

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/>



May 2022

Welcome to church!! We hope to see you in person this month.

For the time being we ask that you still wear a mask and continue to practice social distancing while at church. For those at home, the worship service will be streamed at 10 a.m. on YouTube (or Click "Virtual Services") on the church's homepage

<https://www.firstuualton.org>

The Zoom Coffee Hour follows at 11 a.m. at

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88505584363?fbclid=IwAR0hRmxfn2ZSIo-U98VW0vg9-uXvxlkhIPC7nTK7YqfGa_u6v6ilbcknr5g

Passcode: 641343

10 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICES For May

May 1

Speaker: Jerry Johnson
Title: "Agree in Love"

Jerry will be presenting the Sermon of the Month coming from the MidAmerica Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The sermon was written by the Rev. David Pyle. He is a Congregational Life Consultant with the MidAmerican Region, and he also serves as the Deputy Command Chaplain for the Army Reserve Sustainment Command.

May 8

Speaker: Dennis Fisher
Title: TBA
Worship Associate:
Mary Johnson



There will be a pancake breakfast after service on Mother's Day, 5/8/2022. The menu will include pancakes with syrup and butter, fruit salad, and sausage (both meat and veggie). Gluten-free options can be made available if requested. We look forward to celebrating Mother's Day and Flower Communion with you! **Please bring a flower, or several flowers, to share during the Flower Communion celebration.**

The Flower communion service was created by the Rev. Dr. Norbert Capek (1870-1942), who

founded the Unitarian Church in Prague, Czechoslovakia. He introduced the flower communion service to that church on June 4, 1923.

May 15

Speaker: John Herndon

Title: TBA

May 22

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Claudia Hall

Title: "Covenants and the Beloved Community."

Worship Associate: Robyn Berkley

As we prepare to create our right relationship covenant after worship today, the service will focus on what a covenant is, why they were important in history, and why they are still relevant and important to us as UUs today.

After the service, Rev Claudia Hall will lead us in a workshop on developing a Right Relationship Covenant for our Congregation. This Covenant will lead us forward in being our best selves. We will have a virtual option for participation. We apologize for the challenges during the difficult conversations training and will ensure things go more smoothly this time around for our virtual participants! Please join us to help develop this important covenant as we to move forward with our "Stay or Go" conversation!

May 29

Speaker: Benjamin Lowder – Director of the Center for Spirituality and Sustainability at SIUE.

Title: TBA

Worship Associate: Robyn Berkley

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Wait...wasn't it just Ingathering?
I can't believe it is May already! It's been an exciting and roller coaster year...we've been in and out of hybrid services due to the pandemic waves, but we are in a better place day by day, and we are excited to be able to announce our new minister soon! I appreciate the time and effort everyone has put into helping keep the church afloat, from

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donating time and talent to events and our services, to making your continued donations so we can keep financially afloat. This is community and I'm happy to be a part of and lead this very special community!

The board has been discussing ways to make our church more accessible in the interim before we make our big Stay or Go decision. We are considering purchasing wheelchairs or mobility carts to improve access to our building. An individual who needs support can call the church number when they arrive and we can make sure the wheelchair or electric cart gets delivered to their car door to get them safely into the church from our handicapped parking spaces on Easton. **We welcome YOUR FEEDBACK on this decision, especially if you believe you would use the mobility assistance to come to church! Let us know what you think and would you rather use a wheelchair or a mobility cart!**

As you can see in the newsletter, we are planning a day in May to create our Right Relationship Covenant. This Covenant is important for us as a congregation so we can have clear guidelines how to handle disagreements as well as help us navigate a very difficult conversation upcoming regarding our Stay or Go decision. We need your voice so please make plans to attend either in person or virtually.

We continue to gather information about our building and the choices we have ahead of us. We will be putting together information to share with the congregation, in addition to information we already shared with you at the midyear meeting in January, so when we have our annual meeting agenda ready, you'll have information to be able to make a good decision. Please note, we may decide we still need a bit more time to make this decision. Given we are just coming out of a pandemic where we have been remote for a few years, and people are beginning to reconnect to the church and are making decisions about their own level of participation, it may be prudent to wait until our new minister is on board before we make the final decision. While we cannot put off this decision indefinitely, it is important we hear from everyone on this. If people are still making their way back to the church, we may need to delay a few more months to ensure those voices are heard.

Lastly, it will soon be Stewardship time! With a formal announcement coming in a few days about our new minister, we need to be able to support them in their endeavors. As well, if we want our church to grow and do the outreach we desire in the community, we'll need your financial support! Give what you can...and if you can give more, please consider doing so! If you can pledge volunteer hours, we would appreciate that as well! Look for information in the next week or so about the pledge campaign.

Love and Light...Robyn

Anna Ds
Thursday, May 5, 2022
11:30 a.m.

The Anna D. Sparks Women's Alliance
will meet at **Kaslik Mediterranean Cuisine**

7847 N Lindbergh Blvd, Hazelwood, MO 63042

<https://www.yelp.com/biz/kaslik-mediterranean-cuisine-hazelwood>



We are asking that anyone attending our group luncheons be fully vaccinated or have had a negative COVID test no more than 3 days prior to the meeting. Masks of course are required to enter the restaurant and while moving around inside.

RSVP to [Mary Johnson](#) by Monday, May 2.



Men's Group
Lunch
Thursday, May
12
11:30 a.m.

The men's group will be meeting somewhere for lunch. Information as to where will be sent out to the group's email list.

If you're not already on the group's email list, contact [Paul Hebert](#).

Board Meeting Notes
April 13, 2022

To date \$48,743 has been received in pledges. It is expected that our budgeted goal will be reached. Total income to date is \$72,227 with expenses at \$50,242.

A contract has been prepared for our prospective minister and it hoped that we will be able to announce the name soon.

We have accepted Barrett's bid for installing two new furnaces.

A workday will be scheduled for both indoor and outdoor cleanup tasks.

Providing some kind of mobility transport to help people get from the street parking to the church was discussed and options will be investigated.

As church begins in the fall we hope to have curricula developed for two RE classes divided into age groups.

The next Zoom Board meeting is at 6:15 p.m. on Wednesday May 11. If you have something to bring up to the Board, please contact [Robyn Berkley](#).



**Clean Up and Clean Out Day
at Church
Saturday, May 7th –
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (come any time)**

It's time to be getting our building and grounds back in order, especially in preparation for our new minister. The minister's office and church office are in dire need of getting cleaned up and cleaned out. The other "hiding places" where things have just been pitched for last couple years (e.g., closets, buffet shelves, kitchen and coffee bar cabinets, etc.) need to be sorted out.

Outside, the ivy is once again climbing the church's stone walls and weeds are growing in planting beds. Exterior doors need to be painted. If interested in painting let us know so paint and supplies can be purchased.

Even if you only have an hour to give, there are tasks you can tackle.

If you plan to work outside, please bring basic gardening tools – clippers, rakes, etc.

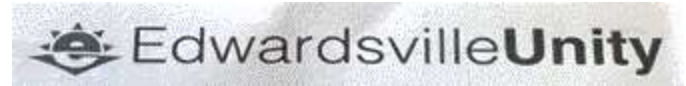
Email [Mary Johnson](#) if you plan to be a part of the workday crew so we can know how to divide the tasks.



**4th Saturday
Distribution – May
28, 2022**

Please help with this monthly community outreach program by volunteering your time in the distribution room or by donating money or products. Contact [Paula Moore](#) if you can help in the distribution room on the 28th. Below is the listing of products we provide. Each person gets to choose 5 items, plus they always are given rolls of toilet paper. Donations of any of these items would be appreciated.

- baby diapers, baby wipes, bathroom cleaner,
- bleach body wash, condoms, conditioner (hair),
- counter wipes, deodorant, dish washing detergent,
- foot powder, glass cleaner, hair cream oil,
- hand wipes, incontinence products, Kleenex, kotex,
- laundry detergent (free and clear) spray cleaner,
- lotion (hand/body), paper towels, razors, shampoo,
- shaving cream, socks (man – woman – child),
- soap (liquid or bar, toilet bowl cleaner,
- toilet paper, toothbrush, toothpaste, trash bags,
- wash cloths.



Unity Fest Volunteers Sought

Volunteer committee organizer and a few other folks needed to coordinate our presence and represent our church in a booth at an upcoming Unity Fest event.

Led by Jesse Allen, recent visitor to our church, *Unity* strives to "... encourage togetherness and solidarity through education, collaboration and community building activities."

Specifically, a free community event is planned on October 1st at LeClaire Park in Edwardsville. Our church could, perhaps, host a table with beverages and/or a planned activity to facilitate both our UU and the Unity Fest common goals to "... bring together as many of the different faces and voices of our community as possible."

Anyone interested please contact [Peg Flach](#).

The Women's Alliance of the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis announces its

Scholarship Competition for the academic year 2022-2023. Initiated by a generous bequest from the estate of Edna Landzettel, a lifelong teacher and proponent of education in a woman's life, the scholarship will be given to a woman who is 21 years or older, responsible financially for continuing her education, a member or active friend of a Unitarian Universalist Church or Fellowship in the region, and a registered student. The award of \$3,000 will made on the basis of scholarship, character, and need. Application packets are on the website <https://www.firstuustlouis.org>

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](#).

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.



**CHURCH CONTACTS
2022**

Board Members

President: Robyn Berkley robynberkley@yahoo.com
Secretary: Mary Johnson mejohanson@mindspring.com
Treasurer: Open
President Elect: Open
Member at Large: Aiden Crist arexboi@gmail.com
Member at Large: Alex Hoeft alex.j.hoeft@gmail.com
Member at Large: Jennifer Lewis

jenniferkaylewis@gmail.com

Member at Large: Carol McGrew
carol_mcgrew@yahoo.com

Member at Large: Pat Moore patjimmoore@charter.net

Office Support: Nancee Magilson
nmagilson@hotmail.com

Building and Grounds: Michael Tarabulski
madtparty@uwalumni.com

Custodial: Hedda Kirk hthrkirk@gmail.com

AV Tech Team: Alex Hoeft & Ken Hoeft
alex.j.hoeft@gmail.com / kfhoeft@gmail.com

Music: Joy Hoeft kjabhoeft@gmail.com

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