

# Metro East Unitarian Universalist Congregation Focus May 2025

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*Newsletter of the  
Metro East Unitarian  
Universalist Congregation*



Masonic Lodge, Glen Carbon IL

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

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**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. Religious Education for PreK – Youth, and care for younger children is provided each Sunday.

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**May 4 @ 10 a.m.**

**Speaker:** Eden Johnson, Pastoral Assistant

**Title:** *"The Force of Hope"*

May the 4<sup>th</sup> - aka "May the force (be with you)" we are pulling a reading from Stars Wars (Andor) to start this month off on our theme of Equity. A quote from our reading: "There are whole armies, battalions that have no idea that they've already enlisted in the cause. Remember that the frontier of the Rebellion is everywhere. And even the smallest act of insurrection pushes our lines forward." Come to hear of hope and you are invited to come dressed in something from this galaxy or one far, far away.

**RE classes – PreK, elementary, and youth.  
Childcare for children younger than PreK.**

**Set up Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall**

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**May 11 @ 10 a.m.**

**Speaker:** Rev. Dee Evans

**Title:** *"Don't Let Them Steal Your Joy"*

**Summary:** With our current cultural and political situation, it is easy to lose your joy. We will investigate two ways to keep your joy.

**RE classes – PreK, elementary, and youth.  
Childcare for children younger than PreK.**

**Take down Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall**

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**May 18 @ 10 a.m.**

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

**Title:** *"Equity - Gender equality and distinctiveness. Paradox or truthfulness?"*

**RE classes – PreK, elementary, and youth.  
Childcare for children younger than PreK.**

**Set Up Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall**

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**May 25 @ 10 a.m.**

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

**Title:** *"Equity - Code Switching, Masking, and Personae. We are all role-players here."*

**RE classes – PreK, elementary, and youth.  
Childcare for children younger than PreK.**

**POTLUCK lunch follows the service.  
Please bring something to share.**

**Take down Sanctuary / Fellowship Hall.**



### **Rev. Claudia's Letter**

May is usually a month for spring cleaning, gardening, and all things pastels, bunny rabbits, and Mother's

Day themed. This year that hits different given the relentless attacks on everything from the environment to the rule of law to women across the gender spectrum.

How do we cope in times like these? It is no wonder that people are turning back to religion for solace. The idea that there is something bigger than Washington, bigger than human-caused crises and panic, bigger than Wall Street mayhem and bigger than my individual problem is an idea that can get us through these things. We call this idea hope, and it comes in so many shapes and sizes. For some of us, hope looks like a found family, a place where we who had terrible mother experiences can come and see healthy families and celebrate good mothering with them. For others, hope looks like a Divine Grace that is bigger than we can name but it is something that we feel deep inside, in the quiet moments like stones sliding into water, like a hug from a friend at coffee hour, like singing a favorite hymn. For yet others of us hope is in the action we take, going to Drag Queen Bingo and reveling in playful art that defies gender binaries. It is found in the marches and protests, in the eco-friendly cups we buy and the plans we have for a future home.

For all of us, it is easy to feel like we are so alone in fighting the tide of terror unleashed by this administration, but the truth is there are far more of us than there are of them. Surveys say that about .3% of the population resonate with UU [source: uua.org]. That means there are 2,100 people in the Metro East alone that are UU and just don't know it yet. Our job is to get the word out about who we are and what we stand for, so those folks find us and come meet their hope right here, inside these walls. That is how we can combat the uncertainty our church is facing, by making our found family, and our voice for justice, ever bigger. Together we grow, together we are stronger, together we overcome. Together, we have hope.

Amen, and Blessed Be.  
Pastor Claudia

### **FROM THE PROPERTY SEARCH COMMITTEE**

At our April vote, the congregation voted to pursue a property on Center Grove Road in Edwardsville. This vote allowed the committee to do our due diligence on the property. We have bad news.

Based on an evaluation of the septic tank, the current one is insufficient and will not enable us to obtain an occupancy permit. Furthermore, it is impossible to install a tank that does meet code for our population, and the city engineers say the property cannot be hooked into the City sewer. The city is also not favorable toward the parking situation.

The board and property search committee continue to look into other options for our next home. If you have properties you would like us to consider, please contact [Joanne Berry](#) or [Kevin Barbier](#).

Sincerely,  
The Property Committee

## ANNA Ds WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

**Luncheon  
Thursday, May 1  
11:30 a.m.**

At **Fusion Taco** in Edwardsville.

1017 Century Dr, Edwardsville, IL 62025

[\(618\) 307-5656](tel:(618)307-5656)

It's in the same shopping center as Bella Milano but at the other end near where Wang Gang was before it closed. All women are invited.

RSVP to [Sandy Shaner](#)

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### **The Gathering - Sunday, May 4**

**A Gathering of Women: "Walk and Talk"** – 12:30 p.m. at the Watershed Nature Center, 1591 Tower Ave. Edwardsville. . If convenient, bring a muchie to share.



**The Gathering** is expanding as we offer centering support to the women in our community. On June 1 we will be back at MEUUC for conversations on the theme of preparedness during uncertain times.

Contact [Peg](#) if the weather is questionable.

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### **MEN'S LUNCH GROUP**

**Thursday, May 8  
11:30 a.m.**

**Info about the location will be sent out by email.**

If you're not on the men's lunch email list, contact Paul Hebert [pphebert@mail.com](mailto:pphebert@mail.com) or call him at 314-702-3A 453 (c).



**The Goshen Market  
MEUUC Booth:  
Saturday - June through  
October – 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday  
each month.**

MEUUC will have a booth from 8 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of the 5 months of the Goshen Market in downtown Edwardsville. Mark your calendars for 6/7/25, 7/5/25, 8/2/25, 9/6/25, 10/4/25.

[Jennifer Lewis](#) requests a partner to help her organize this important outreach project.

Additional volunteers will also be needed as we give out free children's books to the community ... sometimes lemonade, watermelon, etc. too. If you have any children's books to donate, please contact Peg Flach [pegflach@gmail.com](mailto:pegflach@gmail.com).

The RE youth have some ideas for participation this year too!

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### **PAY PAL info**

**MEUUC is no longer using PayPal to receive electronic donations. Please use the Givelify link on our homepage if you are giving electronically.**

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***Masons' May Calendar as of April 29, 2025***

Set up May 4  
Take down May 11  
Set up May 18  
Take down May 25

More things might be added to their calendar as May progresses. The current calendar only indicates that the Masons will be meeting on Thursday, May 1, and Saturday, May 17 (pancake breakfast). But other things are often added as the month progresses. So, we need to check their calendar weekly.

**“AND THAT HAS MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE”**

ZUUminar on Turning Points in  
Congregational Life

May 6, 2025, 7:00 - 8:30 PM CDT /  
8:00-9:30 PM EDT.

All are cordially invited!

Sponsor: History and Heritage Committee,  
MidAmerica Region, UUA

Five current or former UU leaders will describe how their congregations navigated critical turning points. Presentations will allow for questions and comments via Zoom Chat.

To join, use the link on the date and time above:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85304922976?pwd=lqaf9iMTPbeti7IwLnExSvHGp3z3w.1>

Audience members will be muted on entry to minimize interruption. We encourage questions via Chat and will switch to voice if feasible.

Topics:

The Women's Alliance Saves the Church  
A Fund Drive and Fear of Failure  
The Consultant Advised Us to Quit  
A Difficult Leadership Transition  
Deciding to Be Lay-Led

**CHURCH CONTACTS  
2024-2025 church year**

**Minister**

**Rev. Dr. Claudia Hall**  
[dr.claudia.hall@gmail.com](mailto:dr.claudia.hall@gmail.com)

**Pastoral Assistant Eden Johnson**  
[fromedenjohnson@gmail.com](mailto:fromedenjohnson@gmail.com)

**Board Members**

**President:** Alex Hoeft  
[alex.j.hoeft@gmail.com](mailto:alex.j.hoeft@gmail.com)

**President-Elect:** Jessie Dominick  
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**Past President:** Robyn Berkley  
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**Member at Large:** Aimee Villet  
[aimville13@gmail.com](mailto:aimville13@gmail.com)

\*\*\* As printed in the April Board minutes, Aiden Crist has resigned from the Board.

**AV Tech Team:** Alex Hoeft & Ken Hoeft  
[alex.j.hoeft@gmail.com](mailto:alex.j.hoeft@gmail.com) / [kfhoeft@gmail.com](mailto:kfhoeft@gmail.com)

**Building and Grounds:** To be determined

**Custodial:** Hedda Kirk [hthrkirk@gmail.com](mailto:hthrkirk@gmail.com)

**Music:** Joy Hoeft [kjabhoeft@gmail.com](mailto: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**

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**Mailing Address:** PO Box 494, Alton IL 62002

**Phone:** 618-307-5287

**Email:** [church@firstuualton.org](mailto:church@firstuualton.org)

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

**YouTube Channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSx-6KMgYdgy1zktuaPUTIQ>

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

**Instagram:** meuucglencarbon

[Click here to see this month's calendar](#)

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