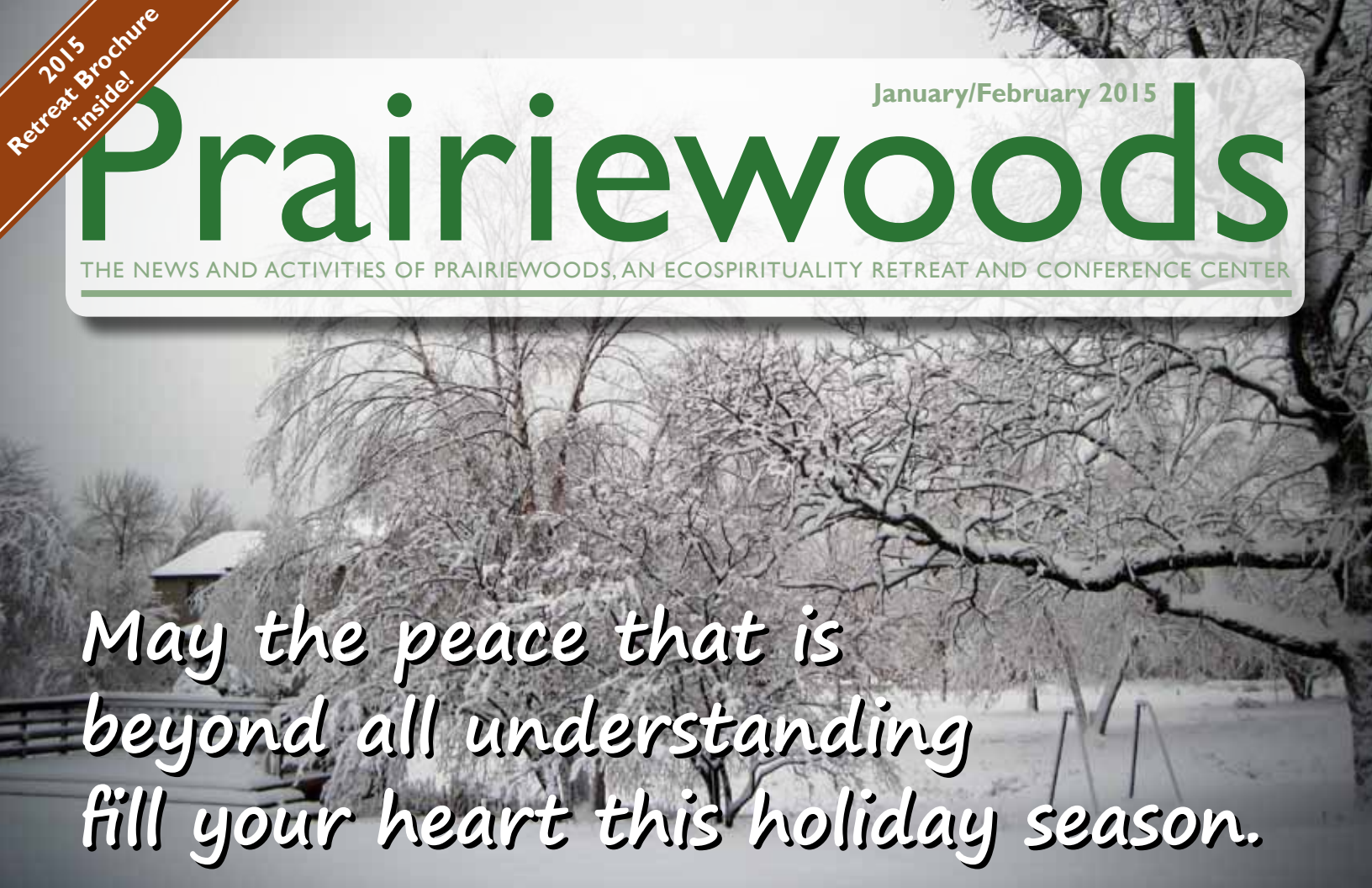


Prairiewoods

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



May the peace that is
beyond all understanding
fill your heart this holiday season.

Living as Authentic Peacemakers

By Betty Daugherty, FSPA

During this season of Christmas, we feel ourselves lured again into the hope that someday we will live in a world that is at peace.

There are so many times in scripture where we are promised peace and invited to be people of peace. The Sermon on the Mount, for instance, lists peacemakers among those to be blessed: “They will be called the children of God.”

The call to be peacemakers in our world may not strike us as radical. And yet, to live a life of peace and nonviolence is not only demanding, but it also requires a dynamic spirituality, an attentiveness to the Spirit, an inner maturity, as well as a community to offer vital support. When we look around at all the situations in our world today where the absence of peace is starkly apparent, we know that peacemaking is difficult and perhaps hazardous. Discipleship in the kingdom of God can be costly.

As we open the doors of Prairiewoods each day, our intention is to open a space for God-seeking, a place where anyone who chooses to come may walk in the quiet woods, pray in our lovely Meditation Room, speak to a spiritual director, relax with a soothing massage—all

of which may be openings to the urgings of the Divine Spirit—and come to a greater personal peace and wholeness. We each need time to be alone, to enter into a contemplative presence with self and with the world.

This kind of authentic spiritual work that each of us is invited to do is transformative in a far broader way than we usually imagine. We are not simply separate individuals, we are immersed in a universe in which everything is interconnected and every thought and action on our part is reflected within the whole.

We can decide to be people who help create a future of peace and justice. Jesuit paleontologist, writer and mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, a man we recognize as being influential in the bridging of science and religion, gave us a vision of our role as humans in the process of evolution. He wrote of the “divine milieu” in which the universe and Earth are in a process of movement toward ever greater unity.

This concept opens new meaning to living as a Christian today. Chardin’s writings are the basis for believing that a vibrant future is possible, that through the
(continued on page 3)

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



We are always on a journey—home. When my tearful teenage daughter left on her own journey, I found myself telling her to remember that no matter where you are, who you are with, you are always home; you carry all the love with you. On her journey she struggled. She was homesick. As I reflect on my words, I pause to think of my definition of *home* and how it has widened.

There is an immense power inherent in each of us, at every moment, to encounter the love that is potentially our inheritance. We were loved into being by our Creator and are an integral part of the natural world. This is a summons to see ourselves surrounded by family, loved ones, relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbors, church, community and Earth. This is *a conscious awareness that we carry our ancestors within us*, as well as the future generations. We have a heritage, an ancestry, a love lineage that we can call *home*.

Many will journey great distances to come home. We, like the bees and the birds, have the ability to find our way home after traveling long distances. Our homing instincts are persuasive, empathic. The magnetic footprints of our birth urge us to come home. *We come home to belonging in the Universe ...* our whole most ancient home is vaster than our imagination, and more intimate, more sacred. *We come home to ourselves ...* a contemplative attitude is required from now on if life on earth is to prosper. The evolution of today is a transformation of the human spirit. As Father Ron Rolheiser puts it, "Our own light, our own moral center, our own heart, our own mystical center ... knowing our own center is intimately intertwined with knowing God." *We come home to the child ...* to play and creativity, to wonder and fascinating with the miracles, diversity and beauty that surround us. *We come home to intimacy, acceptance, nourishment ...* the place that engages us emotionally because of events and relationships that happen there.

Prairiewoods programs and retreats call forth each of us to an encounter of what it means to be home. Prairiewoods is a sacred place where action and distraction can be suspended long enough to pay attention to what is. Such a welcoming space guides us home. We can recognize that we move away and return home to God many times a day. The Giver of Life longs and hopes for our return home. God lets us go and welcomes us back with compassion and celebratory joy, no matter what. May you reenter the womb of our creator God and find your home there, and may this understanding be a homecoming to peace.

Laurie Harris

“Our passionate preoccupation with the sky, the stars, and a God somewhere in outer space is a homing impulse. We are drawn back to where we came from.”

—Eric Hoffer on the first moon landing, as quoted in *The New York Times* (July 21, 1969)



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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integration of religious experience with factual scientific knowledge of the awesome world in which we live, humans will find a road forward. We will come to know more deeply that we all belong within a common story and that we are drawn toward a common destiny.

Though Chardin's vision was not well understood or even accepted by church authorities during his lifetime, his writings continue to inspire today's theologians and spiritual writers. They, in turn, are providing us with a great richness of fresh insights coming from new scientific knowledge of how the universe unfolds.

Recent writings in theology and spirituality, as well as areas covering care of Earth and practices of sustainability, give us a basis on which to proceed toward a viable future involving *justice for all, a requisite for a peaceful world.*

In their recently published book *Ecology and Religion*, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grimm provide a broad vision of peacemaking with a number of practices that they suggest will help us to work together to create a more just and peaceful world. These suggestions are:

- commit to deepening our sense of empathy and interconnection with all our sisters and brothers and the whole community of life on Earth
- demonstrate sustainable living in our religious and spiritual communities
- recognize where our religious traditions and organizations have promoted violence, injustice and unsustainability
- educate ourselves to work effectively in development policy arenas, understanding the critical changes that need to happen in our economic

and governance structures to create a flourishing future for all

In this work, it is important to remember that there is something in all of us that draws us to hope. *And so perhaps if we dream and vision and work together, if we use our capacity to imagine and desire—and even expect—it, a future of peace someday will be possible.* Then we will keep the message that is *Christmas* alive for everyone.

“I found Prairiewoods to be a place of solitude where one can gain or regain a sense of healthy perspective—more joyfully attuned to nature, more honestly uncovering one's natural self, and clearly separated from the daily distractions of today's hectic world. In concert with other community members I experienced the significance of profound calmness and how it can appreciate and grow within a group. I left regenerated with gratefulness for this special time and with excitement to return again during the throes of a Midwestern winter.”

—Al Rowe, Regenerative Leadership participant

PRAIRIEWOODS

“Prairiewoods offers an openness to a universal inclusive approach to the sacred.”

—Jane Cadwallader-Howe, Shadow Work participant

“The natural beauty and quiet solitude of Prairiewoods prompts me to step away from the world and be present in the moment. It is a beacon of peace that challenges the distractions of daily living.”

—Sarah Montgomery, Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life participant

“Trees, animals, land and sky, all living in harmony—that's peace; that's Prairiewoods.”

—Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, Prairiewoods co-foundress

& PEACE

“I was an intensely active peacemaker from 2002 to 2012, protesting war and torture. As punishment for crimes of peaceful dissent, I spent almost a year in jails ... A few years ago I believed I could change the world by protesting war. Today I believe I am changing the world by sitting. Learning to meditate, becoming a vegan, doing two vision quests, and reading *Steps to Knowledge* have combined to allow my God to expand and my heart to open.”

—Chris Gaunt, Prairiewoods friend (*Chris's complete account of how she has changed as a peacemaker can be found at www.Prairiewoods.org/Blog.*)

PROGRAMS

The following are some upcoming programs and continuing programs. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700. (See the Retreat Brochure insert for retreat descriptions.)

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina Tuesdays, Jan. 6, Jan. 20, Feb. 3 & Feb. 17, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Come together in a circle of trust to integrate imagination, learning and prayer through the practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. *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 stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

Drumming for Healing Wednesdays, Jan. 7, Jan. 21, Feb. 4 & Feb. 18, 6–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Sheri Mealhouse
(Hawkwoman)

In the cosmic experience, drumming touches many people at a deep level and brings all creation together as a community. Drumming—and feeling the Creator's rhythm inside of you—resonates with a variety of people. Come see how it resonates with you! No experience is necessary, and percussion instruments are available. This drum circle will meet in the Art Room during the winter.

Fee: Free-will offering

The Artist's Way Sundays, Jan. 11 & Feb. 8, 1–4 p.m.

Facilitator: You

Attention all artists, poets, mandala makers, writers, musicians, sculptors and other creative people! Prairiewoods recognizes that you may not have a studio or special space to let your creative juices flow, so to honor *The Artist's Way*, we offer you space on the second Sunday of each month. Come and go as you please; work alone or share your projects with others.

Fee: Free

Vino Van Gogh Sunday, Jan. 11, 1:30–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Vino van Gogh Artist

Paint, drink and be merry! You will be provided with all the supplies and instruction you need to create your own work of art. Wine, cheese and other beverages are included. A professional

artist from Vino van Gogh will guide you to paint *Feng Shui* (shown here). No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome.

Fee: \$50 includes 16-by-20-inch canvas, art supplies, instruction, apron, wine and snacks



Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing Tuesdays, Jan. 13, Jan. 27, Feb. 10 & Feb. 24, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Meet with other Christian seekers to discuss life and faith in a trusting environment. Use the upcoming Sunday readings from the three-year Lectionary cycle used in many mainline Christian churches to explore and discuss various topics. Learn about the culture of the Bible. Imagine being in the first audience to hear the Word proclaimed. Raise questions for dialogue. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

Chakradance™ Awakening Tuesdays, Jan. 20 & Feb. 10, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Maryann Hesse

Chakradance™ is an effective, anyone-can-do-it way to de-stress and rebalance your inner energies. Surrender to your own experiences, become more in tune with your Chakra system and activate inner healing. Dance in a darkened room to transition from your everyday life into a rich, imaginative world. It is here that deep inner healing is activated. All that is required is to wear comfortable clothing and be open to a delightful inward journey!

Fee: \$20 per session

Dream Group Wednesdays, Jan. 21 & Feb. 18, 1–3 p.m.

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

Use a Jungian approach to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams to help you grow. This Dream Group

will meet monthly through May 2015. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. To participate, you must have completed a Prairiewoods' Dream Workshop or Dream Retreat, or something comparable. Registration is required at least a week in advance.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$20 per session

Come to the Table Friday, Jan. 23, 12–1 p.m.

Facilitators: Laurie Harris & Andi Lewis

Who says there's no such thing as a free lunch? You are invited to dine on a delicious, hot lunch while learning more about Prairiewoods or introducing your friends to this local gem. You will get an informative tour of our meeting spaces, overnight accommodations, LEED-certified ecological features and 70 acres of beautiful woodland and prairies. Then be our guest for a fabulous, fresh lunch made by our on-staff chefs. Registration is required by Jan. 19.

Fee: Free includes lunch

The Legend of Pale Male Sunday, Jan. 25, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

In 1993, a young man from Belgium had an unexpected encounter in Central Park with a wild red-tailed hawk. Compelled to follow this extraordinary creature, he bought a video camera and set out to track the hawk—a journey that lasted almost twenty years. Affectionately known to New Yorkers as *Pale Male*, the hawk became a magnificent obsession and a metaphor for triumph against all odds. Learn more about *Pale Male* as you watch and discuss this beautiful film. Then talk with Cedar Rapids resident Larry Kennedy about his family's role in the movie. Books and DVDs will be available for purchase. Popcorn will be available, and you are welcome to bring your own beverages and other snacks. This will be a great event for families!

Fee: Free-will offering



Day of Self Renewal
Mondays, Jan. 26 & Feb. 16,
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit during our monthly Day of Self Renewal, which features two 40-minute holistic services of your choice, group Guided Meditation, a private guest room, walking trails, fresh lunch and hours of free time. Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

Drawing Closer to God with the Enneagram

Thursday, Feb. 5, 6:30–9 p.m., & Friday, Feb. 6, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Marci Madary

The Enneagram is a personality tool that combines psychology and spirituality for self-awareness and acceptance. The Enneagram can help you understand yourself more deeply and improve your relationships with family, friends, self and God.

On Thursday evening, Marci Madary will introduce the principles of the Enneagram, helping you to become comfortable with your natural type. On Friday, she will focus on the spiritual dimensions of the Enneagram, including the graces and challenges of the nine personality types and prayer styles that speak to them.

Fee: \$20 for Thursday only, \$45 for Friday only or \$55 for both days, includes Friday lunch (lodging may be added for \$50 per night for a single or \$75 for a double)

Dream Workshop Weekend
Friday, Feb. 6, 6:30–8:30 p.m., & Saturday, Feb. 7, 9 a.m.–6 p.m.

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

Dreams can open you into your inner landscape and help you grow spiritually. Working and playing with your dreams can bring transformation and inner healing. In this weekend workshop,

you will be exposed to a Jungian approach to deciphering your dreams. This will include four two-hour sessions with time between for walking the trails or labyrinth, reading, praying, journaling or shopping in the Gift Shop. Please visit www.Prairiewoods.org for more pertinent information.

Marj English, OSF, and Joann Gehling, FSPA, are retreat facilitators and Haden Institute-trained Dream Group Leaders. **Fee:** \$75 includes supplies and Saturday lunch (lodging may be added for \$50 per night for a single or \$75 for a double)

The Mandala: A Pathway to One's Center

Sunday, Feb. 8, 1:30–5:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Joellen Price, PBVM

A mandala is a sacred piece of art, often in the shape of a circle, used to enter into a contemplative or spiritual practice. Learn to create your own mandalas inspired by repeated patterns found in nature and everyday living. This will help you tap into the holiness of deep listening within yourself and within the world around you. No previous experience is necessary.

Fee: \$20 includes art supplies

The Power of Now Book Study
Tuesday, Feb. 17, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Many people have been impacted by *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment*, a book written by world-famous spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle. Are you interested in discussing Eckhart's teachings on living in the present moment? Join this study group that meets every other Tuesday from Feb. 17–April 14. Please read chapters 1 and 2 for the first session.

Fee: \$5 per session

Let's Eat! Vegetable Gardening Basics

Thursday, Feb. 19, 6–7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Scott Koepke

From seed to harvest, this class covers a comprehensive overview of what to consider when starting or expanding a typical home garden beyond flowers to food. It all begins with healthy soil. From there, discuss mapping/placement, rotations, companion plantings, tools, watering, mulching, tilling options, thinning, weeding, organic methods and season extensions. This is a fun and interactive class for beginners,

as well as a useful brush-up for veterans, served up with New Pi Soilmates founder Scott Koepke's contagious enthusiasm!

Fee: Suggested offering of \$5

Terra Firma Film Viewing
Sunday, Feb. 22, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Join a local documentary subject for a showing of the film that features her and two other Iowa veterans. *Terra Firma: Suck It Up and Drive On* follows three female vets who joined the service in the mid '90s to improve their lives. After returning to civilian life with PTSD, they found healing in farming. Sonia Kendrick, one of the three vets in the film, will join us for the viewing and a question-and-answer session. Popcorn will be available, and you are welcome to bring your own beverages and other snacks.

Fee: Free-will offering



Starting Seeds and Transplants
Tuesday, Feb. 24, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Phil Pfister

Starting flowers and vegetables from seed is not only fun and satisfying, but it also can be a cost-effective way to expand your garden and try less common varieties. Linn County Master Gardener Phil Pfister will provide tips for seeding, transplanting, and setting flower and vegetable plants out in the garden. He also will teach techniques for extending the growing season for your flowers and produce.

Fee: \$5

Hatha Way Yoga
Multiple times each week

Facilitator: Cindy Hathaway

Link your movements with your breath and cultivate strength, flexibility and relaxation through regular yoga classes. People of all fitness levels are welcome to join a variety of classes led by Cindy Hathaway of Hatha Way Yogi. For a complete schedule, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Fee: \$99 for eleven-punch card, \$60 for six-punch card, one punch per session



CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Save the Date! for these upcoming programs:

- **Women in Interfaith Dialogue** with Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter, Jan. 31
- **Spirit of the Flute** with Jonny Lipford, Feb. 8
- **You, Me and God: 25 Years, 25 Hours, 25 Ways to Pray** at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Feb. 27–28
- **Full Moon Owl Hike** with Chuck Ungs, March 5

And look for these programs coming later this spring:

- **The Woman's Way** series of women-focused evenings
- **Eco-Swap** for creatively recycling used items you no longer need

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

1st & 3rd Thursdays monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Live a more contemplative life through regular discussions of the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes texts from Thomas Merton and other spiritual writers. The intent is to encourage contemplative living and growth in the ability to respond to life's events with greater faith.

Fee: \$5 per session

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Do you love to knit or crochet? Practice your hobby in the company of new friends! Create beautiful handmade goods for charity and learn new skills as you go. You may join at any time, and donations of materials are accepted with gratitude.

Fee: Free

Evening Centering Prayer

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

Facilitator: Judith Edwards

Centering prayer is a form of meditation focused on praying in silence. Relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you during this time of silence and centering prayer. The group meets in the Guest House, and you may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

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Men's Prayer Group

2nd & 4th Thursdays monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

As they mature, many men undergo a major life transformation from goal driven-ness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom. The transition may seem quite disruptive while on the way to being life-enhancing. Join with a small group of reflective men in honest conversation about life's changes. Call Prairiewoods for details on the book the group is discussing.

Fee: Free-will offering

Wednesday Women

Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women to be spiritually enriched, inspired and challenged. You are welcome to come any time!

On Jan. 7, listen to Dr. Suzanne B. Bartlett talk about reducing stress and living in the now. Discover how HeartMath technology combines science with ancient wisdom, and learn about Dr. Bartlett's integrative medicine practice.

On Jan. 14, watch the DVD *A Place at the Table*, which will change forever how you think about the hungry. Continue the discussion on Jan. 21, and learn how the issue of hunger could be solved forever!

On Jan. 28, Cliff Schueler, Prairiewoods maintenance coordinator, will discuss home safety tips to consider as you age.

Beginning
Feb. 4, the group will read and discuss *The Rebirthing of God: Christianity's Struggle for New Beginnings* by John Phillip Newell. For a list of pages to be discussed each week, please visit our website.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

Are you willing to give Prairiewoods a present in this time of giving? Here is our **wish list** for the garden:

- shovels
- hand tools & larger tools
- leaf rakes
- buckets (5-gallon & ice cream)
- tomato/pepper cages
- stakes
- laundry baskets
- tarps
- edging
- new or used boards/lumber
- garden center gift cards
- perennial food plants (like raspberries)

If you have any items you're willing to donate, please contact Emy Sautter.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER DONORS

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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Stephen Volesky
Connie Zenisek

Inform with Immigration Display

Are you hosting an event focused on immigration? Do you want to increase awareness about issues that immigrants face? Your church or organization can borrow a display that educates people about immigration.

The traveling display—called “Iowa: A State of Immigrants”—is made up of four individual panels, each measuring approximately seven feet tall by three feet wide. A Prairiewoods volunteer will deliver the display, set it up and come back to dismantle it when possible.

The display combines photos and information to convey the history and status of immigration in our nation and in Iowa. It also includes the Interfaith Statement on Comprehensive Immigration Reform, basic facts and myths, and immigrant stories. The traveling display was created as a tool to help inform our community—especially the faith community—about immigration issues.

For more information or to reserve the display, contact Marj English, OSF, at 319-395-6700, ext. 216, or menglish@prairiewoods.org.





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- Please take us off your mailing list.
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SPIRITUALITY in the 21ST CENTURY

featuring Gail Worcelo, CP,
& Sara Thomsen

May 1–2, 2015

Get all the details in the Retreat Brochure inside!

Important Dates for 2015

Prairiewoods is already planning some of our biggest events for next year. Put them in your calendar today so you don't miss a moment!

Spirituality in the 21st Century: May 1–2

Garden Party: June 6

Sweetgrass Flute &

Nature Festival: Sept. 25–27 (with Blessing of the Animals Sept. 27)

Holiday Bazaar: Nov. 21

Removable Retreat Brochure for 2015 Inside
Don't wait another minute—plan your 2015 time away today!

March/April 2015

Prairiewoods

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

People say to me,
“OH, YOU GOTTA BE CRAZY!
How can you *sing* in times like these?
How can you *dream* in times like these?
How can you *love* in times like these?”
A SONG IS *somewhere to begin.*

—from Sara Thomsen’s CD *Somewhere to Begin*, song by T.R. Ritchie

Evolutionary Consciousness Somewhere to Begin

featuring

Gail Worcelo, CP

and

Sara Thomsen

Friday, May 1, 7–9 p.m., &
Saturday, May 2, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

sponsored by Prairiewoods
\$65 (or \$75 after April 1)

at St. Pius X Church
4949 Council St. NE in Cedar Rapids

www.Prairiewoods.org



Gail Worcelo, CP



Sara Thomsen

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Prairiewoods is a sacred place where I have experienced many beautiful epiphanies, manifestations of divine goodness revealed through silent reflection, a walk in the woods, discussions in small groups, giving of volunteers, engaging in conversations with the board and community, and working with and for such a gifted staff. *Epiphany* comes from a Greek verb meaning “to reveal.” All of the various events and wondrous encounters at Prairiewoods are epiphanies—revelations of the goodness of God. At Prairiewoods no day is lived without a glimpse of new hope, the sound of a voice that speaks of love, or the knowing that we can unearth the inner wisdom and beauty that have been etched on our hearts by God. The natural world evident on our 70 acres is both wise companion and teacher for our spiritual journey; it reflects the Divine. The prairie tells a tale of regeneration and growth that goes well below the surface, the trees a lesson in letting go in the height of their splendor to allow the new to emerge, the mellowed richness of winter a reminder of the space and silence needed for dreaming and the catalyst to new life in the spring.

The Spirit is alive, and each of us participates in moving it forward. The time is now to be living the life of the new creation unfolding. “I have done what is mine to do,” Saint Francis reminds us. “May Christ teach you what is yours to do.” This urgent reminder is one that I pray each morning, and one that led me to my own epiphany. This revelation is leading me into a new role at the Newman Student Center at the University of Iowa near where I live. I will be leaving Prairiewoods at the beginning of March to walk with students in their journey of faith. I will carry forward all the gifts I have received at Prairiewoods and feel so blessed to remain in relationship with this land and the wonderful community of light.

Prairiewoods is in good, loving hands and is on an ever-unfolding journey. Recently, we gathered the wisdom from the operating board, staff, volunteers and college interns during an evolutionary becoming strategic planning session where we co-created a transformative vision for the future. Our vision is one of reaching out to others and seeking their good so that together we may be awakened in consciousness and energized by the loving, creative Spirit of the Universe into a community, moving together into wisdom, compassion and the fullness of life. This vision is extraordinarily persistent at Prairiewoods!

Pope Francis states, “Goodness always tends to spread.” My gratitude extends to the Prairiewoods staff and the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration who are aflame with gifts of wisdom, love and goodness. They have inspired me by their authentic and sincere faith, all expressed in different and dynamic ways. What I have received at Prairiewoods is so beautiful and so rich. My hope is that you also may be held deeply in this oasis of peace and transformation. May you bring new life and hope wherever you go.
Peace and all goodness,

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.

Please address all correspondence to:
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www.Prairiewoods.org
Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org



SPIRITUALITY in the 21ST CENTURY

May 1–2, 2015

Evolutionary Consciousness: Somewhere to Begin

Friday, May 1, 7–9 p.m., & Saturday, May 2, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Location: St. Pius X Church, 4949 Council Street NE, Cedar Rapids

Facilitators: Gail Worcelo, CP, & Sara Thomsen

How can we begin to do the great work of renewing the face of Earth? Seemingly it's *Mission Impossible*. Devastated ecosystems, mass extinction of species, polluted water reservoirs, unbreathable air, toxic Earth repositories, rampant poverty, violence and terror besiege the world. Where do we begin?

Prairiewoods' annual *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference invites us to begin by learning courage and living hope. On May 1–2, *Gail Worcelo, CP*, founder of Green Mountain Monastery, and *Sara Thomsen*, musical artist, will inspire us to go out to the edges of evolving consciousness on behalf of Earth and all Earth's creatures. Gail weaves spirituality and ecology for a new generation, tending to the insights of modern physics, ecology, cosmology and theology for a unique approach to holistic spirituality. She will talk about "wild rowing into God"—the journey of humanity that requires us to "lift both feet off the ground," and to "leap from Me to We" and, ultimately, toward creative union.

Co-facilitator Sara Thomsen is an exquisite musician who encourages us to allow various forms of art to touch the soul and invites us to respond for the good of the global community. Sara's gentle, soulful and uplifting acoustical renderings celebrate the beauty of the cosmos and call us into fuller communion with the global family.

Please join us for this extraordinary event!



Gail Worcelo, CP



Sara Thomsen

The cost of this two-day conference is \$65 (or \$75 if purchased after April 1) and includes Saturday lunch. For more information or to register, contact Prairiewoods at www.Prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700.

Limited lodging is available at *Prairiewoods* for \$50 per night for a single (or \$75 for a double) by calling 319-395-6700. Breakfast is included.

Additional lodging is available at *Hampton Inn & Suites* in Cedar Rapids for \$85 per night for one king bed (or \$95 for two queen beds) plus tax by visiting www.TinyURL.com/PrairiewoodsConference or by calling 319-832-1130. Hot breakfast is included.

Please register early, as this conference is expected to attract hundreds of participants!

How are individuals and organizations in our community taking a stand for Earth? Here are a few stories of people making a difference, one tree at a time ...

Foresteering a Pheasant Farm

Joyce Hanson, a former Prairiewoods maintenance and grounds keeper, was inspired by the mission of Prairiewoods to establish a 40-acre habitat for pheasants and other native creatures.

Last spring, volunteers from Pheasants Forever, part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), planted 400 red cedar, plum and crabapple trees, as well as cranberry viburnum and Nannyberry bushes. To complete this habitat, Joyce also planted a food plot of 15 different seeds, an area of switch grass and a diverse prairie. A fire break around the 40 acres ensures safety.

With the help of CRP and others, the prairie has been mowed twice, trees have been watered and invasive species have been controlled. By fall the prairie was ablaze with color, and a variety of animals and birds took residence. For Joyce this work is a labor of love that provides many moments for meditation and joy.

If you desire to know more about Joyce's project, want help planning a similar project or need information on financial assistance available, please contact Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, at [319-395-6700](tel:319-395-6700), ext. 212.

Brushing up on Tree Trivia

How many trees are on the Prairiewoods grounds (not counting the woods, which we are still counting)? Did you say **557**? If you did, you win an extra breath of O₂! Of the 557 trees, how many were planted since Prairiewoods began in 1996? An answer of **358** allows you to sit under your favorite tree to ponder some of this tree trivia:

- 1 healthy tree absorbs **13 pounds** of carbon dioxide per year.
- 1 large tree provides a day's supply of oxygen for **4 people**.
- 3 trees placed strategically around a family home can cut air conditioning needs by up to **50 percent**.
- Trees reduce UV-B exposure by about **50 percent**.
- Studies show that the beauty and peace provided by trees can reduce violence.
- Trees create an ecosystem that provides habitat and food for birds and other animals.
- Trees prevent water pollution and soil erosion.
- Each year 1 acre of forest produces **4 tons** of breathable oxygen. That means Prairiewoods' 40 acres of forest emit **160 tons** of oxygen annually!

We may be calling these facts *trivia*, but the importance of planting trees is not trivial. If each of us plants even one new tree this year, what a change we would make! Shall we do it?



trees

Finding Support from Other Organizations

Trees Forever has been a major force in creating an overall land development plan over Prairiewoods' 18-year history. From the very beginning, Trees Forever Director Shannon Ramsay and her staff encouraged our desire to learn more about the connection between the planting of trees and sustainability. It is hard to overestimate the importance of this contribution!

Over time the two organizations have worked together to improve Prairiewoods' 40 acres of woodland and to establish a significant amount of prairie—both huge tasks but well worth the effort. With the help of the Trees Forever staff, we have deepened our personal connection to trees, natural areas and our entire eco-system.

According to Shannon, a former Prairiewoods board member, this is the work her organization is committed to doing: "We appreciate the opportunity to help local community volunteers and private landowners grow their knowledge and appreciation for their land and the earth. We've seen a real outpouring of interest ... from people who want to help care for the natural world around them."

For more info, visit www.TreesForever.org or call Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222.

*somewhere
to begin ...*

Inspiring with Green World Charter

After speaking at last year's *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference, Marc Ian Barasch composed the *Green World Charter*. Here are some highlights:

"We pledge to plant new seeds of spirit in the real soil of this world. May each burst forth as a resurgence of hope, a message to children yet unborn that we were mindful of their coming, that we stewarded for them a green and peaceful planet and kept faith with their future. We commit to restoring the injured landscapes that cry out for healing. We vow to grow billions of trees, defend our precious natural systems, and protect our climate. We promise to renew the ecology and economy of the world's poorest places. We know in our hearts the truth of the proverb: Compassion is planting that seedling under whose shade we may never sit. We believe if we start small and dream big, plant firm a great intention and care for it with diligence and love, myriad of life's marvels will rise from the good earth to welcome the generations who will follow."

The slogan of this award-winning organization is, "ReGreen the World in One Generation—for All the Generations to Come!" If you want to contribute to the Green World Campaign's amazing work to restore the ecology and economy of some of the world's poorest places, visit www.greenworld.org.

RETREATS

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Innovation and Deep Engagement through Classroom Conversation

Thursday, March 12, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, March 14, 5:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Barbara Ressler & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Sophocles said, “One learns by doing a thing; for though you think you know it, you have no certainty until you try.” Are you a teacher? Then this retreat will offer you the chance to try new teaching ideas in a unique format.

Highly experiential, participative and reflective, this retreat will offer you, as a teacher, the opportunity to learn, practice and apply six conversations cited in Peter Block’s *Community: A Sense of Belonging*. Sessions will focus on studying and practicing theory and will offer opportunities for design and application with students. Each session will provide a learning community experience with student and teacher collaboration and evaluation. Using conversation to transform instructional practice and classroom culture increases student engagement and, consequently, achievement. This retreat reflects the *Ten Skills for the Future* and *Iowa’s Universal Construct*. Teachers can receive 2 Continuing Education Credits.

Barbara Ressler, high school English teacher and life-long learner, nurtures a vision and passion for 21st century education. Ann Jackson, PBVM, Prairiewoods staff member, loves learning, literature and circular leadership. Former teaching colleagues, long-time friends, and conversation devotees, together these two create a dynamic team for re-visioning classroom and educational possibility. Come hungry for inspiration and possibilities ... you will leave fed!

Fee: \$100 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals (CEUs are an additional \$100)

Commuter Fee: \$75 includes retreat sessions, Friday lunch and dinner, and Saturday lunch

This is a great retreat for teachers, and CEUs are available!

Beauty is the Path into God’s Life

Friday, April 10, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, April 12, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: John Quigley, OFM

Your images of God may change dramatically throughout your life. As they do, you can come to appreciate God in so many different ways. During this retreat, you will reflect on images of God—those present in scripture, in nature and especially in your own lived experiences. These paths of revelation can be understood as Beauty, a manifestation of the

internal life of God that the Trinity shares with all people.

John Quigley, OFM, a Franciscan Friar and priest, is an accomplished public speaker, a talented artist and a revered retreat facilitator. A member of the Province of St. John the Baptist (Cincinnati, Ohio), Father John began his pastoral and preaching ministry in 1974 as co-leader with Richard Rohr of the New Jerusalem Community in Cincinnati. In 1982 he became the coordinator of social justice and peace concerns for his Franciscan province and published the international monthly magazine *Mustard Seed*. Called to Rome in 1988, John was the international coordinator for the efforts of the Franciscan Friars (OFM) in the areas of justice, peace-making and care for creation. For more information, visit www.FatherJohnQuigley.com.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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

This new summer retreat was just added!

Voices Serving the Holy in All

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

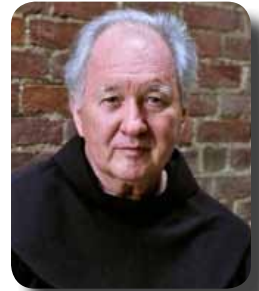
Facilitator: Liz Rog

Do you long to twine your voice with others in song? Do you remember that you were born singing, as your ancestors before you? Join a growing global community movement, knitting the world together through songs of love, play, spirit and freedom. Sing songs of gathering and deepen your sense of communion and your sacred respect and wonder in the face of all nature. You’ll sing easy-to-learn, playfully challenging songs that speak to critical themes—environmental, social, interpersonal—in a way that brings joy, a sense of success and an expression of shared meaning. You will relax into the voice you were born to sing with as you share beautiful, fun, simple songs that can reshape the world. In this retreat, you will raise your voices together in songs that celebrate love, diversity, power, the rhythms of the year and the circle of life. *This retreat is for people who don’t sing and people who love to sing.*

Liz Rog is a songleader in the global Ubuntu tradition, which welcomes all voices, using the collective brain in the body to weave songs and community. Liz delights in helping people rediscover their ancestral birthright of group singing.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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



**Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina
Tuesdays, March 3, March 17, March
24, April 7 & April 21, 10–11:45 a.m.
Facilitator:** Rodney Bluml

Come together to integrate imagination, learning and prayer through the practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. 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 stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$10 per session

**Drumming for Healing
Wednesdays, March 4, March 18,
April 1 & April 15, 6–7 p.m.
Facilitator:** Sheri Mealhouse
(Hawkwoman)

In the cosmic experience, drumming touches many people at a deep level and brings all creation together as a community. Drumming—and feeling the Creator's rhythm inside of you—resonates with a variety of people. Come see how it resonates with you! No experience is necessary, and percussion instruments will be available. This circle meets in the Art Room during winter and outdoors in warmer months.

Fee: Free-will offering

**Full Moon Owl Hike
Thursday, March 5, 6–8 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 Naturalist and expert owl caller Chuck Ungs for this evening that begins indoors with a lesson about owls. Then take your new knowledge to the woods on a moonlit hike and owl-calling escapade. You may be surprised to learn that owls sit on eggs or hatch owlets at this time of year!

Fee: \$5 per person, \$15 per family

**Vino Van Gogh
Sunday, March 8, 1–4 p.m.
Facilitator:** Vino van Gogh artist

Let your inner artist emerge in a fun environment with the assistance of some wine and good snacks! Come for an afternoon party that combines wine and

creativity. You will be provided with a 16-by-20-inch canvas, all art supplies, professional art instruction, an apron, wine and snacks. A professional artist will teach you step-by-step to create the painting *Moonlit Blossoms* 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! All ages are welcome. A non-refundable deposit of \$30 is due at registration. **Fee:** \$50 (\$40 for ages 21 and younger) includes canvas, art supplies, instruction, apron and refreshments



**Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing
Tuesdays, March 10, March 31,
April 14 & April 28, 10–11:45 a.m.
Facilitator:** Rodney Bluml

Meet with other Christian seekers to discuss life and faith in a trusting environment. Use the upcoming Sunday readings from the three-year Lectionary cycle used in many mainline Christian churches to explore and discuss various topics. 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. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$5 per session

**Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*
Book Study**

**Tuesdays, beginning
March 10, 1–2:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Joni Reed Cooley

Using *The Artist's Way* as a guide, Prairiewoods' Artist in Residence Joni Reed Cooley will lead the group in discussion, creative experiences, guided reflections and rituals to explore the essence of integral spirituality. Discover the source of your

creative self! This group will meet ten times between March 10 and May 26. Registration is required by Feb. 23. **Fee:** \$5 per session plus \$15 book

**Chakradance™ Awakening
Tuesdays, March 10 & April 7,
6:30–8:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Maryann Hesse

Draw on the wisdom of Jungian psychology to learn how Chakradance™ can be a method of healing and self-discovery. Licensed Chakradance facilitator Maryann Hesse will lead dances in which you will move through the chakras. You also will create your own mandala from deep within your soul. All that is required of you is to wear comfortable clothing and be open to a delightful inward journey!

Fee: \$20 (due at registration)

**Day of Self Renewal
Mondays, March 16 & April 20,
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit during our monthly Day of Self Renewal, which features two 40-minute holistic services of your choice, group Guided Meditation, a private guest room, walking trails, fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from Swedish massage, reflexology, head and shoulder massage, healing touch spiritual ministry, paraffin bath for hands, spiritual direction or yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

The Woman's Way Join us for a series focused on topics concerning women's needs for health in mind, body and spirit. This series will take place Mondays in March from 6:45–8:30 p.m. with the following topics:

- **Essential Oils and Aromatherapy for Menopause** with Trilby Sedlacek, MA, MFT, RH, AHG, & Kathy Petsche, CCA, March 16
- **Calcium in Women's Nutritional Health** with Lucinda Harms, March 23
- **The Divine Feminine** with Delmarie Gibney, FSPA, D.Min., March 30

(See p. 12 for full descriptions.)

PROGRAMS

Dream Group

Wednesdays, March 18 & April 15, 1–3 p.m.

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

Use a Jungian approach to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams to help you grow. This Dream Group meets monthly through May. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. To participate, you must have completed a Prairiewoods Dream Workshop or Dream Retreat, or something comparable. Registration is required at least a week in advance.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$20 per session

Sustainable Living: Meet the Farmer

Wednesday, March 18, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Grinnell Heritage Farm

Join us for a potluck dinner with Grinnell Heritage Farm (GHF), the largest certified organic fruit and vegetable farm in Iowa. You will learn about Community Supported Agriculture, sample vegetables from the farm and talk one-on-one with GHF farmers. GHF will provide a soup, and you are asked to bring a side dish to share.

Fee: Free-will offering

Seasonal Celebration: Spring Equinox Native Flute Concert

Friday, March 20, 7–9:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Jonny Lipford & Emy Sautter

Through the cycle of seasons, life is a constant flow of beginnings, endings, fruitions, harvests and quiescent times. Spring is a time of new beginnings, new possibilities and rebirth. By celebrating the Spring Equinox, you allow yourself to identify with the earth's seasonal cycles of change. It is a time to recognize and affirm your own rebirth, hopes and

faith. Jonny Lipford, nationally renowned native flute player, will accompany this celebration with some of his newest music inspired by the desire for meditation and listening. If you play the native flute, bring it and join Jonny for a flute-along during the concert. In addition, you are invited to bring your own beverages and snacks.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony

Saturdays, March 21 & April 25, 4 p.m. (enter lodge at dusk)

Facilitator: Rod Courtney

Prairiewoods offers a Sweat Lodge Ceremony focused on prayer, purification and healing. The lodge is a small dome-shaped structure in which you sit on the earth around heated stones. Please bring a dish for a community meal after the ceremony. Registration is required so that you can receive additional protocols and a release form.

Fee: Free-will offering to Prairiewoods

Make Your Own Ceramic Finger Labyrinth

Sunday, March 22, 1:30–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Amethyst Warrington

Create a beautiful handmade meditation piece for yourself or for a gift! In this hands-on workshop, you will create your very own ceramic finger labyrinth to fit your fingers. The labyrinth will be formed the night of the class and will be fired and glazed for later pickup. No experience is necessary—simply bring a creative spirit! This class will be limited to 15 participants, and registration is required by March 18.

Fee: \$30 includes instruction, patterns, clay, use of tools, kiln firing and glaze



Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi Book Study

Fridays, April 10 & 24, 1–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Have you wondered what the life and teaching of St. Francis of Assisi might offer you today? In his new book, Richard Rohr, OFM, explores how St. Francis lived the kind of alternative

orthodoxy that many hunger for in the spiritual life. *Eager to Love* includes Scripture, a blend of psychology and theology, literature and art, in order to articulate ways of understanding God with us. This group will meet every other Friday beginning April 10. Registration is required by March 23.

Healing Moments Workshop: Effective Alzheimer Care

Friday, April 17, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Jade Angelica

Through presentation, experiential exercises, discussion and reflection, caregivers are provided with the opportunity to learn and practice effective methods for communicating, connecting with, and caring for persons with Alzheimer's and dementia. Combining information with creative drama, this workshop is designed for both family and professional caregivers. Participants can receive 0.6 CEUs or 6.0 CEHs. Dr. Angelica's book *Where Two Worlds Touch: A Spiritual Journey Through Alzheimer's Disease* will be available.

Fee: \$60 includes lunch (CEUs and CEHs are an additional \$30)

The Mandala: A Pathway to One's Center

Sunday, April 19, 1:30–5:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Joellen Price, PBVM

A mandala is a sacred space, often in the shape of a circle, used to enter into a contemplative or spiritual practice. Create your own artistic mandalas inspired by repeated patterns found in nature and everyday living. In doing so, you will tap into the holiness of deep listening within yourself and within the world around you. No experience is necessary.

Fee: \$20 includes art supplies (free-will offering for students)

Music, Mysticism and Memoir: An Evening of Sacred Songs and Stories

Monday, April 20, 6:45–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Andy Douglas, MFA

Andy Douglas spent seven years in Asia working and studying as a yogic monk. His memoir, *The Curve of the World: Into the Spiritual Heart of Yoga*, chronicles this journey. Join him for an evening of song and story in which he will read passages from the book, talk about spiritual practice and writing

Save the Date! for the other seasonal celebrations in this series:

- **Summer Solstice** at Ushers Ferry, June 24
- **Fall Equinox** at Matthew 25's Urban Farm, Sept. 19
- **Winter Solstice** at Indian Creek Nature Center, Dec. 18

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

spiritual memoir, present devotional songs and chants, and lead group songs. Books will be available for purchase.
Fee: \$15 (free-will offering for students)

Earth Day Sabbath or Volunteer Day

Wednesday, April 22, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Create your own Earth Day celebration at Prairiewoods by taking a sabbath in honor of the earth or volunteering your time tending the earth at Prairiewoods. Gather for an opening ritual and then take the day to hike, enjoy bird watching or photography, read, pray, meditate or engage in any activity that deepens your connection with the earth. Alternatively, you may choose to spend the day volunteering outdoors. Registration is required by April 20.
Fee: Free, may add lunch for \$9

Eco-Fest 2015

Saturday, April 25, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Celebrate Earth Day in the NewBo District at the corridor's premier Earth Day celebration! This family-friendly festival includes the Eco Film Fest, interactive educational activities, an eco-fair, eco-practice demonstrations, fun ways to reduce and reuse household items, local foods and free live music all day. Come learn how your personal choices connect to individual, community and planetary sustainability! For more information, visit www.EcoFestCR.org.
Fee: Free



Save the Date! for these upcoming programs:

- **Reclaim Your Feminine Power** with Maryann Hesse & Melanie Hoffner, April 25
- **Eco-Swap** with Emy Sautter, May 17
- **Nourish Your Bodyspirit: A Funtensive Weekend** with Mary & Matt Cohen, July 17–18

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Our Wish List for the garden:

- shovels
- leaf rakes
- stakes
- laundry baskets
- tarps
- edging
- hand tools & larger tools
- buckets (5-gallon & ice cream)
- tomato/pepper cages
- new or used boards/lumber
- garden center gift cards
- divided perennial food plants

If you have any items you're willing to donate, please contact Emy Sautter.

Did You Know? Prairiewoods has a number of resources available to borrow for free, including:

DVDs

- I Am* (includes interviews with some of the world's best thinkers)
- A conversation About Oneness* by Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee (on global connectedness)
- Earth and the American Dream* by Bill Couturie (on the history of the United States from the environment's point of view)
- Humanity Ascending* by Barbara Marx Hubbard (about humanity on the threshold of a quantum leap)
- Visions of a Universal Humanity* by Barbara Marx Hubbard (on the potential for a positive future)
- The Legend of Pale Male* (a documentary about a red-tailed hawk in New York)

Books

- Thomas Berry: Selected Writings on the Earth Community* with an Introduction by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim
- Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World* by Joanna Macy & Molly Young Brown
- The Emergent Christ* by Ilia Delio
- The Meaning and Practice of Faith* by Diarmuid O'Murchu

Other Materials

- an indoor labyrinth
- a traveling immigration display
- Thank God for Evolution* programs from Michael Dowd and Connie Barlow (USB)

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CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

1st & 3rd Thursdays monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Come together with other spiritual seekers to learn how to live a more contemplative life. Discuss readings from the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes writings from Thomas Merton and other spiritual writers. The intent is to encourage contemplative living and growth in the ability to respond to life's events with greater faith.

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 praying in silence. Relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you during this time of silence and centering prayer. The group meets in the Guest House, and you may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Men's Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life

2nd & 4th Thursdays monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

As they mature, many men undergo a major life transformation from goal driven-ness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom. The transition may seem quite disruptive while on the way to being life-enhancing. Join with a small group of reflective men in honest conversation about life's changes. Call to learn what book the group is discussing.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m.,

& 4th Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Do you love to knit or crochet? Practice your hobby in the company of new friends! Create beautiful handmade goods for charity and learn new skills as you go. You may join at any time, and donations of materials are accepted with gratitude.

Fee: Free

Wednesday Women

Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women to be spiritually enriched, inspired and challenged. You are welcome to come any time!

On March 4, 11 and 18, view and discuss *The Spirituality of Struggle* series based on the award-winning book *Scarred by Struggle, Transformed by Hope* by Joan Chittister, OSB.

On March 25, explore the concept of spiritual maturity according to experts and your own experience.

On April 1, join Delmarie Gibney, FSPA, for a look at four stories of women anointing Jesus and their significance. You may discover some interesting insights still important today!

Beginning April 8, read and discuss the award-winning book *Scarred by Struggle, Transformed by Hope* by Joan Chittister, OSF. This book will help you cope with the suffering and disappointments that are part of natural human life. Sister Joan describes her book as "an invitation to look again at the struggles of life in order that we might remember how to recognize new life in our souls the next time our hearts turn again to clay." Visit www.Prairiewoods.org for specific readings.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

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Series to Focus on Women's Mind-Body-Spirit Health



March is Women's History Month, and Prairiewoods is helping you honor all that is feminine with *The Woman's Way* series. From 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. on Mondays in March, you are invited to focus on your needs for health of mind, body and spirit. You even can come early for healthy snacks and yoga with Cindy Hathaway from 5:30–6:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity to connect with other women, honor the divine feminine in you and find balance in mind-body-spirit wellness. The cost is \$15 per session (free-will offering for students), plus \$5 for the optional yoga.

Essential Oils and Aromatherapy for Menopause
Monday, March 16, 6:45–8:30 p.m.
Facilitators: Trilby Sedlacek, MA, MFT, RH, AHG, & Kathy Petsche, CCA

Learn how essential oils can improve your overall well-being during menopause. Trilby Sedlacek and Kathy Petsche will show you how to blend various essential oils to relieve symptoms of menopause and find balance.

Calcium in Women's Nutritional Health
Monday March 23, 6:45–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Lucinda Harms

Should you take calcium supplements? Discuss this hotly-debated issue with licensed pharmacist Lucinda Harms, focusing on the importance of good nutrition, what constitutes a strong nutritional foundation and the value of calcium in building healthy bones.

The Divine Feminine
Monday, March 30, 6:45–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Delmarie Gibney, FSPA, D.Min.

Delmarie Gibney will help you explore the manifestation of the Divine Feminine in the Ancient World and how her Presence is felt today. Through input, reflection time, discussion and ritual, you will examine and perhaps discover how you are empowered by this Presence.

May/June 2015

Prairiewoods

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



Somewhere to Begin Our Own Transformation ...

Let's start right here—with who we are, with where we are—in this time and this world. Right here, with the enormous potential we can see for a future filled with hope.

Let's begin by welcoming the new life that explodes with Spring, trees bursting forth with *Veriditas*, Hildegard of Bingen's word for the "greening power of God." Bird song, purple carpets of violets, a sweet mildness in the air—these fill our world.

Let's not run away from life; let's embrace emerging spiritual insights and continue to tap into a spirituality that *includes everyone and all of creation.*

Let's start in this season of resurrection with a resurrection faith. Let's absorb the words of John Haught, who wrote: "A resurrection faith implies that in Jesus' destiny that of the entire universe is at stake. If Christ is not risen from the dead, then vain is our faith. But if he is risen indeed, then theological consistency requires that we bring the entire universe into the sweep of what is destined for redemption."

Let's recognize that we can make wise choices, that we can come together as a community of people to call one another to *our best selves.*

Let's look toward the horizon, connect with sparks

of creative energy wherever we find them, keep our focus where new life is emerging.

Let's move toward deeper expressions of wholeness, unity, relationality and love, *seeing evolution as an internal event.*

Let's listen to the prophets of today, like Gail Worcelo, CP, who wrote, "We, through our choices and desires (decisions), are the ones determining how life for the entire planetary community will unfold into the future." Let's read more—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Ilia Delio, OSF, Judy Cannato and Diarmuid O'Murchu, and the dozens of people who give us new ways to look at our world.

Let's read the mystics, like Catherine of Siena, who said that "all the way to heaven is heaven. We go with each other. We go to God." Let's develop *our own capacity for mystical experience.*

Let's remember the story of creation in Genesis as a symbolic explanation of how we got here—Earth evolving for almost 14 billion years.

Let's plant trees, grow milkweed for the butterflies, foster prairie flowers and grasses to benefit the soil, fly kites with children. Let's live fully present in the world.

Let's begin today.

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Come to the garden! Greetings from Prairiewoods, where Earth is in bloom. While the days are lengthening and the gentle rains are coaxing life from the soil, we are experiencing the picturesque and fragrant budding of a glorious springtime. What a wonderful time to be alive, to foster hope and to cultivate new life!

For cultivating hopefulness, *come to the garden* of reflection to see what's springing to life! *May 1-2 is our annual Spirituality in the 21st Century conference at St. Pius X Church in Cedar Rapids.*

"Evolutionary Consciousness: Somewhere to Begin" features Gail Worcelo, CP, and musician Sara Thomsen. This dynamic duo will invite us to grow in our consciousness about what connects us and what calls us forward as one global community. Sara's music resonates deeply with our heart's desires to nurture growth—even new life—when hope for the planet and its people seems distant. Together they will lift us up as we leap from "me" to "we" in the next phase of evolutionary consciousness. This event is for families, communities, spiritual seekers, business leaders, educators, public servants, and everyone devoted to holistic health and wellness for us and for the planet. Isn't it time we step across the threshold of new life as a united human family? The world is waiting for us to embrace the next step—boldly, compassionately and with fierce love.

In sync with the springtime celebration of life, we also are invited to celebrate at the annual Prairiewoods Garden Party on Saturday, June 6, at St. Pius X Church. Come to the garden of play for the fun, the frolic, the goody baskets, the food and the wine. Spend an evening with folks like you who love Prairiewoods and help our mission to thrive. The event is not just for a good cause; it is because *you are good*, and want what is good for our Earth and for all creation. It's a happy, hopeful way to celebrate new life and keep it growing healthy and strong.

In this newsletter, you will see Prairiewoods is alive with retreats for everyone, and programs and events to make your heart sing and your spirit dance. *Come to the garden* and see how YOU grow!

Peace,

Laura A. Weber, Interim 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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The Ecological Examen: Entering a new world of Ignatian Contemplation

adapted from Joseph P. Carver, SJ (with permission)

The *Daily Examen* is an Ignatian spiritual tool that helps you to reflect prayerfully on your day. It guides you to recognize moments in your day in which God was especially present and to discern God's direction for your life. It fosters mindfulness, deep connectivity and gratitude. Last April, Joseph P. Carver, SJ, created a similar *Ecological Examen* and printed it in *America* magazine. As he points out, "These same spiritual tools can be used to cultivate ecological sensitivity and a heightened awareness of God's immanence in the natural world." Here is an adaptation of the *Ecological Examen* that we think will help you foster your own sense of mindfulness of and appreciation for all of creation.

Use this spiritual exercise to *foster ecological sensitivity and a heightened awareness of God's presence* in the natural world and God's guidance that comes from it. As Father Joseph writes, "The goal of any examen is a discerning heart, so the purpose of an 'ecological examen' is to recognize ourselves as creatures in and of the world: How is God inviting us personally to see creation, and how are we responding?" The five movements parallel the traditional examen.

The Five Movements of the Ecological Examen:

First Movement: Begin with thanksgiving and gratitude for all creation, which reflects the beauty and blessing of God's image. Where were you most aware of this gift today?

Second Movement: Ask the Spirit to open your eyes to the ways you might protect and care for creation.

Third Movement: Review the challenges and joys experienced in this care. How were you drawn into God today through creation? How were you being invited to respond to God's action in creation?

Fourth Movement: Ask for a clear and true awareness of your offenses against creation, whether it be an attitude of superiority or arrogance or a failure to respond to God in the needs of creation.

Fifth Movement: Ask for hope and grace to see the incarnate Christ in the dynamic interconnections of all creation.

Conclude the Examen with a Prayer:

Joseph uses the following prayer of Jesus: "The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (John 17:22-23)

Outcome of the Ecological Examen over Time:

Awareness/Appreciation/Commitment



“ People say to me, ‘Oh, you gotta be crazy! How can you sing in times like these? How can you dream in times like these? How can you love in times like these?’ A song is somewhere to begin.”

—from Sara Thomsen’s CD *Somewhere to Begin*, song by T.R. Ritchie

Headlines scream of despair and destruction, so where do we turn for hope? On May 1–2, Gail Worcelo, CP, co-foundress of Green Mountain Monastery (with the late Father Thomas Berry) and Sara Thomsen, musical artist, storyteller and minstrel of hope, will invite us to what Joanna Macy calls “active hope,” as we move faithfully—boldly—into our future. At Prairiewoods’ annual *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference, Sister Gail and Sara will talk about a “collective emergence” as we evolve into greater complexity and unity for our future. The convergence of people from many different spiritual paths to collaborate on behalf of all creation is a hallmark of our “shared fields of awakening.” Already, we are becoming more and more conscious of what connects us, rather than what separates us. Our inter-dependence gives us hope, joy and courage. It takes extraordinary commitment to re-imagine ourselves and our role in the great web of life and to re-create our world for the good of all. Active hope calls for vulnerability, malleability, relational courage and trust among all people on the planet. Now is when we are “stepping on the threshold” of a new way of being. Humanity is evolving into its own conscious fullness, making the leap from “me” to “we!”

There is hope ...

“At a time when many people are frustrated by the lack of action by government to build stronger, sustainable communities, we have found a way in Iowa to grow our solar energy industry ... This is a win for our economy, our health, our environment and our future.”

—Rob Hogg, Iowa Senator



... for our families

... for our civic communities

... for our spiritual communities

Evolutionary

You are here!

Somewhere

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Parliament of the World’s Religions
 October 2015 in Salt Lake City
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Consciousness

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"I think the Sustainable Living department (at Maharishi University) is a living example of the Donella Meadows quote: 'There is too much bad news to justify complacency. There is too much good news to justify despair.'"

—Dr. Travis Cox, Maharishi University

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RETREATS

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Silent Directed Retreats

Sunday, June 7, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, June 13, 1 p.m. and Sunday, July 19, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, July 25, 1 p.m.

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

Does a silent directed retreat meet your needs for a summer-time rendezvous with God? If you desire more time for prayer and reflection, or if you're feeling consistently depleted, out of kilter with your heart's desires or in need of better balance in your daily life, a week-long foray into the silence may be just the balm for you. These silent retreats (offered in June and July) provide lavish time and sacred space for prayer, solitude, quiet and peace.

Fee: \$410 includes retreat sessions, spiritual direction, lodging and all meals (lodgers only)

Innovation and Deep Engagement through Classroom Conversation

Tuesday, June 16, 8 a.m.–Friday, June 19, 5 p.m.

Facilitators: Barbara Ressler & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Highly experiential, participative and reflective, this retreat will offer teachers and school administrators the opportunity to learn, practice and apply six conversations cited in Peter Block's *Community: A Sense of Belonging*. Sessions focus on studying and practicing theory and offer opportunities for design and application with students. Each session provides a learning community experience with student and teacher collaboration and evaluation. Using conversation to transform instructional practice and classroom culture increases student engagement and, consequently, achievement. This retreat reflects the *Ten Skills for the Future* and *Iowa's Universal Construct*. Participants can receive Continuing Education Credits for teachers.

Barbara Ressler, high school English teacher and life-long learner, nurtures a vision and passion for 21st century education. Ann Jackson, PBVM, loves learning, literature and circular leadership. Former teaching colleagues, long-time friends, and conversation devotees, together these two create a dynamic team for re-visioning classroom and educational possibility. Come hungry for inspiration and possibilities ... *you will leave fed!*

Fee: \$100 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals (CEUs are an additional \$100)

Commuter Fee: \$75 includes retreat sessions, daily lunch and dinner, and Friday lunch



What Dreams May Come: Sacred Time

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

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

In this unique retreat, you will focus on and pray with personal dreams and archetypal images. Allow the unconscious to become conscious and thus grow spiritually through deepening your relationship with Self (based on C.G. Jung's concept of God within/our deepest truest self). So that the inner process of each person is honored, this will be a silent retreat, other than the opening and closing meals and the facilitated interactions in the group gatherings. The rhythm of each day includes private and communal prayer, substantive interactive input, private time, dream group work and movies in the evening that illustrate aspects of dream work. Before the retreat, you are invited to read *Liberating the Heart: Spirituality and Jungian Psychology* by Lawrence Jaffe.

Marj English, OSF, and Joann Gehling, FSPA, are Haden Institute-trained dream group leaders. Both have years of experience facilitating spiritual direction, retreats and small groups for various purposes.

Fee: \$450 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals (lodgers only)

Sacred New Story: A Conscious Meditation on Social Activism

Sunday, June 28, 5:30 p.m.–Friday, July 3, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Mary Plaster & Richie Townsend

Mary Plaster and Richie Townsend are post-graduate students of Matthew Fox, Creation Spirituality theologian and author. They have studied activism with Joanna Macy and Starhawk. They will partner their talents to present a week that spirals deeply through paths of wonder, emptying, creating and going forth for social justice with art making, story telling, gentle movement, drumming and star gazing.

Mary is a mixed-media artist who uses large visuals in celebration, meditation, ritual and activism. Her masks and puppets have appeared across the country. Richie is a musician, amateur astronomer, Taijiquan (or t'ai chi) instructor, ritual leader, and teacher of Creation Spirituality, Cosmology, Deep Ecology and Perspectives on Life and Death.

Fee: \$410 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals (lodging strongly encouraged)

Commuter Fee: \$350 includes retreat sessions and daily lunch



Yoga Flow: Using Yoga to Navigate the Ups and Downs of Life

Sunday, July 19, 5:30 p.m.–Friday, July 24, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Anji Kozikowski

Dive deeper into silence, self-discovery and acceptance by exploring the energy of your diverse emotional moods. Explore the five *prana vayus* (or winds of expression), as well as specific *yoga asana*, *pranayama* and meditation techniques that will help you cultivate joy and calm. Spend time exploring specific yoga techniques for managing anxiety and depression. You even can participate in a special optional Kirtan (or call-and-response concert) that will show you how chanting can open your heart to joy and peace. Participants can receive 10 Continuing Education Credits for Yoga Alliance for certified yoga instructors.

Anji Kozikowski is an Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher (E-RYT 200) with more than 15 years professional experience. She is a certified personal trainer and integrative nutrition coach, as well as a reconnection healing practitioner.

Fee: \$425 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals (lodgers only)



Active Hope: The Work that Reconnects

Friday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 16, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Kathleen Rude

Be inspired! We live in challenging times. How can we respond in a loving way that makes a difference in our world? We can choose *Active Hope*. Active Hope is about becoming a participant in bringing about that for which we hope. It is a practice, a way of living with purpose. This interactive retreat is based on *The Work That Reconnects*, an innovative process developed by Joanna Macy, internationally acclaimed author, eco-philosopher and activist. It will help you transform fear and despair into inspiration and empowerment. Experience the healing power of gratitude, find compassion in honoring your pain for the world, embrace your connections with the self-healing powers in the web of life and realize your potential to make a difference. This retreat includes practicing movement, inspirational readings and teachings, and simple rituals—engaging, invigorating tools for dealing with life's challenges!

Kathleen Rude, a life-long environmentalist mentored by Joanna Macy, conducts retreats on environmental and social change as well as spirituality and healing. A member of The Work That Reconnects Facilitator Network, she also is an environmental writer and advocate with a Master of Science degree in natural resources.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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



Brush Wisdom: Messages from the Contemplative Heart

Friday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 16, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Thomas Roberts, LCSW, LMFT

Brush Wisdom taps into how your life expresses itself. Explore the interplay of mind, body and spirit through the expressive use of the brush stroke in a contemplative, calm place and pace. When the mind is clear and calm, the inner brush wisdom emerges! The foundation of Brush Wisdom is no-mind. The paintings come from silence and stillness. The beauty is that there is no technique. This retreat is a creative representation of the spiritual experience that draws upon the spontaneity of direct spiritual expression without overanalyzing. Deeply inspiring meditation, Brush Wisdom helps develop a deep sense of presence and open relationship to the true self. To engage stillness and silence, you will utilize gentle Qi Gong, breathing and haiku. No artistic experience is necessary.

Thomas Roberts, LCSW, LMFT, is a healer, educator, author and retreat facilitator who translates mindfulness techniques into practical strategies for healthier, happier living! A licensed psychotherapist and clinical hypnotherapist, he also authored *The Mindfulness Workbook: A Beginner's Guide to Overcoming Fear and Embracing Compassion*.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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



Voices Serving the Holy in All

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

Facilitator: Liz Rog

Join a growing global movement, knitting the world together through songs of love, play, spirit and freedom. This weekend retreat is for people who don't sing and people who love to sing. You'll sing easy-to-learn, playfully challenging songs that speak to critical themes—environmental, social, interpersonal—in a way that brings joy, a sense of success and an expression of shared meaning. Relax into the voice you were born to sing with as you share beautiful, fun, simple songs that can reshape the world. By the circular, non-hierarchical, harmonious intertwining of your voices, you can bring light to the world!

Liz Rog is a songleader in the global Ubuntu tradition, which welcomes all voices, using the collective brain in the body to weave songs and community. Liz delights in helping people rediscover their ancestral birthright of group singing. She enjoys re-seeding of the earth with songs for the renewal of all.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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



PROGRAMS

Day of Self Renewal **Mondays, May 4 & June 1,** **8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit during our monthly Day of Self Renewal, which features two 40-minute holistic services of your choice, group Guided Meditation, a private guest room, art supplies, walking trails, fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from Swedish massage, reflexology, head and shoulder massage, healing touch spiritual ministry, paraffin bath for hands, spiritual direction or yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina **Tuesdays, May 5, May 19, June 2 &** **June 16, 10–11:45 a.m.**

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Come together in a circle of trust to integrate imagination, learning and prayer through the practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. *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 stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$10 per session

Drumming for Healing **Wednesdays, May 6, May 20, June 3** **& June 17, 6–7 p.m.**

Facilitator: Sheri Mealhouse
(Hawkwoman)

In the cosmic experience, drumming touches many people at a deep level and brings all creation together as a community. Drumming—and feeling the Creator's rhythm inside of you—resonates with a variety of people. Come see how it resonates with you! No experience is necessary, and percussion instruments are available. All ages are welcome. In inclement weather, this circle meets indoors.

Fee: Free-will offering

Vino van Gogh **Friday, May 8, 6–9 p.m.**

Facilitator: Vino van Gogh artist



Celebrate mom a little early this Mother's Day weekend by bringing her out to paint, drink and be merry! You will be provided with a 16-by-20-inch canvas, all art supplies, instruction, and an apron to create your own work of art. Wine, cheese,

hors d'oeuvres and other beverages are included. A professional artist will guide you to paint *Starry Night* (shown at left). No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome. A non-refundable deposit of \$30 is due at registration.

Fee: \$50 (\$40 for those under 21) includes canvas, art supplies, instruction, apron and refreshments

Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing **Tuesdays, May 12, May 26, June 9,** **June 23 & June 30, 10–11:45 a.m.**

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Meet with other Christian seekers to discuss life and faith in a trusting environment. Use the upcoming Sunday readings from the three-year Lectionary cycle used in many mainline Christian churches to explore and discuss various topics. 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. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$5 per session

Eco-Swap **Sunday, May 17, 1–3 p.m.**

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Eco-Swaps are a great way to come together in love, abundance and sharing to swap items you no longer need for things that you really want. And everything is traded, so you don't need any money! Please bring items in good condition, including clothing, household items, furniture or garden supplies. This is a joint project of Prairiewoods, Indian Creek Nature Center, the Catherine McAuley Center and The Tapestry.

Fee: Free

Dream Group **Wednesdays, May 20 & June 17,** **1–3 p.m.**

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

Use a Jungian approach to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams to help you grow. This Dream Group meets the third Wednesday of each month. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. To participate, you must have completed a Prairiewoods Dream Workshop or Dream Retreat, or something comparable. Registration is required at least a week in advance.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$20 per session

Walking the Line: Memoirs on **Oil, Land and People** **Wednesday, May 20, 6:30–8 p.m.**

Facilitator: Ed Fallon

Ed Fallon, a former Iowa legislator, will share about his experience on the Great March for Climate Action and his 400-mile walk across Iowa. This walk,



along the path of the proposed Bakken Oil Pipeline, helped landowners who don't want their land taken by eminent domain—an area of law Ed worked on extensively as a state lawmaker. Ed also will discuss the urgency of the climate crisis, the need to protect our water and other issues surrounding the oil pipeline.

Fee: Free-will offering

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony **Saturdays, May 30 & June 27, 5 p.m.** **(enter lodge at dusk)**

Facilitator: Rod Courtney

Prairiewoods offers a Sweat Lodge Ceremony focused on prayer, purification, and healing. The lodge is a small dome-shaped structure in which participants sit on the earth around heated stones. You are asked to bring something for a community meal afterwards. Registration is requested one week in advance.

Fee: Free-will offering to Prairiewoods

Save the Date! for these upcoming programs:

- **Audubon: Birding in Peru** with Doug Haar, May 4
- **Women in Interfaith Dialogue** with Barbara Schlachter, May 30
- **Imagine Energy Traveler Training Day** with I-Renew, May 30
- **Audubon Summer Potluck**, June 1
- **Garden Party** at St. Pius X Church, June 6
- **Summer Solstice** at Ushers Ferry, June 24
- **Nourish Your Bodyspirit: A Funtensive Weekend** with Mary & Matt Cohen, July 17–18
- **Fall Equinox** at Matthew 25's Urban Farm, Sept. 19
- **Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival**, Sept. 25–27 (with Blessing of the Animals Sept. 27)
- **Winter Solstice** at Indian Creek Nature Center, Dec. 18

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Creating with the Spirit & Nature Sunday, May 31, 1–5 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 wondrous works of art in this hands-on workshop. Ruth, who has been an artist for more than 35 years, will guide you to create a chair and a totem figure. Registration and prepayment are required. **Fee:** \$35 includes materials



Food • Faith • Climate: Connecting the Dots Sunday, May 31, 2:30–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Sarah Webb, Iowa Interfaith Power & Light

Climate change is related to our food choices. At every meal, we can make a real difference that ensures a more climate-friendly food system. And luckily, the ethical choices are also pleasurable ones that improve the health of the planet and our bodies! Look at healthy food options, study their effects on our climate, and tour the Prairiewoods garden. Register at www.lowlPL.org/Act/Register-Events. **Fee:** \$25

burial laws, and how to communicate your burial wishes to your friends and family. Facilitator Anne Murphy serves on the National Home Funeral Alliance Board. Registration and prepayment are required by May 28. **Fee:** \$15

Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way* Book Study (new session) Mondays, beginning June 8, 7–9 p.m.

Facilitator: Joni Reed Cooley
Using *The Artist's Way* as a guide, Prairiewoods' Artist in Residence Joni Reed Cooley will lead the group in discussion, creative experiences, guided reflections and rituals to explore the essence of integral spirituality. Discover the source of your creative self in this compacted series from June 8–Aug. 10 (designed to fit summer schedules). **Fee:** \$5 per session plus \$15 book

Nurturing a Spiritual Relationship with Nature Saturday, June 13, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Facilitators: Sue Nading & Joni Reed Cooley

Earth is in crisis, and society is struggling to define its relationship with nature. Under Sue Nading's compassion-filled guidance, you will define your spiritual ecology and evolve your relationship with nature through meditation, evaluation of media and literature, exploration of myth archetypes, and creative exercises such as journaling, reflective writing and role-

Introduction to Natural Burials Tuesday, June 2, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Anne Murphy

Do you want to learn more about your options for a natural burial? Come discuss the history of conventional burial and its environmental impacts, the use of biodegradable and non-toxic containers and shrouds, current Iowa

playing. Joni Reed Cooley will guide you to creatively express your eco-spirit through a torn-paper collage.

Fee: \$40 includes materials, instruction and lunch

Sustainable Living: GMOs Wednesday, June 17, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Bethany Jensen

What are genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and why should you care? Discuss how GMOs impact the environment and your health, as well as how you can avoid them. Leave with a greater understanding of our food system and how you can make a difference.

Fee: Free-will offering

Native American Style Drum Making Workshop Saturday, June 20, 1–5 p.m.

Facilitators: Shelly & Randy Stenzel, Feather Ridge Flutes

A drum manifests creation's heartbeat within you. In this workshop, you will construct your own 16-inch deer hide, 12-sided Native American style hand-held drum under Shelly and Randy Stenzel's guidance. Please bring a stone that fits your hand for the handle; all other materials will be provided. This workshop is limited to 12 participants. **Fee:** \$210 includes materials (optional \$15 for drum stick, \$40 for drum bag)

The Summer's Edge: Native Flute Concert

Saturday, June 20, 7–9:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Jonny Lipford

As summer presents herself in full glory, listen to the voices of the land. Jonny Lipford will play the Native American style flute (and he may bring a few friends!).

Bring a lawn chair or blanket, beverages and some snacks for a relaxing and entertaining evening. In case of inclement weather, Jonny will perform indoors.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10



CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

1st & 3rd Thursdays monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Come together with other spiritual seekers to learn how to live a more contemplative life. Discuss readings from the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes writings from Thomas Merton and other spiritual writers. The intent is to encourage contemplative living and growth in the ability to respond to life's events with greater faith.

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 praying in silence. Relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you during this time of silence and centering prayer. The group meets in the Guest House, and you may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Men's Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life

2nd & 4th Thursdays monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

As they mature, many men undergo a major life transformation from goal driven-ness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom. The transition may seem quite disruptive while on the way to being life-enhancing. Join with a small group of reflective men in honest conversation about life's changes. Call to learn what book the group is discussing.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Do you love to knit or crochet? Practice your hobby in the company of new friends! Create beautiful handmade goods for charity and learn new skills as you go. You may join at any time, and donations of materials are accepted with gratitude.

Fee: Free

Wednesday Women

Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women to be spiritually enriched, inspired and challenged. They meet weekly during the school year and the first Wednesday of the month June–Aug. You are welcome to come any time!

On May 6, finish discussing Joan Chittister's award-winning book *Scarred by Struggle, Transformed by Hope* with pages 83–111.

On May 20 and 27, view and discuss Spiritual Cinema Circle's *The God Question*, in which the world's most powerful computer answers the question, *does God exist?*

On June 3, Anne Murphy will discuss natural burials, flameless cremation, current Iowa burial laws and the environmental impacts of conventional burials.

Wednesday Women will not meet May 13 or July 1. Visit www.Prairiewoods.org for details on each topic.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

Hatha Way Yoga

Mondays, 9:30–10:30 a.m. & 4:15–6:30 p.m., Thursdays, 4:15–6:30 p.m., & Fridays, 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Cindy Hathaway

Experience the healing powers of meditative yoga through weekly courses offered by Cindy Hathaway of Hatha Way Yoga. Cindy offers six yoga classes each week, including Gentle, Chair and Beginner's Yoga. People of all fitness levels and abilities are encouraged to come for one or all classes. Cindy, who has practiced yoga for eight years and taught for three, is certified as a Transformational Yoga Instructor through Jackie Chiodo of the Anamaya Resort in Costa Rica. Register through Cindy at cindylhathaway@gmail.com or 319-431-6597.

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

Our Wish List for the garden:

- shovels
- leaf rakes
- stakes
- laundry baskets
- tarps
- edging
- hand tools & larger tools
- buckets (5-gallon & ice cream)
- tomato/pepper cages
- new or used boards/lumber
- garden center gift cards
- divided perennial food plants

If you have any items to donate, please contact Emy Sautter.

Staff Phone Extensions and Email Addresses

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JANUARY/FEBRUARY DONORS

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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In honor of Betty Daugherty, FSPA
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In honor of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, staff & board
Chris & Laurie Harris
In honor of Joann Gehling, FSPA
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In honor of Emy Sautter
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Announcing Staff Change at Prairiewoods

Prairiewoods recently bid a happy retirement to one of our longest-serving staff members, Housekeeper **Linda Koehler**.



Linda didn't want to leave without saying goodbye to all of you: "It was over 10 years ago that I was at a place in my life feeling a need to make a change. A friend told me to check with Prairiewoods, and that's where my journey began. I want to thank all the sisters and staff for years of kindness and support. I will truly miss

all the wonderful people and friends I have met over the years. I look forward to spending time with family and ... *oh, the places I will go!*"

Now we welcome **Judy Hines** as the new housekeeper. She comes to us from Mercy Hospital and brings a positive outlook, gentle spirit and palpable desire to work with our mission. Please help us show Judy all the hospitality and kindness that she will show our guests!





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



Support Prairiewoods at Garden Party on June 6

Prairiewoods' mission is to serve as a sacred space that helps *all people* nurture their relationships with the Source of all Being, Earth, others and themselves. You can help further this mission by supporting the *Garden Party*, Prairiewoods' largest fundraising event of the year. It promises to be a fun-filled evening of fellowship, good food and lavish auction items!

On *Saturday, June 6*, the tenth annual Garden Party will be held at St. Pius X Church. The festivities begin at 5 p.m. with a social hour. For the first time,

What You Need to Know

Who: Prairiewoods Supporters

What: 10th Annual Prairiewoods Garden Party

When: Saturday, June 6, 5 p.m.

Where: St. Pius X Church
4949 Council Street NE, Cedar Rapids

How Much: \$40 each, \$320 for a table of eight

This event is ticketless, so please register each guest by name. **The RSVP deadline is Thursday, May 28.**

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

this year's social will feature farm-fresh appetizers demonstrated and served by New Pioneer Food Co-Op. This is the perfect time to bid on fabulous silent auction items, buy raffle tickets and play Prairiewoods' own Dough for Dough game, in which you buy a loaf of Prairiewoods bread for a chance to win \$250 cash!

Then dine on a gourmet dinner prepared by the chefs at Catering by LJ's. Put in your last-minute bids on your favorite silent auction items and settle in for a rousing live auction officiated by auctioneer Chad Sheppard.

Exciting plans are being made as you read this for a huge variety of items on which you can bid. This year's auctions will include irresistible items ranging from *original art* to *one-of-a-kind dining experiences*, from *pampering massages* to *unique vacations*. Our live auction will culminate with a *week's stay at an exclusive timeshare!*

Tickets to the Garden Party cost \$40 per person or \$320 per table of eight (a portion of which is tax-deductible). Attending the Garden Party is a great way to support the wonderful variety of spiritual and ecological programming Prairiewoods provides throughout the year. *We hope you'll join us!*

Prairiewoods

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

Water: Inspiration for Creation, Poetry and Prayer

This is our time in history. We are the people on stage. Do we know our lines? Do we even have the right vocabulary?

We'll need to learn quickly, creating awareness of the dangers that lie in the future and forming the collective human response that will be needed to carry the story forward.

An example of one crisis of our time: we are quickly running out of clean, plentiful water. Water, which covers about 70 percent of Earth's surface and composes 80 percent of the human body, is essential for all life on this planet. Water not only keeps us alive physically, it nourishes us spiritually and psychologically.

Yet, in our world today, waterways that were once clean are now polluted with rubbish, chemicals and harmful bacteria. About one sixth of the world's population does not have fresh drinking water.

What can be done about this growing problem? How can we—those of us making decisions today—help to ensure the possibility of a sustainable and viable future? Thomas Berry, a well-known prophetic voice for the entire Earth community, suggests that at the root of our present situation is our alienation from the natural world. In other words, *our most basic need is to develop an intimate relationship with nature*, a personal relationship with lakes and rivers, with fields and forests, and with the astounding creatures of this world. Berry urges parents to spend time with their children exploring the wonders of nature: "Let's go out into the sunshine, let's go wade in the creek, let's go meet the trees."

On a similar note, Swiss naturalist Louis Agassiz once

remarked, "I spent the summer traveling. I got halfway across my backyard."

Both men speak of coming to know the sacredness of creation through experience, through forming a spiritual connection to Earth. They suggest that this is the way in which the decision-makers of tomorrow will acquire the knowledge, learn the values and mature within a cosmology of care.

Most of us can remember times in our own lives when we felt transfixed by nature's beauty. Who of us has not, standing in our own back yard at night gazing upward into a starlit sky, experienced an encounter with mystery? This is a basic religious experience. This is meeting the "Holy."

Water, too, invites us into prayerful space. Its beauty can be mesmerizing, inspiring poetry as well as prayer. Wendell Berry, in his poem *Water*, speaks of how sweet it is to hear rain on the roof after days of dry heat. Carl Sandburg writes about how old stones remember past rains and how willows sleep on the shoulders of running water. Saint Francis spoke to Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and chaste.

But in our crisis today, we, who need the rain to soak into dry ground, who rejoice in the small streams that sing their way down a mountain side, who rely on reservoirs that are full as we cry out for clean water to quench our thirst, we are the ones to move our vision forward. What is it that connects such a common element as water to all that is sacred?

(continued on page 3)



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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



*In the wave-strike over unquiet stones
the brightness bursts and bears the rose
and the ring of water contracts to a cluster
to one drop of azure brine that falls.
O magnolia radiance breaking in spume,
magnetic voyager whose death flowers
and returns, eternal, to being and nothingness:
shattered brine, dazzling leap of the ocean.
Merged, you and I, my love, seal the silence
while the sea destroys its continual forms,
collapses its turrets of wildness and whiteness,
because in the weft of those unseen garments
of headlong water, and perpetual sand,
we bear the sole, relentless tenderness.*

—Pablo Neruda

The “relentless tenderness” of God’s love, like the “wave-strike over unquiet stones,” washes over us in times of disquiet or need. We all feel the ache of devastating thirst when potable water is scarce. Our precious Earth and all of us who dwell here together—along with the forests, seas, plants and creatures—thirst for refreshment and renewal. We are in need of a soaking-through of such relentless love! As a sacred place of peace and transformation, Prairiewoods provides an oasis for those whose spiritual thirst reflects the parched land at this time of year. We know that our spiritual thirst is irrevocably tied to our need for God and to the needs of the world. When we respond with compassion to the needs around us, renewed life is possible for all. Our love is a healing balm, fresh water to cleanse open wounds and slake agonizing thirsts. Water is a key catalyst for life, but at this time in our history, water scarcity threatens our global family.

“The water crisis is the #1 global risk based on impact to society (as a measure of devastation), and the #8 global risk based on likelihood (likelihood of occurring within 10 years) as announced by the World Economic Forum, January 2015.” —www.Water.org

Salinization of rivers causes serious toxicity for soil and plant life. Dramatic climate change, resulting in widespread drought and massively unstable weather patterns, coupled with the wasteful squandering of natural aquifers, means water—and therefore life itself—is at risk.

In these pages, you will find many opportunities for slaking your spiritual thirst and opportunities for refreshment that are relentless as the ocean waves crashing on lonely shores. “All you who are thirsty, come to the water!” (Isa. 55:1) Have your fill and be satisfied!

Peace,

Laura A. Weber, Interim 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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THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER

(continued from page 1)

We might begin with the deep realization that everything that supports life, including water, was birthed in the original fireball that exploded in a great burst of energy about fifteen billion years ago. In the same explosion of dust and gas out of which the stars and planets eventually emerged, water also was made possible. Scientists speculate that water molecules were part of the same dusty swirl from which our own solar system was formed. Water—sacred water—is part of the original gift that is the universe.

Now, some 4.5 billion years after Earth itself came into being with all that was needed for life, we are in great need of treasuring the gifts our Creator has given to us out of Great Love. We need to expand our awareness of the “big picture,” to see that the way in which each of us lives our lives is truly significant. *The natural world is the location for sacred communion.*

Fortunately, people are responding as individuals and as members of a variety of organizations. Here are some basic facts to consider, some discouraging and some hopeful:

- 20% of water pollution comes from the runoff of toxic products used in lawn care, and over 8,000,000,000 gallons of water are used to water those lawns.
- Americans use 70,000,000 pounds of pesticides on their gardens each year. These chemicals find their way into our water source.
- However, the number of people responding to the challenge of protecting water is growing rapidly. New organizations are rising up across the world devoted to this issue. A few of these are: Green Faith, Food and Water Watch, Catholic Climate Covenant and Water without Borders.

What are YOU doing for water in this time of history? What more can you do?



Planets form in the presence of abundant interstellar water inherited as ices from the parent molecular cloud. (Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/R. Hurt (SSC-Caltech)/ESO/J. Emerson/VISTA/Cambridge Astronomical Survey Unit)

Vidi Aquam

He sat on a boulder
in the middle of a flowing stream,
and sang the entire *Vidi Aquam*.

“I saw water...”

I, too, have seen water in its many forms,
as glacier, icicle, snow, hoarfrost,
dew, drizzle, downpour
dripping, running, gushing,
thundering, trickling, seeping.
It speaks to us with many voices,
singing, humming, gurgling,
proclaiming, shouting, laughing.
And if we listen carefully, we can hear
the voice of the One who pours out
torrents of love and mercy.

We are bathed in love forever.

—Nina Shepard, FSPA

Vidi Aquam, part of Psalm 117, is used in the rite of sprinkling the congregation with holy water during Easter-tide. Translated it reads: “I saw water flowing from the right side of the temple, alleluia; and all they to whom that water came were saved, and they shall say, alleluia, alleluia.”

To read a water poem written by *Prairiewoods* friend Jean Junis, visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Blog.

Generous Grants Lead to Stream Bank Restoration

By Emy Sautter

I am happy to announce that Prairiewoods has been awarded grant funding through the GP Fund for the Environment, Program Grant Fund of the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation and Rockwell Collins for our first Stream Bank Restoration Project. Our restoration efforts on the land can now include the water as well!

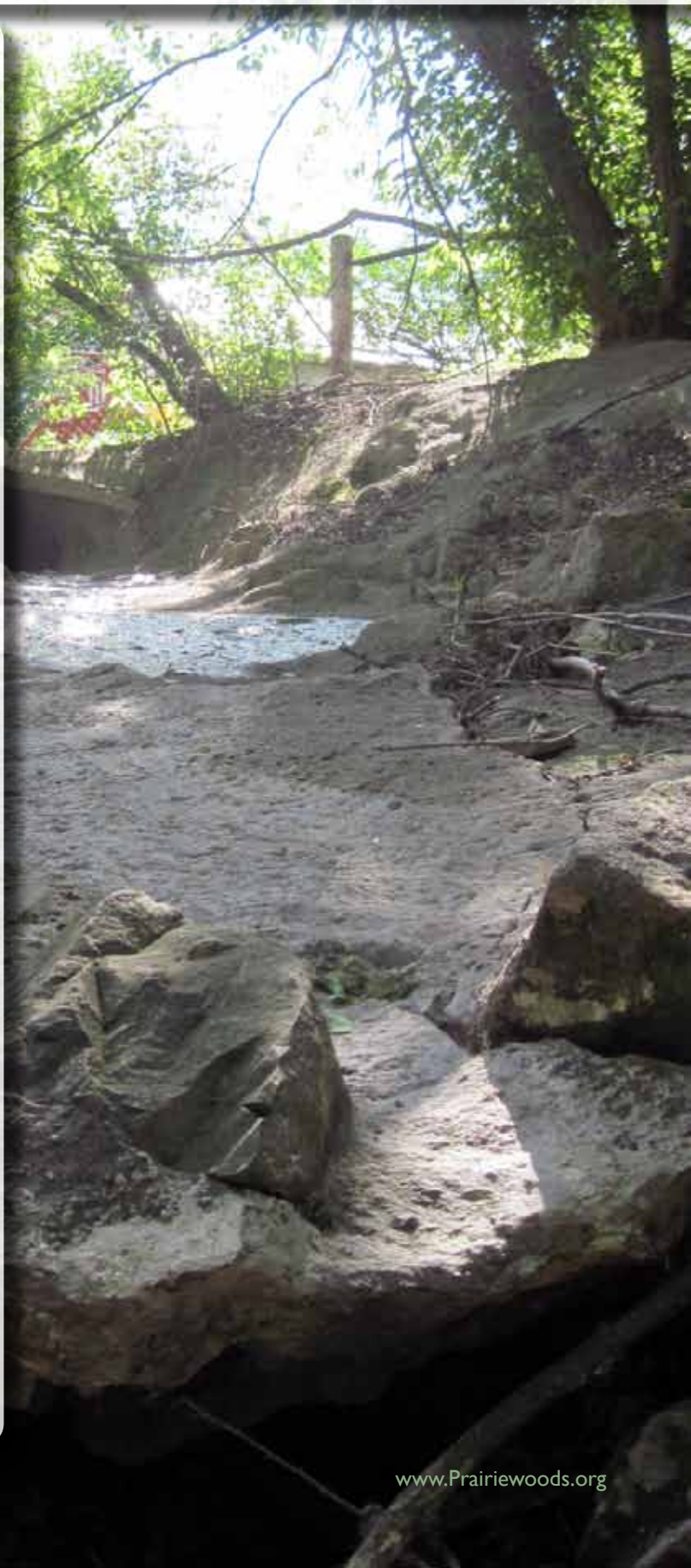
This project has been a long time coming, and we are excited to finally get started! Currently, there is a storm culvert on the east side of our property that drains stormwater from the neighborhood that abuts our eastern property line. This culvert is in great need of repair, and the water that has been rushing through this culvert has led to a highly eroded channel that connects with Dry Creek. *This project will include:*

- *Fixing the existing culvert.*
- *Re-shaping the eroded banks.*
- *Revegetating the banks with native plants.*

Right now, some of the banks are extremely steep, and little to no vegetation can grow to hold the soil in place. Part of the project will include excavating the banks so that they have a gentle slope that allows the water to spread out and vegetation to grow. Our goal is to slow the water down and allow it to spread out over the land. In doing so, there will be less erosion, less pollution and fewer negative impacts on the land and creek. We hope that this project can serve as a pilot project for the community, as an example of how we can improve waterways and therefore improve stormwater systems, lessen water pollution, and improve water quality and habitats. Rain barrels are one way that you can reduce stormwater run-off in your own yard. If you want to make one, check out the class we are hosting July 30 as part of this project! (See page 8.)

A huge thanks to our grant writer Cara Matteson and our other supporters and collaborators: The City of Cedar Rapids; Coe College; Lisa Burch, PE, with YTT Design Solutions; Linn County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Department. We kick-started this project on May 15 with a great group of TransAmerica volunteers through the *United Way Day of Caring*. Volunteers helped us remove vegetation from around the culvert and banks so that we can access these areas for construction. This project brings a fresh and renewed meaning to the quote:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” —Margaret Meade



The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Sacred New Story: A Conscious Meditation on Social Activism

Sunday, June 28, 5:30 p.m.–Friday, July 3, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Mary Plaster & Richie Townsend

Mary Plaster and Richie Townsend are post-graduate students of Matthew Fox, Creation Spirituality theologian and author. They have studied activism with Joanna Macy and Starhawk. They will partner their talents to present a week that spirals deeply through paths of wonder, emptying, creating and going forth for social justice with art making, story telling, gentle movement, drumming and star gazing.



Mary is a mixed-media artist who uses large visuals in celebration, meditation, ritual and activism. Her masks and puppets have appeared across the country. Richie is a musician, amateur astronomer, Taijiquan (or t'ai chi) instructor, ritual leader, and teacher of Creation Spirituality, Cosmology, Deep Ecology and Perspectives on Life and Death.

Fee: \$410 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals (lodging strongly encouraged)

Commuter Fee: \$350 includes retreat sessions and daily lunch

Active Hope: The Work that Reconnects

Friday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 16, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Kathleen Rude

Be inspired! We live in challenging times. How can we respond in a loving way that makes a difference in our world? We can choose *Active Hope*. Active Hope is about becoming a participant in bringing about that for which we hope. It is a practice, a way of living with purpose. This interactive retreat is based on *The Work That Reconnects*, an innovative process developed by Joanna Macy, internationally acclaimed author, eco-philosopher and activist. It will help you transform fear and despair into inspiration and empowerment. Experience the healing power of gratitude, find compassion in honoring your pain for the world, embrace your connections with the self-healing powers in the web of life and realize your potential to make a difference. This retreat includes practicing movement, inspirational readings and teachings, and simple rituals—engaging, invigorating tools for dealing with life's challenges!



Kathleen Rude, a life-long environmentalist mentored by Joanna Macy, conducts retreats on environmental and social change as well as spirituality and healing. A member of The Work That Reconnects Facilitator Network, she also is an environmental writer and advocate with a Master of Science degree in natural resources.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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

Brush Wisdom: Messages from the Contemplative Heart

Friday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 16, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Thomas Roberts, LCSW, LMFT

Brush Wisdom taps into how your life expresses itself. Explore the interplay of mind, body and spirit through the expressive use of the brush stroke in a contemplative, calm place and pace. When the mind is clear and calm, the inner brush wisdom emerges! The foundation of Brush Wisdom is no-mind. The paintings come from silence and stillness. The beauty is that there is no technique. This retreat is a creative representation of the spiritual experience that draws upon the spontaneity of direct spiritual expression without overanalyzing. Deeply inspiring meditation, Brush Wisdom helps develop a deep sense of presence and open relationship to the true self. To engage stillness and silence, you will utilize gentle Qi Gong, breathing and haiku. No artistic experience is necessary.



Thomas Roberts, LCSW, LMFT, is a healer, educator, author and retreat facilitator who translates mindfulness techniques into practical strategies for healthier, happier living! A licensed psychotherapist and clinical hypnotherapist, he also authored *The Mindfulness Workbook: A Beginner's Guide to Overcoming Fear and Embracing Compassion*.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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

Voices Serving the Holy in All

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

Facilitator: Liz Rog

Join a growing global movement, knitting the world together through songs of love, play, spirit and freedom. This weekend retreat is for people who don't sing and people who love to sing. You'll sing easy-to-learn, playfully challenging songs that speak to critical themes—environmental, social, interpersonal—in a way that brings joy, a sense of success and an expression of shared meaning. Relax into the voice you were born to

RETREATS

sing with as you share beautiful, fun, simple songs that can reshape the world. By the circular, non-hierarchical, harmonious intertwining of your voices, you can bring light to the world!

Liz Rog is a songleader in the global Ubuntu tradition, which welcomes all voices, using the collective brain in the body to weave songs and community. Liz delights in helping people rediscover their ancestral birthright of group singing. Leaving behind the auditions, paper, solos, grades and performances of formal singing, you are left with a simple, joyful and holy intertwining of voice with Earth and sky.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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



Generation Waking Up

Friday, Sept. 11, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Sept. 13, 3 p.m.

Facilitator: Joshua Gorman & Generation Waking Up Team

“We are the middle children of History, coming of age at the crossroads of civilization, a generation rising between an old world dying and a new world being born. We are the ‘make-it or break-it’ generation, the ‘all-or-nothing’ generation, the crucible through which civilization must pass or crash.”

—Joshua Gorman

Are you part of this young generation, ready to co-create a fair and sustainable world? Join Generation Waking Up, a global movement that is igniting a generation of young people to birth forth a thriving, just, sustainable world. Through inspiring multimedia and dynamic group interaction, you will explore the critical questions facing society today. This is one of the most promising movements of the Millennial Generation, empowering people to wake up to a clear sense of purpose to contribute to a healthy, sustainable world. Generation Waking Up strives to:



- Awaken a clear sense of who you are as a generation, an understanding of the urgent global challenges and opportunities you face, and a calling to take action.
- Empower you with the training, mentoring and support needed to thrive as global citizens, leaders and change agents in the 21st century.
- Mobilize you locally and globally across issues, geography and all lines of difference, unleashing the collaborative power of your generation.

Friday evening will be a WakeUp Experience, and Saturday and Sunday will train you to be a GenUp Facilitator.

Fee: \$175 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals (Friday only is \$25, and Saturday/Sunday only is \$150)

Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.) 8 Saturdays, Sept. 12 & May 7, 9 a.m.–3 p.m., and Saturdays, Oct. 17, Nov. 14, Dec. 12, Jan. 16, Feb. 20, March 12 & April 16, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

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

Do you wonder how the Spirit is moving in your everyday life or how you're being invited to grow in your relationship with God and others?

What interior fires are you harnessing for the good of the world? Give yourself the gift of Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.), a retreat taking place over the course of nine months in the very fire of your unique journey, encompassing all your joys, sorrows and holy desires for something *more* in the process. St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Company of Jesus (or the Jesuits), offered the Spiritual Exercises to help seekers dispose their hearts to discover the mysterious meanderings of God in the journey of their lives and direct them toward greater availability for mission.

Praying for an hour each day, considering daily readings designed specifically for S.E.E.L., meditating with Scripture, participating with the group once a month for ongoing reflection and meeting monthly with your individual spiritual director will give your interior life a jolt of desire for God and God's work in the world. Participants often express a greater awareness of the presence and action of God in their lives, an enlivening accompaniment of their group companions and an ongoing invitation to grow in relationship with God and others. Through praying the daily consciousness examen, you will adopt a healthy discipline for prayer and experience a deepening habit of gratitude, leading to healthful discernment of life choices and purposeful action. If you are ready for a spiritual work-out and desire to draw closer to the divine Fire, come see what God can do with even the tiniest spark!

Fee: \$450 (payable in September 2015 or in monthly installments of \$50) plus the cost of monthly spiritual direction sessions paid separately

Please request a S.E.E.L. application by emailing lweber@prairiewoods.org. Application due July 15.



Drumming for Healing
Wednesdays, July 1, July 15, Aug. 5 & Aug. 19, 6–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Sheri Mealhouse (Hawkwoman)

Feel the Creator’s rhythm inside you during a biweekly drum circle. In the cosmic experience, drumming touches many people at a deep level and brings all creation together as a community. Drumming—and feeling the Creator’s rhythm inside of you—resonates with a variety of people. Come see how it resonates with you! No experience is necessary, and percussion instruments are available. All ages are welcome. In good weather, this drum circle makes music in the midst of nature; in inclement weather, it meets indoors. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: Free-will offering to facilitator



Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina
Tuesdays, July 7, July 21, Aug. 4 & Aug. 18, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

On the first and third Tuesdays of each month, you are invited to come together in a circle of trust to integrate imagination, learning and prayer through the practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. *Visio Divina* involves listening to the word of God, viewing art, pondering God’s message, letting your heart speak and resting in God. Art images are usually borrowed from *The Saint John’s Bible*, a hand-written, hand-illuminated Bible by renowned calligrapher Donald Jackson. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$10 per session



Earthy Connections Youth Program

Thursdays, July 9 & Aug. 13, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Facilitators: Emy Sautter & Rodney Bluml

Calling all young earthlings! Explore the 70 acres of woodland and prairie that make up Prairiewoods. Go hiking, get creative with nature-inspired activities, learn about the universe and have fun outdoors. This is a morning of exploration and learning for children ages 8 and up. It will be limited to 15 participants. Feel free to bring a snack to share.

Registration is required at least two days in advance.

Fee: \$5



Day of Self Renewal
Mondays, July 6 & Aug. 17, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit during our popular Day of Self Renewal, offered monthly at Prairiewoods. This day of rejuvenation features two 40-minute holistic services of your choice, group Guided Meditation, a private guest room, trails for walking, fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from reflexology, head and shoulder massage, healing touch spiritual ministry, foot spa treatment, paraffin bath for hands, spiritual direction, Swedish massage, or yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services



Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing
Tuesdays, July 14, July 28, Aug. 11 & Aug. 25, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Meet with other Christian seekers to discuss life and faith in a trusting environment. Use the upcoming Sunday readings from the three-year Lectionary cycle used in many mainline Christian churches to explore and discuss various topics. 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. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$5 per session

Dream Group
Wednesdays, July 15 & Aug. 19, 1–3 p.m.

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

Use a Jungian approach to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams to help you grow. This Dream Group meets monthly. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. To participate, you must have completed a Prairiewoods Dream Workshop or Dream Retreat, or something comparable. Registration is required at least a week in advance.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$20 per session

Sustainable Living: Vermicomposting
Wednesday, July 15, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Green Iowa AmeriCorps

Join Green Iowa AmeriCorps as they explain how much fun composting with worms can be! Please bring two containers of the same size that can fit one inside the other (such as 5-gallon buckets or resealable food containers). You will leave with a composting start-up kit including red wigglers. Registration is required by July 3 in order to purchase worms for the group.

Fee: \$8 includes red wiggler worms



PROGRAMS

Nourish Your Bodyspirit: A Funtensive Weekend **Friday, July 17, 6–9 p.m., & Saturday, July 18, 9 a.m.–9 p.m.**

Facilitators: Mary & Matt Cohen

Unlock the wisdom of your body with InterPlay during this *funtensive* weekend!

InterPlay breaks down movement, story, voice and stillness into manageable pieces of creativity. It is about connecting with others, refreshing your soul, finding amusement and retrieving your body wisdom, all while honoring your unique physicality, traditions and faith. InterPlay is an easy-to-learn creative process that invites you to express yourself. You will have fun, and you likely will discover positive impacts on multiple aspects of your life!

Fee: \$125 includes workshop sessions, Friday lodging and Saturday meals (\$115 per person for double occupancy)

Commuter Fee: \$90 includes workshop sessions and Saturday meals

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony **Saturdays, July 25 & Aug. 29, 4 p.m.** **(enter lodge at 6:30 p.m.)**

Facilitators: Rod Courtney & friends

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. 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 using a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony. Registration is requested so that additional protocols

and a release form can be sent to you.

Fee: Free-will offering to Prairiewoods



Make Your Own Rain Barrel **Thursday, July 30, 6:30–8 p.m.**

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Rain barrels collect rain water from your rooftop for watering your yard and plants.

They save water, lower water bills and reduce stormwater run-off. But buying a rain barrel can cost \$100 or more! Cut that cost by 75% and build your own rain barrel in this hands-on workshop facilitated by Emy Sautter. Registration and payment are required by July 24.

Fee: \$25 includes a barrel, screen and spigot



Vino van Gogh **Sunday, Aug. 9, 1:30–4 p.m.**

Facilitator: Vino van Gogh artist

Paint, drink and be merry in this fun event that inspires creativity and relaxation.

You will be provided with a 16-by-20-inch canvas, all art supplies, instruction and an apron to create your own work of art! Wine, other beverages, cheese and appetizers are included. A professional artist will guide you to paint *Sunset Dock* (shown above). No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome. A non-refundable deposit of \$30 is required.

Fee: \$50 (\$40 for those under 21) includes canvas, art supplies, instruction, apron and ample refreshments



Come to the Garden **Tuesday, Aug. 11, 12–1 p.m.**

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

You are invited to a free lunch and tour of Prairiewoods' garden and ecological features. Our garden provides food for those who visit Prairiewoods and for the Metro Catholic Outreach

food pantry. Be our guest for a fabulous, fresh lunch with ingredients right from our garden! If you have never been to Prairiewoods but are curious about who we are and what we do, this is the perfect way to learn more! Registration is requested by Aug. 7.

Fee: Free includes lunch



Sustainable Living: Aquaponics Roundtable

Wednesday, Aug. 19, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Aquaponics is a system of growing food that combines *aquaculture* (raising fish or other aquatic life) with *hydroponics* (growing plants in water).

In aquaponics, the fish waste feeds the plants, and the plants clean the water for the fish—it's a mutually enhancing relationship! Join us for a discussion of the basics of aquaponics and to learn who is doing it locally. Registration is requested by Aug. 17.

Fee: Free-will offering



Zero Balancing II **Thursday, Aug. 20, 8 a.m.–Sunday, Aug. 23, 3 p.m.**

Facilitator: Sheila McCarthy-Daskovsky

Join Sheila McCarthy-Daskovsky for a hands-on workshop in Zero Balancing (ZB), a form of therapy that improves health and vitality in mind, body and spirit. It uses a hands-on approach to balance body energy with



body structure through a combination of Eastern healing and Western science. This is the second half of the Core Zero Balancing program in which you review the material from the first course while learning new fulcrums and expanding your understanding of how and why Zero Balancing is so effective. This class is highly recommended for all Zero Balancing practitioners who have not taken a course in a while as it includes the most up-to-date methods. Continuing Education Credits are available.

Fee: \$595 if registered by June 21 (\$695 if registered between June 22–July 21, \$795 after July 21), plus lodging and meals

Women in Interfaith Dialogue
Saturday, Aug. 29, 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter

Women in Interfaith Dialogue meets quarterly to explore questions of faith and spirituality.

All women are welcome! The Aug. 29 topic is Journey to Empowerment: How We Have Become Power-Full Women. Registration is requested by Aug. 25.

Fee: \$15 includes lunch



Hatha Way Yoga
Multiple times each week

Facilitator: Cindy Hathaway

Link your movements with your breath and cultivate strength, flexibility and relaxation through regular yoga classes. Cindy Hathaway of Hatha Way Yogi leads multiple one hour gentle, beginner/intermediate, chair and yin yoga classes each week. Please bring your own mat if possible. People of all fitness levels are welcome. For a complete schedule, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Fee: \$99 for eleven-punch card or \$60 for six-punch card, one punch per session



Tree Vigil Gatherings We share this world with many beings. We live in a universe created with goodness and beauty. Prairiewoods and others in the community are interested in starting tree and/or Earth vigils in the Cedar Rapids area. Do you sometimes observe the destruction of trees and nature as development continues to expand? To those who feel connected to the great web of life, the land and the whole of creation, this can feel disrespectful and disheartening. If you are interested in gathering with other people in peace to honor trees and land that has been—or is about to be—altered, please contact Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222.

Eco-Tours at Prairiewoods

Do you want to learn about alternative energy, earth-friendly building materials and other eco-friendly alternatives for your home, office or yard? Tour a number of “eco-features” at Prairiewoods, including a trombe wall, straw-bale cabins, solar heated hoop house, photovoltaic solar panels, solar thermal systems, native habitat restoration, retention ponds and much more. These features helped us attain LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification for existing buildings. To schedule an eco-tour, please contact Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222.



In Appreciation Thank you to Rockwell Collins; the GP Fund for the Environment, Program Grant Fund of the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation; and the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration for funding our East Culvert Stormwater Project!

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

1st & 3rd Thursdays monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Come together with other spiritual seekers to learn how to live a more contemplative life. Discuss readings from the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes writings from Thomas Merton and other spiritual writers. The intent is to encourage contemplative living and growth in the ability to respond to life's events with greater faith.

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 praying in silence.



Relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you during this time of silence and centering prayer. The group meets in the Guest House, and you may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Men's Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life

2nd & 4th Thursdays monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

As they mature, many men undergo a major life transformation from goal driven-ness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom. The transition may seem quite disruptive while on the way to being life-enhancing. Join with a small group of reflective men in honest conversation about life's changes. Call to learn what book the group is discussing.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m.,
& 4th Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Practice your hobby in the company of new friends! If you enjoy knitting or crocheting, you are invited to create beautiful works of art (in the form of hats, mittens, blankets and baby items) for charity. The Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers are 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

Wednesday, Aug. 5 (every Wednesday Sept.–May),
11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women to be spiritually enriched, inspired and challenged. They meet every Wednesday from 10–11:30 a.m. during the school year and the first Wednesday of the month in June and Aug. *They will not meet in July.*

On Aug. 5, the group will meet from 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. for their annual summer salad potluck luncheon. Please arrive at 11:30 for a shared meal at noon. Regular weekly meetings will resume Sept. 2.

Fee: Free-will offering on Aug. 5

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

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Our Wish List

for the garden

- a self-propelled push mower in good condition
- a chain saw
- loppers
- a utility trailer
- volunteers to help in the kitchen garden (even 1 hour a week would be a HUGE help!)

For more information, please contact Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222.





120 E Boyson Rd
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Are you on social media? Find "Prairiewoods FSC" on:



How do we advocate for Earth and our Land? How do we create harmony when surrounded by discord? Music often does what words fail to do ... connect us at the unconscious core.



drum making and much more. Then visit vendors offering flutes, crafts and a variety of wares. Fresh, healthy food will be available for purchase from local vendors

With this in mind, Prairiewoods is pleased to host the first annual *Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival*, *Friday, Sept. 25–Sunday, Sept. 27*. Friday and Saturday will feature Native style flute performers, culminating in evening concerts headlined by Jonny Lipford, Joe Young, Rona Yellowrobe and Cornell K.

In addition to listening to the soothing sounds of the Native American style flute, you can strengthen your spiritual connection to nature, mind, body and spirit through activities and workshops, including flute lessons and history, mandala and landscape painting, yoga, drum and flute circles, moon lodge, massage and aromatherapy, tai chi, nature hikes,

BLACCGHST BBQ and Katering Kitchen, with ice-cream treats from the Marion Dairy Queen.

Sunday afternoon, you are invited to bring every member of the family—two-legged and four—for our annual *Nature Fest with a Blessing of the Animals* and live music by the Deep Dish Divas.

The daily gate fee is only \$5 for adults and \$1 for children. Sunday is free. For more information, visit www.SweetgrassFest.com.



Prairiewoods

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

Soil: God's Caress & Means to Combat Climate Change

*For the beauty of the earth,
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
over and around us lies.
Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.*

—Folliott Pierpoint, *Christian hymn*

Of course Earth is beautiful. Not just those trees whose leaves are slowly turning the woods into a blaze of glory; not just those tall prairie grasses dotted with yellow cone flower, purple clover and blazing star; not just the floating clouds in the deep blue sky; not just the pumpkins, squash, sweet corn and apples that laden our tables. *All of it is beautiful to our eyes, touch and taste.*

Earth is not only beautiful; it is beyond that ... mystical, miraculous, nourishing for both body and soul. Its origin, as well as our own appearance as conscious humans billions of years later, is a magnificent expression of God's love. Do we always see it that way?

In his recent encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis speaks powerfully of that love using *the image of God's caress*: "Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God" (paragraph 84).

Could we spend a few moments reflecting on that image, thinking of God's caress sweeping across Earth? Water is God's caress. Mountains are God's caress. And soil—the foundation of all life that we often treat so poorly—is a caress of God. When we list what is beautiful about our world, soil is probably not first on the list. *But when we consider the soil around our homes as a caress of God, when we look at the soil in our fields, orchards and forests as a caress of God, we may recognize its beauty and acknowledge it as gift.*

Looking at soil more closely, we see that God's caress comes in the form of microorganisms, fungi and insects. There is a world of life hidden in the soil beneath our feet: minerals, organic matter, gases, liquids and—*along with all that life*—the amazing ability to modify the atmosphere of Earth.

(continued on page 3)



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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Praise be! Welcome to our Fall Newsletter. In these pages we share our excitement about Earth, about Pope Francis' call to action on the environment—*Laudato Si'*, and about the many opportunities to engage with us and with others through Prairiewoods programs and retreats.

As this is my first Director's Corner, it feels appropriate to share a bit about myself and the path that has led me to Prairiewoods. I've spent most of my life in Eastern Iowa, with brief sojourns in Ohio and Minnesota. My professional work has been primarily in higher education, as a counselor and administrator at The University of Iowa and Mount Mercy University. In addition to my vocation as an educator, I have a passion for assisting individuals and organizations in developing a sense of purpose or mission and engaging in meaningful work as an outgrowth of that purpose.

Several years ago, I attended a retreat at Prairiewoods, which proved to be a pivotal experience for me. Shortly thereafter, I attended a symposium here that focused on creating an environmentally sustainable, socially just and spiritually fulfilling human presence on Earth. These experiences changed my way of relating to the world and, ultimately, my life—in many ways setting my feet on the path that has brought me here as director. This is how I know that Prairiewoods offers the opportunity for transformative growth, both to individuals and to communities who choose to engage with us in our vision of moving together into wisdom, compassion and the fullness of life.

Which brings me back to *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' encyclical letter to all people calling us to care for our common home. At Prairiewoods, we strive to express in our daily, lived experience that care and reverence Pope Francis calls for—through our environmental activities, our spiritual retreats and programs, and our holistic services—doing what we can to heal and protect our Earth and all who live here. As the encyclical so eloquently declares: *"The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things"* (233).

I invite you all to join us in this process of discovering and celebrating God in all things—*praise be!*

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, 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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(continued from page 1)

In a recent book called *The Soil Will Save Us*, Kristin Ohlson addresses the vast potential of soil to remove carbon from the atmosphere through photosynthesis. Plants have the ability to capture carbon, which they convert into sugars for their own growth; plants and microorganisms working together can pull carbon from the atmosphere and put it into the ground.

Because of this, just as deforestation and a whole host of harmful land practices—such as modern industrial agriculture—release carbon into the atmosphere and significantly increase greenhouse gases, organic practices with soil help to mitigate climate change.

This means that one of the best practices we can do to reduce climate change is to increase organic soil management practices and restore a mutually beneficial relationship with the land!

Ohlson describes the life in soil and how to work in partnership with it. She writes, “Here’s something you may not know ... when you put a layer of compost over your soil, you’re basically transporting a metropolis of tiny

“About 80 percent of American homeowners have lawns. How each of us manages our own individual turf may seem insignificant to the greater picture, given all the factors that influence our world, but our turfs and turfettes add up. Lawns are the largest irrigated crop in America, taking up three times as much space as corn, the next-biggest irrigated crop. What we do with our urban green matters.”

—Kristin Ohlson, *The Soil Will Save Us*

“All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.”

—Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*

Find more on caring for your soil at <https://store.extension.IAstate.edu/Product/pm1882-pdf>.

“God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth, for not one of them is forgotten in your sight. Enlighten those who possess power and money that they may avoid the sin of indifference, that they may love the common good, advance the weak, and care of this world in which we live.”

—Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*

“The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all. It is the healer and restorer and resurrector, by which disease passes into health, age into youth, death into life. Without proper care for it we can have no community, because without proper care for it we can have no life.”

—Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*

creatures to your yard. Any plants there will be serviced like one of the Tudor kings, with billions of microorganisms eager to exchange their gifts of phosphorus, nitrogen, and other nutrients for a sip of carbon.”

Soil is God’s love made visible in all our lives. It is truly beautiful, remarkable, nourishing of body and soul.

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sweetgrass

Flute Fest

Friday, Sept. 25, & Saturday, Sept. 26

Mother Earth “now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her” (2).

“Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it” (139).

These quotes from *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment released in June, *speaks the voice of the land*. Have you ever heard the voice of the land calling out from the Trees, the Lone Maple, Broken Branches, the Blue Lizard or the Painted Sky? Have you sensed the energy of the universe that connects us all to each other and to our Common Home in the Moonrise, Caterpillar and Butterfly, Dancing Stardust, Prairie Winds, a Crying Sky or a Tree Frog Dance? *

If so, then your heart will leap in hearing the voice of the land brought to life by the many musical performers at the first annual *Sweetgrass Flute and Nature Fest, Sept. 25–27*. Throughout the three days, a number of world-renowned musicians will bring the sounds of the Native American Style Flute to life. Headliners Rona Yellow Robe, Joseph Young, Cornell Kinderknecht and Cedar Rapids' own Jonny Lipford will share the stage at Prairiewoods with other featured musicians from across the country.

You will have multiple opportunities to attend to your own connections of mind, body, spirit and nature, including through flute lessons, mandala and landscape

painting, yoga, drum and flute circles, moon lodge, massage, sound healing and aromatherapy, T'ai Chi, nature hikes, drum making, gourd birdhouse finishing, nature sculpting, meditation, dream catcher creating and tons more! A grant from Humanities Iowa is allowing us to host sand artist and indigenous educator David Garrison on Friday.

In this three-day celebration, you can connect with other people and with nature to find peace and transformation through natural sounds, a heightened awareness of nature and the Creator, and workshops and music making. *The event will be filled with surprises and spontaneous gatherings, so make sure you and your family are part of the fun!*

Fresh and healthy food will be available for purchase from local vendors BLACCGHST BBQ, Julia-n-LeChef and Meskwaki Fry Bread Tacos, among others.

Gates open at 10 a.m. each day. The daily gate fee is only \$5 for adults and \$1 for children, and Sunday is free. Feel free to bring folding chairs or blankets and soft-sided coolers. Overflow parking has been arranged for the northeast parking lot of GoDaddy on Robins Road. Free shuttles will run from that parking lot to Prairiewoods from 4–10:30 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.–10:30 p.m. Saturday and 12–4:30 p.m. Sunday.

To learn more or register for workshops, please visit www.SweetgrassFest.com.

* titles of songs
by headlining artists



Flute & Nature Fest

Sept. 25–27 at Prairiewoods



Nature Fest

Sunday, Sept. 27

Nature Fest Schedule

1:00 Welcome

1:15 Live Music by Deep Dish Divas &
Family-Friendly Activities

2:45 Procession, Introduction & Blessing of the Animals

3:30 Closing

Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Fest will conclude Sunday afternoon with our traditional *Nature Fest* in honor of the patron of creation and ecology, St. Francis of Assisi. Treat every member of your family—both two-legged and four—to this afternoon of outdoor family fun for people and pets!

Prairiewoods' annual Nature Fest features a *Blessing of the Animals*—a chance for humans to honor and bless the special critters in their lives. It also includes family-friendly games and activities in a festive fall setting.

From 1–3:30 p.m. you can experience Prairiewoods in its natural fall splendor with live music by the Deep Dish Divas, children's activities, games, family photo opportunities, snacks and Cosmic Walks. You also can join the last few workshops of the Sweetgrass weekend, including a Drum Circle, Guided Meditation, Dream Interpretation and Hand Massages. *Stop by the encyclical information table to learn more about Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment*, how you can get involved, and community events that will help you go deeper in your commitment to the environment.

We hope you and any creatures that have a special place in your heart will join us for this afternoon of fun! (All animals—whether furry, winged, scaled or finned—are welcome.) Feel free to dress up

your pets for the procession and blessing by pastoral leaders from the local community. You will be invited to introduce your pet and share what you love about him or her.

In addition to a leash or carrying case for your critter, you might want to bring a blanket or chair for comfortable outdoor seating and a GPS to help you search for hidden geocaches. Registration is not necessary and there is no charge. *So bring your whole family to this free, festive celebration of life!*



Pope Francis Speaks to All through Laudato Si'



Laudato Si' is Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment, or more formally, "on care for our common home." *Laudato Si'* means "praise be to you," which is the first line of the canticle attributed to St. Francis that praises God with all creation.

From the outset, Pope Francis states the purpose of the document: "In this encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home" (3). In the pope's words, "I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation that includes everyone, since the environment challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all" (14). He calls attention to the ways in which human behavior, especially unfettered greed, is leading the world into a downward spiral toward destruction. He challenges individuals, governments and corporations to a radical transformation of economics, politics and personal life styles.

Francis cites the works of former pontiffs, scientists, and community leaders to provide credence to this global message on the environment. The pope speaks of a

throwaway economy driven by consumerism and materialism, which makes Earth less rich and beautiful, exacting a high cost in environmental deterioration. *He says very plainly that global warming is a result of human activity.*

Francis writes that climate change is a global problem and "represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day" (25). It is Earth's poor who suffer most from damage to the water, soil and air. Although everyone is affected, the pope states that the poor have not caused most of the stress to the planet.

Pope Francis wants to see more environmental education and dialogue around these issues. In a segment entitled "Integral Ecology," the pope speaks of environmental issues in light of justice. Ecology is the branch of biology that deals with the relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings. Integral ecology includes environmental, economic and social ecology—the ecology of everyday life.

This is the first-ever papal encyclical written solely on environmental issues, and it is built on Christian tradition, Scripture and the teachings of the church. Francis calls on all people to recognize environmental stewardship as their responsibility. *He wants us to fall in love with Earth.*

Want to learn more? The encyclical can be found on-line for free or purchased from the Prairiewoods Gift Shop for \$15. Then put the pope's words into practice with an action kit that can be downloaded for free at www.InterfaithPowerAndLight.org. Check out these upcoming encyclical-related programs, and visit the calendar at www.Prairiewoods.org for other upcoming events related to the encyclical, labeled "Praise Be."



Praise Be: Eco-Encyclical
Tuesday, Aug. 25, 5:30–7 p.m. or
Wednesday, Aug. 26, 12–1:30 p.m.

Come celebrate Pope Francis' eco-encyclical! Share a meal together and chat about events in our community related to the ground-breaking encyclical. As Pope Francis wrote, let us "enter into dialogue with all people!" Registration is requested by Aug. 20.
Fee: Free-will offering, includes meal

Praise Be the Creator Concert Series
Mondays, Oct. 12, Oct. 26, Nov. 9 & Nov. 23,
7–8:30 p.m.

Bring your joyful heart and honor Earth, Our One Home and gift of the Creator, through song. Join a variety of artists who bring a love of the land and a passion for sharing the Spirit:

- Oct. 12:** Evolving Faith with Richard & Trish Bruxvoort Colligan
 - Oct. 26:** Earth Anew with H₂O Alive
 - Nov. 9:** Voice of the Land with Jonny Lipford
 - Nov. 23:** Our Common Home with The Pericycles: Eric Hauschildt & Jesse Burns
- Fee:** Suggested offering of \$10

Praise Be: Why Native Plants Matter
Tuesday, Oct. 13, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Jim Kessler

Make a vital difference by planting native species that support life!

Restoring native plantings to the landscape is an important and practical way to be responsible stewards of God's Creation.

Jim Kessler will share the faith journey that led him to restore 30 acres to native habitat. He will explain why native plantings are an important solution to a variety of environmental problems, including the pollinator crisis and frequent major floods. Registration is requested by Oct. 12.

Fee: Free-will offering

Pope Francis' Encyclical
Laudato Si'
 (Praise Be to You)

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Calling all millennials!

Generation Waking Up

Friday, Sept. 11, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Sept. 13, 3 p.m.

Facilitators: Joshua Gorman & the Gen Up Team

Josh Gorman says, “We are the middle children of History, coming of age at the crossroads of civilization, a generation rising between an old world dying and a new world being born. We are the ‘make-it or break-it’ generation, the ‘all-or-nothing’ generation, the crucible through which civilization must pass or crash.”



Are you part of this young generation, ready to co-create a fair and sustainable world? Join Generation Waking Up, a global movement that is igniting a generation of young people to birth forth a thriving, just, sustainable world. Through inspiring multimedia and dynamic group interaction, you will explore the critical questions facing your generation and society today. Generation Waking Up empowers millennials like you to awaken to a clear sense of identity and purpose in order to contribute to a spiritually healthy, just and sustainable world. For more information, visit www.GenerationWakingUp.org.

This retreat makes a great gift to help the children, grandchildren, protégés and other students in your life start the new school year with purpose and empowerment!

Fee: \$25 for Friday only, \$150 for Saturday and Sunday only, or \$175 for Friday through Sunday, includes lodging and all meals

Calling small faith group seekers!

Talking in Spirals: Faith in Small Circles

Wednesdays, Oct. 14, Nov. 11 & Jan. 13, 6:30–8:30 p.m. (followed by a spring retreat March 11–13)

Facilitator: Ellen Bruckner

Explore, in ever deepening levels, your relationship with God, encouraged by the discerning wisdom of others using a circle dialogue process. This series will use Diarmuid O’Murchu’s *The Meaning and Practice of Faith* (available in the Prairiewoods Gift Shop for \$16) and will be followed by a retreat next March. Registration and book orders are requested by Oct. 1. **Commuter Fee:** \$10 per session plus cost of book



Calling all creative souls to two retreats—no experience necessary!

Kissed by God: Holy Women Create

Friday, Oct. 16, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 18, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Shirley Cunningham, MA, MSW, LCSW

Celebrate the holy women whose creativity flowed into the imagination, including Miriam the dancer, Hildegard the artist/musician/writer, and Teresa of Avila and Therese of Lisieux, the writers. This interactive retreat invites your creative expression as you explore art by and about holy women from ancient times (such as Mary Magdalene and the Woman at the Well) to today (including Tekakwitha and Hildegard). Carry away a treasure of spiritual practices from your adventures with art, journaling, poetry, music, dreamwork, prayer and meditation, and grow in deeper trust of your own inner wisdom and creativity.

Shirley Cunningham is a certified spiritual director, licensed counselor and working artist. She is the author of *Chasing God*. Learn more about her at www.ArtFromHeartNSoul.net.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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



The Mandala: A Pathway to One’s Center

Friday, Oct. 16, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 18, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Joellen Price, PBVM,

Mandala is the Sanskrit word for circle. According to Lisa Tenzin-Dolma in *Natural Mandalas*, “The origins of the mandala tradition can be dated back to the cave drawings and rock inscriptions created by our primitive ancestors, as a source or reflection of spiritual energy.” Today, the word *mandala* is used for sacred artworks in the form of a circle.

Create your own mandalas and tap into the holiness of deep listening within you and in the world around you. Creating a mandala will help you gain access to the “soul-light,” the divine Spirit within. You will add luminous color effects to your mandala and learn to pray with it. Spending time creating mandalas in Prairiewoods’ natural surroundings will lead you to discover a deeper sense of peace and awareness in the beauty of nature. This is a great opportunity for those interested in this form of prayer, inner reflection and living in the present moment! Supplies will be provided, but you may want to bring your own compass, ruler or black gel/Micron pens.

Joellen Price, PBVM, is a pastoral associate at St. Pius X Catholic Church in Cedar Rapids who uses the process of praying with mandalas as a preparation for spiritual practice, exercise and meditation.

Fee: \$250 includes retreat sessions, art materials, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$200 includes retreat sessions, art materials, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



PROGRAMS

Praise Be: Eco-Encyclical

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 5:30–7 p.m. or

Wednesday, Aug. 26, 12–1:30 p.m.

(See p. 6 for a full description.)

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina

Tuesdays, Sept. 1, Sept. 15, Oct. 6 &

Oct. 20, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Come together in a circle of trust to integrate imagination, learning and prayer through the contemplative practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. *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 stand alone, so you may attend one or all. Art images are usually borrowed from *The Saint John's Bible*. The upcoming weekly topics are: Sept. 1—Proverbs 1:7–8, Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Knowledge; Sept. 15—Proverbs 8:22–9:6, Pillars of Wisdom; Oct. 6—Isaiah 6, Vision; and Oct. 20—Isaiah 52–53, Suffering Servant.

Fee: \$10 per session

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Mandatory Information Session:

Tuesdays, Sept. 1 or 8, 12:30–2 p.m., or
Thursdays, Sept. 3 or 10, 5:30–7 p.m.

Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, Sept. 22–
Nov. 10, 12:30–3 p.m., or Thursdays,
Sept. 24–Nov. 12, 5:30–8 p.m.

Combined Extended Class: Saturday,
Oct. 31, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Mindfulness is the power of mind to be deeply aware of what's happening—without commentary or interference. Research reveals numerous benefits to the nervous system, emotions and general sense of well-being. In this eight-week series, you will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal meditation practices and informal integrative practices. Chris Klug is a grief counselor and mindfulness teacher. This series is offered in partnership with Cedar Memorial.

Fee: Free for information session, \$400 for eight-week series (partial scholarships available)

Iowa Master Naturalist Classes

Tuesdays, Sept. 1–Nov. 24, 6–9 p.m.

Facilitators: Maya Ogren & friends

Enhance your love of nature with at least 40 hours of in-depth training in Iowa's wildlife and natural resources. You also will have eight hours of advanced training in the track of your choice: stewardship of natural resources, citizen scientists, recreation/outreach, education/outreach, interpretation/outreach or organizational support. Three Saturday field trips will put your new knowledge to work! For an application, please contact Maya Ogren at 319-540-5114 or mayao gren@NaturalistAdventures.org. Registration is required by Aug. 25, and payment is due Sept. 1.

Fee: \$225 for 13-week series



Drumming for Healing

Wednesdays, Sept. 2, Sept. 16, Oct. 7
& Oct. 21, 6–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Sheri Mealhouse
(Hawkwoman)

In the cosmic experience, drumming touches many people at a deep level and brings all creation together as a community. Drumming—and feeling the Creator's rhythm inside you—resonates with a variety of people. Come see how it resonates with you! No experience is necessary, and percussion instruments are available. All ages are welcome. In case of inclement weather, this drum circle will meet indoors. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: Free-will offering to facilitator

Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing

Tuesdays, Sept. 8, Sept. 22, Sept. 29,
Oct. 13 & Oct. 27, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Meet with other Christian seekers to discuss life and faith in a trusting environment. Use the upcoming Sunday readings from the three-year Lectionary cycle used in many Christian churches to explore and discuss various topics. 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. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$5

Conscious Breathing for Health, Harmony and Spiritual Growth

Tuesdays, Sept. 8, 15, 22 & 29, 6–8 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. Learn gentle breathing techniques to release anxiety and stress, quiet your mind, remain calm in the midst of stress or conflict, and bring deeper awareness of your inner God-Self. At the first introductory session, you will be invited to register for future sessions, which will be limited to ten participants.

Fee: \$15 for first introductory session, \$75 for four-week series

Art of Feminine Presence

Wednesday, Sept. 9, 6–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Maryann Hesse

Are you a woman who, in the pursuit of having a career or caring for others, has disconnected from your feminine essence and personal presence? This can affect everything—from being able to attract and maintain healthy relationships to finding fulfillment in your work—and can lead you to compete against other women. Learn how to drop into Your Feminine Presence, experience more appreciation and respect, and be even more productive. For more information on Maryann Hesse, a relationship dynamics expert, energy healer and women's empowerment coach, visit www.MaryannHesse.com. Registration and payment are required by Sept. 4.

Fee: \$25



Save the Date! for these upcoming programs in our community:

- **Fall Equinox Harvest Celebration** at Matthew 25's Urban Farm, Sept. 19
- **Green Day** at the Farmers Market, Sept. 19
- **Honey Fest** at Indian Creek Nature Center, Sept. 19
- **Zero Balancing: Spirit of the Organs** with Mary Murphy, Oct. 22–25
- **Women in Interfaith Dialogue** with Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter, Oct. 31
- **Alternative Gift Market** at Prairiewoods, Dec. 5

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony
Saturdays, Sept. 12, Sept. 19,
Oct. 10 & Oct. 24, 5 p.m. (enter
lodge around 6:30 p.m.)

Facilitators: Rod Courtney, Kerry Batteau & friends

Prairiewoods offers a Sweat Lodge Ceremony focused on prayer, purification and healing. The lodge is a small dome-shaped structure in which participants sit on the earth around heated stones. Please bring finger foods to share after the ceremony. Registration is requested so that additional protocols and a release form can be mailed to you.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session to Prairiewoods

Dream Group

Wednesdays, Sept. 16 & Oct. 21,
1–3 p.m.

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

Use a Jungian approach to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams to help you grow. This Dream Group meets monthly, and the sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. To participate, you must have completed a Prairiewoods Dream Workshop or Dream Retreat, or something comparable. Registration is required at least a week in advance.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$20 per session

Sustainable Living: Making a
Difference Letter-Writing Party
Wednesday, Sept. 16, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Derek Miller

Learn to turn your environmental values into political priorities. Elected officials are accountable to the public—that



means if you speak, they will listen! Field Organizer Derek Miller will coach you on how to effectively lobby your state, local and federal officials on key issues, such as solar energy, clean water and climate change. Then write a letter on an environmental topic of your choosing. This gathering is offered in partnership with the League of Conservation Voters, and refreshments will be provided.

Fee: Free

Day of Self Renewal
Mondays, Sept. 21 & Oct. 19,
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit during our monthly Day of Self Renewal, which features two 40-minute holistic services of your choice, group Guided Meditation, a private guest room, trails for walking, fresh lunch and hours of free time.

(Choose from reflexology, head and shoulder massage, healing touch spiritual ministry, foot spa treatment, paraffin bath for hands, spiritual direction, Swedish massage or yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Fest
Friday, Sept. 25, 10 a.m.–Sunday,
Sept. 27, 4 p.m.

(See pages 4–5 for a full description.)

Nurturing a Spiritual
Relationship with Nature
Saturday, Oct. 3, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Facilitators: Sue Nading, MA, & Joni Reed Cooley

Earth is in crisis, and society is struggling to find answers to its relationship with nature. Under Sue Nading's compassion-filled guidance,

you will be encouraged to define your own spiritual ecology. You will discover methods that will help evolve your relationship with nature, such as meditation, evaluation of media and literature, exploration of myth archetypes, and creative exercises like journaling, reflective writing and role-playing. Prairiewoods' Artist in Residence Joni Reed Cooley will then lead you in creatively expressing your eco-spirit through a torn-paper collage.

Fee: \$40 includes instruction, materials and lunch

Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*
Book Study

Tuesdays, Oct. 6–Dec. 8, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Joni Reed Cooley

Using Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way* as a guide, Prairiewoods' Artist in Residence Joni Reed Cooley will lead you in ten weeks of discussion, creative experiences, guided reflections and rituals to explore the essence of integral spirituality. Discover the source of your creative self! The book is available in the Prairiewoods Gift Shop for \$15.

Fee: \$5 per session plus cost of book

Praise Be the Creator Concert
Series

Mondays, Oct. 12, Oct. 26, Nov. 9 &
Nov. 23, 7–8:30 p.m.

(See p. 6 for a full description.)

Praise Be: Why Native Plants
Matter

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 6:30–8 p.m.

(See p. 6 for a full description.)

Hatha Way Yoga

Multiple times each week

Facilitator: Cindy Hathaway

Link your movements with your breath and cultivate strength, flexibility and relaxation through regular yoga classes. Cindy Hathaway of Hatha Way Yogi leads multiple one-hour Gentle/ Beginner's and Chair Yoga classes each week. Please bring your own mat if possible. People of all fitness levels are welcome.

Fee: \$99 for eleven-punch card or \$60 for six-punch card, one punch per session

CONTINUING PROGRAMS/DONORS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

1st & 3rd Thursdays monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Come together with other spiritual seekers to learn how to live a more contemplative life. Discuss readings from the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes writings from Thomas Merton and other spiritual writers. The intent is to encourage contemplative living and growth in the ability to respond to life's events with greater faith.

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 praying in silence. Relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you during this time of silence and centering prayer. The group meets in the Guest House, and you may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Men's Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life

2nd & 4th Thursdays monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

As they mature, many men undergo a major life transformation from goal driven-ness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom. The transition may seem quite disruptive while on the way to being life-enhancing. Join with a small group of reflective men in honest conversation about life's changes.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m.,

& 4th Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Practice your hobby in the company of new friends! If you enjoy knitting or crocheting, you are invited to create beautiful works of art (in the form of hats, mittens, blankets and baby items) for charity. The Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers are 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.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged—you are welcome any time! For a list of weekly reading assignments, please visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

In September, Pope Francis will visit the United States, and this group will read and discuss his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*. As a group participant, you will use various resources and methods to explore and integrate each chapter's message. The encyclical can be found online for free or purchased from the Prairiewoods Office for \$15.

During October, read and discuss *Awakening the Spirit, Inspiring the Soul*, edited by Brother Wayne Teasdale and Martha Howard, MD. This book can be purchased from the Prairiewoods Office for \$15.

Fee: Suggested 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/Donate.

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Thanks for a Great Summer!

At Prairie Woods we feel a deep connection to creation and try to care for the natural world to the best of our abilities. Our summer intern, *Jade Riley*, shares these philosophies. Hailing from Sioux City, he is a junior at Coe College with a double major in theatre and creative writing. Some of Jade's favorite experiences at Prairie Woods over the summer include transplanting a young willow tree with Sister Nancy Hoffman, picking nine pounds of cherries in our orchard, focusing on the ritual aspects of prayer and being immersed in the reverent atmosphere at Prairie Woods. As a spiritual seeker, he appreciated the open dialogue between people of different faiths and traditions, as emphasized in our mission. As Jade returns to school, we will miss his kind spirit and strong, memorable laugh!



SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2015
PRAIRIEWOODS
HIAWATHA, IA

www.sweetgrassfest.com

SEE PP. 4-5 FOR COMPLETE DETAILS, INCLUDING INFORMATION ON OUR BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS!

Prairiewoods

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

Ruach is God's breath, which blew life into all that is. This image, titled Ruach, was created by Lucy A. Synk and is reprinted with the artist's permission. This image is copyrighted by Lucy A. Synk. Do NOT redistribute, alter, post to your website, use in any way or reproduce without the written permission of the artist.

The Air that We Breathe and The Spirit of God

In the beginning, *ruach* (the Hebrew word for "breath/spirit"), God's breath, swept all that is into being. In the beginning, a great flaring forth brought into being the vast universe with its billions of galaxies, with its myriad life forms. Or, in the words of Brian Swimme in *The Universe Story*, "In the depths of its silence, the universe shuddered with the immense creativity necessary to fashion the galaxies—the Andromeda galaxy, the Virgo cluster of galaxies, Pegasus—as well as our own Milky Way." Swimme speaks of galaxies as gigantic structures that pinwheeled through the emptiness of space, sweeping up hydrogen and helium into self-organizing systems.

In this great story of creation with its epic proportions, after billions of years of creativity and life, humans emerged. By that time, everything necessary for our existence was present. Plant and animal life flourished. The oceans and atmosphere, having dealt with the presence of carbon dioxide, were now suitable for human existence. Planet Earth was the perfect place for life to flourish. And it did.

Today, however, as we look around the world, we wonder if we have forgotten the marvel of life, the very miracle that we exist at all. This is what Pope Francis is pointing out to us in his eco-encyclical, *Laudato Si'*. He refers to "our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us." He laments, "We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, have plundered her—harming the soil, the water, the air and all forms of life" (*Laudato Si'*, 1–2).

Air, one of the four basic elements upon which life depends, has been harmed. We all

know of air pollution, smog that covers some of our cities, car emissions and chemicals that cause health problems that make breathing difficult, raising temperatures in the cumulative pattern of climate change. It is human activity that is now threatening life on Earth.

The pope calls for international cooperation to protect the environment, to use diplomacy to develop strategies that will create a better future. He reminds us that "the entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us" (84).

In his call for all nations to cooperate in taking care of our planet, Pope Francis recognizes this fundamental reality: we live in a world in which everything is connected. We have been born into a universe that is creative and relational. *This relationality can be expressed in the simple idea of breath, which connects us all.* "Spiritual breathing teaches us that we are all connected in love" (Dan Brulé, *The Healing Power of Spiritual Breathing*).

A story that illustrates this connection is from psychologist and writer Jean Houston, who tells about her childhood in New York City. She was racing to school one day when she accidentally bumped into an elderly man out for a walk. Somehow, a friendship developed between these two, and they often went to Central Park where the elderly man seemed fascinated and pleased by everything in nature. Since the old gentleman had a long French name, he asked Jean to call him by his first name which she interpreted as Tayer. She remembers one day in which a strong wind suddenly whipped through Central Park.

(continued on page 3)

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*Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting—
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.*

—Mary Oliver, from “Wild Geese”

Autumn in Iowa begins in mid- to late September with that first crisp chill in the air. By mid-October, deep blue skies are finally clear of summer's humid haze. Strange lights seen in farm fields turn out simply to be farmers working the harvest well into the night. Then, as we enter November, the crops are in, and the fields lie fallow. We hear the geese long before we see them, flying in formation on their way to locations with gentler winter weather.

Here at Prairiewoods, we're celebrating a successful summer of programs and retreats. Our prayer is for a harvest of peace and transformation in the lives and hearts of all who have joined with us in these events, who have walked on our prairie or in our woods, who have engaged thoughtfully with Pope Francis' presence and words in his eco-encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*.

As we focus on *air*—the third element in our newsletter series (July/August focused on water, and September/October addressed soil)—I am reminded that this air that we breathe is the same air that has always been, since the dawn of creation! If I stop to truly think about that, the implications are staggering. Air unites us to the rest of our earth family.

This idea that, through our membership in creation, we humans are part of a larger family—as Mary Oliver's poem (above) says, we have a “place in the family of things”—is a deeply important one. In his encyclical, Pope Francis asks us to consider, “What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?” (160). Francis goes on to say that, in answering this question, we have to struggle with the deeper issues of meaning and values. Beneath the basic question of ecology, there is a deeper question of our purpose. He says: “We need to see that what is at stake is our own dignity. Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us. The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn” (160).

This quiet time between the harvest and midwinter celebrations is an opportune time to stop and breathe deeply, seeking both the inner peace and the passion to explore those questions of meaning and purpose.

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, 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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(continued from page 1)

Mr. Tayer exhorted her, "Jean, lean into the wind; sniff the wind! This wind may have been sniffed once by Jesus Christ, by Alexander the Great, by Jeanne D'Arc."

Years later, when Jean was an adult, someone handed her a book called *The Phenomenon of Man*. She immediately recognized the author's picture. Mr. Tayer was Teilhard de Chardin, the great priest-scientist, poet, paleontologist and mystic.

Yes, it is important to remember that we are so interconnected. The air we breathe today may have been breathed by our own ancient ancestors, by the world's present inhabitants of every creed and culture, by human and animal alike. It is important that we do everything possible to keep it clean and pure.

In his encyclical, Pope Francis reminds us that, for Christians, an ecological spirituality is grounded in the Gospel, where Jesus tells us to learn from the birds of the air and lilies of the field that all creation is good. *The very air we breathe is God's breath.* We are all born of this breath, this same Spirit: "The wind [from the Greek word *pneuma* for "wind/breath/spirit"] blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is of everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). When Jesus breathed on the disciples, they received this same inestimable gift, as do we. *God's breath is our very life.*

The great spiritual questions engage us at the level of our breath: they are essential to our life. Taking one collective breath, we embrace the continuous unfolding of life with determination and hope. God's breath, the air we breathe, sustains us.

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA

The Avowal

As swimmers dare
to lie face to the sky
and water bears them,
as hawks rest upon air
and air sustains them,
so would I learn to attain freefall,
and float into Creator Spirit's deep embrace,
knowing no effort
earns that all-surrounding grace.

by Denise Levertov

In this poem, Denise Levertov offers two images of God's love that we can trust. One is an image of water, which buoys the swimmer floating on its surface. The other, air, supports the flight of the hawk as it soars above. The poet speaks to the longing in each of our hearts for a certain and sustaining love.

*God's breath,
the air we breathe,
sustains us.*

PRAISE BE AT PRAIRIEWOODS CHALLENGE

Are you looking for practical ways to respond to *Laudato Si'* (or "Praise Be"), Pope Francis' clarion call to care for our common home? While you likely have taken steps toward living in a more ecologically sustainable manner, the encyclical implores you to increase your efforts. If you don't know what to do next, step up with Prairiewoods' *Praise Be Challenge!*

To participate, choose one of the following practical challenges (or create your own) to raise your activity to the next level. We encourage you to share how it went with the rest of the Prairiewoods community. Visit us on Facebook or Twitter and, using the hashtag **#PBchallenge**, tell us how it goes, what you learn or suggestions for other **#PBchallenge** opportunities!

Are you up for the challenge?

1 **Add gratitude and mindfulness of the earth to your meals.** If you already take a moment of silence or say grace before meals, challenge yourself to stop every third bite to thank a pollinator! Watch the short film *Every Third Bite* on YouTube to learn more.

2 **Pare down excess buying at the holidays.** Step it up by attending the Alternative Gift Market at Prairiewoods (see p. 7 for details), where you can purchase conscious gifts from a multitude of local and international nonprofits—gifts that address hunger, poverty, spiritual development and more.

3 **Reduce waste at home and participate in local recycling programs.** Step it up by pledging specifically to reduce plastic use. Make at least one daily substitution (such as using reusable shopping bags and covering a bowl with a plate instead of plastic wrap). Reusable glass, stainless steel and ceramic are great alternatives and healthier for you and the planet! For more information, watch *The Story of Stuff*.

4 **Support local businesses and ones that purchase locally.** Visit www.Hearts.com/EcoLife/Find-Local-Small-Businesses for more information on how to do this and why it's important. And if you already frequent local businesses, take the next step by encouraging the owner or manager of shops you frequent to fill the store with locally-sourced products.

5 Link spirituality and nature. Light your passion for creation by praying or meditating outside. Listen to the wisdom of the earth, and ask what you can learn from creatures and plants. Keep notes of thoughts that come to mind as you do this—they may contain important insights!

7 Ride your bike and walk more. Challenge yourself to continue this practice into late fall and winter. Research shows that it is good for both your health and the environment (www.FHWA.dot.gov/Environment/Bicycle_Pedestrian/Resources/Data/Benefits_Research.cfm). Consider joining a Blue Zones Moai Walking Group. If you need more inspiration, the Winter Cycling Congress will be convening in the Twin Cities in February—the first time it has ever been held in the United States!

6 Reduce your water consumption. Challenge yourself to take one less shower a week and to shorten each shower by one minute. The average eight-minute shower uses 17 gallons of water!

8 Fix it, don't nix it! Repair what you own—from clothing to electronics—rather than replacing with new products. And if you don't have a need for the item anymore, share it or swap it with a friend or family member who could use it.

9 Compost, because your food needs food too! Put your food scraps in your Yardy, or build your own compost bin. If you live in an apartment, find a neighbor or community garden that can use your food scraps. Challenge yourself and your family to have a zero-waste kitchen!

10 Attend a Praise Be program or retreat at Prairiewoods. Visit the calendar at www.Prairiewoods.org and look for events whose titles begin with "Praise Be." And send us a note at ecospirit@prairiewoods.org if you have suggestions for other programming you want to see here!

RETREATS

The following are some upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Silent Mindfulness Meditation

Friday, Nov. 6, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Nov. 8, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

“Life unfolds in moments. The healing power of mindfulness lies in living each one as fully as we can,” says Jon Kabat-Zinn. Do you long to live fully the moments of your life? Consider joining others in the practice of mindfulness meditation in this silent retreat. Mindfulness will be cultivated through the repetition of guided meditation practices, including sitting meditation, walking meditation, mindful movement and mindful eating. This establishes and strengthens the habit of mindfulness while supporting its integration into everyday life.

Chris Klug has practiced mindfulness meditation for more than 25 years, has taught in the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program at University of Iowa Hospitals since 2001 and has many years of experience facilitating retreats.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals

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



Calling small faith group seekers!

Talking in Spirals: Faith in Small Circles

Wednesdays, Nov. 11 & Jan. 13, 6:30–8:30 p.m. (followed by a spring retreat March 11–13)

Facilitator: Ellen Bruckner

Have you been on a new journey of faith because your old paradigms are shifting? Explore, in ever deepening levels, your relationship with God, encouraged by the discerning wisdom of others using a circle dialogue process.

Ellen Bruckner is skilled at facilitating circle conversations to help you find new paradigms for practicing your faith. This series will use Diarmuid O’Murchu’s *The Meaning and Practice of Faith* (available in the Prairiewoods Gift Shop for \$16) and will be followed by a retreat next March. (Please register for each session and the retreat individually.)

Commuter Fee: \$10 per session plus cost of book



Radiance: An Inter-Spiritual Advent Retreat for Conscious Carriers of Light

Friday, Nov. 13, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Nov. 15, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel

This Inter-Spiritual Advent Retreat approaches all of creation as illuminating Divinity—the radiant energies and

love of God’s indwelling Life Force Spirit or Light. You are a Light carrier! Awareness of, attunement with and humble consent to this empowering, healing Inner Light of Spirit involves knowing yourself Full of Grace amid life’s demands, difficulties and fears. Blending Eastern and Western spiritual wisdom and drawing from mystics, sages, spiritual healers, prophets, visual art and sacred texts, you will explore your oneness with the human species and planet, participating in the ongoing universal Incarnation of the Divine. Experience gentle mind-body-spirit practices, including interior prayer of the heart, for increased awareness of inter-connective oneness, healing and strength to serve. You also will engage in personal reflection, including spiritual mapping of your life to recall and give thanks for those luminous people who, throughout your life sojourns, helped rekindle your Light.

Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel is the chaplain of Cornell College and an associate priest at Trinity Episcopal Church in Iowa City. A meditation instructor, Healing Touch and Reiki practitioner, and artist, she has taught courses on Suffering and the Sacred, Jewish-Christian Relations, Christian-Hindu inter-spiritual wisdom on mysticism, meditation and the inner life of leadership.

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$180 includes retreat sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



When I Let Go, What is There To Hold On To?

Friday, Nov. 13, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Nov. 15, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Thomas Roberts, LCSW, LMFT

You are not alone. Many people are expanding their spiritual journey. Often this involves examining the institutions, teachings and imperatives that have accompanied a prescribed religious path. Are you yearning for something more meaningful? Where are you looking for it? What makes sense? How do you craft your own spiritual path so as not to throw the baby out with the bath water, but rather discover how to make the journey more personal to you? Quieting all the noise of “should” expectations and fears, you will listen, embrace and learn to trust your true nature and abiding wisdom that awaits emergence within. This retreat offers opportunity to explore and discern ways to enhance your spiritual path. Through various spiritual wisdom traditions and teachings about contemplation and meditation, you will



engage life-long questions and enjoy stimulating inner and outer conversations!

Thomas Roberts, LCSW, LMFT—one of our most popular retreat leaders—gained widespread recognition as a healer, educator, author and retreat facilitator who translates mindfulness techniques into practical strategies for healthier, happier living. A licensed psychotherapist and clinical hypnotherapist, he authored *The Mindfulness Workbook: A Beginner's Guide to Overcoming Fear and Embracing Compassion*.
Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$180 includes retreat sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

Stillness: Somewhere to Begin in the New Year
Friday, Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Dec. 13, 1 p.m.
Facilitators: Laura Weber & Ann Jackson, PBVM

Come, be still. Of song, dream and love, new life is born! What great loves are gestating in your life, and how can you nourish the germinating seeds while wintering? Don't let December freeze you into the winter doldrums, or morph you into a relentless rush mode! Treat yourself to a weekend of pure joy

in the comfort of winter's quieting blanket.

Join Prairiewoods Retreat Coordinators Laura Weber and Ann Jackson, PBVM, for a retreat that will warm and inspire you to slow down, lean back and listen to the deepening stillness. Through meditation, reflection, poetry and mindfulness, Sister Ann and Laura will invite you to light up your own interior doorway, where if you dare to open and step inside, new life is brimming with hope and possibility. Begin the new year with a heart that is ready for life!

Fee: \$230 includes retreat sessions, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$180 includes retreat sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



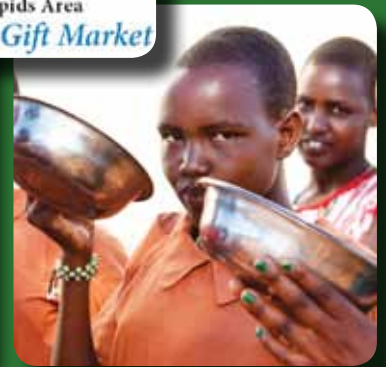
Alternative Gift Market Comes to Prairiewoods

For the first time ever, Cedar Rapids' *Alternative Gift Market* is coming to Prairiewoods! Join us **Saturday, Dec. 5, from 9 a.m.–2 p.m.** to get ready for the holiday season with unique gift solutions.

Instead of buying yet another tie for Uncle Mike, give a donation in his honor that will purchase a wheelchair for a disabled person in Ecuador or provide food for a family right here in Cedar Rapids. Uncle Mike will receive an attractive card describing the gift given in his honor, and you can rest assured that your gift has made a difference rather than collecting dust in a closet. This is a great opportunity to solve your gift-giving problems, help those in need, and learn about organizations making a difference in your community and around the world!

This is a unique event the entire family can enjoy. It is perfect for kids who want to share with needy children worldwide, for grandparents who enjoy socially-conscious gifts and for anyone who wants to improve the global society. (And it is ideal for those on your list who are hard to shop for!) Join us for this fun opportunity to give back to your loved ones and to the community.

The market has been held in Cedar Rapids since 1998. More than 45 local and global nonprofit organizations will be represented in this year's event. Admittance is free, and credit cards are accepted. Lunch will be available for purchase. For more information, visit www.Facebook.com/AGMCR. For volunteer opportunities or to get involved, contact Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222, or esautter@prairiewoods.org.



PROGRAMS

The Art of Feminine Presence Sundays, Nov. 1 & Dec. 6, 1–5 p.m.

Facilitator: Maryann Hesse

There are women who walk into a room and have an air of confidence about them that says, *you can trust me.*



Other women walk in and are basically unnoticed. The first woman has "presence," while the second does not. Having presence draws people and opportunities to you. But there is good news: presence can be learned!

Join Certified Art of Feminine Presence teacher Maryann Hesse for one of these four-hour interactive workshops. You will experience and learn:

- The best practice that will create and anchor you in your presence so that you can be authentically confident in *any* situation
- Letting go of and forgiving lingering resentments or old hurts regarding other women
- Healing the deep wounds that cause you to make unwise choices of intimate partners and keep you from manifesting whatever you truly desire (such as love, money, respect, connection or creative expression)

Come and experience the power of your presence for yourself, and start being appreciated in a whole new way!

Fee: \$67 (or \$97 within one week of class)

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina Tuesdays, Nov. 3, Nov. 17, Dec. 1 & Dec. 15, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Come together in a circle of trust to integrate imagination, learning and prayer through the contemplative practice of *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing. *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 stand alone, so you may attend one or all. Art images are usually borrowed from *The Saint John's*

Bible. The upcoming weekly topics are: Nov. 3—Ezekiel 1:1–3:27, Visions; Nov. 17—Ezekiel 37:1–14, Dry Bones; Dec. 1—Ezekiel 40, New temple; and Dec. 15—Isaiah 66, As a Mother Comforts.

Fee: \$10 per session

Kala Sacred Activism Introductory Sessions Tuesday, Nov. 3; Wednesday, Nov. 11; or Thursday, Dec. 3; 6–7 p.m. (followed by Initiation into Sacred Activism Retreat March 4–6)

Facilitator: Michelle Stafford

Introduce yourself to Kala Sacred Activism, which helps you engage a blueprint for the "new consciousness." Explore natural tools to help you birth your authentic self, be a strong force in the ascension of the world and humanity's evolution, and open your heart to your higher purpose.



Join Michelle Stafford, cofounder of Illuminations Healing Arts Center, for one of three introductory sessions. You then may choose to participate in a monthly series at Illuminations or the Initiation into Sacred Activism Retreat with Andrew Harvey at Prairiewoods (March 4–6). To register for an introductory session, call 319-241-9679 or email kalasacredactivism@gmail.com.

Fee: Free for introductory sessions

Drumming for Healing Wednesdays, Nov. 4, Nov. 18, Dec. 2 & Dec. 16, 6–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Sheri Mealhouse
(Hawkwoman)

In the cosmic experience, drumming touches many people at a deep level and brings all creation together as a community. Drumming—and feeling the Creator's rhythm inside of you—resonates with a variety of people. Come see how it resonates with you! No experience is necessary, and percussion instruments are available. All ages are welcome. In case of inclement

weather, this drum circle will meet indoors. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: Free-will offering to facilitator

Praise Be the Creator Concert Series

Mondays, Nov. 9 & 23, 7–8:30 p.m.

Bring your joyful heart and honor Earth, Our One Home and gift of the Creator, through song! Join local musicians who bring a love of the land and a passion for sharing the Spirit.

On Nov. 9, listen to *Voice of the Land*, featuring the beautiful sounds of Jonny Lipford on the Native American style flute. On Nov. 23, come to *Our Common Home*, featuring the Christian singer-songwriter duo The Pericycles: Eric Hauschildt and Jesse Burns. These concerts are part of our *Praise Be* series, which celebrates the connection between faith and the environment, as put forth in Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'* (which means "praise be to you"). Come, let your heart sing!

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10



Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing Tuesdays, Nov. 10, Nov. 24, Dec. 8 & Dec. 22, 10–11:45 a.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml

Meet with other Christian seekers to discuss life and faith in a trusting environment. Use the upcoming Sunday readings from the three-year Lectionary cycle used in many Christian churches to explore and discuss various topics. 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. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$5

Remembrance Service
Tuesday, Nov. 10, 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitators: Prairiewoods staff

Join us for a Remembrance Service in honor of benefactors and friends of Prairiewoods who have blessed us in life as well as in death by their presence and gifts. Please bring a picture or symbol of your loved ones who have died to be used during the service. Light refreshments will be served. Registration is requested—but not required—by Nov. 5.
Fee: Free



Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony
Saturdays, Nov. 14 & Dec. 12, 5 p.m.
(enter lodge around 6 p.m.)

Facilitators: Kerry Batteau & friends
 Prairiewoods offers a Sweat Lodge Ceremony focused on prayer, purification, and healing. The lodge is a small dome-shaped structure in which participants sit on the earth around heated stones. Please bring finger foods to share after the ceremony. Registration is requested so that additional protocols and a release form can be mailed to you.
Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 to Prairiewoods

Day of Self Renewal
Mondays, Nov. 16 & Dec. 14,
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rodney Bluml
 Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit during a Day of Self Renewal, which features two 40-minute holistic services of your choice, group Guided Meditation, a private guest room, trails for walking, fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from reflexology, head and shoulder massage, healing touch spiritual ministry, foot spa treatment, paraffin bath for hands, spiritual direction, Swedish massage or yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.
Fee: \$90 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

Dream Group
Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1–3 p.m.
Facilitators: Marj English, OSF, & Joann Gehling, FSPA

Use a Jungian approach to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams to help you grow. This Dream Group meets monthly (except in December). The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. To participate, you must have completed a Prairiewoods Dream Workshop or Dream Retreat, or something comparable. Registration is required at least a week in advance.
Fee: Suggested offering of \$20 per session

Prairiewoods Holiday Bazaar
Saturday, Nov. 21, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.
 (See p. 12 for a full description.)

Alternative Gift Market
Saturday, Dec. 5, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
 (See p. 7 for a full description.)

Back by popular demand!
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
Information Session: Tuesdays, Dec. 8 & 15, 12:30–1:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 10, 5:30–6:30 p.m., or Monday, Dec. 14, 5:30–6:30 p.m.
Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, Jan. 5–Feb. 23, 12:30–3 p.m., or Thursdays, Jan. 7–Feb. 25, 5:30–8 p.m.
Combined Extended Class: Saturday, Feb. 6, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Chris Klug

Mindfulness is the power of mind to be deeply aware of what's happening—without commentary or interference. Research reveals numerous benefits to the nervous system, emotions and general sense of well-being. In this eight-week series, you will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal meditation practices and informal integrative practices. Chris Klug is a grief counselor and mindfulness teacher.



This series is offered through a community partnership with Cedar Memorial. (In fact, Cedar Memorial and its President, John Linge, provided more than \$1,000 in scholarships to participants in our fall MBSR series!)
Fee: Free for information sessions, \$400 for eight-week series (partial scholarships available)

Winter Solstice at Indian Creek Nature Center
Friday, Dec. 18, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Indian Creek staff
 At the tipping point between the longest night of the year and increasing daylight, celebrate the quiet of darkness and the joy of light. Rejoice in the promise of longer days and warm sunshine. Explore the seasonal movement of Earth around its star. Create a sand candle to celebrate returning light. Please dress warmly for moon gazing.
Fee: Free-will offering

Hatha Way Yoga
Monday & Thursday mornings & evenings
Facilitator: Cindy Hathaway

Link your movements with your breath and cultivate strength, flexibility and relaxation through regular yoga classes. Cindy Hathaway of Hatha Way Yogi leads multiple one-hour Gentle/Beginner's and Chair Yoga classes each week. (For a complete schedule, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.) Please bring your own mat if possible. People of all fitness levels are welcome.
Fee: \$99 for eleven-punch card or \$60 for six-punch card, one punch per session

Save the Date! for this upcoming program:

- **Vino van Gogh** featuring the painting *Red Poppies*, Sunday, Jan. 10, 1:30–4 p.m.
This makes a great Christmas gift!

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

CONTINUING PROGRAMS

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

1st & 3rd Thursdays monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Come together with other spiritual seekers to learn how to live a more contemplative life. Discuss readings from the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes writings from Thomas Merton and other spiritual writers. The intent is to encourage contemplative living and growth in the ability to respond to life's events with greater faith.

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 praying in silence. Relax, clear your mind and find God's presence within you during this time of silence and centering prayer. The group meets in the Guest House, and you may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitches

2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m.,

& 4th Wednesday monthly (except Nov. 25), 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Practice your hobby in the company of new friends! If you enjoy knitting or crocheting, you are invited to create beautiful works of art (in the form of hats, mittens, blankets and baby items) for charity. The Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitches are 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

Men's Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life

2nd & 4th Thursdays monthly (except Nov. 26 & Dec. 24), 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

As you mature, many men undergo a major life transformation from goal driven-ness to receptivity, from ego to wisdom. The transition may seem quite disruptive while on the way to being life-enhancing. Join with a small group of reflective men in honest conversation about life's changes.

Fee: Free-will offering

Wednesday Women

Every Wednesday (except Nov. 25, Dec. 23 & Dec. 30), 10–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Marj English, OSF

Join this lively group of women to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged—you are welcome any time! For a list of weekly reading assignments, please visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

On Nov. 4 and 11, finish reading and discussing *Awakening the Spirit, Inspiring the Soul*, edited by Brother Wayne Teasdale and Martha Howard, MD.

On Nov. 18, begin discussing and praying through the book *The Heartbeat of God: Finding the Sacred in the Middle of Everything* by Katharine Jefferts, a presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church who shares insights on the intersection of the sacred and the secular.

The group will not meet Nov. 25, Dec. 23 or Dec. 30. On Dec. 9, you are invited to gather at 11:30 a.m. (instead of 10 a.m.) for a Christmas luncheon. Weekly meetings resume Jan. 6.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session (\$20 for Dec. 9)



Prairiewoods' friend Nancy Rude lost her battle with cancer in July. She left us with these words of wisdom: "I believe that God put us on this Earth for two reasons: to take care of each other, and to take care of this planet. If we just focused on these two things, we wouldn't have time for any nonsense." Thank you, Nancy, for this important reminder, and thank you, Sister Anna Phiri, for introducing us. Nancy, you are remembered and missed at Prairiewoods.

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The Prairiewoods kitchen uses an organic flour grown and milled in Iowa for all of our sweet breads, desserts, bars and homemade breads! It is called Early Morning Harvest, and we purchase it at New Pioneer Food Co-op in Cedar Rapids.

Chef Laurie Erlacher with some of her delicious baked goods





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Welcome Gift-Giving Season at Holiday Bazaar

The holiday season is about love and kindness, generosity and gratitude. But sometimes the quest to find the perfect gift or host the best party leads to more stress than serenity.

This year, kick off the Christmas season in festive style at Prairiewoods' annual *Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, Nov. 21*. From *8 a.m. to 1 p.m.*, you can find the perfect gifts for everyone on your list and stock up on baked goods for parties or last-minute house guests. Jump start your holiday season by visiting some of your old favorite vendors, as well as several new ones from the local community. The wide range of gifts you can choose from include pottery, assorted jewelry, scarves, fun socks, children's books, Trappistine caramels, gourmet chocolate pecans and a variety of beautiful hand-crafted items. When you need a break from shopping for friends and family, join Otis—Prairiewoods' favorite squirrel—for a cookie or other fresh baked goods in our Coffee Corner.

If you want to help make the bazaar a success, you are invited to donate baked goods or craft items, or volunteer your time. To join the fun, please contact Sue Wiley at swiley@prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700.

We hope you will join us for the official start of the season at the Holiday Bazaar!



Otis, Prairiewoods' favorite squirrel, photographed by Artist in Residence Joni Reed Cooley