

Metro East Unitarian Universalist Congregation Focus April 2024



Newsletter of the Metro East Unitarian Universalist Congregation



Masonic Lodge, Glen Carbon IL

Location: *Masonic Lodge – 90 Kriege Farm Road, Glen Carbon IL 62034*

Welcome! We hope to see you in person this month at our meeting place in Glen Carbon.

For those at home, the worship service will be live streamed each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. on YouTube (or click Virtual Services) on the church's homepage at <https://www.firstuualton.org>.

A “coffee hour” follows every service.

April 7 @ 10 a.m.

Speaker: John Herndon

Title: “*Beyond Why and What*”

Summary: Spirituality and religious faith in a non-traditional setting see the Universe as a totality and the possibility of connections are infinite. Let’s explore more questions.

Childcare is available for children under the age of 5 and a Religious Education (RE) class for school-aged children will be offered during the service.

April 14 @ 10 a.m.
Live and on YouTube

All UU Service. All 4 UU churches in the area (Emerson, Eliot, First STL and Metro East) will be sharing a service that morning. Invite a friend to join us, and they can see all the churches and find one that suits them!

April 21 @ 10 a.m.

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Claudia Hall

Title: “*Preaching to the Principles*”

#3 - Acceptance vs Encouragement. How do we balance the need to accept others (and ourselves) where they are, and the need to encourage others (and ourselves) to achieve more? We look to our Six Sources for wisdom to navigate between these two positions.

Childcare is available for children under the age of 5 and a Religious Education (RE) class for school-aged children will be offered during the service.

April 28 @ 10 a.m.

Speaker: Robyn Berkley

Title: “*Democracy - The Joys and Challenges of Democracy*”

Summary: Our 5th Principle supports the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

While valuable and important, the democratic process is not perfect and poses challenges. As Unitarians we embrace democracy, but we need to fully understand the implications of its use.



Rev. Claudia's Column

April 2024
Metro East Unitarian
Universalist
Congregation

Hello everyone!

Yet another busy month is on deck here as we race toward summer. I am thrilled to see so many new faces in worship with us. If you see someone new, please say hi in our welcome moment during service and don't forget to greet them during coffee hour!

I know service is starting to feel snug, rest assured that the Board is already discussing plans for maximizing space and you can expect more news on that very soon. Meanwhile, we ask that you consider doing something unheard of and, I know, quite terrifying...and sit up front! Visitors are already intimidated by coming somewhere new, and they are often a few minutes late trying to find us, so the more we can sit toward the front and leave chairs in the back free, or in the pews the more we can scoot toward the middle, the more we can offer a welcoming environment to new people who are finding us for the first time.

Radical hospitality means putting our best foot forward, not to be fake but to really make people feel welcome. It is super scary to walk into a new church, especially if you have had bad experiences with religion, so we want to be extra empathetic and welcoming to our guests. Love your neighbor as yourself from the minute you pull in (saving the front parking for those with mobility challenges) all the way to making sure new faces know about coffee hour and that they have a personal invitation to stay, to sitting up front so there is space in the back for last minute visitors. I know all of this can be uncomfortable for even long-time members, so be gentle with yourself but also be willing to

challenge yourself a little, you already know this is a safe, loving, and welcoming place, now your job is to prove it to others!

Also, please let me know your ideas for improving worship, adult RE, social justice work, really everything about our church. This is YOUR HOME, and we want it to be just as inviting and fabulous for you as for the new people who walk in.

I can't wait to see you for services!

Best,
Pastor Claudia



On Sunday, March 17, four new members joined the church. Please welcome them and spend some time getting to know each of them.

Alison Lamothe
Beth McMahon
Brian Semmler
Aimee Villet

Fellowship Event April 13

Please join us in our first friend raising fellowship event in our new home. This all ages crafternoon will be Saturday April 13 starting at 2 p.m. We are making COLLAGES. Every skill level is welcome. We will have some supplies to share, and we encourage bringing old magazines and scissors. This is a non-alcoholic event, however there will be light snacks and beverages.



[Sayer Johnson](#)
[Juliette Crone-Willis](#)

President's Column

Greetings my friends...things feel so much lighter these days as the days are longer...there's new growth all around us and Spring is upon us! And speaking of growth...our church continues to grow, bringing in more people who are curious about what it means to be Unitarian Universalist. We are pushing the boundaries of our space which of course means it is time to consider a new location. While our goal is to stay in the Masonic Lodge for as long as is feasible, the Board is exploring a few options, both short and long term. Once we have a basic plan in place we will be discussing these options with you, and present to you a new location for our congregation to consider and on which to vote. Look for information in the near future.

The Board had a virtual retreat a week or so ago and we began exploring our strategic plan...it is bold and exciting and we look forward to sharing that vision with you. In the meantime, if you have a vision for something you'd like to accomplish and you want the church's support, please let us know. This can be social justice, or just social! Let us be a conduit for what you'd like to bring to the community to exemplify our UU Principles!

Love and Light...Robyn

New Name Tags



If you would like to have a magnetic name tag made, please fill out the

blue Name Tag Request card found on the Information Table in the fellowship hall at the Lodge and put the card in the marked basket. This is for both people just starting to attend, and for people who already have other forms of name tags.

if you know someone who would like to receive our weekly flyers and/or monthly newsletter ask them to contact [Mary Johnson](#).

UU Friends Facebook Group

If you would like to join the MEUUC Friends Facebook page, please contact [Robyn Berkley](#), the Group Administrator.

Total Solar Eclipse – April 8, 2024

Some of our congregation members are planning to go to Carbondale on April 8 to view the eclipse.



Hopefully, we will be able to park at the UU Fellowship, 105 N Parrish Ln, Carbondale, IL 62901 and set up chairs, etc. across the street at Parrish Park (2500 W Sunset Dr, Carbondale), where there are wide open spaces for viewing.

If you want more information, please contact [Alex Hoeft](#). He has purchased a number of eclipse glasses and plans some learning activities for kids.

Anna D Sparks Women's Alliance

Thursday, April 4, 2024

11:30 a.m. @ Fazzi's in Collinsville



Fazzi's is at 1813 Vandalia Street in Collinsville. The phone # there is 618-344-5440. RSVP asap to [Sandy Shaner](#).



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

In April, the men will meet at the **Old Bakery Beer Company**, 400 Landmarks Blvd. in Alton. <https://www.oldbakerybeer.com>

Unitarianism in Transylvania

There are over 65,000 Unitarians in Transylvania (Romania) and 25,000+ in Hungary. Unitarianism got a foothold in Transylvania in 1568 under the leadership of David Ferenc. The UUA supports UU Congregations in the U.S. that wish to partner (provide financial and other support) with U churches in Transylvania.



Our church member, Robert Kokenyesi, translates sermons from Transylvanian ministers and has provided us with a link to the newsletter prepared for US Partner churches to keep them up to date with happenings in Transylvania. You can join a group from a Partner Church on a visit to Transylvanian churches.

Click [here](#) for the TRU-US Partners Newsletter 2024 1st Quarter Newsletter.

Sunday Morning Volunteers Needed

We need a number of different people to take on volunteer jobs on Sunday morning. We don't want the same people to have to be responsible every Sunday for seeing that all systems are "GO" for our weekly services – that's how burnout quickly happens.

At the link below is a detailed description of tasks that need doing on Sunday mornings.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cI8jNiL-BFRz9qSaxwRmfKD54ZBLhYuqk3Ur3Bdo-FY/edit>

The chart below is a picture of the signup sheet as of 3/31/24, prepared by [Peg Flach](#) for April. It includes the tasks needed and the times volunteers should be at the Lodge for the specific tasks listed.

Also, there are two Sundays that the sanctuary area will need to be taken down and reset the next week due to the Masons using the space the following Thursday. Take down on 3/31, set up on 4/7 and take down again on 4/7 and set up again on 4/14.

2024 Hospitality Team Sign Up

"one energetic human can easily handle multiple volunteer jobs on the same day"

Date	Set up sanctuary before service NEED TWO	* Signs In/Out	*Front Desk	*Greet Guests	*Coffee/Snacks	Break down sanctuary after service NEED TWO	Masons use Building <small>*check Tr check calendar*</small>
arrive time	9:00 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.		
3/31	N/A		Mary J	Aimee	Easter POTLUCK	1. Steve S 2.	April 4
4/7	1. 2.		Jennifer L	Aimee		1.B Alford 2.	April 11
4/14	1.Brian S 2.Aimee		B Alford	Robyn		N/A	
4/21	N/A		Jennifer L	Mary W		N/A	
4/28	N/A	Alison L	Alison L	Robyn		1. 2.	May 2 (check calendar)



We welcome all children to participate in our Religious Education class held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month. Children start in the sanctuary, and following the "story for all ages," are invited to attend class in the fellowship hall.

Childcare for children under the age of 5 is available during the service.

Plans for the RE Spring social justice activity are being put in place.

To volunteer to help with the RE program, or if you have any questions about what is offered in the RE program, please get in touch with [Jennifer Lewis](#).

CHURCH CONTACTS

2023-2024 Church Year

Minister

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dr.claudia.hall@gmail.com

Board Members

President: Robyn Berkley
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Member at Large: Jessie Dominick
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Music: Joy Hoeft kjabhoeft@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Mary Johnson
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Office Support: Nancee Magilson
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**SOME OF THESE CONTACT LINKS WILL
BE CHANGED OVER THE UPCOMING
MONTHS**

Metro East Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Location: *Masonic Lodge - 90 Kriege
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Phone: 618-462-2462

Email: church@firstuualton.org

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

YouTube Channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSx-
6KMgYdgy1zktuaPUTIQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSx-6KMgYdgy1zktuaPUTIQ)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/firstuualton>

Instagram: firstuualton

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