

FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS

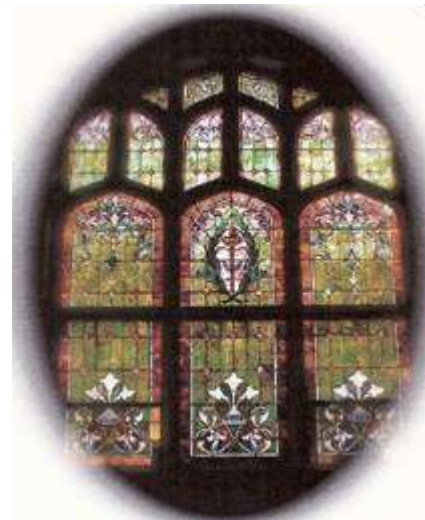


Congregation established 1836

Newsletter of the First Unitarian Church

Alton, Illinois
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PO Box 494 62002 (mail)

Office phone: 618-462-2462
<https://www.firstuualton.org/>



March 2021

Sunday Worship at 10:00 a.m.
March 2021 Theme: "COVENANT"

This month's services are pre-recorded videos and will premiere on our YouTube site at 10:00 a.m. Click on the YouTube icon in the upper right corner of the church's website.

The March 21st service from Rev. Khleber Van Zandt will not be on our YouTube site. For that service go directly to <https://www.youtube.com/user/uucov>

Due to technical issues, sometimes the services do not upload exactly at 10 a.m. Check for a message on UU Friends Facebook page regarding the start of any service.

Our live Zoom "Coffee and Conversation" time follows at 11:00 a.m. at the Zoom link below.
<https://siue.zoom.us/j/726948775> (that's a j not an i) - PASSWORD: 551868

March 7, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Speaker: John Herndon

Sermon title: "Moving the Fences, the essence of the faith in action of Unitarian Universalism."

March 14, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

*****(Daylight Saving Time Begins – set your clocks ahead Saturday night.)*****

March 14 ...

Speaker: Joy Hoeft

Sermon Title: "Unitarian and Universalism in the 3rd-6th centuries, and the people who reawakened Unitarianism in the 16th-18th centuries."

This is the first of seven in what will be a once-a-month series entitled "Unitarian and Universalist History and the People who Influenced our Faith" which will trace Unitarian and Universalist traditions over the centuries.

March 21, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Speaker: The Rev. Khleber Van Zandt of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice, Florida.



Sermon Title: “No Longer Black and White”

Our dictionaries often define racism in terms of individual prejudice, but this does little to explain how social hierarchies are reproduced. While those of us who are white may be against racism, we still benefit from the distribution of resources put in place and controlled by people like us. The link to this service is

<https://www.youtube.com/user/uucov>

March 28th, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

To Be Announced

If people need help with doing their worship service videos, please get in touch with [Alex J. Hoeft](#). He would like to have the videos at least by the Friday before your service.

Robyn’s Report

Greetings everyone and Happy Spring ... despite what the Ground Hog said, Spring is full steam ahead! As we move towards warmer weather, I am excited thinking about possibilities for us to meet on the church property to gather for services. As more and more of us get vaccines, this gives us many more options. So as things shift, we'll keep you in the loop on potential gatherings, weather permitted!

As for other events upcoming, please consider attending the Healing Circle planned for 3/13. We want to provide this opportunity for all folks, past and present members, who have had some challenging experiences with and within the Congregation. We want our church to be a place of refuge and comfort and if we have not extended this to members and congregants, we need to know so we can do better.

With Spring upon us, plan for some workdays on the Church grounds in the coming months. We'll schedule days, weather permitting, as soon as we are able!

Don't forget to come join us at our Sunday coffee hour ... come for a minute, come for an hour, or anything in between! It is a comfort to see familiar faces.

I want to thank everyone who is working so hard to keep the congregation running smoothly, despite all being at a distance! A special shout out to the Worship Associates, and Joy Hoeft and Alex Hoeft who are tirelessly working on getting the services working smoothly every Sunday morning! I know how hard this work is and I am grateful for all of you.

Love and Light,
Robyn Berkley
President of the Board

**First UU Alton Healing Circle
Via Zoom
Saturday, March 13, 2021
10:00 a.m. to Noon**

If you are a church member who has felt hurt or troubled by the difficult experiences in this congregation over the past few years, you are invited and encouraged to come together to check in. In a small circle of listening (on Zoom), facilitated by Rev. Dr. Claudia Hall, you can let others hear how you are doing, what feels still unresolved, and what might be done to help you, or others, begin to heal.

First UU Alton Healing Circle
Time: Mar 13, 2021 10:00 a.m. Central Time
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://siue.zoom.us/j/94323503408>
Meeting ID: 943 2350 3408
Password: 817244

Concerns



Please continue to keep Nancee Magilson's newborn granddaughter, Avery, in your thoughts and prayers.

Miscellaneous News and Notes

Carol McGraw's LEGO themed birthday party was postponed due to inclement weather. It will now be on March 13th from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. At church (limited # of attendees) and on Zoom. Please get in touch with [Carol](#) for that Zoom link.



Church Board Meeting

The Board will have its regular monthly meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, March 9th from 6 to 8 p.m. If there is an item you would like the Board to address, please contact [Robyn Berkley](#).



The Men's Group will be gathering on Zoom at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 11th. If you are not already on the Men's Group email list, contact [Nick Pendergrass](#) for the zoom meeting ID

Mona Hebert has a 20-gallon aquarium to give away. It has a heater and UV light. It is just like brand new. (Fish not included.) Contact Mona at mlhebert41@gmail.com.



VIRTUAL UUA General Assembly June 23-27, 2021

2021 Registration Information

Registration for virtual GA 2021 is **\$200 per person**. Financial support for registration as well as a payment plan are available. General Assembly registrants receive access to the 2021 Online Participation Portal, including live, simulive, and on-demand video content, the virtual exhibit hall, chat features, support, and a (**new!**) GA mobile app.

For further information go to:

<https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>

To register for financial aid or a volunteer position go to the link below.

<https://www.uua.org/ga/registration/financialaid/volunteer>



Financial Donations to the Church



You can now make a financial donation to the church through PayPal. The blue logo icon is in the upper right-hand corner of the church's homepage <http://www.firstuualton.org/>.

You may also donate using Givelify. Click on the large green square on the church's homepage.

Or mail your check to the church at PO 494; Alton, IL 62002.

Do not be too squeamish about your actions. All life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better. What if they be a little coarse, and you may get your coat soiled or torn? What if you do fail, and get fairly rolled in the dirt once or twice? Up again; you shall never be so afraid of a tumble.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Recipe from 1962 Anna Ds Cookbook

“Our Favorite Recipes”

Coq Au Vin with Rice

2 lb. chicken thighs and 2 lb. chicken breasts
½ cup cubed celery; 1 cup dry wine; 1 cup chicken
consommé; ½ tsp thyme; ½ cup cubed carrots; 1 box
mushrooms, washed and sliced; 1 Tb. Cornstarch, ½ tsp.
marjoram; 1 pod garlic. Cooked rice.

In a heavy skillet melt 1 stick of butter, add garlic,
thyme, marjoram until the butter foams, then add
chicken and brown quickly. Add wine when the
chicken is brown, also the carrots, celery, and consommé
(or broth). Cover and simmer over low heat for one
hour. When almost done add the mushrooms. Add
more broth or consommé if needed. Remove chicken
and keep warm. Thicken the gravy with cornstarch
dissolved in consommé. Pour over cooked rice.

From Mrs. Orland Forcade (Lottie)

CHURCH LEADERSHIP as of March 2021 2020 - 2021

Board Members

President: Robyn Berkley
robynberkley@yahoo.com

Secretary: Mary Johnson
mejohanson@mindspring.com

Treasurer: Nathan Brown
nathan.brown0621@outlook.com

Member at Large: Aiden Crist arexboi@gmail.com

Member at Large: Alex Hoeft
alex.j.hoeft@gmail.com

Member at Large: Carol McGrew
carol_mcgrew@yahoo.com

Member at Large: Pat Moore
patjimmoore@charter.net

President Elect: To be Determined

Message from UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray

Dear Friends - In the last year, we have experienced trauma
unprecedented in our lifetimes. The assaults on our
democracy, the devastation caused by COVID-19, repeated
incidents of deadly police violence, the rise in white
supremacist violence and the impacts of climate disasters
continue to take their toll. So many lives and livelihoods have
been lost. We are exhausted. We are grieving.

March 2021

To everyone in Texas, we send you our love and care and pray
that you and your loved ones are safe. To leaders in
communities impacted by these deadly winter storms, if your
congregation, members of your community or local partner
organizations are in need, the UUA's [Disaster Relief Fund](#)
is a resource for financial grants to help in this time. Please be in
touch with Lisa Presley at lpresley@uua.org with any
questions about applying for grants.

Over the weekend, we awarded a grant to the San Marcos UU
Fellowship to bolster a community effort to house and feed
those experiencing homelessness. We also organized a
shipment of water to First UU Church of Houston to distribute
in partnership with neighborhood organizations. These are
small offerings in what will be a long recovery, but they are
real ways that UUs make a difference through the UUA's
Disaster Relief Fund.

For those who are able, [your donations to the Disaster Relief
Fund](#) will help us respond to the urgent requests coming in.

It matters that we lean more deeply into compassion
and care. There is no more important practice or culture to
develop in this time.

During times of grief and loss, we have traditionally found
comfort and resilience in gathering together. As religious
communities, it is what we do. Yet, we now approach the first
anniversary of when, due to the pandemic, the UUA and most
of our congregations shifted to all-virtual gatherings. For
many, this has been an additional source of grief and isolation
and can make it more difficult to process our grief and pain.

Given the layers of stress and trauma, the need to care for
ourselves is more important than ever.

Encourage each other to take time off—and heed this advice
yourself. It is critically important to support congregational
staff and religious professionals, especially those who hold
marginalized identities or who have children, to take time off.

We must recognize the level of trauma that has
disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and Latinx
people and communities of color. Additionally, many of our
children are experiencing untold stress and challenges. Parents
are giving all they can to support their kids and their
livelihoods.

It matters that we lean more deeply into compassion and care,
for these are practices that remind us we are not alone and
reinforce our humanity and our interdependence. There is no
more important practice or culture to develop in this time.

May you be kind to yourself and others. And may you have
space to tend to your heart, your spirit, and your well-being.
Our ministries and leadership will benefit from it.

Yours, Susan