

# FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS



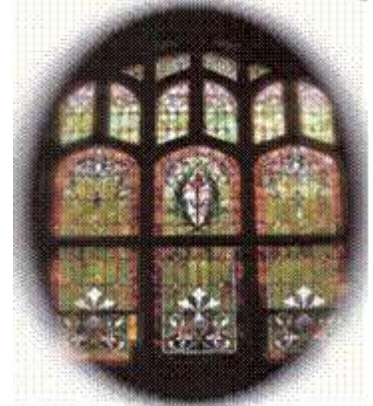
Photo by Rev. Sunshine Wolfe, 2015

*Newsletter of the*

## *First Unitarian Church*

*Alton, Illinois*

[www.firstuualton.org](http://www.firstuualton.org)



Rev. Sunshine J. Wolfe, Pastor

## July 2016

*Sunday Worship Service at 10:15 am*  
*Soulful Sundown Vespers Service on the 3rd Saturday at 4 pm*

**July 3** *A Politics of Respect* - a sermon by Dennis J. Daniels and read by Worship Associate Rebecca Walters

**July 10** *Coming of Age In India In the Sixties: A Unitarian Peace Corps Volunteer Looks At Life* with Thomas Cochran, Worship Associate Joy Hoeft

**July 16** **Vespers**

**July 17** *Music and Spirituality* with Rebecca Walters, Worship Associate Dee Evans

Music: A Universal language that every human can understand. Have you ever turned on the radio and the song playing touches you in a way you can't explain? Have you paused and thought, "Wow, I really needed to hear that today."? Could it be possible that The Universe or deceased loved ones are trying to send you a message that you can understand? It has been my personal experience that this phenomenon IS possible. I believe that the physical and spiritual planes of existence are interconnected, and that music is often the bridge between them.

**July 24** *Stations of the Pentacle* - with Yomi Kinder and Worship Associate Thomas Cochran

**July 31** *Singing Our Visions of Action, Transformation, and Hope* - with Joy Hoeft and Worship Associate Rebecca Walters

**No monthly themes from June to August.**

Worship Services are held at 10:15 am on Sunday as an intergenerational service with ritual, movement, a sermon, readings, and music. Soulful Sundown service is at 4:00 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday with meditation, silence, readings, and singing.

### **ADULT RELIGIOUS ENRICHMENT (ARE)**

**"The Seekers"**

**For our summer schedule; each week a topic for discussion will be pulled from a jar. Come join our always lively and loving exchange of ideas, support, and encouragement.**

## **A Fond Farewell** "You are enough."

It has been quite the journey these last two years. I cannot thank you, the First Unitarian Church of Alton, for letting me walk with you during this time. There has been a lot of change and I know that has been stressful for many of you. That said, I do hope that you have had the space you need to grieve Rev. Khleber and Linda leaving the congregation and had opportunity to imagine someone completely new and different being your settled minister in the future.

If there is one lesson I hope that you as a community take with you into the future it is to see yourselves as a learning organization. That is, rather than focusing on problems to be fixed or perfection in all things, that you see each challenge as an opportunity for learning and growth and that you proudly name and hone those things that you are good at. You are a beautiful and powerful community. Hold onto your strengths and live into potential. Don't let yourselves be held back by the struggles that arise. Remember that healthy conflict is useful when folks are respectful and compassionate.

You have wisdom to give the world. You have love to the share. Alton needs your wisdom and love. You are enough to share it and to model for the world strength in the face of challenge. You are Unitarian Universalists. Let your light shine.

In these two years, I've made mistakes, met challenges, learned, grown, and hopefully brought a little of my own wisdom to you. Your wisdom will go forth with me into the future conversations that I serve. Know that this time matters not just for you, but for all of our congregations. May you keep that light lit in the chalice of this congregation.

I will miss you dearly. It has truly been a pleasure to serve with you these years. Thank you for the opportunity.

With love and blessings,  
Pastor Sunshine Wolfe

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### **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**



**Newsletter Deadline is on the 15 of each month.**  
Send info. to Dorothy Wilson  
[djjccw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:djjccw@sbcglobal.net) and to Becky Green at church [church@firstuualton.org](mailto:church@firstuualton.org)



**Religious Education for Children and Youth**  
**Will be on summer schedule – no classes until fall.**

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### **Religious Education Planning Session July 10<sup>th</sup>**

Please join us for a planning session for the 2016-17 Religious Education Program for children and youth. Pastor Sunshine will facilitate with leadership from Religious Education Chair Joy Hoeft. All parents, teachers, and those interested in helping to plan the program for the upcoming year, please join us. We need your input and support.

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### **Pastor Sunshine's Availability This Summer**

Pastor Sunshine will continue working for First Unitarian Church of Alton until July 31<sup>st</sup>. If you have an emergency or need urgent assistance, please contact gher directly. If you would like to meet with Pastor Sunshine before she goes on vacation on July 7<sup>th</sup>, please contact gher through church office or via e-mail at [swolfe@uuma.org](mailto:swolfe@uuma.org). Have a fun and blessed summer.

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**Church Potluck Lunch**  
**July 3 @ 11:30 am**

Gather 'round to share food and fellowship. Bring a dish to share and stay to help clean up, while enjoying your church community.

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## **News from the Board of Directors** **Summarizing Annual Congregational Meeting and June 14 Board Meeting**

**The Annual Congregational Meeting** was held after church on June 5.

President Debby Lovell announced the following:

- Minutes of the meetings are posted on the Bulletin Board in the Wuerker Room.
- The Policy Book is located on the cabinet in the hall, above the mailboxes.
- The yearly report to the UUA has been completed.
- We are on the Black Lives Matter banner map tour.
- We have allowed another ghost tour access to the church, as a fundraiser.
- The trivia night was a big success, fun and funds!
- Upcoming events are: the Ware Lecture party on June 24, the Pride Parade on June 26, Campfest from July 22 to 24, and the 180<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

The Board, with UUA help, has worked out a plan to share an Interim Minister with Emerson Chapter for the 2016-2017 church year, since neither congregation could afford full time settled ministry at this time. Rev. Dawn Fortune has been hired by the Board, and is looking forward to working with us. Plans are being worked out with Emerson as to how Rev. Fortune's time will be spent, and that information will be shared ASAP. The Board and any other interested persons met with UUA Transitions Rep, Dori Thexton, to discuss what to expect with a shared ministry.

Rev. Wolfe reported on progress that has been made during gher interim and things ghe sees as still needing work.

Dee Evans reported on progress made in reorganizing committees such as Membership, Sunday Support, Endowment, Canvas, and Building & Grounds. She still needs a volunteer to organize Sunday Support.

Treasurer Lisa Strangeman submitted a written report. She says that all pledges have not yet been paid, and we have had to use money from our reserves to pay bills. The budget for next year has been updated to show the shared ministry, which should give us about \$6000 surplus for other purposes.

Jerry Johnson reported that the Endowment Fund is currently at \$165, 026.87. According to the formula, the fund was able to return about \$5100 to the treasury.

The Congregation voted to make some changes to the by-laws to bring them up to date with current practices.

Sabrina Trupia and Paul Fischer are leaving the Board, and Robin Crane and Mike Schmidt were elected to serve as assistant treasurer and President Elect respectively. A new search committee will be elected in the fall.

### **The Board meeting was held June 14**

The Board voted to approve the hiring of Rev. Dawn Fortune for half time Interim ministry for Church year 2016-2017.

New Policies on bank accounts, leadership roles and responsibilities, and annual disbursement of Endowment Funds were approved.

The Interim Minister Rev. Sunshine Wolfe gave a thorough report:

- Ghe is working with the RE Council on plans for RE next year to have the OWL program included.
- Ghe is working with the Pastoral Associates to follow up on care and support with part-time ministry.
- Ghe provided a curry dinner and movie as his farewell to the congregation, which proved to be fun and raised \$600+ for our treasury. Thanks, Sunshine.
- Gher last sermon will be June 19, but ghe will be available until July 7. Please call if you would like a meeting before then.

The treasurer, Lisa Strangeman gave a written report and will be sending out notices soon about where you stand on your pledge for this last year.

The Ministerial Search Committee submitted a report with suggestions for the next committee.

The Board spent some time reflected on ideas for next year and the future, We may want to start thinking about a new long-term plan for our congregation.

Sabrina Trupia will take on the job of Social Justice leader for next year.

Sabrina, as nomination chair has found several people to serve on the next Search Committee. If you are interested or would like to suggest someone, speak to Sabrina or any Board member.

Submitted by,  
Pat Moore, Board Secretary

## Campfest 2016!

Friday July 22 from 3pm till  
Sunday July 24 at 5pm. All  
ages cooperative camping  
experience. Cost is \$30 per  
person. Includes rustic  
shared cabins meals  
activities and a private  
pool.  
Email [sayerjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:sayerjohnson@gmail.com) for more information.  
Reservations and payment due by July 1.



pool.

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## CHURCH LEADERSHIP 2016 - 2017

### Board of Trustees

**Board President** - Dee Evans  
**President-Elect** - Michael Schmidt  
**Past President** - Debby Lovell  
**Treasurer** - Lisa Strangeman  
**Secretary** - Pat Moore  
**At-Large** - Robin Crane  
**At-Large** - Paul Hebert

### Committee/Team Leads

**Transitions Committee** - TBA  
**Social Events** - Vacant  
**Interfaith and U.U.** - Vacant

### Pastoral Associates

Marcia Custer  
Sandra Shaner

### Religious Education Council

**Chair**-Joy Hoeft

### Stewardship Committee

**Building** - Kelly Crone-Willis  
**Grounds** - Robyn Stranquist  
**Canvass 2017** - TBA  
**Endowment Fund** - Kelly Crone-Willis  
**Finance** - Matt Koch  
**Membership** - Mary Weber  
**Sunday Support Ministries** - TBA

### Worship Associates

Tom Cochran  
Robin Crane  
Dee Evans  
Joy Hoeft  
Yomi Kinder  
Rebecca Walters



## Congregational Covenant

Approved May 17, 2015

**To strengthen and  
nurture with love,  
compassion and respect,  
we covenant to:**

**Honor** and make space for our diversity, respect our  
volunteers, leaders and staff by  
Supporting balance in their lives and in their personal and  
professional pursuits;

**Encourage** each member to develop a personal spiritual  
practice that cultivates honesty and acceptance;

**Remembering** our humanness we acknowledge our  
imperfection and extend forgiveness to ourselves and  
others;

**Engage** within our own and larger community with  
integrity, by taking responsibility for our actions,  
facilitating right relationships, and living into the  
Journey.

(The acronym for our Covenant is *HERE*)



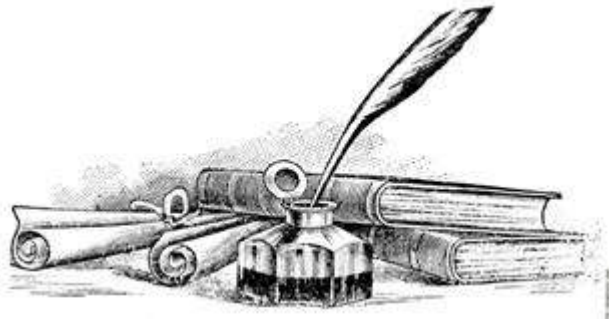
**Please remember to bring non-perishable  
foods to contribute to the Alton Crisis Food  
Pantry – It's the right thing to do.**

## Is It Your Turn?

If you've ever had a cup of coffee  
or tea, or a glass of water or  
lemonade, or had a snack during  
coffee hour, or enjoyed a potluck  
lunch at church, please take  
**YOUR** turn at doing coffee hour

cleanup. It should not take more than 30 minutes to take  
care of the dishes following our policy of "wash, dry, and  
put away"





The current issue of *The Journal of Unitarian Universalist History* (v. 39, 2015-2016) was published in May 2016 and has an article by Mary Johnson about our church's 2<sup>nd</sup> minister, the Rev. William D'arcy Haley.

The article, entitled "William D'arcy Haley as Liberal Minister and Editor in the West" focuses on Haley's time in Alton (1853-1856), including his involvement in the purchase of the property where our church now stands; his sermons for the workingman; his summer vacation in 1855 spent among the Chippewa in Minnesota; and his words and actions regarding the political and moral issues of the times, the final outcome of which was to guarantee the ministers of this church freedom of the pulpit.

After leaving Alton he was the minister at the Unitarian Church in Washington DC for a short time, but joined the Union forces at the start of the civil war.

Later Haley published books and articles, and one article about Johnny Appleseed stood for many years as the definitive work about John Chapman.

Haley also started and edited several newspapers on both the east and west coasts, but never stayed in one place for very long.

A copy of *The Journal of UU History* is available in our church library.

### THIRD of July Fire Works

For those who don't know, the park next to the church is the ideal spot to watch the Alton fireworks, and hundreds of people show up to sit on the lawn every year to enjoy the display.



### 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday Lunches Suspended for the Summer:



Noting that we didn't have enough volunteers, many of us would be out of town over the next few months, and the old stalwarts were still stressed out, Sabrina, Mary Johnson and Robin Crane decided that we were not able to pull off 4th Saturday lunches this month and through the summer.

In August we will try to meet with people from the Salvation Army and the OASIS Crisis Center to see if we can devise some way to be useful to the people we have been serving but in a way that requires not quite so many volunteers.

Thanks to those who said they would help this month; your availability is appreciated.

So, at least for the rest of the summer, no more 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday lunches. Please bring us any suggestions you may have about redesigning this program.



**The Kitchen Klub** – The "Wash, Dry, Put Away" program for kitchen and Wuerker Room cleanup seems to working quite well. Rare is it to see dishes left in the sink or on the drain rack. Please remember that "Wash, Dry, Put Away" is not only for coffee hour and potluck but for any meeting or gathering that is held at church. Everyone needs to help keep the kitchen and Wuerker Room neat.

### Shared Ministry with Emerson Chapel

The Board, with UUA help, has worked out a plan to share an Interim Minister with Emerson Chapter for the 2016-2017 church year, since neither congregation could afford full time settled ministry at this time. Rev. Dawn Fortune has been hired by the Board, and is looking forward to working with us. Plans are being worked out with Emerson as to how Rev. Fortune's time will be spent, and that information will be shared ASAP. The Board and any other interested persons met with UUA Transitions Rep, Dori Thexton, to discuss what to expect with a shared ministry.



## INTEREST GROUPS:

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### **Anna Ds – Women’s Alliance July 7th, 11:30 am**

We will meet on Thursday, July 7, at 11:30 am.

We'll be at Bluff City Grill, 102 W 9th St, Alton, it's on your left as you go north on Piasa / Hwy 67 before you reach St. Anthony's hospital or the mall (**Phone:** (618) 433-8288). <http://www.bluffcitygrillalton.com/>



Please PSVP to Sandy Shaner by Monday, July 4 for a confirmed number the next day.



### **Men’s Monthly Lunch July 14<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am**

The men’s lunch bunch (Retired old Men Eating Out) meets on the second Thursday of each month. Join us at the Best Buffet at 615 Wesley Dr. in Wood River. All men in our church are invited (retired or working, old, or not). For further information contact Paul Herbert [pphebert@mail.com](mailto:pphebert@mail.com)



### **Free For All**

Between the holiday weekend and the fact that several of our regulars will be on vacation that week, we decided not to meet on July 2nd. What we do in August is still up in the air as we await our new interim minister and hear how we can support the agenda they and the Board will develop. We'll do an e-mail poll of our group in July/Aug and let you know what we decide.



**WHAT: Time for Something Better,**

**WHERE: First UU of Alton**

**WHEN: Saturday Nov 12 and Sunday Nov 13,  
2016: Veteran’s Day weekend**

This is an all-gender church and community event

Saturday afternoon mini-retreat

Saturday evening catered dinner

Saturday night concert featuring  
The Troubadours of Divine Bliss

Sunday Spoken Word service  
featuring local writers and the Troubadours.

**WHY: Because we all need a Weekend of WOW**

Wellness,

Oh-My-Goodness Opportunities for Over-the-Top Fun,  
Workshops, Words & Wonderful Music!

Here is a link to the Troubadours performing their  
song, as well as the lyrics:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCZdTbxwSxs>