



From the Administrator,

Welcome to the newsletter for the Fifteenth of August. You will find contributions from Dave Siegfried, Nick Schweitzer, Gigi La Budde, Annette Kuhlmann, Kathi Kemp, Gil Williams, & Prairie UU. 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 Parks**

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

Date	Program	Speaker	Topic
Aug 16	Free Thought Forum	David Couper	Sanctity of Life: A Necessary Review
Aug 23	U.U. Program	Penny Andrews	Nested Realities
Aug 30	Work Day	All invited	Tasks both inside and out

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).

Free Thought Forum with the Rev. David Couper, August 16

David Couper will be our Guest Speaker. His presentation will be **The Sanctity of Life: A Necessary Review**. Please join David for **a reflection on loving-kindness as the thread connecting daily life, spiritual practice, and political engagement — and why we need to recover such kindness in this fractured moment.**

Free Thought Forums 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.

This program begins at **10:10 a.m.** 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.**

Please join us. Childcare is provided. The program will also be on Zoom (see last page for a link).

Board of Directors Meeting

The **Board** of the Free Congregation will meet at **11:30 a.m., September 8 at Park Hall**. 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.

What I Believe Now

The Adult Ed discussion group, **What I Believe Now**, will meet **on Zoom** as usual on the fourth **Monday, August 24, at 6:30 p.m.** The topic will be: **Consciousness**. 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.

Black Hawk books Donation to Free Thinkers Library

Rick Whaley, the brother of Michael, has donated 3 books to the Free Congregation, in memory of Michael. All 3 books cover the history of Chief Black Hawk and are first-edition printings. The books are **Wind Over Wisconsin**, August Derleth, **Along the Black Hawk Trail**, William F. Stark, and **Re-Collecting Black Hawk**, Daniel A. Brown and Sarah E. Kanouse.

Relocation Assistance for member John Rigby

From Kathi Kemp, "Our friend John Rigby is moving from his long-term home in Baraboo for a brand-new apartment on the north side of Madison. He and Susan accumulated a lot of memories and stuff at the Baraboo house, and he could use our help getting things sorted into Keep, Give Away, Give to Goodwill, and Trash categories. If you have time, we are looking for crew members throughout this month. Please let Kathi Kemp or Fritz know. Thanks!"

2026 Prairie UU Retreat September 18-20

Prairie UU invites our members to join them at Pine Lake Camp near Westfield. Pamphlet bookmaking, stargazing, weaving, jigsaw puzzles, games & cards, hiking, birdwatching, visiting, reading, crafting, and journaling are planned. [Registration ends Sept 2.](#)

Nature-Based Pain Recovery Group Sessions

From member Annette Kuhlmann, "I am familiar with this work and have been impressed by the results. You may want to check it out." From the **Unbound Roots Therapy Group**: Nature offers one of the most powerful environments for recovery, helping the nervous system experience safety and regulation. Together, we'll explore the neuroscience of pain, learn evidence-based pain reprocessing techniques, and deepen our connection with ourselves, one another, and the living world. The Series of 4 sessions will be a hybrid of in person (Barneveld, WI) and Zoom meetings: September 15, 22, 29 and October 13. For registration and more information www.unboundrootstherapy.com.

International Association for Religious Freedom

Our Free Congregation is a member of this association, the **IARF**. "Founded in 1900, it is the oldest international group that promotes dialogue among religions" and it has consultative status with the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The UUA is another member of the IARF. Nick Schweitzer attended its congress in Romania in 2023 and he is also an individual member of its U.S. chapter, IARFUS. Another congress will be held in Albania in the fall of 2027. If anyone would like more information about the U.S. chapter or the parent organization, you can check out their web sites at iarf.net or iarfus.org, or contact Nick, jnschweitzer@gmail.com.



Mary Sue Reutebuch, minister at Prairie U.U., presided for our August 9 UU Program. Her topic was **The Story: An Ancient Operating System**. We heard how stories encode memory, transmit values, and teach truth across generations, that range from antiquity thru today, and bring meaning and relationships to our lives.



Brand new to the grounds at Park Hall, the Fire Circle welcomed its first users for Michael Whaley's Celebration. Thanks to Groundskeeper Gil Williams and crew, this space is open to members for conversation and meditation.

Sauerkraut Preparation Sunday will be September 20

The Kitchies (our cooking & baking volunteers) will work about 50 lbs of cabbage into sauerkraut for the Winter Solstice Celebration and make some Kombucha to be served at Wormfarm Institute's Decomposium event running October 7-10. We will start our fermentation project after the **September 27** (Fall Equinox) **Sunday Program**. If you would like to pitch in to be one of the Congregational Kitchies, please talk to Gilbert (608-574-6656) or Kathi. Volunteers are welcome.

Planning for the Winter Solstice Celebration

Thus far, the Winter Solstice planning committee (Susie Tatone, Gilbert Williams, Kathy Kemp) has agreed on the following activities for our **December 20, Sunday Program**. A day of winter joy, feasting, celebration and singing is in the works.

- 10-11:30 a.m. Free Thought Forum Program for the winter solstice.
- 11:30-12 p.m. Winter Bonfire, outdoors at the fire circle
- 12-12:30 p.m. Local wine and cheese tasting in the hall
- 12:30-1:30 p.m. Feast of the Winter Solstice, by the Kitchies downstairs
- 1:30-2:00 p.m. Presentation: pre-Christian and Druid Solstice history
- 2:00 p.m.-?? Congregational group sing in the hall



The Celebration of Life for member Michael Whaley was held at Park Hall on Sunday, August 2. The hall was full as was the tent outside with live music and food. Friends and family shared warm and funny anecdotes from their relationships with Michael.

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

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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.