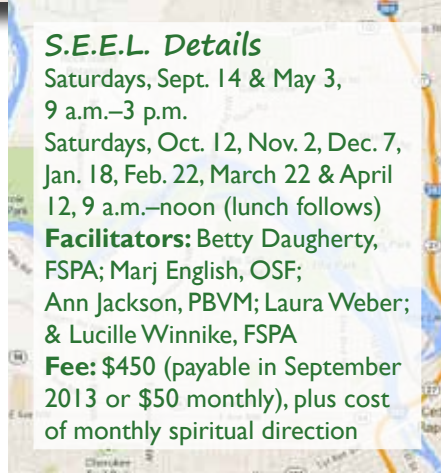
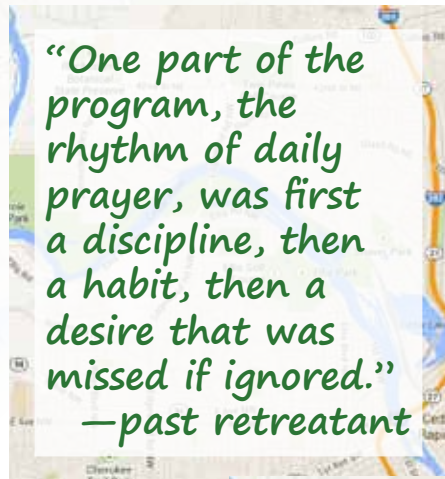
David Fleming, SJ, writes that "all things in this world are here so that we can know God more easily. We have a satellite television with 500 channels. God is broadcasting on all of them." It is up to us to decide how to respond.

Learning how to listen, how to discern—a standard component of Ignatian spirituality—involves tuning into God's channels. We connect to our own mysterious "within," which is always urging us toward greater consciousness. Attention to inner experience is the essence of Ignatian spirituality. We are led to greater interior depths. But it is also an engaged spirituality, one that connects us to the everyday world and to an evolving global future.

One former participant said, "S.E.E.L. has been a true gift in ways I did not expect. This is a new beginning like the season of Spring." Another added, "I began

to realize that when I take one step, God takes four or five more toward me."

As participants in S.E.E.L., we come to Prairiewoods on nine Saturdays to be introduced to all components of the Spiritual Exercises, which are traditionally done in a 30-day retreat grounded in Scripture. Some of these elements, which Ignatius found helpful, are the awareness examen, use of the imagination and integrated imaginative prayer. We are introduced to various prayer forms and, at the monthly Saturday morning retreat days, are given precious time for reflection on the life of Christ and our own interior journey. It is all about encountering the Holy.



The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For a complete list and *online registration*, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Living the Power of Our “Teaching Stories” Retreat Friday, Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m.–Saturday, Sept. 14, 5 p.m.

Facilitator: Cindy Chicoine

“Teaching stories” carry layers of deep meaning and help us remember who we are in the largest sense. Cultural anthropologist Angeles Arrien said that the indigenous people believe that if we have 100 teaching stories, we are a healer. This retreat provides a nourishing environment for you to recognize, claim, harvest and live your own teaching stories. You will approach this exploration through quiet, rest, journaling, movement, music, art, gentle sharing and listening.

Cindy Chicoine—a psychotherapist, spiritual director and body worker—believes in the power of teaching stories and their healing potential. In her book, *Turning Around the Heart: Stories of Possibility, Connection and Transformation*, Cindy offers inspirational teaching stories and invites the reader into their own stories.

Fee: \$150 includes presentations, lodging and Saturday meals

Commuter Fee: \$100 includes presentations and lunch



Following the retreat, stay for a free book reading and signing by Cindy from 6:30–7 p.m. Then join Morgan Rivers for *Dances of Universal Peace*—simple, meditative, joyous, multi-cultural circle dances from various spiritual traditions.
Dances of Universal Peace Fee: \$15

Walking the Artist’s Way Retreat

Friday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 13, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Marlou Ricke, FSPA, & Betty Daugherty, FSPA

The Creative Spirit within each of us acts as a doorway into the Divine Presence. We come into touch with our own souls and allow ourselves to be led from the deep space of creativity. You are invited to walk through this doorway; you merely need to ask yourself if you are open to the invitation.

Using concepts from Julia Cameron’s book, *The Artist’s Way*, Marlou Ricke, FSPA, and Betty Daugherty, FSPA, will offer creative experiences, guided reflection and rituals to encourage the inner exploration of an integral spirituality. Come away to a quiet place and be filled with the peace of a retreat that is supportive of your creative works. Writers, visual artists and performing artists—all whose works call for deep time and expression—are invited. This weekend, working with a combination of experience, readings, and individual and group process, you will experience an intensive, guided encounter with your own creative self.

Fee: \$225 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina Tuesdays, Sept. 3 & Oct. 1, 10–11:45 a.m. or 6:30–8:15 p.m. **Facilitator:** Rodney Bluml

Come, integrate creativity and prayer through the practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. A contemplative practice of praying the Scriptures while viewing visual art, *Visio Divina* involves listening to the word of God, viewing art, pondering God’s message, letting your heart speak and resting in God. Based on the *Seeing the Word* reflection guides, the four sessions in this series stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Sept. 3 will focus on the *Sower and the Seed*, from which we learn that, just as the Sower casts out the seed upon all types of soil before moving on, so we are to examine our own receptiveness to God’s Word and our role in spreading it to others. Oct. 1 will focus on Ruth and Naomi, who model Christian love, fellowship and faithfulness to help us find courage to face our own challenges.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session includes *Seeing the Word*

Lift Your Spirit with Flowers Wednesday, Sept. 4, 1:30–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Rita Heires, FSPA

Prairiewoods’ own Rita Heires, FSPA, has been creating exquisite floral arrangements for years and believes that flowers can brighten almost anyone’s day. In this two-and-a-half-hour course, Sister Rita will help you create an arrangement using plants from the Prairiewoods grounds. You will learn to express pizzazz with a variety of materials and techniques and will take home a beautiful center piece. Please bring your own vase, dish or empty 15-ounce can. Registration is required by Aug. 30.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$15 includes plants and supplies



PROGRAMS

Hatha Way Yogi Partners with Prairiewoods Multiple times each week during 11-week session (Sept. 9–Nov. 22) Facilitator: Cindy Hathaway

Yoga is a meditative practice that links movement with breathing and cultivates strength, flexibility and relaxation in body and mind.



Cindy Hathaway of Hatha Way Yogi will lead multiple one-hour gentle, beginner/intermediate, chair and yin yoga classes each week. People of all fitness levels are welcome. (For a complete schedule, visit www.Prairiewoods.org)

Cindy, a certified Transformational Yoga Instructor, has practiced yoga for eight years. She lives by the mantra *You don't need to live with those little aches and pains* and credits being pain-free to her dedication to yoga.

Fee: \$99 for 11-punch card or \$60 for 6-punch card

Make “Local” Last All Winter Thursday, Sept. 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Facilitator: Rachel Morey

Can you picture yourself enjoying local food all winter? Rachel Morey will show you how to can, dry, ferment and root cellar your surplus harvest. You will learn the “math” of how much to grow, how much to process and what preservation techniques work best for each crop. Rachel will demonstrate water bath canning of tomato sauce (delicious for salsa or spaghetti sauce), the fermentation of kimchee, the drying of fruits and herbs, and the role of root cellaring. Please register by Sept. 9.

Fee: \$15 includes samples

Day of Self Renewal Mondays, Sept. 16 or Oct. 21, 8:30 a.m.–4:15 p.m.

Facilitators: Prairiewoods Staff

Come for a day of rest and relaxation! Experience the peaceful and natural grounds of Prairiewoods, a deeply holistic service and group meditation.

The day will begin and end with a brief group gathering; the rest of the day is yours for quiet reflection. (Optional activities will be offered.) You will have a private guest room and may schedule an individual 50-minute session of massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, paraffin bath treatment with hand massage, foot soak with exfoliation scrub and foot massage, or head and shoulder massage. Please register at least a week in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and choice of holistic service

Tuesday Take-Away: Spiritual Direction or Tea Time, Tree Time & Thee Time Tuesdays, Sept. 17 or Oct. 15, 12–1 p.m. Facilitators: Marj English, OSF, & Laura Weber

Tuesday Take-Away is a series that pairs a garden-fresh lunch with a topic of interest in a lunch-hour discussion.

On Sept. 17, Marj English, OSF, will describe what happens in spiritual direction and group spiritual companionship. This is an opportunity to learn about these resources without making any commitment. On Oct. 15, Laura Weber, Prairiewoods' new associate director, will welcome you to lunch on the patio with her love of life's greatest trio—a cup of tea beneath a tree praying poetry.

Fee: \$15 includes lunch

Circle Cinema Fridays, Sept. 20 or Oct. 18, 12–1 p.m. Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Bring a lunch and enjoy a film and conversation over the noon hour. (Or if you would like a hot Prairiewoods lunch for \$8, call at least two days in advance to see if we are serving lunch.)

On Sept. 20, watch and discuss *Mr. Happy Man*, an 11-minute film about 88-year-old Bermudian Johnny Barnes, who devotes six hours every day to an endearing traffic ritual that has made him one of the island's most cherished citizens. On Oct. 18, watch *What Would It Look Like?*, a 25-minute film that asks you to reflect on the state of the world and yourself.

Fee: Free-will donation (\$8 if you request lunch)

Improving Our Watershed, One Project at a Time Saturday, Sept. 21, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Facilitators: Lisa Burch, PE, LEED AP; Andrea Blaha, LA; & Emy Sautter

Are you interested in improving water quality or learning more about stormwater runoff on your property? You are invited to a community



workshop to learn about ways to improve water quality and properly retain stormwater. The workshop includes classroom time and hands-on experience at Prairiewoods developing a small retention pond, riprap stabilization and/or rock check dams. Learn about simple, inexpensive ways to address stormwater needs in your yard and community. This is funded by a Rockwell Collins Green Communities grant.

Fee: Free-will offering

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony Saturdays, Sept. 21 or Oct. 19, 1–4 p.m. Facilitator: Jorge Pena

Prairiewoods offers a Sweat Lodge Ceremony focused on prayer, purification, recognition and healing. The lodge is a small dome-shaped structure in which participants sit on the earth around heated stones. Please note that the lodge is a small enclosure that is dark and extremely hot inside. *If you have claustrophobia or any medical conditions that prevent you from going into a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony.* Registration is required.

Fee: Free-will offering to Prairiewoods

Fall Equinox Harvest at Matthew 25 Sunday, Sept. 22, 4–6 p.m.

Facilitators: Matthew 25 Staff

Join us at Matthew 25 to celebrate the many blessings of fall and harvest! Rustic fall colors offer the perfect setting for a community potluck full of fellowship and appreciation of Earth's gifts of harvest. The potluck will include

a contest for the best seasonal dish (so bring yours!) as well as urban farm tours and fall-inspired children's activities.

Please bring a fall-inspired dish to share and your own serving ware. For more information, contact Matthew 25 at 319-362-2214 or www.Hub25.org.

Fee: Free-will offering

Come to the Table

Tuesday, Sept. 24, or Friday, Oct. 25, 12–1 p.m.

Facilitators: Laurie Harris & Andi Lewis

You are invited to a free lunch and tour of Prairiewoods. This discussion and tour will introduce you to all that Prairiewoods has to offer. You'll get an informative tour of our meeting spaces, overnight accommodations, LEED-certified ecological features and 70 acres of beautiful woodland and prairies. You will be our guest for a fabulous, fresh lunch made by our chef. Please register at least five days in advance.

Fee: Free includes lunch

A Discussion on Faith, Climate Change, Public Health and Social Justice

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 5–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Marianne Comfort

Marianne Comfort is the Education Coordinator for the Institute Justice Team of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas based in Silver Spring, Maryland. She is a leader for addressing climate change and public health from a perspective of social justice. Join this discussion over a light dinner to learn about Marianne's efforts at a national level and to share with her and others about similar efforts in Iowa.

Fee: Free-will offering includes light dinner

Drink Tea for Good Health!

Thursday, Sept. 26, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Sandy Rosenberger

Learn about the health benefits of tea while taste-testing different varieties, including herbal teas. Learn to blend teas to get the best health benefits or to remedy problems, such as upset stomach, menstrual cramps and insomnia. At the end of class you'll be able to choose your favorite blend to take home!

Registration is required by Sept. 23.

Fee: \$18 includes samples

Nature Fest at Prairiewoods Sunday, Oct. 6, 1–4 p.m.

Facilitators: Prairiewoods Staff

(See page 1 for a full description.)

Permeable Pavement Project Friday, Oct. 25

Installed by: Culver's Lawn and Landscape & Prairiewoods

Permeable pavers allow rainwater to drain back into the ground, rather than diverting it to storm sewers. They help reduce stormwater run-off, reduce our impact on the water cycle by filtering water back into the ground and improve water quality. Stop out to get a close-up look at permeable pavements as Culver's and Prairiewoods replace a traditional concrete sidewalk with a pervious one. Thank you to King's Material and UniLock for donating the pavers. Please call Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222, for times and other details.

Fee: Free-will offering

Dream Workshop Weekend

Friday, Oct. 25, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 27, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Marj English, OSF, & Joann Gehling, FSPA

Dreams open you into your inner landscape and help you grow spiritually. Working and playing with dreams can bring transformation and inner healing. You will use a Jungian approach to decipher your dreams and be prepared to work with dreams individually or in groups. Topics include Jungian terms, Biblical dreams, common dream symbols, dream mapping and group dream work.

Fee: \$225 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

The Franciscan Spirituality Center (one of Prairiewoods' sister centers) in La Crosse, Wisconsin, is offering a one-year ecumenical program called *Journey Toward Wholeness: Living Franciscan Spirituality Today*. For more information, visit www.FSCenter.org.

The following classes are offered by the Institute of Spiritual Healing & Aromatherapy (ISHA). For more information or to register, contact ISHA at 303-467-7829 or www.IshaHealing.com. Reserve lodging and meals through Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700. Participants will receive continuing education credits.

Essential Oils for Physical Health and Well-Being, Course 302, Sept. 6–8

Focus on the basic chemistry of 70 oils, the vibrational frequencies of oils, oil toxicity, essential oil safety and the healing qualities of essential oils in this three-day advanced course.

Essential Oils for Cancer Care, Course 502, Oct. 18

Review the historical and current uses of essential oils for cancer care and discuss essential oil chemistry, quality standards, safety and research in this six-hour course.

Sent to Heal & Anoint, Course 301, Oct. 18–20

Learn about aromatherapy and how to integrate essential oils with heart-centered energetic healing techniques in this two-and-a-half-day course.

Introduction to Healing Ministry, Course 101, Oct. 19

Study the history of healing, experience the laying-on of hands, and explore the roles of prayer, belief and the development of a healing presence in this eight-hour course.

Introduction to Judeo-Christian Anointing, Course 102, Oct. 20

Explore anointing in the Judeo-Christian story—and how that tradition was lost through history—including nine essential oils traditionally used at the time of Christ, anointing with healing oils, the laying-on of hands and other simple healing techniques in this eight-hour course.

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton
Every other Thursday (including Sept. 12), 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

This group focuses on *Bridges to Contemplative Living*, which includes excerpts from the writings of Thomas Merton and other authors, to explore truths of the human experience. As a participant, you will read, reflect and discuss these texts and various topics related to contemplative living. This will help you respond to experiences with greater awareness of your connections with God and others. You may join at any time.
Fee: \$5 per session

Green Living Group
3rd Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Are you committed to reducing your impact on global climate change? Join the Green Living Group to learn more and experience a support system for happy and healthy green living. New participants are always welcome, but registration is appreciated.

On Sept. 18, participate in a *Fall Potluck and Evening Prairie Walk*. The group will come together to enjoy the simple pleasures in life—food, community and the beauty of the earth. Following dinner, the group will take a walk through the prairie. Please bring a dish to share and your own tableware. Feel free to bring information about community events you would like to share with others. On Oct. 16, participate in *Green Alternatives for Home and Health*. You will discuss a variety of “green” alternatives in the areas of cleaning products, pest control, garden and home. Feel free to bring products and/or recipes that you want to share!

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$5 per session

Wednesday Women
Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m.
Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

This lively group of women meets every Wednesday (beginning Sept. 4) to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged. Feel free to join at any time!

On Sept. 4, Wednesday Women will begin watching and discussing a DVD series of 12 lectures by Professor Keith J. Egan, Ph.D., on *Thérèse of Lisieux: Wisdom’s Daughter*. In his lectures, Dr. Egan uses the Institute of Carmelite Studies’ third edition of Thérèse’s classic *Story of a Soul*, translated by John Clarke, OCD. You will find it helpful to read the book as the group works its way through the lectures. The Prairiewoods Office has copies of the book for \$14 and study guide materials for \$3.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session

Evening Centering Prayer
2nd & 4th Tuesdays monthly, 5:30–7 p.m.
Facilitator: Judith Edwards

Centering prayer is a form of meditation focused on silent prayer. In this time of silence, you can relax, empty your mind and find God’s presence within you. This prayer/support group meets in room 113 of the Prairiewoods Guest House, and new participants may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers
2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Spend a few hours a month knitting and crocheting for people who need your hats, mittens, blankets and baby items. Join the Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers—a group of crafters of various skill levels who create handmade goods for charity twice a month. New participants always are welcome, and donations of materials are gratefully accepted!

Fee: Free

Ministry Reflection Group
2nd Tuesday monthly (Sept.–May), 2–4 p.m.
Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

This group is designed to give people in ministry a chance to reflect with peers on ministerial experiences in a safe, confidential setting that allows for personal and professional growth and insight. The nine monthly sessions will be contemplative, including prayerful reflections and sharing. You will be asked to commit to consistent participation so that rapport and trust can be established within the group.

Fee: \$180 (\$20 per session, whether present or not)

Group Spiritual Companionship
4th Tuesday monthly (3rd Tuesday in Dec.), 6–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Would you benefit from and appreciate experiencing an ongoing contemplative model of Group Spiritual Companionship? You will have an opportunity both for intentional, prayerful reflection on God’s presence in your life and for developing your ability to listen for and reflect on God’s presence in the lives of others. You are invited to join if you are serious about deepening and nurturing your experience of God, discerning an issue or direction in your life, open to sharing from your spiritual life, open to listening to and offering prayerful reflection on what others share, and committed to attending all meetings. Registration is required by Sept. 3.

Fee: \$180 (\$20 per session, whether present or not)

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Community Reunites with Block & McAfee on Nov. 20

Tens of thousands of people build community, not because it is their job, but because of who they are! The hope of all who engage associational life is to bring into conversation the collective wisdom present within each and every individual and organization within the community, co-creating restorative, sustainable, abundant community.

Exciting changes are being narrated in our communities since the April *Engaging Community, Narrating Change* conference. A number of partners—both individuals and organizations—are convening six conversations inviting forth possibility, accountability and commitment of citizens, and creating collaboration and a greater sense of belonging.

On Nov. 20, Peter Block returns! Author of many books to help citizens imagine an alternative future, Peter's hope is to inspire people to converse with one another, share their gifts and contribute to a more sustainable, abundant community. From 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Nov. 20, he

Prairiewoods invites you to join
thought leader and songwriter/musician
Peter Block & Barbara McAfee
for
**Engaging Community,
Narrating Change** *Phase 2*



Wednesday, November 20 • 9 a.m.–2 p.m.

will assist in lifting the learnings and initiatives arising from the circle conversations. This event will be held at St. Pius X Catholic Church.

Singer/songwriter and musician Barbara McAfee will blend practical content, sassy music, useful wisdom and sophisticated humor as we deepen our commitment.

Peter also has offered to meet with individual circles via conference call. If your circle is interested, please contact Ann Jackson, PBVM, at ajackson@prairiewoods.org

or 319-213-3384.

Please keep us posted on what's going on in your circle and track the progress of other circles on the Prairiewoods website! For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Engaging-Community-Narrating-Change.

**Wednesday, Nov. 20, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
at St. Pius X Catholic Church
(4949 Council Street NE in Cedar Rapids)
\$40 if reserved by October 31 (\$45 after)**

Prairiewoods

THE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF PRAIRIEWOODS, AN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Impacting Community One Circle at a Time

Peter Block and Barbara McAfee Return to Cedar Rapids Nov. 20

By Ann Jackson, PBVM

“**W**hy not call it *BOOST?*” says one circle convener, “*Building Our Strengths Together* is exactly what we are about!” She exclaims, “Just being in these conversations, I’m re-energized by ideas for practical actions to address problems we’ve been wrestling with for years. We are smarter together.”

Peter Block and Barbara McAfee will return to Cedar Rapids to “boost” with circle conveners, participants and interested others on *Wednesday, Nov. 20, from 9 a.m.–2 p.m., at St. Pius Church* (corner of Council Street and Collins Road in Cedar Rapids). This day promises to be thought-provoking, enlightening and challenging—a container to collect the wisdom of conversation circles that have been meeting since last April’s *Engaging Community, Narrating Change* conference.

The April conference is impacting the way many understand community and their role in and personal commitment to it. A circle process facilitates real and lasting change. The April conference provided opportunity to transform passion into action. Concerned citizens met regularly to explore social and environmental issues; to share wisdom, experience and support; and to inspire one another to affect change on personal and planetary levels. Circle conversation topics include art and creativity, education, health and well-being, resilient local economy, safety and security, and welcoming the marginalized.

One circle convener suggests that the illusion of isolation presents a huge obstacle to realizing a sustainable community. “Many individuals feel so alone in attempting to create change or to even sustain hope for change. The very act of connecting with others is a vital part of the future of sustainable community. Conversations offer support and engender accountability. *I see community members transforming former despondency into impassioned, focused action.* These ripples of positive change narrate a new story for our community.”

Maridee Dugger participates in two different circles—one at Prairiewoods and one with the Systems Thinkers. She attributes a consciousness shift to the impact of circle conversations. “The circle discussions have encouraged me to examine how I participate, lead and take responsibility for my role in a group,” she says. “In my neighborhood, we are making an effort to sit on our front



Peter Block & Barbara McAfee

porches, to visit more, have coffees and picnics, and raise awareness of what is happening on our street.”

The synchronicity of the circle conversations, Maridee feels, also brought a wonderfully dedicated man to her door. Though financially challenged, he functions effectively at the very heart of “community.” He offers a real presence and resource as a neighbor to others who struggle socio-economically or have no home. Recently, his years of neighborliness and service were affirmed when a social service agency provided him with materials

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“To adore: that means to lose oneself in the unfathomable, to plunge into the inexhaustible, to find peace in the incorruptible, to be absorbed in defined immensity, to offer oneself to the fire and the transparency, to annihilate oneself in proportion as one becomes more deliberately conscious to oneself, and to give of one’s deepest to that whose depth has no end.”
—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Sometimes it is challenging to find quiet. Even in our own minds, there is noise. Thankfully, we can always enter into inner prayer regardless of our location, age, health or intellect. St. Francis urged his followers to nurture in their hearts a dwelling place for God.

“Wherever we are, wherever we go, we bring our (monastic) cell with us,” he said. The inner sanctuary of our hearts is the place of this intimate encounter.

Prayer draws us inward and outward. We are more compassionate persons having sat in the Holy presence of God. Everyone is connected in this wonderful holy mystery we call “God.” God’s presence is everywhere in all people, in all things, in all of creation. Prayer leads us beyond our personal concerns to the Divine Presence everywhere.

O Sacrament most Holy,
O Sacrament Divine,
All praise and all thanksgiving,
Be every moment Thine.
Eucharist Heart, Jesus,
Furnace of Divine Love,
Give Peace to the world.

Since 1878, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, sponsors of Prairiewoods, have been saying this prayer to open a new hour of adoration in the Mary of the Angels chapel of the St. Rose Motherhouse in La Crosse, Wisconsin. For 135 years, two or more people have been praying without interruption, night and day, before the Blessed Sacrament. I was told, “It is a way of maintaining awareness of God’s presence in our lives and keeping vigil for the community, the city, the church and the world.”

Each of us has a human need to adore and love with our whole heart and soul. This tradition of perpetual adoration is a reminder, hour after hour, of God’s presence in our lives and our need to be present in others’ lives. My prayer for you is that you may rest in adoration of God’s radiant love and goodness wherever you are and open your hearts to receive greater influence of the Holy Spirit who dwells within already.

Peace,

Laurie Harris



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.

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

Prairiewoods publishes this newsletter bimonthly. Content focuses on happenings and opinions that support Prairiewoods’ mission and vision.

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to assist in setting up a food pantry on the southwest side of Cedar Rapids. A community possibility realized.

A circle of educators, naturalists, TreeKeepers, climate advocates, planners and parents meet monthly in the CSPA building to converse about caring for Earth. Trees Forever consultant Jo Ann McNeil shares, *“Transformation happens through citizen-to-citizen and small group engagement,* and we can start transformations—whether in our families, on our street, in our neighborhood or in our community—one conversation at a time. We *all* have gifts, and our conversations can help bring forth those gifts and transformational energy. We can organize ourselves in very powerful ways.”

Such vitality and spirit is contagious! The Mound View Neighborhood Association newsletter reads, “Nextdoor has connected with 45 neighbors since April 2013; Your neighbor Warren invites you to join: ‘Hey neighbor—sign up. It’s a great way to connect with what’s going on in the neighborhood.’”

Carol Sindelar, a Mound View Neighborhood Association member, read that a Colorado police chief says that “80% of the time when a police officer is called, it isn’t an officer that is needed, it is a good neighbor.” Carol says, “So I have scoured the internet. I am digging into books with the simple question, ‘Where do we start?’ And they all focus on one thing: knowing your neighbors. Think of the neighborhood as a piece of fabric. We are woven together like threads, one next to the other. *To keep the fabric of our neighborhood strong, we really need to know who lives next door, across the street, in the house behind us; just eight houses. It is a place to start.*”

Conversation circles are far-reaching. Nate Walton of Chicago was inspired by his conference experience. Driven to engage the process, he meets with community members near his second home in Hammond, Louisiana,

where he lives periodically throughout the year. Challenged by the interracial and low socio-economic profile of his neighborhood, Nate contacted pivotal people, passing out copies of Block’s book *Community: A Structure of Belonging*.

United Way partnered with Prairiewoods to hold six community conversations addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) within our communities. United Way engaged 80 participants from 28 organizations to attend one or more circle conversations. Within the conversations, participants identified 31 ACE-related strategies they plan to implement to help improve outcomes for children and families. Participants have committed themselves and/or their organizations to implementing one or more of the ACE strategies over the next six months. Eugenia Vavra confirms that conversations helped to identify new partnerships and needed resources to support community education efforts. United Way plans to hold a follow-up conversation in March 2014 to discuss progress on ACE strategies.

Circle conversations enable us to build our community’s capacity to better solve community issues. Additionally, it is expanding leadership efforts in educating the community. According to Washington State Family Policy Council’s model on developing High Capacity Communities, “When we share perspectives, cultural differences, common values, or simple interest in one another, we naturally build hope and a sense of shared identity. It becomes easier for us to ask for and receive help. It becomes easier for us to notice how we can help others. Families become more stable when there is reciprocity—the give-and-receive flow of interaction that benefits all.”

Through a powerful combination of dialogue and song, facilitators Peter Block and Barbara McAfee will help participants on Nov. 20 further explore the interconnectedness of shared dreams, community assets, and ways that people come together. Circles will be inspired to self-organize to address complex issues such as creating jobs in the neighborhood and improving services, forming deeper partnerships with social service agencies, non-profit organizations and businesses, to effect change in concrete economic and social measures.

Prairiewoods invites you to join
thought leader and songwriter/musician

Peter Block & Barbara McAfee
for

**Engaging Community,
Narrating Change** *Phase 2*



So where might community members begin? Attend *Engaging Community, Narrating Change Phase 2* ... and bring a friend. Step out of the isolation; hear from others; focus on sustainability; shed old habits, make new choices and spark major social change. Transform the community narrative!

For more details or to attend, contact Prairiewoods at www.Prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700.



“For everyone who

By Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Scripture assures us, we are encouraged by Jesus himself, to search and to knock, with a promise that we will be heard. We are told that the God who has loved each of us into existence is near to us, is listening and is eager to offer us a love that is unbelievable, total and without condition.

And yet ... there are those times when believing in this promise becomes a challenge, times when our lives are in crisis, times when we do not feel heard. Then we pray out of our hunger to understand, to be assured that we have not lost our connection with the Source of all Being.

We may try different ways to pray: meditation, centering prayer or Lectio Divina ... maybe journaling or the rosary. We may search for meaning as we sit in solitude, may immerse ourselves in nature. We may become more deeply involved in community and church.

No matter how we go about it, we are doing our own searching and knocking. We are doing what generations of people before us have done: seeking a relationship with Divine Mystery.

So much in our practice of prayer depends on how we think about the God to whom we are relating. Is it still the image left over from our youth? Does our God abide in a far-away heaven, distant and withholding love until we earn it?

Changing that image may help us, especially when we are faced with personal pain, anguish, fear and doubt, and we need a God who is engaged and available to companion us through our days.

In her poem *Conflict as Growth*, Diane Pendola suggests that we do have a place to turn when life becomes harder and obstacles seem impenetrable. She tells us that these are the times to “sink the tap-

knocks, the door will be opened.” —Luke 11:10

root of our spirit deeper into life.” She writes that we can connect through a tap-root, which descends “down the spine of our humanness into the cosmic-divine, groping toward source and sustenance, rooting into something so much bigger than our small perspectives and limited views.”

In explaining her image, Pendola quotes Raimon Panikkar, who says that “hope is not in the future but in the invisible,” that we are guided by Powers beyond our comprehension and that we are entrusted with hearts to love us through our darkest passages.

Each of us is rooted in Mystery that is far beyond our ability to understand. Diarmuid O’Murchu writes in his book *Evolutionary Faith* of the “life-force working creatively and interdependently from within creation.” This is the Holy Spirit that Christians have long invited to “Come,” come and do God’s work in us. *Veni Sanctus Spiritus!*

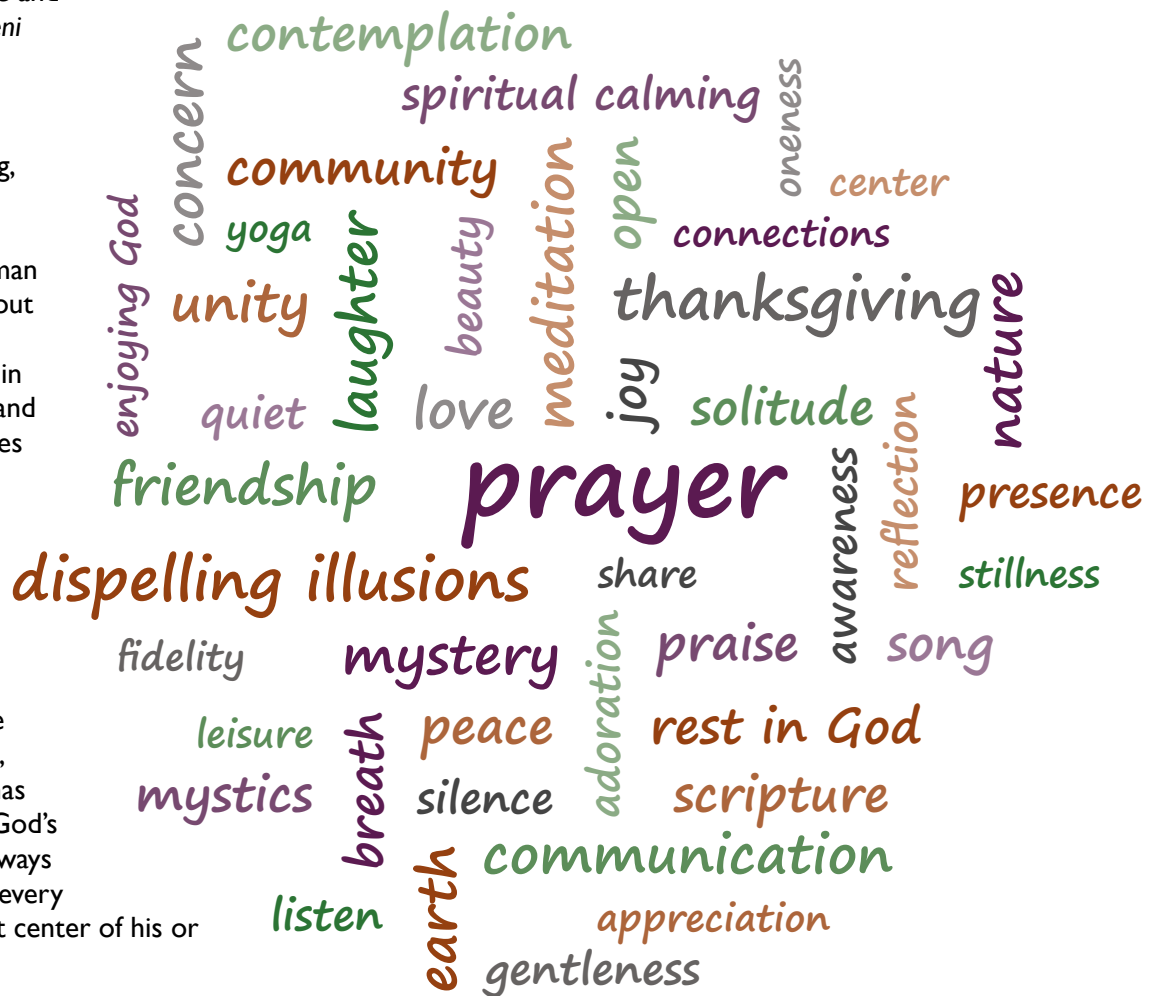
O’Murchu connects the Spirit with Wisdom (Sophia) as a “persuading, inviting, educating, communicating agency, acting not merely in human interaction but throughout the whole of cosmic reality.” God’s presence in our individual histories and in creation at large comes through the Spirit. Elsewhere, in his later book *In the Beginning was the Spirit*, O’Murchu writes of the work of the Spirit within us, offering us the words of the theologian, Karl Rahner: “God ... has already communicated God’s self in the Holy Spirit, always and everywhere and to every person as the innermost center of his or her existence.”

Might this be a great consolation to us as we pray? The Spirit is the presence of God within us. Our God communicates with us from within, awakening us to greater consciousness, to the discovery of the meaning held in the mystery of our everyday lives.

It is this all-pervasive Presence to whom we are privileged to turn in prayer: the Spirit of God who constantly lures us to greater personal depth.

When we doubt if our prayers are being heard, wondering if God remembers us, if our knocking is being heard, it is good to realize that yes, God is not only present, but is the Giver of Life, constantly enabling us from within. The life of Sacred Mystery flows through us. We trust.

Our staff and Facebook friends shared words that speak of “prayer” to them. Here are some of their words:



What's your "tude" (as in attITUDE)? Today I choose



By Emy Sautter

As my favorite poet, Mary Oliver, said, "They (the trees) save me, and daily." Amid all the war and violence in the world, the land and the people at Prairiewoods save me, and daily.

As Thanksgiving draws near I think about all that I am thankful for and feel overwhelmed with gratitude! I am amazed and so very thankful to all of the people who generously give their time and energy to help with the land here at Prairiewoods, from the garden to the flower beds to special projects (like our latest stormwater project). My spirit and the spirit of Prairiewoods grow with each act of kindness.

Thankfulness has a ripple effect, it expands the more you think about it—as I think more about the people that help here at Prairiewoods, my thoughts expand beyond those that help with outdoor tasks to the whole of Prairiewoods outdoor community. *I am reminded of the gratitude I have for the dancing grasses and the stoic trees, the colorful flowers and the little bright green bugs, the water and the soil, the funny squirrels, the wandering turkeys and the sweet young deer.*

Prairiewoods offers the perfect place to unite with the gratitude within. Come, take a walk, watch the turkeys or the tall prairie grasses, find a spot to rest as the holidays draw near.



With gratitude and thankfulness in my heart for the land and people of Prairiewoods, I share this *Prayer of Gratitude* that I recently came across:

Dear, dear God; dear Divine Mother; dearest Divine Father, thank you for this existence. Thank you for this life. Thank you for this opportunity for my smallness to become bigness and my bigness to enjoy smallness.

Thank you for the perception of my own shortcomings, the capacity to perceive shortcomings within myself, the capacity to see that all shortcomings are just an illusion.

Dear God, thank you for the love that is present in my life, for the flaws that are present in my life. Thank you even for the sadness that complements the happiness.

Thank you for the capacity to feel gratitude at all times. Thank you for the opportunity to feel gratitude at all times. Dear God, thank you for your pure presence radiant in my own heart. Truly, thank you for the infinity of your presence. Thank you, God.

Thank you for the presence of pure love in every situation of my life, even when that love is hidden from view. And thank you for that love sometimes hiding from view so that I may experience the gratitude and the love in finding that which is missing.

Dear God, thank you for God. Thank you for God. Thank you that consciousness is conscious, that the universe is. Thank you for the capacity to perceive truth and beauty. Thank you for the capacity to experience love and the blessings of free will.

Thank you for this body and its capacities—the capacity to experience bliss on a physical level, pain on a physical level, joy, elation, freedom on physical levels. Thank you for my own infinite potential.

Dear God, dear infinity that resides as my true identity within the subtle structures of my own heart and beyond into infinity. Thank you God for this life. Thank you for both the smallness of my mind and the bigness of my Being. Thank you for this time. Dear God, thank you for revealing yourself to be that which I truly am.

I love you, God.

—Matthew from *The Daily Wholeness Healings*

NATURE

FEST 2013



Several hundred people and pets came out Oct. 6 to help us celebrate *Nature Fest*, the seventeenth annual celebration of the Feast of St. Francis. The rain chased everyone indoors, but it couldn't dampen the fun of the Blessing of the Animals, live music and a bounce house!



The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For a complete list and *online registration*, visit www.Prairiewoods.org. You also can call 319-395-6700 for more information or to register.

Silent Meditation Retreat

Friday, Nov. 1, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Nov. 3, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Mindfulness is an open, kind, non-judging attention to what is happening as it is happening. It shapes a wise and compassionate relationship with experience as it unfolds. In this silent weekend retreat, there will be time for instruction, questions and guided meditative practices.

Fee: \$225 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$175 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Dances of Universal Peace in Song and Silence:

Renewal, Transformation and Connection Retreat

Friday, Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m.–Saturday, Dec. 7, 5 p.m.

Facilitator: Morgan Rivers

Do you long for quiet time and beauty amid the busy-ness of the holiday season? Participate in the Dances of Universal Peace, which use simple music, lyrics and movement from diverse spiritual traditions to touch the essence within ourselves and others and connect us to the Spirit.

Fee: \$100 includes presentations, Friday lodging, and breakfast and lunch

Commuter Fee: \$60 includes presentations and lunch



PROGRAMS

The Artist's Way

Sundays, Nov. 10 & Dec. 8, 1–4 p.m.

Attention all artists, poets, mandala makers, writers, sculptors and other creative people! Prairiewoods recognizes that some of you don't have a studio or special space to let your creative juices flow, so to honor *The Artist's Way*, we will make space in the Center available to you every second Sunday of the month from 1–4 p.m. Come and go as you please; work alone or share your projects with others.

This new opportunity will kick off Nov. 10 with a special community painting event called *Vino Van Gogh*. (See below.) On Dec. 8, you are invited to join us for open studio time. **Fee:** Free (unless otherwise noted)

Vino Van Gogh

Sunday, Nov. 10, 1–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Artist from *Vino Van Gogh*

Paint, drink and be merry! *Vino Van Gogh* is a creative twist on a fun night (or afternoon) out that is spreading across the country. Join us at Prairiewoods for an afternoon party that combines wine and creativity. You will be provided with a 16-by-20-inch canvas, art supplies, an apron, wine and snacks. A professional artist will teach you step-by-step to create the painting *Tree of Emotion* (see picture below) that you will take home.

You don't need any previous painting experience or skill—just let your inner artist emerge in a fun environment!

Fee: \$40 includes all art supplies, instruction, apron, wine and snacks



Hatha Way Yogi

Multiple times each week (through Nov. 22)

Facilitator: Cindy Hathaway

Yoga is a meditative practice that links movement with breathing and cultivates strength, flexibility and relaxation. Cindy Hathaway of Hatha Way Yogi will lead multiple one hour gentle, beginner/intermediate, chair and yin yoga classes each week. People of all fitness levels are welcome. (For a complete schedule, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.)

Fee: \$99 for 11-punch card or \$60 for 6-punch card, one punch per session

Beautiful Writing: The Art of Calligraphy

Wednesdays, Oct. 30, Nov. 6 & Nov. 13, 1–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Rita Heires, FSPA

Calligraphy, which the ancient Greeks referred to as “beautiful letters,” is found in both sacred and secular texts throughout history. It was originally done using pens and water-based ink. In this series, Rita Heires, FSPA, will teach a more basic, accessible approach, using felt-tipped pens. She will take you through the strokes and spaces needed to pen cards, signs and posters.

Fee: \$35 for 3-week series includes calligraphic pens and paper

Living Foods: The Art and Science of Creating Fermented Foods at Home

Thursday, Nov. 7, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Mollie Schlue & Rachel Morey

Curious about the trendy Kombucha tea? Wondering how to safely and easily make your own fermented vegetables?

Come for a fun and interactive class focused on food preservation methods including water bath canning, drying, freezing, root cellaring and dehydrating. Enjoy samples and leave with easy, fool-proof recipes for basic Kombucha tea, mild Kimchee, and crispy fermented pickles. You also will get a list of resources where you can find in-depth, reliable information about the preservation methods that interest you most. Registration and payment are required by Nov. 4.

Fee: \$19

Dream Group

Thursdays; Nov. 7, 14 & 21; Dec. 5, 12 & 19; 6–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Marj English, OSF, & Joann Gehling, FSPA

A Jewish Sage said, “A dream unexamined is like a letter unopened.” As a participant in this Dream Group, you will use a Jungian approach to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams to help you grow. To participate in this six-week series, you must have completed a Prairiewoods’ Dream Workshop Series, a Dream Weekend or something comparable.

Fee: \$120 for 6-week series, whether you attend all sessions or not

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony

Saturdays, Nov. 9, 1 p.m., or Dec. 8, noon

Facilitator: Jorge Pena

Prairiewoods offers a Sweat Lodge Ceremony focused on prayer, purification, recognition and healing. The lodge is a small dome-shaped structure in which participants sit on the earth around heated stones. Please note that the lodge is small, dark and extremely hot inside. *If you have claustrophobia or any medical conditions that prevent you from going into a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony.* After the ceremony on Dec. 8, you are invited to help put the lodge to rest for the year and gather for a meal in the Center. Registration is required.

Fee: Free-will offering to Prairiewoods

Remembrance Service

Tuesday, Nov. 12, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Prairiewoods Staff

Join us for a Remembrance Service held for benefactors and friends of Prairiewoods who have blessed us in life as well as in death by their presence and their gifts. Come for a prayer service for your loved ones and ours who have died. Please bring a picture or symbol of your loved ones to be used during the service. Light refreshments will be served. Registration is requested—but not required—by Nov. 5.

Fee: Free

Join us for the following events too:

- **Women in Interfaith Dialogue** at Prairiewoods, Nov. 23
 - **Alternative Gift Market** at Echo Hill Presbyterian Church, Dec. 7
 - **Winter Solstice** at Ushers Ferry Historic Village, Dec. 20
 - **Relationship Building with the Enneagram** at Prairiewoods, Jan. 30–31
- For details, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Day of Self Renewal

**Mondays, Nov. 11 or Dec. 16,
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.**

Facilitators: Prairiewoods Staff

Come for a day of rest and relaxation! The day begins and ends with brief group gatherings; the rest of the day is yours for quiet reflection. Choose two 40-minute sessions of Swedish massage, head and shoulder massage, reflexology, healing touch spiritual ministry, foot spa treatment, paraffin bath for hands, spiritual direction or yoga. Registration is required at least a week in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

Tuesday Take-Away: Ted Talk on The Wahls Protocol or Survive Stress Around the Holidays

**Tuesdays, Nov. 12 or Dec. 17,
12–1 p.m.**

Tuesday Take-Away is a series that pairs a garden-fresh lunch with a topic of interest in a lunch-hour discussion. On Nov. 12, watch a Ted Talk about Dr. Terry Wahls, who was confined to a wheelchair due to progressive MS. Diet and lifestyle changes allowed her to reverse her disease, and she now bikes five miles to work! Learn how you can use diet and lifestyle changes to improve the function of your brain, your energy and your vitality. On Dec. 17, a representative from the Mercy Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will share helpful tips for surviving the stress of the holidays.

Fee: \$15 includes lunch

Circle Cinema

Fridays, Nov. 15 or Dec. 20, 12–1 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Bring a lunch and enjoy a film and conversation over the noon hour. (Or if

you would like a hot Prairiewoods lunch for \$8, call at least two days in advance to see if we are serving lunch.) Visit www.Prairiewoods.org for specific films.
Fee: Free-will offering (\$8 to add lunch)

Holiday Candle Making

Tuesday, Nov. 19, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Sandy Rosenberger

Come learn how easy and fun it is to make your own candles for all of your holiday entertaining or to give as gifts. You'll learn how to make a number of different types of candles and will go home with two candles! Registration and payment are required by Nov. 15.

Fee: \$20

Dances of Universal Peace

Saturday, Nov. 23, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Morgan Rivers

Join leader Morgan Rivers in the Prairiewoods Center for Dances of Universal Peace—simple, meditative, joyous, multi-cultural circle dances from various spiritual traditions.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$15

No-Sew Scarves

Tuesday, Dec. 3, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Scarves are everywhere these days. They can help add that little something to any outfit, but they can be quite expensive. Why not make them yourself from old T-shirts? Join us for a fun evening of repurposing old T-shirts into a variety of new scarves. It's super easy and involves no sewing, so anyone can do it! Please register by Dec. 2. You are asked to bring scissors and at least four T-shirts.

Fee: \$5

Seeing the Word: Advent Visio Divina

Saturday, Dec. 14, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

December can feel like a busy month. In light of that, our God invites us to slow down and dwell in the energy of the season. During this day of Sabbath reflection, you are invited to explore prayerfully Advent themes with the help of *St. John's Bible* illuminations, share a healthy lunch, rest and listen ...

Fee: \$30 (Extend your stay by reserving a room for Friday or Saturday night!)

Scripture Sharing Tuesdays

**Every Tuesday, 10–11:45 a.m. or
6:30–8:15 p.m.**

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Tuesdays are Scripture Sharing Days at Prairiewoods! The first Tuesday of each month is reserved for the *Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina* series. All other Tuesdays (beginning in Dec.) are *Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing*.

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina

First Tuesday of Each Month

Come together in a circle of trust to integrate imagination, learning and prayer through the practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. A contemplative practice of praying the Scriptures while viewing visual art, *Visio Divina* involves listening to the word of God, viewing art, pondering God's message, letting your heart speak and resting in God.

The sessions in this series are based on the *Seeing the Word* reflection guides.

The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. On Nov. 5, use the *Messianic Predictions* from Isaiah 7 to explore the fidelity of God's promises amidst a troubled world. On Dec. 3, focus on *Word Made Flesh* when you consider the cosmic scope and beauty of Christ and how the Incarnation affects your life.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session includes *Seeing the Word*

Lectionary Based Faith Sharing

**All Other Tuesdays (beginning
Dec. 10)**

Do you desire to meet a group of seekers with whom you can discuss life and faith in a trusting environment? Join us to explore and discuss the upcoming Sunday readings from the three-year-cycle Lectionary used in many Christian churches. Learn about the culture of the Bible. Imagine being in the first audience to hear the Word proclaimed. Raise questions, feelings and impressions for dialogue. Come as often as you like. Feel free to bring your own Bible, but if not, readings will be made available.

Fee: Free-will offering

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

Every other Thursday (including Nov. 7), 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

This group focuses on **Bridges to Contemplative Living**, which includes excerpts from the writings of Thomas Merton and other authors, to explore truths of the human experience. As a participant, you will read, reflect and discuss these texts and various topics related to contemplative living. This will help you respond to experiences with greater awareness of your connections with God and others. You may join at any time.

Fee: \$5 per session

Evening Centering Prayer

2nd & 4th Tuesdays monthly, 5:30–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Judith Edwards

Centering prayer is a form of meditation focused on silent prayer. In this time of silence, you can relax, empty your mind and find God's presence within you. This prayer/support group meets in room 113 of the Prairiewoods Guest House, and new participants may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Green Living Group

3rd Wednesday monthly (except Dec. & Jan.), 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

On Nov. 20, join Prairiewoods and Indian Creek Nature Center for *The Holidays: Simple. Green. Meaningful*. This evening discussion will focus on ways to have a more meaningful and less stressful holiday season. Learn ways to save money and be less wasteful. Share ideas you have and learn from others that want a simple and more eco-friendly holiday.

Join the Green Living Group to learn more and experience a support system for happy and healthy green living. New participants are always welcome, but registration is appreciated.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$5 per session

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Spend a few hours a month knitting and crocheting for people who need your hats, mittens, blankets and baby items. Join the Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers—a group of crafters of various skill levels who create handmade goods for charity twice a month. New participants always are welcome, and donations of materials are gratefully accepted!

Fee: Free

Wednesday Women

Every Wednesday (except Nov. 20, Nov. 27, Dec. 25 & Jan. 1), 10–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women that meets every Wednesday to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged—you are welcome to come any time!

Beginning Nov. 6, the group will read and discuss *Birthing God: Women's Experiences of the Divine* by Lana Dalberg. According to the book's description, "Forty women relate Spirit-filled moments ... Grounded in raw experience and ideal for spiritual seekers and leaders of all faiths, these engaging and powerful stories invite you to consider the origins of your own spirituality and to deepen your relationship with God." Participants are encouraged to use *Interview Questions: Eliciting Spiritual Stories* on pages 278–279 to journal and will be invited to share their answers in pairs. Please read the following pages and answer the questions for the given dates:

Part I: Divine Love and Love of Self

Nov. 6: pages 1–25, interview questions 1–4

Nov. 13: pages 26–43, interview questions 5–7

Dec. 4: pages 44–63, interview questions 8–10

Dec. 11: pages 64–86

Dec. 18: Christmas luncheon (Details to be announced later.)

You may buy *Birthing God* through the Prairiewoods Office for \$19. The group will not meet Nov. 20 due to *Engaging Community, Narrating Change Phase 2* or Nov. 27, Dec. 25 or Jan. 1 in honor of the holidays.

Fee: Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session

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We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money or other gifts to Prairiewoods!
For a complete, up-to-date list between Newsletters, go to www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate.

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New Staff

Diane Welp is Prairiewoods' new chef and kitchen manager. Her background includes 29 years of customer

service and management, with the last 11 of those years in the food and beverage industry. Good, healthy food, combined with excellent customer service, is always her goal. Diane finds pride in preparing foods that taste delightful and are pleasing to the eye.

Wish List Throughout the year, the staff identifies items that we need. If you have any of the following items, we would greatly appreciate the donation!

- Digital Camera
- Basic Tool Kit
- Yarn, Fabric, Knitting Supplies
- Adult Bikes



New Website We planned to update our website to be mobile-friendly and more modern this winter. After the unfortunate demise of our last website in August, we decided to speed up the process and create our new website right away. So now we have a brand new website, just waiting to be explored! We welcome feedback, so please visit www.Prairiewoods.org and let us know what you think.



Prayer-A-Thon Are you looking to expand your understanding of and experience with various forms of prayer? Join us at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church for a 40-hour Prayer-A-Thon March 14-16, 2014. Although you may be familiar with prayer during weekly church services, weddings and funerals, this event will introduce you to a large variety of prayer modalities that may be unfamiliar to you. Although the Prayer-A-Thon will last for a continuous 40 hours, you are invited to come and go as you please. For more information, visit www.SEASP.org.



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



Get in the Spirit of the Season at the Holiday Bazaar

The holiday season brings with it a sense of wonder, gratitude and generosity. Welcome the spirit of the season at Prairiewoods' annual *Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 23*. It will be a great opportunity to cross items off your holiday

shopping list!

Our doors will open at 8 a.m. so that you can enjoy a wide selection of baked goods and gifts for family and friends. You will have until 1 p.m. to fill the Christmas stockings and the space under your tree.

Prairiewoods will offer special items from its Gift Shop and kitchen. Other vendors will offer an array of goods prepared by local artisans. You will have your choice of freshly baked breads and pies, Trappistine caramels, scarves, handcrafted aprons, denim wear, bags, baby blankets, mittens, jewelry and much more. You also can enjoy a relaxing cup of coffee or cider and a cinnamon roll at our Coffee Corner.

Want to do more than just shop? You are invited to help make the bazaar a success! We also appreciate any donations of baked goods, craft items or volunteer time. If you are interested, please contact Helen Elsbernd, FSPA, at 319-395-6700, ext. 208, or helsbernd@prairiewoods.org.

We hope you will join us for the official start of the season at the Holiday Bazaar!



Volunteers Sandi Allen and Jeanette Rops helped spread the joy through the Coffee Corner at last year's Holiday Bazaar.