

September 2012

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF AUSTIN

*We gather in community to nourish souls,
transform lives, and do justice*

CAMP UU/HOGWARTS

Wizards and Witches on Church Grounds

First UU's Hogwarts/CampUU transformed the church into a magical place in late July and early August. Part of the fun is that the adult leaders transform into magical figures as well—Vicki Almstrum as Headmistress Esmirelda McGonagall, Allegra Azulay as Madame Ollivander, and Andi Windham as Andriana Tonks. We were assisted by a small army of adult volunteers who served as house elves, professors, and specialists, as well as by a group of teens as prefects.

The week began with “shopping” at Diagon Alley for capes, hats, wands, and other essentials. The children spent the rest of the week in classes led by a variety of contributors, including UT-Austin's Women in Chemistry, the Austin Planetarium, and members of the Central Texas Geocaching community. Each morning was rounded out by magical music and wizard sports such as Quiddich. Afternoons at CampUU Hogwarts included making lunch for ARCH; animal blankets for pet care organizations; meditative finger labyrinths for Christopher House hospice; and welcome cards with Austin travel tips for our unDocu-Bus visitors (see page 5). For fun the campers swam at Ramsey Pool, bowled at Dart Bowl and played board games.

The camp culminated in a Great Feast on Friday, featuring food and entertainment the campers created themselves. We also shared a bit of the camp with everyone who attended the Aug. 5 service.



Clockwise from top: Wizards and witches gathered in the Great Hall for lunch. Top-notch faculty included professors Mary Jane Ford, Linda Webster, Vicki Almstrum and Lucia Markert. Witches and wizards shopped at Flourish and Blotts in Diagon Alley. Matthew mastered proper care of magical creatures. David learned how to deal with a dementor.

Sharing Suppers

Sept. 15
jubarker@
yahoo.com for
time/location

Attending these casual adult dinners is a great way to meet newcomers and long-time UUs. Groups of 6-10 people gather on third Saturdays in participants' homes and all contribute to the dinner. Dinners are open to anyone in the church, new or established, couples or singles, and you need not be a member. Sign up for one dinner at a time; no long-term commitment. Participants take turns hosting. Sign-up deadline: Sept. 9. More info: jubarker@yahoo.com. Monthly reminders: sharingsupper-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Senior Luncheon

Sept. 11, noon
Howson Hall

The group Inside Out will play on steel drums for our entertainment. The members of the group are Angela Smith and C.J. Menge. Soup, salad and dessert, \$5
RSVP: Alice Cashman, 837-0988

MEG BARNHOUSE

With Vacation Over, Our Real Trip Begins



In my last letter to you, Kiya and I were getting ready to go on an enormous wild adventure, driving up to Prince Rupert, British Columbia, getting on an Alaskan Marine Highway ferry to Haines, Alaska, then to Skagway, then to the Yukon Territory and onward ...

At this writing, we are on our way home. I'm in the harbor in Skagway, and the boat will leave in about fifteen minutes to take us back to Haines on our homeward journey. We have seen wonders. The mountains and lakes were stupendously beautiful. One young grizzly bear fished for salmon within 40 yards of us. The other night, out for a walk in our campground, a moose came toward us out of the woods. We froze. A friend had told us that they will chase you, and that you should run. She paused and looked us over, then seemed to dismiss us as harmless. Her calf followed her after a moment or two. We murmured

plans to dive into the nearby outhouse if she changed her mind, but she walked slowly away, clip-clopping down the hard-packed dirt road in the dusk. We've seen caribou and sled dogs, and we managed not to run over a mink that scampered across the road in front of our van. Seeing the animals, walking on spongy tundra, soaking in natural hot springs, taking inadequate pictures that failed to convey the immensity of the beauty in front of us, driving for long hours through country that gave me a new understanding of how empty of people much of this continent is, all of those things have grounded and rested me.

The people have been amazing. Lisa, Kiya's best friend from sixth grade, is one. She moved to Alaska with her partner David, got a commercial fishing license, became the boss of a lively crew, and made a living pulling wild salmon out of set nets on Kodiak Island. One year she and David decided to see the end of the Iditarod in Nome, and she got hooked on

mushing. The next couple of years she volunteered to help with the race, then she got a job with a winning sled dog breeder and musher, then she ran the race herself, with his team of inexperienced dogs, just to show them it was fun and that they could finish. And finish they did. The UUs in Anchorage and Fairbanks, where Kiya and I presented a concert on the Saturday night and I preached that Sunday, were as friendly, smart and quirky as UUs everywhere. Then there's Herman. At the beginning of the trip, running on four

Our congregation is on it way into a big, wild adventure

brand-new tires, right after spotting our first black bear foraging by the side of the road, we had a blow-out. There was no cell signal in that part of British Columbia. The second car that happened along stopped. (I may have stepped a little in front of his car, but he could have gone around me.) A small man in white pants emerged, asking if he could help. When we told him how kind he was, he gestured to the mountains and the river and said "Out here, you can't just pass someone by who needs help." He went into the ditch to fetch two large rocks to stop the front tires. He helped us figure out how to lower the spare tire down from under the car where it rides. Together we got the tire changed, splashed water over one another's hands to clean off the dirt and grease, introduced ourselves to one another, invited him to Austin, and waved goodbye as he drove away. He had gotten not one smudge on his white pants. That was a show of skill and elegance I won't soon forget.

Our congregation is on its way into a big, wild adventure. What do we want to do? Who

do we want to be? Do we want to stay the size we are, comfortably fitting into the space we already have? Do we want to open the doors wider? Welcome all of the people who need us? What would that look like? What would it feel like? Shall we stay the same size and start more congregations and be a “Mother Church?” Shall we get as big as we can, building upwards on our lot in Central Austin, having two or three stories of RE and worship space? Should we try to “let out the seams” of the buildings we have in order to buy ourselves more time to grow in numbers, in commitment, in generosity and vision?

Mostly we want to ask ourselves how best to accomplish the goal of being a warmly, intentionally welcoming congregation. What does it mean to be more welcoming? Partially, it’s about space, but it’s also about our inner space, our minds and hearts. Does anything need to change inside each of us for us to be sincerely welcoming to those who come through the church’s doors?

We are going to talk about all of these things together, after the second service on Sept. 2, and then again on Oct. 14. Watch the

announcements for topics and reminders. It’s going to be an adventure. It’s going to take conversation and courage. I want to hear what you have to say about being welcoming, and the congregation’s leaders do too. We’ll be walking across unfamiliar ground, seeing new beauties, maybe learning how to deal with bears! We’ll be taking risks, being as prepared as we know how to be, counting on our leaders, reading the guidebooks, consulting those who have done this before, and having fun. Fun is important. Dr. Edwin Friedman, who wrote the book on leadership that the board will be reading this year, says that the first thing a group that’s in trouble loses is its sense of playfulness. First UU’s Ministerial Search Committee had a fine sense of playfulness, which both attracted and reassured me last year when we were exploring the possibility of my becoming First Austin’s minister that this was a healthy congregation. Let’s have an adventure together. Let’s help each other through. Maybe we can even navigate the tricky parts without smudging our white pants!



Equinox Auction and Masquerade Ball

Sept. 22,
6-10 p.m.
At the church

This annual fundraiser supports the mission of First UU. The event includes a live and silent auction, food and drink, music and dancing as well as free childcare. The children will have their own event with stories, games and music. Come dressed in costume or dressed up to party, eat, drink and celebrate, all for a worthy cause. Everyone is welcome. Tickets are \$25 a couple or \$15 for singles. Children under 12 admitted free. Buy tickets at equinoxauction.org.

MUSIC MATTERS

MANY WAYS TO GET THE BEAT AT FIRST UU

FIRST UU ADULT CHOIR: Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. The choir sings at two to three services a month and features a range of music. No audition required. More info: brentb@austinuu.org.

CHILDREN CHOIRS: Meet during first service RE in room 13 (grades 4–8) and room 11 (grades K–3). Directors provide top-notch instruction and fun. Pick up your

registration packet and schedule outside the RE office. More info: 512-694-5970 or chris@chrisandtoby.com.

ACMC ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE: Austin Chamber Music Center will hold its entire 2012–2013 season at First UU. They will also lend their world-class musical talents to our services. Discounted tickets will be available to our church members.

GET-ALONG GANG FORMS AT FIRST UU

First UU’s newly formed Healthy Relations Ministry, appointed by Rev. Meg, will bring our Healthy Relations Covenant to life. The ministry will seek to support our spiritual paths and guide our actions as we live our lives both at church and away. The ministry team will periodically seek comments from members regarding the covenant’s use and how it can be made more vivid—like our mission statement. The ministry team, at the minister’s or a member’s request, can be called upon to help with difficult conversations among members or between a member and the minister. Members are Margaret Borden, Ann Edwards, Sandra Ries, and Irene Tobis. More info: healthyrelations@austinuu.org.

FreshenUUp Underway!

Have you noticed the changes starting to show up around the church building? Many folks are working together to find ways to update and clean up the space we share on Sundays and throughout the week. The launch of Freshen UUp happened in parallel with work to create a new Welcome Center and redesign the Office. The first official Freshen UUp project was to repaint the Gallery — doesn't the new show look beautiful hanging in this space? Many thanks to Ruby Edmond, Tomás Rodriguez, and Genie Martin for their efforts and expertise in making this a dream job! There will be many opportunities in the months ahead to help with smaller-scale projects to clean and paint throughout the church space. On Sept. 8: a work party to paint the wall in Howson Hall and clean the acoustic panels. Watch the announcements for more info. If you can volunteer to help with one or more of these projects, please contact Vicki Almstrum, freshenUUp@austinuu.org.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

How Big are We? Why Does It Matter?



Does it seem to you that we are bursting at the seams? We welcomed over 80 new members in Rev. Barnhouse's first year. We may quickly join the ranks of UU churches that the Unitarian Universalist Association has designated as Breakthrough Congregations, those that have achieved significant and sustained growth.

There are many ways to count church growth. We count voting members, persons in the pews, in religious education classes and at public forum on Sunday mornings, pledging units and budget growth. These are all valid indicators, but they are incomplete measures. They beg the question of why we want to grow because they only speak indirectly to our mission and the difference we want to make in the world.

Your board reads books and articles and watches videos that help us focus on creating the future of our church. We recently discussed a presentation by Tandi Rogers, UUA growth strategist, entitled "Multiplying Ourselves in the 21st Century," that emphasized outreach to persons who may be searching for our UU message but may not be inclined to attend religious services. There are many ways we do this already—by posting our sermons on our website, on iTunes and on YouTube, broadcasting our forums on public access TV, opening our church doors for Paradox Players productions and musical performances, hosting homeless men on Freeze Nights, going into the community with our Standing On the Side of Love banner to witness to social justice. We recently hosted a teach-in about immigration issues. It is impossible to put an exact number on how many people we reach through these efforts. Could we do more? Certainly.

Loren Mead, author of *More Than Numbers: The Way Churches Grow*, describes four aspects of church growth. One is numerical growth. I have been guilty of advocating for

numerical growth, more people in the pews to increase our pledging units and volunteer base. But churches that focus only on numerical growth for these reasons miss the point of why we come together as a congregation in the first place.

Maturational growth is the ability of a congregation to encourage all members to grow in the maturity of their faith and deepen their spiritual roots and religious imagination. Incarnational growth is the ability to take the meanings and values of our UU faith

and make them real in the world beyond our walls, our efforts to make the world a better place. I am struck by how much these aspects of growth reflect our church's mission. The efforts we make as a congregation to live our mission will result in both maturational and incarnational growth.

The final aspect of church growth is organic growth, building the organizational structures and infrastructure and developing the practices and processes that result in a dependable, stable network of human relationships and systems in which we can grow and from which we can make a difference. Our transition to policy-based governance is a form of organic growth. So is ensuring that we have adequate facilities and staffing for the size we want to become.

Over the next several months I will use this newsletter column to explore with you more about these aspects of church growth, how big we are in each aspect and why it matters. I welcome your thoughts.

— Susan Thomson

**The challenge isn't growth,
growing the right way.**

SOCIAL ACTION

UNDOCUBUS RIDERS VISIT FIRST UU

About 40 First UUs, along with another dozen Live Oak and Wildflower UUs, gathered in community to nourish souls, transform lives and do justice as we hosted, fed and learned from UndocuBus riders when they stayed in Austin Aug. 3-6.

The UndocuBus riders showed us heartfelt appreciation as they arrived here after a 24-hour trip via unair-conditioned buses that broke down a couple of times in route. They left Phoenix, AZ, traveled to Denver, CO, came here and left for New Orleans, LA on a journey across the nation, headed toward the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, NC Sept. 3-6 to spotlight the injustice toward both immigrants and undocumented workers.

The riders say they feel like they've been used as a political football, tossed from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party, while we've had the highest deportation rates of non-criminal undocumented workers during President Obama's first term. We must reform our immigration laws.

A few personal individual stories include:

One mom, Maricruz, supports her children cleaning houses but also works to organize the Dreamers, children who've grown up in the US, earned up to two degrees and been turned down for citizenship.

One young student Daniella won't be traveling all the way to North Carolina, because she must return to Phoenix to stand trial for civil disobedience. Arizona is home to Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who says publicly he sees no reason not to racially profile, even though our constitution forbids the singling out of one ethnic group by police.

One volunteer, who has been a member of



Above, no papers, no fear: The UndocuBus parked outside First UU in early August. Refreshed after a hot, 24-hour bus ride and a good night's sleep, guests enjoyed fellowship in Howson Hall.

First UU for five years, arrived to Howson Hall ready to help serve our guests food and had a difficult time pulling herself away both Saturday and Sunday nights because she felt personally connected with our guests. She arrived in the U.S. a couple of decades ago with documents.

One employee at First UU has a green card because he went through the legal route to come here, and his card gives him an A-number. The A stands for "alien," and is still on his card after 11 years of living here.

While it's easy for me to get caught up in the injustice, my favorite story came from Giovana, who thanked me and fellow UUs for reminding them the root of their movement is about love. After much work to organize resistance because of their anger, she said they first saw the power of love over hate when about 2000 UUs wearing Standing on the Side of Love tshirts stood vigil outside Arpaio's Tent City Jail in Phoenix during UU General Assembly.

Both in Denver and Austin, UUs have greeted and hosted UndocuBus riders wearing our bright yellow Standing on the Side of Love tshirts and Giovana said they feel our love.

— Peggy Morton

OUTREACH PROJECT MEET-UP

Sept. 2, 11 a.m., room 13

Help choose a social justice issue for next year's project. More info: Wendy Erisman, churchwideproject@austinuu.org.

HANDS ON HOUSING

Help us help a low-income homeowner.

Saturday, Oct. 27

info: handsonhousing@austinuu.org

People's Community Clinic Collate Group

Sept. 11, 9:30 a.m. At the PCC

More info: pcc@austinuu.org.

ARCH Lunch Preparation

Mondays 6 p.m., kitchen

For 2nd Monday off-site location, email lyndawest@earthlink.net

NAMI Walk

Oct. 6, 8 a.m. Auditorium Shores

Please join us as we support the National Alliance on Mental Illness. No one should be stigmatized by having a mental illness. Now is the time to sign up as a FirstUU team member and start raising awareness that mental illnesses are real, physiologically based illnesses like diabetes, Alzheimer's and cancer. Together we will walk with members of Wildflowers UU and Live Oak UU as the team UU Uniques. More info: Kathryn Govier, kamargo72@att.net, 512-832-6379, or look for the table in the gallery.

UU/Quaker Singalong

Sept. 22

7:30–10:30 p.m.
3701 E. MLK Blvd.

As usual, we meet on the fourth Saturday. Bring snacks and finger foods, instruments and copies of songs to sing. Copies of “Rise Up Singing” will be available. Please do not bring alcohol, since this is not a custom of the Quakers. More info: **Larry Vaughn**, 469-0029. Contact **Mary Jane Ford** at singalong@ustinuu.org to add someone to the email list.

Eclectic Folk Jam

Sept. 14, 7-10 p.m.
Howson Hall

Gather on second Fridays for an open jam session with singers and instrumentalists. Genres include 1960s folk, bluegrass, gospel, blues, protest songs, Irish, Scottish, Appalachian, Dixieland, and more. Potluck and snacks are encouraged. More info: singalong@ustinuu.org; **Mary Jane Ford**, 926-4122; or **Pete and Kim Akenhead**, 834-0188. Next month's session: Oct. 12.

PARADOX PLAYERS

YOUR ROLE IN *THE BEST MAN*

Opening night with Paradox Players is always an electric evening, a night when we count on your attendance to make it so. Members of First UU comprise our core support group. Won't you join us on Friday, Oct. 5, for Gore Vidal's wickedly funny political satire *The Best Man* and the gala reception with cast members that follows?



You will be amazed to watch Vidal's dramatization of two candidates competing for their party's Presidential nomination — as bitingly relevant today as when he wrote it 52 years ago. In a great bit of irony, Ronald Reagan auditioned for the lead role in the first NYC production, but was rejected by Vidal because he didn't think Reagan would make a credible president!

You will recognize Paradox Players veterans Don Owen (*Trying*), Susan Roberts (*Shards of Love*), Peggy Schott (*Sisters Under the Skin*), Craig Kanne (Guest Artist) and Freddy Carnes (*Bus Stop*) as well as First UU members George Denny (*Our Town*), Brian Miller, Ethan Love and Laura Rice.

We'd love you to play a role in the production too! Here's how: Volunteer to help backstage during some performances, help paint the set or coordinate the opening gala after the Oct. 5 show.

Would you rather donate costumes or set pieces and props? We are still looking for 1960s-era women's dresses, men's suits (including a tuxedo), shoes and white shirts (of any era), thin ties, tie tacs and tie clasps. We could also use your unused sofa, love seat, chair, rollaway bed, dresser, suitcase stand

and nightstand.

Please contact Gary Payne, director (capcitymystery@swbell.net) or Jean and John Boehme, producers (joboe1@hotmail.com) with your offerings of help, costumes or set pieces. Hope to see you opening night!

FLEX TICKETS FOR NEW SEASON

The \$60 Season Flex Ticket advantage:

- Six admissions to our three productions
- Subscriber and guests can use in any combination
- Reserved front-row seating
- A 33% savings over single ticket price

Reservations: 744-1495 or paradoxplayers.org

PP PROGRAMS TO TAKE ADS

PP programs will now offer ad space. Rates are \$40 for a quarter page and \$70 for a half page. Submit camera-ready copy with contact info by Sept. 14 to info@paradoxplayers.net.

READER'S THEATER RESUMES

Join us Monday evening, Sept. 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the Gallery to read aloud without memorizing! This will be our first meeting since June; we'll be meeting on the second Monday of every month at the same time and place. Whether we read several one-acts or a longer play, we always enjoy the variety of roles and the discussion of the scripts. Join us if you enjoy reading aloud without rehearsing. Newcomers are always welcome.

THE NEW SEASON

October 5-21

The Best Man. A play that makes you wish that Vidal were writing the dialogue for this year's presidential debates.

February 8-24

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged. Join three madcap men in tights as they weave their wicked way through ALL of Shakespeare's work in one wild ride.

June 14-30

Next Fall. Luke believes in God. Adam believes in everything else. This unlikely couple's five-year relationship paints a beautiful and funny portrait of modern romance.

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS**PLAN AHEAD FOR UUA AND SWUUC EVENTS**

If you like to plan ahead and pencil in events on your calendar, following are future Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (SWUUC) and Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) events:

- Nov 9-11, 2012—SWUUC Fall Leadership Training @Glen Lake, TX
- Feb 9-11, 2013—SWUUC Winter Conference @Dallas, TX
- Feb 22-24, 2013—Southwest UU Women's Conference @Corpus Christi, TX
- Mar 21-24, 2013—SWUUC Spring Training
- Apr 19-21, 2013—SWUUC Spring Conference & Annual Meeting
- Jun 19-23, 2013—UUA General Assembly @Louisville, KY
- Jun 30-Jul 6, 2013—SWUUC Primary Camp @UBarU
- Jul 7-13, 2013—SWUUC Junior Camp @UBarU
- Jul 14-20, 2013—SWUUC Senior Camp @UBarU
- Jul 21-26, 2013—Southwest UU Summer Institute (SWUUSI) @Western Hills Guest Ranch, Tahlequah, OK (everyone welcome, with or without children!)

SOUTHWEST UU WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

The "Making Waves on a Sea of Change" event will feature performance artist and activist Kimberly Dark, and Grammy-nominated musician Kit Holmes. Workshops will fit into five tracks:

1. SPIRITUALITY AND RITUAL: Rhythmic Waves for the Soul
2. CREATIVITY: Waves That Carve Into Being
3. SOCIAL JUSTICE: Making Waves for Justice
4. FOCUS ON THE FAMILY: Splashing in the Waves
5. MUSIC AND MOVEMENT: Sound and Body Waves

Do you have a great idea for a workshop that fits within these tracks? Workshops will be chosen by Oct. 1, as registration will be opening in November! This is a wonderful way to give service to our women's community. If you would like to lead a 90-minute workshop, submit your application at: www.swuuc.org/conferences/conference/68-workshop-app

Feb 22-24, 2013
Omni Bayfront
Hotel
Corpus Christi

**UUA GUIDE: KNOW YOUR MAILING LISTS**

Are you on any UUA mailing lists yet? If you like to connect with other UUs in our region or around the country through electronic forums, there are many to choose from at this UUA link: lists.uua.org

Here are just a few available that may interest you:

- Newcomers – for interested visitors and new UUs
- UU-Parenting – UUs discussing parenting experiences and issues
- UUcf-Bible – Biblical conversation, study and spirituality
- UUTheology – UU theology discussions
- UUhs-chat – UU history and historical research
- UU-Community – a moderated electronic forum for UUs
- Political-uus – UUs discussing politics and religion
- Humanists – a forum for friends of religious humanism
- GreenSanctuary – environmental discussions
- Swuuc-1 – electronic forum for UUs in our Southwestern district

Connections Fair 2012**Sept. 23****10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.**
patio & gallery

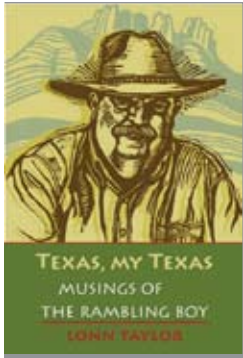
Brave the heat with all the teams, studies, committees and circles that help make First UU a vibrant and diverse community! Meet new friends and learn about what the church does during the other six days of the week—or represent your own church project or community! Info and sign-up: connections@austinuu.org

Chalice Circle Sign-Up
Sundays
the gallery

Stop by the Gallery following services on Sundays for more information or to sign up for the Fall session of Chalice Circles, First UU's small group ministry program. Groups of 8 to 10 people meet twice monthly to explore spirituality and deepen their ties to the church and other members. More info: Lisa Carrell, Chalice Circles coordinator, 512-698-231 or chalicecircles@austinuu.org.

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING



Heritage Book Club
 Sept. 14, 7 p.m.
 4308 Ave. D

Pot luck dinner followed by discussion of *Texas My Texas* by Jonn Taylor. Next month's selection is *Lacuna* by Barbara Kinsolver.

Mind and Meaning Book Club
 Sundays

More info: ddpauler@sbcglobal.net or leonard.e.hough@gmail.com

The Sunday Book Group
 Huntington-Surrey School
 9-10:15 a.m.,
 Sundays

More info: James Burson, 794-1086

WELCOME BACK!

RE Begins Again in Earnest

Summer has come and gone and the RE office would like to extend a big welcome to all of the kids and youth who are returning to class this fall! We will be welcoming in many new friends into our classes and youth groups this year, as well and we are geared up to show old friends and new what a great place this church is to learn and laugh and grow! This will be a great year and we are glad that you are here.

CURRICULA FOR FALL

Pre-K: Rainbow Seekers

Chalice Children introduces our youngest students to Unitarian Universalism through songs, games, stories, and other fun activities. They will learn about the importance of spiritual curiosity, making friends, and how their uniqueness makes them each special. Through introduction to the children's version of our Seven Principles, children will learn about the many ways in which their church is a great place to be!

K- 1st Grade: Picture Book UUism

Picture Book Unitarian Universalism uses works of children's literature to illustrate values of our faith-love, acceptance, self-expression, and the importance of thinking for oneself. Through these stories and activities, linked to our Seven Principles and our Sources, students will learn about what it means to call ourselves Unitarian Universalists and how influential figures such as Henry David Thoreau helped to shape our faith.

2nd & 3rd Grade: Moral Tales

Moral Tales uses stories from many traditions (including our own) to provide young Unitarian Universalists with a solid foundation for ethical decision-making. This cur-

riculum includes crafts, dramatic play, quiet centering, and many other activities in an effort to explore virtues such as empathy, courage, cooperation, and perseverance. Students will learn how to approach ethical dilemmas from a spiritual perspective and have in their tool box the language of our Principles for their discernment and ultimate decisions when asking, "What Would Love Do?"

4th & 5th Grade: UU Explorers

This curriculum will prepare our 4th & 5th graders to transition into the Jr. High youth group by incorporating elements of small group-style worship into each lesson. Each Sunday will consist of chalice lighting, opening reading (typically in the form of a story), sharing circle, discussion and hands-on activity, followed by closing words in unison. This highly interactive curriculum aims to assist in UU identity formation, relating each week's theme to one of the Seven Principles and to one of our Sources.

Jr. High Group 10:45-11:45 a.m.
Sr. High Group 10:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Both groups will focus on the six components of community building: Worship, Learning, Team Building, Social Action, Leadership and Youth/Adult Partnership. Come and make new friends, reconnect with old friends, and be a part of helping us to make this a great year for youth at First UU!

FALL SCHEDULE

- 9:15-10:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.-noon**
 Preschool (3 and 4 year olds)
 Kindergarten-Grade 1
 Grades 2-3
 Grades 4-5
- 9:15-10:30 a.m. only**
 Two Children's Choirs (first service)
- 10:45 a.m.-noon only**
 Jr. Youth Group (Grades 6-8)
- 10:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.**
 Sr. Youth Group (Grades 9-12)

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ADULT PROGRAMMING

TRAIN & VOLUNTEER

The Adult RE Committee Needs YOUR Voice!

The Adult Religious Education Committee is an advisory committee to the interim director of Lifespan Religious Education which helps inform and implement the Adult RE program offerings here at First UU. Currently, the committee has several seats open to welcome a diverse group of new voices into dialogue and action. If you would like to lend your perspective and serve in this vital ministry of this church, please contact Cyndi Loudon at: are@austinuu.org.

Training to be an Ally Workshop Sundays, 12:15-1:45 p.m. Sept. 9th-30th, room 13

Mari Caballero will lead a four-part workshop series that will continue the conversation on how to become a better ally to members of marginalized communities. This course will cover topics such as the dynamics of systemic, institutional, and interpersonal oppressions, microaggressions, and what it means for our congregation to become intentionally anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural. We will end the course by strategizing means of moving forward in increased understanding and celebration of difference as a community. Registration deadline: Sept. 6. Email: mari@austinuu.org.

Women's Spirituality Group

Sept. 1 & 15 10:30 a.m. room 13

Sept 1: A focus on Kuan Yin, Chinese goddess of compassion. Sept. 15: A focus on Japanese goddess Amaterasu and the power of her mirror. We meet on the first and third Saturday mornings of each month. This group is for women high school age and older. We are open to new members at all times. We hope you'll join us. More info: Linda Webster, women@austinuu.org.

Yew Grove

Sept. 13, 7:30 p.m. room 15

Food, community, and questions—what could be more UU? Bring something yummy to share and hang out, eat and get to know each other. **Full Moon Circle Sept. 29, 7:30 p.m.** Our circles are open to anyone of any spiritual tradition, just come with an open heart. Meet to the south of the sanctuary under the trees. More info: YewGrove@austinuu.org or www.austinuu.org/yewgrove

MEET CARLA JO SCHAEFER

We are pleased to announce Carla Jo Schaefer has joined our staff as director of membership and communications. Carla Jo brings more than 35 years of communications and nonprofit experience to the position. Send her your announcements and other information at news@austinuu.org.



FIRST UU GROUP IN PROFILE

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Meditation and its benefits are receiving a great deal of press these days. Perhaps you have read articles or a book on meditation, or someone has recommended it to you to reduce your stress or gain clarity in your life. Recent scientific research suggests a correlation between meditation and stress reduction and improved cognitive performance.

If you are interested in practicing meditation with a group, join us Monday nights at 6:30 p.m. in church room 11. We're there whenever the church building is open.

Meetings last one hour and typically con-

Mindfulness Meditation
Mondays, rm. 11
6:30-7:30 p.m.

hour concludes with reading a brief text such as a poem, song lyrics, or article selected by someone in the group and reflective conversation. The group includes meditators of all levels. Everyone is welcome to attend for one meeting or many.

More info: meditation@austinuu.org

**Flower Power
Take a Spot on
the Calendar**

Please consider filling an empty spot on the Flower Calendar. You can honor or memorialize a special person or date, or just provide flowers to warm your own heart! You may sign up in the hallway across from the office. More info: Barbara Denny, flowers@austinuu.org

**First Unitarian
Universalist
Church of
Austin**

4700 Grover
Austin, TX
78756

512-452-6168
austinuu.org

Minister
Rev. Meg Barnhouse
ext 304

Director of Finance
and Operations
Sean Hale
ext 308

Interim Director of
Lifespan Religious Ed.
Marisol Caballero
ext 306

Director of Music
Brent Baldwin
ext 314

Board President
Susan Thomson
president@austinuu.org

SUNDAY WORSHIP

SANCTUARY 9:15 A.M. AND 10:45 A.M. (SEPT. 2 IS 10 A.M. ONLY)

SEPT. 2 (10 A.M. ONLY)
Water Communion/Ingathering
WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

As we come together for the start of First UU's program year, please bring to the service a small container of water from a place that refreshed your spirit this summer. We will pour our waters together in a common bowl as we mingle our spirits in a common effort to nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice. If you didn't bring water from that place literally, you are welcome to pour water from the pitcher next to the bowl. Please prepare just one or two sentences if you wish to speak!

SEPT. 9
Setting Sail
WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

Magellan, Verrazano and Columbus were European explorers with three very different mixes of courage and caution, attention to detail and big-picture overview. So often a quality in a person that is useful in most situations is their downfall in others. What can we learn from these three?

SEPT. 16
A Relationship of Promises
WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

In the first of a series on the First UU Covenant of Healthy Relations, we'll talk about being a "covenant community," and about nurturing one another's spiritual growth.

SEPT. 23
American Civil Religion
WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

Years ago, Robert Bellah wrote about the beliefs at the center of U.S. culture. These stories are a mixture of Puritanism, positive thinking, "the American Dream" and capitalism. With the upcoming election, we can see all of this in high dudgeon.

SEPT. 30
Coming Home
WITH MARISOL CABALLERO

We pride ourselves in being open and affirming toward all who come through our doors, yet it seems like many people still do not know of our existence. "Uni-what?" With such a rich history and with so many searching for a church home such as our faith offers, why are UUs so notoriously shy about talking about where we attend church? This sermon will challenge us to be more willing to share our faith.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: SAVE THE DATE

SUNDAY, NOV. 11, 1:30 p.m. - Pre-congregational Meeting
(to discuss the agenda of the December congregational meeting)

SUNDAY, DEC. 9, 1:30 p.m. - Congregational Meeting
(to vote on the annual budget and more)

This notification of the congregational meeting will appear monthly, throughout the year, and will serve as an official notification of our semi-annual meetings. In order to save time and money, we will discontinue the practice of sending targeted mailings announcing these meetings.

THE FORUM

IN SANCTUARY AT NOON, FOLLOWING SECOND SERVICE

SEPT. 9 It Takes a Movement: Restoring Union Power

WITH PROF. JACK GETMAN

Anyone concerned about the decline of the American middle class needs to hear Professor Jack Getman, a preeminent scholar in the field of labor law at the University of Texas. Professor Getman, a distinguished labor historian as well as a legal scholar, traces the connections between the erosion of labor rights under U.S. law and the erosion of the economic standing of American wage-earners. Getman's research highlights the importance of restoring union power—putting the movement back in the union movement—as a way to turn this situation around.

SEPT. 16 The Effects of Standardized Testing on Education in Texas

WITH ALLEN WEEKS

Parents and citizens throughout Texas have become increasingly concerned about the overemphasis on standardized testing in our schools, evidenced by over half of the school districts in the state signing on to an anti-testing resolution. This talk will look at the origins of testing and school accountability in Texas and how it has evolved into the new STAAR and EOC tests in 2012. While accountability may be good, the devil is in the details, with the new tests potentially reducing learning time and increasing barriers to college admission and financial aid.

SEPT. 23 (No forum, Connections Fair)

SEPT. 30 Investing in Austin's Future: 10 Goals in 10 Years

WITH KIRK WATSON

Sen. Watson will discuss his vision for Austin's future, including the establishment of a major new university medical center here. Kirk Watson is State Senator for District 14. He is a partner with the law firm Brown McCarroll, L.L.P. He is a lawyer and former Austin Mayor. Senator Watson is the chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus. He serves on the Senate committees overseeing Business and Commerce, Economic Development, and Higher Education, and he is Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security. He is currently sitting on the Joint Committee on Oversight of Higher Education Governance, Excellence & Transparency. Senator Watson is the immediate past chair of CAMPO, the primary transportation planning agency for Central Texas.

Put on a Happy Face: Be a Fall Usher or Greeter

Ushers and greeters needed for the fall/winter session (Sept. 9, 2012 through Jan. 27, 2013). You will only have to work one Sunday a month, either the first or second service. Training will be provided. Contact Kitty Traylor, usher@austinuu.org or 451-9479.

UU Circle of Friends Retreat Oct. 20, U-Bar-U

The theme this year: "UU—One Heart, One World." We gather Friday night for a wiener roast, starting our weekend-long journey to get to know each other. On Saturday after breakfast, we gather in the main room to listen to our speaker and have workshops in the morning and afternoon. There'll be singing around the campfire, massage, photography, writing under a tree, two labyrinths, hiking, swimming, reading on the porch, tai chi and more. More info: Pat Whalen, 512-535-1990

**First Unitarian
Universalist
Church of
Austin**

**One Church
Many Beliefs**
512-452-6168
austinuu.org

Photography
compliments of
Jane Parsons and
Margaret Roberts

**First Unitarian
Universalist
Church of
Austin**
4700 Grover
Austin, TX
78756

SPECIAL OFFERING FOR SEPTEMBER
People's Community Clinic



Since its beginning 42 years ago in the basement of the Congregational Church near the UT campus, PCC has grown to provide high quality, affordable health care to thousands of medically underserved and uninsured Central Texans. PCC offers prenatal and pediatric care, adolescent health services, comprehensive care for adults, and valuable educational services that give patients the tools they need to improve their health. PCC's patients pay on a sliding scale determined by income and family size. While PCC does charge its patients for services and accepts Medicare and Medicaid insurance, 60 percent of PCC's income comes from private sources

like foundation grants and donations. Government funding sources are shrinking and the demand for services is skyrocketing. PCC needs our help.

For many years, First UU Austin has supported PCC with donations and countless hours of volunteer time. On Sept. 9, please make a generous contribution to our Justice Fund special offering so that we may continue to support the crucial work of PCC and our other worthy recipients.

*More info: www.pcc.org
Volunteer info: sherioverton@hotmail.com*

A NOTE ABOUT SPECIAL OFFERINGS

On the second Sunday of every month our church collects a special offering. Your generous donations at the worship service go to the First UU Justice Fund, which is divided among worthy organizations, thereby extending our church's mission into the greater community. Organizations are nominated and then approved by the congregation.