

FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS



Newsletter of the
First
Unitarian Church
Alton, Illinois



Windows on the west side of sanctuary

www.firstuualton.org

Rev. Khleber Van Zandt, Minister

April 2013

Worship Services at 9:30 am and 11:00 am

April 7, 2013

-- Stewardship Sunday --
"Welcome Home"
Rev. Khleber Van Zandt

As we kick off our annual pledge drive this year, we face many high hurdles on a very steep climb. It is truly up to us to face the hurdles and decide whether this "house that love built" will continue to fulfill its mission to inspire lives of love and service and justice for all.

Liturgist: Paul Fischer

April 14, 2013

"Room at the Tomb"
Rev. Khleber Van Zandt

When visiting churches in Rome, one comes across any number of gravesites within those baroque sanctuaries. It is surprising who you can find buried there. Herewith, a slideshow and travelogue of a recent visit to Italy.

Liturgist: Char McAllister

April 21, 2013

"Inviting Demons"
Rev. Khleber Van Zandt

A lot of days don't go as well as they might, and it can often seem as if the problem resides inside of ourselves. Perhaps we ought to try inviting our demons to tea.

Liturgist: Wayne Politsch

April 28, 2013

Speaker and Sermon Topic to be Announced

Liturgist: Ethel Potts

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Send Newsletter items by the 15th of each month to the newsletter editor,

Mary Johnson – mejohanson@mindspring.com
and also to Becky Green in the church office
church@firstuualton.org

Church phone: 618-462-2462
Mail: PO Box 494, Alton IL 62002

Adult Religious Education (ARE)

Sessions at 9:30 am and 11 am
Childcare Available

At 9:30 am

April 7 – Tracey Howe-Koch

The Bible.

Questions, please contact Tracey Howe-Koch.

April 14 – Dr. Ron Glossop

American Philosophy. Our 8th session will focus on neo-pragmatist philosopher Richard Rorty (1931-2007). Rorty's thought shifted from a concern about what is eternally true to an evolutionary Darwinian-Deweyan secular pragmatism and a concern about which philosophical ideas promote a more tolerant and open society.

April 21 – Eric Johnson

Theology Funshop.

April 28 – Michelle Bryant Barbeau

Earth-based Spirituality.

At 11:00 am

April – Each Sunday

Cheryle Tucker – Spirit in Practice.

Spirit in Practice was created to help Unitarian Universalists develop regular disciplines, or practices, of the spirit—practices that help them connect with the sacred ground of their being, however they understand it.

Contact Rev. Khleber Van Zandt

Email: kvanzandt@uuma.org

Cell Phone:

Missouri – 314-223-0551

Illinois – 618-520-0567

A First Glance



Linda and I attended an extended-family wedding in New Orleans recently that was far beyond anything either of us had ever experienced before. In the Grand Ballroom of the fanciest old hotel in the French Quarter, everything about the event was way over the top. Fun enough, for sure, though the words “conspicuous consumption” came to mind over and over again.

Somewhere about mid-evening, when I could barely hear because the band had been blasting for hours, a woman came to our table and sat down next to us. I tried to say hello, but found I had no voice left, either, from trying to talk over the band. As it turned out, I didn't need to say much, because the woman had her own story to tell. She said the number of homeless-looking people outside the big doors of the hotel on the streets of New Orleans reminded her of a story her father told her long ago.

“My father told me when I was a little girl that he'd visited New Orleans for a business conference, where he saw a poor little boy tap-dancing in the street. The boy was a good enough performer that he drew a crowd, and everybody, including my dad and all his co-workers, put money in the little boy's cup.

“After dancing in the street for awhile, the boy picked up his cup – which was stuffed with huge wads of cash by now – waved to the crowd with a cocky smile, slipped into a waiting limousine, and vanished into the night counting his big roll.”

Then came the moral of her father's supposedly first-hand account. She told us, “Almost all of those people you see on the street make a lot more than you and I think they do. They don't want us to know how much they make, because they can make \$300 a day for doing nothing! So don't you go feeling sorry for any of those people. It's not as bad for them as they make it look like.”

After sharing this bit of folk wisdom with her two stunned listeners, she disappeared back onto the dance floor among a whirr of other well-healed and finely attired wedding guests.

Feeling even more deaf and dumb than usual after she left, I wondered at the willful blindness of the rich toward the rest of the world. I wondered at the stories some people need to tell themselves to be able to sleep at night.

And I wondered at something else: how incredibly important it is for those of us with an alternative voice to put a more truthful story out there for anyone with ears to hear.

It seems to me that's one of the reasons our church exists - to offer the alternative stories that correct the misperceptions and even the outright lies told by segments of our culture.

May you be blessed with eyes to see and ears to hear,
And may your voice remain strong through it all,

Khleber



Notes from the Board Sandy Shaner, Newsletter Liaison

By now we hope that everyone in the conversation knows about the current year's financial shortfall, either by attending the March 10 congregational meeting or by reading a letter sent to everyone we believed had not attended. If you don't know about this issue, please call or e-mail either a Board member, Khleber, or the church office and they will get information to you.

After learning about the history and current status of an almost \$30,000 shortfall, we also hope that you have responded by increasing your pledge as much as you can for the current fiscal year. A church can only survive and prosper when we bond and commit to each other to provide the necessary support. As this is written, we sincerely hope that additional funds are pledged by March 17 so that we can avoid cutting programs or staff. With your help, next month's update will be one of celebration instead of uncertainty and worry.

LETTER FOR THOSE WHO MISSED THE FINANCIAL MEETING

On Sunday, March 10, 2013, the Board of Trustees called a meeting of the congregation to discuss our current financial situation. Following is a synopsis of that meeting:

The Board explained to those present that we project a budgetary shortfall of approximately \$30,000 by the end of this fiscal year. Budgetary shortfalls are not new for our congregation; we began the 2010/11 fiscal year with a \$3,593.25 shortfall, and began the 2011/12 fiscal year with a \$10,593.66 shortfall. At the beginning of this 2012/13 fiscal year, our budget carried a cumulative shortfall of \$26,149.07 from all years past.

How, then, have we been paying our bills and staff salaries when our income is so much less than expenses? Answer: a very generous member of this congregation, Davona Paul, died in May of 2009, and left the church an undesignated bequest of approximately \$50,000. At that time, the then-current Board deposited 10% (or \$5,000) of Davona's bequest directly into the Endowment Fund. The remaining \$45,000 has been supporting our programming and budgetary shortfalls ever since. With deep gratitude, we continue to remember Davona Paul's generosity.

What have we done to ensure that we have a current and continuing view of our income and expenses going forward?

- Through a donation of \$2,000 from Khleber, the Board engaged Kelley Green of Financial Housekeepers to establish and manage an online financial system for the church using QuickBooks and Church Help Mate that includes an automated payroll system.
- Our Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers have implemented a procedure to have at least two people do the initial count of Sunday offerings.
- Becky Green, our Administrative Assistant then double-checks those deposits and inputs them into the system.
- Our Treasurer then double-checks Becky's work and posts it into the system.
- Becky scans all bills and sends them to Kelley who, after approval by the Treasurer, pays them using online banking.

But today, what can we do about the projected shortfall for this fiscal year? The Board has reviewed the budget and believes that problem to be one of revenue more than one of expenses. Any move to reduce expenses would require cutting entire programs and/or laying off staff; either action, we believe, would make it difficult if not impossible to continue to carry out our congregational mission. As a result, we wish first to address the need for additional revenue. **We are asking you to support the mission of the church by giving what you can "OVER AND ABOVE" paying your pledge for this year in full. If you received an "Over and Above" donation card please fill it out and return it to any board member. You can also mail your card to the church. If you did not receive an "OVER AND ABOVE" card please contact the church office and you will be sent one.**

After the donation cards are returned we will update the congregation as soon as possible on possible further actions.

We need and appreciate anything you can do to be part of the solution to this shortfall. If you have any questions about the situation or plans to resolve it, please feel free to contact any member of the Board of Trustees.

The list of Board members is on the next page.

**Your Church Board
Jan – June 2013**

President	Sayer Johnson
President Elect	Jennifer Timpe
Past President	Cheryl Tucker
Secretary	Sarah Lazarz
Treasurer	Michelle Bryant- Barbeau
Trustee	Kelly Crone-Willis
Trustee	Sandy Shaner
Youth Rep.	Lily Tade

Board meetings are the 2nd Monday each month at 7 pm and are open to the church members.

Chalice Circles



RENEGADE WOMEN'S CHALICE

CIRCLE

Every 3rd Saturday.

Saturday, APRIL 20 at from noon to 2 p.m. at church.

We had a great presentation by Gayle Borman on March 17. Her presentation generated so much discussion that we requested the she continue the presentation at April's meeting. She inspired some of us to buy the book that was the basis for her presentation. The title is *"The Tools: Transform Your Problem in Courage, Confidence, and Creativity"* by Phil Stutz and Harry Michels, published in 2012. If you missed March's meeting, we will recap for you before Gayle continues her presentation. You do not need to buy the book to come. Contact the facilitator Dee Evans zorn227@fastmail.fm for further information.

PARENTS SEEKING PEACE CHALICE CIRCLE

Every 3rd Sunday.

Sunday, APRIL 21 from 12:15 to 1:30 pm in Emerson Place at Church.

Contact: Diane Thompson dianeelizabeththompson@gmail.com or Sayer Johnson sayerjohnson@gmail.com.

THE GLBT CHALICE CIRCLE

Every 3rd Sunday

Sunday, APRIL 21 at 12:15 pm in the 7th grade classroom downstairs at Church.

Contact Staci Bratten sabrat10@gmail.com.



4th Saturday Lunch April 27 – 11:30 a.m.

An individual or group host is needed for April's lunch. Would you, or a group you are involved with in the

church, be willing to host this month's lunch?

Details about the lunch will be available at church, on UU Friends, and through *"This Week at Church"* so watch for more information.

Trish Botsko, our current 4th Saturday Lunch coordinator, will be moving to California as soon as school is out. One or more volunteers are needed to coordinate these lunches and find individuals or groups within the church who would like to choose a month to put on the lunch.

Let's not let this much needed and much enjoyed community service fall by the wayside. Contact Trish trishbotsko@yahoo.com for further information about lunch coordination.



UU Family Campfest @ Pere Marquette

**Mark your calendars
July 5 – 11**

More details later.

Interest Groups

**Fifty-Plus (50+) Forum -
First Saturday of every month
April 6, 2013
10:30 – noon at church.**



We'll share information about our favorite authors.

Spiral Scouts – Every SUNDAY from 1 to 3 pm.



This program for children and youth includes interpersonal skills, traditional woodland lore, camping, and outdoor living skills. Please use this email (amy9637@gmail.com) and our facebook ([facebook.com/riverdragonspiralscouts](https://www.facebook.com/riverdragonspiralscouts)), as

it will give updated information about what we are, upcoming events and what is going on in our meetings.

Amy Eichen

**NO Anna Ds in April –
The next meeting will be May 2**



Anna D's **will not meet in April** due to the two meetings we had in March.

May 2nd will be the next meeting. Ginger McCall is hosting the meeting at Meridian Gardens. She will need to know if you are planning to attend by Monday, April 29. Her email is vjmccall@empowering.com. You will need to bring cash for payments as the restaurant there does not accept credit or debit cards. The address is 101 Evergreen Lane in Glen Carbon. Take highway 157 to Meridian Rd. Go to Auerbach (first street on the right), turn tight and then left onto Evergreen which is the first street on the left. Turn right into the parking lot.



FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

Please don't forget to bring non-perishable food donations for the Alton Food Pantry. The collection receptacle is in the RE entrance foyer under the coat rack.



The ROMEOS – Retired Old Men Eating Out – will meet on Thursday, April 11 at 11:30 am at the Best Buffet at 615 Wesley, Drive in Wood River IL. Contact **Dick Blanton** dickb65@sbcglobal.net for further details. All men in our church are invited!



**Worship Associates
TUESDAY, April 2
7:00 to 8:30 pm**

The discussion topic for this month's meeting is the role of "FRAMEWORK" in the worship service.

Anyone interested in "worshipful things" – i.e., things of worth, is invited to come to this gathering.

For more information contact **Khleber Van Zandt**
kvanzandt@uuma.org.

**Your ATTENTION is Needed to
Maintain the Church Building**



Join us on the third Saturday of each month from 9:00 am to noon for Building and Grounds Work Days. If you notice something in the church building that needs attention or repair, please contact our Building Co-Chair, **Lee Suarez** at Lenoresuarez12@yahoo.com or **618-535-9996**.

If you notice something around the church grounds that needs attention or repair, please contact our Grounds Co-Chair, **Bob Larson** at l Larsonlaw@gmail.com or **618-462-0901**.

UUA General Assembly – Louisville KY

June 19 – 23, 2013

Are YOU going? Have YOU registered?

<http://www.uua.org/ga>

*Getting to Know You –
Biographies of two of our New Members*

Lee Suarez & Char McAllister

Born and raised several hundred miles apart – Lee is from the inner city of Chicago and Char is from a Central Illinois farm.

Lee did her under and graduate work at SIU-C & SIU-E with degrees in Fine Arts, Education, & Curriculum & Administration. Char graduated from Illinois State University in Social Work/Political Science and spent many summers working in East St. Louis at Lessie Bates Neighborhood House.

Lee spent her time in art classes and playing sports, while Char spent her efforts in anti-war activities, feminists' issues and social justice issues. Char's adventures also took her to several migrant fields and living in Belize for several months. Eventually Char returned to Illinois where she worked for the Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois in Glen Carbon, in Membership & Fund Development. She retired in 2007 after 26 years. Since retirement, she has worked at The Greenery in Godfrey and Riverbend Head Start & Family Services as an Early Head Start Case Manager in Granite City.

Lee stayed a "million miles" from migrant fields. She taught physical education and art classes at a Chicago High School for 4 years. After that she returned to Southern Illinois to take a position at Principia College. After 39 years at Principia, Lee retired in 2008 as a Professor Emeritus.

She served as a Professor of Sports Management, as a coach in numerous sports and Athletic Director of 17 sports for men and women. In May 2013, Lee will be inducted into the Division III Conference NCAA Hall of Fame. Lee has been the only female and ethnic minority to hold the above roles at Principia College.

Lee and Char have lived in Jersey County for over 30 years and have established a broad interest of hobbies: volunteering in our community at various activities, traveling, camping, gardening, attending women's music festivals and jet skiing.

They have been active in this UU Church for 2 years, serving on the Social Justice Committee, Building & Grounds Committee, and they are both active in the 4th Sat. lunch for community members in need.

Char is also very active on the Welcome Team serving as and recruiting greeters.

"Want to know more about us? Let's have coffee," say Char and Lee.

Lay Caring Ministry

Below is the current list of members of the **Caring Ministries Committee**. You may always contact one of them in time of illness, loss, crisis, or other need. Keep this list of contact people available in case you or your family is in need of pastoral support.

Amy Andrews ~ ajrn07@gmail.com

Brian Bennett ~ bben990703@hotmail.com

Chrissie Blount ~ cchapman@lc.edu

Marcia Custer ~ mcuster@siue.edu

Melody Hardman ~ nberg1240@yahoo.com

Sharon Johnson ~ sharonjohnsonmsw@gmail.com

Kathleen McKeever ~ mckeeverjim@sbcglobal.net

Catherine Nofles ~ cnofles@gmail.com

Sabrina Trupia ~ strupia@gmail.com (Chair)

Khleber Van Zandt
314-223-0551(MO)
618-520-0567 (IL)
kvanzandt@uuma.org

The Caring Ministries Committee is ready to welcome several more members! If you are interested in engaging in conversations with other church friends and getting to know them on a deeper level, please consider joining our group! Please contact Sabrina Trupia at strupia@gmail.com.



April Birthdays

Most people enjoy getting a card, email, or phone call on their birthday. Below is the list we have of church members and friends celebrating birthdays this month. If you do not think the church office has your birthday on file, please contact Becky Green at church@firstuualton.org and give her that information.

- 4/02 Michelle Bryant Barbeau
- 4/03 Debby Lovell
- 4/04 Maggie McCarthy, (13)
- 4/05 David Wiseman
- 4/06 Cathy Tade
- 4/10 Don Allen
- 4/12 Lily Tarbell, (19)
- 4/14 Ethan Grippi, (9)
- 4/14 Brynda McCoy
- 4/16 Delores Ele
- 4/16 Dennie Lightle Jr., (14)
- 4/20 Ian Herndon, (18)
- 4/22 Linda Walker
- 4/23 Gayle Borman
- 4/27 Lucas Koch, (9)
- 4/27 Virginia McCall
- 4/28 Sophia Hull, (5)
- 4/29 Bennett Hershey, (5)
- 4/29 Catherine Hershey, (5)

Unitarian Universalist Association Gets New Headquarters

The UUA will be moving its headquarters from Beacon Hill to Boston’s Innovation District. The new address is 24 Farnsworth Street. The Beacon Hill building had accessibility issues, staff spread out over 16 floors, inadequate meeting space, and other issues facing a modern workplace. It was determined that to renovate would be financially prohibitive. The UUA will be sharing information on its website and on [visit our new building blog](#) to keep everyone up-to-date on the move. Read more at <http://www.uua.org/headquarters>.



April RE Program News & Notes

Whitewashing the Fence

“Hello, old chap, you got to teach, hey?”
 I wheeled suddenly and said: “Why, it's you. I warn't noticing.”
 “Say — I'm going in a-swimming, I am. Don't you wish you could? But of course you'd druther *work* — wouldn't you? Course you would!”
 So I contemplated my interlocutor a bit, and said: “What do you call work?”
 “Why, teaching — ain't that work?”
 So, I resumed my teaching, and answered carelessly: “Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain't. All I know, is, it suits me.”
 “Oh come, now, you don't mean to let on that you like it?”
 “Like it? Well, I don't see why I oughtn't to like it. Does a body get a chance to teach like this every day?” That put the thing in a new light.
 “Say, Steven, let *me* teach a little.”
 “No — no — I reckon it wouldn't hardly do. You see, Rev Khleber, he’s awful particular about our kids. Iffen it was just your own kids I wouldn't mind and he wouldn't. But, he's awful particular about *our* kids; it's got to be done very careful; I reckon there ain't one body in a thousand, maybe two thousand, that can do it the way it's got to be done.”
 “No — is that so? Oh come, now — lemme just try. Only just a little — I'd let you, if you was me, Steven.”
 “Well. OK. Deal.” . . . Maybe it’s not such a hollow world after all.

With due apologies to Samuel Clemens. Everybody wins when you whitewash the fence. Consider teaching RE this fall — we’ll start recruiting this month. It pays well and won’t cost you much, except maybe “a piece of blue bottle-glass to look through.” So, ya’ll sign up and we’ll “whitewash the fence” together and this Special Place will be the better for it.

Steven Mead, Director, Religious Education
 314.239.5694 (cell)
dre@firstuualton.org