

## OPEN PRAIRIE UCC – September 2004 News

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### CORRESPONDENCE

*✿ I appreciate so much all the calls, cards and prayers from Pastor Curran and my church family. You've been so very thoughtful. Thank you, thank you – Donna Chelin*

*✿ What a wonderful surprise when the doorbell rang and I was given the vase of beautiful flowers from OPUCC. It was so thoughtful of you people. I would appreciate your prayers as I continue through this valley to whatever God has in store at the other end. May God continue to bless each of you. Sincerely, Ellen Robison  
(Church Secretary at Sheffield UCC)*

*✿ Thank you for your donation to Ibandu Primary Schools and Kisubi Orphan Project. We'll keep you updated on the progress of those projects. –Paul Pleva*

### PRAIRIE CIRCLE

Prairie Circle meets on the first Wednesday of each month for supper at 6:00 p.m. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Hornbakers. Please call Kathy to make your reservation. The meal will be provided.

### BIRTHDAYS

#### SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

9/05 Ray Kuhnert  
9/06 Sara Hornbaker  
9/13 Hal Autrey  
9/16 Beth Bickerman  
9/17 Tyler McCombs  
9/24 Molly Hornbaker  
9/25 Marilyn Calvert  
9/25 Donna Chelin

*Note: if you have any additions or corrections, please let Marcie know at the church office.*

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**FRESH PRODUCE!** Just a reminder that the last Tuesday for produce pick-up is October 12<sup>th</sup>. Your second payment of \$150 is due at that time.

**ANNOUNCING A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:** Sunday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at Pilgrim Park following our worship service. The youth group will provide a luncheon.

### MISSION TEAM

I always fill my new year with new goals and new commitments officially beginning in September. This is, no doubt, due to a lifetime spent in the academic world – on either side of the desk. So it is with a fresh heart and a mind filled with hopes and possibilities that I announce the Mission Team's first meeting of "the new year".

If you have interest in joining a team that will explore possibilities to make a positive difference in our community and wider world, please join us Tuesday, September 7, at Curran & Katie's home at 7:00 p.m. Hope to see you there.

Peace, Kelly Autrey-Webber

Our Mission Team invites your support of our local Food Pantry. For the month of September we will collect cereal. Please bring your donations to worship on Sunday mornings. Thanks for your support!

### STAR CHART

Please note that Victor Borst is still preparing a start chart each month. Copies are available on Sunday mornings at worship.

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### FELLOWSHIP TEAM

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✂ Fellowship will host a special coffee hour after worship on Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup> to celebrate "Homecoming Sunday".

✂ The next "new member" get together is scheduled for Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the Pastor's Place.

✂ There is NO need for anyone at Open Prairie to cook on Monday, September 20<sup>th</sup>. It is Open Prairie day/evening at Monical's Pizza! Monical's will donate 20% of each dining room check accompanied by the flier (you will be getting those at church) to our church. All proceeds will be given to the Fellowship Team. Mark this date on your calendar now!

✂ We will also have something special after the October 3<sup>rd</sup> service for Stewardship Sunday.

### CHRISTIAN ED

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Two adult education programs have been planned. Please make a note on your calendars.....

***Studying Homosexuality and the Bible***, led by Katie Morrison. Beginning Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup> and the following three Sundays from 2-4 p.m.

***Deepening Spirituality***. Wednesdays in Advent December 1, 8, 15 and 22 from 6-7:0 p.m.

### CHURCH COUNCIL

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The Church Council has been an active group ongoing, last meeting on August 24. The group continues to work through various housekeeping issues as we establish new traditions and functions for Open Prairie. In

August we discussed financial considerations as we begin our annual Stewardship

Campaign, the budgeting process, and building/location plans.

We are also actively pursuing additional grant funding for our new church start. In September the Council will meet at least twice to develop and finalize a budget for the Congregation's consideration.

Plans are also underway for Celebration Sunday October 3, and the Annual Meeting on October 17. The Annual Meeting timing is somewhat different than in the past but allows for annual elections, stewardship, and budgeting to be coordinated more effectively so that in January a smooth transition will occur. Remember we're still in our formative stages, so if it doesn't work perfectly, we can adjust and continue forward.

As always, we welcome everyone's thoughts and participation.

Alan K. Forristall, Moderator

### CHURCH INFORMATION

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Church Office:  
22937 1140 N Ave  
Princeton IL 61356  
(815) 659-3432  
[mail@openprairie.org](mailto:mail@openprairie.org)

Marcie Jagers, Secretary

Rev. Curran Reichert  
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Church Web Site:  
[www.openprairie.org](http://www.openprairie.org)

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AUGUST 2004  
PASTOR'S ACTIVITY REPORT  
Rev. Curran R. Reichert

**WORSHIP SERVICES**

Normal Worship Services	3
Communion Services	1
Other Services:	
1 service this month was planned by Sheffield UCC	

**UCC WEDDING SERVICES**

Inquiries Made:	
Member	0
Non-Member	0
Requested to Schedule:	
Member	0
Non-Member	1
Scheduled:	
Member	0
Non-Member	1
Sessions Held:	
Member	0
Non-Member	3
Performed:	
Member	0
Non-Member	1

**BAPTISM SERVICES**

Baptism Conference	0
Baptisms	0

**FUNERAL SERVICES**

Member	0
Non-Member	0

**MEMBERSHIP SERVICES**

Loss of Members:	
Deaths	0
Transfers	0
Others	0
New Members:	
Joining	6
New Member Classes or Individual Meetings	3

**VISITS / COUNSELING**

Visits: Includes approximate # of visits made to hospitals, nursing care facilities, homes, and visits for this period. 8  
Phone Visits: impossible to chart this month, I will start keeping a log.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

Attended and/or planned Annual Meeting planning	2
Visioning Retreat, Atlanta Event, Community Church Mill Valley, City of Refuge San Francisco, Meeting with Council Officers	6
Council Meeting	1
Meeting with Kathy Hornbaker to plan youth events/classes	1
Prairie Assoc. Ministry Caring for Minister will resume in September	
Christian Ed Parents Meeting	
Illinois Conference Annual Mtg worship committee	2
Classes/Sessions Taught – will resume this Fall	

**TIME ACCOUNTING (hours spent)**

In the office	50
Visiting/Counseling	20
Worship / day of services	20
Working off site:	10
Lunch in the Park, Wedding at Buffalo Rock, other OPUCC events (meeting, classes, events), organic box group, drop-ins	
Rites & Sacraments:	15
Wedding, funerals, baptisms (meetings, rehearsals, performing)	
Other off-site events:	
Meetings (clergy related, continuing ed)	60
Meetings with OPUCC teams	20

**DAYS OFF**

Vacation Days	6
Continuing Education	6
Sick Days	0
Holidays	0
Hourly Accounting:	
40 hr week x 4.4 weeks in August	176
Total Hours Worked	187
Hours over for month	11

### **PASTOR'S MESSAGE**

Beloved OPUCC Community,

This has been an action packed month for me and I am so excited about heading into September. Fall is my favorite season anyway and the thrill of walking into Gods glorious autumn hand in hand with my Open Prairie family brings great joy to my heart. Those of you who have been attending worship regularly of late know that Katie, Kelly, Susan and I had the great pleasure of attending a New Church Start Training/Evangelism Event in Atlanta at the beginning of August. How good it felt to meet people who are on a similar journey to ours. There were about 150 folks, pastors and lay-leaders alike, telling their stories and listening with great support to ours. They like we, are worshipping in temporary locations, raising money, defining their short and long-term visions. They like we, are listening above all to God and to the direction of the Holy Spirit. We each attended loads of workshops as well as inspirational worship services. I was even asked to be a guest vocalist for several of the services, giving me a wonderful opportunity to personalize our story and to do the thing I love to do best, to sing my little heart out.

Upon my return it was my great privilege to lead Council through a visioning process regarding OPUCC's Core Values. You might be interested to know what they came up with:

### **THE TOP THREE CORE VALUES**

- Love
- Affirmation/Openness
- Action

Values that described Council's perception of OPUCC were (in no particular order)

Openness, Respect, Understanding, Trust Integrity, Justice/love, Being viable, Relevant Passion, Mission, Nurture/challenge, Faith/spirituality

### **WHO WE ARE NOW PHYSICALLY**

- 96 members on paper
- +/- 10 visitors a week

- Meet in a community building on Main Street. Free from physical and many financial obligations
- We meet in a circle when we worship or meet in small groups
- Demonstrative & joyful – smiles & hugs
- Diverse in age
- Regional
- Diversity of class
- Group of educators who place a high value on learning

### **WHO WE ARE NOW SPIRITUALLY**

- Eclectic
- Seekers/Open/Questers
- Believers
- Doubters
- Critical thinkers
- BIG feelers (from the heart)
- Deep feelers
- Not literalists meaning we take the Bible seriously, not literally
- Lectionary based
- Some very "knowledgeable" about Scripture, prayer, faith basics. Some not as comfortable with knowledge of the Bible
- Value life experience

### **WHERE DO YOU WANT TO BE SPIRITUALLY ONE YEAR FROM NOW?**

- Alive!!!
- Keep "current list of who we are now" deepening
- Even stronger than we are now
- Embody more of the abundance
- More integrated – more folks on board / on the same page with what we believe and why we do what we do
- Relevant

### **WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE PHYSICALLY IN ONE YEAR?**

- Physical building with tuned electrical piano
- Look inviting, successful, artistic, colorful
- Have a central office for pastor & church administrator and gathering space.
- Intentional outreach & advertisement
- Visible local hands-on outreach. Ongoing mission commitment and program.

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- Become – live into multicultural congregation. Anti-racism work within / intentional outreach without

### PRIORITIES FOR NEXT YEAR

- A dependable, accessible, multi-purpose, welcoming space
- Education / Edification
- Mission (visible) work at home / care of members & neighbors / long-term
- Involved in town
- Publicity – better communication within church & community.
- Advertisement
- Evangelism
- Radical hospitality – one another & neighbor
- Outreach
- Offer safe pasture & invitation to keep growing
- Aware of the marginalized / timid / unsure  
Globally, nationally, regionally, communally
- Being Grounded. Maintain solid foundation. Good housekeeping. Keep house in order. Have plans, have visions, have goals.

I am, as I am sure you are, grateful to Council for their insight. It does help to come together and get our visions down on paper as they are continuing to evolve and grow. It is our intention to include the whole congregation in opportunities to participate in visioning as well. We will plan to engage in some visioning exercises at the upcoming Congregational meeting on OCTOBER 17<sup>th</sup>, at Pilgrim Park as well as at our one day retreat also to be held at Pilgrim Park on Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

As you can see OPUCC is ready to burst into full swing. May God Bless you as you begin or resume school, work and may the Holy One inspire you as I have been inspired to a renewed commitment to be a part of the Open Prairie journey.

Friends, God is doing a marvelous thing in our midst, thank you for the great honor of serving you during this exciting time.

Rev. Curran R. Reichert

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### Sunday Mornings

10:30 am Worship at Prouty Building

9/01	8:15 am	Prayer Group
	6:00 pm	Prairie Circle
9/02	6:30 pm	Choir Practice
9/07	5:00 pm	Produce box pick-up
	7:00 pm	Mission Team
9/08	8:15 am	Prayer Group
9/09	6:30 pm	Choir Practice
9/14	5:00 pm	Produce box pick-up
	7:00 pm	Council Meeting
9/15	8:15 am	Prayer Group
	7:00 pm	Worship Team
9/16	6:30 pm	Choir Practice
9/17	7:00 pm	New Member Gathering
9/20		Monical's Pizza Day
9/21	5:00 pm	Produce box pick-up
	7:00 pm	Building Team Meeting
9/22	8:15 am	Prayer Group
9/23	6:30 pm	Choir Practice
9/28	5:00 pm	Produce box pick-up
	7:00 pm	Council Meeting

### USHER/GREETER SCHEDULE

9/5	The Kuhnert Family
9/12	The Zearing Family
9/19	Nick Forristall & Becky Sapp
9/26	Tina Aronson & Cherie Miller
10/3	The Forristall Family
10/10	Mimi Cofoid & Susan Hale

## Open Prairie Inter-Generational Jubilee

**Saturday, October 23rd**

A day for fun, food, fellowship and renewal at the beautiful Pilgrim Park!

A time to create community within our church family and deepen our relationship with God and one another.

Let's spend the day together as a family!

Breakfast  
Gathering Worship  
Art Projects  
Intergenerational Programming  
Scripture Reflection  
Lunch  
Afternoon free time for: softball, napping, volleyball, horse shoes, hiking, paddle boats, labyrinth, board games, fishing, big group games  
Dinner  
Evening Fun & Fire: bonfire, scavenger hunt, pumpkin carving, vespers

***Pick up a flyer at church for all the details & registration information!***