

# FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS



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.  
October, 2018 - "Persistence"**

**October 7<sup>th</sup> 10 A.M – Potluck Dinner!**

**Pastor Amy Brooks**

**Worship Associate: John Herndon**

**October 14<sup>th</sup> 10 A.M**

**Phillip Harris**

**Sermon: "Persistence throughout the Protest: My Story of during the Ferguson Unrest"**

**Worship Associate: Robin Crane**

**October 21<sup>st</sup> 10 A.M.**

**Pastor Amy Brooks**

**Worship Associate: Peg Flach**

**October 28<sup>th</sup> 10 A.M.**

**Mary Johnson**

**Presenting Faith Rocket Sermon "Persistence in the Times of Struggle" by Rev. Robin Barlett**

**Worship Associate: Joy Hoelt**



POTLUCK DINNER

**Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup>**

Share your favorite foods with your church family and stay to help clean up after - all are welcome!

### **PASTOR AMY'S CORNER**

#### Mea Culpa

*Tomorrow, every Fault is to be amended; but that Tomorrow never comes. ~ Benjamin Franklin*

Of recent weeks many of us have followed along in sick horror as reports from Pennsylvania revealed that priests kept secret over a thousand identifiable cases of abuse of children. In my home country of Australia, the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse have been similarly damning.

These actions are a violation of the trust that is placed in religious institutions, and I abhor the actions of the abusers and of those who covered up their crimes.

There is a righteous indignation that rises up from within me whenever I read another story about a child being abused in a religious setting, and about the people who protected abusers instead of protecting the vulnerable. And I am mindful that anger is so much simpler when it is directed at our others. It is so easy to judge our neighbours for their failings and forget there is a need to clean our own house.

I wonder about the people who have encountered harm within the halls of Unitarian Universalist churches. I wonder about those who have experienced pain within our own walls. Whose stories have yet to be told? And, most importantly, where am I complicit in all of this? Where have evil actions been allowed to continue *Mea Culpa* or 'through my fault?' What can I do to change this?

It can be overwhelming to imagine how to respond when we are confronted by systemic violence. I suggest that something is always better than nothing. Revolution begins with one person, sharing one story: naming the evil, uplifting the good, and claiming as their own the agency to make change happen.



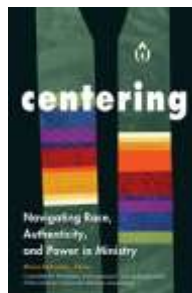
### The Seekers

Change in Adult (18 and over)  
Religious Education group  
called Seekers:

Beginning in October, 2018, Seekers will be facilitated by a group leader on the second and third Sundays only, after church, in Emerson Place, this month to occur on October 14 and 21. On the other Sundays, the group will be self-led by those attending. UU's love to discuss ideas, and all adults are encouraged to use this forum to discuss the sermon and related ideas. We always have lively and interesting discussions and we encourage all adults to participate. It is recommended that personal sharings be held to 2-3 minutes so that all may have an opportunity to participate. Looking forward to seeing you there!

### Common Read

Have you been wondering *when are we going to start the Common Read book again?* (The Common Read is a book chosen by a Unitarian Universalist Association panel which all UUs are encouraged to read for the year.)



Answer: After careful discussion with Pastor Amy and our religious education professional, Zipporah Lee, the book "Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity and Power in Ministry" is on hold for now. However, watch for further developments (currently in the works) on the important issue of race.

### Don't forget the church now offers online giving!

-You can now make a contribution to our church through a mobile app! To get started download **GivePlusChurch** for **FREE** from the App Store or Google Play. Simply search for "**GivePlusChurch**" to quickly find and download the app today. Then, you can easily make donations directly from your smartphone using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account. You can also choose to donate as a guest or set up an account that allows you to securely and conveniently schedule recurring donations and manage and review your giving history. We hope you enjoy this new way to contribute to our church and thank you for your support!



### Religious Education Updates

The Eliot Chapel Youth are visiting on Nov. 4th to worship with us & also to tour the building after worship. *Please welcome them warmly as they join us.*



Religious Education for Youth & Children is currently being held in Emerson Place due to the need for slight building updates. We plan to share the space kindly with Seekers and any other group that wishes to use that space on a Sunday morning.

**The Religious Education Schedule has changed!** In an effort to move toward sustainable youth & children's RE here at First UU Alton, there have been adjustments to how RE is scheduled on a Sunday morning. **Youth now meet for RE every 1st and 3rd Sundays. Elementary now meet for RE every 2nd and 4th Sundays. 5th Sundays, all children & youth remain in worship.** If anyone has further questions about these arrangements, please contact Zippy, whose information is found in the church directory.

**New Church Office Hours**  
**Monday, Wednesday and Friday**  
**10:00 am - 2:00 pm**

## From the Board



The Board met on September 13 and discussed several ongoing issues. Phil continues to work on the many building and grounds issues with other volunteers in both areas. A major building issue is the plan to move the Administrator's

office upstairs next to the Minister's office. Progress has been made in emptying the "RE storage locker" upstairs and we're working toward a wiring addition so the copier can be moved upstairs along with some of the office furniture. You'll probably be hearing a request for strong backs and sturdy hands to do some of that moving over the next month.

We reviewed experiences with the new electronic giving app as well as plans for the NoCo and GlenEd satellite start-up meetings.

We discussed our continuing concern over the lack of member interest in filling the continuing vacancy in the President-Elect position. This is becoming increasingly worrisome since a person in that position would NOW be learning about the Board activities and responsibilities so that they could succeed Chris as President on July 1.

And we discussed items for the Board's "annual retreat" which is scheduled for September 22. More on that later.

If you have any questions, please find a Board member and ask.

Sandy Shaner



Besides donations of personal care items we need donations of a few hours of your time. *We almost had to cancel September's distribution* because most of our regular workers were not available. Fortunately some people were able to change their plans at the last minute and we opened as usual. However, we need additional people to be trained in the processes involved in this community outreach program. So, October's distribution is on October 27. If you are willing to come from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to learn about the distribution tasks involved, please contact Mary Johnson ([mejohanson@mindspring.com](mailto:mejohanson@mindspring.com)) or reply to a UU Friends Facebook request for helpers when it is posted.

Thanks, Mary

## Wash, Dry and Put Away!

We count on each other to be thoughtful and fair in all our interactions – that also includes seeing to it that our church home is kept clean and dishes washed up and put away. If you enjoy a cup of coffee, a plate of snacks, or a full meal, please take your turn to help with cleaning-up.



## Join us for our Third Annual Trivia Night Friday, October 19th at Kirkwood Community Center

Follow Link Below for More Information and Registration

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=stlefa&id=52>

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39<sup>TH</sup> Annual Oktoberfest -- October 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at  
St. Michael's Parish,

415 E Main St., Staunton, IL –  
Exit 41 off I-55.



Saturday, October 6<sup>th</sup> kicks off at 9:00 a.m. with a 5k run and the Auction will begin at 9:30 a.m. Great food & refresh-

ments, Laser tag and other games, amazing raffles, a country store and live music by Hella Snaps from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup> begins with a polka Mass at 10:00 a.m. Our famous chicken dinner from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. and entertainment all day including live music by Wildfire from 5:00-9:00 p.m. Visit our website for a full schedule of events at:

[www.stmichaelsoktoberfest.com](http://www.stmichaelsoktoberfest.com).

Thank you for your assistance and we hope that you will all be able come visit our parish celebration.



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**"Story as Medicine"**

**What stories serve to heal the world?  
How can stories focus your fire within?  
UU Women's Connection Fall Retreat  
October 12 - 14, 2018**

***DeKoven Center, Racine, WI***

Join us for our 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Retreat. We will be gathering at the DeKoven Center. **Our Keynote is Mary Grace ("M.G.") Bertulfo – author and community activist.** Her topic is "Story as Medicine – What stories serve to heal the world? How can stories focus your fire within?" Listening for stories, voices of nature, and 16th century women shamans from the Philippines.

**REGISTER NOW!**

At:

<https://www.uuwomensconnection.org/10-conferences/107-fall-retreat-2018>

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**Social Justice Committee  
Minutes for 09-15-2018**

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**Present: Amy Brooks, Pastor;  
Sheila O'Brien, Lucy Bouton, Ruth Maskow,  
Dee Evans**

The meeting was called to order at 11:03  
A short discussion ensued due to the small number of people at the meeting. Members decided the committee would continue.

In regard to voter registration, the following has been or is being done: registration was done at the animal pet pantry, was rained out at the Farmer's market, and was done on 4th Saturday, will be done at Alton High School and again at the Farmer's market.

Ruth wanted to know when part two of voter's engagement would be completed. Dee said she would contact Mike Atty of United Congregations of Metro East about that.

All voter's registration forms have to be in the County Clerk's Office by 10-10-2018. Lucy offered to drive the forms there, if needed.

Amy suggested a thank-you-for-voting booth at some sites. Lucy is going to call Robyn Berkley regarding SIUE and Sheila is going to call Lewis and Clark. There will be cookies/fruit to thank people for voting. If we have these booths, due to allergies to peanuts/nuts, we must be careful about what we bring.

Lucy is concerned about bringing people who need rides to the polls. Dee will contact AFSCME to see if they are giving rides and if we can join them.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08.  
**The next meeting will be October 20, 2018 at  
11 AM.**

**Submitted by: Dee Evans**

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## **INTEREST GROUPS:**

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### *Ladies Luncheon*

**Anna Ds – Women’s Alliance**  
**Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> 11 a.m.**

At our September meeting we decided we wanted to return to Fazzi’s in October, and Mary Weber has made arrangements for us to do so.

Here’s the summary:

Fazzi’s  
1813 Vandalia St.  
Collinsville, IL 62234  
Phone: 618-344-5440  
<http://www.fazzis.com/>

Please either respond to this email or call Mary Weber with your RSVP by Monday, October 1.

If you would like to bring canned food for Oasis or personal care items for 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday distribution, we’ll make sure they get to the right place.

See you soon!  
Sandy

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**Men’s Monthly Lunch**  
**Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> 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)



## **CHURCH LEADERSHIP** **2018 - 2019**

### **Board of Trustees**

**Board President-** Chris Strangeman  
**President-Elect-** TBD  
**Past President-** Michael Schmidt  
**Treasurer-** Robin Crane  
**Secretary-** Sandy Shaner  
**Member-At-Large-** Phil Embree  
**Member-At-Large-** Tracy Howe-Koch

### **Committee/Team Leads**

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

### **Pastoral Associates**

Marcia Custer  
Sandra Shaner

### **Religious Education Council**

**Chair-**Joy Hoeft  
**RE Coordinator -** Zipporah Lee

### **Stewardship Committee**

**Building & Grounds -** Phil Embree  
**Canvass 2019-** TBD  
**Endowment Fund-** Jerry Johnson,  
Ron Glossop & Tracy Howe-Koch  
**Finance-** Matt Koch  
**Membership-** Mary Weber  
**Sunday Support Ministries-** Vacant

### **Worship Associates**

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