

FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS

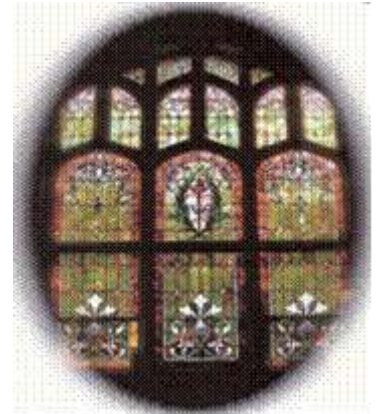


Photo by Rev. Sunshine Wolfe, 2015

*Newsletter of the
First
Unitarian
Church*

Alton, Illinois

www.firstuualton.org



Rev. Dawn Fortune

Sunday Worship 10:00 A.M
The Theme for November is Community

November 6, 10:00 a.m.

Kayci Combs-Lueker

Worship Associate: Tom Cochran

“Relaxed Distractions” Musical guests. Poetry. Chanting. Meditation and guided visualization to relax and reduce stress as we prepare for an intense week . We won't speak about candidates or parties but we will focus on being inward seekers and to being present with needs that arise from any political aftermath . Come, stand alongside your UU family and raise the vibrations of the community and the world.

Wear fun hats. Bring instruments. Bring a friend. And be ready to open your heart and *Stand on the Side of Love*.

November 9, 7:00 p.m.

Vespers Service, All are Welcome

Rev. Dawn Fortune

No matter who wins the election, people will need a place to be safe and to process the election and what it means for the future of our nation and our community.

It will be a service of readings and hymns, with a short reflection by me, and space for people to talk and share, both before the service and afterwards in the Weurker Room. We will be publicizing this event to the larger Alton community and inviting the people at Emerson Chapel to join us for this time of quiet healing and reflection. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

November 13, 10:00 a.m.

Rev. Dawn Fortune, Peg Flach and Worship Associates

A special service to include Spoken Word and music, part of “**The Weekend of Something Better**”!

November 20, 10:00 a.m.

Joy Hoeft

Worship Associate Mary Johnson, with youth group

In this annual and special Thanksgiving service, the Youth Group will be helping to lead in a special way. As usual, we encourage congregants to bring bread to share, preferably cut into shareable pieces. We will have our traditional bread service with a slight surprising twist. Come and join this service of community and sharing.

November 27, 10:00 a.m.

Irene Gulovsen

Worship Associate Mary Johnson

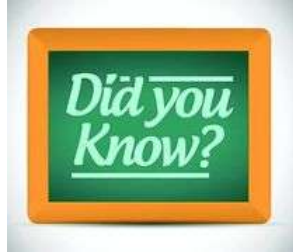
“Is There Really Nothing New Under the Sun?”

What if 4th century Qoheleth (the author of *Ecclesiastes*) met Sebastian Junger (the author of *Tribe: On Belonging and Homecoming* (2016))? What sort of conversation might transpire?

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Ms. Gulovsen has a Master of Theological Studies from Eden Seminary, has recently served as interim pastor at two local UCC churches, owned and operated a book store in the St. Louis area for over twenty years, and has lived in various parts of the country as well as three years in Abu Dhabi.

From the Prez



We were friendly, nice, warm people. That is how my family and friends described our congregation after attending my husband’s memorial. They loved the service which was created by Dawn and liked the explanation of Unitarian Universalism. I feel the same way about our church and the memorial service, so it was nice that my family and friends spontaneously expressed their opinions.

The board knows our responsibility for carrying out the mission and vision of our church.

We know that we can’t do this by ignoring financial necessities to keep the church running.

We also know that the congregation wants more transparency about financial issues. In pursuing this goal, I learned more than I wanted to about financial aspects of our church.

For example, we have had three different accounting systems in the last five years. We now have Quick Books which Becky Green, our administrator, has become a master of by teaching herself. We will be producing reports that compare expenses to our actual income. Lisa Strangeman and Robin Crane will be working on this with Becky.

We have four accounts. This will be reduced to three in the near future. The work of Sandy Shaner, Robin Crane, and Becky Green with much needed clarification from Jerry Johnson was essential in understanding why we had these different accounts.

Following is the account name and money in it as of October 11, 2016.

Church Checking Account \$16,844.62
This is our operating fund and we pay bills from it.

Money Market Account \$26,236.10
This is a reserve/emergency fund

Capital Campaign \$ 0.02
We used this for the remodeling & recent roof repairs

Endowment Account \$ 716.57
Money donated to put in our Endowment fund

We will be closing out the capital campaign which had money left after remodeling our church. The last bit of that was used to repair the turret roofs which were rotten and leaking into the church. Several bids were taken on this job and the board decided on a bid (one of the lowest) that would get the job done. We can close the capital campaign account which was meant to be temporary.

We have one other account that is the minister’s discretionary fund. Some money from that account will be transferred into the checking account leaving the ministerial account with a rather low balance.

I hope that as we become transparent in what funds we have and where they are going, our congregation will give input to help forward our mission and vision.

Dee Evans, Board President.

Rev. Dawn’s Schedule:

Wed – Sunday preaching	church office	Sunday
Nov. 2-6	Emerson	11/6 Emerson
Nov. 9-13	Alton	11/13 Alton

If you’d like to meet with me, the best days are Wednesdays and Thursdays when I have regular office hours, although I recommend making an appointment so things don’t overlap. I can also sometimes meet on Fridays or Saturdays, depending on my schedule, so if midweek doesn’t work for you, let me know and I’ll flex to make things fit.

As always, you can get in touch with me at my cell phone (314) 399-1023 or at my church email revdawnfortune@gmail.com

Peace,
Rev. Dawn

Coffee Hour Goodies

If you want goodies for our Sunday coffee hours, please bring some to share. We have no more goodies, like fruit, cookies, cheese, left. Any donations of coffee, tea, creamer, lemonade, and so on are welcome. Mike Tarbulski is doing a great job of keeping coffee and goodies out on Sunday. So, if you like goodies, please help us out by bringing some every so often.



4th Saturday Personal Care Item Distribution Saturday, Nov. 26th, 11 a.m.

Your contributions are needed, **and**, especially in November and December, we need your help in distributing these essential products. Many of our members who always participate have out of town plans over the Holidays. Make the Holiday Season special for someone else, and yourself, by taking part in this community service event. It only takes a few hours, 10:30 till just after noon, one day a month. We'll do an inventory a few weeks before the 26th to determine what items are needed; it varies month to month. If possible, please purchase items that are fragrance free. As always, cash or check donations are also gladly accepted. Please be sure to indicate that the funds are for "personal care items".



UU PARTNER CHURCH COUNCIL

Since 1993, the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUPCC) has encouraged and supported almost 200 congregational partnerships between U.S. and Canadian Unitarian Universalists and Unitarians and Unitarian Universalists around the world. These relationships weave together the lives and stories of people who share our fundamental affirmations of freedom of conscience in matters of religion, tolerance for those with different beliefs, a reasoned approach to religious ideas, and a willingness to grow and change in our religious understandings.

UUPCC is an independent affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association. UUPCC believes that international engagement is a moral and spiritual principle that enhances Unitarian Universalist congregational life. Global partnerships can be a first step to building world community. Through shared experience, partners become increasingly aware of the interdependency of all people.

Partnerships provide individuals, small groups and congregations a way to connect with the larger fellowship of our faith. We value building relationships between UUs that benefit all in both small and large ways—improving cultural understanding, supporting communities and helping to develop individual, religious, educational and economic opportunities.

UU congregations in North America have partner church relationships with Unitarians in the UK, Czech Republic, Romania (Transylvania), India, Hong Kong, Philippines, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria and Burundi.

Individuals and groups in partnered churches can take "pilgrimages" under the auspice of the UUPCC to

visit Unitarian churches in various countries. Robert Kokenyesi and Jerry and Mary Johnson have all spent time in Unitarian villages in Transylvania. For three years our congregation also helped financially support the education of three Unitarian students from the Khasi Hills of India through the Partner Church Council program.

The headquarters of the UU Partner Church Council, formerly in Massachusetts, is now at Eden Seminary in St. Louis. Its Executive Director, Rev. Roger Bertschhausen, will be giving the sermon at our church on December 11. For further information about the Partner Church activities visit its website www.uupcc.org



The sanctuary of the Unitarian Church in the village of Homoródalmás. - photo by J. Johnson

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**)

Religious Education for Children and Youth News

The Youth Group has been participating in Popcorn Theology. In October, they watched segments of Star Trek Generations (theme - happiness and finding inner peace)

Star Gate: The Ark of Truth (theme - truths and false; making moral decisions can be difficult; does the end justify the means?)

Back to the Future (how choices affect the future)

Saved! (the middle ground between right and wrong)

In November, the Youth Group will be watching Hunger Games (economic despair)

Forrest Gump (cultivating attitude and gratitude)

Hoosiers (forgiveness)

The Youth Group will also be involved in the Thanksgiving Bread Service on November 20.

In the Elementary Classroom, the kids are learning that there are different types of superheroes in everyday people.

We have been introducing the children to the stories of people from the Bible who have acted with courage and wisdom and shows how their lives confirm our Unitarian Universalist principles. The curriculum also encourages the children to lead their own lives fully and to use their own positive "super powers" as they interact with the world around them, and as they do so, to grow both spiritually and ethically. Lessons includes art, drama and music activities.

We now have a paid Nursery Attendant, Hannah, who is also available for Adult RE time. Since our policy is to have 2 adults at all times, we still need an assistant in each class and the nursery, so remember to support our young people by volunteering.

If you have any questions or comments about RE, please contact Joy Hoeft, kjabhoeft@gmail.com.



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

Bookkeeping Help

Please use the envelopes available in the pews for cash donations that are designated as pledges or for specific funds like for the Minister's Discretionary Fund, 4th Saturday Lunches, Sacred Grounds, etc. Write this information along with your name on the envelope. All other undesignated or unrestricted cash donations can be placed in the collection plates.

Also, please make sure that all checks and envelopes have the pledge year in the memo line.



Kitchen Clean Up



and put away."

No more than 30 minutes of your time is required to clean up the kitchen after a potluck lunch or coffee hour. Please be sure you're doing your fair share of keeping our church home clean and comfortable. Remember to always "wash, dry,

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@firstuualton.org



From the Editor



Non-perishable foods items are always needed to contribute to the Alton Crisis Food Pantry. It's important to help our neighbors get the food they need.

Church Potluck Lunch November 6th @ 11:15 am

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



The Weekend of Something Better

WHAT: Time for Something Better,
WHERE: First UU of Alton
WHEN: Saturday Nov 12 and Sunday Nov 13
Veteran's Day weekend

This is an all-gender church and community event
Saturday afternoon mini-retreat
Saturday evening catered dinner
Saturday night Spoken Word / Live Music concert
Sunday Spoken Word service

We enthusiastically invite all to attend our uber-special event "**The Weekend of Something Better**"! Please invite your friends and families. This is a community event.



A glorious variety of workshops are offered at 11:00, 1:00 and 3:00 ... as well as a hearty dinner at 5:30 p.m. and an insightful Spoken Word / Live Music Concert at 6:30 p.m. The first set will feature Spoken Word original writers who will each share a personal, true story that reflects upon the theme of Something Better. Perhaps best known under her

professional pseudonym of Adrianna Larkin, our second set will spotlight Nancy Herold. An award winning singer-songwriter, Nancy renders dulcet tones with "story in song" and upbeat acoustic originals performed solo with a simple guitar.

Reservations are now available ONLINE at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090f4daaae2aabfc1-workshops>. Here you can sign up for Saturday workshops, massages, dinner and/or our Spoken Word/Concert event ... all located at our cozy First UU of Alton.

On Sunday, a special UU service will be led by Rev Dawn Fortune with 2 featured Spoken Word readers.

A weekend bonus: gorgeous fall river bluff views!

Join us for Something Better!

SpiritUUal Exercises: The Journey Continues

The next group meeting is **Nov 6 after service (11:15 or so)** in the Sanctuary. We will be discussing the concepts of consolation and desolation, which appears apt the Sunday before the election :)

Suggestions regarding the meditation/contemplation

/prayer (this is for everyone): Pick the same time of day. Do the breath meditation first. When you meditate on the breath, other (non-breath) thoughts will come to your mind. It's completely normal and expected. Just lightly shoo them away. When your mind is quieted after a while of breathing, you can start contemplation on your faith history or your life history (how did I get here?). I would suggest contemplating just one section of it. But you can look at the whole thing too as long as you focus on the object of contemplation. Again, during contemplation, you will get distracted by other thoughts. When that happens, gently shoo them away. But do observe what kind of other thoughts come up. Maybe write them down. How long for meditation/contemplation? However long you can do it. The longer the time, the easier it gets to quiet the mind.

For the prayer, you may want to write it down after the contemplation has given you the 'material', or just say it at the end of your practice. This can be done separately from meditation contemplation. See what works for you.

What to keep in the journal? Your own book of 'experiments' or (as Ignatius would call them) rules for what works for you, what deepens your self-awareness (the goal for this month).

Thanks again for your participation. Many blessings,

Sabrina

**Alton Area Cluster
Book Club**

Social Justice

**Thursday, Nov 17
3 – 5 P.M.**



INTEREST GROUPS:

We're Meeting Again

50+ Group / Free For All

Nov. 5th, 10:30 a.m.

We have begun reading and discussing the book



'Landscapes of Aging & Spirituality', edited by Kathleen Montgomery. It's a small book with short reflections that we can read aloud (after check-in) and then discuss. We'll meet in the Wuerker Room, followed by lunch for those who want to continue the conversation in a different location.

Remember, there really is not an age requirement to join us.

Anna Ds – Women's Alliance, Nov. 3rd, 11:30 a.m.



We will gather at one of our favorite places, Old Bakery Beer, 400 Landmarks Blvd, Alton, 618-463-1470.

Please contact Sandy no later than Monday, Oct 31st so she can complete our reservations.

We'll have a great visit with many friends, old and new.

Men's Monthly Lunch, Nov. 17th, 11:30 a.m.

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



UU-UNO

Paula LaFond has agreed to be our second UU-UNO envoy. The **Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA's) United Nations Office (UU-UNO)** is your voice at the United Nations and is engaged in international advocacy work at the UN based on Unitarian Universalist (UU) values. To find out more about this organization, speak to Ron Glossop or see the UU-UNO website at



<https://uuinternational.org/networking/uu-uno/>.

Healing Energy Meditation

**Nov. 14th and 28th,
6:30 p.m. by the Fireplace**

Powerful guided meditations, words of wisdom, beautiful music, laughter, chanting, sharing, exploring the many



paths to connect with the Light and to experience and Bless the Interdependent Web of Life. We bring no answers, only open minds and questing hearts. Please join us.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP 2016 - 2017

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