

FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS



Photo by Rev. Sunshine Wolfe, 2015

Newsletter of the

First Unitarian Church

Alton, Illinois

www.firstuualton.org



Rev. Dawn Fortune, Interim Minister

August 2016 THEME: WONDER

*Sunday Worship Service at 10:15 am - August 7 & 14
New Service Time 10:00 am - August 21 & 28*

10:15 am

August 7 Service with Robin Crane
Worship Associate: Tom Cochran

10:15 am

August 14 Service with Sabrina Trupia
Worship Associate: Yomi Kinder

**Beginning on August 21st our Sunday
Services will begin at 10:00 a.m.**

10:00 am

August 21 Service with Mary Johnson
Worship Associate: Joy Hoeft

“In All Thy Getting, Get Understanding”

The June 26 Sunday worship sermon given by the Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd at the 2016 UUA General Assembly will be video streamed as part of our August 21st worship service. Portions of the music and readings by Dr. Glen Thomas, choir director of this year’s GA, will also be included. Rev. Ladd, currently the Senior Minister at River Road UU Congregation in Bethesda MD, was minister of the Bull Run UU Church in Virginia when our church was linked with BRUU in the UUA’s “Leap of Faith” pilot program a few years ago.

10:00 am

August 28

Service with Reverend Dawn Fortune
Worship Associate: Robin Crane

11:00 am

Meet and greet our new interim Minister Dawn Fortune

ADULT RELIGIOUS ENRICHMENT (ARE)

“The Seekers”

We will continue 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.

**Religious Education for
Children and Youth**

Will be on summer schedule – no classes until fall.

Religious Education for Children and Youth

**Nursery services are
available for
children under 4
years of age.**



2016-2017 Children & Youth RE Registrations will be sent out to parents to fill out for this coming year. It is important for planning programming to find out how many children and youth we have. Please email these forms back to Joy Hoeft, kjabhoeft@gmail.com, or hand them to her in person at church by August 10, 2016.

Our Elementary classes will be K-6th grade, and Youth Group will be 7th-9th grade.

The curriculum for the Elementary class will be UU Superheroes - bible people. In this program, kids will learn about important people and stories from the bible, mostly the Old Testament, from the UU perspective. We are looking for people to teach in the Elementary classes this Fall. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Joy or Jennifer Lewis.

The Youth Group will be participating in a program called Popcorn Theology, where they watch a segment of a selected movie that is built around theological and ethical issues relevant to UU youth. To furthering the Youth Group, curriculum classes will be 3 weeks, then 1 week a month the group have planned a social time, an outing, a social justice project, or whatever they want to do. Please encourage your Youth to attend the first day, so they can learn more about what is happening with the Youth Group.

We are in need of several more "pairs" to facilitate Youth Group. I would ask you to commit to one set week each month until December; then we will review. If you are interested in getting to know our Youth a little better, and having discussion with these kids about the movie excerpts, and UU issues, please contact Joy for more information.

There is a saying that it takes a community to raise a child. The children and Youth of this church are our future. Many teenagers don't come back to church after they become a little more independent. We want our teens to continue to be Unitarian adults. Please think about volunteering for the Children & Youth Religious Education. Contact Joy Hoeft for more information.

Thanks, Joy

A great big **THANK YOU!** to Kelly Krone-Willis for putting handles on the sanctuary doors in the church to make it easier for the ushers to open the doors when people are coming in.



Church Potluck Lunch August 7th @ 11:15 am

Come share lunch with your friends and fellow church members. Greet old friends and make new ones.

*(And enjoy the fellowship & laughter of cleaning up after! Please sign up for **your** turn, either after our potluck or after any Sunday's coffee hour.)*

This is Our Home – and Company's Coming! Housekeeping – Saturday, August 20

9:30 am to 2:00 pm

(If you can only spare an hour – come for that hour!)



As we look forward toward Ingathering Sunday in September, it's time to do some "housekeeping" to refresh our gathering place.

Window washing, dusting, straightening closets and cabinets, making sure our RE classrooms and nursery are clean and cheerful (parents especially invited to work in those

areas), cleaning and adding décor to the front porch, sweeping cobwebs and bugs from the other exterior doors (i.e., Alby St. entrance, back hallway, Wuerker Room entrance) ... and the list goes on.. You can choose from a variety of tasks, none of which will take too long with people working together.

Cleanup day can be almost as fun as our fellowship events – and indeed is a fellowship event – so "come, come whoever you are."

Questions? Contact Mary Johnson – mejohanson@mindspring.com.

News from Our Interim Minister, Rev. Dawn Fortune

Greetings, Gentle People,

As we begin this new journey of shared ministry, I imagine that there might be some initial concerns and challenges about the coming year. I appreciate those anxious thoughts and honor them. As such, I will do what I can now to alleviate some of the nervous feelings that might be free-floating in the two congregations of Alton, Illinois and Ellisville, Missouri.

One of the things we will be doing to nurture a culture of cooperation and shared mission is that the two governing boards will be meeting jointly for the first few months, and then periodically after the winter holiday season. In those meetings, we will be discussing some of the challenges and successes each congregation is experiencing, as well as discussing a book that members of both boards will be reading.

Shared Reads

Both governing boards will be doing shared reads this fall, with Alton's board reading "**Growing A Beloved Community**," by Tom Owen-Towle (ISBN# 978-1-55896-464-8), and the Emerson board will be reading "**Serving With Grace**" by Erik Walker Wikstrom (ISBN# 978-1-55896-562-1).

The governing boards will also be meeting jointly each month for the first few months to iron out any wrinkles in the process of this shared ministry journey. As part of their work together, they will also have a shared read: "**Sources of Our Faith**," a collection of inspirational readings edited by Kathleen Rolenz (ISBN# 978-1-55896-678-9).

All three books are available through the UUA Bookstore, and congregants are encouraged to read along with the boards to get a sense of the shared growth and learning they are experiencing.

Themes

We will have monthly themes this year, with both congregations following the same themes:

August: Wonder
September: Action
October: Integrity
November: Community
December: Hope
January (2017): Reason
February: Grace
March: Miracles
April: Nature
May: Witness
June: Resilience
July: Divinity

The Interim Minister's Schedule

The administrators at both congregations are working cooperatively to establish a shared on-line calendar detailing events and activities in both places. In the meantime, here is a basic run-down of what to expect in the coming months: On most weeks when I work at a congregation, I will finish that week by preaching at that congregation. Because I get one Sunday off each month, the schedule is not as simple as a "first and third/second and fourth" kind of division. That said, here's what we're looking at for August and September, remembering that Mondays and Tuesdays are my Sabbath and I am unavailable (except for emergencies):

August 1-7: Dawn is on vacation
August 8-15: Dawn is on vacation
August 15-21: Dawn is at Emerson UU Chapel
August 21: Dawn preaches at Emerson
August 22-28: Dawn is at First UU Alton
August 28: Dawn preaches at Alton
August 29-Sept. 4: Dawn is at Alton
September 4: Dawn preaches at Alton
Sept. 5-11: Dawn is at Emerson
Sept. 11: Dawn preaches at Emerson
Sept. 12-18: Dawn is at Alton
Sept. 18: Dawn preaches at Alton
Sept. 19-25: Dawn is at Emerson
Sept. 25: Dawn's Sunday off
Sept. 26-Oct.2: Dawn is at Emerson
Oct. 2: Emerson hosts a picnic for both congregations

As we transition from full-time professional ministry to shared professional and lay-led ministry, there are two major areas where we will need trained and organized volunteers: Worship and Pastoral Care. To that end, start-up meetings for both of those teams will be happening in August, as soon as I am back from vacation. Keep an eye on the weekly email updates for news on those.

Blessings to all on the remainder of your summer!

Peace,

Dawn

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Newsletter Deadline is on the
15 of each month. Send info. to
Dorothy Wilson
djjccw@sbcglobal.net and to
Becky Green at church
church@firstualton.org



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"



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



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

**4th Saturday Lunches Are Suspended for the
Summer**



The Kitchen Klub – The "Wash, Dry, Put Away" program for kitchen and Wuerker Room cleanup seems to be 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.

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](#))

INTEREST GROUPS:

Anna Ds – Women’s Alliance **August 4th 11:30 am**

We decided it was past time to return to Fazzi’s in Collinsville
1813 Vandalia St.
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-344-5440



Mary Weber will handle the reservation, so please RSVP to Mary by Friday, July 29.

We’ll try to make arrangements with the Maryville Winery for September, but I’ll wait a while to call them.

Stay Cool!
Sandy



Men’s Monthly Lunch **August 11th, 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

Free For All (formerly 50+ Group)

At this time, there are no meetings planned, but as always, any good excuse to get together is always welcome. Let Becky or Dorothy know if you have an idea

Small Group Ministries

...are suspended for now but may be re-formed in the fall, depending on the amount of interest shown in having the groups and the availability of leadership.

New Group Being Formed

Have you been longing for a way to *do something*, to bring peace to our nation and the larger world, and to bring healing to our planet? Do you believe that humans have an innate ability to direct the energy we are made of in order to change the physical world? (Or figure it’s a least worth a try?) Then please join us for a new group, tentatively named “Healing Energy”.



- Almost all aspects of this new group remains to be decided, by you, the members – the day and time, the frequency, the exact format. But there are a few underpinnings:
- The aim is to be absolutely inclusive – theist, non-theist, atheist, Wicca, Christian, Buddhist, agnostic, quantum physics believer, you name it – all are welcome to take part and **to lead**. Guided or silent meditation, invocations, drum circle, prayer, singing bowls, chanting, affirmations, music, dance – any and all sincere methods of channeling human energy will be used to send blessings the world. And, of course, always respect and kindness for others’ beliefs.
- The point of the meetings is not to rehash and dissect the many things that need healing. While it is important to be educate ourselves, this time is for blessing and healing - positive energy. Of course, each of us will “hold up” specific situations that we wish to heal as we gather our energies together.

Please e-mail to Dorothy Wilson at djjccw@sbcglobal.net if you’d like to be part of this. Please include a day of the week and time that is good for you, as well as how often you’d be willing to participate. How about alternating days of the week – first week of the month, we’ll meet on Sunday at 6:00 p.m.; second week of the month on Monday at 6:30 p.m.? Weekly meetings or once or twice a month? Maybe start with monthly and go from there? We’ll have at least one planning meeting, timing to be announced.

Dorothy