

Prairiewoods

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

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* —Isaiah 9:6

*The Prairiewoods staff wishes you a blessed
Christmas and a peace-filled new year!*

Fire: The Original Spark within Us and All Creation

Beneath a great oak at Prairiewoods, a sign invites us to begin a walk through time. (See photo on p. 3.) *This is a cosmic walk, taking us from The Great Flaring Forth of the Emerging Universe to today*, a time when humanity is just becoming conscious of who we are and of our place in a great epic, the story of this amazing universe.

Our story begins almost 14 billion years ago, when out of the darkness a great ball of fire blazed into being. In it was all the matter and energy that makes up our universe. This is the birth of ourselves, of all we see around us, of all we love. We were born in fire.

Almost two billion years after this original event, the first stars illuminated the night in billions of galaxies. Some of the most brilliant of these stars eventually exploded, creating billions more stars and eventually our own sun and planet Earth, our entire planetary system. This is an awesome thought ... but in reality, we were born in the fire of the stars.

That original fire is still in us.

Ronald Rolheiser, a well-known Catholic theologian,

speaks of this unquenchable fire that burns within everyone. This fire “lies at the center of our lives, in the marrow of our bones, and in the deep recesses of the soul.” How we channel this fire, Rolheiser writes in his book *The Holy Longing*, is our spirituality. Spirituality, he claims, has to do with the fire within and how we use it in the world.

Another author and social psychologist, Diarmuid O’Murchu, explains the same concept this way in his book *In the Beginning Was the Spirit*: “The ‘afterglow’ of the original fireball of creation pervades the whole universe as an animating, energizing Spirit. It is the dynamic, erotic, creative impetus flowing through us that inspires and spurs us onto new life today. This pervasive, energizing Spirit is innately relational and propels us toward deeper communion and co-creation.”

These scholars seem to challenge us to ask, *What are we doing with our fire?* Each of us has the fiery energies—gifts of the Creator—within us. How can these energies be effective in creating a better world today?

(continued on page 3)

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



In the midst of Christmas cheer, a small thin voice insists on posing a series of difficult questions: What does it all mean? Am I happy? What is my life for? How can I satisfy that itch within me? How can I satisfy that part of me that nothing seems to satisfy? How can I explain the wonder that I sometimes sense is at the heart of life? And we find ourselves putting our lives under a microscope. Wondering. It's the equivalent of shuffling our way through a dense forest and then suddenly we find ourselves in a calm, silent clearance. And we get a calmer and more reflective view of where we are. Suddenly we have an opportunity to put things in perspective. It's as if, in some peculiar way, we have been brought into our own presence.

—Brendan Hoban, *A Christmas Reflection*

(www.AssociationOfCatholicPriests.ie/2013/12/A-Christmas-Reflection)

As I thought about this Director's Corner, I went online to search for something that might help me tie together the season of Advent, Christmas and midwinter celebrations, and how we kindle the fire of life and warmth in the midst of winter. When I came upon the text of the Christmas reflection (above), I felt it captured my hopes for each one of us as we head into this time of year that is both the season of darkness and the celebration of light.

In giving ourselves the opportunity to step back, to be still, and to allow the calm quiet of winter to blanket us, we paradoxically allow ourselves the chance to reconnect with the fire of Creation. At Prairiewoods, we will express this in upcoming opportunities to retreat into winter's silence and contemplate how life comes full circle, and in program offerings that call us to engage with our own creative spirit through art and literature. And, as always, we have this beautiful land, the woods and prairies in which we can wander and experience silence as well as life.

My wish for each of you, through the coming winter months, is that your lives be filled with both fecund darkness and generative fire; with silence and cries of joy and praise. May you be truly blessed with abundance in the coming year. I leave you with one of my favorite Christmas carol verses from *O Little Town of Bethlehem*:

*How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given;
So God imparts
To Human hearts,
The wonders of his heaven.*

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, Director



Prairiewoods is a Catholic 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.

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

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

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRE

(continued from page 1)

We will come to see, if we continue our long walk through our cosmic journey, that *at each moment of crisis, God has been present.* There have been times of danger, but somehow, at each of these Moments of Grace, life has continued, always more complex, always more abundant.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, whose mystical theology celebrated the centrality of the divine as an all-consuming fire, proclaimed, "Someday, after mastering the wind, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we will harness for God the energies of Love, and then for the second time in the history of the world, (we) will have discovered fire."

The last station of the cosmic walk offers us two words: *consciousness changing.* It could say *spirit at work* or *universe still moving forward.* This thirteenth station does not signify the end of the evolutionary process. The original fire has not been extinguished. The evolutionary story is not finished. The Spirit is still moving. God is still creating.

Our task is to tend the fire that lies within.

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA

“Someday, after mastering the wind, the waves, the tides, and gravity, we will harness for God the energies of Love, and then for the second time in the history of the world, (we) will have discovered fire.”

—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ

“I, the highest and fiery power, have kindled every living spark and I have breathed out nothing that can die ... I flame above the beauty of the fields. I shine in the waters; in the sun, the moon and the stars. I burn. And by means of the airy wind, I stir everything into quickness with a certain invisible life which sustains all ... I, the fiery power, lie hidden in these things and they blaze from me.”

—Hildegard of Bingen

“We belong to a reality greater than ourselves, an envelope of consciousness informing our awareness, intuition and imagination in what is essentially an intelligent universe. All our thoughts, dreams and aspirations arise from this cosmic wellspring within which we live and grow, and are empowered to realize our full potential as planetary, cosmic creatures.”

—Diarmuid O’Murchu, *Reclaiming Spirituality*



Releasing the fire within you into the world might mean:

- reading Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, discussing it with others, allowing yourself to be open to a relationship with the entire global community and listening to the cries of the poor
- considering what the lives of your children and grandchildren will be like if you do not respond to cries of Mother Earth
- realizing that everything is connected and all of us are related; interconnectedness with all humans and other-than-human creatures includes Earth herself

You are invited to walk the entire Cosmic Walk and enjoy all the trails at Prairiewoods, tended lovingly by Nancy Hoffman, FSPA; Cliff Schueler; Emy Sautter and many dedicated volunteers.

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.)

New at Prairiewoods!

Adult Contemplative Coloring
Wednesdays, Jan. 6–Feb. 24, 6:30–8 p.m.; & Sundays, Jan. 10–31, Feb. 14 & Feb. 28, 1–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Self-directed

Adult coloring clubs are the newest way to reduce stress and increase focus. Join others in Prairiewoods' peace-filled environment to contemplate the love God has for you and your connection to creation while coloring! Coloring pages, mandalas, colored pencils, crayons, coffee, tea and water will be available for your use. Feel free to bring your own coloring books, art supplies or beverages.

Fee: Free-will offering

Great Christmas Gift Idea!

Vino van Gogh

Sunday, Jan. 10, 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 Red Poppies (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

Diarmuid O'Murchu's Evolutionary Faith Book Study

Wednesdays, Jan. 13–Feb. 17, 11:45 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Laura Weber, Ph.D.

Take a leap into the deep waters of post-modern faith in all its complexity and beauty by reading and discussing Diarmuid O'Murchu's *Evolutionary Faith: Rediscovering God in Our Great Story*. The book invites you to explore the ongoing

story of creation with an eye toward synergy, relationality, embodiment and consciousness. (O'Murchu will be the featured facilitator at our *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference April 8–9.) Share a delicious Prairiewoods lunch and join in a lively conversation. Come hungry and curious; leave challenged and inspired!

Fee: \$15 per session includes lunch (or \$5 without lunch), plus cost of book

Early Christianity & Some Books that Didn't Make the Cut

Thursdays, Jan. 14, Jan. 28, Feb. 11 & Feb. 25, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Mel Schlachter

Fifty two books were discovered in the Egyptian desert in 1945, a body of Christian scripture that did not make it into the New Testament canon. However, some of the books now are seen as texts rich in the Christian wisdom of human transformation. You are invited to read the texts—found in *A New New Testament* by Hal Taussig—prior to each week's discussion.

Fee: \$40, plus cost of book



Day of Self Renewal Mondays, Jan. 18 & Feb. 15, 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, 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: \$95 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

Our Common Home Sunday Afternoon Movie & Discussion Series

Sundays, Jan. 17, Jan. 24 & Feb. 21, 1:30–3:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Backyard Abundance, Green Iowa AmeriCorps & Emy Sautter

Join area green organizations for a Sunday afternoon documentary movie and discussion series this winter. Popcorn will be available, and you are welcome to bring snacks.

On Jan. 17, watch and discuss *Inhabit*, a documentary about permaculture, a way of being and relating to Earth. Then learn from Backyard Abundance about upcoming permaculture-based, edible landscaping events that will help you grow your knowledge.

Jan. 24 will feature *Journey of the Universe*, in which evolutionary philosopher Brian Swimme describes the 14-billion-year history of the universe and humanity's place within it.

On Feb. 21, join Green Iowa AmeriCorps to watch and discuss *I Am*, which follows filmmaker Tom Shadyac after a life-threatening cycling accident. In it, he asks: *What's wrong with our world?* and *What can we do to make it better?* The answers might surprise you!

Fee: Free-will offering (*Please help us cover the \$100 per movie screening fee!*)

The Enneagram: Insight & Relationships

Thursday, Jan. 21, 6:30–8:30 p.m., & Friday, Jan. 22, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Audrey Quanrud & Steve Spilde

The Enneagram is an ancient personality tool that combines spirituality and psychology for insight and acceptance. Prior to the workshop, you will complete an online tool to discern your preferred style of relating. You will receive a detailed report as a starting place for study and conversation. This is ideal for work teams, young adults and couples who wish to strengthen communication, improve effectiveness and increase life satisfaction. Please register by Jan. 11.

Commuter Fee: \$85 includes sessions, Enneagram tools and Friday lunch

Peaceful Patterns & the Universe Story
Tuesday, Jan. 26, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Andi Lewis

Have you considered the depth of your connection to all of creation? Gradually reveal your peaceful-patterns response to the Universe Story as it is told in a 13-part narrative. Peaceful patterns, often called doodles or tangles, are detailed black-and-white drawings created by repeating simple patterns. You will leave with a unique work of art that expresses the unfolding universe in you. No experience is necessary.



Fee: \$15 includes instruction and art materials (which are yours to keep)

Eclectic Light Book Club
Wednesdays, Jan. 27 & Feb. 24, 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitators: Joni Reed Cooley & Jenifer Hanson

Join Prairiewoods' new monthly book club, in which you can read and discuss a different book each month. The selected books will be light—not theological study, but eclectic writings with spiritual links. Some books may raise questions; some may raise hackles. They all will provide interesting food for thought and invite friendly discussion! You are invited to read the text prior to the discussion. You may attend single sessions or come monthly.

For Jan. 27, please read *Traveling with Pomegranates* by Sue Monk Kidd and Ann Kidd Taylor. For Feb. 24, the book is *The Traveler's Gift* by Andy Andrews.
Fee: Free-will offering, plus cost of books

T'ai Chi Chih®
Thursdays, Jan. 28–March 3, 1–2 p.m.
Facilitator: Nancy Hoffman, FSPA

Do you want to feel and be well? T'ai Chi Chih®, or Joy Through Movement, is a series of twenty simple actions that are slow, gentle and easily done by anyone, regardless of age or physical condition. The movements promote physical, mental, emotional and spiritual harmony. No experience is necessary.
Fee: \$60 for six-week series

Life = Change. Transitions: Rediscovering the Spark Within
Friday, Feb. 5, 3:30 p.m.–Sun, Feb. 7, 4 p.m.
Facilitators: Kathleen MacFerran & Mary Mackenzie

During this nurturing, experiential three-day workshop, you will be challenged to step toward and embrace the life you want! Have you changed inside, but the rest of your life has not? Has your life turned upside down and you don't know which way is up? Do you simply



see change on the horizon and want to be ready? This workshop will invite you to find peace amid the chaos, spend less time being stressed, get back to balance faster, speak your truth to anyone, stop being hard on yourself, ask for help when you need it and see beauty in challenges. This workshop, led by nationally renowned speakers, will use the frameworks of Marshall Rosenberg's *Nonviolent Communication* and William Bridge's *Managing Transitions*.

Fee: \$330 (or \$320 for double room) includes sessions, materials, lodging, Friday dinner, and Saturday and Sunday breakfast and lunch
Commuter Fee: \$250 includes sessions, materials, Friday dinner, and Saturday and Sunday lunch
Register by Jan. 15 and save \$15!

Conscious Breathing for Health, Harmony & Spiritual Growth
Saturday, Feb. 6, 9 a.m.–5 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. In this workshop, you will learn gentle breathing techniques to release anxiety and stress, quiet your mind, and bring awareness of your inner God-Self.
Fee: \$80 includes lunch

Spirited Artists' Coffee Chat
Sunday, Feb. 7, 2–4 p.m.
Facilitator: Joni Reed Cooley

Are you an artist who expresses your spirituality in your art? Come join in friendly conversation with other artists who share your passion! This afternoon is open to artistic expression of all types, including visual artists, writers, dancers and musicians. Coffee, tea and water will be provided. Please bring an example of your work that expresses your faith and heart.

Fee: \$5

Learn More Online about these programs that take place each month:

- **Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina** with Rodney Bluml, Tuesdays, Jan. 5, Jan. 19, Feb. 2 & Feb. 16
- **Drumming for Healing** with Sheri Mealhouse (Hawkwoman), Wednesdays, Jan. 6, Jan. 20, Feb. 3 & Feb. 17
- **Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing** with Rodney Bluml, Tuesdays, Jan. 12, Jan. 26, Feb. 9 & Feb. 23
- **Hatha Way Yoga** with Cindy Hathaway, Monday & Thursday mornings & evenings

Save the Date! for these upcoming programs:

- **Initiation into Sacred Activism** with Andrew Harvey, Friday, March 4–Sunday, March 6
- **Mind/Body/Spirit Groups** with Jane Cadwallader-Howe & Claire Dickey, Mondays, March 7–May 23
- **Rekindling the Artist's Way** with Joni Reed Cooley, Tuesdays, March 8–May 10
- **Invitations to Wholeness** with Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, Tuesdays, April 12–May 3
- **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction** with Chris Klug, Tuesdays or Thursdays, May 31–July 21

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, 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

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.

Jan. 6–20, the group will continue discussing and praying through *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

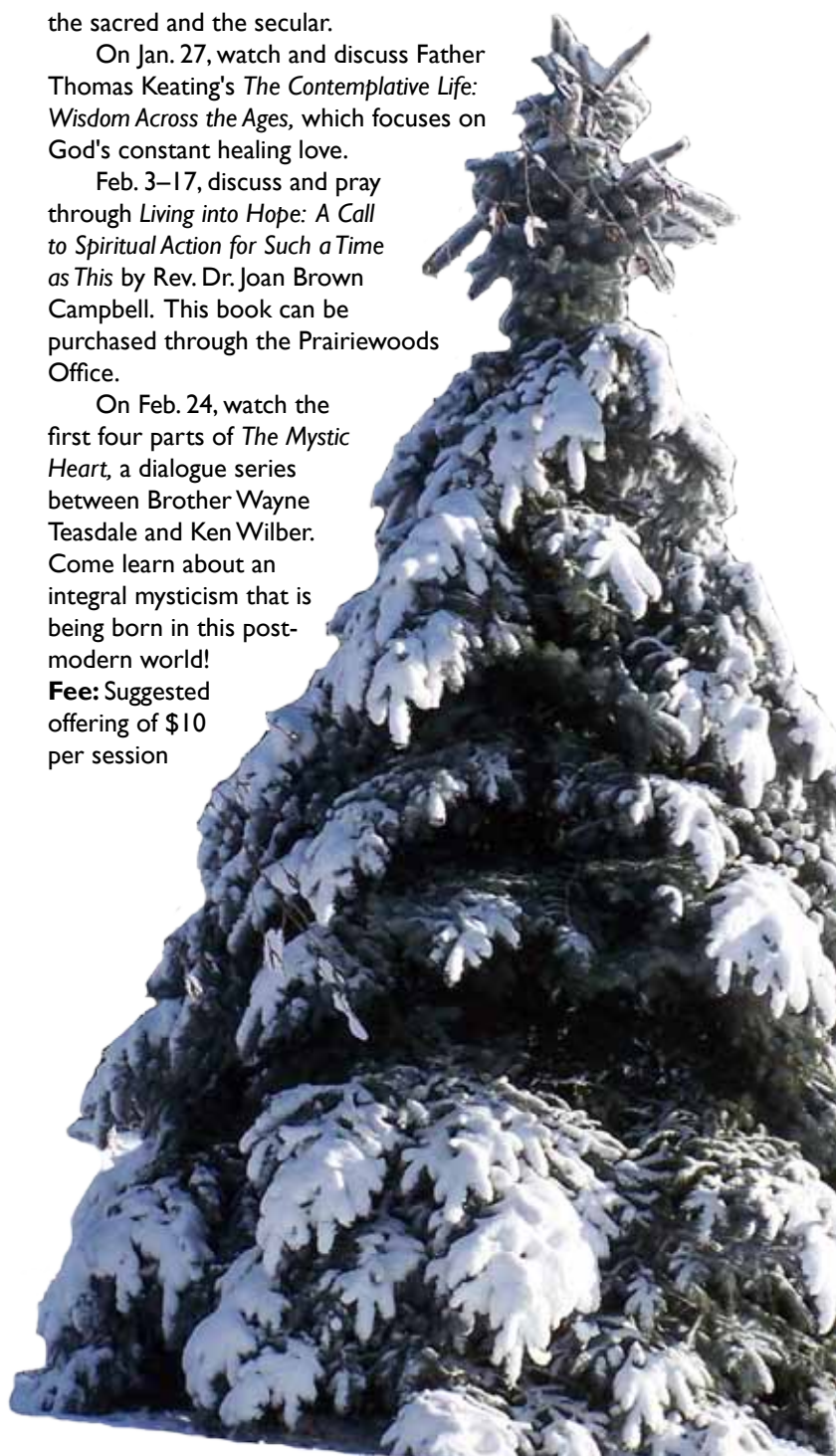
the sacred and the secular.

On Jan. 27, watch and discuss Father Thomas Keating's *The Contemplative Life: Wisdom Across the Ages*, which focuses on God's constant healing love.

Feb. 3–17, discuss and pray through *Living into Hope: A Call to Spiritual Action for Such a Time as This* by Rev. Dr. Joan Brown Campbell. This book can be purchased through the Prairiewoods Office.

On Feb. 24, watch the first four parts of *The Mystic Heart*, a dialogue series between Brother Wayne Teasdale and Ken Wilber. Come learn about an integral mysticism that is being born in this post-modern world!

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session



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

To our chagrin, while collating information for our Annual Report, we discovered that 15 gifts made during the 2014–2015 fiscal year did not appear in our newsletters. Those gifts are included in this list.

To those whose generosity was not properly acknowledged, please accept our sincere apology and know how much we appreciate your support and kindness. We truly could not be the place of peace and transformation we strive to be without you!

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Important Dates for 2016

Prairiewoods is planning some of our biggest events for next year. Please put them in your calendar today so you don't miss a moment! (For other important dates, please check www.Prairiewoods.org regularly.)

*Spirituality in the 21st Century with Diarmuid
O'Murchu & Peter Mayer: April 8–9*
Eco-Fest 2016: April 23
Garden Party: June 4
Nature Fest: Sept. 25
Holiday Bazaar: Nov. 19
Alternative Gift Market: Dec. 3



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



Prairiewoods was founded in 1996, so we are celebrating our 20th anniversary this year. Please join us in marking this momentous occasion! Keep your eyes peeled for a number of special celebrations and features, including a weekly blog launching on our website in January.



Prairiewoods

A CATHOLIC, FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Integral Ecology: Awakening to Our Interconnectedness

Pope Francis might be called a Jesuit with a Franciscan heart. His encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, is steeped in a Franciscan theology that embraces all of creation as revelatory of the Divine. *Everything in the world is a means of God's self-revelation.*

The pope uses the words of Saint Francis to describe the relationship between humans and the rest of creation. He writes, "Everything is related and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth" (92). The pope speaks of a cosmic family: "all of us are linked by unseen bonds and together form a kind of universal family, a sublime communion" (89).

This encyclical is addressed to all people of good will, through which Pope Francis invites us to a conversion of heart. He reminds us that through modern science we now know that *everything is connected, everything is in relationship: the environment, the economy, politics and culture.*

Throughout *Laudato Si'*, the pope uses such words as *love, solidarity, connectedness, unity and harmony.* He urges us to think differently, especially about all of our relationships.

Chapter four, entitled *Integral Ecology*, is the heart of the encyclical. In it Pope Francis explores integral ecology as a new vision of how we are to live in the world, a path that can only be

taken if we have a relationship with the world around us.

Because nature is not something apart from us, because everything is interconnected, the pope tells us that *our present crisis is both social and environmental*; it is about how we live our everyday lives; it is about what is happening to our common home—a home for all beings, not just for humans.

Our enormous environmental problems, such as climate change and degraded ecosystems, cannot be separated from cultural issues: poverty, rampant inequality, consumerism, materialism, living and acting without mindfulness of coming generations. This is what he means when he speaks of integral ecology. This linking—this wholeness—requires a very large vision.

The papal encyclical calls all of us to a new commitment to dialogue and cooperation. Pope Francis gives us a sense that this is possible: "Yet all is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good and making a new start" (205).

He also offers us a promise that we are not alone. He gives us both Francis of Assisi and Jesus of Nazareth to be our guides, as he writes: "The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God, which has already been attained by the risen Christ, the measure and maturity of all things" (53).

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA



integral
ecology

A field and wind turbines
in India, courtesy of Vestas

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



*It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless
our walking is our preaching.*

—St. Francis of Assisi

At Prairiewoods, there is very little preaching in the traditional sense. However, there is a great deal of walking! There has been much literal walking at Prairiewoods since our founding twenty years ago. Many have walked in the prairies and woods, which are painstakingly and lovingly being restored. Some have followed the creek bed, where there is a project underway to mitigate storm-water erosion. Countless individuals have walked, often in silence, the paths of the labyrinth or the Cosmic Walk.

There has been much metaphorical walking these twenty years, as well. People of all faiths and cultures are invited to Prairiewoods to explore and nurture their relationships with the Source of all Being, Earth, Self and Others. Spiritual directors, retreat facilitators and holistic practitioners walk this path of inner deepening with our guests.

Here, we walk the welcome paths of hospitality and simplicity, as modeled so many years ago by St. Francis himself. We strive to be warm and kind to all. In our meals and in our guest accommodations, you will find comfort and nourishment, but not extravagance. Hospitality encourages guests to feel peaceful and open to their experiences at Prairiewoods. Simplicity allows space for rest and silence, while also keeping our programs affordable so that guests can experience the transformation they offer!

Our concern for simplicity also meshes with our care for creation, underpinning all that we do at Prairiewoods. In this, perhaps, is the deepest expression of our Franciscan identity. As Pope Francis so eloquently says, "Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically" (*Laudato Si'*, #10). As we move forward, into and beyond our 20th year, it is our desire at Prairiewoods that our walking continues to be our preaching. Each of you is invited, joyfully and authentically, to walk with us.

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, Director



Prairiewoods is a Catholic 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.

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

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

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www.Prairiewoods.org
Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org



The following are some upcoming retreats and programs (beginning on page 6). For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Exploring Your Spirituality through Circles & Spheres

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

Facilitators: Mary Kopecky; Joellen Price, PBVM; & Andi Lewis

Where can circles and spheres take you on your spiritual journey? Join three local artists for a hands-on retreat focused on the holiness of creative expression. This weekend retreat is for you, whether or not you consider yourself an artist! Explore and express your spirituality as you delve into three forms of artistic expression focused on circles and spheres: mandalas, Peaceful Patterns and willow orbs. Mandalas are sacred artwork created in the form of a circle and can be used as a meditation or contemplative prayer practice. Peaceful Patterns, often called doodles or tangles, are detailed black-and-white drawings created by repeating simple patterns. Willow orbs are versatile three-dimensional spheres woven with willow branches. In learning and practicing these three art forms, you will look past any pressure to “create art,” and begin to feel the spiritual power inherent in the creative process. Join three creative spirits for a weekend of expression, exploration and spirituality! No artistic experience is necessary. **Fee:** \$230 includes art materials, sessions, lodging and all meals **Commuter Fee:** \$180 includes art materials, sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



communities. This retreat mirrors the process of several circle conversations on Diarmuid O’Murchu’s *The Meaning and Practice of Faith*. You do not need to have attended those conversations to participate in the retreat, but reading the book is recommended. (O’Murchu will be the featured speaker at Prairiewoods’ *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference April 8–9, so this retreat is in anticipation of that promising event.) Get inspired by others on a similar journey of faith! Ellen Bruckner is skilled at facilitating circle conversations to help you find new paradigms for practicing faith.

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



Silent Mindfulness Meditation

Friday, April 15, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, April 17, 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,” writes Jon Kabat-Zinn. Do you long to live the moments of your life more fully? 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 taught in the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics since 2001 and facilitates the MBSR series at Prairiewoods.

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



Talking in Spirals: Faith in Small Circles

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

Facilitator: Ellen Bruckner

Have you been on a new journey of faith because your old paradigms are shifting? Does the unbroken circle of your life of faith feel like it’s spiraling into surprising new vistas? Explore, in ever deepening levels, your relationship with God, encouraged by the discerning wisdom of others using a circle dialogue process. Circle conversations are respectful, reflective and confidential dialogues designed to foster creative and healthy

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in the **21ST** CENTURY
SPiRiTUALiTY



"Beams of Love" by Mary Southard, CSJ, www.MarySouthardArt.org,
Courtesy of www.MinistryOfTheArts.org, Congregation of St. Joseph

*Celebrate the universal and radical call to inclusion
advocated by the integral ecology of Pope Francis!*

Join *Diarmuid O'Murchu, MSC, & Peter Mayer*
for Prairiewoods' annual *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference.

**Friday, April 8, 7–9 p.m., &
Saturday, April 9, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.**

at Mercy Medical Center's Hallagan Education Center
701 Tenth Street SE in Cedar Rapids

The cost of this two-day conference is \$70 (or \$75 if purchased after March 15) and includes Saturday lunch. Friday only is \$25, and Saturday only is \$45, including 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 \$95 per night plus tax for one king bed or two queen beds by calling 319-832-1130 or visiting www.TinyURL.com/PrairiewoodsHamptonRate. Hot breakfast is included.

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

"When our hearts are authentically open to universal communion, this sense of fraternity excludes nothing and no one" (*Laudato Si'*, #92).

For our 20th anniversary, Prairiewoods welcomes internationally-known author and speaker Diarmuid O'Murchu and musician Peter Mayer for an event that will awaken and enfold us in the sacredness of all creation! Based on his newest book, *Inclusivity: A Gospel Mandate*, Diarmuid will outline the challenges involved in discerning and adopting a spirituality for the 21st century, embracing the cosmic and planetary horizons that engage us at this time.

"When the Gospels tell us that Jesus gathered sinners, tax collectors and prostitutes around the table of fellowship, it was not mere charity or a patronizing gesture of good will. It was a highly subversive and empowering gesture by one who himself was ever faithful to God's Holy Spirit. The commensality provided a forum to tell painful stories and to dream utopian hopes. The basic affirmation of being acknowledged, accepted, welcomed, encouraged, and supported to make a fresh start were all in place."

—Diarmuid O'Murchu, MSC, *Inclusivity: A Gospel Mandate*, p. 95

So much of our world is fragmented, stratified and in crisis. Widening socio-political, cultural and economic chasms threaten our global family. We sometimes forget how inter-connected we all are, and that the most vulnerable among us suffer the worst from our cultural amnesia. Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, challenges us to "bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development ... Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home ... We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all" (13–14). This event is a way of engaging and expanding our circles for this crucial conversation, compelling us to reach out and include everyone, especially those on the margins. Diarmuid reminds us that the Gospel mandate requires us to "clear the ground" of exclusionary thinking. "It is the outsiders who become the catalysts for a radical new quality of inclusivity" (*Inclusivity*, 12).

Joining Diarmuid in this event celebrating the inclusive circle of life is Peter Mayer, whose soulful music resounds with the beauty, goodness and holiness of all creation. In the miracle of creation, nothing is excluded from God's love. *Everything is holy now!*

**"It used to be a world half there
Heaven's second rate hand-me-down
But I walk it with a reverent air
'Cause everything is holy now"**

—Peter Mayer, "Holy Now,"
from the CD *Million Year Mind*

Come be inspired by "Everyone in the Circle!"



Diarmuid O'Murchu, a member of the Sacred Heart Missionary Order, is a social psychologist whose working life has been mostly in social ministry and writing extensively on the interplay of religion, science and spirituality. His books include *Quantum Theology* (1996, revised in 2004), *Evolutionary Faith* (2002), *God in the Midst of Change* (2013) and *Inclusivity: A Gospel Mandate* (2015), among others. For more information, visit www.Diarmuid13.com.



Peter Mayer is a singer/songwriter/musician from Minnesota who writes songs for a small planet—songs about interconnectedness and the human journey, about the beauty and mystery of the world. For more information, visit www.PeterMayer.net.

PROGRAMS

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina Tuesdays, March 1, March 15, April 5 & April 19, 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 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: March 1—Feeding of Multitudes, March 15—The Crucifixion, April 5—The Resurrection and April 19—Road to Emmaus.

Fee: \$10 per session

*Offered in Partnership with
Cedar Memorial*

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Information Sessions: Tuesday,

March 1, 12:30–1:30 p.m., or

Thursday, March 3, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays,

March 8–May 3, 12:30–3 p.m., or

Thursdays, March 10–May 5, 5:30–8 p.m. (no class March 29 or 31)

Combined Extended Class: Saturday,
April 23, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Prairiewoods is the Linn County home for Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). In this eight-week series, you will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal and informal meditation practices. Mindfulness is the quality and power of mind that is deeply aware of what's happening—without commentary and without interference. Scientific research reveals countless positive effects on the nervous system, emotions and sense of general well-being. Chris Klug, a grief counselor, has been an instructor in the MBSR program at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics since 2001. This series is offered in partnership with Cedar Memorial. **Fee:** Free for information session, \$400 for eight-week series (partial scholarships available)

Drumming for Healing Wednesdays, March 2, March 16, April 6 & April 20, 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 cold weather, this drum circle meets inside. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: Free-will offering to facilitator

Wednesday Women

Wednesdays, March 2–April 20,
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 to come any time.

On March 2, continue viewing and discussing *The Mystic Heart*, a dialogue series in which Brother Wayne Teasdale and Ken Wilber discuss integral mysticism.

On March 9, discuss Spiritual Directors International's booklet *What to Expect in Christian Spiritual Direction*, which is available in the Prairiewoods office.

On March 16 and 23, view and discuss the DVD *The Passion of Christ*, a meditation with Ron Rolheiser, OMI.

March 30–May 11, read and discuss Diarmuid O'Murchu's *Evolutionary Faith: Rediscovering God in Our Great Story*, which looks at the ongoing story of creation through the lenses of synergy, relationality, embodiment and consciousness.

This group will not meet April 27.
Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session



Hatha Way Yoga Mondays & Thursdays; March 3–April 28; 9:30–10:30 a.m., 4:15–5:15 p.m. & 5:30–6:30 p.m.

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 Monday and Thursday. 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

Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

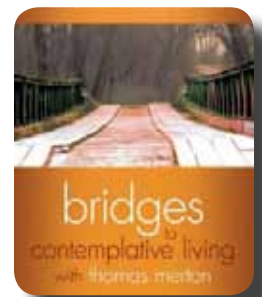
Thursdays, March 3, March 17,
April 7 & April 21, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Do you want to learn to live a more contemplative life? Are you ready to grow in your ability to respond to life's events with greater faith?

Come together with other spiritual seekers! This group's continued discussions are based on the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes musings of Thomas Merton and other spiritual writers. You are welcome to join any time.

Fee: \$5 per session



Mind-Body-Spirit Group Mondays, March 7–May 23, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Facilitators: Jane Cadwallader-Howe & Claire Dickey

Research shows that eighty percent of illness is due to chronic stress. The single most important way to deal with stress is through skills that balance mind, body and spirit. This twelve-week series will be a powerful, effective combination of research-based healing modalities to help you deal with life change, stress and illness in an intimate and supportive group setting. Learn the self-care skills

Initiation into Sacred Activism

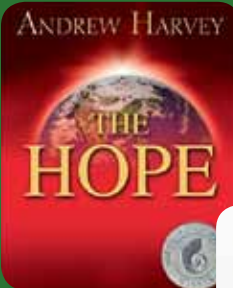
**Friday, March 4, 6 p.m.–
Sunday, March 6, noon**
Facilitator: Andrew Harvey

Welcome renowned mystic and best-selling author Andrew Harvey to Iowa! During this weekend workshop, you will be inspired to become a transformational force of "love-in-action!" Discover, embrace and share your authentic self; become centered in Divine love, peace and justice; and learn how to be a profound agent of change. Become the force of your authentic divine nature!

Andrew Harvey is the founder and director of the Institute of Sacred Activism, an international organization that invites you to take up the challenge of the contemporary global crises by becoming an inspired and effective agent of change. Sacred activism is born of a fusion of deep spiritual passion with wise radical action in the world. The large-scale practice of sacred activism can become an essential force for preserving and healing the planet and its inhabitants! Andrew has taught at Oxford and Cornell Universities, as well as at various colleges and spiritual centers throughout the world. He has written more than 30 books.

Fee: \$360 includes workshop sessions, two nights lodging in a single room, three meals on Saturday and Sunday breakfast

Commuter Fee: \$250 includes workshop sessions and Saturday lunch



necessary to transform the physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual dimensions of your life!



Jane Cadwallader-Howe nurtures the connection between mind, body and spirit through reading, T'ai Chi and yoga practice, walking, gardening, making music and hiking. Claire Dickey finds a deepening sense of connectedness to the Universe through the creative arts and the outdoors. Jane and Claire completed the Professional Training and Advanced Training programs with the Center for Mind-Body Medicine.

Fee: \$450 for twelve-week series

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers
Tuesdays, March 8 & April 12, 9:30–11 a.m., & Wednesdays, March 23 & April 26, 7–8:30 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

Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing
Tuesdays, March 8, March 22, March 29, April 12 & April 26, 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 per session

Rekindling The Artist's Way: Walking in This World
Tuesdays, March 8–May 10, 1:30–3 p.m.
Facilitator: Joni Reed Cooley

If you have completed an *Artist's Way* series and are looking to revitalize your artistic life, continue your journey in this ten-week series. Artist in Residence Joni Reed Cooley will help you rekindle your inner artist by following Julia Cameron's *Walking in This World: The Practical Art of Creativity*, the sequel to *The Artist's Way*. Take the next steps in discovering and recovering your creative self with new prompts and familiar tools, such as weekly reading, group reflection, morning pages and artist dates. Please read *Walking in This World* and take the next inspiring step on your artistic journey!



Fee: \$75, plus cost of book

Evening Centering Prayer
Tuesdays, March 8, March 22, April 12 & April 26, 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

Spring Gardening Series
Starting Seeds and Transplants
Tuesday, March 8, 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 varieties. Linn County Master Gardener Phil Pfister will provide tips and techniques on seeding, transplanting, setting plants out in the garden and extending the growing season. Registration is requested by March 7.

Fee: \$10

PROGRAMS

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony **Saturdays, March 12 & April 9,** **5–9 p.m.**

Facilitators: Kerry Batteau & 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 food items to share in a simple meal afterward. Registration is requested so that additional protocols and a release form can be mailed to you.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 to Prairiewoods

Fruit Tree Pruning Class **Tuesday, March 15, 6–8 p.m.**

Facilitators: Trees Forever & Prairiewoods

Help your fruit trees stay happy and healthy when you learn to prune apple and other fruit trees in this hands-on class. Annual dormant pruning is essential for fostering productive and healthy trees with high-quality fruit. This class will take place indoors and out, so dress accordingly. Registration is requested by March 14.

Fee: \$15

Dream Workshop Series **Wednesdays, March 16–April 6,** **1–3 p.m.**

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

Dreams can open you into your inner landscape and help you to grow spiritually. In this four-week series, you will learn how to “unpack” your dreams individually and within a group process. (For more information and recommended readings, please visit www.Prairiewoods.org or see the brochure.) After completing this series or something comparable, you will be eligible to join a Dream Group. (See p. 10.) Registration is required by March 9. **Fee:** \$80 for four-week series (payable at registration or \$20 per session, whether present or not)

Our Daily Bread **Saturday, March 19, 8:30 a.m.–** **3:30 p.m.**

Facilitators: Laurie Erlacher & Kathy Decker

Spend a day in the Prairiewoods kitchen with in-house bread-baking expert, Laurie Erlacher, who will demonstrate creating a heavenly loaf of homemade, savory, quick-rising bread. Kathy Decker will reflect on the connections between bread and life. You will then create a uniquely flavored soda bread using produce from the garden or pantry. Share the goodness and take some home!

Fee: \$75 includes recipes, utensils, ingredients, samples and lunch (may add lodging for Friday or Saturday nights for \$50 per night)

Medicinal Plants Series **Cultivate Health & Happiness** **with Medicinal Plants**

Saturday, March 19, 10 a.m.–noon
Facilitator: Dr. Nancy Hayes

Learn about medicinal characteristics of plants commonly found in home gardens and explore the long history of using plants as medicine. Focus on historical and contemporary uses of plants that grow well in this region and ways the medicinal qualities can be preserved, prepared and used to enhance health and well-being. Registration is requested by March 14.

Fee: \$20

Save the date for the other program in this series:

Medicinal Plants Workshop,
Saturday, June 25

Vino van Gogh **Sunday, March 20, 12:30–3 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 all the supplies and professional art instruction you need to create



your own 12-by-12-inch work of art, *Lilies in the Pond*. Wine, other beverages, cheese and appetizers are included. No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome. A non-refundable deposit of \$30 is required. Stay for the Equinox Concert immediately following!

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

Seasonal Celebration Series **Energy of the Equinox**

Relaxation Concert

Sunday, March 20, 3:45–5 p.m.

Facilitator: Jonny Lipford

The Spring Equinox signifies the emergence of new life and renewed energy. Bring yoga mats or cushions and find your favorite meditation posture as local musician Jonny Lipford plays music from his *Elemental Relaxation Series* on the Native American-style flute.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10



Save the date for the other celebrations in this series:

Summer Solstice at Ushers Ferry, Wednesday, June 22

Fall Equinox at Matthew 25, Saturday, Sept. 24

Winter Solstice at Indian Creek Nature Center, Saturday, Dec. 17

Day of Self Renewal **Mondays, March 21 & April 18,** **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 and yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance. **Fee:** \$95 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

Almost Full Moon Owl Hike & Owl Call Building Event
Thursday, March 24, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Facilitators: Wickiup Hill Learning Center & Prairiewoods

Learn about local owls and build owl calls to take home in the warmth of the Wickiup Hill Learning Center. Then head to the trails to talk to the owls and try to call one in. (The hike is timed just right to view the full moon!) Registration is required by March 23 by calling 319-892-6485.

Fee: \$5 (\$2 for those 16 and under, additional calls can be made for \$5 each)

Men’s Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life
Thursdays, March 24, April 14 & April 28, 7–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Bob Davis

As men mature, many 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 319-395-6700 to learn which book the group is discussing. **Fee:** Free-will offering

Pollination Propagation: Monarchs, Pollinators & Plants
Monday, March 28, 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitators: Cam Watts, Craig Kohl & Devon Dietz

The Cedar Rapids Monarch Research Project will plant 20,000 milkweed plants this spring in Cedar Rapids! Learn about this initiative from Cam Watts of Iowa State University and Certified Master Naturalist Craig Kohl. Then Master Gardener Devon Dietz will speak about 20 common butterflies and their pollinator plant companions. This is part of the Iowa Master Naturalist Spring Speaker Series. Registration is requested by March 27. **Fee:** Free-will offering

Eclectic Light Book Club
Wednesdays, March 30 & April 20 (not April 27, as advertised), 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitators: Joni Reed Cooley & Jenifer Hanson

Join Prairiewoods' new monthly book club, in which you can read and discuss a different book each month. The selected books will be light—not theological study, but eclectic writings with spiritual links. Some books may raise questions; some may raise hackles. They all will provide interesting food for thought and invite friendly discussion! You are invited to read the text prior to the discussion. You may attend single sessions or come monthly.

For March 30, please read *Traveling with Pomegranates* by Sue Monk Kidd and Ann Kidd Taylor. For April 27, read *The Other Hand (Little Bee)* by Chris Cleave. **Fee:** Free-will offering, plus cost of books

Illuminate!
Saturday, April 2, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Facilitators: Joni Reed Cooley & Rodney Bluml

Celebrate resurrected life this Easter by creating your own illuminated art! Experience *Visio Divina*, or holy seeing, with the Road to Emmaus illumination from *The Saint John’s Bible*. Then apply gold foil to your copy and share the meaning for you. Other group prayer and art experiences will be part of the day. **Fee:** \$75 includes facilitation, art supplies, illumination copy and lunch



Spring Gardening Series
Earth-Friendly Lawn Care
Tuesday, April 5, 6:30–8 p.m.
Facilitator: Phil Pfister

Can you have a great looking, neighbor-pleasing lawn and still be earth-friendly? Linn County Master Gardener Phil Pfister will help you explore various techniques used to maintain an earth-friendly lawn, including organic options. Registration is requested by April 4. **Fee:** \$10

Save the date for the other program in this series:
Container Vegetable Gardening, Tuesday, May 10

Invitations to Wholeness
Tuesdays, April 12–May 3, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Facilitator: Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, MD

Explore the expansive healing paths suggested by Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, a local practitioner of integrative medicine. In this four-week series, Dr. Suzanne will provide scientific research and personal anecdotes as invitations to consider the positive effects on health of Spirituality (April 12), a Whole-Systems Approach (April 19), Nature (April 26) and Community (May 3). Participants also can choose to participate in a private Moon Lodge or Sweat Lodge Ceremony on April 30 and an Eldering Ceremony on May 10. **Fee:** \$60 for four-week series, or \$20 per session



Healing Garden Series
Designing a Healing Garden: Restoring Earth, Healing Ourselves
Wednesday, April 13, 6–8 p.m.
Facilitators: Jen Kardos, Fred Meyer & Emy Sautter

Inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical, focus on how God’s call to heal Earth is also a call to heal yourself! Discuss gardening as a path to wholeness and learn about optimal plant placement for creating interconnected, mutually-beneficial relationships between you and your plants. Then help envision the design and creation of a new healing garden at Prairiewoods in the first of three hands-on workshops. Please dress for the outdoors in garden-appropriate clothes. Bring a picture of a plant or an item that brings you joy. Registration is requested by April 8. **Fee:** \$20 per session (or \$50 for three-part series)

PROGRAMS & DONORS

Save the date for the other programs in this series:

Establishing a Healing Garden: Sacred Soil, Wednesday, May 25
Digging Deeper in the Healing Garden: Gardens & Plants as a Portal to Spirit, Wednesday, July 13

Dream Group

Wednesdays, April 20, May 18, June 15 & July 20, 1–3 p.m.

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

Join other dream interpreters to unpack your dreams and bring transformation and inner healing in this four-part series. You will follow the Haden Institute's Dream Group Process to decipher the wisdom present in your dreams. Registration and full payment are required by April 13.

Fee: \$80 for four-part series (payable at registration or \$20 per session, whether present or not)

Celebrate Earth Day at *Eco-Fest 2016* on Saturday, April 23! Visit www.EcoFestCR.org for more information.

Creating in Spirit & Nature I & II Saturday, April 23, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. & 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. Create a chair and a totem figure in the morning session, and a structure and fairy house in the afternoon session. Ruth has an art degree and teaching certificate from the University of Iowa. She has been an artist for more than 35 years. Registration and payment are required by April 21.

Fee: \$60 for both sessions, or \$35 for one session (lunch can be added for \$9)

Peaceful Patterns & the Universe Story

Sunday, April 24, 1–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Andi Lewis

Have you considered the depth of your connection to all of creation? Gradually reveal your Peaceful Patterns response to the Universe Story as it is told in a 13-part narrative. Peaceful

Patterns, often called doodles or tangles, are detailed black-and-white drawings created by repeating simple patterns.

You will leave with a unique work of art that expresses the unfolding universe in you. No experience is necessary.

Fee: \$25 includes instruction and art materials (which are yours to keep)



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

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter

Come together with women of various faith traditions to explore questions of faith and spirituality. On April 30, focus on compassion as you study the work of Karen Armstrong and her Charter of Compassion, Matthew Fox and Parker Palmer. Then share your faith tradition's understanding of compassion and a time when it changed your life. Registration is required by April 26.

Fee: \$15 includes lunch

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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Celebrating 20 Years: Prairiewoods' foundresses and guests gathered in 1996 to dedicate the Prairiewoods Center. Fittingly, the ribbon cutting ceremony took place in the Atrium—the place in which so many have been welcomed to Prairiewoods over the years. Flanked by red-jacketed Chamber of Commerce representatives, those pictured are (left to right): FSPA Sisters Betty Daugherty, Nancy Hoffman, Therese Pedretti, Karen Flottmeier (FSPA Central Region Director at the time), Maryam Gossling, Joanne Moeller and Joann Gehling.

Prairiewoods

May/June 2016

A CATHOLIC, FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Support Prairiewoods' 20th Anniversary at Garden Party on June 4

Prairiewoods was founded in the summer of 1996, so this year marks our 20th anniversary of being a place of peace and transformation. The *Garden Party* on *Saturday, June 4*, will honor this special anniversary. *Join us as we come full circle* in honoring all that Prairiewoods has done in the last 20 years and anticipate all it will do in the next 20!

The Garden Party is Prairiewoods' largest fundraising event of the year. It promises to be a fun-filled evening of fellowship, good food and generous fundraising! The celebration is held at St. Pius X Church. The festivities begin at 5 p.m. with a social hour featuring farm-fresh appetizers demonstrated and served by New Pioneer Food Co-Op. This is the perfect time to bid on fabulous silent auction items and buy raffle tickets. And if you love the food served at Prairiewoods, grab the first copy of our newly-updated, ever-popular cookbook, *from the Prairiewoods kitchen*. Then play Prairiewoods' own Dough for Dough game, in which you buy a delicious loaf of Prairiewoods bread for a chance to win \$250 cash!

At 6, dine on a gourmet dinner prepared by the chefs at Hy-Vee. Put in your last-minute bids on your favorite silent auction items and settle in for a rousing live auction with auctioneer Chad Sheppard. Exciting plans are being made as you read this for a huge variety of items on which you can bid, ranging from *original art* to *one-of-a-kind dining experiences*, from *pampering massages* to *unique vacations*, from *attending a baseball game* to *paddling down a lazy river*. There are a variety of items that are sure to tempt you!

Tickets to the Garden Party cost \$45 per person or \$360 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 and to honor all that has happened in the last 20 years. *We hope you'll join us as we come full circle!*



What You Need to Know

Who: Prairiewoods Supporters

What: 20th Anniversary Prairiewoods Garden Party

When: Saturday, June 4, 5 p.m.

Where: St. Pius X Church

4949 Council Street NE, Cedar Rapids

How Much: \$45 each, \$360 for a table of eight

This event is ticketless, so please register each guest by name. **The RSVP deadline is Thursday, May 26.**

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

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



"So what they all need is an 'ecological conversion,' whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ becomes evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocations to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience." —Pope Francis, Laudato Si'

Since coming to Prairiewoods last summer, I often consider our own story of ecological conversion—when a small group of women religious came together to study and pray for guidance about the best use for this land. I imagine they were heady times, reading and discussing the work of such brilliant minds as Brian Swimme, Thomas Berry and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, with an eye toward creating something to benefit our community and make a difference in the world. In the process, our foundresses experienced a profound ecological conversion, the effects of which are clearly visible in the life and ecospirituality of Prairiewoods today.

The ecological conversion that had its genesis in our founding continues through our collaborations with Backyard Abundance to incorporate permaculture practices in our land management. It is evident in our solar panels and use of alternative energies; in the use of natural light throughout our Center; in the green products we use and in our no-waste kitchen, which produces simple, healthy meals. It is evident in our LEED® Gold certification for existing buildings—Prairiewoods is the only nonprofit in Iowa to receive that distinction.

Among the most important outcomes of ecological conversion at Prairiewoods, though, is the outpouring of love for this land, its flora and fauna, that is shared with and by people of all faiths and cultures at Prairiewoods. They come to experience peace and transformation through retreats, discussion circles or meditative walks on the labyrinth. It is our hope that they leave with a profound gratitude for God's abundant Creation and hearts ripe for ecological conversion.

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, Director

Our bi-monthly newsletter is important to the overall success of Prairiewoods. Our analytics show that most of those who join us for retreats and programs (possibly *you!*) connect with us and learn about our offerings through the newsletter. While we are proud of the print piece, we also are concerned about the resources that go into producing it.

We do not intend to discontinue the print version of the newsletter. However, if you are willing to help us reduce our print waste by receiving the newsletter in electronic format only, please email your name, mailing address and email address to alewis@prairiewoods.org. Thanks for helping us be good stewards of Earth's resources!



Prairiewoods is a Catholic 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.

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

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

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Hiawatha, IA 52233
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www.Prairiewoods.org
Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org



The following are some upcoming retreats (pages 3 and 6) and programs (pages 7–10). For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

For Her: Encircling Mom with a Little Peace & Quiet

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

She gave you roots and wings, discipline and nurturing, faith, hope and love. What can you do for her? Give the one who has mothered you some sacred space. Whether it's the quiet that comes from gentle tea-time out in the garden, or the invitation of spring breezes and birdsong to help her unwind, this is a weekend just for her. Friday evening, you can bring her to the door, where she will be treated to a celebratory candlelit dinner and a feast of peace and quiet! On Saturday, she will have the opportunity for holistic services—massage or healing touch for all her aches and pains—or just time to lounge, read, write, color or draw, pray and enjoy the beauty of springtime. On Sunday, you can join her for a hot breakfast at Prairiewoods to kick off Mother's Day right. She encircled you with love; now you can return her warm embrace with a weekend just for her!

Fee: \$150 includes lodging, celebratory Friday dinner, all meals on Saturday and Sunday breakfast with a named family member, plus \$60 per hour for holistic services, if desired (holistic service requests and dietary restrictions that affect health must be requested at registration; *lodgers only*)



The Mandala of Being Yoga: Exploring the Sacred Self through the Mandala of Movement, Meditation & Music

Sunday, June 19, 5 p.m.–Friday, June 24, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Anji Kozikowski

Sacred circles are everywhere, helping you navigate time, the seasons and your very life. Mandalas are ancient Indian circular pictographs used for meditation. The mandala represents the universe and provides a model of wholeness from which you can explore your sacred self. In this yoga retreat, you will discover how to use a variety of mandalas for deeper self-discovery and self-acceptance. With a sense of play, experience the power of mandalas in the circles of your personal yoga practice, labyrinth meditation, nature “walkabouts,” drumming circles, mandala coloring meditations and the community of song circles. This will be a transformational retreat that will open the portal to the sacred flow of your life! Anji Kozikowski has a master's degree in Health Promotion and Wellness Management and is an Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher (E-RYT 200) with more than 20 years professional experience in health and wellness. **Fee:** \$425 includes sessions, lodging and all meals **Commuter Fee:** \$350 includes sessions and daily lunch and dinner



Prairiewoods 20th Anniversary Silent Directed Retreats

Sunday, June 5, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, June 11, 1 p.m., or Sunday, July 24, 5:30 p.m.–Saturday, July 30, 1 p.m.

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

If you desire deepening and renewal, a week-long foray into the silence may be just the balm for you. Silent Directed Retreats (offered in June and July) provide lavish time and sacred space for prayer, solitude, quiet and peace. In the beauty of 70 acres of prairie and woodland, you will be held by the beauty of creation. A daily experience of centering prayer is available. Each day you will meet with a spiritual director who will listen with you for the movement of God within your life. As you rest in silence, you may notice many of life's gifts, regain a sense of balance, learn to

be still and live in the moment, and deepen your relationship with God and others. Silent Directed Retreats are ideal for you if you could use a little quiet time away from over-stimulation to return to your center, to learn the art of deep listening, to recover a sense of wonder and gratitude for life, and to fall in love again with living.

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



We're being called to ...



In the beginning, God planted a garden.
Genesis 2 tells us the story. Here is Divine Love creating a garden, a garden prolific with life, a home for all inhabitants of planet Earth, a welcoming habitat for every species of plant and animal life, including humans.

In his eco-encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis reminds us that we still live in that garden. This garden is our entire universe, which “unfolds in God, who fills it completely.” It is a sacred place where “there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face” (233).

The pope reminds us how Jesus often used references to the natural world in his teachings. The birds of the air, the lilies in the field, the mustard seed that grows into the greatest of plants, all display the importance of each creature in God’s eyes. So is God’s love shown in the world.

In the beginning, God created the Earth garden—prolific with life and welcoming to all species—but we have not honored the majesty of God’s creation.

Laudato Si' is a clarion call to look at the garden with new eyes. Pope Francis is telling us that we have not honored the majesty of God’s creation. We have not seen the sacredness of all life, of Earth itself. The mystery abiding within each of Earth’s creatures has eluded us. In our blindness, we have damaged our home, a damage that is immense, terrible and often irreversible.

Over many years, the Church has issued a variety of documents filled with beautiful prose exalting in the beauty of Mother Earth and expressing concern for decisions made by humans that are harmful to her. This encyclical is different in that it is addressed not just to Catholics, but to the entire human family. It also is the first time that a church document recognizes the link that exists between recent scientific discoveries and a new understanding of our religious faith. It recognizes our connectedness, our interdependence with the natural world and our need to engage in “an ecological spirituality grounded in the convictions of our faith” (216).

Thus in chapter six, the pope calls for Ecological Conversion: “The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. For this reason, an ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion” (217).

Pope Francis says that our faith convictions help us with this conversion. These convictions “include the awareness that *each creature reflects something of God* and has a message to convey to us and the security that Christ has taken unto himself this material world and now, risen, is intimately present to each being, surrounding it with his affection and penetrating it with his light” (221).

Fortunately there are many other advocates of this kind of conversion who are active in the great work of

living with love for our common garden.

One of these is Joanna Macy, a scholar and teacher whose work addresses spiritual and psychological issues through which she promotes a deep concept of ecology called *the Great Turning*. She describes this turning as “the essential adventure of our time.” Macy says that we are in the process of choosing our future, and this choice is between Empire and the Earth Community. Macy believes that, *although we may not be aware of it, there are countless individuals and groups around the world who are making this choice in favor of Earth*. In her guidelines for the Great Turning she states, “Gratitude for the gift of life is the primary wellspring of all religions, the hallmark of the mystic, the source of all true art.”

Elizabeth Johnson, in her book *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*, notes that there are “numerous people around the globe beginning to live the ecological vocation, caring for the living world as their neighbor” (p. 281). She assures us that there are teachers, farmers, artists, scientists, architects, home owners, and ecologically minded individuals and communities who are engaged in care for our common home. These and others speak of a conversion to the Earth in an ecological sense as our only home in the vast universe.

Iliia Delio, who will be our featured presenter at next year’s *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference May 5–6, 2017, also joins her unique voice to this sign of hope. In *The Unbearable Wholeness of Being*, she writes, “We are always becoming part of a greater whole, trusting that the Creator is continuing to create in and through us.” She goes on to state that our lives call us to “live attentively to the intricate connectedness of all that exists and to engage absolutely in love.”

Pope Francis calls us to an ecological conversion, an awakening to the pain of the planet, to the needs of the poor, to our need to show compassion for all living beings.

The message of Pope Francis is powerful and prophetic, warning us of the magnitude of our ecological crisis. It is challenging, and it leans toward hope. He trusts

that we can awaken in time, come together to make things better. He calls us to an ecological conversion, an awakening to the pain of the planet, to the needs of the poor, to our need to show compassion for all living beings. He offers encouragement.

“All is not lost,” he writes. “Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good and making a new start despite their mental and social conditioning” (205). *It is time for that new start.*

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Photos taken at Prairiewoods by Rita Heires, FSPA (squirrel), Andi Lewis (tree), Laura Weber (sunset), Joni Reed Cooley (creek and deer) and unknown (lily).

ecological conversion



RETREATS

Save the date for these summer retreats!

Spirituality Outdoors Series

Church on Two Wheels: Exploring Natural & Spiritual Landscapes by Bicycle

Tuesday, July 5, 4 p.m.–Friday, July 8, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Rodney Bluml & Jenifer Hanson

Venture into your spiritual landscape while exploring the natural beauty of east-central Iowa by bicycle. Experience “church” as both a spiritual experience and a community as you storytell, share meals, pray, celebrate and ride together. Come for all four days or for one day, and delve into the art of storytelling to enliven the collective cycle of communal life:



Tuesday: Our Story (all are in the circle of creation)

Wednesday: My Story (mapping your spiritual landscape)

Thursday: Sacred Stories (leaders for the spiritual journey)

Friday: My Legacy (taking your unique place in the circle)

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

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions and daily lunch and dinner

One-Day-Only Commuter Fee: \$65 includes sessions, lunch and dinner



Spirituality Outdoors Series

Nurturing the Circle: Earth, Self & Spirit

Tuesday, July 5, 4 p.m.–Friday, July 8, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Rest, relax, connect, commune and have fun! Take time to be—in nature, with yourself and with Spirit. Are you being called into a deeper relationship with yourself, with Earth and with the Creator? Come experience the deep wisdom that the natural world has to offer! There will be time spent outdoors in the prairie and woodlands as well as in the vegetable garden. Put your hands in the rich soil to learn about lifecycles and nourishment. Morning gardening sessions will be balanced with opportunities for meditation and reflection, group outings and time to rest. Tending the outdoors and your inner landscape will heighten your senses and nourish your soul!



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

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions and daily lunch and dinner

One-Day-Only Commuter Fee: \$65 includes sessions, lunch and dinner

The Divine Circle: Exploring Creativity in the Circle of Fifths & the Color Wheel

Friday, Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 14, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Laura Caviani

Have you ever felt the presence of the divine spirit while listening to or making music? Music-lovers, this retreat is for you! For many centuries, the symbol of the circle has been used to depict the mathematical beauty of music. Color is like music in that it, too, is cyclical. In this retreat, you will use the circle of fifths, the color wheel and the labyrinth as tools to connect to your creative spirit, which comes from the divine. Explore the relationships between these circles with song, rhythm and the art that springs from music making. If you have musical instruments, feel free to bring them. No musical talent will be turned away, and all levels are welcome. People from all faith traditions, or with no faith tradition, are welcome. Laura Caviani is a pianist, composer and educator who has five recordings out under her own name. She is on faculty at Carleton College, where she directs the jazz ensemble and coaches chamber groups. For more information, visit www.LauraCaviani.com.
Fee: \$230 includes sessions, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Journey around the Circle of the Self with SoulCollage®

Friday, Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 14, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Audrey Chowdhury

Explore your inner world through intuition, imagination and images. Experience the magic of the intuitive collage process called SoulCollage® when you unlock the hidden and often powerful aspects of your Self that may be blocked from your consciousness. Begin with an introduction to the process, and then explore the realms of the four major aspects of Self that form the circle of the SoulCollage structure through guided imagery, collage making and journaling. You will leave with the beginnings of a personal guidance system made up of powerful cards that you have created, as well as a lifelong practice to sustain you as you continue to navigate your powerful inner circle. Audrey Chowdhury is a board certified art therapist and SoulCollage Facilitator Trainer. She is the author of three CDs: *Discovering the Power of the Suits in Your SoulCollage Deck*, *SoulCollage in Spiritual Settings* and *Giving Voice to Your SoulCollage Cards through Sound and Music*, published by Hanford Mead. She presents workshops and facilitator trainings in the Midwest and Canada.
Fee: \$230 includes art supplies, sessions, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$180 includes art supplies, sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Hatha Way Yoga**Mondays & Thursdays;****May 2–June 30; 9:30–10:30 a.m.,
4:15–5:15 p.m. & 5:30–6:30 p.m.****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 Monday and Thursday. 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

Essential Oils at Prairiewoods**Mondays, May 2–23 & June 13–27,
6:30–8 p.m.****Facilitators:** Stephanie Brinkman,
Donette Johnson, Rachel Fischer & Marie
Rotondo

Join this team of teachers to learn more about essential oils and ways to use them effectively and safely. Topics include Introduction to Essential Oils (May 2 and June 13); Pain, Inflammation & Supporting Exercise with Essential Oils (May 9 and June 27); Guarding Against Bug-Born Illnesses with Essential Oils (May 16); Green Cleaning with Essential Oils (May 23) and Essential Oils of the Bible (June 20). Essential oils will be available for purchase at the end of each session.

Fee: \$5 per session

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina**Tuesdays, May 3, May 17, June 7 &
June 21, 10 a.m.–noon****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. A contemplative practice of praying the scriptures while viewing visual art, Visio Divina involves listening to the word of God, viewing art, pondering God's message, letting your heart speak and resting in God. The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all. Art images are usually borrowed from *The Saint John's Bible*, a hand-written, hand-illuminated Bible.

Fee: \$10 per session

**Invitations to Wholeness:
Community****Tuesday, May 3, 6:30–8:30 p.m.****Facilitator:** Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, MD

Explore the expansive healing paths suggested by Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, a local practitioner of integrative medicine. Dr. Suzanne will provide scientific research and personal anecdotes connecting community and health. You also may participate in a Whole-Systems Approach (April 19), Nature (April 26), private Moon Lodge or Sweat Lodge Ceremonies (April 30), or an Eldering Ceremony (May 10).

Fee: \$20 per session

**Wednesday Women****Wednesdays, May 4–June 1,
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 to come any time! On May 4, finish reading and discussing Diarmuid O'Murchu's *Evolutionary Faith: Rediscovering God in Our Great Story*. May 11–June 1, read, pray with and explore Richard Rohr's "Seven Pathways to Your Deeper Self." June–Aug., Wednesday Women will meet only on the first Wednesday of each month.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

Drumming for Healing**Wednesdays, May 4, May 18, June 1
& June 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. Come see how drumming—and feeling the Creator's rhythm inside of you—resonates with you! No experience is necessary, and percussion instruments are available. All ages are welcome. In case of cold weather, this drum circle meets inside.

Fee: Free-will offering to facilitator

**The Enneagram: Insight &
Relationships****Thursday, May 5, 6:30–8:30 p.m., &
Friday, May 6, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.****Facilitators:** Audrey Lucier &
Steve Spilde

The Enneagram is an ancient personality tool that combines spirituality and psychology for insight and acceptance. Prior to the workshop, you will complete an online tool to discern your preferred style of relating. You will receive a detailed report as a starting place for study and conversation. The facilitators will then guide you into deeper understanding with anecdotes, presentation, exercises and group discussions. This is ideal for work teams, young adults and couples who wish to strengthen communication, improve effectiveness and increase life satisfaction. Registration is required by April 20.

Commuter Fee: \$85 includes sessions, Enneagram tools and Friday lunch (lodging may be added for \$50 per night)

**Bridges to Contemplative Living
with Thomas Merton****Thursdays, May 5, May 19, June 2 &
June 16, 6:30–8 p.m.****Facilitator:** Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Do you want to learn to live a more contemplative life? Come learn from the *Bridges to Contemplative Living* series, which includes musings of 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

Day of Self Renewal**Mondays, May 9 & June 13,
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.****Facilitator:** Rodney Bluml

Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit with two 40-minute holistic services of your choice and group Guided Meditation. (Choose from reflexology, head and shoulder massage, healing touch spiritual ministry, spiritual direction, Swedish massage, or yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$95 includes room, lunch, group meditation and two holistic services

PROGRAMS

Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

Tuesdays, May 10 & June 14, 9:30–11 a.m., & Wednesdays, May 25 & June 22, 7–8:30 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

Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing

Tuesdays, May 10, May 24, May 31, June 14 & June 28, 10 a.m.–noon

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

Spring Gardening Series

Container Vegetable Gardening
Tuesday, May 10, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Phil Pfister

Nothing compares to vegetables fresh from the garden. Even if you don't have a lawn in which to plant, you can grow your own produce. Growing vegetables in containers is easy and fun, and it can be done almost anywhere. Linn County Master Gardener Phil Pfister will discuss container options, growing media, growing conditions, tips and techniques, and insect and disease controls, which will help you have a bountiful crop of almost any vegetable. Registration is requested by May 9.

Fee: \$5

Evening Centering Prayer

Tuesdays, May 10, May 24, June 14 & June 28, 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. This group meets in the Guest House, and you may join at any time.

Fee: Free-will offering

Cedar Valley Flute Society

Wednesdays, May 11, May 25, June 8 & June 22, 6–7:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Jonny Lipford & friends

Since the first annual Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival at Prairiewoods last fall, there has been a lot of interest in the sounds of the Native American–style flute. Join this flute circle to surround yourself with a community of like-minded individuals of all skill levels. Everyone is welcome, even if you don't play the flute!

Fee: Free-will offering to Prairiewoods

Men's Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life

Thursdays, May 12, May 26, June 9 & June 23, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

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

Fee: Free-will offering

Vino Van Gogh

Friday, May 13, 6–9 p.m.

Facilitator: Vino van Gogh artist

Give mom a special Mother's Day experience together! You and your mom can paint, drink and be merry through creativity and relaxation. You will be provided with all the supplies and art instruction you need to create your own



16-by-20-inch work of art, *Doodle Flowers*. Wine, other beverages, cheese and appetizers are included. No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome. A non-refundable deposit of \$30 is required.

Fee: \$50 (\$45 for those under 21) includes canvas, art supplies, instruction, apron and ample refreshments

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony
Saturdays, May 14, May 21, June 11 & June 25, 5–10 p.m.

Facilitators: Kerry Batteau & 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 food items to share in a simple meal afterward. Registration is requested so that additional protocols and a release form can be mailed to you.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 to Prairiewoods

I Am Compassionate Creativity
Monday, May 16, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Kali Quinn

Author and performance artist Kali Quinn is on a 10,000-mile trek across the country to bring *I Am Compassionate Creativity* into people's homes and hearts.



Come learn from her as she passes through Iowa! *I Am Compassionate Creativity* shares Kali's philosophy of combining healing and the arts through 111 value-focused stories from her life. It is part memoir, part field guide and part curriculum. While at Prairiewoods, she will focus on #34, "continuing to fall in love with the world." Bring friends and multiple generations of your family to this inspiring and creative discussion of compassionate creativity! Books will be available for purchase. To learn more, visit www.CompassionateCreativity.com.

Fee: Free-will offering

Offered in Partnership with Cedar Memorial

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Information Sessions: Tuesday, May 24, 8:30–9:30 a.m., or Thursday, May 26, 5:30–6:30 p.m.
Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, May 31–July 19, 8:30–11 a.m., or Thursdays, June 2–July 21, 5:30–8 p.m.

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

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Prairiewoods is the Linn County home for Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). In this eight-week series, you will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal and informal meditation practices. Mindfulness is the quality and power of mind that is deeply aware of what's happening—without commentary and without interference. Scientific research reveals countless positive effects on the nervous system, emotions and sense of general well-being. Chris Klug, a grief counselor, has been an instructor in the MBSR program at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics since 2001. This series is offered in partnership with Cedar Memorial. **Fee:** Free for information session, \$400 for eight-week series (partial scholarships available)

Healing Garden Series

Establishing a Healing Garden: Sacred Soil

Wednesday, May 25, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Jen Kardos, Fred Meyer & Emy Sautter

Inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical, focus on how God's call to heal Earth is also a call to heal yourself! This two-hour class is the second in a three-part series about creating and interacting with garden spaces that promote healing of the earth, body, mind and spirit. Jen Kardos and Fred Meyer of Backyard Abundance, in partnership with Emy Sautter of Prairiewoods, will lead you through fun, hands-on activities in the shared outdoor cathedral. Join them to establish a new healing garden at Prairiewoods and impart your healing wishes into each plant. While getting

your hands dirty, you'll learn time-tested techniques for establishing a low-maintenance garden and how to properly plant perennial herbs and shrubs. Like humans, plants have specific needs that must be met for them to thrive. Learn to understand the needs of your plant friends by connecting with them and with the soil, water, air and sun. Communing with these sacred elements opens a new and joyful dimension to gardening that can make the overhaul of the most demanding weed patch a pleasurable task! Please dress for the outdoors in garden-appropriate clothes. Registration is requested by May 20.

Fee: \$20 per session (or \$50 for three-part series)

Save the date for the other program in this series:

Digging Deeper in the Healing Garden: Gardens & Plants as a Portal to Spirit, Wednesday, July 13

Prairiewoods Garden Party Saturday, June 4, 5–8 p.m.

(See p. 1 for a full description.)

Tiny House Talk: Living Small & Simple for a More Purposeful Life Tuesday, June 14, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Greg Johnson

There is a growing interest in small houses as a result of various cultural factors, including economic conditions, concerns about the environment and a desire for simple, more effective living. Are you one of the many people who can make a small living space work for you? You likely would find that you would have more time and money for other areas of life, such as your spouse, family, education, fitness or career. Come learn how this could help you create a more balanced, enjoyable life!

Fee: \$5



Medicinal Plants Series

Medicinal Plants Workshop

Saturday, June 25, 10 a.m.–noon

Facilitator: Nancy Hayes

Explore the medicinal properties of plants and learn easy ways to preserve and use them to cultivate health and happiness in this hands-on, outdoor workshop. Focus on plants native to the Midwest and those that are easy to grow in Iowa during the second class in this series. Enjoy a garden walk and make two tinctures to take home. Registration is requested by June 21.

Fee: \$20

Save the Date! for these upcoming programs:

- **Summer Solstice at Ushers Ferry**, Wednesday, June 22
- **The Spiritual Dimension of Climate Change: An Interfaith Experience**, Sunday, Aug. 28

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Save the date for this fun summer series!

Adult Summer Camp

Monday, July 18–Thursday, July 21, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. daily (with optional evening activities)

Save some vacation time to energize yourself at Prairiewoods' Adult Summer Camp from July 18–21! Come one day or all four; stay overnight or be a day camper. Each day will have a unique theme and some activities to help meet all your needs:

Monday: Holistic Health

Tuesday: Encounter Nature

Wednesday: Musical Arts

Thursday: Creative Arts

Each day will include a facilitated session on the theme, a variety of breakout sessions and optional community activities, such as storytelling, drumming, sharing or movement. Visit www.Prairiewoods.org and watch our next newsletter for more information!

THE DARING WAY™

SHOW UP | BE SEEN | LIVE BRAVE™



based on the research of Brené Brown

Daring In Eastern Iowa Women's Retreat
Friday, June 17, 6:30–9 p.m.,
& Saturday, June 18,
8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Facilitators: Roxanne Erdahl, NCC, CDWF, & Kay Duncan, LICSW, CDWF

Move from hustling for worthiness to owning and celebrating who you are! According to Dr. Brené Brown, "Owning our story and loving ourselves through that process is the bravest thing we'll ever do." Drawing on Brown's research, explore shame, vulnerability, empowerment and ways to live a wholehearted life. Join facilitators Roxanne Erdahl and Kay Duncan for this experiential and educational experience to explore the ways in which women externalize their worth, such as through people pleasing, perfectionism, wearing the badge of busyness and more.

This workshop is for women who want to examine the thoughts, emotions and behaviors that hold them back and get in the way of living the life they truly desire. As a participant, you will be led on a journey of exploring the universal

experience of feeling not good enough and how this keeps you playing smaller than you like in the arenas of family, work and relationships. Look at the myths women go through and how to rewrite the next chapters of your life. Use play and song to help you embrace the beauty and courage that comes from within. Drawing on the groundbreaking concepts, tools, and practices of Dr. Brené Brown, explore how to show up in your own life. Learn how, by sharing your story, you can tap into your power, resilience and worthiness. You will leave with practices (based on research) that help you internalize your worth, foster self-compassion and promote connection with others, making you more resilient and able to dare greatly.

Roxanne Erdahl is a Certified Life Coach and Daring Way™ facilitator. For over 40 years, she has been known as a change strategist, working with organizations throughout Iowa City and Cedar Rapids to create the lives and communities we desire. She serves clients through Erdahl Coaching and Daring In Eastern

Iowa with speaking engagements, workshops, group and individual coaching.

Kay Duncan has worked in the mental health field for over 30 years. Originally from Iowa, she currently has a psychotherapy and life coaching practice in Seattle. Throughout her career, she has had a special interest in helping women cultivate resilience, wellness and a deep sense of their worthiness to lead lives where they thrive. As a Certified Daring Way™ facilitator, she enjoys speaking and conducting workshops for women, leaders and helping professionals. A non-refundable deposit of \$25 is required at registration.

Fee: \$210 includes sessions, materials, Friday lodging, and Saturday breakfast and lunch

Commuter Fee: \$165 includes sessions, materials and Saturday lunch



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

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Remembering Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter

Prairiewoods lost a friend and active supporter with the recent death of Rev. Dr. Barbara Schlachter. Barbara's spirit was strong, determined and wise, and those were the gifts she brought to Prairiewoods. She served two four-year terms as a very effective member of the Prairiewoods' board. She also created and facilitated the quarterly program Women in Interfaith Dialogue and brought it to Prairiewoods years ago.

In 2012 Barbara founded 100 Grannies for a Livable Future, an organization of grandmothers uniting to stop the destruction of Earth, in Iowa City. She was a strong force for change in our community. She was a vocal advocate for Earth and for Prairiewoods. Her impact was immense, and we are grateful.



Thank you!



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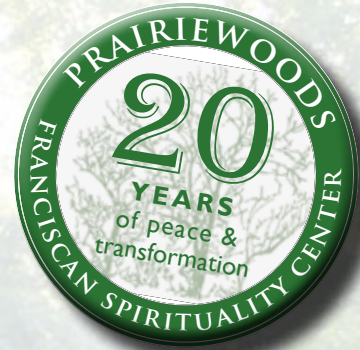
Ecological Conversion at Prairiewoods: During an early Blessing of the Animals festival in honor of Saint Francis, guests process in celebration of the resource of water. In the background, the Guest House solar hot water panels are an indication of Prairiewoods' ongoing support and use of green features.

July/August 2016

Prairiewoods

A CATHOLIC, FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

celebrating 20 years of integral ecology



Praise be to you my Lord! So our beloved Pope Francis reminds us in his encyclical *Laudato Si'* of our loving God who gave us this wondrous Earth, a place for “universal communion,” a home where a “sense of fraternity excludes nothing and no one” (92).

This inclusive view of creation is all about relationships, the ways in which we treat other people, but also the ways we regard all of creation.

The pope continues, “Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unifies us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth” (92).

When we at Prairiewoods read these words, we

feel a deep connection with Pope Francis’ thoughts, as expressed here and throughout the encyclical. We feel that our own mission of offering a sacred and welcoming space for all people, for all beings, is a way of accompanying whomever comes here as part their own wonderful pilgrimage.

For twenty years, thousands of women and men have found peace, inspiration, healing, love, laughter and new life in this place, enjoying these 70 acres as a place where God’s love flows out in great streams. The land itself has welcomed all of us, teaching us about how we are connected to one another, to all of life and to Earth itself. On this page we turn to the words of some of our friends as they speak of their own experience of Prairiewoods and who thus become voices for our mission.

“Prairiewoods is a place of nourishment and inspiration. I was introduced to Prairiewoods years ago and it has been a huge thing in my life. I have grown to love the silent retreats and now know the importance of taking time out for silence.”

—Kathy Schumacher

“What I like about Prairiewoods is the vibrancy that is there at the same time as peacefulness. I feel strongly about God’s story and the Universe Story coming together, and Prairiewoods brings that into fruition by being in touch with nature. That and my faith story have come together. It’s all been growthful for me.”

—Geri Pettitt

“I can say that Prairiewoods found me. It is a sacred place that has helped me to deepen my life. It brought hope and gladness.”

—Clara Oleson

“I was involved at Prairiewoods, working there for ten years as a psychologist and found it to be a wonderful place. There are so many resources I could offer my clients, the land itself, the people and the publications in the media center. Being there helped me to free my own spirit and expand my own horizons.”

—Tony Wobeter

“I fell in love with this place, with Prairiewoods. There is such beauty in the silent retreats I’ve made. It gives me the energy to go on with life. At the end of every retreat I feel ... I’m ready, I’m refreshed, I’m full of energy.”

—Ann Phiri, OSF

“I love nature, I thrive on being able to walk in the woods, to take a labyrinth walk, to sit and watch the animals, to talk to them. Prairiewoods is a very renewing and refreshing place for me in all seasons. It is a full expression of life and all creation for me. It puts me into a new kind of bonding which the whirlwind days of ministry do not always allow. I feel linked more. There is a sense of community, a wholesomeness. It’s all about something that matters.”

—Kathleen Mullin, BVM

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



One evening this spring, I happened to be walking from the Prairiewoods Guest House back to the Center. I felt a shadow overhead, and then heard the sound of something dropping to the pavement. I turned and discovered a crayfish (or crawdad) on its back, struggling to turn over. When it managed that feat, it became aware of me watching it. As I bent closer to get a better look, it appeared to make eye contact with me. We regarded one another in silence for several moments, neither of us moving.

I guessed that a bird had spotted Mr. Crayfish in the retention pond and snagged him for a tasty meal – only to drop him as it flew off. However it happened, I felt certain that the encounter between

Mr. Crayfish and me was a sacred moment, the kind for which Prairiewoods is famous!

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis tells us that we do not merely live in nature, but we are a part of nature. Everything is so closely interconnected that it is not possible to separate environmental concerns and social concerns as if they are discrete problem sets. In looking to solve our current crises here on Earth, Francis says, "It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems. We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature" (139).

As we celebrate Prairiewoods' first twenty years, it is vital that we also consider the next twenty years. What I believe makes Prairiewoods relevant for the immediate future is that we are already seeking solutions. Here are a few examples: combating poverty through our garden partnership with Metro Catholic Outreach; restoring dignity to the excluded through our open invitation to all who wish to join us in healing and transformation; protecting nature through our partnerships with the City of Cedar Rapids and the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation on the East Culvert stormwater erosion management and education project. Since its founding, Prairiewoods has practiced both an integrated approach to spirituality and an integral theology. And we continue to foster and nurture these as we invest in partnerships and programs on permaculture design, immigration education and environmental activism.

Woven throughout all we do is an ongoing focus on the ever-astounding, ever-evolving, wondrous Creation of which we are all a part. Is Prairiewoods relevant for the future? With gratitude and an abundance of faith, the answer is a resounding, "YES!"

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, Director



Prairiewoods is a Catholic 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.

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

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

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www.Prairiewoods.org
Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org



INCLUSIVITY

Everybody In! Everybody In!

On April 8–9, Prairiewoods hosted Diarmuid O’Murchu, MSC, Peter Mayer and 230 of our closest friends for our annual *Spirituality in the 21st Century* event, “Everyone in the Circle: Toward a Spirituality of Inclusivity.” It was truly a celebration of life’s grand circle of abundance! Diarmuid invited us to hear the Gospel mandate as a call to the Companionship of Empowerment, in which everyone and everything is included in the great circle of creation. Pete’s song, “Everybody In,” captured our communal celebration of inclusivity:

Jesus spoke entreating them
To live together in a great circle of love
And when his followers asked him then
Who should be included
Jesus said

Chorus:

Let everybody in
Everybody in
Everybody into the circle, circle
Everybody, Everybody
Everybody, Everybody
Everybody into the circle, circle

Oligarchies and tyrants tried
To keep some in and everyone else outside
But revolution swept across the land
When the people did stand
And the common man cried

CHORUS

But in the 20th century
It was a circle that was made of only men
And then Susan B. Anthony
Said what about me
Let me in

CHORUS

And still the circle was a privileged thing
Excluding people for the color of their skin
Until the voice of Martin Luther King
Said let freedom ring
And let them in

CHORUS

Gay and straight, Rich and Poor
Whole and broken, open up that door
The more we are the greater we become
And after all, we all are one
Bring in the people but don’t stop there
Bring in the fish in the sea and the birds in the air
Bring in the rivers and the mountains tall
We go together or not at all

CHORUS





Everything
is related in
the circle of
abundance!

“Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth.”

-Pope Francis,
Laudato Si', 92



Prairiewoods celebrates the emergence of abundance in the heart of the summer! So much is growing in our gardens, our woods, our prairies, and the hearts of those who come here for healing, peace and transformation. We know how inter-related everything is on our planet, and how everything we are and do affects everything else. We are aware now more than ever how the health of Earth's bio-systems is irrevocably tied to pollinators as well as pollutants, natural fertilizers as well as crippling toxins. Human and other-than-human health is directly related to healthy forests, arable soil, clean water and breathable air, and we all suffer the ill effects of erosion, droughts, floods and extinctions. When Earth is thriving and healthy, our water, soil, air, food and drink are healthy, nourishing and delightful, producing abundant nourishment for our bodies and our souls, and healing our planet's fragile eco-systems.

It all comes down to this: *When we know how inter-related we all are, we hold and tend all of creation with reverence, and the whole of creation thrives in the process, creating a great circle of abundance.*

Pope Francis' eco-encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, calls everyone to embrace the universal communion that animates creation: "Moreover, when our hearts are authentically open to universal communion, this sense of fraternity excludes nothing and no one. It follows that our indifference or cruelty towards fellow creatures of this world sooner or later affects the treatment we mete out to other human beings. We have only one heart ..." (92). Flowing from our "one heart" is the desire to turn away from that which devastates creation and turn toward that which rejuvenates and gives life. This great turning signifies an "ecological conversion." It involves cultivating "an attitude of the heart, one which approaches life with serene attentiveness, which is capable of being fully present to someone without thinking of what comes next, which accepts each moment as a gift from God to be lived to the full" (226). Prairiewoods is a sacred place for serene attentiveness, for cultivating healthy attitudes of the heart, where attuned awareness and active presence can be nourished for the good of all creation. Here is where everyone can come practice reverence for all that is alive and growing, a real place of joy, peace and transformation!

Prairiewoods celebrates many opportunities for attuning ourselves to the gift of the present moment, by nurturing our relationships with the Source of All Being, Earth, self and others. *In living our mission as fully as possible, Prairiewoods flows from the inter-relatedness of everything in the circle of abundance!*

—Laura A. Weber

Thank YOU for everything you are and do to expand the circle of abundance!

... fostering gentle care for our land, tending Earth with an eye toward natural cycles, needs and abundant gifts



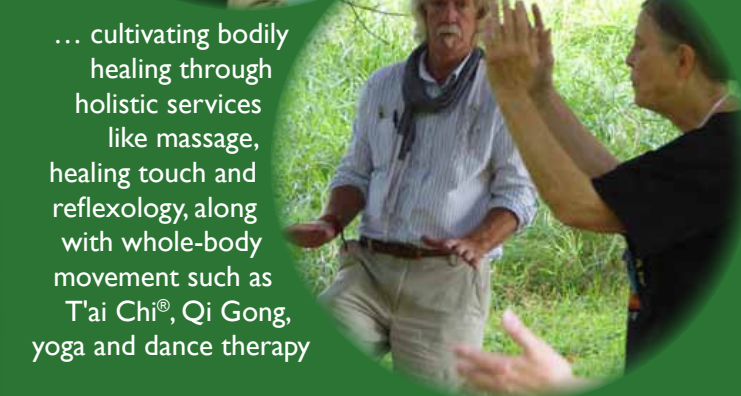
... networking with stellar volunteers who co-steward our mission



... paying attention to spiritual hunger and cultivating spiritual depth and openness through *Spirituality in the 21st Century*, retreats and programs



... partnering with Backyard Abundance, Trees Forever, I-Renew, Metro Catholic Outreach and many others



... cultivating bodily healing through holistic services like massage, healing touch and reflexology, along with whole-body movement such as T'ai Chi®, Qi Gong, yoga and dance therapy

RETREATS

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

Two retreats for lovers of the outdoors!

Church on Two Wheels: Exploring Natural & Spiritual Landscapes by Bicycle

Tuesday, July 5, 4 p.m.–Friday, July 8, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Rodney Bluml & Jenifer Hanson

Come ride with us! Venture into your spiritual landscape while exploring the natural beauty of east-central Iowa by bicycle. Experience “church” as both a spiritual experience and a community as you storytell, share meals, pray, celebrate and ride together. Come for all four days or for one day:

Tuesday: Our Story (all are in the circle of creation)

Wednesday: My Story (mapping your own spiritual landscape)

Thursday: Sacred Stories (leaders for the spiritual journey)

Friday: My Legacy (taking your unique place in the circle)

Each day features several destinations, a choice of distances to accommodate both novice and seasoned riders, and optional evening group activities. All rides are no drop.

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

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions and daily lunch and dinner

One-Day Only Fee (Wednesday or Thursday): \$65 includes sessions, lunch and dinner



Nurturing the Circle: Earth, Self & Spirit

Tuesday, July 5, 4 p.m.–Friday, July 8, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Emy Sautter

Rest, relax, connect, commune and have fun! Take time to be—in nature, with yourself and with Spirit. Are you being called into a deeper relationship with yourself, with Earth and with the Creator? Experience the deep wisdom that the natural world has to offer! Morning gardening sessions will be balanced with opportunities for meditation and reflection, group outings and time to rest. Reading poetry, reflecting by the pond, strolling through the woods, centering yourself in the labyrinth, lazing in the hammock, or learning birdsong from the local feathered residents will heighten your senses and nourish your soul!

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

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions and daily lunch and dinner

One-Day Only Fee (Wednesday or Thursday): \$65 includes sessions, lunch and dinner



Two retreats for lovers of the arts!

The Divine Circle: Exploring Creativity in the Circle of Fifths & the Color Wheel

Friday, Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 14, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Laura Caviani

Have you ever felt the presence of the divine spirit while listening to or making music? Music-lovers, this retreat is for you! For many centuries, the symbol of the circle has been used to depict the mathematical beauty of music. Color is like music in that it, too, is cyclical. Use the circle of fifths, the color wheel and the labyrinth as tools to connect to your creative spirit, which comes from the divine. Explore the relationships between these circles with song, rhythm and the art that springs from music making. If you have musical instruments, feel free to bring them. No musical talent will be turned away, and all levels are welcome. People from all faith traditions, or with no faith tradition, are welcome. Laura Caviani is a pianist, composer and educator who has five recordings out under her own name. She is on faculty at Carleton College. For more information, visit www.LauraCaviani.com.

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

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



Journey Around the Circle of the Self with Soul Collage®

Friday, Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Aug. 14, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Audrey Chowdhury

Explore your inner world through intuition, imagination and images. Experience the magic of the intuitive collage process called SoulCollage® when you unlock the hidden and often powerful aspects of your Self that may be blocked from your consciousness. Begin with an introduction to the process. Then explore the realms of the four major aspects of Self that form the circle of the SoulCollage structure through guided imagery, collage making and journaling. You will leave with the beginnings of a personal guidance system made up of powerful cards that you have created, as well as a lifelong practice to sustain you as you continue to navigate your powerful inner circle. Audrey Chowdhury is a board certified art therapist and SoulCollage Facilitator Trainer. She is the author of three CDs.

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

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



Take a quick look at our outstanding lineup of fall retreats! For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Challenge a young adult in your life to co-create a thriving, just and sustainable world with the **Generation Waking Up! Leadership Weekend for Young Adults** (Sept. 9–11) with Joshua Gorman and the Generation Waking Up Team.



Celebrate the contributions of eco-spiritual pioneer Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, who was recently cited in Pope Francis' eco-encyclical, *Laudato Si'*! Join Kathleen Duffy, SSJ, for **Teilhard's Mysticism: Spiraling into the Cosmic Christ** (Sept. 16–18).



Delve deeper than you ever thought possible into your personal spiritual journey with **Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.)** (Sept. 17, Oct. 8, Nov. 5, Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 18, March 18, April 8 and May 13). This nine-month retreat will take you on a magnificent journey into the very heart of your unique journey! It is facilitated by spiritual directors with Betty Daugherty, FSPA; Marj English, OSF; Ann Jackson, PBVM; Laura Weber; and Lucille Winnike, FSPA.



Transform your fear and despair into empowerment and inspiration in **Active Hope: The Work that Reconnects** (Oct. 7–9). This retreat with Kathleen Rude is based on eco-philosopher Joanna Macy's work and will help you realize your potential to make a difference!

Let go of all your ideas, beliefs and knowledge and surrender completely to your deeper spiritual self in **The Circle of Wholeness: The Art of Letting Go** (Oct. 7–9) with Tom Roberts. This art retreat will help you embrace a deep spiritual awareness rooted in patience and openness.



Learn to live in this busy world without giving in to the endless motion in **Embracing the Eternal Now: Taming the Tyranny of Time** (Nov. 4–6) with Mary Jo Franklin and Kathy Reardon.



Neuroscience reveals that your thoughts directly change your brain! Learn to channel your thinking for good in **Spirals of Growth, Circles of Connection: Neuroscience and the Spiritual Journey** (Nov. 4–6) with Colleen McGeady-Ambrose.



Identify the significance of Jesus' understanding of discipleship as radically inclusive and radically equal in **Jesus & His Circles** (Nov. 11–13). This retreat with Fr. Tony Gittins, CSSp, will invite you to heed Jesus' invitation to the disciples to "come to the center!"

Get inspired and live into the ever-evolving understanding that we are part of an always-evolving and always-revolving circle of life! Join Mary Ann Zollman, BVM, for **Embracing the Adventure of Our Times: Living Grace-fully in the Circle of Life** (Nov. 11–13).



Engage your imagination and spirituality in **Poetry to Spur our Spirituality** (Dec. 9–11). This retreat with Ann Jackson, PBVM, and Barbara Ressler will allow you to read, reflect, share and even write poetry.



PROGRAMS

Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina **Tuesdays, July 5, July 19, Aug. 2 & Aug. 16, 10 a.m.–noon**

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 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. Art images are usually borrowed from *The Saint John's Bible*. Topics include Praise of Wisdom (July 5), Milkweed (July 19), Elisha and the Six Miracles (Aug. 2) and the Ten Commandments (Aug. 16). The sessions stand alone, so you may attend one or all.

Fee: \$10 per session (\$9 to add lunch)

An Evening of Shinrin Yoku **(Forest Bathing)**

Tuesday, July 5, 6–9 p.m.

(Rain Date: July 12)

Facilitator: Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, MD

Explore this ancient healing path with Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, a practitioner of Integrative Medicine. In an extended gentle, contemplative, guided walk across the



Prairiewoods land, use your senses to enhance your well-being in this naturally healing environment. Breathe, relax, wander, touch, smell, taste, see, listen, share and engage.

Fee: \$25

Wednesday Women

Wednesdays, July 6, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., & Aug. 3, 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 to come any time! On July 6, come at 11:30 a.m. for the annual summer salad pitch-in luncheon on the patio or Atrium, depending on weather. Bring

your favorite salad to share! On Aug. 3, learn and use the contemplative dialogue process on the topic of mercy.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony **Saturdays; July 9, July 30, Aug. 13 & Aug. 27, 5–10 p.m.**

Facilitators: Kerry Batteau & 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 food items to share in a simple meal afterward. Registration is requested so that additional protocols and a release form can be mailed to you.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 to Prairiewoods

Essential Oils Series

Essential Oils at Prairiewoods

Mondays; July 11, July 18, Aug. 1, Aug. 8, Aug. 15, Aug. 22 & Aug. 29; 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Susan Berends, Stephanie Brinkman, Rachel Fischer & Donette Johnson

Join this team of teachers to learn more about essential oils and ways to use them effectively and safely. Topics include Essential Oils and Your Family (July 11, with wife and mother Stephanie Brinkman); Essential Oils and Thyroid Support (July 18 with registered pharmacist Donette Johnson); Essential Oils and Supporting Your Autoimmune System (Aug. 1 with long-time educator Rachel Fischer); Introduction to Essential Oils (Aug. 8 with nurse practitioner Susan Berends); Supporting Exercise with Essential Oils (Aug. 15 with Rachel); Cooking with Essential Oils (Aug. 22 with Rachel) and Essential Oils of the Bible (Aug. 29 with Rachel). Essential Oils will be available for purchase at the end of each session.

Fee: \$5 per session



Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing **Tuesdays; July 12, July 26, Aug. 9, Aug. 23 & Aug. 30; 10 a.m.–noon**

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

Healing Garden Series

Digging Deeper in the Healing Garden: Gardens & Plants as a Portal to Spirit

Wednesday, July 13, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Jen Kardos, Fred Meyer & Emy Sautter

Engage in mindful, experiential exercises to reflect on how your role in healing Earth is a mirror for the healing and merging of Spirit happening within you. Bring an inquisitive mind and compassionate heart as you explore how collaboration with nature can help you become a beneficial, healing element in the ecosystem's health. For 30 minutes after class, the instructors will answer questions about designing a healing garden in your landscape. Please dress for the outdoors in garden-appropriate clothes. Registration is requested by July 8.

Fee: \$20

Men's Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life

Thursdays; July 14, July 28, Aug. 11 & Aug. 25; 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Bob Davis

Join other reflective men for honest conversations about life and spirituality. Currently, the group is engaged in a verbal and literal World Religion Tour. Bi-weekly gatherings include a discussion of Hinduism with Ashok Chawla at Prairiewoods (July 14) and a discussion of Islam with Imam Hassan Selim at the Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids (Aug. 11).
Fee: Free-will offering

Adult Self Renewal Summer Camp

Monday–Thursday, July 18–21, 8 a.m.–9 p.m.

(See p. 10 for a full description.)

Women in Interfaith Dialogue
Saturday, July 23, 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Virginia Melroy, Paula Sanchini & Mary Beth Siemann

Come together with women of various faith traditions to explore questions of faith and spirituality. On July 23, focus on Myth, Magic and Literalism as you study how ancient stories of faith traditions connect to the present. Registration is required by July 19.

Fee: \$15 includes lunch

Day of Self Renewal

Monday, Aug. 15, 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 T'ai Chi® to begin the day, a private guest room, trails for walking, a fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from reflexology, healing touch spiritual ministry, spiritual direction, dream interpretation, head and shoulder massage, or yoga.) Registration and a non-refundable deposit of \$25 are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$95 includes room, lunch, group T'ai Chi and two holistic services

Extending the Growing Season
Thursday, Aug. 18, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Pfil Pfister

Do you want early tomatoes? How about fresh broccoli from the garden for the holidays? In this discussion, Master Gardener Phil Pfister will look at various ways to extend the early and late growing seasons. Topics include the use of cold frames, row covers and hoop houses, as well as other tips for getting the most out of the growing season.

Fee: \$5

Nourish Your Bodyspirit with InterPlay: A Funtensive Weekend
Friday, Aug. 19, 6:30 p.m.–Sun, Aug. 21, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Mary Cohen, Ph.D.; & Matt Cohen, Ph.D.

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 find lasting impacts on your life!

Fee: \$240 includes sessions, lodging and all meals (\$220 for shared rooms)

Commuter Fee: \$185 includes sessions, three meals on Saturday and two meals on Sunday

Illuminate!

Saturday, Aug. 27, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Facilitators: Joni Reed Cooley & Rodney Bluml

How does Creator Spirit move and inspire you? Be open to creating your own illuminated art! Experience Visio Divina with the Road to Emmaus illumination from *The Saint John's Bible*. In response, you will be invited to journal your own "journey narrative," apply gold foil to your illumination copy and share the meaning for you. Other group prayer and art experiences will be included.

Fee: \$60 includes facilitation, art supplies, illumination copy and lunch

Save the Date! for these continuing and upcoming programs:

- **Drumming for Healing;** Wednesdays; July 6, July 20, Aug. 3 & Aug. 17
- **Hatha Way Yoga;** Mondays & Thursdays; July 7–Aug. 29
- **Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton;** Thursdays; July 7, July 21, Aug. 4 & Aug. 18
- **Evening Centering Prayer;** Tuesdays; July 12, July 26, Aug. 9 & Aug. 23
- **Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers;** Tuesdays, July 12 & Aug. 9; & Wednesdays, July 27 & Aug. 24
- **Cedar Valley Flute Society;** Wednesdays; July 13, July 27, Aug. 10 & Aug. 24
- **Mind-Body-Spirit Group,** Mondays, Sept. 12–Nov. 21
- **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Information Session;** Tuesday, Sept. 13; or Thursday, Sept. 15

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Sweetgrass is back!

- **Sweetgrass Flute School,** Wednesday, Sept. 21–Friday, Sept. 23
- **Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival,** Friday, Sept. 23–Sunday, Sept. 25

For more information, visit www.SweetgrassFest.com.



The Spiritual Dimension of Climate Change: An Interfaith Experience

Sunday, Aug. 28, 1–6:30 p.m.

Facilitators: various faith leaders

What is the role of religion and spirituality in addressing our changing planet? What practices can stimulate healing of Earth and humans? Join faith leaders from around the state to learn about a variety of faith traditions and explore climate change from various spiritual dimensions, including the Twelve Principles of Spiritual Leadership by Will Keepin.

There will be time for personal reflection and opportunities to experience practices that deepen spiritual and ecological consciousness. This day is offered in partnership with Iowa Interfaith Power & Light, the Inter-Religious Council of Linn County and the Interfaith Green Coalition. Registration is required by Aug. 23.

Fee: \$25 includes dinner

PROGRAMS



You may not have been lucky enough to attend summer camp as a child. However, you likely have heard enough about those adventures to relate to the excitement of being outdoors with a community of people learning new skills and engaging life. If you ever dreamed of going to summer camp or want to relive those wonderful days, join Prairiewoods for the first-ever Adult Self Renewal Summer Camp!

Between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. each day, you will be presented with three delicious meals, an Adventure Guide to take you through the daily theme, outdoor activities, creative projects, relaxation, simple energizing exercises, and optional evening activities that include singing, music and storytelling.

All of this for a mere \$65 a day! Make it the ultimate summer camp experience by choosing to stay overnight in the Guest House for another \$45. Pick your favorite days to join us or receive a discount when you register for all four days! See the full schedule below and visit www.Prairiewoods.org for more details. Come experience the freedom, playfulness and learning that only summer camp can provide!

Fee: \$110 per day includes activities, materials, lodging and all meals (or register for all four days, Sunday afternoon–Thursday evening, for \$375)
Commuter Fee: \$65 per day includes activities, materials and all meals (or register for all four days for \$215)

Holistic Day Monday, July 18

- 8:00** Breakfast
- 8:30** Making Connections with InstaJournal, *Jenifer Hanson*
- 10:00** Energy, Acupressure & Chakras, *Dr. Eric Dimalanta*
- 12:00** Lunch
- 1:00** Body Energizer, *Nancy Hoffman, FSPA*
- 2:15** Essential Oils, *Kathy Petsche*
- 3:45** Closing & Sharing
- 4:15** Yoga or T'ai Chi®
- 5:15** Dinner
- 6:00** Centering Prayer, *Betty Daugherty, FSPA*

Nature Day Tuesday, July 19

- 8:00** Breakfast
- 8:30** Adopting a Woodland Perspective, *Andi Lewis*
- 10:00** Visio Divina: Nature, Scripture & Art, *Rodney Bluml*
- 12:00** Lunch
- 1:00** Five-Senses Hike, *Emy Sautter*
- 2:15** Vocal Playground, *Lia Falls*
- 3:45** Closing & Sharing
- 5:15** Dinner
- 6:00** Introduction to Sweat Lodge, *Kerry Batteau & Rod Courtney*
- 7:15** Campfire Singing, *Lia Falls*

Music Day Wednesday, July 29

- 8:00** Breakfast
- 8:30** Guided Meditation, *Kathy Decker*
- 10:00** Yoga of the Voice, *Lia Falls*
- 12:00** Lunch
- 1:00** Vocal Playground, *Lia Falls*
- 2:15** Singing Bowls, *Mario Corella*
- 3:45** Closing & Sharing
- 5:15** Dinner
- 6:00** Drumming for Healing, *Hawkwoman*
- 7:15** World Flutes, *Jonny Lipford & the Cedar Valley Flute Society*

Art Day Thursday, July 21

- 8:00** Breakfast
- 8:30** Drawing Peaceful Patterns, *Andi Lewis*
- 10:00** Spirit of Creativity, *Joni Reed Cooley*
- 12:00** Lunch
- 1:00** Watercolors, *Dr. Howard Chapman* or Rain Sticks, *Ruth Ipsan Brown*
- 3:45** Closing & Sharing
- 5:15** Dinner
- 6:00** Dutch Oven Desserts, *Linn County Conservation*
- 7:15** Drumming for Healing, *Hawkwoman*

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MARCH/APRIL 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 Earth Day
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*Note: Garden Party donors
will be acknowledged in
the next Newsletter, which
includes May and June donors.*

Our Wish List

for the garden

- 2 self-propelled push mowers in good condition

For more information, please contact Cliff Schueler at 319-395-6700, ext. 211.



Take an Eco-Tour

Summer is the perfect time to take an Eco-Tour at Prairiewoods! Bring your group to learn about our many sustainable eco-features, including photovoltaic solar panels, a trombe wall, straw bale cabins, an organic garden and much more! For more information, contact Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222.



Thank you!



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



For 20 years, Prairiewoods has
cared for all
God's creatures.

*"All praise be yours, my Lord, through our Sister,
Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us ..."*
—Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of the Creatures*

September/October 2016

Prairiewoods

A CATHOLIC, FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Active Hope

"Active Hope is not waiting to be rescued
by the Lone Ranger or by some savior.
Active Hope is a willingness to engage."

—Joanna Macy

There are times when we are changed.

There are times when just one encounter, perhaps one word, opens something within and we see ourselves and the world in an entirely new way. Maybe a friend gifts us by showing a simple trust in who we are—and something within us shifts. Or, at a time when we are feeling discouraged and alone about a situation that seems hopeless, we discover with delight that we have many allies. We are not alone after all.

So it is these days, as whole communities of people desperately look for signs of hope for our ravaged world. We have the fears down pat: wars, environmental degradation, poverty, racial tensions, a whole range of global threats. There is no end to this list. But maybe, in spite of the pain of our many woes, we are not lost; maybe we can uncover some glimmerings of hope, some encouraging thoughts.

Joseph Campbell once assured us that, "We save the world by being alive ourselves."

How does our aliveness show up? It might be in the simple choices we make each day. For instance, we can choose to simply bury ourselves in some small, self-made cocoon and ignore as much as possible the pain of the world; or we can choose to be active and engaged, connected to communities of people who, like us, are not only searching for places of hope, but are *creating* them. Isn't this what Jesus did when he lived on this earth? Wasn't he about creating communities of hope?

Thankfully, such communities can be found. One person who has done ground-breaking work in bringing people together to guard against the despair we may feel about our world is *Joanna Macy*, a well-known and respected voice in areas of peace, justice and ecology.

Joanna, who calls hope a "spiritual issue," has created a group method known as *The Work that Reconnects*. In it she brings together her knowledge of deep ecology systems theory and spiritual traditions. She believes that when people come together as a community, they are encouraged to discover their own personal transformative power, which then enables a transition into constructive, collaborative action.

In her book *Active Hope*, Joanna speaks of how each of us plays only one small role in a much larger movement. Because of this, we each need to trust, and that means being there in serenity, knowing that we are connecting with an energy far exceeding our own.

The Work that Reconnects is only one example of ways in which people are moving from fear to a place of hope and trust. Networking around such issues as destruction of our ecosystems, poverty, racial divides, human trafficking and many other crucial topics is already prolific, bringing thousands of voices together, all speaking for our common humanity.

Pope Francis also blesses the world with new hope. His words and actions—and in particular his encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*—impact the entire global community, emphasizing the need for dialogue and action. He is teaching us that the way forward to deep and far-reaching change is through cooperation.

There are examples closer to home. Prairiewoods staff and friends offer signs of hope they have observed:

- 230 people came to hear Diarmuid O'Murchu, MSC, speak about a spirituality of inclusivity at last spring's *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference.

(continued on p. 3)

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



"Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out."

—Václav Havel

I have long had this Havel quote displayed in my workspace. If we have ever lived through a period in which we needed to feel certain that something makes sense, this time of worldwide upheaval is one. And so we look toward hope in this issue, toward the things we know make sense for our shared future.

Hope is one of those interesting words that is both a noun and a verb. As a noun, hope is a feeling; as a verb, it is something one does. Hope is sometimes vilified by those who claim it is ineffective because it is passive. But hope can be active!

For an example of active hope, we need look no further than our amazing garden at Prairiewoods. Each spring, volunteers arrive to prepare the soil, to plant seeds and to care for the tender shoots as they emerge. Each moment the volunteers spend on their knees, hands deep in the soil, is an example of active hope. Each hour of weeding is a tedious but necessary act of hope. And as we approach the fall, the bountiful harvest is a reminder that hope—as a verb—produces abundant results.

When we plant a garden (or allow the seed of an idea to germinate, or offer a variety of retreat experiences), we do not know with certainty what will grow. But we have the conviction that what we are doing makes sense, regardless of outcome. The world needs our active hope, needs our willingness to step forward to nurture and advocate for the environment, needs us to lovingly tend the spirit that resides in each person, needs us to go forth each day to do that which is within our power to sow love that flowers into peace and compassion.

"And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts ..."

—Romans 5:5

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, Director



Prairiewoods is a Catholic 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.

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

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



(continued from p. 1)

- Families in our community are creating their own backyard prairies, which cuts down on mowing and provides natural habitats for numerous creatures.
- Dialogue groups in the Cedar Rapids area are addressing imperative issues and are engaged in their own transformation of consciousness.
- Many in our community are moving into an adult faith, into the spirituality of “seeking the more” and living in the certainty of God’s love.
- Many people are willing to be vulnerable, to recognize their own pain and the pain of the world, but then to move through that to greater healing and more life.
- More than 16,000 people come to Prairiewoods each year for spiritual direction, retreats or other transformative experiences to ground themselves spiritually in their life’s journey, to find God at the heart of their lives.
- There is a growing movement to support local farmers through farmers’ markets and community supported agriculture (CSA).
- People are rising up to fight against injustice through any way open to them, sometimes at great personal cost.

These few examples indicate that we are in a time of change. Some of us are, in our own way, crossing a threshold. We are discovering our own power, coming together to create new visions of how we might move into the future in a positive way. And although Joseph Campbell encourages our own transformation with his statement that we save the world by being alive ourselves, he also reminds us that in any crossing of thresholds, *there are always threshold guardians blocking the way.* Threshold guardians could be outside forces or something inside of us that prevents us from following the call of the vision.

Each of us finds our own sources of hope. In the process we need to conquer whatever is blocking us from crossing our own personal thresholds. We might find help in moving along that path by:

- Being willing to risk, to trust that we are not alone.
- Joining with others who are actively engaged in missions of hope.
- Reaching out to the spiritual wisdom of indigenous peoples.
- Developing a deep spiritual life, honoring time given to prayer.
- Availing ourselves of opportunities for growth in our community, such as Prairiewoods' Active Hope: The Work that Reconnects retreat in October, focused on the work of Joanna Macy. (See p. 6 for details.)

What is your threshold guardian, blocking your way to active hope and true transformation?

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA



the Prairiewoods labyrinth at sunrise, by Elizabeth McChesney

Holistic Services & Providers at Prairiewoods

Holistic services are forms of treatment that focus on the whole person—mind, body and spirit. We have two holistic service providers on staff: Nancy Hoffman, FSPA, and Joann Gehling, FSPA. Services cost \$55 per hour. To learn more or schedule an appointment, please call 319-395-6700.

Prairiewoods is pleased to introduce two independent contractors who are now offering services here. Both are available to work with Prairiewoods guests when Sisters Nancy and Joann are not available. Their services begin at \$65 per hour.

Karen Sindelaar, MA, LMT, is a Licensed Massage Therapist, a Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry practitioner, an aromatherapist, a registered movement therapist and an assistant professor at Coe College.

Paulette Canney, MA, HTSM-AP, CCA, is a Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry practitioner and aromatherapist. She has a master's in pastoral studies, 17 years' ministry experience and previously offered services in our Day of Self Renewal.



Caring for Creation & Sister Water

“Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water; she is very useful, and humble, and precious, and pure.”

—Saint Francis of Assisi

Caring for Sister Water

was one of many creation care efforts that came with the founding of Prairiewoods 20 years ago. These efforts included two

infiltration ponds that hold much of the water that runs off our parking lots and roadways, as well as numerous trees and plants with extensive root systems that hold and cleanse water. After the Cedar Rapids floods of 2008, we doubled our efforts to address storm water concerns—we installed permeable pavers, hosted rain barrel classes and identified four storm water culverts that drain on our land. Varying degrees of erosion meant that all four of these culvert areas needed attention.

The first project—the *North Culvert*—was addressed in the fall of 2013. We built a series of rock check dams to help slow storm water, reducing the erosion that was degrading the area.

The *East Culvert*, the largest culvert on our property, recently was completed, thanks to generous grants from the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation and

Rockwell Collins. This culvert has a drainage area of about 73 acres, meaning that water from more than 70 acres drains onto our land through this storm water culvert. The water then flows into Dry Creek and eventually into the Indian Creek and Cedar River Watersheds. (The Cedar River Watershed includes Hiawatha, Cedar Rapids and a number of other communities. It is what flooded in 2008.) Over the years, rain events and impervious surfaces (such as roads, driveways and turf grass) have forced large amounts of fast moving water through this culvert, degrading the culvert and resulting in severe stream bank erosion.

Why do we care? Erosion means soil loss, soil loss leads to sedimentation in the water, and sedimentation (the number one cause of water pollution in Iowa) leads to reduced water quality. Soil is the foundation of our entire food system, and without it we humans could not live. The health of Sister Water is a direct reflection of our own health, as our bodies are about 60% water.

During the East Culvert Project, we reshaped the eroded banks to allow water to spread out. We also re-seeded the banks with vegetation that better holds the soil. We removed some trees to allow more light in to help the vegetation thrive.

One way to help Sister Water is to move away from systems that force water into our waterways, since this leads to flooding and water pollution. Sister Water wants to move more slowly, at her own pace, nourishing flora and fauna as she infiltrates back into Earth. At Prairiewoods, we want to help her as best we can.

by Emy Sautter



Thanks to the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation and Rockwell Collins, we are offering *free educational classes* as part of our East Culvert Project. Join us for Earth-Friendly Lawn Care on Sept. 29 (see p. 9 for details) or for upcoming Rain Barrel Classes (see our website for details). Visit www.IowaStormWater.org to learn what you can do with your own lawn. And if you are a Cedar Rapids resident, visit www.Cedar-Rapids.org to learn how you can get reimbursed for up to 50% of storm water retention projects on your property!

www.Prairiewoods.org

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



Linking Ecology & Spirituality, like Pope Francis' Eco-Encyclical Laudato Si'!

Teilhard's Mysticism: Spiraling into the Cosmic Christ

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

Facilitator: Kathleen Duffy, SSJ

In an early essay, Jesuit paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin provided a road map into the intensely mystical environment in which he lived and moved. He described the stages of his mystical growth in terms of five concentric circles. These circles, which could be more properly imaged as the loops of a spiral that he continually revisited throughout his life, provided him with a sacred path into an ever deepening reality, a reality that is informed as much by the science of his time as it



is by his religious tradition. These circles help us trace Teilhard's growth and development as he plunged ever more deeply into the heart of matter and into the heart of God, where he found the radiance of a loving, cosmic Person—the God for evolution. Through input, prayer, song, film, contemplative activities and sharing, you will follow Teilhard as he travels ever more deeply from circle to circle into the arms of the Cosmic Christ.

Kathleen Duffy, SSJ, Ph.D., is a professor of physics at Chestnut Hill College, where she directs the Interdisciplinary Honors Program and the Institute for Religion and Science. She is editor of *Teilhard Studies* and serves on the Advisory Boards of the American Teilhard Association and Cosmos and Creation. Sister Kathleen has published several book chapters and articles on these topics, an edited volume of essays entitled *Rediscovering Teilhard's Fire* (St. Joseph's University Press, 2010) and *Teilhard's Mysticism: Seeing the Inner Face of Evolution* (Orbis Books, 2014).
Fee: \$230 includes sessions, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.) 9

Opening Session: Saturday, Sept. 17, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Monthly Sessions: Saturdays, Oct. 8, Nov. 5, Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 18, March 18 & April 8, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Closing Session: Saturday, May 13, 9 a.m.–3 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 the Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.), a retreat taking place over the course of nine months (Sept. 2016–May 2017) in the very heart 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 Jesuits, offered the Spiritual Exercises to help seekers dispose their hearts to discover the mysterious meanderings of God in their lives. The Spiritual Exercises will lead you to healthful discernment of life choices and purposeful action born

out of your heart's holiest desires. S.E.E.L. includes:

- praying for an hour each day, deepening your habit of gratitude
- training your heart and mind to be still
- learning the art of discernment
- considering daily readings designed specifically for S.E.E.L.
- meditating with Scripture
- praying the daily Examen of Consciousness and noticing patterns of consolation and desolation along the way
- meeting once a month with your spiritual director who listens with you for the movements of God's Holy Spirit in your life
- participating with the group gathering once a month for ongoing reflection

If you want to embark on this magnificent journey, call Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 for a S.E.E.L. application today. Come see what God can do with even the tiniest opening in your heart!

Commuter Fee: \$450 (payable in Sept. 2016 or in monthly installments of \$50) plus the cost of monthly spiritual direction sessions paid separately (usually \$45 per hour)



RETREATS

Based on the ground-breaking work of eco-philosopher Joanna Macy!

Active Hope: The Work that Reconnects
Friday, Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 9, 3 p.m.
Facilitator: Kathleen Rude

Transform your fear and despair into empowerment and inspiration! These are challenging times. How can you respond and work in the world without burning out or losing heart? You can choose to practice Active Hope, a way of living with purpose to help bring about the kind of world for which you hope. This interactive retreat is based on *The Work that Reconnects*, developed by Joanna Macy, 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 each other and all life on this planet, and realize your potential to make a difference! This retreat includes experiential practices, movement, inspirational readings and simple rituals. It's engaging, it's invigorating and it gives you tools for dealing with the challenges of living in difficult times.



Kathleen Rude, a life-long environmentalist mentored by Joanna Macy, conducts retreats on environmental and social change, as well as spirituality and healing. A healer and ceremonial leader, she offers sweat lodge and seasonal fire ceremonies. She also is an environmental writer and advocate with a master's degree in natural resources.

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

Save the Date! for these November Retreats

Neuroscience reveals that your thoughts directly change your brain! Learn to channel your thinking for good in **Spirals of Growth, Circles of Connection: Neuroscience and the Spiritual Journey** (Nov. 4–6) with Colleen McGeady-Ambrose.



Learn to live in this busy world without giving in to the endless motion in **Taming the Tyranny of Time** (Nov. 4–6) with Mary Jo Franklin and Kathy Reardon.



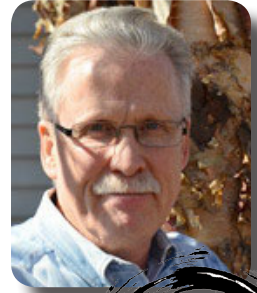
Get inspired and live into the ever-evolving understanding that we are part of an always-evolving and always-revolving circle of life! Join Mary Ann Zollman, BVM, for **Embracing the Adventure of Our Times: Living Grace-fully in the Circle of Life** (Nov. 11–13).



Identify the significance of Jesus' understanding of discipleship as radically inclusive and radically equal in **Jesus & His Circles** (Nov. 11–13). This retreat with Fr. Tony Gittins, CSSp, will invite you to heed Jesus' invitation to the disciples to "come to the center!"

The Circle of Wholeness: The Art of Letting Go
Friday, Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 9, 1 p.m.
Facilitator: Tom Roberts

What happens when you let go of all your ideas, beliefs and knowledge—especially your sense of who you are—and surrender completely to your deeper spiritual self? Use exciting brushstrokes to explore the image of the *Enso*, or Zen circle, to embrace a deeper level of spiritual awareness that is deeply rooted in patience, openness and compassion. With each brushstroke, you access a level of wholeness of experience not otherwise possible. Spiritual depth goes far beyond words, intellect and knowledge, and it connects more directly with that which cannot be expressed by words. You will learn how to release yourself from your incessant inner critic. By learning to relate wisely to the brush, ink and paper, you release the Enso from the paper. The Enso emerges from your inner state of being—you do not paint them. By the end of the retreat you will have the wonderful opportunity of releasing your very own Enso creation on a beautiful scroll.



Tom Roberts, LCSW, LMFT, has 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 sessions, lodging and all meals
Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

Save the Date! for these programs that meet every month:

- **Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton**
1st & 3rd Thursdays, 6:30–8 p.m.
- **Cedar Valley Flute Society**
2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 6–7:30 p.m.
- **Drumming for Healing**
1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 6–7 p.m.
- **Evening Centering Prayer**
2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 5:30–7 p.m.
- **Hatha Way Yoga**
Mondays (except Sept. 5) & Thursdays; 9:30–10:30 a.m., 4:15–5:15 p.m. & 5:30–6:30 p.m.
- **Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing**
2nd, 4th & 5th Tuesdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
- **Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers**
2nd Tuesday, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday, 7–8:30 p.m.
- **Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina**
1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

Offered in Partnership with Cedar Memorial

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Information Sessions: Tuesdays, Sept. 6 or 13, 12:30–1:30 p.m., or Thursday, Sept. 8, 5:30–6:30 p.m.
Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, Sept. 20–Nov. 8, 12:30–3 p.m., or Thursdays, Sept. 22–Nov. 10, 5:30–8 p.m.
Combined Extended Class: Saturday, Oct. 29, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Prairiewoods is the Linn County home for Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). Mindfulness is the quality and power of mind that is deeply aware of what's happening—without judgement, commentary or interference. In this eight-week series, you will cultivate the skill of



mindfulness through formal and informal meditation practices. Chris Klug, a grief counselor, has been an instructor in the MBSR program at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics since 2001. Please note that you will not receive confirmation of your registration until after you have a personal conversation with Chris.

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

Wednesday Women

Wednesdays; Sept. 7, Sept. 14, Sept. 21, Sept. 28, Oct. 5, Oct. 12, Oct. 19 & Oct. 26; 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 to come any time! On Sept. 7, view and discuss *Journey of the Heart*, a documentary on the life of Henri Nouwen. Sept. 14–28, read and discuss *The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom*, considered one of Henri Nouwen's most compelling books. Oct. 5–Nov. 9, view and discuss DVDs from the Center for Action and Contemplation's *Prophets Then, Prophets Now* conference, featuring Joan Chittister, OSB, and Richard Rohr, OFM.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 per session

Home Greenhouses

Thursday, Sept. 8, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Phil Pfister

Are you considering setting up a greenhouse in your garden? Linn County Master Gardener Phil Pfister will explain what you need to consider before setting up and operating a home greenhouse, including selecting a good location, choosing your greenhouse materials, calculating heating and cooling requirements, and integrating pest management. Registration is requested by Sept. 7.

Fee: Free-will offering



Early Christianity & Some Books that Didn't Make the Cut

Thursdays; Sept. 8, Sept. 22, Oct. 13, Oct. 27 & Nov. 10; 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Mel Schlachter

Fifty-two books were discovered in the Egyptian desert in 1945, a body of Christian scripture that did not make it into the New Testament canon. Some of these books now are seen as texts rich in the Christian wisdom of human transformation. You are invited to read the texts—found in *A New New Testament* by Hal Taussig—prior to each week's discussion.

Fee: \$50 for five-week series, plus cost of book



Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony

Saturdays; Sept. 10, Oct. 1, Oct. 15 & Oct. 29; 5–10 p.m.

Facilitator: Kerry Batteau

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 food items to share in a simple meal afterward. Registration is requested so that additional protocols and a release form can be mailed to you.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10 to Prairiewoods

Mind-Body-Spirit Group

Mondays, Sept. 12–Nov. 21 (Halloween is optional), 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Jane Cadwallader-Howe & Claire Dickey

Research shows that eighty percent of illness is due to chronic stress. The single most important way to deal with stress is through skills that balance mind, body and spirit. This ten-week series is a powerful, effective combination of research-based healing modalities to help you deal with life change, stress and illness in an intimate and supportive

PROGRAMS

group setting. Learn the self-care skills necessary to transform the physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual dimensions of your life!

Jane Cadwallader-Howe and Claire Dickey completed the Professional Training and Advanced Training programs with the Center for Mind-Body Medicine. **Fee:** \$400 for ten-week series



***It's Never Too Late to Begin Again* Book Club**

Tuesdays, Sept. 13–Nov. 29 (except Oct. 4), 1:30–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Joni Reed Cooley

Are you seeking meaning and creative expression in the second half of life? Join Prairiewoods' Artist in Residence Joni Reed Cooley for a study of Julia



Cameron's newest book in *The Artist's Way* series: *It's Never Too Late to Begin Again: Discovering Creativity and Meaning at Midlife and Beyond*. Joni, who began painting in her fifties, will lead you through a ten-week exploration of creativity and passion, using tools like weekly readings, group reflection, morning pages and artist dates. Registration is required by Sept. 6. **Fee:** \$75 for ten-week series, plus cost of book

An Evening of Shinrin Yoku (Forest Bathing)

Tuesday, Sept. 13, 6–8 p.m.
(Rain Date: Oct. 4)

Facilitator: Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, MD

Explore the ancient healing path of *shinrin yoku*, or forest bathing, with Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, a practitioner of

Integrative Medicine. In an extended gentle, contemplative, guided walk across the Prairiewoods land, use your senses to enhance your well-being in this naturally healing environment. Breathe, relax, wander, touch, smell, taste, see, listen, share and engage. **Fee:** \$20



Day of Self Renewal **Mondays, Sept. 19 & Oct. 10,** **8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Prairiewoods staff

Find rest and relaxation for your mind, body and spirit during our Day of Self Renewal, featuring two 40-minute holistic services of your choice, group energy work, a private guest room, trails for walking, fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from reflexology, healing touch spiritual ministry, spiritual direction, dream interpretation, head and shoulder massage, or yoga.) Registration, a non-refundable deposit of \$25 and your top three service choices are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$95 includes room, lunch, group activities and two holistic services

Singing Bowl Prayer **Mondays, Sept. 19 & Oct. 10,** **12:45–1:30 p.m.**

Facilitator: Mario Corella

Let the resonant sounds of seven gemstone singing bowls relax your entire body and create a pathway for a clearer connection with the divine.

Fee: \$5



Essential Oils Series **Mondays; Sept. 19, Sept. 26, Oct. 10** **& Oct. 24; 6:30–8 p.m.**

Facilitators: Rachel Fischer, Maree Bean & Shelby Rathke

Join an experienced team of teachers to learn more about essential oils and the effective, safe use of them. Topics include Introduction to Essential Oils (Sept. 19, with long-time educator Rachel Fischer), Beyond the Basics: Using Your Essential Oils (Sept. 26, with Rachel), Do-It-Yourself Bath & Body Products Using Essential Oils (Oct. 10, with entrepreneurs Maree Bean and Shelby Rathke) and Green Cleaning with Essential Oils (Oct. 24, with Rachel). Essential Oils will be available for purchase at the end of each session.

Fee: \$5 per session (plus additional \$5 materials fee for Oct. 10 & 24 sessions)

Join us for our popular Blessing of the Animals!

Nature Fest

Sunday, Sept. 25, 12–3:30 p.m.

Come honor the patron saint of ecology, St. Francis of Assisi, at Prairiewoods' annual Nature Fest! This family- and pet-friendly party celebrates our connection with animals, Earth and all cosmic creations. Experience Prairiewoods in its natural fall splendor with children's activities, games, soothing music from the Native American Flute tradition, food, vendors, book readings, cosmic walks and the popular Blessing of the Animals (at 2:30 p.m.). We hope you, your children and your pets—whether furry, winged, scaled or finned—will all join us! Every year brings a few surprises, so visit our website for more information.

Fee: Free



Nature Fest is part of the **Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival** taking place at Prairiewoods **Friday, Sept. 23–Sunday, Sept. 25**. Come hear the voice of the land during this **FREE, family-friendly festival!** For more information, visit www.SweetgrassFest.com.

Dream Group

Wednesdays; Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 21, Jan. 18, Feb. 15, March 15, April 19 & May 17; 1–3 p.m.

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

Learn about your truest and deepest self through a group exploration of dreams. As a participant, you will discuss *The Wisdom of Your Dreams: Using Dreams to Tap into Your Unconscious and Transform Your Life* by Jeremy Taylor. (For Sept. 21, please read pages IX–30.) Then you will have an opportunity to process a participant's dream. A background in dream work (such as a Prairiewoods dream workshop, dream retreat or something comparable) and a commitment to attend all nine sessions are required. Registration is required by Sept. 14.

Fee: \$180 for nine-week series (payable at registration or \$20 per session, whether present or not), plus cost of book (available through Prairiewoods' office)

Earth-Friendly Lawn Care

Thursday, Sept. 29, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Phil Pfister

Can you have a great looking, neighbor-pleasing lawn and still be Earth-friendly? Linn County Master Gardener Phil Pfister will help you explore various techniques used to maintain an Earth-friendly lawn, including organic options and good storm water infiltration. This class is offered for free thanks to Linn County Master Gardeners and the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation. Registration is requested by Sept. 28.

Fee: Free

Creating in Spirit & Nature

Sunday, Oct. 2, 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 your art materials on the forest floor to help you create a chair or totem figure. Ruth has an art degree and teaching certificate and has been an artist for more than 35 years. Registration and payment are required by Sept. 28.

Fee: \$35 includes materials

Jesus Seminar on the Road

Friday, Oct. 7–Saturday, Oct. 8

How do fresh insights from recently recovered first-century documents encourage new ways to explore your religious life? Join nationally-renowned authors Hal Taussig and Celene Lillie at PCI Medical Pavilion for this two-day conference co-sponsored by the Westar Institute, Faith Explorers and Prairiewoods.

Spirituality of Caregiving Workshop

Friday, Oct. 14, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Jade Angelica

This interactive workshop offers hope and healing for families, informal caregivers and friends of people (including children) with chronic or terminal illnesses and disabilities, such as cancer, dementia, HIV and paralysis. In a safe and supportive environment, author Rev. Dr. Jade Angelica will help you explore spirituality as a way of finding healing in the face of incurable illness. You will have the opportunity to share your feelings of confusion, frustration and grief with others who understand. You are not alone on this journey!

Fee: \$80 includes sessions, materials and lunch



The Whole Body Goddess Retreat for Women

Saturday, Oct. 15, 9 a.m.–Sunday, Oct. 16, 1 p.m.

Facilitator: Susanna McCan

See www.Prairiewoods.org for complete details.

Making the Irrelevant Church Relevant

Sunday, Oct. 16, 4 p.m.–Tuesday, Oct. 18, 4 p.m.

Facilitator: Rev. Leslie Ritter-Jenkins

Many see church as irrelevant, but pastors know that church can be the

foundation that nurtures, inspires and transforms. During this experiential 48-hour workshop, Rev. Leslie Ritter-Jenkins will help you learn Empowering Communication,



which is key to developing healthy relationships and churches. If you are a progressive pastor, this workshop will give you a roadmap for moving Jesus' life and teaching out of the Bible and into the Church. Gain skills that deepen connection with yourself, the divine and others.

Fee: \$300 (or \$320 after Sept. 11) includes sessions, materials, lodging and all meals (\$285 for double room, or \$295 after Sept. 11)

Commuter Fee: \$190 (or \$210 after Sept. 11) includes sessions, materials, and daily lunch and dinner

Zero Balancing I

Thursday, Oct. 20, 9 a.m.–Sunday, Oct. 23, 5 p.m.

Facilitator: Sheila McCarthy-Daskovsky

Learn Zero Balancing (ZB), a form of therapy that improves health and vitality in mind, body and spirit. ZB uses a hands-on approach to balance body energy with body structure through a combination of Eastern healing and Western science. This stimulating, four-day workshop is the first course of the Core Zero Balancing curriculum. For more information or to register, visit www.ZeroBalancing.com.

Commuter Fee: \$595 plus lodging and meals (*The price increases after Aug. 20.*)

Dances of Universal Peace

Saturday, Oct. 22, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Morgan Rivers

Dances of Universal Peace are simple, meditative, joyous, multi-cultural circle dances. They use sacred phrases, chants, music and movements from many spiritual traditions to help you touch the spiritual essence within yourself and recognize it in others, thus creating a sense of connectedness and well-being. Registration is requested by Oct. 19.

Fee: \$10

PROGRAMS & MAY/JUNE DONORS

The Solar Experience: An Introduction to Photovoltaics Thursday, Oct. 27, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Alliant Energy, Moxie Solar & I-Renew

Residential solar is on the rise, but you still may have questions about technology, contractors, rebates or working with your utilities provider. Come learn from those who are familiar with the process: Alliant Energy, Moxie Solar (a contractor/installer) and a local homeowner with a solar unit. There will be presentations and time for questions. The Iowa Renewable Energy Association (I-Renew), a non-profit organization

focused on renewable energy, sponsors this event.

Registration is requested by Oct. 26.

Fee: Free-will offering



Vang: A Drama about Recent Immigrant Farmers

Saturday, Oct. 29, 3–5 p.m.

Facilitators: Mary Swander & Matt Foss

Watch a play and find yourself transformed by the gut-wrenching experiences of recent immigrant farmers in Iowa and their ability to survive.

Vang—which means "garden" or "farm"



"It isn't possible to witness this play and not be changed."

—Dr. Judith A. Conlin, Exec. Director of Iowa International Center

in Hmong—is a verbatim play using the words of recent Hmong, Mexican, Sudanese and Dutch immigrants as they speak of their struggles, survival skills and intense desire to work the land. This drama was created by Poet Laureate of Iowa Mary Swander, who documented their stories. Their words are combined with stunning photographs of the immigrants in their greenhouses, farms and dairy barns, as captured by Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Dennis Chamberlin. Then Kennedy Center award-winner Matt Foss added his theatrical brilliance to the production, bringing *Vang* to life on the stage.

Following the performance, Mary will be available to talk with viewers. This performance is made possible through a Venture Grant from the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. *Vang* also will be performed at Mount Mercy University that evening.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10

Vino van Gogh Sunday, Oct. 30 1:30–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Vino van Gogh artist

Celebrate the changing seasons with this interactive outlet for creativity and relaxation.

You will be provided with all the supplies and professional art instruction you need to create your own *Falling Leaves*. Wine, other beverages, cheese and appetizers are included. No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome. A non-refundable deposit of \$30 is required. Paint, drink and be merry!

Fee: \$50 (\$45 for those under 21 years old) includes canvas, art supplies, instruction, apron and refreshments



The trails are calling! Our 2.5 miles of walking trails are open every day, so bring your family—including those who walk on four legs—for a walk through our woods and prairie.

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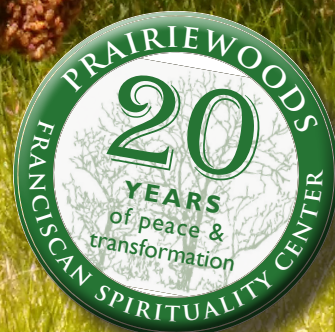
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Are you on social media? Find "Prairiewoods FSC" on:



As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, Prairiewoods sees abundant reasons to hope for the future! Two examples are (left) the hope of a humble plant, such as the milkweed, that offers itself as sustenance for a fragile species, and (right) the hope of pollinators actively seeking a safe home on the land. Come, find hope on our 70 acres!



November/December 2016

Prairiewoods

A CATHOLIC, FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Celebrating Prairiewoods' 20 Years with Gratitude

Twenty years ago, a group of Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration was inspired and swept forward by a growing movement of theologians and scientists toward a Creation-focused spirituality. These sisters came together around the idea of creating a center in which people of all faiths and cultures could come to explore their relationships with God, Earth, themselves and others. *And so Prairiewoods was born.*

Much of the inspiration for beginning such a center came from Father Thomas Berry, a theologian who called himself a *geologian*, a theologian of Earth. Berry was one of the first people to say that our current ecological crisis is fundamentally a spiritual crisis. Berry wrote mostly about our spiritual links to the natural world, once saying that "not to hear the natural world is not to hear the divine."

He reminded us that we live in a vast universe in

which everything is connected, in which there is great creativity and dazzling diversity, a universe that constantly gives us new images of the loving Creator and calls us to a renewed relationship to the natural world.

Berry talked about our "autism" in regard to Earth, saying that we are no longer listening to what the planet is telling us. "We have broken the great conversation ... and have shattered the universe," causing all the disasters that are happening now.

From his works and that of similar prophets, we learned that we are living in a time of great awakening, coming to understand that we are at a turning point in the history of human/Earth relationships. *We have an immense task: to learn to listen to God's word speaking to us through all of creation.*

(continued on p. 3)



Spirituality
IN THE 21ST CENTURY
a growing time line

Prairiewoods' signature series is *Spirituality in the 21st Century*, which brings internationally renowned speakers to Iowa. These conferences have helped us deepen and expand our understanding of our relationships with God, Earth, ourselves and others, all of which are central to the Prairiewoods mission. Follow the growing time line for a look back at the speakers and topics in this groundbreaking series, as well as a preview of what's to come next spring ...



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*"Everybody in,
everybody in,
everybody in to the circle, circle ..."*
—Peter Mayer

Every day I am grateful for the vision of Prairiewoods' foundresses. They came to this land with listening hearts and created a transformational space. Our sponsors, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA), have provided support and innumerable resources to keep our mission and vision thriving. For 20 years, Prairiewoods has welcomed, wondered and walked with countless individuals seeking peace, healing and/or inspiration. This issue of our newsletter celebrates all that Prairiewoods, in these first two decades, has co-created with all of you—our friends, guests, supporters, donors, volunteers—our Prairiewoods community! Woo hoo!

Though we are taking this moment to celebrate our past, Prairiewoods is, as ever, focused on the future! Our vision for that future is of people everywhere energized into a community of compassion and care for Earth, a community that practices the radical hospitality of St. Francis (so beautifully captured in Peter Mayer's song, quoted above) where those on any spiritual path can experience interior growth, peace and transformation. In this community we are actively creating—together—we share an understanding of our interconnection with one another and with the rest of Creation.

Now is definitely the time to plant seeds for growth and new life at Prairiewoods! As we move into our third decade, we hope to reach out to more people who need what this sacred space offers, as well as to others who share our (r)evolutionary spirit. You, dear friends, can help us increase our reach! Why not invite others to come with you to Prairiewoods for a walk, an event, a massage? Are you willing to forward our bi-weekly Prairiewoods Planner emails to your friends? Will you take our brochures to your church groups? Do you belong to any organizations that invite speakers—Prairiewoods staff (including me) would love to be invited to share what's new here! In other words, please feel free to spread the word and help us enlarge the circle to *welcome EVERYBODY IN!*

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, Director

P.S. Don't forget to follow and engage with us on social media!



Prairiewoods is a Catholic 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.

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

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

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Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org



— 20 YEARS OF GRATITUDE

sponsoring community that makes Prairiewoods possible, a community of women who carry within themselves the joy and simplicity of St. Francis and the Franciscan message that Creation is God's first Word.

With love and warmth ... all who have come to Prairiewoods in these 20 years: the seekers, the believers, the questioners. Those who come for retreats, spiritual direction, holistic services and programs, and those who come simply to walk the land. You support and encourage us in ways that are crucial to the entire adventure.

With deepest gratitude ... our staff, past and present, whose love for Prairiewoods and whose dedication and work advance the mission in seen and unseen ways. Each one makes decisive contributions.

With much appreciation ... our Operating Boards, past and present, who willingly give of their time and graciously share their expertise. They can never be thanked enough for bringing creativity and stability to the center.

With heartfelt joy and gratitude ... the hundreds of volunteers who lend a hand and become our friends in the process. How many times have we remarked that Prairiewoods could not exist without their presence, hours of work and generosity of spirit?

With awareness of their often elusive presence ... the creatures in the woods, our companions, our teachers, so beautiful. And for the woods and prairies themselves, places of peace and spiritual connection.

And not forgetting ... all the Prophets who helped to guide us in our early days: too many to mention, but especially Thomas Berry, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Brian Swimme, Sister Miriam Therese MacGillis, Sister Paula González and a host of others. And through the years, speakers at *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conferences, including Ilia Delio who will bring her own energy and scholarship to us May 5–6, 2017.

For all of you, we are so profoundly grateful.

by Betty Daugherty, FSPA



The foundresses at Prairiewoods' ribbon cutting in 1996 (from left): Sisters Betty Daugherty, Nancy Hoffman, Therese Pedretti, Karen Flottmeier (Regional Director at the time), Maryam Gossling, Joanne Moeller and Joann Gehling.

(continued from p. 1)

So, as we look back at the 20 years of Prairiewoods' growth and our own deepening understanding of our mission, we are energized and encouraged in knowing that, even though we are small, we are part of a wide, inclusive and growing grassroots movement of increased consciousness of the human role within creation.

We continue to hope that Prairiewoods will always be a place where people can catch on fire, realizing that we are surrounded by mystery, that we are being pushed from within ourselves to open up to that mystery that continues to draw us forward.

With this in mind, we are called to celebrate these 20 years with *a sense of overwhelming gratitude*, a gratitude that includes:

First of all ... our loving, mysterious God who creates out of a great outflowing of love, a God who remains with us and speaks to us through our lives and through the amazing universe that spun into being some 14 billion years ago.

And, with awareness of its tremendous beauty ... our home in the Universe, our beloved planet Earth, that gifts us both physically and spiritually. Astronaut Edgar Mitchell describes our planet as seen from space: "a sparkling blue and white jewel ... laced with slowly swirling veils of white ... like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery."

And deeply ... the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of La Crosse, Wisconsin, the founding and

2001 John Shea, STD

Storytelling from all traditions serves the development of human spirituality.

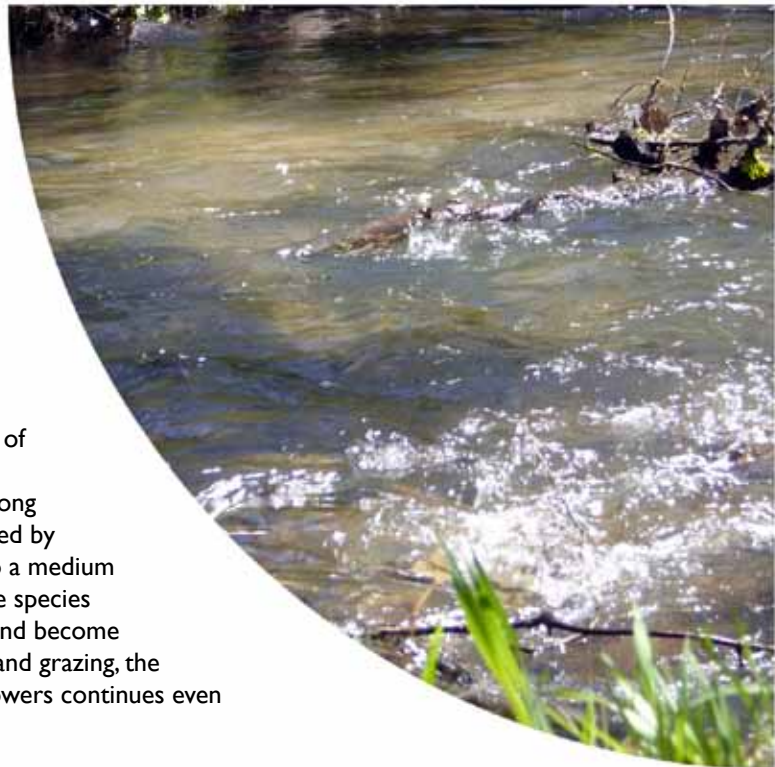


2002 Joyce Rupp, OSM

By entering the spiritual world of the Celtic peoples, we learn to connect with God in ordinary pieces of life.



20 years *sustainable* **LAND** management



Manage? No! Listen? Yes! Actually the land can manage itself quite well. We cannot improve upon the interiority or soul direction of the land. It knows exactly what it should be and do to fulfill its purpose in God's wonderful universe.

Then, what has been our purpose at Prairiewoods? Mainly, to listen and act upon how we best can be supportive of the land's purpose. So we mitigate the impact of humanity's inability to recognize Earth's Wisdom and failure to listen to its needs. How is this best done? By studying, trying to understand and marveling at God's great plan for and love in the universe.

In practical terms, *how have we tried to listen?* In the early 1960s, all members of a Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA) province were invited to walk upon and listen to the undeveloped Prairiewoods land. What we heard was the land inviting us to journey with it in a more intentional way.

First on the agenda was listening to the land shouting: "Listen to my birds and animals. See the myriad expressions of beauty. Let your feet touch my energy. Hear God speaking in your heart! Make trails so that many may traverse my body." With the help of many volunteers, and respecting the contours of the land and plant species, a series of trails was born.

Next the prairies got our ear. Since they had developed along two types—the hydric and mesic—they told us they were being choked by brome grass. We heard that our mission was to build up the prairie to a medium mesic prairie. We also strove to promote wildflowers and other native species of plant life to encourage other organisms to make their home here and become part of the whole ecosystem. Since our land's history included tillage and grazing, the use of prairie burns, cutting, and re-seeding with native grasses and flowers continues even

2003
Diarmuid
O'Murchu, MSC



Contemporary spiritual trends offer us new sources of spiritual nourishment.

2004
Wayne
Teasdale



Inter-spirituality is a growing force in our world. All faith traditions offer a path to mystical experience.

today. The land thanks us by wonderful displays of flowers and grasses, and even the re-emergence of multitudes of monarch butterflies!

Who has not heard the singing of the trees or felt the gentle breeze? Because the woods had been grazed before Prairiewoods existed, non-native species were introduced. Our woods were over-populated with species that limited diversity and contributed to disease. Using non-toxic means, we are working to gradually eliminate non-native species. Sometimes we need to make choices and eliminate some native growth too, if its elimination gives a larger and healthier tree a chance for more sunshine and space. Following a Native American custom, when we have to cut down trees, we use a non-violent means that places their energy in their roots; we even thank the trees for their contributions. (St. Francis continues to guide us to consider all of creation as our brothers and sisters!) In the last 20 years, we have planted and tended at least 350 new trees, including many fruit trees. Some of the orchard is fenced, while another part is left open to feed the animals.

We also heard the cry of Dry Creek, its banks and our northern perimeter, as they felt their soil being washed away. Through grant funding we undertook major projects that mitigated the damage done by water funneled from near-by housing developments.

We value listening to how the land reveals the amount of construction it can support. Early on, we changed our original center building plans to ensure the roots of two large oak trees were not negatively impacted. More recently, we discerned that our land could support an extension of the garden that partners with Metro Catholic Outreach.

Sometimes listening means opening ourselves to evolving concepts. The ancient but recently renewed concept of permaculture is inviting us to re-establish low-maintenance edible landscapes that emulate the patterns and principles of nature and nurture relationships with God. In the process, we are being challenged to study, listen to and be open to re-defining our concept of what is termed *invasive*.

As we look to the future, we are aware that we have many groups sitting around our listening table, including Tress Forever, I-Renew, Backyard Abundance, the Department of Natural Resources, the Cities of Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha, and our FSPA Community, along with the entire Prairiewoods staff and board. We rejoice when we hear our wonderful volunteers use the pronoun *our* when discussing the land. It does take a village to care for the whole world community of plants and animals on this land called Prairiewoods.

by Nancy Hoffman, FSPA

2005 Joseph Nassal, CPPS

A spirituality of reconciliation can restore all of our relationships. Inter-faith dialogue is a necessity.



2006 Elaine Prevallet, SL

An inner Spirit of Wisdom is needed for Earth's healing. Both inner and outer works are essential.



RETREATS

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

Embracing the Eternal Now: Taming the Tyranny of Time

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

Facilitators: Mary Jo Franklin & Kathy Reardon

Have you felt the weight of endless motion, the tyranny of time? Do you hear, “Hurry, hurry!” in your head as you wait in traffic or grocery lines? Even in the midst of being overwhelmed and the stress of daily schedules, there’s a way to live in time that doesn’t deplete your energy or disregard your inner spirit. Using a contemplative approach, you will have the opportunity and space to slow down, observe ways you typically look at time and view how the ever-expanding universe affects your sense of time. Explore new perspectives and practical tools to embrace a healthier relationship with time and develop a more harmonious and holistic lifestyle.

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

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



enrich your relationship with God. This retreat will allow you to:

- learn about basic brain structures, functions and characteristics
- discover how spiritual practices are good for your body, mind and spirit
- engage in experiences to enhance the neural function of your brain
- gain valuable information about how to tend your spiritual life
- explore new ways to cultivate compassion for yourself and others

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

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



Embracing the Adventure of Our Times: Living Grace-fully in the Circle of Life

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

Facilitator: Mary Ann Zollman, BVM

Fifteen billion light years ago, love propelled the circle of life into motion. Catalyzed from within by that original creative energy, the circle revolves and evolves, manifesting more fully with each turning the wonder of its origins. You now inhabit the circle at a pivotal point in its revolutionary unfolding. Capable of seeing more than ever before the beauty, power and goodness given at the beginning, this retreat will help you get inspired to live in the truth of that vision. Letting Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home*, Elizabeth Johnson’s *Ask the Beasts* and your own experience be mutually illuminative, this retreat is designed to break open your awareness of the original gift and awaken your desire to live its adventure. Dwelling in contemplation, communal conversation and the Prairiewoods environment, you will celebrate how love moves in you for the ongoing grace-filled revolution of the circle of life.



Spirals of Growth, Circles of Connection: Neuroscience and the Spiritual Journey

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

Facilitator: Colleen McGeady-Ambrose

“The field of neuroscience is changing our understanding of the way we live, move and have our being.”
—Ilia Delio

Your brain changes with every experience. Neuroscience research reveals that what you do with your mind—the thoughts you think, how you focus your attention and the experiences you have—all directly change your brain. You can apply this new research to make choices that guide your spiritual journey, deepen your connection with others and

2007

Marcus Borg



The church in modern society has an important and changing role, encompassing science and cultural diversity.

2008

John Haught



Scientific discoveries provide us with an understanding of God that is consistent with our traditional beliefs.

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

Poetry to Spur our Spirituality
 Friday, Dec. 9, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Dec. 11, 1 p.m.

Facilitators: Ann Jackson, PBVM, & Barbara Ressler

“The spiraling energies of God defy containment.”

—Raphael Consedine, PBVM

Poetry posits us in the infinite. Imagery stretches our western minds’ confines. Come rest with poetry! Allow poems and the communal sharing and creating of them to engage your imagination and spirituality. Read, reflect, share and even write poetry (if you choose). We’ll spend some quiet hours in poetry circles by the fire, listening for God’s invitation to you through poets and prophets! Bring your favorite poems, and find new favorites in our selections. You will find time for leisure, individual and communal reading, and reflecting on poetry. Time for resting in poetry and conversation to stir our imaginations resounding God’s voice deep within and beyond. Come hungry for inspiration and possibilities ... you will leave fed!

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

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

This retreat will be limited to ten participants, so please register early!



Two Unique Gift-Buying Opportunities at Prairiewoods

Give gifts differently this year with the help of two unique gift-buying opportunities at Prairiewoods: the **Holiday Bazaar** and the **Alternative Gift Market**. The **Holiday Bazaar**,

on Nov. 19, offers a variety of local, handmade items from distinctive vendors and showcases baked goods, jewelry, felted wool mittens and bags, pottery, water color paintings, and many other art forms. There will be 13 local vendors, plus amazing fair-trade items from developing nations. The Prairiewoods’ Knitters and Stitchers, who meet at Prairiewoods twice a month, will provide mittens, scarves and blankets, as well as kitchen and baby items, all hand-crafted with love! Come early for pastries and coffee in the Coffee Corner, or join us for lunch from 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Two weeks later, the **Alternative Gift Market (AGM)** on Dec. 3 offers a great opportunity to relieve poverty and empower individuals by learning about and supporting charitable projects locally and around the world. An *alternative gift* is a humanitarian donation given in honor of a friend or loved one. Just like traditional gifts, they express love and affection, celebrate special occasions and show you care. But unlike traditional gifts, alternative gifts don’t contribute to the consumer stream and won’t be left to collect dust on a shelf. Honor a friend or relative with an alternative gift of food, medicine, livestock or education, in areas with great need around the world and here in our community. Thirty international projects and up to thirty local organizations will be represented at the market. Sales Exchange for Refugee Rehabilitation and Vocation (SERRV) will sell fair trade and hand-made items. A bake sale will run all day, and lunch will be available from 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m. Change the world one gift at a time with gifts that empower the poorest of the poor on our planet to sustain life and to build a future for subsequent generations! For more information, visit www.Facebook.com/AGMCR.

African Women Empowered (AVE) will be present at both events. They feature hand-made items that support African women refugees in the Cedar Rapids community. This year, shop alternatively at Prairiewoods and give gifts that have a local or global impact!



Holiday Bazaar
 Saturday, Nov. 19,
 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Cedar Rapids Area Alternative Gift Market (AGM)
 Saturday, Dec. 3,
 9 a.m.–2 p.m.

2009

Ilia Delio, OSF

There is a shift occurring in human consciousness. We are becoming aware that “all is one.”



2010

Michael Morwood

God is an “everywhere God”—always near, never absent, a God of mystery but also of relationship.



PROGRAMS

Putting Your Garden to Bed Friday, Oct. 28, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Facilitators: Jen Kardos & Fred Meyer

Learn to prepare your vegetable garden for hibernation so that it will emerge healthy and ready for spring! Jen Kardos and Fred Meyer, organic gardening experts from Backyard Abundance, will share tips for enticing beneficial organisms to create healthy soil, reduce weeding and watering, and decrease pest and disease problems. Please bring gardening gloves and dress for hands-on learning in the garden. A potluck will follow—feel free to bring a dish to share! This class is offered for free thanks to a grant from Rockwell Collins.

Fee: Free

Vang: A Drama about Recent Immigrant Farmers

Saturday, Oct. 29, 3–5 p.m.

Facilitators: Matt Foss & Mary Swander

Watch a play and find yourself transformed by the gut-wrenching experiences of recent immigrant farmers in Iowa and their ability to survive. Poet Laureate of Iowa Mary Swander, Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Dennis Chamberlin and Kennedy Center award-winner Matt Foss collaborated to create a drama called *Vang* (meaning “garden” or “farm” in Hmong). This play documents the experiences of recent Iowa immigrant farmers in their own words. Hmong, Mexican, Sudanese and Dutch immigrants all speak of their struggles, survival skills and intense desire to return to the land. Following the performance, Mary will be available to answer questions. This play is offered through a venture grant from the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.

Fee: Suggested offering of \$10

Vino van Gogh Sunday, Oct. 30 1:30–4 p.m.

Facilitator: Vino van Gogh artist

Celebrate the changing seasons by painting your own work of art, *Falling Leaves*, while enjoying some wine and the company of friends! No experience is necessary, and all ages are welcome.

Fee: \$50 (\$45 for those under 21 years old) includes canvas, art supplies, instruction, apron and refreshments



Conscious Aging Workshop Mondays, Oct. 31–Dec. 19, 1–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Joann Gehling, FSPA

Does aging leave you feeling afraid, lonely or less capable? In this eight-week series, you will listen to your own inner wisdom, share in intimate conversation circles and heed the collective wisdom of the group to help you face aging gracefully. This group will use Kathleen Erickson-Freeman’s workbook *Conscious Aging: Cultivate Wisdom, Connect with Others, Celebrate Life*.

Fee: \$150 for eight-week series includes workbook

Wednesday Women Wednesdays, Nov. 2–16 & Nov. 30–Dec. 21, 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!

Nov. 2–16, continue watching and

Save the Date! for these programs that meet every month:

- **Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton**
1st & 3rd Thursdays, 6:30–8 p.m.
- **Cedar Valley Flute Society**
2nd & 4th Wednesdays (except Dec. 28), 6–7:30 p.m.
- **Drumming for Healing**
1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 6–7 p.m.
- **Evening Centering Prayer**
2nd & 4th Tuesdays (except Dec. 27), 5:30–7 p.m.
- **Hatha Way Yoga**
Mondays & Thursdays (except Nov. 24, Dec. 26 & Dec. 29); 9:30–10:30 a.m., 4:15–5:15 p.m. & 5:30–6:30 p.m.
- **Lectionary-Based Faith Sharing**
2nd, 4th & 5th Tuesdays (except Dec. 27), 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
- **Men’s Prayer Group: Getting Perspective on Life**
2nd & 4th Thursdays, 7–8:30 p.m.
- **Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitches**
2nd Tuesday, 9:30–11 a.m., & 4th Wednesday (except Dec. 28), 7–8:30 p.m.
- **Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina**
1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

For more information, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

discussing the Center for Action and Contemplation DVDs from the *Prophets Then, Prophets Now* conference with Joan Chittister, OSB, and Richard Rohr, OFM.

Beginning Nov. 30, view and discuss the DVD series *Messages of the Mystics* by Barbara Leonhard, OSF, which will introduce you to four inspiring modern religious icons.

Dec. 21, meet from 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. for the annual Christmas Luncheon. **Fee:** \$10 per session (\$20 for Dec. 21)

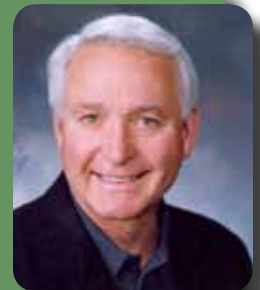
2011 Barry Donaghue, CFC

Spiritual awakening is a continuing process of involving an accelerating evolution of consciousness.



2012 Father John Heagle

The transformative path of evolution leads us into deeper awareness and reflective consciousness.



Flute-Making Workshop

Sunday, Nov. 6, 1–5 p.m.

Facilitator: Jonny Lipford

Visit www.JonnyLipford.com for complete details.

Fee: \$125 includes all materials and tools

Essential Oils at Prairiewoods

Mondays, Nov. 7–28 & Dec. 5–12, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Rachel Fischer

Join long-time teacher Rachel Fischer to learn more about essential oils and their effective, safe use in this ongoing series. Topics include:

- Essential Oil Basics for New Users (Nov. 7)
- Beyond the Basics of Essential Oils (Nov. 14)
- Attending to Sleep, Stress & Emotions with Essential Oils (Nov. 21)
- Pain, Inflammation & Supporting Exercise with Essential Oils (Nov. 28)
- Essential Oils of the Bible (Dec. 5)
- Essential Oils for Gift Giving (Dec. 12)

Fee: \$5 per session

Rohr Webinar & Discussion Circle

Tuesdays, Nov. 8 & Dec. 13, 5:30–7 p.m.

Facilitator: Prairiewoods Staff

Do you enjoy having your conscience pricked or your mind ruffled? Do you seek practical applications of religious teachings in your daily life?

Join us for a new monthly viewing of the latest 60-minute topical webcast by Father Richard Rohr, OFM, followed



by a discussion. Rohr is a Franciscan priest, the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation, and an internationally recognized ecumenical teacher. He focuses on contemplation and radical compassion, especially for the marginalized, out of a Franciscan perspective. Feel free to bring a meal to enjoy during the viewing.

Fee: \$10

A Morning of Shinrin Yoku (Forest Bathing)

Friday, Nov. 11, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Facilitator: Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, MD

Explore the ancient healing path of *shinrin yoku*, or forest bathing, with Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, a practitioner of Integrative Medicine. In an extended gentle, contemplative, guided walk across the Prairiewoods land, use your senses to enhance your well-being in this naturally healing environment. Meet the land in her annual process of letting go. Breathe, relax, wander, touch, smell, taste, see, listen, share and engage.



Fee: \$15 (\$9 to add lunch)

Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony

Saturdays; Nov. 12, Dec. 10 & Dec. 31; 4–9 p.m.

Facilitator: Kerry Batteau

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 food to share in a simple meal afterward. 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. 14 & Dec. 12, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Prairiewoods staff

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 energy work, a private guest room, trails for walking, a fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from healing touch spiritual ministry, spiritual direction, dream interpretation, Swedish massage, singing bowl body healing, head and shoulder massage, or yoga.) Registration, a non-refundable deposit of \$25 and your top three service choices are required at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$95 includes room, lunch, group activities and two holistic services

Remembrance Service

Tuesday, Nov. 15, 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. 10.

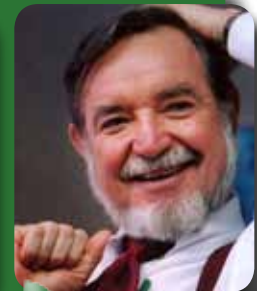
Fee: Free



2013

Walter Brueggemann, Peter Block & John McKnight

The path to a better future includes community, neighborliness and vision for the common good.



PROGRAMS

Singing Bowl Prayer Mondays, Nov. 14 & Dec. 12, 12:45–1:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Kathy Broghammer

Let the resonant sounds of gemstone and brass singing bowls relax your entire body and create a pathway for your clearer connection with the divine.

Fee: \$5



Ceramic Finger Labyrinth Class Tuesday, Nov. 29, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: The Ceramics Center

Labyrinths have been used for meditation and prayer for thousands of years. Create your very own ceramic finger labyrinth—made specifically to fit your fingers—in this hands-on workshop. No experience is necessary—simply bring a creative spirit! The labyrinth will be formed the night of the class and will be fired and glazed for later pickup at the Ceramics Center. Come create a beautiful handmade meditation piece for yourself or for a gift! This class will be limited to 15 participants, and registration is required by Nov. 22.

Fee: \$25 includes instruction, patterns, clay, use of tools, kiln firing and glaze



The Spiritual Dimensions of the Indoor Labyrinth Sunday, Dec. 4, & Monday, Dec. 5, 3–4:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Prairiewoods staff & Kathy Broghammer on singing bowls

Advent is a great season to explore meditation and movement prayer, such as walking a labyrinth. Labyrinths are found in virtually all cultures and religious traditions, as well as many churches of the world. Prairiewoods has a permanent outdoor labyrinth and a portable 24-foot indoor labyrinth. On these early Advent days, we welcome everyone, especially religious educators, to these sessions with the indoor labyrinth. Experience it as a walking meditation, a spiritual practice or simply an opportunity to calm the mind and enjoy peace and reflection. Prayer will be accompanied by the soothing vibrations of singing bowls. Learn how this can be taken back to your own prayer spaces and classrooms and done with groups.

Fee: \$10 (with \$10 credit toward renting indoor labyrinth for \$30 by April 2017)

Waves of Serenity: A Musical Experience for Your Soul Sunday, Dec. 18, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Jonny Lipford

Breathe into the winter solstice and Christmas season with the soothing sounds of the Native American–style flute. Award-winning musician Jonny Lipford will offer music from his recently released CD *Waves of Serenity*. Feel free to bring your own refreshments to this coffee-house style concert, which will be intimate and relaxing.

Fee: Free-will offering

Offered in Partnership with Cedar Memorial

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Information Sessions: Tuesdays, Dec. 6 or 13, 12:30–1:30 p.m., or Thursdays, Dec. 8 or 15, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, Jan. 10–Feb. 28, 12:30–3 p.m., or Thursdays, Jan. 12–March 2, 5:30–8 p.m.

Combined Retreat Day: Saturday, Feb. 18, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Mindfulness is the quality and power of mind that is deeply aware of what's happening—without judgement, commentary or interference. In this eight-week series, you will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal and informal meditation practices.

To learn more, please register for an information session. (You will not be officially registered until you have a personal conversation with Chris.)

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

Winter Solstice Party

Wednesday, Dec. 21, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Indian Creek Nature Center

Head to Indian Creek Nature Center for a fun evening to celebrate the winter solstice! The solstice marks the point at which days get longer. Bring the whole family and enjoy seasonal crafts, live music and hot cocoa. This seasonal celebration is offered in partnership with Indian Creek, Prairiewoods, Matthew 25 and Usher's Ferry.

Fee: \$3 for Indian Creek members, \$5 for non-members, \$2 for kids 3 & up

2014
Marc Ian Barasch & Drew Dellinger

We are all part of the Great Work of renewing Earth as we move forward in a spirit of compassion.



2015
Gail Worcelo, CP

Together, spirituality and ecology lead us to a place in which consciousness is evolving and hope is possible.



JULY/AUGUST DONORS

We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money or other gifts to Prairiewoods!
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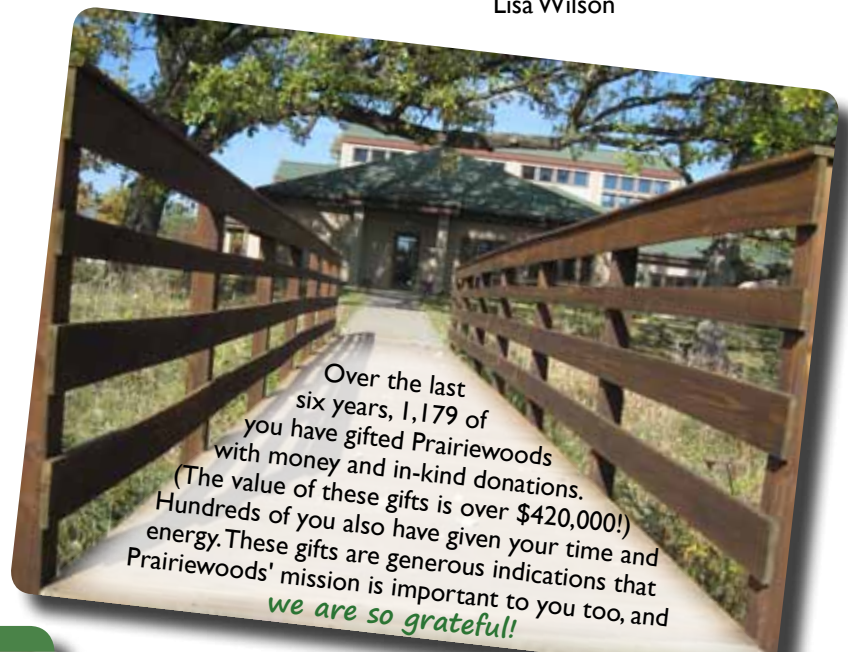
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2016
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As humans face ecological, cultural and economic threats, we can work together to build a common home.



2017
Ilia
Delio, OSF

Next May 5-6, join Sister Ilia Delio as she returns for another groundbreaking exploration of spirituality in the 21st century!





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Now is the time to plant the seeds for growth and new life!

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