



From the Administrator,

Welcome to the newsletter for the **Fifteenth of July**. You will find contributions from **Dave Siegfried, Nick Schweitzer, Mary Sue Reutebuch, Phil Haslanger, family of Michael Whaley, Gil Williams and Eleanor Chiquoine**. I hope 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**

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

Date	Program	Speaker	Topic
July 19	Free Thought Forum	Phil Haslanger	Crossing Racial Lines
July 26	Joint Program & Potluck	Mary Sue Reutebuch	Information, Knowledge, and Wisdom
Aug 2	Spiritual Roundtable	All attending	

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).



The Prairie Garden at Park Hall, July 12, 2026 photo by Eleanor Chiquoine

Board of Directors Meeting

The **Board** of the Free Congregation will meet on **August 9 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](#) so that it may be added to the agenda.

Free Thought Forum July 19 - Crossing Racial Lines

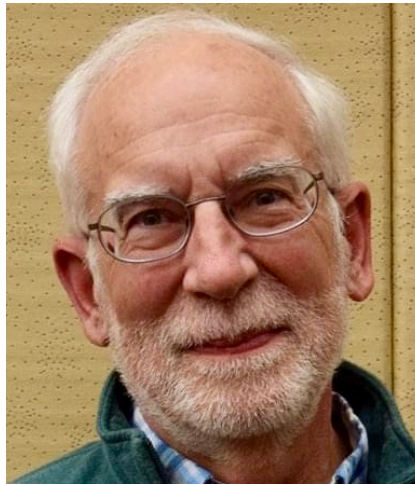
Please join us for July's **Free Thought Forum** with guest speaker **Phil Haslanger, Sunday, July 19, 10:10 a.m. at Park Hall and on Zoom** (see last page information). Childcare is provided.

Crossing Racial Lines from Phil Haslanger

As concerned as we might be about the racial divisions that have long been part of our society, it is hard to find ways to cross those lines, especially when we live in areas that are overwhelmingly white. I have been seeking ways to do that for much of my life (hint – I am now 77 years old).

Fortunately, I have not had to do that alone. I have had guides and mentors along the way who helped. And I still keep working on it. Most of my efforts have been around black and white connections, but in an area like Sauk County, the largest ethnic group is Hispanic, which often adds the additional challenge of language barriers as well as worries about documentation. I have struggled with that in Madison as well.

I hope that on July 19, we can explore this together, not to find the magic answer to all the divides that exist, but perhaps to open up a few doors we can walk



through. I am looking forward to being with you.

Rev. Phil Haslanger has had careers in Madison in both journalism and ministry. He worked at **The Capital Times** for 34 years, then served as pastor at **Memorial United Church of Christ** in Fitchburg for a decade. Now he is deeply involved in the life of **Christ Presbyterian Church** in Madison as a volunteer.

In recent years, he has served on the board of **JustDane**, an organization that works with formerly incarcerated people. He also is a volunteer with the **Prison Ministry Project**, helping with their restorative justice program. In addition, he chairs the advisory board of the **Center for Journalism Ethics** and has chaired the advisory council of the **Religion News Service**.

He and his wife, Ellen Reuter, live in Fitchburg and their children and grandchildren are scattered across the country.

What I Believe Now, July 27, 6:30 p.m. on Zoom

The Adult Ed discussion group, **What I Believe Now**, will meet **on Zoom** as usual on the fourth **Monday, July 27**, at **6:30 p.m.** The topic will be: **Amathia: Willful Ignorance, Intelligent Stupidity**. 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.

Celebration of Life for Michael Whaley August 2, 2 p.m., Park Hall

Please join us to share memories of Michael and spend time together. There will be cold drinks, food from Red Barn Catering, and live music from **Doug Brown and friends**. Children are welcome; please leave your dogs at home. We will gather inside Park Hall for stories and memories, and then spend the rest of the afternoon outside, weather permitting. [Click for Michael's obituary](#). Please assist the preparation for this event by clicking [RSVP yes, regrets, or maybe](#).

Susan Larkin

Beloved member, wife of member John Rigby, Susan Larkin passed away on July 5, 2026. Before serving as our Board member and President, Susan was our Administrator until 2018. Information about the celebration of her life will be printed here as it becomes available.

UU Women's Connection Summer Retreat, August 14-16

A weekend retreat at Ronora Lodge and Retreat Center, in Watervliet, Michigan. Information at [This Link](#). Cut off date is August 10. [Register at this link](#). Home page [UU Women's Connection](#)

Facilities Coordinator Report **July 12, 2026 - Christine Meiners**

PAST/ONGOING EVENTS

Bi-Monthly - Wednesdays- Mindfulness sessions - Diane Matzke- 6:30-7:30 pm

June 14th - Indivisible Sauk Prairie event 'Rise up and Sing Out Watch Party for the First Amendment' and potluck

FUTURE SCHEDULED EVENTS

Aug 2nd - Celebration of Life - Michael Whaley (2 - 5pm)

September 26, 2026 3:00pm - Wedding ceremony with rehearsal - Outdoor ceremony with cocktail hour indoor following. Rehearsal the day before outdoor only.

September 21st - 19th- M-TH SPTG will be holding rehearsals for their November play Miracle on 34th St. The performances will be held at the River Arts Center.

CONTINUED Facilities Coordinator Report

Wednesday, October 7 – Monday, October 12, 2026 - WormFarm Institute: A Decomposium, using both Park Hall space and Cemetery location

Family Gathering Rentals for this fall:

November 26, 2026	December 12, 2026
December 13, 2026	December 19, 2026

Kitchen Projects for this Fall

We are in need of crew of volunteer kitchies. We plan to work with the Worm Farm Institute for the Decomposium the weekend of Oct 7-10. We will use an earthen oven and do 2 projects.

We will also produce The Winter Solstice Dinner on Dec 20. As much of the ingredients will be locally sourced with processing in our kitchen.

Date	Project
Late Aug.	Pizza Sauce Sunday, cutting and processing local tomatoes into pizza sauce, canning the product.
Early Sept.	Sauerkraut Sunday, chopping and fermenting cabbage for Winter Solstice Dinner.
Oct 8?	Artful Baking with stone milled flour
Oct 9?	All Local Pizza dinner
Oct??	Founder's Day Potluck, a good chance to try some cooking.
Mid Dec.	Pie workshop, dessert for solstice dinner
Dec 19	Get ready day with lunch
Dec 20	Cook and serve dinner.

Contact Gilbert Williams to help, (608) 574-6656

Tentative Winter Solstice dinner menu; roast pork, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, veggie medley, winter salad and pie for dessert.

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.