

# FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS

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Congregation established 1836

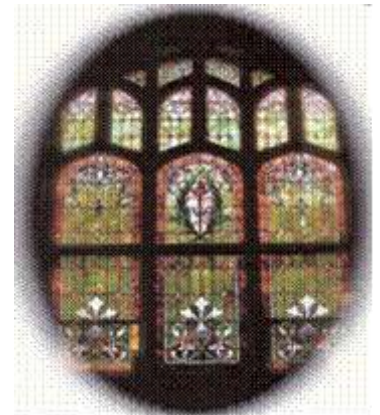
*Newsletter of the*

## *First Unitarian Church*

*Alton, Illinois*

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

*Pastor Amy Brooks*



**Sunday Worship 10:00 A.M**

**The Theme for October, 2017 is "Vulnerability"**

**October 1<sup>st</sup> 10 A.M**

**Animal Blessing - No Potluck**

**Pastor Amy Brooks**

**Worship Associate: Sabrina Trupia**

You are invited to bring your animals, large or small, for a blessing of the animal's service. The service will be outdoors, at the church. See more details on page 3.

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**October 8<sup>th</sup> 10 A.M**

**Church Picnic in the Park!**

**Pastor Amy Brooks and The UU Pagans**

We will meet at Gordon F. Moore Community Park on College Ave. The Pagan group will lead us in a brief, earth-centered ceremony after which we will share in food and fellowship. See more details on page 3.

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**October 15<sup>th</sup> 10 A.M**

**"Jimmie Lee and James, the Evolution of a Movement."**

**John Herndon**

**Worship Associate: Dorothy Wilson**

Learn about one of the pivotal events in the 1960's civil rights movement

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**October 22<sup>nd</sup> 10 A.M**

**"Beautifully Vulnerable"**

**Presented by Mary Johnson**

**Worship Associate: Robin Crane**

A Faith Rocket sermon presented by Mary Johnson, and written by the Rev. Sandra Fees, minister, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Berks County in Reading, PA.

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**October 29<sup>th</sup> 10 A.M**

**"What good has the UN done?"**

**Ron Glossop**

**Worship Associate: Robin Crane**

How does it need to be changed to do what until now it hasn't done?

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### **The Seekers**

**Every Sunday, 11:15 in the Emerson**

**Room, we'll engage in a more in-depth**

**discussion of that day's sermon and the**

**monthly topic. Everyone is welcome to**

**join in. It's a great way to get to know**

**your fellow congregants and to get a deeper understanding**

**of the lessons we are learning.**



**The Weak**

*Protecting yourself is self defense. Protecting others is warriorship.* ~ Bohdi Sanders

These are troubling times.

Just in recent days we have seen numerous hurricanes, the Stockley verdict, earthquakes in Mexico, and now another attempt to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. It is almost as if the universe is reminding us of the importance of being attentive to the worship theme for October: vulnerability.

I find this theme especially appropriate to our planned blessing of the animals service; and to the picnic, with the Pagan group leading us. At this time of attacks on the EPA nature is particularly vulnerable.

I suspect that most of us have faced a time when we have been made aware of our weakness. We can feel very alone at those times. And how much more lonely when our family and friends stay silent! No-one escapes vulnerability, but the gift of community is that while some are weak others are strong.

Now, more than ever, is the time for us to lean into the UUA's Love Resists campaign\*. The beauty of resistance is the dual message it sends. Yes, it draws a line in the sand as we push back against the powerful forces in this world that bring death and destruction. AND it sends a message to the vulnerable that they are not alone.

These are troubling times. So maybe it is time to trouble ourselves on behalf of the weak.

*Rev. Amy Brooks*



**From the Editor**  
[church@firstuualton.org](mailto:church@firstuualton.org)

**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)

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**Board of Trustees:**

There will be no report this month from the Board – November's newsletter will cover September and October news – stay tuned!

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**Nursery Care**

All children, 5 years of age and under, are welcome to our staffed nursery during Sunday Services



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**Religious Education for Children and Youth News**

We will be starting OWL in October. Please let me know if you are interested in having your teenager take OWL. To start, there is a mandatory parents meeting one Sunday October, after church. Parents will preview the slideshow of the pictures that will be shown to your teens. You will then need to sign a permission sheet to allow them to view these pictures. After that meeting, the group will tentatively meet every other Sunday during church and an hour after. The alternative Sundays will be Youth Group and the Social Justice Curriculum.

We are still in need of teachers for the Elementary RE class. The kids are learning about world religions. If people would just commit to teaching once a month (same week each month), from now until the end on Dec, one would only have to teach 3 or 4 times. If 3 people commit to this, we will have a full complement of teachers that meets UUA safety standards as well as giving Jennifer a break once in a while.

In Youth Group this past week in our social justice curriculum, we discussed Awareness - being aware of the problem/ injustice. We discussed one symptom of awareness which was described as "SEP" or Somebody Else's Problem.

We need to be aware that a supported Children's Religious Education Program is vital to the growth and sustainability of our church. I realize that we are a small congregation, but in order to grow, we need to step out of our comfort zone. We have great kids. Please contact Jennifer Lewis about teaching Elementary RE.

Joy

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**Animal Blessing - Sunday**  
**October 1st - 10:00 am**



You are invited to bring your animals, large or small, for a blessing of the animals service.

The service will be outdoors, at the church. Since you know your animals best we ask that you use your own discernment as to whether to bring them if the weather is cold on the day. If, for whatever reason, you prefer to leave your animal/s at home you are invited to bring an image of them instead. Depending on how well your animals play with others, cages or leashes are advised.

This is a great event for first time visitors. Feel free to invite neighbors, friends, coworkers, or any strangers you meet at along the way.

**\*\*In case of inclement weather this service will be moved indoors. If we wake up to a wet day on the 1st we ask that you leave your animals at home and bring an image of them instead, as the possibility of allergies or accidents could make an indoor service unpleasant for all.\*\***

Since you know your animals best we ask that you use your own discernment as to whether to bring them if the weather is cold on the day. If, for whatever reason, you prefer to leave your animal/s at home you are invited to bring an image of them instead. Depending on how well your animals play with others, cages or leashes are advised.

This is a great event for first time visitors. Feel free to invite neighbors, friends, coworkers, or any strangers you meet at along the way. Please email, text or call Pastor Amy if you have questions: [thisisamybrooks@gmail.com](mailto:thisisamybrooks@gmail.com) or 217-204-7377 (c)

**\*\*In case of inclement weather this service will be moved indoors. If we wake up to a wet day on the 1st we ask that you leave your animals at home and bring an image of them instead, as the possibility of allergies or accidents could make an indoor service unpleasant for all.\*\***



Jim Elliott's widow, Phyllis Elliott, has moved into the home of her daughter, Michelle. Please contact Lucy or Becky for the address. Her cell phone number did not change.

**Potluck Picnic**  
**Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**10:00 am**



**Location:**  
**Gordon F. Moore**  
**Community Park on**  
**College Ave**

The Pagan group will lead us in a brief, earth-centered ceremony after which we will share in food and fellowship.

There are benches, grills, and a playground available for our use.

This event will serve as our worship service for this Sunday. Signs at the church will direct visitors to the park.

Please Bring: food to share, yard games, folding chairs.

Note: due to park rules this is a dry event.

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**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)



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## LIGHTING OUR CORNER OF THE WORLD,



We all work hard to keep the lights on in our homes, our offices, our schools, our non-profits, and our church. People called “Chalice Lighters” go even farther: They choose to contribute to their UUA Region’s “Chalice Lighting” program by making

annual, and often quarterly, contributions of at least \$20. Chalice Lighters define community as extending beyond their own church’s walls to include all the churches in our MidAmerica Region. The Chalice Lighting program exemplifies the generosity of the St. Louis churches that helped us in our time of need.

Let us do the same. Let us each think about letting “this little light of mine” shine in our Region, so that UU churches can benefit from Chalice Lighting grants that will provide supplemental funds for:

- Staff
- A new or renovated building
- New outreach and public relations programs, or
- Establishing new churches.

Here’s how to contribute your \$20 or more:

On-line through:

<https://midamericauua.org/programs/chalice-lighters>

OR

Via snail-mail to:

Chalice Lighter Program  
MidAmerica Region Unitarian Universalist  
Association  
2355 Fairview Ave N. #312  
Roseville, MN 55113

## *Enhancing Civil Conversations*

Led by the Rev. David Crowley

Thursday evenings - October 12, 19, 26

6 to 7:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church – 4<sup>th</sup> & Alby Sts., Alton IL

- Would it be helpful to you to learn how to create space for a new quality of conversation and relationship building in these divisive and turbulent times?
- Do you think the social art of listening is being drowned out by fearful commentaries and hateful speech?
- Would you like be able to be strong, as well as respectful, in situations where there are entrenched opinions being expressed?

If so, you are invited to join in conversations where we may re-discover the precious resource and skill of being civil with each other, even though significant differences may exist in our world outlook. *“Enhancing Civil Conversations”* is planned as a three-session workshop to help us find and live out the best in humankind. It will be led by the Rev. David Crowley, minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Alton, and coordinated by the **Book Discussion Group of the Alton Area Cluster - United Congregations of Metro-East.**

Participants will receive handouts, engage in question/answer dialogues, and practice some interactive activities.

An optional resource you may be interested in borrowing from a library, or purchasing, is the book Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World by Richard Mouw.

If you have questions please email Mary Johnson [mejohanson@mindspring.com](mailto:mejohanson@mindspring.com). If you will be attending please let Mary know by email before Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>.



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.

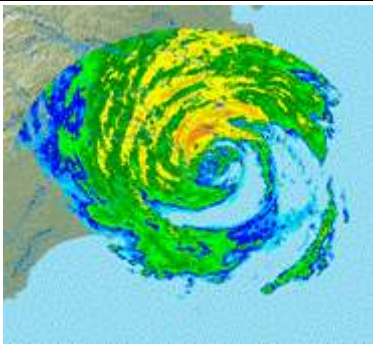
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## Wash, Dry and Put Away!

Enjoy some coffee and cookies with your conversation after church? Thank you for being sure our dishes are taken care of and trash removed.



*Keeping our church home clean and comfortable is everyone’s job.*



## HURRICANE SEASON

The Gulf Coast has been hit by two hurricanes. The national Unitarian Universalist Association is collecting money to help with emergency services. Half of the money collected will go to Unitarian Universalist congregations in Texas and Florida. The other half will go direct to high risk groups that are outside of our churches. Online contributions can be made to <https://giving.uua.harvey-floods>. Checks can be sent direct to the national Unitarian Universalist offices in Boston. Checks should be marked: "Hurricanes Irma and Harvey."

Address:

Unitarian Universalist Association,  
24 Farnsworth Street  
Boston, MA 02210.

## Great Rivers Choral Society

The Great Rivers Choral Society will begin its 2017-18 season with "Beginnings: Seasons, Life and Love"

*This concert is free to the public and a free will offering will be taken. Inquiries maybe directed to Richard Booth, 618-407-3888 or Paul Guccione, 618-798-1492.*

*Saturday October 7, 7:30 pm  
at Holy Angels Catholic Church,  
345 W Acton, Wood River*

*October 14, 7:30pm  
at First Presbyterian Church,  
514 Alby St, Alton*

*October 15, 3 pm  
at First Presbyterian Church,  
514 Alby St, Alton*



New works by Randall Stroope and Rene' Clausen will be featured as well as traditional choral music.

Thank you so much for your kind support,  
Richard Booth

### 4th Saturday Personal Care Item Distribution Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>



Please support our church's community outreach by donating to our personal care inventory.

Each month we need laundry detergent, toilet paper, shampoo, body wash, deodorant, hand lotion, shaving cream, baby wipes ("free and clear"), dish detergent (for hand washing dishes).

Donations of reusable tote bags (like what you can buy at grocery stores) would be appreciated.

Stay tuned for more specific information on what will be needed this month.

### Statement by Members and Friends of the First Unitarian Church 9-24-17

As people of faith, we, members and friends of the First Unitarian Church of Alton, have been galvanized by the not-guilty verdict of September 15th, 2017, in St. Louis City in the unlawful death of Anthony Lamar Smith. In response, we hereby attest and affirm the following:

The U.S. Justice System is in conflict with the First Principle of Unitarian Universalism: "The inherent worth and dignity of every person." Our First Principle echoes a key purpose of the U.S. Constitution which the verdict fails to honor: to "secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

In response to these affronts to human dignity and liberty, we pledge to work toward the achievement of what is assured in the Pledge of Allegiance: "**liberty and justice for all.**"

For our support with events and actions that oppose racism and promote equality, please contact us through our church website <http://www.firstuualton.org/>. The signers' names are listed on this website.

## INTEREST GROUPS:

**Anna Ds – Women's Alliance, October 5<sup>th</sup> 11:30 a.m.**



*We're going to be at United Methodist Village to **celebrate Lorelei Nelson's 100th birthday!***

Here's the information about the location --  
United Methodist Village,  
5201 Asbury Ln, Godfrey, IL 62035  
Phone: (618) 466-8662

Since Lorelei doesn't have e-mail, I'm asking that you e-mail me with your RSVP or call on my land line so I can call Lorelei with a final count. Please e-mail or call me by Friday, September 29.

You can arrive on Thursday, 10/5 as early as 11, go in the main entrance, pay \$8.75 in cash for a lunch ticket (all lunches are the same price, there's no tipping, and exact change for your lunch is appreciated by the Village receptionist). Then go down 1 floor and we will be seated in a private room with lunch orders taken at 11:30.

This should be even more fun than normal! Hope to see everyone there.

Sandy



**Men's Monthly Lunch  
October 12th, 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](mailto:pphebert@mail.com)

**Healing Energy Meditation  
October 11<sup>th</sup> and October 25<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 P.M.**



Come Explore the Mystery with us!  
Conversation, meditation and growth with friends. This group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. of each month at 6:30 P.M. at the fireplace. All are welcome

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CHURCH LEADERSHIP  
2016 - 2017

### Board of Trustees

**Board President** - Michael Schmidt  
**President-Elect** - Paula LaFond  
**Past President** - Dee Evans  
**Treasurer** - Robin Crane  
**Secretary** - Pat Moore  
**Member-At-Large** - Phil Embree  
**Member-at-Large** - Tracy Howe-Koch

### Committee/Team Leads

**Transitions Committee** - TBA  
**Social Events** - Vacant  
**Interfaith and U.U.** - Vacant  
**Social Justice** - Carol McGrew  
**Fundraising** - Dee Evans & Peg Flach

### Pastoral Associates

Marcia Custer  
Sandra Shaner

### Religious Education Council

**Chair**- Joy Hoeft

### Stewardship Committee

**Building** - TBD  
**Grounds** - Robyn Stranquist  
**Canvass 2017** - TBA  
**Endowment Fund** - Jerry Johnson  
**Finance** - Matt Koch  
**Membership** - Mary Weber  
**Sunday Support Ministries** - TBA

### Worship Associates

Mary Johnson  
Robin Crane  
Joy Hoeft  
Robert Kokenyesi  
Dorothy Wilson  
Mike Tarabulski  
Ruth Maskow  
Sabrina Trupia