



From the Administrator,

Welcome to the newsletter for the **First of March**. You will find contributions from **Christine Meiners, Dave Siegfried, 3rd Sunday Committee, Building/Grounds Committee, Diane Matzke, Joe Frost, Nick Schweitzer, and Ellen Paul**. 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 phone and voicemail: 608.643.3131 **Fritz Parks**

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

Date	Program	Speaker	Topic
Mar 8	U.U. Program	Robin Proud	Mercy Otis Warren: Muse of the Revolution
Mar 15	Free Thought Forum	Philip Matthews	Working Art on Working Land
Mar 22	U.U. Program	David Butler	Christian Nationalism

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).

Facilities News

Hello, my name is Christine Meiners, and I am proud to serve as the new **Facility Coordinator** for Park Hall.

I have lived in the area since 2014 and am proud to be part of this community and Sauk County. I am actively engaged with Sauk Prairie Theatre Guild and Baraboo Theatre Guild, organizations that celebrate creativity, collaboration, and bringing people together.

Park Hall is especially meaningful to me because my husband and I were married here in 2021. That personal connection gives me a deep appreciation for how important this space can be for life's special moments.

In this role, I coordinate reservations and work closely with individuals and organizations to ensure every event runs smoothly. Park Hall is a welcoming and versatile space for weddings, meetings, performances, and community gatherings.

Please feel free to reach out with questions, to schedule a tour, or to reserve your date. I look forward to discussing how Park Hall can support your next event. freeconevents@gmail.com

Board of Directors Meeting

The **Board** of the Free Congregation will meet on **March 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](mailto:Dave.Siegfried@freecongregation.org) so that it may be added to the agenda.

Free Thought Forum (FTF) - Philip Matthews

Our Free Thought Forum on **Sunday, March 15** will feature guest speaker Philip Matthews, Director of Programs at the **Wormfarm Institute**, on the topic **Working Art on Working Land**. Guests will learn about artist-led Sauk County projects for the 2026 growing season. From the **Hay Rake Ballet** to the **Decomposium**—an experimental symposium on decomposition and renewal coming to Park Hall this October—to immersive long-distance walks through Wisconsin’s working landscape with farm visits, gatherings, and stories of land, migration, and memory along the way.

For 25 years, **Wormfarm Institute** has organized projects that assert the culture in agriculture, drawing attention to rural places and the people who live here. Learn how this work is evolving—and why cultivating relationships between unexpected allies in our “culture-shed” matters now more than ever.

FTF programs continue the legacy of free and open inquiry established more than 150 years ago by the founders of the Free Congregation. As their Sunday programs did then, today’s Forums express our commitment to free thought in religion, guided by reason, and inspired by the books of nature and world history.

FTF programs **begin at 10:10** am with an invitation to be seated, followed by brief announcements. The guest presenter then begins and speaks for 25-30 minutes. Open comments and questions follow the presentation. We usually adjourn by 11:20 a.m. Childcare is provided. The program will also be on Zoom at <https://freecongregation.org/sunday-programs.aspx>.

Elevator Replacement starts March 9

The removal of the elevator has been scheduled for **Monday, March 9**. The contractor estimates that it will take one or two days for the removal. Our electrician and volunteers can start work on **Tuesday or Wednesday, March 10 or 11**. Installation of the new elevator will follow, hopefully concluding in the week of March 23. **We are still collecting donations, see the green link on our home page.** We have raised \$38,650.00 to date for this \$65,000 project.

Mindfulness Meditation

Bi-weekly mindfulness practice sessions with **Diane Matzke** from **6:30-7:30pm. at Park Hall**. Please join us for these free sessions, **March 11 and 25**.

March Grounds Work Days

The grounds subcommittee will be sponsoring work days in March. **Dates have changed to Saturdays (March 14 & 21) from 10 am to 2 pm**. Our kitchen crew (“the Kitchees”) will be serving a **free hot lunch for volunteers**. 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. earthdogghw@gmail.com.

Pledge Dinner, March 22,

Don't Miss It! Mark your calendars! Our **2026/2027 Pledge Drive** will kick off on **March 22**. Pledging at the Drive is critical to our budget planning for the year starting July 1, 2026. We'll have a budget presentation at noon, followed by dinner. Members should watch email for supporting information and pledge forms around March 15. We hope to record as many member pledges as possible at the dinner. Contact Joe Frost, Glen Johnson, or Fritz Parks for more information.

What I Believe Now

The Adult Ed discussion group, **What I Believe Now**, will meet **on Zoom** as usual on the fourth **Monday, March 23**, at **6:30 p.m.**. The topic will be: **Regulations**. Please email **Nick Schweitzer**, jnschweitzer@gmail.com, if you'd like to receive a meeting invitation and list of questions in preparation for the gathering.

Food Pantry, April 8

Volunteers are needed **from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.**, for the Congregation's next assigned pantry staffing. Please RSVP to Ellen, eap313@gmail.com. The Food Pantry distribution has moved inside. [For pantry information.](#)

Assisting the UU Senior Lay Population

Laughlin Fund

The Laughlin Fund is an enduring legacy of Mrs. Iva Giles Laughlin. (1852-1904)

Mrs. Laughlin's bequest supports elder UU lay persons with needs such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, food assistance, dental expenses, medical treatment, and housing assistance.

A dedicated Universalist laywoman, Mrs. Laughlin worked closely with Rev. Frederick J. Millar at the Ryder Memorial Church (Universalist) in Chicago.

Known for her philanthropic work and her work in the Sabbath school – Mrs. Laughlin donated service, books, hymnals, and gave liberally to all its departments.





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:

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