

# FIRST UNITARIAN FOCUS



Congregation established 1836.

Newsletter of the  
**First  
Unitarian Church**  
Alton, Illinois  
110 East 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (location)  
PO Box 494 62002 (mail)

Office phone: 618-462-2462

<https://www.firstuualton.org/>

**November 2021**



**There will be NO INPERSON SUNDAY SERVICES in the sanctuary until further notice. Generally, only those directly involved in putting on the service (i.e., the speaker, worship associate, pianist, and the tech team) will be in the building. Services will stream at 10 a.m. on YouTube (or Click “Virtual Services”) on the church’s homepage <https://www.firstuualton.org>**

**The Zoom Coffee Hour follows almost immediately after the service (no matter whether the service lasts 30 minutes or an hour).**

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88505584363?fbclid=IwAR0hRmxfn2ZSIo-U98VWOvq9-uXvxlkhIPC7nTK7YqfGa\\_u6v6ilbcknr5g](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88505584363?fbclid=IwAR0hRmxfn2ZSIo-U98VWOvq9-uXvxlkhIPC7nTK7YqfGa_u6v6ilbcknr5g) Passcode: 641343**

**10 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICES  
FOR NOVEMBER**

**November 7**

**Speaker: John Herndon**

**Title:** *“When God is Not Present: Everything is Holy.”* Further reflections from a humanist skeptic

**Daylight savings time ends at 2 o’clock on Sunday morning ... set your clocks back before you go to bed Saturday night.**

**November 14**

**Speaker: Rev. Dr. Claudia Hall**

**Title:** *“Preparing to Rejoice: The Importance of Advent as Spiritual Discipline”*

**Worship Associate: John Herndon**

**November 21**

**Speaker: Annie Girresch**

**Title:** *“Who are your people?”*

I will talk about practices of ancestor reverence/remembrance, weaving in themes of blood family and chosen family and the challenges of being with family over the holidays since it's the Sunday before Thanksgiving. I'll also probably try to weave in something about indigenous communities and decolonizing Thanksgiving.

**Worship Associate: Paula Moore**

**November 28**

**Speaker: Eric Johnson**

**Title: TBA**

**Worship Associate: Robyn Berkley**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings all! I hope this newsletter finds you well! There are just a few things I want to talk about this month. First, thanks to all who were willing to deliver and attend the outdoor services. We were fortunate to be able to conduct two services outdoors while the weather was lovely. I know for me, just being able to see you all and sharing outdoor space lifted me up in October. I am unclear we'll be able to continue given the chilly turn of the weather but for the time being, it was nice to be able to be together.

On that note, we are continuously monitoring the Covid delta variant situation. We are not at a place where returning to the sanctuary makes sense but know that it is in the forefront of our minds, and we are reviewing the stats weekly.

We are working on our application process to secure a minister for next year. Obviously, we will discuss this as a congregation, but we needed to begin the preparation process in advance. We will present this information to the congregation at our Mid-year meeting and hopefully can decide at that time if this is the next step for us.

In terms of the recent property survey, it looks like we'll be able to secure a permanent easement for the extent to which our building and some of the property we use regularly extends 4.5 feet over the line onto the city property where the Rotary Park will be. This will take time but should not be a difficult process. We'll keep you posted as this progresses.

Our legal case against Philip Harris is moving forward. Our accountants and I met with the States Attorney and had a long discussion about the case and what resolution we are looking for from the process. This is still in discussion and the case has not gone to court yet, but as I know more I will share what I can.

Lastly, thank you for all you have pledged to the church. A gentle reminder to please send your pledges as you are able so we can maintain our budget. We appreciate each and every one of you and thank you for your continued support!

Love and light and Happy November! - Robyn

## Social Gatherings



**Anna Ds  
Thursday,  
November 4,  
11:30 a.m.**

The *Anna D. Sparks Women's Alliance* will meet at the Old Bakery Beer Company, 400 Landmarks Blvd. in Alton on November 4 at 11:30 a.m.

RSVP to [Sandy Shaner](#) by email or by phone by Friday, October 29.



**Men's Group  
Lunch Gathering  
Thursday,  
November 11**

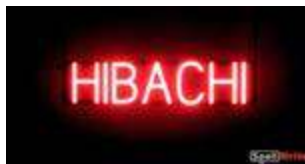
The men's group will be meeting for lunch at 11:30 a.m. somewhere.

As the date draws closer a decision will be made as to where, and the usual participants notified. If you have questions, or want to get on the Men's Group notification email list, contact [Paul Hebert](#) or [Nick Pendergrass](#).



**Congratulations to  
Paul Fischer and  
Jen Nagel** who will be married at our church on Saturday afternoon, October 30.

We wish them much joy and happiness.



### Lunch With Brynda McCoy

Former church member Brynda McCoy will be coming to our area from Northfield MN to visit her son for a week or so in November. He lives in Ballwin, MO.

We're planning to have a luncheon for Brynda on **Monday, November 15** at 11:30 a.m. at the **Hibachi Grill Supreme Buffet** in Ballwin MO. This is the restaurant where we have met her on previous visits. The address is 1282 Orchard Village Ct., and it's on Manchester Road, 2.8 miles west of I-270 and east of highway 141.

<https://www.woieat.com/hibachi-buffet-ballwin>.

She's excited about getting to see Alton church friends so we hope many of you will be able to come to lunch.

RSVP to [Mary Johnson](#) by Friday, Nov. 12.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday Personal Care Distribution



Thanks to Aiden, Rose, and Jerry for their help in October's Personal Care Distribution for

those in need. Sixteen adults and two children came by for products. Laundry detergent, dish detergent, bleach, and body wash were the most requested items. In addition, everyone got a bag with toilet paper and hand sanitizer.

Masks were given out and required to be worn to come to the distribution table. Condoms were also available.

We plan to have the next distribution on November 27 and the time will be slightly changed. We'll open at 10:45 a.m. and close at 12:15. Two or three volunteers as well as financial and product contributions to support the church's community outreach program are welcomed.

**Next newsletter deadline – November 24, 2021.**  
Send info. to [Mary Johnson](#).

### 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.

### Board Notes

The Church Board monthly zoom meeting was held on Monday evening, October 11.

There is concern that pledges are not coming in as initially expected. To date we have received only \$19,805. At this rate we will not meet our budgeted pledge goal of \$62,030. However, currently our basic bills are minimal.

Volunteers are needed to form a "Welcoming Congregation" renewal task force.

The City is looking into using TIF funds to possibly building a ramped sidewalk from the curb cut at Easton and Third to connect to our sidewalk next to the church provide better accessible access (the short steps would be removed).

The stay/go teams need to regroup and start collecting information regarding costs involved in staying with the building (i.e., maintenance and repairs) or moving elsewhere.

### Care and Concern



Please keep **Jim Moore** in your thoughts as he recovers from surgery.