

NOVEMBER 2018

first UU NEWS

*Together we nourish souls, transform lives, and
do justice to build the Beloved Community.*

persist.

IN THIS ISSUE

Reader's Theater

Monday, November 12
Rm 13
7:30 p.m.-9 p.m.

Reader's Theater continues its 2018/19 season reading contemporary short plays. No memorization or rehearsing! All are welcome and no previous experience is required!

Note: The December Reader's Theater meeting is cancelled. We will resume in January, thank you.

Senior Luncheon

Wednesday, November 14
Howson Hall
12 p.m.

Soup, salad and dessert will be served for \$5 and there is always an engaging program planned. This month, Greg Buford will return to tell us about his new book "Kept: An American Househusband in India".

Please RSVP to Joyce Wilson: (512) 482-0998.

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SUPPORT YOUR FAVORITE NON-PROFIT!

It's time to nominate your favorite nonprofit social justice organization for First UU's monthly special offering for 2019. Each year, 12 nonprofits receive the funds collected through our special offering on the second Sunday of each month. For 2017, we were able to give each of the 12 selected organizations \$1,700. If you know of a nonprofit that is doing great work for justice, please submit a nomination!

Nominated nonprofits must have 501(c)(3) tax status. Nomination forms will be available throughout the month of November in the Social Action mailbox in the mailroom and by email. The vote to select next year's special offering recipients will take place in December. To receive a nomination form by email or get help with the nomination process, contact socialaction@austinuu.org.

SUNDAY SERVICES

SANCTUARY | 9:15 AM AND 10:45 AM

NOVEMBER 4

Need a Little Mercy Now

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

What does the word “mercy” mean to you? When do you need it? When do you give it? Where does it come from?

NOVEMBER 11

Fall Down 7, Get Up 8

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

Persistence, endurance, resilience, grit -- is it a mistake to be goal-oriented? Is there a better way to think about forward movement?

NOVEMBER 18

Come, Ye, Thankful People, Come

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

As Thanksgiving approaches, let us talk about gratitude in the midst of difficult circumstances.

NOVEMBER 25

We Remember

WITH REV. CHRIS JIMMERSON

The path that led us to where we are now informs all the possibilities of our continuing journey. We will explore how our memories, both those in our mind and those buried deeply within our DNA, ground as well as challenge our human potential. This may be the day that our building will be closed and we will be live streaming from the courtyard (on our public Facebook page), inviting our church folks to watch from home.

Eclectic Folk Jam

Friday, November 9
Rm. 17

7–10 p.m.

An open jam session for singers and instrumentalists, held on the second Friday of every month. We have “Rise Up Singing” and “Rise Again” and music stands. Bring other songs if you like, as well as drinks and snacks to share.

Contact Pete and Kim Akenhead at (512) 834-0188, or Mary Jane Ford at (512) 926-4122 or singalong@austinuu.org.

UU/Quaker Singalong

Saturday, November 24
Friends Meeting House
(3701 E. MLK Blvd.)

7–10 p.m.

Please bring snacks and finger foods, musical instruments, and copies of songs you want to sing. Copies of “Rise Up Singing” and “Rise Again” are provided, but you may bring other songs. This is an alcohol-free event, round-robin format, held on the fourth Saturday of every month.

Contact Larry Vaughn at (512) 469-0029 or Mary Jane Ford at (512) 926-4122 or singalong@austinuu.org.

Announcing A Special Service

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 7

A SERVICE OF FELLOWSHIP AND PERSISTENCE

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

We will gather after the election to strengthen our spirits and laugh or cry or both. Please bring a reading that expresses how you feel or one that would inspire the congregation.



TAKE THE SURVEY ON LIVING OUT OUR MISSION AND ENTER TO WIN A DOZEN ARTISANAL DONUTS!

Beginning on November 4, you are invited by the First UU Board of Trustees to take an online survey to help us measure how well we as a church are doing on living our mission. The survey asks you to rate how effective we are at meeting the ends we adopted this year as a way of fulfilling our mission: "Together we nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice to build the Beloved Community."

We'll also be asking you about the impact on your spiritual life, the various groups you participate in First UU have. Finally, we'll ask demographic questions so we can get a better handle on who our congregants are. Our plan is to make this an annual survey in order to measure how our church is progressing. If you are part of the First UU church community, even if you are not an official member, please do take the time to answer the survey. The survey will be available through November 18, and the URL for the survey will be available in the Order of Service. And, when you complete the survey, you'll have the opportunity to enter a raffle for a dozen home made artisanal donuts!

PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM

SANCTUARY | SUNDAYS | NOON



Hospice Austin
Your comfort. Our calling.

NOVEMBER 4

Conversations in the End-of-Life Hospice Journey

WITH REV. DIANA DWORIN

Join us for a conversation with Rev. Diana Dworin, Hospice Austin's Christopher House chaplain, about end-of-life hospice care and the themes that come when accompanying patients and families during this time. Rev. Dworin, a graduate of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, worked for more than 20 years as journalist, daily newspaper reporter and editor before becoming an interfaith chaplain. Her pastoral care experience also includes work at Austin-area trauma hospitals and Dell Children's Medical Center.

NOVEMBER 11

What November 6th Means for the Texas Legislature

WITH ASH HALL

The dust has settled on the 2018 election, and it's time for Round 2 of civic engagement. Ash Hall will provide a debrief of the results of the Texas state house and senate races, and analyze what it means for the upcoming Texas legislative session. Ash will then equip attendees with the tools and information they need to affect policy decisions in the legislature as both constituents and organizers, and offer ways to join ongoing efforts.

Ash Hall is the Democratic Precinct Chair for Precinct 242, and an avid policy advocate. They became involved in social justice advocacy in Texas a decade ago, after discovering their own queer identities and finding community with others facing oppression. Ash's previous work includes Representative Celia Israel's campaign, the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, Equality Texas, and Representative Victoria Neave's legislative team. Today, they serve as the Content Manager for the Texas Civil Rights Project. Ash is committed to reaching justice for all marginalized communities and changing cultural norms in favor of compassion and equity.

NOTICE:

There will be no Public Affairs Forum on November 18 or November 25th. Thank you.

NEWS & NOTES

GROUP
CANCELLATIONS**Paradox Players**

The Paradox Players production of A Christmas Carol has been canceled. Thank you all and we will see you next year!

Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance meetings for November and December have been canceled. Please watch for the January Newsletter for information regarding dates for the 2019 Spring Meetings!

Mindful Meditation

The Mindful Meditation group will not meet during the construction shut down at the end of November/ beginning of December.

We will keep you posted in the Order of Service and on the announcements page at AustinUU.Org on exact dates as we get closer.

Racism Unlearning Circle

The November meeting has been canceled. We will keep you updated on the December meeting. Thank you all so much!

White Allies for Racial Equity

The November meeting of White Allies for Racial equity will be cancelled for the month of November. We will resume on December 9 with our joint WARE/POC holiday potluck.

**"Getting to Know
UU" Class**

The December 2 Getting to Know UU class has been cancelled. The 2019 dates will be announced soon. Thank you.

GREEN SANCTUARY &
350 AUSTIN

GROUP RELOCATION

Green Sanctuary & Austin 350

The November meeting of Green Sanctuary/Austin 350 has been relocated to Wildflower UU Church for Tuesday, November 20th.

The group will return to First UU in December. Thank you so much!

Floods. Drought. 100+ degree temperatures, poor air quality, fires and more! Does this concern you? Our Green Sanctuary Ministry has joined with 350 Austin to defend our sacred planet and all its creatures by stopping the causes of climate destruction. We are working on reducing fossil fuel pollution. The new International Panel on Climate Change says we must work at an historic level to avoid increasing climate disasters. More info here: nytimes.com/2018/10/07/climate/ipcc-climate-report-2040.html.

Green Sanctuary meets every third Tuesday at First UU, snacks and visiting at 6:30 p.m., meeting at 7. All are welcome. Change the world, now, while we can. Info? green@austinuu.org or call Richard or Beki Halpin at (512) 658-2599.

Inside Books Project



Keep your book donations for Inside Books coming! Put them in the grey *Inside Books* tub located in the Gallery.

We fill inmate book requests the 2nd Monday of each month, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. while enjoying some community time, fun, a potluck lunch and more. For info, location, and other helpful stuff visit www.insidebooksproject.org or send an email to insidebooks@austinuu.org.



On December 9 will we celebrate our 5TH ANNUAL re-gifting event. Bring your old items, appropriate for a gift to another, on November 25 and we will put them out between the first and second services for others to choose from on December 9. Someone else might just love that old picture frame, iced tea pitcher, decorative plate, or necklace you never use. And kids! Bring that awesome toy or special shirt you have outgrown to pass along. Enjoy the holiday season and Recycle, Reuse, RE-GIFT.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Here Comes the Rain Again

Rev. Meg Barnhouse
Senior Minister



There are a lot of things in life I can't control. I dislike that this is true, but there you go. Rain is one of those things. Our construction costs jumped last year because of Hurricane Harvey. Building materials suddenly were in high demand. We rolled with that, gritting our teeth a bit, but what else are you going to do? We signed the construction company's minimum bid paperwork as quickly as we could before prices rose even higher.

The work has been going on apace, even ahead of schedule at times, but now we've hit delays. The trenches they are digging for gas lines are filling up with water. They pump them out, but the water table is so high because of all the October rain that they just fill right back up again. The work on the outside of the building has to grind to a halt until some days with good weather.

The construction folks told us a few days before this writing that the building would lose electricity for two and a half weeks. We raised up a cry. OK, eleven days. They could make all of the replacement of the circuit boards and mapping of the

lines happen in eleven days. It was going to be from this date to that date in November, so we notified all of the people whose programs would be affected by the building's being closed for that period of time. Events were cancelled, moved, adjusted. Then they told us, because of all the rain, the building closure would be these other dates, November 26 to December 7. The things that had been cancelled --- could they be on again? Other things had to be cancelled now. Would we be able to have some kind of Thanksgiving Dinner? We still don't know. We can't have it in the building, probably. Unless there is more rain, causing another delay, making the building closure dates change again. It's hard to hold onto anything. When it's just the ministers and staff who are inconvenienced, it's easier, but when we see church members put out, disappointed, discombobulated, it's a lot harder.

As it stands now, there will be one Sunday when we won't be able to be in the building. December 2 is that Sunday at this point. We will livestream the service from the courtyard, most likely. We will ask

the congregation to practice joining the service from their phones and computers. We will be here to "catch" people who are visiting the church. When people finally decide to visit a church, it's often at a stressful time in their lives. They wonder how to dress, they wonder whether they will be welcomed and accepted, they check their GPS and wash their children's faces and wrangle everyone into the car. The worst thing that could happen is they arrive and find a sign on the door that says "CLOSED." So we will be here, Jules and Chris and Brent and the musicians and I.

Thank you for bearing with First UU as we go through these growing pains. There is uncertainty and frustration and excitement and pride. We are doing difficult things here. Building a sanctuary, being a sanctuary, living into our mission, growing in numbers and in depth. There can be a feeling of vertigo, of displacement. Please engage with patience and perseverance, and we will emerge on the other side of this stronger, wiser, with a greater feeling of togetherness. We will know we did it! Together.

YOUR FIRST UU BOARD



Keep the Faith

Elias Ponvert

Member

Board of Trustees

Hello, my name is Elias and I'm writing to you on behalf of the Board of Trustees this month.

I'll lead by simply saying how humbled and touched I am to have been asked to serve the First Unitarian Universalist community! First UU has been a cornerstone of my social, cultural and religious life since my family and I joined in 2013.

When we joined, during our orientation we got to hear from Rev. Meg though, unfortunately, we could barely hear her -- Meg had a nasty bout of laryngitis that day and could barely whisper between sips of hot tea. She kept her remarks brief and responded to a few questions. One response has haunted me ever since.

When asked, what don't you like about the church community? Meg's response was that, while many UUs define themselves by what we don't believe we should strive to define ourselves by what we do believe.

Since then, I have tried every day to live up to Meg's call. In this letter,

I'm going to talk about faith.

Faith is a challenging concept. If you know me, you know I reference faith a lot -- I often sign emails "Keep the faith" or "Faith and solidarity", and I invoke faith in my politics. In English, we often speak of faith devoid of context, and in our culture faith usually defaults to faith in God. But that's not really what I mean by faith. Faith is a relational concept -- one has faith in something. Here are some things I have faith in.

I have faith that all of us are part of something bigger than ourselves; that self-aware human beings with love and compassion are absolutely remarkable; that simply being human, participating for good or ill in our global community is to be part of an epic spanning lifetimes.

I have faith in the Beloved Community. I was delighted to hear our new Covenant explicitly invokes Dr. King's vision, and I do believe that we can build this vision for our community and in society. Having

faith in the Beloved Community does not mean it is inevitable, though, or easy. I don't believe that we will arrive in our lifetimes, or that the path to there will be straight. My faith is in us, our community and our leadership, to do the work necessary to achieve a better world.

And we do have work to do. As Maria's letter in the October newsletter revealed, even within our liberal community we meet attitudes and aggressions that hurt. It is a challenge to dream about the Beloved Community in our world today. Nevertheless, our Board is committed to engaging these issues head on -- even to challenge our own biases and fragility.

I am honored to be a part of the First UU adventure, and I have faith that with the Board we can, in some small way, help build the Beloved Community. I welcome discussion, find me and let's talk! ·

FIRST UU ALIVE



Jules Jaramillo
Director
Lifespan Faith Development



On the Brink of Everything

It is so exciting to be discovering my way in the great big beautifulness of all things First UU Austin. I walk around our church with all the construction and, honestly, some days are somewhat distracting with the jack hammering and sawing. There have been a couple of unexpected interruptions- one including Shannon, the Congregational Administrator, peeking her head into my office to say, "Don't light a candle or turn anything on that wasn't on." There was an issue with a gas line that turned out just fine. Faith development classes have needed to be adjusted and Sunday Seminars are running with limited offerings. Our sanctuary is being transformed and our temporary worship space doesn't look or feel the same. Every day we make space for changes, expect one on the horizon, or maybe live with slight uncertainty.

In the midst of the structural changes we are also experiencing personnel changes in our nursery program. Karyn Machler, our Childcare Coordinator, has given her resignation effective November 18. We wish her the very best and are deeply grateful for the love and care she has given the youngest amongst us. Along with Karen, several of our nursery care staff will be moving on to other opportunities. These are more changes for us to live into.

In this time of transition, as our sanctuary and kitchen are begin transformed, as our faith development classes will be becoming more structurally sound, as we say goodbye to staff; our patience, endurance - our hearts - may feel stretched or strained. When I feel that stretch, I think of Parker Palmer's words; "Then there is the supple

heart, the one that breaks open, not apart, the one that can grow into greater capacity for the many forms of love. Only the supple heart can hold suffering in a way that opens to new life."

We are on the brink of everything. We are creating a renewed, larger space allowing us to be a beacon of strength, justice, and hope to the greater Austin area. We will be strengthening the walls of our classrooms so the lifespan faith development classes for all ages can continue to nurture minds, bodies, and spirits. And, as our walls are made stronger, we create pathways to connect all ages into multi-generation community - where all stages of life are seen and valued. In this transition, Meg and I are connecting First UU to new and innovative resources and support through the UUA to bolster our mission and ends of building Beloved Community. In rebuilding our nursery care program, we have the opportunity to revision how lifespan serves the youngest among us and how we nurture them in our Unitarian Universalist faith.

Yes, we are on the brink of everything. We may all be called to step into more discomfort before we are there. As we are; let us hold to our supple hearts, hold our discomfort in a way that opens to the new life that is ahead of us.

love, love, and more love.

-jules



FIRST UU IN PHOTOS

Here We Grow

Bear W. Qolezcua

Director of Communications

Here is a preview of some of the work our construction crew is undertaking. The old kitchen has been emptied, the flooring has been abated, and the new kitchen is taking shape nicely. The old kitchen will become much needed storage. The sanctuary expansion is well under way, painting and flooring are the current work order as well as installing a window on the south-east wall.

An important reminder: currently the plan is for us to lose *all* use of the building for two weeks beginning November 26th (as with all things construction, this date is subject to change). During this time, the electricians are going to map and install the new power transformer and the construction crew are going to tackle much of the abatement (removing asbestos flooring) needed in Howson Hall, the Gallery, and elsewhere. Due to this, it would be dangerous for any groups to meet in the building. As far as the missed Sunday, we will LiveStream the service on our Facebook page from the courtyard so that you will feel home while being at your own. Thank you all. Onward we go!





UBarU Camp & Retreat Center

UBarU Looks to Secure the Future ...with You Present

UBarU Camp and Retreat Center, in the beautiful Texas Hill Country has launched a capital campaign for 2018. Our last campaign for a single large project, the Rev. Dwight and Marie Brown Center in 2013 raised over \$600,000, thanks in significant part to the support of the members of First UU Austin. This beautiful facility has hosted hundreds since opening, I hope you are one of them! The campaign is structured into three tiers composed of several smaller projects that will be implemented in order of urgency, need and available funding. These three tiers address (1) critical infrastructure, (2) additional public meeting space, and (3) expanded private lodging.

Since UBarU receives no outside support from the UUA or other institutional sources we depend almost totally on usage fees for daily maintenance and operations. Fortunately UBarU has made steady progress in increasing usage to serve more UUs over the years. The joy of increased usage has already surpassed the level that our current infrastructure can support over the long term. As unsexy as it might be, we must upgrade the septic system that serves the Meeting House and main kitchen. This essential improvement will cost \$60,000, and upgrading our water system to match the needs of a public water system will cost an estimated additional \$80,000.

Once these critical first-tier projects are done, we look to provide an additional break-out/meeting space so that we can better attract and serve groups who need more than

just the Meeting House to convene, contemplate or work. This can be done economically by enclosing the open area at the end of the Brown Center to form a climate-controlled meeting space at a cost of \$25,000 - \$30,000. We would also like to create a large outdoor performance/event space in the form of a 100 -150 seat amphitheater, which would cost between \$75,000 - \$100,000. Wouldn't it be delightful to enjoy an evening of Texas music or a rousing theater performance under the stars or celebrate the morning sunrise in peaceful harmony with nature!

Depending on funding, we may opt to prioritize the construction of a third-tier project to build one or two additional cottages/duplexes at a cost of approximately \$75,000 each. These would not only provide additional housing in general, but would allow UBarU to attract small conferences that usually require more accommodations with private baths. Having more cottages available is an increasing trend among other camp and retreat centers such as UBarU, given their flexibility and convenience for families and small groups.

All our options are good ones and your support will help launch UBarU into a brighter future, serving more UUs than ever before. Please visit UBarU.org for more information, or contact UBarU Board members Michael West, Melanie Walter-Mahoney, Mark Kilpatrick or Derek Howard. ·

There are some fun events coming up at UBarU Camp & Retreat Center!

WINTER FAMILY CAMP -	DECEMBER 18 - 31, 2018
FIBER ARTS WEEKEND -	FEBRUARY 15 - 18, 2019
ASTRONOMY WEEKEND -	MARCH 1 - 3, 2019

For more details and to register go to www.ubaru.org. If you would like to rent a cottage for a quiet weekend not during a retreat or for any questions please contact: Robyn Stout, director@ubaru.org.

STEWARDSHIP

THANK YOU TO YOU!

So many people came together to make this year's annual stewardship campaign happen! Thank you those who helped plan Celebration Sunday; everyone who volunteered on Celebration Sunday; those who shared their time to stuff envelopes, write thank you cards, reach out to our members and friends, and staff our phone bank. Most importantly, thank you to those who organized food! We couldn't have done it without you!

STEWARDSHIP DRIVE UPDATE

By the time this November newsletter goes out, our stewardship drive will be mostly complete. If you haven't pledged yet, please do! Generosity is an expression of our spiritual lives and we have set a very ambitious goal to increase the number of families that pledge. As of October 12, 232 families have pledged. 18 of these families are brand new pledges and 21 of these families have chosen to pledge after missing a year or two.

In addition to being a spiritual practice, pledging is how our church raises 78% of our annual budget. In other words, when Rev. Chris presents the budget at our November pre-congregational meeting, it will be based on the results of this stewardship drive. You are supporting our mission to nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice to build the Beloved community. If you would like to pledge, please reach out to stewardship@austinuu.org.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Check out the latest information about our church's ongoing construction/renovation/rejuvenation. Photos and updated data are available on the monitor in the welcome center. If you're concerned about booking a room at church, follow the standard process of contacting Shannon Posern (Shannon.Posern@austinuu.org) and she'll be able to address your needs.

MUSIC NOTES

MUSICIANS FOR SUNDAY SERVICES

NOVEMBER 4.

"Messe de Nostre Dame"

by Guillaume de Machaut, arr. Brent Baldwin

For their first major work of the season, First UU of Austin Adult Choir, under the direction of Brent Baldwin, will present Guillaume de Machaut's Messe de Nostre Dame (Notre Dame Mass). Joining them is guest organist Benjamin Dia. Machaut wrote the Messe de Nostre Dame, historically known as the first complete polyphonic setting of the Ordinary of the Mass by a single composer, while he was serving as a permanent member of the clergy at the Cathedral at Reims. It consists of 5 stylistically coherent movements of the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. While the Gloria and Credo of the Messe de Nostre Dame possess text-less musical interludes,

simultaneous style, and long melismatic Amens, the other four movements are composed in motet style with mass text. The choir will be singing Brent's own arrangement of this ground-breaking work.

NOVEMBER 11.

The piano-violin duo of Bryan Uecker and Ben Hummel will be providing music for the services.

NOVEMBER 25.

Pianist Kathryn Govier will be joined by guest pianists Marcia Edwards and Felicity Coltman playing works by Rachmaninov. Plus a chamber group comprised of members of the Adult Choir will be singing music by Joni Mitchell and the Kings Singers

Fellowship Events

NOVEMBER 17TH, 5 - 8 P.M.

Parents' Night Out. Need a break? Join other parents for dinner and drinks (location TBD). Kids can be dropped off at the church for a movie and pizza party (or hang in the nursery) while the adults venture out to a local restaurant. RSVP to Sarah Miller at fellowship@austinuu.org.

NOVEMBER 20TH, 6 P.M.

Fellowship meeting. Brief meeting to be followed by Thanksgiving preparations. Want to volunteer? We could use some help setting up tables and decorations for Thursday's meal. RSVP to fellowship@austinuu.org.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 22ND

Thanksgiving Dinner, 3 - 5 p.m.

This is one of First UU Austin's greatest annual traditions. Join fellow UUs for a potluck style Thanksgiving feast here at the church. Email fellowship@austinuu.org to RSVP, or sign up at the table in the gallery November 4-18th. Donations of \$5 per individual (\$10 without food) or \$10 per family (\$20 per food) requested.

DECEMBER 16TH

Tea and holiday treats. Bring your teapots and cups for a formal tea and biscuits after both services. We will provide the hot water and tea. Bring your favorite holiday treat to share!

DECEMBER 24TH

Refreshments will be served after both Christmas Eve services.

DECEMBER FELLOWSHIP MEETING: CANCELLED

COVENANT CORNER

What Does the Healthy Relations Ministry Team Do?

Dear Covenant,

There is a church member who is very active and accomplished, but we had an interaction the other day which made me feel shamed and rebuked. I don't know if approaching this person directly would do any good. I don't really even know what I want from the interaction. Do I want somebody to just say I was right, and they were wrong? Do I want to find common ground? Do I want an apology? I just don't know. Is this something the healthy relations team can help me with?

Uncomfortable

Dear Uncomfortable,

Thank you for sharing your dilemma. It is an example of using our covenant as intended: to inform our decisions when we struggle to stay in right relationship with others. Your letter offers the Healthy Relations Ministry (HRM) team an opportunity to make our work more open, visible, and transparent to our church members.

The main focus of the HRM team is to keep our covenant in the forefront of our minds by things such as this newsletter column, occasional skits during Sunday services, and periodic classes about the covenant as part of adult religious education. However, the team is also a resource for individual members needing assistance with a difficult situation at church.

In your case, you might first talk

with a team member to determine what exactly you want. The team member will provide a friendly ear to listen to you and help you discern your feelings and consider possibilities for moving forward. The team member will not tell you what to do nor give you advice. They will, however, let you know how possibilities you are considering may or may not be within our Covenant of Healthy Relations.

If you want to approach the person who caused your concern, but want assistance doing so, a team member can facilitate a conversation between the two of you if the other person is open to such a conversation. Again, the team member will not tell either of you what to do nor give you advice. But they can help both of you decide what guidelines you want to govern your conversation, ensure each of you has the time and space to tell your perspective, and make certain each of you understands the other's perspective.

Thank you again for providing all of us an opportunity to consider how to live the aspirations expressed in our covenant.

The Healthy Relations Ministry is available to you as a resource if you need help with a difficult situation here at church. It is comprised of Margaret Borden and Elizabeth Kubala and can be reached at healthyrelations@austinuu.org.

Sincerely,

Healthy Relations Covenant

THE COMMCOORD BLOTTER



Skowhegan, Somerset County, 2004

Bear W. Qolezcua

Director of Communications

In the winter of 2002 I lost my partner suddenly. I ran away up north seeking refuge and, in my “New York Year”, I traveled quite a bit downeast to Maine.

There was something so peaceful, kind, and soft about the little treasures I found there. Stony jetties, salt washed marshes, and the inland towns, some only a few thousand strong, all brought me a quiet that I hadn’t known since my childhood. Something there, about that place, healed me. It became a home.

I found myself staying a week or two at a time over my season in New England until it was time to go back to Texas but something within me has yearned for the simple quietude and cool embrace of that strange, wild, green, craggy place where the winds are fierce and the soil is good.

So, this month I offer you a piece that I’ve written, and revised many dozens of times, that pays homage to a town in central Maine, Skowhegan, that enchanted and inspired me.

This piece focuses a lot on scent. My sense of smell is intense and I depend on it a lot for memory and connection with people and places. My keenest smells are those of the earth... oats, loam, wheat, fruits, vines, petrichor, and all the melange that greets us when we invest time into our world. They make me feel grounded, connected... home.

gold-fire set alight in my billowing curtains
as the sun burns through autumn leaves
into my bedroom

echoes of sweet summer warmth
come through the window and
I smell cinnamon,
and honey and earth and rye

the air
ever chilling
grows fragrant with fresh mown hay and
I smell sage
and oatmeal

the delicious laughter of youth
barks through the pumpkin patch
passive scarecrows stooping on pikes
wave eagerly and smile

we shuffle quickly to the bonfire
warm, so warm, and
I smell smoke
and cider and chocolate
and the hearths
that belch sensuous temptations

crisp leaves, fallen, crunch
beneath my feet
tea smokes languid in my mug
as I wander
in a labrynth grown wild in the fields and
I smell corn and fodder

and my bones resonate with the essences of
home.

MONTHLY SERVICE OFFERING

This Month's MSO:

Brittany Golden, LMSW
Community Engagement Specialist

Austin Child Guidance Center has been providing mental health services to children and families since 1951. ACGC's services include individual, family, and group counseling along with in-depth psychological assessments, psychiatric evaluations, parent workshops, and trainings. Since its inception, the agency has served nearly 150,000 children, youth, adolescents, and family members.

ACGC treats children in the context of their families, and utilizes an inter-disciplinary approach where social workers, family therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and other professionals work to provide children and families emotional tools to meet life's challenges. Mental health concerns can impact any family and, in fact, affects approximately one out of every five children. ACGC serves the entire community, placing particular emphasis on families with limited means to access mental health services. Approximately 84% of clients are low-income. The center has sought and received funding to provide services at no cost to victims and witnesses to crime and violence.

In addition to services at the main campus at 45th and Lamar, ACGC reaches out into the community, providing mental health services at twelve high-need childcare centers, working with pregnant and parenting teens through a project with People's Community Clinic; and embedding therapists in ten charter schools serving low-income children to lower barriers for families to access services.

Over the past year, the center has put particular emphasis on increasing the agency's awareness of diversity issues brought to light by bilingual families (primarily Spanish/English) and maintain/increase services for Spanish-speaking families while promoting and increasing diversity training to ACGC staff. ACGC recently created the Bilingual Services Task Force (BSTF). The scope of the task force is to discuss evidence-based treatments and any empirical modifications for Hispanic and Latino families to find ways to address barriers we see in our Spanish speaking families and find possible solutions.



ACGC's focus is one therapist working with one child and family. The cumulative effect of these individual relationships is making a profound impact on generations of families. The following is just one of the 3,000 stories from last year:

At age 14, Alícia found out that she was pregnant. A freshman in high school, she had dreams of attending law school and becoming an attorney one day. When she discovered that she was pregnant, she was overwhelmed. She felt trapped, as though her dreams were out of reach. She started going to the People's Community Clinic for pre-natal care and continued using their case management services after giving birth to a healthy baby. After having the child, Alícia was overcome by the stress of her responsibilities as a teen parent and a full-time high school student. Support from her family and the family of her child's father were unstable. Alícia began to struggle with being able to control her anger and decided to seek help. Alícia found it with a clinician from Austin Child Guidance Center working with the People's Community Clinic's Tandem Teen Prenatal & Parenting Program, an interagency collaboration also including Any Baby Can and Life Works. In her weekly counseling sessions, Alícia practiced interpersonal skills taught through Dialectic Behavioral Therapy. Alícia and her family were connected with resources to help her realize her goals as a mother and a student. Alícia gained the tools needed to successfully navigate the challenges that come with a difficult family situation while pursuing a high school diploma. She worked hard at it, used what was available, and tried new things. In 8 months, she felt stronger, more confident, and ready to tackle life's challenges. Alícia never gave up on her dream. She completed her pre-college courses in high school and has since been accepted into a state university, where she is pursuing her dream with her daughter at her side.

DENOMINATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Southwest UU Women Conference Feb. 22 – 24, 2019 Hot Springs, Arkansas

Many women from our church attended the 2018 SWUWUW Conference in Austin. Please put the 2019 Conference on your calendar and join UU women from around our region for fellowship, celebration and learning. The keynote speaker is Kathy Webb, Vice-Mayor of the city of Little Rock. Registration opens in November. More information at the SWUWUW website, at <https://www.swuuw.org/>.

Southern Region Announces New Chalice Lighters Efforts

Chalice Lighters is a UU program that allows individual UU's to further our faith in specific ways. The Chalice Lighters program just announced two new efforts: to help the UU Church in the Pines (Florida) buy their first

permanent building, and to help Horizon UU Church in Carrollton, Texas build a community garden. More information at <https://www.uua.org/southern/chalice-lighters>.

UUA Issues Response to Kavanaugh Confirmation

The Unitarian Universalist Association has issued a statement denouncing the confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, and in support of survivors of sexual assault and abuse. The text of the letter is at <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/uua-denounces-brett-kavanaughs-confirmation-supreme-court>. This link can also be found on the UUA's home page, at <https://www.uua.org/>.

UUSC Advocates for Human Rights at the United Nations

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee has developed a letter to the Trump administration, urging the administration to appoint a UN Ambassador who will be "a sincere proponent of human rights and a defender of the ideals of international cooperation." UU's are encouraged to take action by signing the letter, which can be found at <https://www.uusc.org>.

Carpool Opportunities

Want to carpool to an event outside Austin? Email David Overton at denom@austinuu.org and we will work to put you together with someone to share the ride. ·

Personal Preferences for Memorials

It is important to relay your wishes to your family about your final preferences. Having these sometimes tough discussions helps relieve a lot of the pressure placed on families at the time of a loved one's death. There is much to consider and having the details lined up and decided upon removes much of the emotional and mental struggle at a time when a family is trying to grieve and make sense of their world without their loved one in it.

On our website we have a personal wishes form that you can fill out, save, and email to Rev. Meg, Meg.Barnhouse@AustinUU.Org, to put into a confidential personal wishes file. You can find the form at bit.ly/PersonalWishes (case sensitive web address), or directly on AustinUU.Org under Community you will see Personal Wishes. Click there and help bring some peace of mind to you and your family.

*If you require a hard copy be mailed for you to fill by hand, please contact Bear, News@AustinUU.Org, and we will get one in the mail for you. ·

SAYING GOODBYE

At the start of 2018, I made a promise to myself (not a resolution... a PROMISE) that I would practice mindfulness and self-care. This has been a work in progress as the last 5 years have demanded a lot from me and it is only recently that I find myself in a place where I have finally had the time to reflect. I have realized that I have been running on reserve for quite some time and NOW is the time for my self-care. So, with much thought and consideration, I have made the decision to leave my position as Childcare Coordinator at First UU. Over the past 4+ years, I have gotten to know so many of you and have enjoyed watching your children grow and blossom. My last day will be Sunday, November 18th, and I will leave holding this congregation in a special place in my heart. Thank you so much for your care and kindness.

With much love and light,
Karyn Machler

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

CHURCH OF AUSTIN

(512) 452-6168

WWW.AUSTINUU.ORG

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**THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 22ND**Thanksgiving
Dinner, 3 p.m.

This is one of First UU Austin's
greatest annual traditions. Join
fellow UUs for a potluck style
Thanksgiving feast here at the church.

Please, email [fellowship@
austinuu.org](mailto:fellowship@
austinuu.org) to RSVP, or sign up at
the table in the gallery November
4th, 11th, & 18th. Donations of
\$5 per individual (\$10 without
food) or \$10 per family (\$20
without food) requested.

FIRST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH of Austin4700 Grover Ave.
Austin, TX 78756