

FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS



*Newsletter of the
First
Unitarian
Church*

Alton, Illinois
www.firstuualton.org



January 2015

**Rev. Sunshine J. Wolfe,
Pastor**

January Worship Services
January 4 - 10:30 service only;
January 11, 18, 25 - Services at 10:30 am and 1:30 pm

January 4, 2015
“Where I’m From”
Sabrina Trupia

The service will be about some of the aspects of the place I was born and how they have and continue to affect me, including the universal and communicable aspects of my experience.

Liturgist: Peg Flach

January 11, 2015
***“The Future of Religion and
Unitarian Universalism”*** –
with **Rev. Sunshine Wolfe**

Is religion really dying? How will church change in the coming years and will Unitarian Universalism survive the changes? What’s next?

Liturgist: Michelle Bryant Barbeau

January 18, 2015
“30 Days of Love Kickoff Sunday: Ida B. Wells”
with **Rev. Sunshine Wolfe**

This intergenerational service will explore the life and work of Ida B. Wells and how relevant she is to us today.

Liturgist: Robyn Berkley

January 25, 2015
***“30 Days of Love: Soul Repair and the
Veteran Soldier”***
with **Rev. Sunshine Wolfe**

We will explore the impact of moral injury on our soldiers and veterans. Congregations and individuals can help provide support to those who face existential struggles with their values and actions.

Liturgist: Lisa Strangeman

Rev. Sunshine Wolfe's Office Hours

Tuesdays from 4-6 at the BreadCo in Florissant

Fridays from 1-5 at First Unitarian Church of Alton

**Available by phone, e-mail, and appointment
Tuesday to Saturday**

Phone: 317-448-3818

E-mail: swolfe@uuma.org

ADULT RELIGIOUS ENRICHMENT (ARE)

Contact Tracey Howe-Koch if you would like to lead, coordinate or facilitate an ARE class.

January 4 - Dee Evans, facilitator for **“Supporting and Developing each Individual’s Spiritual Path.”**

This discussion group meets at 11:50 am in Emerson Place. Plan to attend Pastor Sunshine’s classes on Jan. 11 and 25.

January 11 at 9:30 am – Ron Glossop – meeting held in Emerson Place.

Our 5th class on "Global Problems of the 21st Century" will discuss the increasing disparity between rich and poor within this country and in the world. Why is this happening? Is capitalism the cause? Is the lack of a democratic world government a factor? What is meant by the terms "leftist" and "rightist"?

January 18 - Two sessions: 9:30 am and 10:30 am
Michelle Bryant Barbeau – Emerson Place
“Meditations from Around the World”

Rev. Sunshine J. Wolfe – **“Inspire Programs”** – Emerson Place

At 11:50 on Sunday twice a month, Rev. Wolfe will offer *Inspire Programs* on a wide array of topics. Inspire Programs will provide opportunities for religious education in spiritual development, justice, countering oppression, spiritual practice, Unitarian Universalist identities, and more. Some programs will require registration and others will be open to all. Each program description will state clearly whether registration is needed. All programs are open to high school age students 14 and over with permission of parents, unless otherwise noted.

January 11th - Race the Power of an Illusion: Part 3

A powerful three part documentary from PBS, Race the Power of an Illusion covers the ways in which race was formed as a concept in the United States. *Part 3 covers the legalization and indoctrination of racial difference into United States culture from the early 1900s to today.* You can learn more about this series and take a short quiz on race at http://www.pbs.org/race/000_General/000_00-Home.htm.

January 25th – Enneagram for Daily Life

This program will go deeper into the Enneagram with a focus on the relationships between the various motivational types. What do wings mean? How do we move towards unhealthy and health? This will be an opportunity to discuss your particular number in more depth. *Prerequisite:* Must have participated in an Enneagram Basics program or receive permission from Rev. Wolfe to attend this program.

Semi-Annual Congregational Business Meeting

Sunday, January 18 at 11:50 am

All members are encouraged to attend.

Non-members are welcome to sit in but only members may vote on issues.

Pastor Sunshine's Column

Living a Legacy

"We are seventh generation." ~John Trudell

We are the future of the generations who previously attended First Unitarian Church of Alton. As such, it is important to be excellent stewards of that legacy. In addition, it is important to remember that we will leave a legacy to those who come after. The Interim Process is designed to guide the congregation through an intentional reflection of who you have been, who you are, and who you would like to become. The answers to these questions will help the Search Committee discern who the best minister will be for the congregation.

In the coming months, a team of members will be updating the history document for the church to include the history of this congregation with Rev. Khleber Van Zandt. The history of this congregation is long, complex, and powerful. The early ministers of this church set a high bar for the congregation to be, in the words of James Luther Adams, "a prophethood of all believers." In other words, to be active agents for justice in the world. Many ministers left the ministry of this church due to threats from both residents of Alton and members of the congregation. The congregation was active in the Civil Rights work of the 1960s. Members of this congregation founded Oasis House. There is much to recommend and lift up this community.

In the next few months, the Board will begin to delineate the process for selecting the Ministerial Search Committee. The Committee will be made up of seven members of the congregation who will dedicate many hours from June 2015 to May 2016 in the service of the legacy - the vision for the future of this congregation. Will you consider serving? Will you offer important feedback to that committee? Will you be involved in shaping the future of this church?

"We are the seventh generation." We are the legacy of this church. Members in the 1970s could not imagine how our church would be today and yet they committed \$20,000 to calling the first minister in decades, Rev. Sylvia Falconer. Just ten years ago, this congregation was not yet a Welcoming Congregation and yet we now have many LGBTQQIAA members. From generation to generation, there has been a commitment to a future that goes beyond what we know and experience today. As we engage in workshops, programs, and discussions about the future of this congregation it will be important to be representatives not just of the constituency that we know today, but also those who have not yet joined us.

So, as we gear up for the search process and continue the difficult work of the interim time, may

you keep before you the lives of those who are to come, the lives of those who made it possible for you to be here today, and may you commit and recommit yourself to the ongoing transformation and legacy of this amazing community. May we bless the world by our words and deeds. May we be open to change and be prepared for the possibilities to come. May it be so.

Rev. Sunshine J. Wolfe

Intercultural Competency: Who Are Our Neighbors?

You are invited to this workshop, where you will learn about the Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. The DMIS posits that we have the ability to learn how to be more interculturally competent--that we go through stages of ability and attitudes, and that we have the ability to increase our abilities. It provides tools for learning in order to advance your competency. The model is about the "differences that make a difference" in every setting--whether that be race, class, culture, gender, sexual orientation, or any other difference that might be key in our interactions.

The training builds on itself, so it is crucial to be able to attend the Friday night, Saturday daytime and Saturday evening components. There will be a pre-workshop reading assignment as well.

When:

January 23-24, 2015

6:30- 9:00 on Friday night and 8:30 - 5:30/7:00- 8:30 on Saturday

Where:

First Unitarian Church, St. Louis, Missouri

Registration fee:

\$30 registration includes snacks, Saturday breakfast & lunch (dinner is on your own). If you need financial assistance to attend, please contact Pastor Sunshine at swolfe@uuma.org.

Facilitated by: Lisa Presley and Ian Evison,
MidAmerica Congregational Life Consultants

For more information and to register: Go to
<http://www.firstuustlouis.org/news/2014/12/5/intercultural-competency-workshop>

Regional Assembly to Explore the New Era of UUism

Join fellow UUs the weekend of April 17-19, in Naperville, Illinois (a western suburb of Chicago) for Regional Assembly 2015. It will be a great chance to be together as one region to explore The New in a New Era of Unitarian Universalism with presentations by two major speakers: the Reverend Rosemary Bray McNatt and the Reverend Dr. Marlin Lavanhar. You can benefit from workshops designed to strengthen your congregation, deepen your social justice work, and enrich you on a personal level.

Come and experience the Regional Business Meeting, good food, and time for meeting new friends and old from congregations across our great Region, culminating with the joy of shared worship and musical celebration on Sunday morning. See

<http://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly>

**MidAmerica Region
Unitarian Universalist Association**
2355 Fairview Ave. #312,
Roseville, MN 55113

Web: <http://midamericauua.org>
Phone: 312-636-9724
Fax: 224-603-2309
Email: midamerica@uua.org

*Central Midwest, Heartland, and Prairie Star
Districts of the
Unitarian Universalist Association
joined together as
MidAmerica Region in July 2013.*

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



Report from the Board Sandy Shaner, Board Secretary

For the second month the Board discussed Pastor Sunshine's "Initial Review and Suggestions" document, focusing on tasks to accomplish during the two-year interim period. One of the first tasks to stand out was the need to update our church history, since that document will be needed during the search process for a settled minister. Anyone who would like to work on that task should contact Board President Sabrina Trupia.

We also completed our discussion of the last few months about establishing a Memorial Fund, separate from the Endowment Fund, with guidelines for its use. (In general the Endowment Fund is designed to acquire and safeguard funds to generate income for the Church over time while the Memorial Fund is a repository for other non-pledge donations which may be used for other purposes.) A copy of the new policy is included in this newsletter and anyone with questions may talk to any Board member.

At Pastor Sunshine's suggestion we have been doing a "group read" of Governance and Ministry by Dan Hotchkiss to deepen our awareness of the issues surrounding church governance and identify suggestions in that text which we want to pursue. This month we finished the chapter on Board Leadership with the sections on leading by policy. While we have worked the past few years on policies and procedures, the book makes it clear that we have much work yet to do in order to create a framework to support our future. Following that discussion we authorized a Policies & Procedures Drafting Team consisting of Sandy Shaner, whoever wants to help with the effort, and Pastor Sunshine as an ex-officio member.

We also agreed that we would hold our semi-annual congregational meeting on January 18 (with January 25 as a snow date if needed) and discussed potential agenda items. In addition to regular reports, Board President, Sabrina, will discuss the current committee structure and explain proposed changes which we believe will improve our effectiveness in working together to support the Church mission. No action will be needed at that meeting, and we anticipate discussion of the structure by members over the next few months.

As always, members are welcome to attend Board meetings, and the next meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2015.

Sandy Shaner
Board Secretary

The Board now meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month @ 7 pm.

**Your Church Board
July 2014 – June 2015**

President	Sabrina Trupia
President Elect	Debby Lovell
Past President	Kelly Crone-Willis
Secretary	Sandy Shaner
Treasurer	Michelle Bryant- Barbeau
Trustee	Bob Larson
Trustee	Paul Fischer
Youth Rep.	Vacant

Lay Caring Ministry

Below is the list of members of the **Caring Ministries Team**. **Marcia Custer** is the Coordinator. You may always contact a Team member 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.

Kathryn Chapman paintedgeatfarm@yahoo.com

Marcia Custer mcuster@siue.edu

Claudia Harju dachsandcats@gmail.com

Kathleen McKeever mckeeverjim@sbcglobal.net

Ethel Potts ethel.h.potts@gmail.com

Donna Young donnae47@gmail.com

Congregational Covenant Workshop March 14th!

Mark your calendar for the Congregational Covenant Creation Workshop on Saturday, March 14th from 10 am to 4 pm



We do not have a creed, but we do understand the value of having shared standards for how we wish to treat others and be treated. This will be a day of talking about values and what matters most to us. Childcare will be provided and will include children and youth providing their input into the covenant. Youth ages 14 and older are encouraged to attend the Workshop. This will be a great opportunity to spend time with people you care about and influence the future of this community. We hope to see you there!

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 Marcia Custer at mcuster@siue.edu for more information.

Church Potluck Lunch January 4 11:45 am



Our monthly fellowship potluck lunches are held on the 1st Sunday. Everyone is invited to bring a dish to share. This is an all-church event so everyone should plan to participate in setting up and cleaning up, as well as in the sharing of food and conversation.



Sunday Announcements

If you have an announcement to be made during worship services, please either write it in the notebook provided at church or email Pastor Sunshine swolfe@uuma.org with that announcement. The liturgist will share your announcement with the congregation.

A Social Justice Opportunity for High School Youth -



Rev. Victoria Safford places an offering at the No More Deaths gravesite in the desert that honors the lives lost at the US/Mexico border

UU College of Social Justice is thrilled to announce *Activate Southwest Border*, a youth training in summer 2015. This is the kind of hands-on experience that will help bring the seven principles to life — and build community and connection with youth from around the country. In this intensive one-week program, participants will hear powerful testimonies from migrants, from undocumented youth who were raised in the U.S., and from the allies working to change current laws. They will walk the desert paths followed by thousands of migrants each year, and help distribute life-saving water and medicine along these routes.

Join the youth training in the Southwest Border through Activate, a UU College of Social Justice program! The dates for this training will be August 1 to 9, 2015 in Tucson, Arizona. To learn more and register, check out the page <http://uucsj.org/youth/activatesouthwestborder/>

Youth will have hands-on experiences like meeting with No More Deaths, a ministry of the UU Church of Tucson, who led us on a trek into the desert to a makeshift gravesite honoring the many lives lost crossing the border. We learned of their work creating harm reduction kits to help save lives, and of the station in the desert where they provide water and medical care to those in need.

Youth will be moved, as we were, by Kino Border Initiative, who run a community feeding center and a respite stop for people just returned to the Mexico border. And they will be inspired by local faith leaders, as we were after our meeting with Rev.

John Fife, former pastor of Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson, which began the first Sanctuary Movement.

Such powerful words. These are important opportunities for youth to get involved this summer.

In faith,

Rev. Kathleen McTigue and Jennifer Toth
UUA Standing on the Side of Love

UU Friends on Facebook

Did you know that our Church has an online extension on Facebook? This Group of over 120 folks is comprised of current members and friends, plus members who have relocated, and some individuals who only attend church online.

Everyone is welcome to join UU Friends. All you need to do is request to be added to the group. The conversations shift from church business and opportunities to personal information and support sharing.

We recently went through the Group list and removed individuals who had not been active in the Group for over a year. If we mistakenly removed you, please re apply and we will gladly put you back in the Group.

While most of the info we share on our Group is church related, most topics are welcome. We simply ask that no personal information is shared about anyone without specific permission. This Group is Closed but not Secret so individuals can find us but with a level of privacy.

To join the Group, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Juliette Crone-Willis or Sayer Johnson.

First Unitarian Church of Alton Board Policy on Memorial Fund

Purpose: Ensure financial accountability and transparency in the use of the Memorial Fund

Action taken: Approved at December 11, 2014 Board Meeting

Introduction: Historically a separate fund has been maintained for large donations outside of normal pledging. These contributions were often made in honor or memorial of a long-time member. The intent of this fund is to remain outside of the normal annual operating budget, specifically to fund unanticipated and/or special purchases. The fund is governed directly by the Board and can be accessed immediately for Board approved purchases. This is a different purpose from that of the Endowment Fund, which was intended as a long-term growth fund which would contribute a percentage each year to the general operating budget.

Policy: Record Keeping

The treasurer shall maintain the Memorial Fund as a separately listed and reported fund of money from that of the general operating budget. The treasurer and bookkeeper are responsible for properly separating, recording additions to, and expenditures from the fund, as well as periodic reports to the Board and congregation. The funds may be deposited in the church general checking account as long as logical bookkeeping controls are maintained to properly segment these funds.

Additions to Memorial Fund

Contributions specifically marked in writing as Memorial Fund by the donor go directly into the Memorial Fund. Marking a contribution may include, but is not limited to, memo line on a check, placing in a marked envelope, or including with a letter of explanation.

Any other large donation suspected to be intended for the Memorial Fund may only be added to the fund by way of Board vote. This includes all word of mouth designations, third party or direct from donor.

This also includes any large donations that the treasurer is unsure of designation, perhaps due to ambiguous memo, etc. Without board approval, such donations will go into the general operating budget.

Spending the Memorial Fund

The general operating budget is designed to cover most recurring monthly or annual expenses of the church. When an unanticipated repair or new purchase falls outside of the general budget, the Memorial Fund may be used if the expense is approved by board vote. As good stewards of these special donations, the Board should consider all other possible funding solutions, such as using reserves or building an expense into next year's budget. However, the Memorial Fund is intended to further the good work of the church and a Board vote shall be the determining factor for spending any one-time maximum of \$5000. Any amount over \$5000 shall require a simple majority congregational vote.



Capital Campaign Financial Report

“Restoring Our Future” 2012-2014

Our three year capital campaign is officially over, although a few donations are scheduled to continue through June.

As of December 14, 2014 we have received **\$242,587.65**, which is 97% of our original goal. Everyone who donated to this Campaign should know that their contributions allowed the church to remodel the kitchen, including putting in a new window and adding the coffee center; have a new roof put on the Wuerker Room and RE wing; install new energy-efficient windows throughout the RE Wing, and upgrade the electrical system. The window installation in the nursery / RE foyer is being completed this month.

A final report of income/expenses will be given when this current work is completed.

Unfortunately, one proposed project that we did not have enough funding to pursue was providing an area for accessible parking next to the church. Maybe this can be the focus of the NEXT capital campaign.

Interest Groups

**FIFTY-PLUS (50+)
FORUM ...**

**WILL NOT MEET IN JANUARY
AND FEBRUARY.**



Join us again on March 7 when we will continue our first Saturday of every month meeting.

ANNA DS – WOMEN’S ALLIANCE

The Anna Ds **will not meet in January or February.** All women in the church are invited to join us at our next meeting on March 5, 2015.

Men’s Monthly Lunch January 8 @ 11:30 am



The Men’s lunch bunch – the Romeos - meets the second Thursday of each month. Join us on **Thursday, January 8** at 11:30 am at the **Best Buffet** at 615 Wesley, Drive in Wood River, IL.

All men in our church are invited. For further information contact **Paul Hebert** pphebert@mail.com.

Donations to the Alton Crisis Food Center

The Crisis Food Center, down the street from the church, is always in need of donations of food items. The Center is in need of canned green beans, corn and other vegetables; tuna; canned meat; peanut butter; boxes of mac ‘n cheese; and basic food staples.



Please bring non-perishable food items and put them in the collection container in the RE Foyer. Any personal care items should be put in Emerson Place for distributing at the 4th Saturday Lunch.

RENEGADE WOMEN - JANUARY 17

Topical Discussions every 3rd Saturday –1 pm to 3 pm.



LIVING SIMPLY UNITY CIRCLE

The Unity Circle, facilitated by Sharon Johnson, will meet on **Sunday, January 18 from 12:15 to 1:30 pm.**

Everyone is welcome. Participants should join if they are able to commit to joining us monthly for 6-12 months, as this Unity Circle is intended for relationship building. This Unity Circle is intended for deep listening, and not feedback or advice.

January 2015 Religious Education (RE) Program News & Notes

Date	Spirit Play (Pre-K-K)	Elementary (1 st -5 th grade)	Youth (6 th -12 th grade)
4-Jan	Promise	Special Event	Youth Group
11-Jan	Sources Introduction	Nature Sunday	Our Whole Lives (Jr. High) Coming of Age (8 th grade & up)
18-Jan	Intergenerational	Martin Luther King, Jr.	Service
25-Jan	Islam source	Social Service Sunday	Our Whole Lives (Jr. High) Coming of Age (8 th grade & up)

Juliette Crone-Willis
Acting Religious Education Coordinator
jrcronewillis@gmail.com
314-482-5239 (cell)