



From the Administrator,

Welcome to the newsletter for the First of February. You will find contributions from **Dave Siegfried, 3rd Sunday Committee, Ellen Paul, UU Multiracial Action, Gigi LaBudde, Gilbert Williams, UU Women's Connection**. I think you will find them interesting. Please let me know if I can be of assistance. My Park Hall hours are Tuesday and Friday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and by appointment. Park Hall Voicemail: 608.643.3131 **Fritz**

Upcoming Sunday Programs (10:10 a.m.)

Date	Program	Speaker	Topic
Feb 8	U.U. Program	Penny Andrews	Connected Consciousness
Feb 15	Free Thought Forum		TBA
Feb 22	U.U. Program	Ralph Tyksinski	TBA

We invite you to attend our in-person Sunday programs at our beautiful Park Hall. We have masks available. Childcare is provided each Sunday. Our Sunday programs are also available live on Zoom (see last page info).

Board of Directors Meeting

The **Board** of the Free Congregation will meet on **February 8, at Park Hall at 11:30 a.m.** If you have an issue for us to an address, please email Dave Siegfried, President of the Board at [Dave Siegfried](#) so that it may be added to the agenda.

3rd Sunday/Holiday Programming Committee

The Third Sunday Committee has two member openings. Love our presenters and the interesting, thought-provoking programs they bring to Park Hall? Be part of the planning! Contact Kathi Kemp, Eleanor Chiquoine or Nick Schweitzer for details.

Speakers Wanted Do you know of a group or an individual who could speak at our 3rd Sunday Free Thought Forums? Please send your suggestions, via the Contact Form, attention: 3rd Sunday Committee, on our website.

Food Pantry, April 8 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Volunteers are needed for the Congregation's next assigned food distribution. Please RSVP to Ellen, eap313@gmail.com. The Food Pantry distribution will now be inside. [For pantry information](#)

Eagle News from our Cemetery!



The Bald Eagle pair have been active, carrying sticks to the nest and perching in the area. Kristin Enge, our cemetery neighbor and trained eagle-watcher will officially begin observing the nest February 1. Hopefully, by the middle or end of February, the pair will be sitting on eggs.

Note of caution: If you do visit the cemetery in the next few months, be respectful of their preference for privacy and quiet. Call Gigi La Budde 608-469-4348 with questions.

March Grounds Work Days

The grounds subcommittee will be sponsoring 3 work days in March. They will be on **Fridays (March 6, 13, 20)** from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Our kitchen crew (“the Kitchees”) will be serving a free hot lunch for volunteers. To set goals for this work; please join the discussion by sending email: “I am in on the Grounds Work Days” to Gilbert Williams at earthdoghw@gmail.com. For starters, we will clear the fallen leaves and improve the front of the Hall appearance. We also need to clear some fallen wood from the back 40. Participants are asked to bring their favorite rake, leaf blower, pitch fork, wheelbarrow or chain saw. A riding lawn mower would be a big help. Subject to proper weather.

Please RSVP to let Gilbert know which days you will be attending, so that the Kitchees can plan for lunch. earthdoghw@gmail.com.

We celebrated our 174th Painesfest Holiday on January 25. Prof. Dan Kapust, of the UW-Madison Political Science Department was the guest speaker; hosted by Ellen Paul. The topic was **Common Sense (Paine's invocation of 1 Samuel)**. There were 35 attendees in the hall. A potluck lunch was served after the program. Photos by Eleanor Chiquoine.



U.U. Multiracial Unity Council Podcasts

The Unitarian Universalist Multiracial Unity Council, offers a library that features Vespers Service sermons and other recordings. Find them on Youtube: [UUMAC Youtube](#) or the podcast feed: [RSS UUMAC](#).

UU Women's Connection Winter Retreat

The Unitarian Universalist Women's Connection will host its 2026 Winter Retreat from **February 27 to March 1** at the Toddhall Retreat Center near Columbia, Illinois, just south of St. Louis. [Winter 2026 Retreat Info](#) Registration is open, with limited capacity of 27 participants.

How to join our Zoom Sunday Programs.

1. Go to the Sunday Programs tab of our website:
<http://www.freecongregation.org/sunday-programs.aspx>
2. Refresh the browser page.
3. Click the “Join Our Zoom Meeting” link in RED TEXT.

The “Join Our Zoom Meeting” link will not be visible until 15 minutes before our meeting; typically this is 9:55 a.m. for a 10:10 a.m. meeting. Early birds will see the option to “Join a Practice Zoom Meeting”. Refreshing the page after 9:55 a.m. should reveal the active meeting link.

We publish twice a month to our website. We email announcements to our list as each issue appears online. If you no longer desire email reminders, feel free to tidy up our email list with an unsubscribe message. Keep our website bookmarked for future use.

[FreeCongregation.org](#) our website homepage

Other Useful Links:

[Unusbscribe to Newsletter List](#) use the form below newsletter links.

[Sign up for Newsletter List](#) use the form below newsletter links.

I welcome your submissions to this newsletter. Send your events, announcements, photos, and recipes to me. [Newsletter Submissions](#) use the Contact Us form at bottom.

December 14, 2025, Free Congregation of Sauk County Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members

✓ Dave Siegfried, President	✓ Gil Williams, Member-at-Large
✓ Jenni Walsh, Secretary	✓ Nick Schweitzer, Past President
✓ Joe Frost, Treasurer	✓ Fritz Parks, Non-Member Attendee
✓ Kathi Kemp, Member-at-large	
✓ Susie Tatone, Member-at-large	

Meeting Called to Order: 11:37 a.m.

November Meeting Minutes – Gil Williams moved to approve minutes. Susie Tatone 2nd motion. Approved.

Staff Reports:

- Administrator's Report: See written report. Kathi Kemp sent a sympathy card, from the Congregation to Penny Andrews.
- Facilities Coordinator Report: See written report. There was discussion about the Wormfarm Institute renting space for their Decomposition event next October. They proposed renting our space for 43 hours. Jenni Walsh will be negotiating rental space payment amount with staff at the Wormfarm Institute and keep our board updated on event details.

Treasurers Report: Our bank balance is \$13,477.16. Nick Schweitzer moved to approve minutes. Gil Williams 2nd motion. Approved.

Standing Committee Reports:

- Stewardship Committee: Glen Johnson. See Written Report.
- Religious Education for Youth and Children: Susie Tatone. On Hiatus.
- Buildings and Grounds: John Lichtenheld. No Report.
- Personnel: Dave Siegfried. The Facility Coordinator position has been posted.
- Membership: Ellen Paul. Dave Siegfried reported that, this year, we have seven new members.
- Cemetery Affairs: Gigi LaBudde. The Cemetery Committee has approved the use of the Slotty Road building for the Wormfarm Institute on Sunday, October 11th. Gil Williams and Fritz Parks are going to look at the Slotty Road building lock, which hasn't been working correctly.

CONTINUED DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Ad-Hoc Committees:

- Portraits in the Hall: Melaine Weller. No Report.
- Celebration of the Season: Nick Schweitzer. A copy of the agenda was shared with the board and we discussed volunteers for the day. Remember to promote the event on all of your social media accounts this week!
- Outreach: Jenni Walsh & Kathi Kemp. No Report.
- Volunteers: Nick Schweitzer. No Report
- Third Sunday Forum: Kathi Kemp. No Report.
- Inventory Committee: Gil Williams. The committee has been doing a lot of inventory

Old Business:

- Elevator Replacement: We recently received a \$15,000 donation, which brings our full Elevator Fund up to \$22,320.46.
- Website: We have been having a lot of problems with our website and Dave Siegfried needs to start researching new website companies.
- Towel Dispensers: A new dispenser has been add to the ADA compliant bathroom.
- Cleaning Schedule: Meghan has been out of synch on her work schedule. Her current work schedule is to come before the 2nd and 4th Sunday.
- Bathroom Renovation Update: The next step in the ADA compliant bathroom is wainscotting and flooring. The painting has been completed. Gil Williams made a motion for one ADA toilet with dual flush at a \$500 cap. Kathi Kemp 2nd motion. Approved.

New Business:

Motion to Adjourn – Gil Williams moved to adjourn. Joe Frost 2nd motion. Adjourned at 12:57p.m.

Administrator's Report

January 11, 2026 Board Meeting

Administrator's December Projects of Note

Support for the Celebration of the Season event: bookkeeping of donations, expenses, ticket sales and reimbursements. Website updated for the event poster and ticket sales. Square point-of-sale system set up. See Facebook below.

Member deaths for Mike Irwin (December 8) and Michael Whaley (December 24) recorded.

Hymn scores for the December 14 program sent to new musician Caleigh Judd.

Website update with Board member information.

Facility Coordinator inquiry and resume received from Christine Meiners.

Accounts correspondence to ACE Hardware for past payments.

Preparation of handout documents to support the December 14 board meeting.

Facebook

Sunday program notices and newsletter announcements are posted each month.

Celebration of the Season post was created with a link to our website, shared with 3 FB pages: What's

Happening SP/SP Happenings/Baraboo United. Facebook ad placed to boost the post.

Employment ad for Facilities Coordinator placed.

Newsletter

The December 15 Newsletter Announcement was emailed to 51 member and 150 non-member addresses; we printed and mailed to 3 addressees. This issue had 7 contributors.

Building issues

Received Avondale Roofing estimates for gutter work, forwarded Bldg/Grounds Committee.

Procedure for requests for extra cleaning hours arranged with Meaghan Yngsdal; Fac. Coordinator will make these requests.

Program	Date	In Person	Zoom Devices
Spiritual Roundtable Conflict & Anger	12.7	11	8
UU Program Rob Brink	12.14	n/r	9
Free Thought Forum coffee & chat	12.21	10	6
UU Program Joint Program Robin Proud	12.28	16	14
Month Averages		12.3	9.3

Sunday Attendance

Fritz Parks, January 8, 2026

Free Congregation of Sauk County

BUDGET VS. ACTUALS: BUDGET_FY26_P&L - FY26 P&L

July 2025 - June 2026

			Total	
		Actual	Budget	% of Budget
REVENUE				
401 Pledges	34,660.24	47,740.24	72.60 %	
402 Donations	5,145.40	4,000.00	128.64 %	
403 Sunday Collections	1,103.86	1,500.00	73.59 %	
405 Events & Rental Income	2,648.50	3,500.00	75.67 %	
409 From Endowment				
409.2 Fund Operations		1,471.26		
Total 409 From Endowment		1,471.26		
Total Revenue	43,558.00	58,211.50	74.83 %	
GROSS PROFIT	43,558.00	58,211.50	74.83 %	
EXPENDITURES				
601 Insurance	2,356.64	4,500.00	52.37 %	
610 Building Maintenance				
611 Cleaning staff	513.00	1,040.00	49.33 %	
612 Snow Removal	406.45	500.00	81.29 %	
613 Grounds-Mowing	450.00	1,700.00	26.47 %	
614 Cleaning supplies	47.76	250.00	19.10 %	
615 Elevator	51.13	1,000.00	5.11 %	
616 Security	974.00	1,000.00	97.40 %	
619 Maintenance & Repair - Other	374.03	3,000.00	12.47 %	
Total 610 Building Maintenance	2,816.37	8,490.00	33.17 %	
620 Utilities				
621 Electric	978.82	2,000.00	48.94 %	
622 Gas	233.20	1,900.00	12.27 %	
623 Garbage Pickup	220.50	441.00	50.00 %	
Total 620 Utilities	1,432.52	4,341.00	33.00 %	
630 Programs				
631 Speakers	820.00	2,010.00	40.80 %	
633 Sound System/Zoom Equip	167.90	300.00	55.97 %	
634 Music	1,200.00	2,760.00	43.48 %	
636 Associate Speaker	3,300.00	6,900.00	47.83 %	
637 Mileage for Associate Speakers	287.50	537.50	53.49 %	
639 Programs - Coffee & Misc	118.91	200.00	59.46 %	
Total 630 Programs	5,894.31	12,707.50	46.38 %	
640 Dues				
641 UUA	400.00	500.00	80.00 %	
642 Baraboo Chamber of Commerce		200.00		
643 Chamber of Commerce Dues	341.00	200.00	170.50 %	
Total 640 Dues	741.00	900.00	82.33 %	

Cash Basis Wed, Jan 7 12:33AM GMT-8

CONTINUED BUDGET VS ACTUALS

		Total		
		Actual	Budget	% of Budget
660 Administration				
661 Office Expenses	574.99	1,500.00	38.33 %	
662 Advertising	211.68	250.00	84.67 %	
663 Telephone/Internet	948.10	1,700.00	55.77 %	
664 Website/Cloud acct	5.94	500.00	1.19 %	
666 Infinite Giving Monthly Stock Gifting Service	594.00	1,188.00	50.00 %	
Total 660 Administration	2,334.71	5,138.00	45.44 %	
670 Staff				
671 Administrator pay	8,045.50	13,875.00	57.99 %	
672 Taxes	784.06	1,400.00	56.00 %	
673 Payroll Services	1,395.88	2,600.00	53.69 %	
677 Facility Coordinator	1,248.75	1,800.00	69.38 %	
678 Childcare provider	815.52	960.00	84.95 %	
Total 670 Staff	12,289.71	20,635.00	59.56 %	
700 Other Budgeted Expense				
701 CoS Budget Support	1,000.00	1,000.00	100.00 %	
702 Portraits in the Hall	3,330.65	500.00	666.13 %	
Total 700 Other Budgeted Expense	4,330.65	1,500.00	288.71 %	
Total Expenditures	32,195.91	58,211.50	55.31 %	
NET OPERATING REVENUE	11,362.09	0.00	0.00%	
NET REVENUE	\$11,362.09	\$0.00	0.00%	

January 11 Board Meeting Highlights

The last board meeting was held January 11, 2026. Highlights include a review of the Celebration of the Season, which was held in December. It was a terrific event and those who attended had a great time. However, attendance was low for the 2nd year in a row and the future of the event is in question. From the Facilities area, the Wormfarm Institute will be renting Park Hall for their fall major workshop, Decomposition. The event will take place October 9-11, 2026 and are expecting over 500 people to come through our congregation. There were many Buildings and Grounds updates, including: Elevator - will be replaced during the 2nd week of March and we show have a new operational elevator by April; Bathroom Update - Susie Tatone is currently painting and adding flooring to the bathrooms; Building Updates - the Building and Grounds Committee is fixing the decking on the west porch, mud jacking the sidewalk on the east side of the building, cleaning the gutters, and fixing the flat roof on the backside of the building; Spring Clean-Up - Gil Williams is planning to organize a spring cleanup of our grounds. Stay tuned for more information.

Facilities Coordinator Report

Jenni Walsh

1.11.26 FCSC Board Meeting

Recent Events at Park Hall:

- Mike Irving Celebration of Life – Thursday, January 9, 2026, 12-3pm

On-Going:

- Bi-Monthly Mindfulness Sessions with Diane Matzke - Wednesdays from 6:30-7:30pm

Upcoming:

- WormFarm Institute: A Decompositon – Wednesday, October 7 – Monday, October 12, 2026
 - Event Details to Date: Keynote Speaker – Omar DeKok-Mercado, Director of Wilding, Mad Agriculture, Boulder Colorado



Omar's (he/him) work has focused on supporting regenerative farmers in incorporating perennials into their farming systems. His philosophy embraces the wisdom of traditional practices and the power of creative imagination. Blending his technical expertise in soil science and agroecology with his artistic sensibilities he makes complex concepts accessible and inspiring. This unique blend has had a transformative impact on the agricultural landscapes he's worked with, enhancing both productivity and farmer livelihoods.

Facility Use Agreement Proposal:

Decomposium 2026 is a three-day public symposium exploring themes of decomposition, renewal, and ecological cycles through art, science, music, food, and conversation. The event will take place October 9–11, 2026, with the historic Park Hall in Sauk City serving as the primary indoor venue, with additional programming in the adjacent Free Thinkers Park, the Free Thinkers Annex on Slotty Road, and field trips to select partner sites.

Produced by Wormfarm Institute, the Decomposium will bring together approximately 30 artists, soil scientists, farmers, musicians, and cultural practitioners to lead a mix of panel discussions, lectures, workshops, performances, exhibitions, and guided experiences. Programming will run throughout the day and early evening across all three days, with Park Hall hosting the majority of Friday and Saturday sessions requiring seating, A/V support, and ADA accessibility.

We anticipate welcoming approximately 1,000 attendees over three days, drawing a mix of Sauk County residents and regional visitors. Most events will be free and open to the public, with advance registration required for many sessions to manage capacity. Attendees are expected to be respectful, curious, and intergenerational, reflecting Wormfarm's long history of producing public cultural events.

Park Hall was intentionally selected for its location in Sauk Prairie, historical significance, and alignment with values of free inquiry and open dialogue. The tone of the event will be thoughtful, engaging, occasionally provocative, but always welcoming and non-confrontational. Sessions will engage topics such as death and regeneration, soil, and ecological change through a cultural lens, inviting thoughtful public engagement.

The event will require standard venue support, including room setup flexibility, seating, and A/V capabilities for speakers and performances. Outdoor spillover programming in the adjacent park will help manage flow and create a festival-like atmosphere without overwhelming the hall itself.

Decomposium builds on Wormfarm Institute's 25-year track record of producing large-scale, well-run public events in Sauk County and the region. We view Park Hall not only as a venue, but as a meaningful partner in hosting this cultural gathering, which connects agriculture, ecology, art, and community at a human scale.

Facility Usage:

- Wednesday, October 7th: Set Up at Park Hall (Approximately 5-7 hours)
- Thursday, October 8th: Set Up at Park Hall (Approximately 5-7 hours)
- Friday, October 9th: Registration, Information Tabling by Regional Organizations, Opening Program, Welcome Dinner at Park Hall (8 hours)
- Saturday, October 10th: Scientific Discussions, Art Installations, Performances, and Rituals at Park Hall. Wormfarm Institute is current seeking proposals until February 9th – <https://www.wormfarminstitute.org/programs/current/decomp26> (10 hours)
- Sunday, October 11th: Field Trips to Partner Sites, Closing Afternoon Program at Slotty Road Cemetery (5 hours)
- Monday, October 12th: Clean Up at Park Hall and Slotty Road Cemetery (Approximately 4 hours)

Total Hours – Between 37-41 hours

Financial Proposal: \$2,000 for space rental, plus an additional \$150 if they need to use our sound system.

This is a discounted amount from our Space Rental Contract Fees because the Wormfarm Institute has limited financial resources. In exchange for the rate discount, the Wormfarm Institute would recognize the Free Congregation of Sauk County(FCSC) as an event co-sponsor.

- As such, FCSC would be listed on all marketing materials, along with verbal recognition at on-site events.
- Such recognition supports our stated goal of expanding facility awareness and congregation growth.