



## From the Administrator,

Welcome to the newsletter for the 1st of January. You will find contributions from **Cemetery Affairs**, **Nick Schweitzer**, **John Lichtenheld**, and **Grace Vosen** that I hope you find interesting. Please let me know if I can be of assistance. My usual Park Hall hours are Tuesday and Friday mornings from 9:00 a.m. and by appointment. Park Hall Voicemail: 608.643.3131

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

Date	Program	Speaker	Topic
Jan. 2	Spiritual Roundtable	Bill Ladewig	Man Plans, God Laughs
Jan. 9	U.U. Program	Robin Proud	Transcendentalist: C. H. Dall
Jan. 16	Painesfest Program	Daniel Kapust	Paine on Liberty and Humor
Jan. 23	U.U. Program	Rob Brink	TBA
Jan. 30	5th Sunday	Work Day?	Send your suggestions

We invite you to attend our in-person Sunday programs at our newly restored Park Hall. We require our guests to follow the CDC and local health recommendations for mask use when inside. We have masks available. Childcare is provided each Sunday, but we cannot accommodate children who are ill.

Our Sunday programs are also available live on Zoom. Please see the Zoom instructions on the last page.

## Notes and Events from/for Members, Friends and Community

The **Board of Directors** of the Free Congregation will meet on **January 9 at Park Hall** following the Sunday program. If you have an issue for us to an address, please email Nick Schweitzer, President of the Board at [jnschweitzer@gmail.com](mailto:jnschweitzer@gmail.com) so that it may be added to the agenda. The meeting will also be on Zoom.

The **Cemetery Affairs Committee** had proposed a work day on January 2. Now that there is snow on the ground, the **work day will be postponed until the spring**. Watch this space for more information.

The **What I Believe Now** adult education class will hold its next meeting on **January 24 at 6:30 p.m.**, with a topic to be determined. Watch for more information in the January 15 newsletter.

**Final Phase of the Restoration Work at Park Hall**, from John Lichtenheld

The final work on the main hall renovation is scheduled to start in January 2022.

We do not have a final start date at this time, but anticipate that it will begin within the first couple of weeks of the new year.

As Michael explained in the last newsletter, we do not as yet have the final price on the work, but given the preliminary estimates, we feel that Michaels fund raising efforts will be adequate to cover the final cost.

There will be three major components of the work. The first will be the installation of scaffolding which will allow the contractor access the whole ceiling. This will include the stage area on the north as well as well as the balcony area on the south. We anticipate that we will not have to move all the chairs and pianos since the contractor routinely works on church projects that have fixed pews.

The second part of the work will be plaster restoration. The contractor will glue/screw any loose plaster sections to the lath backing, add fiberglass reinforcement sheets over cracked plaster sections, and skim coat a new layer of plaster over the entire ceiling. This portion of the project will probably take the longest depending on the number of workers available.

Once the plaster work is completed and allowed to dry (several days to a week depending on the humidity), the final component of the work will be painting the ceiling. This will included painting the entire ceiling with a base coat and then reapplying the stencil work that now borders the ceiling perimeter.

The restoration investigation the contractor conducted in 2020 to determine the original color palette of the walls and cornice, did not include the ceiling. The colors are more limited on the ceiling pattern and are not nearly as extensive as the cornice, but they do contain similar colors. That will be verified once the restoration work begins.

Once we have a final contract and start date, we will provide an update on our finances and the work schedule.

Our programs will be on **Zoom only, after January 9**. Programs will return in person in March, as allowed by health advisories.

Thanks to member **Grace Vosen** for sharing one of her latest blog entries:

I recently walked into a local restaurant and was greeted by five employees shouting my name. Cheers jokes aside, it felt wonderful to be both recognized and welcomed. I know how much effort it takes to process the hundreds of faces encountered in customer service, especially during busy hours — let alone develop a rapport with them. And their kindness was the real deal, not tied to my status as a customer. I felt like I belonged there.

This is the kind of familiarity I've been striving for since I moved to Spring Green earlier this year. While it's not the deepest of connections, it feels good to visit a place so often that people know my name (and what I drink and eat). It says something about the town and the people in it that these things happen at all.

Perhaps the most striking, yet understated, example of this is our post office. After months of getting my mail there, I realized that the clerks now know me by name and my box number by heart. Again, I don't see myself being this thoughtful in their position. What's more, it turns out that one woman remembers the first time I stopped in to set up my PO box — before I was even an official community member.

True, it's partly a function of size and the fact that many people who live in this community also work here. But I don't think my case is unusual. We make an effort to know one another here, whether or not it's our goal to become known. I feel welcomed, and welcome.

**How to join our Zoom Sunday Programs.** Please use the following steps to join each and every one of our Zoom programs. We will use this simple method for **every Zoom meeting**. You should have success by following the steps below each time.

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.

Instructions to join the meeting by telephone are on this same web page.

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](http://FreeCongregation.org) our website homepage

Other Useful Links:

[Ununsubscribe 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.