

Free Congregation of Sauk County

A Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



Use of Facilities Policy

Statement of the Congregation's Intent with Regard to Community Use of Park Hall and Grounds

Recognizing the historic significance of Park Hall in its own right, as well as its historical role in the religious, social, and cultural life of the Sauk Prairie area, the Free Congregation of Sauk County considers it part of its mission to honor the heritage of our founders – who built Park Hall not only for their own use but as a community center to which people of all faiths could come for social, cultural, and recreational events – by continuing the tradition of making the Hall available and affordable to the public for appropriate uses. The Congregation makes a special effort to provide affordable access to the Hall and its environs to charitable and non-profit organizations whose missions, goals, and principles are compatible with those of the Free Congregation.

Non-Discrimination

In keeping with Free Congregation and Unitarian Universalist principles, no individual or group will be denied use of FCSC facilities on the basis of religion, race, sex, national origin, disability, sexual preference, gender identity, age or public assistance status.

Use by the General Public: Businesses and Private Parties

Businesses and other private or private-sector parties may arrange for use of FCSC facilities on a single event basis through special arrangement with, and approval by, the FCSC Facilities Coordinator and the FCSC Board of Directors. These parties must complete a Facility Use Agreement. Facility use fees will apply.

There is a separate pay schedule for Non-Profits, FCSC Members, and Friends of the Congregation. Contact the Facilities Coordinator, Ellen Paul at ParkHallEvents@gmail.com for more information.

Restricted and Prohibited Uses

The use of FCSC facilities by a partisan political group is prohibited unless the purpose and principles of the group are clearly within the stated purpose and principles of the FCSC and the purpose of the event is wholly or in large measure educational or informational rather than polemic, provocative, or incendiary; or whose *manner of presentation* is blatantly directed to promote a specific electoral outcome. (Example: Because the FCSC has established itself, by a vote of the Congregation, as a “Welcoming Congregation”, an event organized by Wisconsin Won’t Discriminate may be permissible as long as it is informational and/or educational, appeals to reason rather than to emotion, does not limit or restrict participation, and allows for an open forum for questions and discussion.)

In keeping with the 167-year-old Free Thought tradition of the FCSC, the use of FCSC facilities for free and open, non-partisan discussions of political issues is both allowed and encouraged. Moreover, and in keeping with that same 167-year-old tradition of full disclosure, open debate, and free discussion, even partisan events or presentations may be allowed *if and only if* there exists an easily identifiable person, group, or party that has an

opposing or dissenting view AND that person, group, or party is a) notified in advance of the original event, and b) invited to use the same or comparable FCSC facilities, under the same terms and within a reasonable amount of time since the original event, to present its point of view. (For example: a “listening session” with challenging Democratic candidates for State Assembly and State Senate might be allowable if and only if the Republican incumbents were notified in advance and invited to hold their own “listening session” in such manner and at such time as does not afford them a discernible advantage or disadvantage.)

Long Term Use Requests: See the FCSC Facility Coordinator.

Conflicts

The above priorities notwithstanding, once an event has been scheduled, it is “on the calendar” and will not be canceled by the FCSC to accommodate a program with a higher priority. If a scheduling conflict inadvertently occurs, the FCSC Facility Coordinator will notify both groups promptly and involve both parties in efforts to resolve the situation to everyone’s satisfaction.