

First Unitarian Focus



Newsletter of the First Unitarian Church of Alton, Illinois

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November 2023

There will be **no worship services** at the Alton church building in November.
See below for the upcoming schedule.

Metro East Unitarian Universalist Congregation is the new name for our congregation,
as approved by Congregational vote on Sunday, September 24, 2023.

Our new building is the Masonic Lodge in Glen Carbon, 90 Kriege Farm Road 62034.

At the **Zoom congregational meeting** held at 7:30 p.m. on November 1, 2023 there were 19 people present, plus 3 absentee ballots received, and a quorum was declared. The motion was made by Mary Johnson and seconded by Jessie Dominick that:

“The Metro East Unitarian Universalist Congregation (formerly known as the First Unitarian Church of Alton) lease the Edwardsville Masonic Lodge #99 from Nov. 2, 2023 to June 30, 2024.” Following discussion of the motion it was approved unanimously.

A WEEK-BY-WEEK SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT TWO MONTHS

- a) **Sunday, November 5th**, PACKING DAY AT THE OLD BUILDING. We plan to start working at 10 a.m. and quit at 2 p.m. Come anytime between those hours to help us with final sorting and packing.
- b) **Sunday, November 12**, PACKING/MOVING DAY AT THE OLD BUILDING. Come at 10 a.m. and finish the last odds and ends.
- c) **Sunday, November 19**, Walkthrough at the **NEW BUILDING 90 Kriege Farm Rd, Glen Carbon, IL** **Come at 10 a.m.** and see the space if you haven't yet, and fellowship with everyone.
- d) **Thursday, November 26**, THANKSGIVING WEEKEND, NO SERVICES OR WORKDAYS. Enjoy the weekend with your loved ones.

- e) **Sunday, December 3 & 10**, Coffee and fellowship at the new building, 10 a.m. both Sundays. We will be focused on making sure we have a smooth setup and breakdown for services, that all of our coffee hour routines are down pat, and that RE has everything it needs to help our children have a wonderful experience.
- f) **Sunday, December 17: First full service in the new building!** 10 a.m. as always, with fellowship after.
- g) **Sunday, December 24**: Short meditation at 10 a.m. in the new building, followed by a carpool caravan to carol at the nursing homes of our members. After caroling everyone is invited to come back for brunch at the Lodge.
- h) **Sunday, December 31: New Year's Eve, NO SERVICE.**

In **January** we will begin sending out invitations to the community to join us as we build a new home for faith in the Metro East. In the midst of all this, please know that Pastor Claudia is available to meet with you by text, email, zoom or in person. Just reach out to her at 636.219.6580 or dr.claudia.hall@gmail.com



*Rev.
Claudia's &
President
Robyn
Berkley's
Column*

Greetings everyone! We know that things seem in a flurry over here, but that is because we have so many great things to report! There is a LOT going on this month, so let us recap everything step by step.

- 2) We had a grand farewell to the old building on Oct 29th, so many fond memories were shared, and it was lovely to see members former and new fellowshiping together as we said goodbye and released the building from our service.
- 3) We voted on Nov 1st to lease space from the Edwardsville Masonic Lodge, they are giving us access to the entire building for the unbelievably low lease price of \$200/month. This frees up funds that would have been consumed by a higher lease, allowing us now to offer multiple programs monthly to the community! The Masonic Brothers are also wanting to partner

with us on events, so we will be looking at doing joint charitable works with them throughout the year. This is such a phenomenal opportunity, so we want to say a great big THANK YOU to all the Masonic Brothers.

- 4) We are not having worship services for the month of November, as we need to finish packing and moving, while in December we will have what is called a 'soft' opening where we get together some but don't advertise to the larger community. Then in January we plan to do some outreach with the idea of a new year, new church to start attracting people from the Ed-Glen area. If you have a friend or neighbor who is in need of community (and who among us isn't) please invite them to start joining us in January!

Whew! That schedule as listed at the beginning of the newsletter is enough to keep us busy, and then in January we will begin sending out invitations to the community to join us as we build a new home for faith in the Metro East. In the midst of all this, please know that Pastor Claudia is available to meet with you by text, email, zoom or in person. Just reach out to her at 636.219.6580 or dr.claudia.hall@gmail.com

In faith,
Claudia & Robyn



Rev. Dee Evans' Ordination

On Saturday, October 28, our own Dee Evans was ordained into the Unitarian Universalist ministry. The ordination was held at the Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation (ALUUC) in Springfield, IL. The sermon was given by Rev. Krista Taves and the prayer by Rev. Dr. Claudia Hall. Others from our church involved in the ceremony were Robyn Berkley, Sabrina Trupia, Jennifer Lewis, Joy Hoef, and Mary Johnson. Twenty people from our congregation attended the service.



Thanks to Peg Flach for the photos from the live stream of the service.



Please plan to come to church on the 5th (and the 12th) to help with the work of sorting and packing. Pizza will be ordered for lunch.

Some of the work has already been started but there's still a lot to do. Some items will be designated as going to storage and won't necessarily need to be boxed as a mover will take them to long term storage (e.g., folding chairs, tables, pulpit, and pulpit chairs, piano, desk(s), file cabinet(s) and some items downstairs. Other items need to be boxed as they will be taken to members' homes to await the move into the new place where they will be used when services begin again (e.g., hymnals, the chalice, other pulpit décor, membership books, paper products, etc.) Other items, especially downstairs are destined to be given away (check them out, you might want some of them), or hauled away by a trash mover.

Available for your taking include a desk or two, file cabinets, miscellaneous chairs, card tables, etc. A date can be scheduled for you to pick up any of the desired items for which you might need something besides your car to take them home in.



**ROMEOS Lunch Group
(Retired Old Men
Eating out) – Thursday,
November 9th
at 11:30.**

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



**The Farewell Service at the
First Unitarian Church of Alton
October 29, 2023 -
118 years since the building was dedicated
on October 29, 1905.**

Rev. Dr. Claudia Hall conducted the farewell service. More than 53 people attended the farewell service in person, while another 26+ watched on YouTube. That service is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZMy7q43OvU&t=1265s>.

Many attending were former members and friends of the church who came to say goodbye to the building and to greet long-time friends. An exhibit of photographs and other items from the past were on display, including the Bible given to the church in 1898 by David R. Sparks to honor the memory of his wife Anna D. Sparks. The Coffee hour included sandwiches, salads, and desserts.

Photos provided by Buddy Stricker.





GLEN-ED FOOD PANTRY

Note from Alan Oberholtzer

The Boy Scouts annual Scouting for Food drive is the Food Pantry's largest source of donated food each year. The drive is happening on Saturday, November 18, 2023. We need many hands on deck to help us sort and load several tons of food. This is a great opportunity to volunteer at the Glen-Ed Pantry with a group or as a family. The address is 125 5th Avenue in Edwardsville

Go to <https://www.glenedpantry.org/> to volunteer. I work at the pantry so if you have any questions call or text me. [Alan Oberholtzer](mailto:Alan.Oberholtzer@glennedpantry.org) (407-484-1376).

CHURCH CONTACTS

2023-2024 church year

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**SOME OF THESE CONTACT LINKS WILL
BE CHANGED OVER THE NEXT MONTH
OR SO**

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