

Aug
2020

Prairie Fire



Prairie Contacts

Rachel Long, President—president@uuprairie.org
Dan Klock, Administrator—admin@uuprairie.org
Holly Tellander, DRE—dre@uuprairie.org
Renee Deschard, Prairie Fire Editor —
prairiefire@uuprairie.org

Please see www.uuprairie.org for other contacts, including board members and committee chairs.

Table of Contents

Calendar & New Study Group	2
When Will We Meet in Person	3
Do You Like to Have Fun	3
Prairie RE: Between No Longer & Not Yet	4
Summer Harvest Dinner	5
Landscaping Update	6
Caring Committee Update	6
3rd Quarter Offering Partner	7
Member Spotlight: Mary & John Frantz	8

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August Calendar*

Please see www.uuprairie.org for detailed descriptions

*All events take place online via Zoom

2

Saturday 1

- 10a Prairie WOW

Sunday 2

- 10a Service: "Prairie Religious Education: Gratitude for the Past, Hopes for the Future" by Prairie RE Committee" - followed by Virtual Coffee Hour

Monday 3 (every Monday)

- 4:30p Beginner D&D

Wednesday 5 (every Wednesday)

- 6:30p Wednesday Night Fun Night

Friday 7 (every Friday)

- 4:30p Advanced D&D

Sunday 9

- 10a Service: "Not for the Weak of Heart - Virtual General Assembly 2020" by 6 GA Attendees, followed by Virtual Coffee Hour

Tuesday 11

- 6p Board Meeting

Thursday 13

- 7p Program Meeting

Sunday 16

- 10a Service: Lauren Way

Saturday 22

- 10a Creativity & Connection

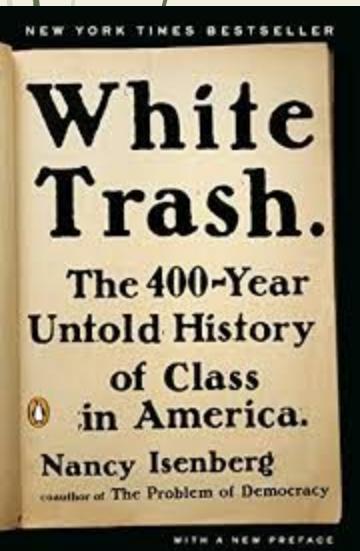
Sunday 23

- 10a Service: TBA

Sunday 30

- 10a Service: "Educational Activism: Speaking Up for All Kids" by Holly Tellander, followed by Virtual Coffee Hour

Calendar Notes - New Study Group!



We are thrilled to announce that Prairie is starting a study group! We will be learning about race and class, using books and articles to reflect on our culture and ourselves. This kind of learning and reflection will help us move toward being a more loving and welcoming community.

We will begin on **September 14th**, meeting virtually on the second and 4th Mondays of the month from 7-8:30 pm. We will have study questions to consider in small groups and then come back to the whole for the rest of the discussion. Suzanne Gernandt has agreed to lead 3 sessions (1 for each section of the book) for our first selection, **White Trash - The 400 Year Untold History of Class in America** by Nancy Isenberg. Please plan to read the book even if you can't make it to the discussions, and please come to the discussions even if you haven't read the book yet or have to miss one of the discussions. Let's get educated together!

Rachel Long and Suzanne Gernandt

When Will We Meet in Person?

Rachel Long, President

3

We have so many hopes and wishes for our congregation, not the least of which is to meet together in our beautiful new space! Your Board had a lengthy discussion on this issue (undoubtedly one of many to come) at our meeting on 7/14/20. Unfortunately with Covid-19 worsening right now in Dane County, we are not ready to approve any kind of gathering at Prairie. The first such in-person gatherings we will approve will be small groups, outside, with everyone masked, socially distant, and without singing or food. We will let you know as soon as we feel it would be reasonable for Prairie to sanction such offerings.



I want to share the documents we are using in our ongoing deliberations. The UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) put out guidance for congregations, <https://www.uua.org/safe/pandemics/gathering-guidance>. I would encourage you to take a look at these thoughtful and thought-provoking recommendations that urge us to ground our decision making in our principles. The "Forward Dane" phased reopening plan for Dane County update dated 7/1/20, https://publichealthmdc.com/documents/Forward_Dane.pdf lays out targets for us to meet and an additional link to WI DHS current data on Covid 19 by county. Our insurance company has a nice summary of what procedures need to be in place when we open, <https://p.widencdn.net/r87ip0/CM0308-2020-05-RC-Recommendations-for-a-Safe-Return-to-Worship>. We will be posting these documents in the members section of the website in the near future.

Do You Like to have Fun?

Karen Deaton, Religious Education Committee Chair

Our DRE organizes and publicizes many fun activities for us, but until we hire our next DRE, we hope that members of our community will find ways to organize fun together without staff support. To help all of us maintain our Prairie connections, there's a new group on Facebook - it's called **Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society Group** and it's intended as a way for all of us to self-organize activities with each other. [Join the group](#) and use it to find out about what's going on, or rustle up an activity yourself!

You might use one of the many virtual game sites, or set up a Netflix Party to chat while watching a movie together, or see if anybody wants to meet up with you for kayaking on Lake Monona or sitting on a hilltop watching a sunset. Holly's already posted about doing a float trip (inner tubes help maintain social distance). I'm planning to start a virtual Scrabble tournament. Activities can be in person with safe spacing or online. Please note that we don't want to start flooding our administrator Dan with requests to set up Zoom meetings - instead, please use Facebook Messenger video rooms, or Google Meet, or Facetime, or the free version of Zoom if possible.



Prairie RE: Between No Longer and Not Yet

Karen Deaton, Religious Education Committee Chair

4

Prairie's RE program is facing two big challenges: Holly's departure and the pandemic. Holly is no longer going to be our DRE, and it's not yet safe for us to meet again in person. Here are the RE program's plans for addressing these challenges in the year to come (always subject to change).

Holly will leave the DRE position at the end of July. We will miss her leadership very much! I am delighted to report, though, that Holly plans to stay on as a Prairie member and even serve on the RE committee.

We're not planning in-person RE activities before next summer. Out of caution for our families, our volunteers, and our community as a whole, we're following expert guidance. If our caution seems excessive, I encourage you to read this thought-provoking article from the UUA: <https://www.uua.org/safe/pandemic>.

We're waiting a few months to hire a new DRE. Since we went into isolation in March, we've found that it is not realistic to expect to conduct a vibrant RE program remotely. Virtual activities are more cumbersome to prepare than in-person activities, less satisfying for both students and leaders, and not well attended. We don't think it makes sense to hire somebody to face that challenge. We will begin the hiring process as preparation for restarting our program. When we hire a new DRE, Holly will come back as a consultant to mentor and train them as her schedule allows.

The RE committee will maintain scaled-back activities through the pandemic, without a DRE. We'll take turns hosting Wednesday Night Fun. Our two Dungeons & Dragons campaigns will continue. (If you're interested in joining the beginners group on Mondays or the advanced group on Fridays, let me know and I'll put you in touch with the Dungeon Masters.)

The biggest activity we plan to conduct in the months to come is an **online Human Sexuality Education program for grades 7-10**. The Our Whole Lives (OWL) curriculum we usually use is designed for in-person workshops and can't be conducted online, but we don't want to keep our youth waiting for this valuable information. We plan to use online tools to convey honest, accurate, comprehensive information in the spirit of OWL despite the change in format. Recognizing that our young teens often find discussion of such personal topics awkward, we are tentatively calling our online program HAWK (Hesitant Adolescents with Knowledge). Pageen Small, Holly Tellander, and I will be working on this program.

Let us know if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or ideas!

Karen Deaton for the RE Committee

Committee members: Jesse Garst, Paula Pachciarz, Pageen Small, Holly Tellander, Carl Wacker

Summer Harvest Dinner

Patty Stockdale, Membership Committee Co-Chair

5

Mary Mullen and Patty Stockdale hosted a Service Auction dinner in their yard a half block from Prairie UU Society Saturday evening July 18 with 8 diners, Jon and Marie Andre, Martin Arnold, Karen Deaton, Susan Hagstrom, Judy Lazarus, Rachel Long, and Nancy Schraufnagel. Unfortunately, Suzanne and John Gernhardt were not able to attend, so Patty and Mary delivered their meals the following day as they live near Prairie UU Society as well.

The meal featured many in-season vegetables and fruits, many of which came from Mary's community garden. The salad plate offered kohlrabi and peapods with homemade guacamole and the main dishes were zucchini casserole, kale-citrus salad, mixed steamed veggies, and tomato-yogurt-basil chilled soup. Desserts were ice cream with freshly picked raspberries and homemade date nut cookies.

Comradery and good conversation were had as well, as Prairie members and friends continued to honor the conditions to keep the coronavirus from spreading. Everyone wore masks when not eating and kept 6 or more feet apart. The weather cooperated with a 15 MPH breeze from the SSW that blew to the street with the aid of boxed fans blowing in the same directions. Hand sanitizer was available on every table.

If you want to use the driveway and side yard of Mary Mullen and Patty Stockdale's home, please give us a call or email to see what can be arranged. The photos show the diners eating and posing in masks. There is also a panoramic photo of the driveway and side yard.



Landscaping Update

Karen Deaton, Landscape Sub Committee Chair

The contractors are finishing up their work on our landscape as I write this, spreading seed and mulch on the disturbed areas east of our buildings. Some areas are planted with lawn turf seed; some with a low-grow/no-mow seed mix, and some with a prairie seed mix. Flowers, shrubs, etc will be added later.



You may have seen standing water near the RE entrance (or pictures of it) while the landscape was still a work in progress, which was alarming. We don't expect to have ongoing problems, though. Gutters and downspouts have been installed, with the downspouts running underground and draining well away from the building. Further excavation of the rain garden area near the downstairs entrance punched through the heavy impermeable clay to the sand below, so water can now infiltrate the soil. In addition, there are now terraces and swales built in the east yard to help avoid excessive runoff to the lower walkway. I'm confident we're ready for all but the most disastrous rainfalls to be handled without flooding.



Martin Arnold will help me set up irrigation for the newly seeded areas, but some areas will need hand watering. Kathy Converse, Barb Park, and Mary Mullen have agreed to work on gardening the new area. If you have native plants to donate or if you are willing to stop by and do some watering, planting, or weeding, please let me know (email preferred).

Carin Committee Update

Barbara Frye, Caring Committee Chair

The Prairie Caring Committee is here for you, as we always are. Please let us know if you have any concerns with which we can help or if you could use some socially distant company or a phone chat. You can contact your Caring Committee person or write me at Caring@uuprairie.org or call 608 249-2777.

Here's hoping you stay healthy, be safe and support your local small businesses when you can.



3rd Quarter Offering Partner

Molly Plunkett, Social Action Committee Co-Chair

7



Our offertory collection is shared this quarter with the Allied Wellness Center which is a small shoestring community health center founded in 2004 to assist people in the Allied, Belmar and Dunn's March neighborhoods. It is a place where community members can learn about ways to stay healthy. The center has one half time Community Health Liaison (Gloria Manadier Farr) whose salary is supported by a city grant and many members of the neighborhood who volunteer their time. The staff provide referral information for health related needs of the community and help with prescriptions or medical devices or identifying what health provider is needed. The center has offered recurring educational programs on conditions chronic to the population such as hypertension, asthma and diabetes and has had occasional consulting services of volunteer nurses or nursing students. The center has sponsored programs on maintaining a health diet and for two years organized a weekly walking group called "Walky Talkies." Another stalwart volunteer in the community developed a support group for grandparents raising their grandchildren. The Wellness Center houses a Personal Essentials Pantry which provides personal care products, diapers, cleaning supplies and equipment, and even some basic medical supplies such as crutches or slings for neighbors in need. The Center provides bus passes and gas cards for neighborhood members who need transportation to doctor appointments or to get to work. When funds allow, the Center may help low income residents with copays for medications and has a relationship with a pharmacy to deliver needed medications to residents. A core group of women in the neighborhood called The Welcomers by word of mouth and postings get information out into the neighborhood about programs and resources available. The Center is totally reliant on donations of churches and grants for all its programs and functions outside of staff salary. Prairie has been a reliable donor for the Wellness Center for several years.

Recent Allied Wellness Center Initiatives

The Allied Wellness Center has long held a dream of training a core group of community members to be Community Health Workers. Community Health Workers are a relatively new category of paraprofessional health workers who as known and trusted community members can bridge the gap between hard-to-reach patients and the medical resources and health care professionals who may be able to help them. Their jobs range from educating people on blood pressure checks and cancer screenings to setting up reminder systems for proper utilization of medications. Milwaukee has an intense 6 week program that leads to a certification that is recognized by health care institutions in the city.

In 2018 The Center pieced together several grants that allowed them to offer their own training for Community Health Workers (CHWs), since both the cost, time commitment and travel to the Milwaukee program made it impractical for Allied residents to attend. Nine women from the Allied neighborhood began training in late 2018 with a local nurse, Shannon Hattenhauer and Dr. Jonas Lee, of Wingra Clinic, who both volunteered their time. Over several months participants were trained in use of basic medical devices such as blood pressure cuffs and use of my chart. They received more advanced education about the health conditions chronic to the Allied neighborhood population. They were trained to help potential "clients" identify health needs and create a supportive structure for those needs. Support might involve helping the "client" use my chart to communicate with health providers or even attend an appointment with a provider. Eventually the Community Health Workers graduated to finding and working with a "client" in the neighborhood. Participants received stipends of \$15/hour for both their training time and time with "clients." The program wound down when grant funding was depleted in late spring 2019.

Recently, the Center received a new Evjue Foundation grant of \$10,000 to continue the CHW program applied by Molly. They are exploring virtual training possibilities and further "client" work in these times of covid.

Member Spotlight

Mary & John Frantz

8

Mary and John Frantz say “They do love their fellow Prairie friends!”



Easily Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society's oldest members nearing 97 years old this year, Mary and John Frantz may not have grown up in the Unitarian Universalist tradition, but as young adults began attending UU churches after reading a book by Sophia Lyon Fahs, a religious activist who led a revolution in Unitarian religious education. Mary and John's attendance and involvement followed their medical careers as Internal Medicine Specialists as they relocated in Colorado, to Missouri, and finally in Wisconsin for professional placements.

First was the Denver Unitarian Church and then the Church of the Larger Fellowship when no local church was available in Montrose, CO. Next, they help start a fellowship in Columbia, MO. In Madison, they attended First Unitarian Society for nearly 50 years (Wowza!) after leaving their local fellowship in Monroe, WI, and then were lured to Prairie by another Prairie long timer Ruth Calden, who passed just last Fall 2019, as well as fellow Monroe Clinic doctor Rachel Long.

Mary and John were attracted to Prairie both for its small and friendly community, especially after attending Prairie's Fall retreat, as well as for its music. Mary says before too long Doleta Chapru had her playing hymns and preludes at Prairie when she wouldn't have thought of playing music at First Unitarian Society where professional musicians abounded.

Before the Coronavirus lockdown, she played the prelude and offertory herself for Prairie's weekly Sunday services. Since 2008, Mary also found the musicians who played the special music among Prairie's many talented musicians. The **Prairie UU Society 50 Years in a Congregation 1967-2017** published in 2018 makes many references to Mary and John. Especially impressive are Dan Proud's tribute on pages 732-734 as well as the wonderful photo of her playing piano surrounded by Prairie children Gil, Ivy, and Destiny on the back cover of volume 2.

Mary and John have always been interested and involved in what everyone is doing and what is going on, especially with Prairie members and friends, their patients, and their family. They have 5 daughters (2 deceased), 11 grandchildren, and 20+ great-grandkids, as well as extensive nieces, nephews, and cousins all over the world. Both are physicians, Mary retired 12 years ago and John 15 years ago, and retired from the Monroe Clinic, where Prairie's President Rachel Long works as a Psychiatrist and Martin Arnold worked until a few years ago as an anesthesiologist.

The Membership Committee plans to have an event for John and Mary Frantz in the near future to recognize their contributions and lives to both Prairie and the community at large. Watch for the announcement!