

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin

Leadership Reference Guide

This is the first official version. There are probably mistakes in it! If something doesn't sound right to you, let us know: lrg@austinuu.org.

This document is intended to provide general information that Committee and Group leaders need to function in our church. It is not intended to answer committee specific questions, to be a "How To" guide or to answer general questions of the congregation.

If this document references a policy, that policy supersedes the information presented here!

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Covenant, Values, Vision and End Statements

These can be found online at: <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/visitors/values-mission/>

Our Values

- Transcendence – To connect with wonder and awe of the unity of life
- Community – To connect with joy, sorrow, and service with those whose lives we touch
- Compassion – To treat ourselves and others with love
- Courage – To live lives of honesty, vulnerability, and beauty
- Transformation – To pursue the growth that changes our lives and heals our world

Our Mission

At First UU Church of Austin, we gather in community to

- nourish souls
- transform lives
- and do justice.

Ends

First UU Church of Austin is a radically hospitable community where:

- All people feel welcomed and are treated with respect and dignity
- Members and their families feel supported in times of joy and need
- Members find connection with one another in fellowship
- People are fully engaged and generous with time, treasure and talent

First UU Church of Austin nourishes souls and transforms lives by:

- Engaging and supporting members in spiritual practice and growth
- Providing worship, programs and activities that awaken meaning and transcendence
- Ensuring that members have a caring, supportive and safe place to rekindle the spirit

First UU Church of Austin witnesses to justice in our personal lives and beyond, by:

- Practicing liberal religious values in the public arena
- Empowering all people to access the richness of life
- Providing leadership to the greater UUA community to expand the reach of our movement
- Partnering with the interfaith community to live our shared values

A Covenant of Healthy Relations

As a religious community, we promise:

- To nurture the spiritual growth of people of all ages in our church.
- To keep communications with one another direct, honest, and respectful in a spirit of compassion, love, and trust.
- To support our church with generous gifts of time, talent, and money in gratitude for the fellowship, joy, and inspiration we receive.
- To be present with others through life's inevitable transitions.
- To make our church a safe place to express our deepest fears and our greatest joys.
- To forgive ourselves and others when we fall short of expectations, showing good humor and the optimism required for moving forward and calling ourselves back into covenant.
- To engage with the larger world to promote justice and peace.

We acknowledge and commit ourselves to the work of sustaining our beloved community, welcoming all in good faith, and ministering to each other.

Thus do we covenant with one another.

Office Hours and Overview of Staff Responsibilities

Church Office: Tues-Fri 9:00a – 4:00p; closed Mondays and holidays.

Mailroom and Copier: Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 4:00pm; Sunday 9:00am – 1:00pm

Building: approximately 9:00am – 9:00pm

To gain access to the office, mailroom or building outside of these hours, please send a request at least five days in advance to natalie@austinuu.org.

Office Administrator & Rentals: Natalie Freeburg; natalie@austinuu.org; 452-6168 x300

- General information, room rental arrangements for members and outside parties

Bookkeeper: Jamie Schroeder; jamie@austinuu.org; 452-6168 x302

- Pledges, receipt of funds, account balances
- Payroll
- Accounts payable

Communications: Linda Taylor; linda@austinuu.org; 452-6168 x301

- Monthly newsletter, weekly e-announcements and Order of Service.
- The best way to reach her is via email.

Please do not say or print “contact the office for more information” unless you have cleared it first with Natalie and given her the information in writing or via email. It is more helpful to include your own contact info in publicity about your event.

Drop-ins vs. Appointments – making an appointment with a member of the office staff, rather than just dropping in, allows them to give you their undivided attention and increases their productivity on other projects. Drop-ins may have to wait or even come back another day if that staff member is otherwise occupied.

Austin Area UU Churches

There are several UUs in our vicinity.

- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Austin
www.uufa.org
- Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Church
www.liveoakuu.org
- Wildflower Church
www.wildflowerchurch.org

You can find more Central Texas churches by searching on the UUA website: www.uua.org.

Bookstore

If your committee wants to purchase books from the UUA publishing house, Beacon-Skinner, the bookstore can get you the book at a significant discount and there are no shipping charges.

Building Layout

The building layout can be found online at:

V1.1

Send corrections to lrg@austinuu.org.

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This document is online at: <http://austinuu.org/lrg>

<http://austinuu.org/wp2011/visitors/room-reservations/building-layout/>

Childcare

The complete Childcare Requests and Booking Policy can be found on the church website here: <http://austinuu.org/childcare>.

This is a short summary. If you have not requested childcare before, please reference the complete policy.

- Please request childcare at least two weeks in advance of your event.
- Childcare requests are made by e-mailing childcare@austinuu.org. This e-mail goes to the Director of Religious Education, the Children's Programming Assistant, and the Childcare Coordinator.
- The rate is \$30.00 per hour. This books two paid, CPR and First Aid Certified childcare workers. If your event is church related, you may choose to be reimbursed for childcare expenses out of your committee's budget.
- No fewer than one hour of childcare for an event may be booked at a time.
- No more than five hours of childcare may be booked for an event at a time.
- Traditional Childcare is for children 6 months old up to 5th grade only. We will not care for youth older than 5th grade due to safety reasons in the childcare rooms.

If a committee meets outside of the building and a member needs childcare, this policy does not apply. If a committee meets at church and wants childcare so that committee members with children can attend, this policy can be used. The cost of childcare must be paid by either the committee or the individual. This is, however, a very expensive way to enhance committee member participation. Please talk to the Executive Director for ideas on how to do so for less money.

Church Directory

A directory is periodically sent to the email leadership list or to members who request it. For security purposes, please distribute it to your committee members, but to church members only. Exceptions can be approved by the Executive Director.

Church-wide Calendar

The church-wide calendar can be found here: <http://austinuu.org/calendar>.

Traditional Events

This is a non-comprehensive list of events that traditionally happen at our church, U bar U, the Southwest District and the UUA.

***** Any event's date may change in a given year. These dates are not set in stone. Double check these dates with the church calendar to ensure their accuracy. *****

Flower Communion is traditionally on Easter Sunday
Sedar is traditionally on Good Friday

January

All Council – 2nd Sunday

February

March

Men's Retreat at U bar U

April

All Council – 2nd Sunday

SW District Annual Meeting / Spring Conference

Pre-congregational meeting – 2nd Sunday

May

Congregational Meeting – 2nd Sunday

Committee Leader Training

Women's Retreat at U bar U

June

General Assembly

July

All Council – 2nd Sunday

August

Dwight Brown Leadership Experience

September

Connections Fair – 2nd Sunday

October

All Council – 2nd Sunday

November

Pre-congregational meeting – 2nd Sunday

SW District Fall Conference

December

Congregational Meeting – 2nd Sunday

Christmas pagent – 3rd W of December

Monthly Events

Sharing Suppers – 3rd Saturday

Committee Data Storage

Different committees have stored their electronic data at different places. If you want to store your information on-line, check these out.

- [Yahoo groups](#)
- [Google docs](#)
- [MyCommittee.com](#)
- [Volunteerspot.com](#)

Committee emails

All committee chairs have a forwarding email address set up. The reason for this is two-fold: it minimizes publication of your personal email address on the web for spammers to harvest, and it helps with continuity of communication as committee chairs change.

Currently the Leadership Lists, both electronic and paper, list your personal email. We are transitioning into using the forwarding emails and encourage you to adopt this practice.

If you want to publish a contact email address for any of the church's online publications (web pages, newsletters, announcements), the web team recommends that you use your forwarding address as the address to reach you. When giving your contact information in person, you may choose to give out your personal address, but the web team recommends that you use the forwarding address so as to help ensure that church members will not continue to contact you about committee related items after you have completed your term as committee chair.

The email forwarding can go to one person or to co-chairs. If you would like a mailing list for your committee, you can set one up through Yahoo, Google, or another 3rd party provider. If your committee is listed as an administrative committee on the church website, the web team can set up one mailing list for the entire committee.

Please do not hesitate to contact the web team for assistance with creating web pages, forwarding email account issues, and other church-related web issues. You can reach the web team at webmaster@austinuu.org. By sending your message to the entire team at the webmaster@austinuu.org address, your issue will most likely be resolved more quickly than if you contact an individual on the web team, and it helps us track requests made to the team.

Communicating to the congregation

The complete Newsletter and Announcement Submission Criteria Policy can be found on the church website here: <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/leadership/leadership-resources/submission-criteria/>

If anyone has suggestions, questions, concerns or ideas regarding these communications please notify the editor at linda@austinuu.org or call (512) 452-6168 Ext. 301.

Newsletter

This is a short summary. If you have not submitted an article before, please reference the complete policy: <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/leadership/leadership-resources/submission-criteria/>

The church newsletter is to educate, build community, create institutional loyalties, and focus on people as well as events. The primary focus of the newsletter is future driven, highlighting the important things we want everyone to know at the beginning of each month.

All submissions MUST be sent to Linda Taylor's email linda@austinuu.org by 5 p.m. on the 15th day of the month to be included in the following newsletter. Anyone needing an extension of the deadline must notify the editor prior to the deadline. The newsletter goes to final print on the 25th of that month.

Weekly email announcements / Sunday Bulletin

This is a short summary. If you have not submitted anything before, please reference the complete policy: <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/leadership/leadership-resources/submission-criteria/>

The Web announcements highlight events and other messages of interest to the congregation from Friday to the Saturday of the following week, the Sermon and Forum topics of the following Sunday and additional announcements and dates to keep in mind. This final section also includes acknowledgment of past events, activities, and programs of interest. The Sunday Bulletin is the same except that the information begins on Sunday instead of Friday.

All submissions should be sent to Linda Taylor's email linda@austinuu.org by noon on Wednesday to be included in that week's Friday announcements and Sunday Bulletin.

Please include email and telephone number with your submission so she can contact you if there are questions that need to be addressed.

Special announcements

This is a short summary. If you have not submitted anything before, please reference the complete policy: <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/leadership/leadership-resources/submission-criteria/>

All submissions should be sent to Linda Taylor's email linda@austinuu.org. If there is any question about the appropriateness of the announcement, Linda will run it by the minister who has the final say.

Class announcements and other events that have already been advertised elsewhere will not be sent out in special announcements. If there has been a death of a First UU member, a special announcement will be sent out if it was not included in the regular announcements or Sunday Bulletin.

Communicating with other committees

Currently there are two primary ways to communicate with other committees.

- The quarterly All Council meeting, which committee chairs are expected to attend and to which anyone is invited. Committee reports are limited to one minute or less. If your committee would like to place an item on the agenda, they should contact the Executive Director, preferably a month in advance
- The leadership email list, leadership@austinuu.org, which goes to all chairs of committees, subcommittees, church groups, senior staff and the board.
Senior staff = Minister, Executive Director, Director of Religious Education and Music Director

Copiers

There are two copiers.

- The copier nearest the mailroom door is available as needed. It makes only black and white copies.
- The color copier under the window requires a code to operate. Your code and account will need to be set up in advance and are set up by person rather than committee. Color copies are charged to your committee's budget at 10 cents per page. You must have training before operating the color copier. Trainings are given on a quarterly basis. For training, contact natalie@austinuu.org.

The cost of black and white copies comes out of the church's general operating budget.

Please double check to leave nothing behind, or it might be thrown away.

Equipment (audio/sound system, projector/screen)

In order to use any audio equipment or the project/screen, advance notice needs to be given to Natalie when the reservation for the event is made (or at least seven days in advance).

You need to be trained before using this equipment. Trainings are set up on a quarterly basis.

Fax machine

The office has a fax machine.

The fax number is (512) 453-5912.

Key Checkout and Alarm Codes

Room and building keys are loaned on a short-term or long-term basis to those who need access to rooms outside of church office hours. Possession of a key requires a signed contract and a fee if the key is lost. Within office hours, we can give you a key (please call in advance so we can expect you). If you will be coming in after building hours, you will need a security code. If the alarm goes off upon entering, you may be responsible for paying the police fee of \$100.

Kitchen

The kitchen phone is a fax phone. When it rings it must be answered on the first or second ring to get the caller rather than the fax noise.

Leadership list – email and printed

Natalie maintains a list of contact information for the church leadership. Please be sure that the email address that you give to her as your contact email is the email account that you would like to use for communications from the church leadership.

The Leadership List

This term applies to two different entities, a paper and an email version, that include almost the same people.

- The **paper version** is posted outside the office and is not confidential. It is maintained by natalie@austinuu.org. It contains leaders of committees, subcommittees and church groups, senior staff and the board. The paper version includes non-senior staff members who are not on the email list.
- The **email discussion list**, leadership@austinuu.org, is maintained by the web team, webmaster@austinuu.org. It includes leaders of committees, subcommittees and church groups, senior staff and the board. It also includes Natalie. The email list is the best source for distributing information. When sending to this listserv, do not include any other recipients, otherwise it will be too big to go through. Non-leadership list members may not post to this list.

Senior staff = Minister, Executive Director, Director of Religious Education and Music Director

It is the responsibility of each committee chair to notify their members about events and notices that are distributed to the leadership list. Please keep your members informed!

Other Leadership Lists

board@austinuu.org – Senior staff and officers and trustees of the board

justboard@austinuu.org – officers and trustees of the board

Senior staff = Minister, Executive Director, Director of Religious Education and Music Director

Library

You can browse the library contents here: <http://www.austinuu.org/library>.

There are still some materials that are not yet cataloged.

The comprehensive version of library policies is laid out here:

<http://austinuu.org/wp2011/community/lit-arts/library/library-committee/>

Leadership Books

The Nominating / Leadership Development Committee has donated several leadership books to the library. We highly recommend any and all of them for our committee leaders.

- *Healthy Disclosure: Solving Communication Quandaries in Congregations* by Kibbie Simmons Ruth and Karen A. McClintock
- *Leadership and Self-Deception* by the Arbinger Institute
- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High* by Kerry Patterson
- *Crucial Confrontations: Tools For Resolving Broken Promises, Violated Expectations and Bad Behavior* by Kerry Patterson
- *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership* by James W. Sipe
- *Community: The Structure of Belonging* by Peter Block

There are other resources in the library as well.

- *Leadership Skills: Developing Volunteers for Organizational Success* by Emily Kittle Morrison

How to check out/return books to the library

Checkout is currently based on the honor system. Sign out/sign in books in the binder by the entrance.

There is a light grey fabric basket labeled for returned books, within the library on the south side of the open doorway.

How to donate to the library

There is a light grey fabric basket labeled for donations within the library on the south side of the open doorway. Please leave your donations there for our library volunteers to catalog for our online system. Thank you for understanding that your donation might not meet the criteria set forth for books in the library and by donating it, you are giving permission to the library staff to donate it elsewhere.

If there is a specific person that you or one of your group members wishes to memorialize or honor via the one of the donation books, feel free to write that name and information inside the book or books. For example, "this book is a gift of love from the XXXXCommittee."

If the book is written by or about a member of the congregation, please be sure to document the fact. The library staff may not otherwise know and the book may not be incorporated into the library.

Lost and found

The Lost and Found is a box in mailroom. Valuable items (watches, glasses, jewelry, electronics) should be given directly to someone in the office (or put through the office door if the office is closed) stating when and where it was found. Lost items are donated after approximately 30 days.

Mail boxes

- Check your mailbox weekly.
- Try not to store things there (makes it hard to see new items);
- If you can't find the right box for someone else, don't just leave it on the ledge – it might get thrown away.

Money

Requesting Information

Bookkeeper forms are located in front of Jamie's desk or in the mailroom: Check Requests, Request for Information (reports, account balances, etc.) and Tax-Exempt Letters. If you are in need of a tax exempt form, please email Jamie and she can send an electronic copy for your convenience.

Requests for Information forms can be used for reports, summaries, etc. Please note if there is a timeframe expectation for this request, it will be taken into consideration, but is not guaranteed. General turnaround time for these reports is 48 hours.

Reimbursing Expenses / Check Requests

Check request forms are located in front of Jamie's desk, in the mailroom and are downloadable from this webpage: <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/leadership/leadership-resources>.

A check request form is for reimbursements or payments to third parties and requires the signature of your committee chair before it is turned in. Check requests must be completed and signed and in Jamie's mailbox (in the office, not the mailroom) by noon Monday in order to be

processed at the end of the week. If the request is received after noon on Monday, it will be processed the following week. If you drop the request off on Monday when the office is closed, please put it through the mail slot in the office door.

Budget process

Each committee has the opportunity to request a budget. The fiscal year runs January 1 to December 31. The process is currently in flux, but will be similar to the following.

1. In June, Executive Director sends out budget request forms via the email leadership list.
2. The Executive Director will be available through Mid-July to committees that would like help or input crafting their proposal. The Executive Director may not be available to help at the last minute, so please schedule an appointment by mid-July.
3. These forms are due back by July 31. *** This date may change as the process is finalized. ***
4. The budget is presented at the pre-congregational meeting in November and voted upon by the congregation in December.

Quarterly budget updates

A quarterly report of your committee's budget will be sent to you via email by the end of the month after the quarter ends. For example, first quarter reports will be sent by April 30th.

Office Supplies

Office supplies are in the paper closet just outside the minister's door. The best way to know what's in there is to look!

Please try and think of requests 14 days in advance. If something is getting low, let Natalie know via email or note in her box. Another option is to buy supplies out of your own budget and be reimbursed. Think of others and help leave paper, staples etc ready for the next person.

Playground

We hope to have information on playground use and etiquette soon.

Postage

The office does not have a postal machine. Committees should purchase their own postage and request to be reimbursed from their budget.

Room reservation

Reserve a Room

To reserve a room for your committee's event:

1. Confirm a common date with your committee members, using the online church-wide calendar at <http://austinuu.org/calendar> to be sure there are not conflicts.
2. Submit a request either of these two ways:
 - a. Place a paper request in Natalie's box in the office. The paper version can be found in the mail room or online:
<http://www.austinuu.org/RoomReservationRequest.pdf> OR

- b. Submit an electronic request using the online form found here:
<http://austinuu.org/wp2011/visitors/room-reservations/room-reservation-request-form/>
3. Natalie will book the room and confirm it within 5 business days.
4. Double check the church wide calendar after receiving confirmation.

Once your room is confirmed, please make sure to communicate to Natalie any changes or cancellations.

When you arrive for your meeting, check the room reservation schedule posted opposite the office door. Your room assignment might have changed since you booked it.

What you need to know about reserving a room

1. This is a very busy building – 1st come, 1st served. In case of conflict, the overall mission of the church takes precedence. Church meetings are booked September through the following August. It is the committee’s responsibility to confirm their reservations online in advance of the meetings, and to renew their reservations each year. Recurring annual events may be booked up to two years in advance.
2. Please make reservations at least 14 days in advance so we can plan our staff needs accordingly. Earlier is always better. Think ahead - what table/chair set up do you need? Projector and screen? Dry-erase board? We might not be able to accommodate your equipment requests if you request it less than 14 days before the meeting. Please do not take tables and chairs from other rooms – they might be set up for a future event.
3. A two-week reservation schedule is posted opposite the office door. Please check it upon your arrival at the church for your meeting – your room assignment might have changed since you booked it.
4. Please leave the room welcoming for the next group; don’t leave food out anywhere – it attracts mice, rats and ants. If you use anything from the kitchen, you are responsible for washing, drying and *putting it away*.
5. Please be thoughtful, considerate, and mindful that we want to serve many important groups and activities with very limited space. Please book only the space you know you will need. No-shows and last-minute cancellations deprive other groups of the use of space and/or the church of vital revenue.
6. Sundays from 9:00am to 1:00pm – Religious Education sets the priorities for room use.

Southwestern UU Conference / District

The SWUUC has professional paid and volunteer staff support the 78+ congregations in our district with high quality training opportunities, consultant services, and resources.

www.swuuc.org

Every April and November they offer a reasonably priced and informative conference. The location rotates through the member congregations.

UUA Resources

The UUA has email lists specific to most committees. You can ask questions of other churches through these email lists. The list of lists is here: <http://lists.uua.org/>

The UUA also has resources for many committees here:

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/congregationalhandbook/34729.shtml>

V1.1

Send corrections to lrg@austinuu.org.

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This document is online at: <http://austinuu.org/lrg>

InterConnections is a monthly email newsletter that publishes tips and stories about vital congregations for lay leaders and the professional staff who work with them. Sign up [here](#).

Website

Leadership Resources

The website has a resources page with links to several important documents. The resources page can be found here: <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/leadership/leadership-resources>. As more documents become available, they will be added, so keep an eye on it.

Committee Web Pages

Each committee can have its own pages if desired. A committee's page can either be maintained by the web team or a committee member can maintain the page. If the web team maintains the page for the committee, the page will not be able to be updated as frequently as it might be if a committee member were able to maintain it. However, if no one on the committee feels comfortable maintaining a page, and the committee would like to have one made, the web team will happily work with committee members to create a page that suits the committee's needs.

Please do not hesitate to contact the web team for assistance with creating web pages, forwarding email account issues, and other church-related web issues. You can reach the web team at webmaster@austinuu.org. By sending your message to the entire team at this email address, your issue will most likely be resolved more quickly than if you contact an individual on the web team, and it helps us track requests made to the team.