

Feb  
2021

# Prairie Fire

In Peggy Small's Creativity & Connection on 1/23, participants created interpretations of a portion of Andrea Gorman's inauguration poetry.

Kathy Converse's watercolor interpretation is of "where we can find light in this never ending shade"....."we must put our differences aside so we can reach our arms to one another...."



## Prairie Contacts

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Please see [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org) for other contacts, including board members and committee chairs.

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# February Calendar\*

Please see [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org) for detailed descriptions & public event links

*\*All events take place online via Zoom*

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## Tuesday 2

- 4:30 Beginner D&D (every Tuesday)
- 7p Trivia (1st & 3rd Tuesday)

## Thursday 4 (every Thursday)

- 6:30p Thursday Fun Night

## Friday 5 (every Friday)

- 4:30p Advanced D&D

## Saturday 6

- 10a Prairie WOW

## Sunday 7

- 10a Service: "Raising Anti-Racist Kids (and Grandkids)" by Robin Lowney Lankton
- 11a Virtual Coffee Hour (every Sunday)

## Monday 8

- 7p Study Group (2nd & 4th Mondays)

## Tuesday 9

- 6p Board Meeting

## Thursday 11 (2nd & 4th Thursday)

- 7pm Prairie Sing Along

## Sunday 14

- 10a Service: International Institute of Forgiveness

## Sunday 21

- 10a Service: "What are you? Multiculturalism, Latinidad, and the American Melting Pot" by Peggy Manolis Small

## Saturday 27

- 10a Creativity & Connection

## Sunday 28

- 10a Service: "The Social Regulation of Speech" by Franciska Coleman (sponsored by Badgertalks)

We have many exciting Sunday services coming up in February! On 1/28, Franciska Coleman (UW-Madison Assistant Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Wisconsin Law School & the Associate Director of the East Asian Legal Studies Center) talk about "The Social Regulation of Speech" (sponsored by Badgertalks).

This talk addresses the relationship between the First Amendment, the social regulation of speech and "cancel culture." In the process, it addresses the impact of social media technologies on our understandings of and assumptions about free speech as well as why community control of speech norms has devolved into exercises of domination.



# Study Group in February

Rachel Long, President

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We changed the schedule in January to allow us to hear Isabel Wilkerson speak. She is the author of *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*, which was one of our earlier selections. Therefore we will start February by completing our discussion of *White Fragility - Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin Diangelo. New Yorker writer Katy Waldman wrote, "The value in *White Fragility* lies in its methodical, irrefutable exposure of racism in thought and action, and its call for humility and vigilance. Combating one's inner voices of racial prejudice, sneaky and at times irresistibly persuasive, is a life's work."

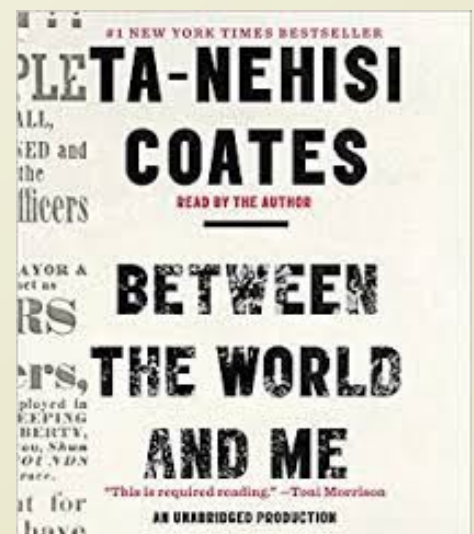
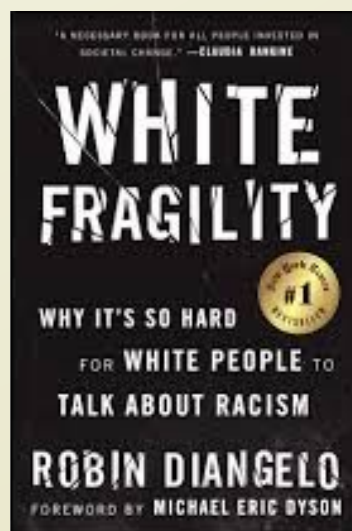
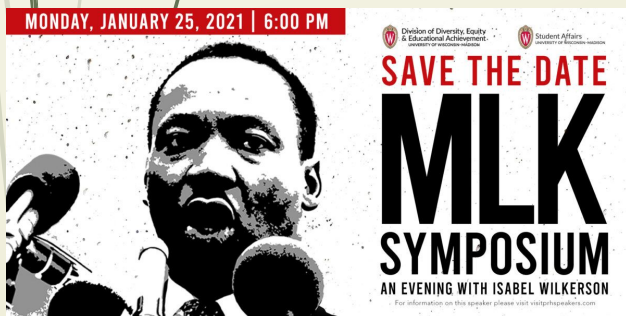
Later in February, we will discuss *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Among many accolades, David Remnick of *The New Yorker* called the book "an impassioned letter to his teenage son—a letter both loving and full of a parent's dread—counseling him on the history of American violence against the black body, the young African-American's extreme vulnerability to wrongful arrest, police violence, and disproportionate incarceration." No leader has been identified yet, would you like to lead the discussion?

Study Group meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 7-8:30 pm (with the exception of 1/25/21.) You are welcome to participate whether or not you have read the book. Below is the upcoming schedule. The link will be on the main web page. Join us! ding sharing of our own biases during this session.

**Jan. 25 - 6 to 7:30 pm**, "MLK Symposium — An Evening with Isabel Wilkerson," sponsored by University of Wisconsin, Madison. Free, **but registration is required.**

**Feb. 8** - *White Fragility* part 2, lead by Mary Somers

**Feb. 22** - *Between the World and Me*, by leader undetermined.



# Prairie's Anti-Racist Study Group Is Going Strong

## Mary Mullen

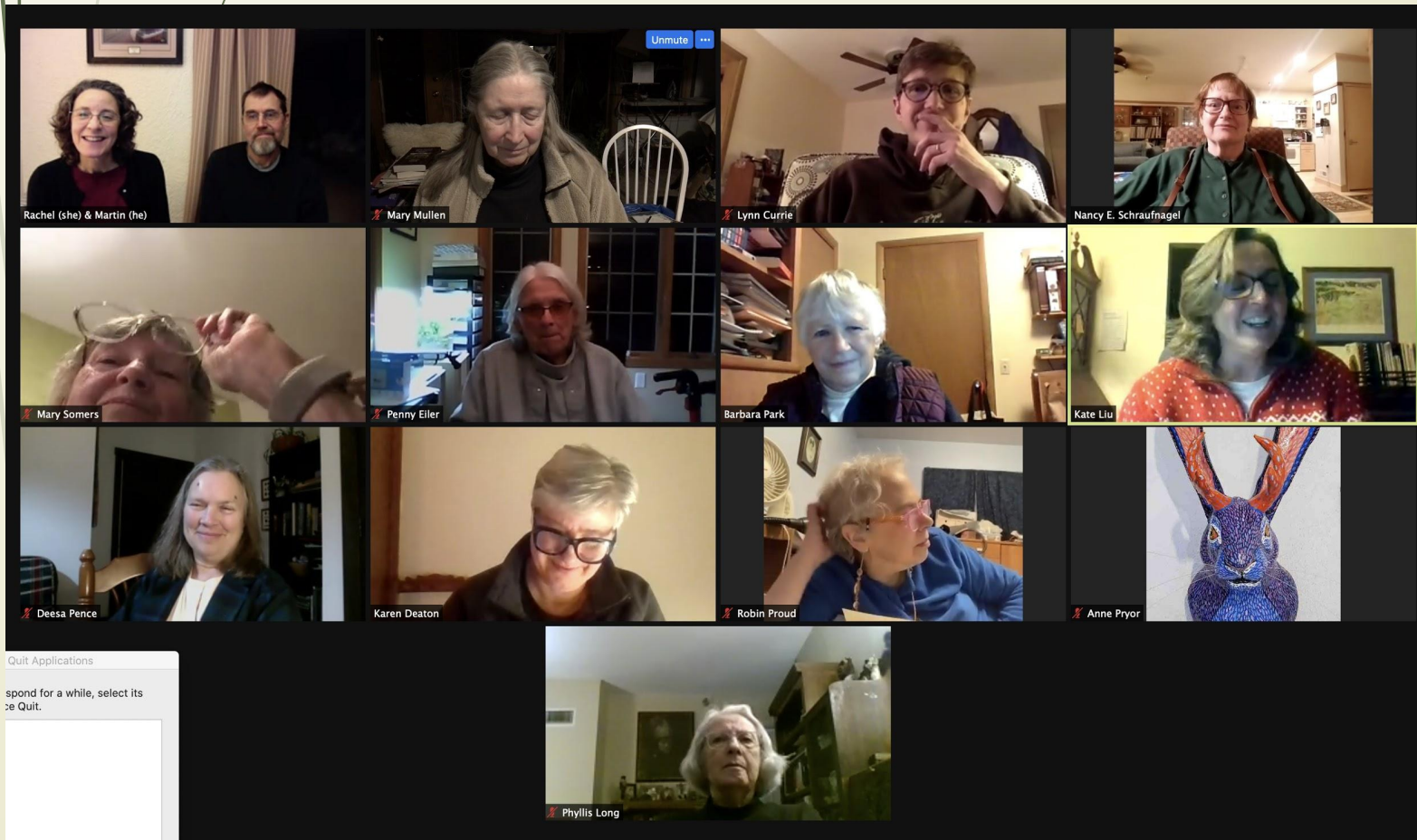
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Several months into the initiation of a Prairie study group focused mostly on anti-racism, it continues to attract a healthy number of participants.

Inspired by a Sunday service presented by the Rev. Karen Hutt, a Black minister associated with First Universalist Church in Minneapolis, our Prairie study group first met on September 14, 2020. The initial meeting drew 18 participants to discuss the book *White Trash, The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America* by Nancy Isenberg.

Since then, the study group has viewed and discussed the movie *Disclosure* which deals with transgender experiences, the book *Caste: The Origin of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson, a book written for young people *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi, and has held one meeting of two focused on *White Fragility* by Robin Diangelo. The January 11 discussion on *White Fragility* drew 14 people.

Different people lead the discussion on each book. So far our leaders have been Rachel Long, Karen Deaton, Robin Proud, Tracy Hamm Warnecke, and Mary Somers. The group meets twice a month. We will finish discussing *White Fragility* on Monday, February 8, starting at 7 pm on Zoom. All Prairie folks are cordially invited to attend. Check the Prairie website to link to the discussion.



# Meeting in Our Building Update

**Rachel Long, President**

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The Board is nearly finished finalizing our new procedures and consent forms for small meetings in our newly remodeled space during the pandemic. This information will be sent to you on Prairienews and posted in our Policies and Procedures Manual on the website soon.

Unfortunately, despite the mammoth efforts of our remodeling committee and Tom Robinson in particular, our main building and grounds are still considered a “construction site,” and access for meetings is not yet permitted. The final hold up has been a difference of opinion between inspectors about fire suppression requirements for our kitchen range. We are SO close now.

Please express your appreciation to Tom and all of the members of the remodeling committee and interior design sub-committee, who are still actively working to ready our beautiful space for our return.

## Update from Interiors Committee

**Heidi Hughes, Interior Design Committee Chair**

Greetings Prairie Folk! Just to let you all know, progress toward completion of all the details of our building is moving forward, thanks to many of you.

First, thank you to all who once again, donated to specific items and/or completed your pledges for the year that have enabled us to purchase the remaining materials for art, window coverings, and furnishings. This is a big deal, and we are so grateful!

We are lucky that our own member, John Gernandt (wood artist) has graciously volunteered to help orchestrate the completion of Todd Barnett’s (Prairie’s architect) wood design for the front and back walls of the meeting room. This is a big job and we are so fortunate to have someone in our congregation with so much experience and willingness to get it done! Thanks, John!

Another note of gratitude to all the members of this committee (Barbara Chatterton, Renee Deschard, Paula Pachciarz, Nevenah Smith, Heidi Hughes, Ron Frye), who keep meeting regularly, deciding on this item and not that, colors, placement of furnishings and the many decisions and details that complete a project. And, to all the other volunteers from whom I have asked for advice and/or help who just keep plugging along, getting all the necessary tasks done, you are all so appreciated!

We will all be back in this new, completed, beautiful space hopefully in 2021 with so much to share with each other. That, I believe, keeps us all going.



# Prairie RE: February Edition

Karen Deaton, RE Committee Chair

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## **New Virtual Activities for Prairie Kids**

Let's get together online for some fun with our Prairie friends!

**Minecraft** - we are planning to set up a secure server for youngsters ages 7 and up to gather online and build. We will need people to serve as hosts/moderators. Please let us know if you're willing to help! Please let us know if your kids will be interested in participating!

**Roblox** - we are planning to set up a secure server for youngsters ages 11 and up to gather online and play games. We will need people to serve as hosts/moderators. Please let us know if you're willing to help! Please let us know if your kids will be interested in participating!

**Fun Night** - Fun Night has moved to Thursdays at 6:30 pm. All are welcome. You might want to join us with your grandchildren! Fun night, 30 minutes of socializing together online, is focused on our youngest people - up through about age 8. Some activities have included virtual hide and seek, show and tell, stories, songs, online find-the-picture, and puppets. Sometimes we just do silly things like stack stuffed animals on our heads. Sometimes we look at something cool, like Carl's matrushka dolls. See Prairie's online calendar for the Zoom link

**HAWKS** - Nine young people ages 13-15 are meeting every Sunday for our sexuality education program Helping Adolescents with Knowledge about Sexuality, or HAWKS. Thank you to Pageen and Holly for your assistance in creating a new program in the spirit of Our Whole Lives (OWL)! Thanks to Katrina for co-facilitating with me! Thanks to parents who are committed to providing their children with accurate and comprehensive information (and for helping their kids get up and online on Sunday mornings)! Most of all, we appreciate the young people who are participating in a program that can feel awkward. We know that HAWKS will help them make good decisions about relationships and sexual activity in the future, and that will make the world a better place. Please let me know if you are interested in participating as a facilitator in our sexuality education program in years to come!

**DRE Hiring** - The hiring committee (chaired by Carl Wacker) for our new Director of Religious Exploration (DRE) has analyzed our program's needs and priorities and drafted a job description. We'll be posting the job this month. Please keep an eye on Prairie News and Prairie's Facebook account for the job posting in mid February, and share the posting widely. We hope to bring a great new DRE on board in May, with the possibility of some in-person outdoor activities in the summer and the hope that we'll be able to meet in person beginning in the fall.

# WOW, Prairie's Women's Group Attracts Women From Far and Wide

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## Mary Mullen

We can't meet in person, but Prairie women have enthusiastically endorsed Zoom as a second-best alternative. The group meets on the first Saturday morning of each month at 10 am. Check the Prairie website for the Zoom link. Unfortunately, no food is involved.

Interestingly, since we are no longer bound by geography, nearly every meeting has drawn women from afar. "Afar" is no exaggeration. Anne Urbanski has joined us from Santa Fe, New Mexico. Mary Somers has participated from Tucson, AZ. Anne Pryor has tuned in from Colorado (or was she back in Madison that Saturday?). Casey Steinau – Barb Park's daughter – attended from Alaska. Kim Truog, a former member, joined us from Illinois.

Other women who originally were a bit Zoom-shy have rejoined us. We are so happy to see Mary Frantz and Terri Prudlo and loved seeing Cheryl Robinson too. Rosemarie Carbino is another "new" attendee. Ordinarily she has come only to the Prairie retreat, but more recently she's attended other activities.

While "normal" attendance is about a dozen, on one Saturday 16 women showed up. After a few minutes of free chatter, women each get about 5 minutes to do a "check-in" to share how they are feeling and what they've been doing during the past month. The group is a social and support group and one of the best ways to get to know and appreciate the women of Prairie.



# Ministerial Search Update

**Renee Deschard**, Search Committee Chair

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The Search Committee has continued to meet virtually through the winter. We posted our job on the UUA's Ministerial Search System at the end of November to align with the UUA's suggested search timeline.

We have received a few applications and are currently vetting them for initial interviews. Search Committee members cannot give any details about prospective ministers until we bring our selected candidate to the congregation, which could be late spring.

Rest assured that we are working hard to find a great fit for our community! Thanks to the Search Committee: Steve Hingle, Barb Park, Jane Richards, Peggy Small, Katrina Daly Thompson



## News from MOSES

**Molly Plunkett**, Social Action Committee Co-Chair

Announcement! The 2020 MOSES Yearbook, of which Prairie member Pam Gates was coeditor, is now available online at [mosesmadison.org](http://mosesmadison.org). More information about MOSES, of which Prairie is a member, is available on that website as well, including a bimonthly newsletter.

