



From the Administrator,

Welcome to the newsletter for the 15th of October 2020. We have contributions from Members and Friends which I hope you find useful. 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

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

Date	Program	Speaker	Topic
Oct 18	168th Founders Day	Matt Rothschild	Gerrymandering in Wisconsin
Oct 25	Child Ed & UU Program	Rob Brink	TBA
Nov 1	Spiritual Roundtable	Nick Schweitzer	Remembrance of the Dead
Nov 8	Child Ed & UU Program	Pema Antoniotti	TBA
Nov 15	Free Thought Forum	Abby Swetz	TBA

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.

Notes and Events from/for Members, Friends and Community

The Board of Directors of the Free Congregation will meet on November 8, as usual on the second Sunday, immediately following the program. This meeting will take place on Zoom. If you have an issue for us to address, please email Nick Schweitzer, President of the Board at jnschweitzer@gmail.com so that it may be added to the agenda.

News from our Board. Please welcome this column from Susan Larkin, Member of the Board of Directors.

I miss seeing you all so much. Especially the chatty gatherings between the coffee pot and the treat table! It is wonderful that we can meet by Zoom each week, but it is just not the same. And with the climbing Coronavirus cases in Wisconsin it is not feasible to begin a plan to open Park Hall.

So, where to start.

Walls Restoration Project

A wedding cancellation has allowed our Architect and Plaster Contractor to begin work on the walls on Wednesday, October 28. The old wall covering will be removed, the plaster repaired and the whole thing repainted. The concert, a fundraiser, so generously provided by Trevor Stephenson, Pianoforte, and Soprano Morgan Balfour, brought in \$1,160 in donations. These donations will be matched by an anonymous donor. Any donations under \$1,000 that we receive for the Restoration project will be matched up to the remaining amount of the matching grant, \$8,840. [Those of you who missed this concert, will have another chance to donate to our Restoration Fund and receive permission to view this private concert video. More information soon. Watch the Restoration Projects tab on our website: Fritz]

Local Minority Business Outreach Initiative

Not long after the Black Lives Matter roundtable, the Board decided to reach out to minority owned businesses in our area. We intend to showcase one or two businesses in our newsletter, which will include pictures and descriptions. We hope this introduction will pique your interest and persuade you to perhaps patronize these businesses (in a masked and safe distanced way, of course).

Religious Education for Children

The RE program is up and running. The class is small, but very enthusiastic. They meet on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at 9:30 a.m. and finish up just before the regularly scheduled Unitarian Universalist style programs. They are learning about life cycles and habitats! Teachers Susie Tatone and Eleanor Chiquoine have developed their curriculum following the UU Seven Principles.

You do not have to be a member to introduce your children or grandchildren to this class and there is no fee for joining. Please spread the news. Call either Susie Tatone (608-370-3692) or Eleanor Chiquoine (608-524-2478) to join.

And now some miscellaneous

As always, we need volunteers, specifically for the Personnel and Welcoming Committees. Let me know if you are interested (larkinarts@gmail.com). The Personnel Committee should meet every six months to provide ongoing support and reviews to our two employees.

Though there is no need for volunteers to greet our drop-ins and visitors at this time, but Welcome Committee members could make contacts to our shut-ins and those who don't have decent cable/Wi-fi service to join us on Sundays.

Not to be missed:

October 18, 2020, is our 168th Founder’s Day. Those of you who have been members for a while will remember Matt Rothschild of the Center for Democracy. He was still on the staff of the Progressive Magazine at that time. He is a knowledgeable and dynamic speaker. His topic is Why We Need to Ban Gerrymandering in Wis.

November 15: I will not get too far ahead on the schedule, but a former Associate Speaker of ours is returning to present a program on November 15. I hope you can join us on Zoom to hear Abby Swetz. Topic to be determined.

That’s all folks! We encourage you to contribute to our newsletter. Send a picture, a poem, a joke, a description of your life in the time of coronavirus, a joy or a concern. There is not enough time during our meetings to share all we would like. Let’s make this a public forum.

Best, Susan Larkin

The **Outreach Working Group** has reported its recommendations for this year’s **Mission in Motion** grants. The Group’s goal is to support local efforts working with people/families experiencing stress due to COVID and economy. At its October 11 meeting, our Board has approved the following gifts:

Baraboo Area Homeless Shelter	\$1000
Renewal Unlimited	\$500
Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry	\$750
Sauk Prairie School District % Susan Baumann	\$750
Sauk Prairie Area Literacy Council	250
Summer Outdoor Adventure Club	\$250
Good Neighbor Clinic	\$250
<u>Kid’s Ranch</u>	<u>\$250</u>
Total grants	\$4000



Above: Trevor Stephenson, director of Madison Bach Musicians and fortepianist, left, and Morgan Balfour, Australian award winning soprano, right, led a Zoom Q&A discussion on October 9 at the FCSC’s Park Hall. The discussion supported the artists’ fundraising concert for our Park Hall Walls Restoration Project. Although the donation deadline has passed, please visit our website if you would like to add your donation and view this wonderful concert. Viewing is available exclusively to Walls Restoration Project Donors.

Don't miss our **Free Thought Forum this Sunday**. Matt Rothschild will be our special guest speaker on **Sunday, October 18, at 10:10 a.m.** Matt's will address restoring free thought to Wisconsin politics. Below is an excerpt of Matt's article from our October 1 newsletter. The full article is available at [View our Newsletters](#) or on the Newsletter tab of our website: FreeCongregation.org.

Why We Need to Ban Gerrymandering in Wis.

By Matt Rothschild

I'm looking forward to speaking with members of the Free Congregation on the morning of Oct. 18. I hope you can make it.

I'll be talking about why we need to ban gerrymandering in Wisconsin.

It's pretty simple: As Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg put it back in 2015: "Partisan gerrymanders are incompatible with democratic principles." She understood that gerrymandering is a tool to "subordinate adherents of one political party and entrench a rival party in power."

I look forward to seeing you, and to answering any questions you might have.

Matt Rothschild is the executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

Here's a link to the [Ban Gerrymandering Toolkit](#) Matt helped put together.

This Free Thought Forum will be on Zoom and is **open to the public**. We hope you will spread the word to your family and friends. Zoom instructions are on the first page of this newsletter.

The **Spiritual Roundtable** discussion topic for **November 1** will be **Remembrance of the Dead** introduced by Brianne Ravenwolf. Bri and Susie and Nick want you to be aware of some celebrations that will be taking place on that weekend that you might want to participate in. Go to [Circle Sanctuary / Samhain](#) to check out the pagan celebration that will be held online on the Oct. 30-31. Also go to [Day of the Dead](#) to see what the **Freethought Society** is planning on Nov. 1.

The **Aging & Disability Resource Center** is currently in need of **Meals on Wheels Volunteers in Sauk Prairie**. Home delivered meal routes start at the **Sauk Prairie Community Center at 11:00 am Monday-Friday** and typically take under an hour. Meals on Wheels Volunteers have the option to be reimbursed for their mileage if they so choose. Please contact Brianna Wipperfurth to volunteer or more information: (608) 355-3289, brianna.wipperfurth@saukcountywi.gov.

The **Sauk Prairie Conservation Alliance** will host a **Volunteer Work Day** at Badger on **Saturday, October 24 from 9 a.m. to noon**. Volunteers will continue clearing brush along the Great Sauk Trail Prairie Corridor in order to prepare the site for prairie planting in the future. **Meet at the entrance to Badger**, at the Badger Museum parking lot (across from Citgo Station on Hwy 12, between Sauk City and Baraboo) **at 8:45 a.m.** to discuss the morning's work and to get ready to caravan to our work site. Wear clothes suitable for the weather (long pants and layers), good shoes or boots and work gloves. SPCA will provide tools, water and snacks.

Is it your sense that there is a **civility deficiency out there?** And that **it's affecting your heart?** Join **UW-Madison Extension educators** and **Sauk County Institute of Leadership (SCIL) facilitators Jenny Erickson** and **Morgan McArthur** as they lead a program that examines civility and critical conversations in a refreshing and engaging way. The **event is free** and open to anyone that would like strategies to better navigate difficult conversations. **Monday, October 26, 1:00 p.m.-2:30p.m.**, open on Zoom. Please register by visiting go.uwplatt.edu/civility

Warning! Construction Zone Ahead! Park Hall Walls Restoration starts **Wednesday, October 28**, with work by **Artisan Plastering, LLC**. Our aged and yellowed wall panels will be removed and new plaster will be applied. No entry to the upstairs hall will be allowed during this work. Please contact Fritz if you plan to visit.

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.

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