

FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS



*Newsletter of the
First
Unitarian
Church*

Alton, Illinois
www.firstuualton.org



February 2015

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

February Worship Services at 10:30 am and 1:30 pm

February 1, 2015

**30 Days of Love: The Terrible Dance of Power
with Rev. Sunshine Wolfe**

Through the poem by Barry Oshry we will explore the dance of power and oppression that permeates human history. What is it in the nature of human communities that brings about this dance and how might we recognize the role that we dance?

Liturgist: Sayer Johnson

February 8, 2015

**30 Days of Love: Being the Change
with Rev. Sunshine Wolfe**

Gandhi invited us to “be the change we wish to see in the world.” This can be hard to do. What impact will it have on our children? How might it cause trouble in our lives? Is it really worth the cost and can the world really be changed at all? We will take some time on this day bless the work of members of our community in the Boy Scouts as they consider the role of religion in their lives.

Liturgist: Kayci Combs Lueker

February 15, 2015

**30 Days of Love: Give Your Love Away
with Rev. Sunshine Wolfe, Juliette Crone-Willis,
and friends**

This intergenerational service we celebrate the gifts we receive when we give our love away. Love multiplies. It expands and grows and can bring great joy to our lives. We will hear the stories of members and friends who gave their love away and what happened when they did.

Liturgist: Spiral Blanton

February 22, 2015

**Summon Your Courage
with Rose Schwab, Ministerial Intern
First Unitarian, St. Louis**

Please join us for a service about finding deep connection to our bodies, our spirits, and our inspiration. Rose Schwab is the Ministerial Intern at the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis.

Liturgist: Pat Moore

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**

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.**

February 1 and Feb. 22 - 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 Feb. 8 and 15.

February 8 at 9:30 am – Ron Glossop – Emerson Place.

Our 6th class on "Global Problems of the 21st Century" will discuss governance for the global community. How do the United Nations and other international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ or World Court) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) deal with global problems? Are other organizations needed?

February 15 - 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 Inspire Programs are available to members and friends 16 years and older.

Inspire Programs for February

February 8

U.U. 101 - Source It!

Unitarian Universalism draws from Six Sources that form the foundation for our wisdom tradition and spiritual lives. This program explores the history of how we came to these sources and how they are reflected in our religion today.

February 15

Understanding Oppression: Microaggressions

There are so many aspects of oppression that it can be hard to fully understanding the ways that it manifests in the world. This program will look at the study of microaggressions brought to us by psychology. What are they? How do we recognize them? How do we prevent them?

Special Gratitude to Nancee Magilson

We offer our sincerest gratitude to Nancee Magilson for serving as our Wedding Coordinator.

Her service has been exemplary. The job has not always been easy and Nancee brought her organization, patience, and heart to the task.

In January, at the recommendation of Nancee and Rev. Wolfe, the position of Wedding Coordinator has ended. Nancee wanted out of the role for some time and we do not currently receive enough requests for weddings to warrant the position. Nancee's input has been valuable in assisting in this transition.

Please be sure to share your gratitude with her for her excellent service!



Pastor Sunshine's Column

30 Days of Love

The year 2015 brings us to the fiftieth anniversary of the March on Selma. This march brought people together from all walks of life and it was not easy. Our congregations were of mixed opinions at the time. Many were dismayed at the participation of their ministers and members in the March on Selma and the voting rights campaign. Some of these opinions would be changed by two murders of Unitarian Universalists in March of 1965. Rev. James Reeb died on March 11th, 1965 from a beating by a white mob that he received two days prior. Viola Liuzzo assisted in the organization of the march from Selma to Montgomery and was shot by KKK members while driving black activists to and from the Montgomery Airport. The anniversary of Bloody Sunday and the March from Selma to Montgomery lie at the heart of our Unitarian Universalist struggle with racial justice.

In anticipation of the denomination wide celebration of the Selma marches on March 8th, we will explore together some of the aspects of love in our justice work. What do we sacrifice and why? How has our history shaped us? Why is justice work necessary in the first place? I encourage you to wrestle with the questions deepest on your heart and mind during this month.

For the 30 days leading up to February 14th, we are celebrating love through our justice commitments. We started by looking at the life of Ida B. Wells who is one of many who paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. We then looked at what it means to love and care for veterans who live with moral injury after service. In the coming weeks we will talk about the "Terrible Dance of Power" that leads to continuing disconnection, the power of personal change to create larger change, the wisdom of Gandhi, the messiness of justice work, and the ways in which we can choose to bless the world. All of this in an effort to go deeper with our awareness of social justice in our lives, the lives of our children, and the larger world.

In the words of Dr. Cornell West, "Justice is what love looks like in public." We know that love is messy. Love is grief and hurt and joy and laughter. Love is connection while owning all of the consequences, responsibilities, and gifts that come with it. Public expressions of love make a difference because it is a statement that it matters to us.

Unitarian Universalists are becoming known in the greater world by our yellow shirts. We are frequently called "the love people" by other activist and religious groups. This is a great gift and a great responsibility. So, as we rise together on the side of love in the world, may we hold onto our connections in their messiness and blessings. May you do one thing this month that brings greater love into the world.

On February 1st, you will be invited to take an envelope with one action that you can do to increase love through action in the world. Should you choose to take an envelope, you will be given the opportunity to share your experience of what you did on February 15th during worship. May we engage in everyday acts of love to the world of which we are a part. May it be so.

Rev. Sunshine J. Wolfe

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN Regional Assembly to Explore the New Era of UUism

The Regional Assembly, held in Naperville, IL, starts Friday evening April 17 and goes through Sunday morning April 19.

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

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

February 2015 Board Meeting

Our meeting in January was held one week later than normal in order to accommodate more members' schedules, and we spent most of our time planning for the January 18 Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting. Probably the lengthiest discussion was about the Interim Minister's report by Reverend Sunshine and the unveiling of a new organizational/reporting structure within which we will be doing our work either as individuals, committees or special purpose task forces. For those of you unable to attend the Congregational Meeting, I will have minutes available soon and you can call or e-mail me to request a set so you can stay current with Church issues.

One of the task forces will continue the work already done in documenting policies and procedures to guide the work of the church, with the goal of having the bulk of the work done and approved by the Board before the next settled minister arrives. We have several new resources to use in that effort and welcome anyone interested in this effort to join us. So far "us" consists of me and Kathryn Chapman, and there's always room for more to help finish this important task in church governance.

SHOES FOR WATER



Mona Hebert (who works at St. Louis University) is collecting shoes for the "Battle of the Boot" Shoe Drive. Five universities in the St. Louis area are competing in this annual event.

Formerly called the Shoeman Water Project, with the retirement of George the Shoeman, the name has been changed to Solea Water. But the purpose remains the same - to provide both shoes and clean water systems for people in Panama, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. SLU's goal is to collection 10,000 pounds of shoes.

Any kind of shoes are acceptable. If the shoes have shoe strings, please tie them together, and for other shoes, please attach each pair together with a rubber band or string.

Mona will have a collection bin in the Wuerker Room for the next few weeks.

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

**Reserve Your Spot at the
 Covenant Workshop on
 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 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. All members and friends are encouraged to attend. Youth ages 14 and older are highly 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!

Children and youth in child care will also provide input into the covenant through their own programming. We hope to see you there!!!

So that we may plan food for lunch and child care, we ask that you RSVP by March 7th!!! Please send the following information to swolfe@uuma.org:

- Who will be attending
- Food restrictions, if any
- Accessibility needs
- Number of children who will need child care.

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 paintedgoatfarm@yahoo.com

Marcia Custer (cell) 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

Congratulations to Our New Worship Associates

Please join us in welcoming the new Worship Associates at First Unitarian Church of Alton for 2015-16:

Dee Evans
Joy Hoelt
Mary Johnson
Sayer Johnson
Yomi Kinder
Sabrina Trupia

They will begin in the pulpit on March 1st. Look forward to hearing each of them preach this summer, as well. They bring many talents, gifts, and interests to the ongoing worship life of our community. Congratulations one and all!



Proms Through the
Decades.
Put Your Dancin'
Shoes On!

Please join First Alton Youth Group on Friday
March 20 for an
**INTERGENERATIONAL
Dance!**

Come dressed in your favorite decade's finest
formal wear! Photos will be taken!

Everyone is welcome to this all-ages event.

The festivities will be from 7pm till 10 pm.

5\$ cover suggested - more if you can and less if
you can't. All proceeds will go to support
Campfest 5!

BYOB and a snack to share. Lemonade, water
and coffee will be provided.

Do You Shop At Schnucks?

If so, do you have an eScrip card, and do you remember to use it? Presenting your eScrip card each time you make a purchase at Schnucks adds a little money to our church coffers.

You can register online at www.escrip.com and put in the church's group id 164501344 (First Unitarian Church, Alton IL) and pick up an eScrip card at church or ask Michelle Bryant Barbeau about getting one.

Interest Groups

FIFTY-PLUS (50+)
FORUM ...

WILL NOT MEET IN
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 February**. All women in the church are invited to join us at our next meeting on March 5, 2015.

Men’s Monthly Lunch February 12 @ 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.

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



Everyone is welcome. The Unity Circle is intended for deep listening, and not feedback or advice.



Dorothy Wilson joined the church on January 18, 2015. Please introduce yourself and make her feel welcome in her new church home.

RENEGADE WOMEN – SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21 1 TO 3 PM

Our theme for the coming year is "Unitarian and Universalist Women of the 19th century."

The theme comes from the book "*Stirring the Nation’s Heart: Eighteen Stories of Prophetic Unitarians and Universalists of the Nineteenth Century*" by Polly Peterson. Each month part of our program will include learning something about the remarkable Unitarian and Universalist women who made an incredible impact on the direction of our nation.

These vignettes will not preclude having an additional program on a topic of interest. The presentations set thus far are: February, Olympia Brown; March: Lydia Maria Child; April, Margaret Fuller, May: Judith Sargent Murray.

Come join us and learn about these incredible women.

Donations to the Alton Crisis Food Center Always Needed

Please bring a few canned goods or non-perishable food to donate to the Crisis Food Center, down the street



Basic food staples are always in demand. Please put your Donations in the collection container in the RE Foyer.

Any personal care items or laundry products you wish to donate should be put on the shelves in Emerson Place for distributing that the 4th Saturday Lunch.

4th Saturday Lunch - February 28

Announcements about what is needed for February’s lunch menu and personal care items for our neighbors in need will be made at church, on UU Friends, and in This Week at Church.

Please plan to help Kathleen, Robyn and Sabrina in continuing this long-standing social service effort.



RUMMAGE SALE COMING IN MAY

Once again, it is time to clean out the clutter and help raise a bit of extra cash for our church. The sale is tentatively scheduled for

May 1st and 2nd. We will begin accepting donations soon once I get confirmation on a room for temporary storage. As we have done this for a few years now, we have learned a few things so please follow these guidelines when consolidating donations:

1. NO electronics please (tv's, VCR's etc.) they do not sell well and would do better at a Goodwill or recycling center for this sort of item.
2. NO large exercise equipment it does not sell and then volunteers are left to move heavy things.
3. NO books. I know that UU's love their books, but the truth is they are heavy and sell very poorly. Please donate any books to your local library.
4. Clothing is welcome; however, please make sure it is CLEAN and WEARABLE. This was stressed to me by a few people so I'm just passing on what I really feel should be obvious.

Donations should be packaged in bags/boxes/containers that will be manageable up and down our stairwell as the storage will be in the basement and the sale in the Kate Wuerker. It is all a volunteer effort and I don't wish to break anyone. Your assistance in this matter is appreciated.

One last note, I plan to stop accepting donations the Sunday before the sale April 26th. This will give us the best possible plan for organizing what we have in the space the week leading up to the sale.

I thank you all for your donations, help, and support. All proceeds go to the church.

Kathryn Chapman paintedgoatfarm@yahoo.com

CAMPFEST 5

Campfest 5 will be at Camp Piasa in Pere Marquette State Park, Monday June 8 through Saturday morning June 13. This is an inter-generational, all inclusive camping experience. Many details to come.

Our first planning meeting will be Sunday February 1 at 11:45. Everyone welcome. For more info please contact Juliette or Sayer.

An article summarized by Pat Moore – retired elementary school educator

10 Dangerous Apps That Parents and Teachers Should Know – written by Tony Tramelli, MA, PLPC for the *Hazelwood School District News*.

The article encourages parents to talk to their kids about these apps, to find out if they are being used, and if so how they are being used. Parents can then decide whether they are appropriate for their children and adolescents.

1. Whisper: an anonymous social network.
2. Hot or Not: allows its users to rate pictures of other people. When a user rates another as “hot” they become connected.
3. Oovoo: free messaging, voice, and video chat app very popular among teenagers.
4. Vine: a mobile app that one can think of as an online video diary.
5. ask.fm: a question and answer site that thrives on anonymity.
6. Secret Phone: a phone within a phone, completely hidden in every way. There will be no icon in the application list, and no trace of the phone ever being opened.
7. Ihookup: a “casual” hookup site for “hot guys and girls.”
8. KiK Messenger: a relatively new text messaging app similar to iChat or Google Chat.
9. Snapchat: often called the “sexting app,” snapchat allows users to send a photo or short video that is viewed by the recipient for a maximum of 10 seconds, then it self destructs.
10. Omegle: the website’s tagline is “Talk to Strangers.” It allows users to communicate with total strangers without any sort of registration.

Church Potluck Lunch February 1 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.



Sierra Club Speaker Series - February 9 at 7:30 pm

Maple Syrup is great for Pancakes AND the Environment

Join us on February 9th to learn about a natural gem in Calhoun County, the McCully Heritage Project (MHP). Michelle Berg Vogel will present a history of the McCully Heritage Project, highlighting the current projects and programs at McCully, including the opportunities the MHP offers for exploring the outdoors. She will discuss their maple syrup production and education program, and the annual “Fungus Among Us” backyard mushroom production workshop. Both programs are forestry related and focused on value-added use of woodlands. This event will be held at 7:30 p.m., in the community room at the First Unitarian Church, 110 E. Third Street in Alton. Everyone is invited to join the speaker for dinner at 5:45 p.m. at Mac’s Time Out, 315 Belle St in Alton.

February RE Program News & Notes

February Schedule

Date	Spirit Play (PreK-K)	Grades 1-5th	Youth: 6th Grade and up
1-Feb-15	Buddhist source	CoExist Sunday featuring Sabrina Trupia & Paul Fischer	Youth Group
8-Feb-15	Hindu source	Nature Sunday	Coming of Age & Our Whole Lives
15-Feb-15	Intergenerational Service: Standing on the Side of Love		
22-Feb-15	Sufi source	Social Service Project	Coming of Age & Our Whole Lives

Religious Education committee news: Joy Hoeft has agreed to be the Religious Education committee chairperson. In an effort to accommodate more people, we have moved the RE committee meeting to the first Sunday of the month. The meeting will be held downstairs in the Youth Room at 11:50 and is open to all. Grab your potluck plate and join us on Feb. 1st!

We are more than halfway through our year in Religious Education and things are going very well. From the preschoolers up through the youth, our children have been so fortunate to have a team of caring, committed, creative teachers! This month the Spirit Play preschool class will learn about various UU sources from world religions. The Elementary group has a full set of classes with a CoExist day, learning about Catholicism from Sabrina Trupia and Paul Fischer; a wintery Nature Sunday; an Intergenerational Service celebrating our UUA Standing on the Side of Love program, and finally a Social Service Sunday. Youth continue to thrive in the Our Whole Lives sexuality program, Coming of Age class and the Youth Group. What a wonderful group of classes, teachers and kids!

The Youth Group, under the care of Paul Fischer and Sayer Johnson, have had a great year so far. They have planned and facilitated the children’s’ events for the Dia de los Muertos party and fundraiser. In December they had a Lock-in at church. Now they have an all-congregational, intergenerational dance planned for Friday, March 20 at 7:00 pm with a theme of “Prom through the Decades.” Keep an eye out for further information!