



FIRST UU NEWS

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

Some suggestions from the construction team

by **Rev. Meg Barnhouse**



We had a pre-construction meeting with the folks who will be directly supervising the construction starting this year, and they had a list of things they wanted us to tell you.

1. Construction is inconvenient, and it calls upon all participants to be flexible.
2. Construction and renovation are messy. They will do their best to clean up after themselves every day, and especially on weekends. They are professionals, and they will comport themselves as professionals.
3. The first things we will see are construction crews digging for a water line that goes down Grover. There was a crew there last month, but they were on a different project. The architects are working all that out. They are going to be moving a construction trailer onto the property in February and laying out materials. The first thing they will do is lay down pads for the new kitchen and for the sanctuary expansion. They will get those framed in and dried in.
4. Once construction begins, we will begin to put the next two weeks' schedule up on the monitor in the hallway by the welcome center.
5. The plan is for us to dig up the garden plants ourselves and sell them at the garden table. We will also be digging up plants from the corner with the two big rosemary plants lying between the bank and the church. The architect, Aaron, has saved the dirt they dug up during the ground-breaking ceremony and they will make sure that that dirt is part of the new garden.
6. Communication with the construction workers should go through their supervisor, Darrell. Communication with Darrell should come from Building Committee Chair Brian Moore, who is our contact with the whole operation, or through the ministers.
7. Construction and renovation are stressful. We should all make the effort to be kind to one another as we are inconvenienced, as we move things around, and as we have to change meeting rooms at various times during the next month. I know we can do it. ■

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Forward through the ages

by **Jairy Grisaffe**



Greetings and Happy New Year! For our church, 2017 was quite a year that saw some great progress in our church's efforts to live its mission.

Perhaps the most significant event of 2017 was inviting Alirio into sanctuary. After our first experience with Sulma was an overwhelming success, we as a congregation came together to talk about what it means to be a church that offers sanctuary. It was an important step in the justice work that this congregation does in our community. I am optimistic that justice will be served and Alirio will get to stay in the U.S. without fear of deportation because of the work of this congregation and the Austin Sanctuary Network. And now, we have a framework by which we will continue to offer sanctuary to future refugees who need our help.

We were also able to secure our loan and begin construction on the building changes. The updates to our campus will create a wonderful space to further our mission. So many of us in our congregation have made sacrifices and put ourselves out there to make this happen. I am glad it is coming to fruition, and I hope you are too.

Another thing I am proud of is

that we had a lot of new members join our congregation. They've come looking for a spiritual home where their souls are nourished, their lives are transformed, and they can participate in justice work. I am thrilled that they chose us.

As many of you know, we are in the process of revising our mission statement, values, and end statements. Many of you took part in the Courage and Wonder workshops in November to share your stories and wishes for our church. We'll be meeting this month at a retreat to review what you've told us and author our changes.

There are a couple of long-term board initiatives that you may not be aware of that are currently in the works. The first is a Minister Housing Initiative. You don't have to have just arrived in Austin to know that it is growing and growing fast. And as a result, property values are rising. While we don't anticipate Rev. Meg leaving us anytime soon, we want to be sure that when the time comes to call a new minister we don't get passed by because of the cost of living in Austin. Our board is currently researching ways that congregations of our size incentivize housing for ministers. This could mean anything from housing

allowances to acquiring a parsonage. And while we don't have anything concrete right now, we are optimistic that we will find something that fits our church. This process will take a while to unfold and it could be some time before we have anything to present.

The second initiative is the Finance Initiative. In the short term, we are looking to get the church's financial records audited. It's been several years since we've done this so we believe that the time is right for this to happen. I've spent time studying and practicing audit and can speak firsthand to the value that it can provide. Providing audits is a way to assure both the church's congregants and its leadership that we are getting quality information from our systems that allow us to make good financial decisions. The next step is to research and choose a comprehensive accounting system. This acts as a control on the financial records, which also allows us to get quality information about the church's finances.

There are some very exciting things happening with the church right now, and I hope you find yourself optimistic about the future of what our church will offer. ■



Music Matters

Ring in the new year with something fun and new!

by Katrina Saporantos, Executive Assistant



First UU Adult Choir singing at the recent Christmas choral benefit for Drive a Senior. *Both photos courtesy of First UU Music Program.*

First UU Adult Choir

Led by Director of Music Brent Baldwin, the First UU Adult Choir is a group that performs a wide variety of music—from rock greats such as the Ramones and Pink Floyd, to classical staples such as Benjamin Britten and Gabriel Fauré, to the challenging works by Alfred Schnittke and Arvo Pärt. Rehearsals are in the sanctuary starting January 17, on Wednesdays from 6:45–8:30 p.m.

First UU Children’s Choir (grades K–3) and Youth Choir (grades 4–8)

Our dynamic groups for young voices



start rehearsals on January 7. These spiritually-enhancing singing sessions, led by accredited and experienced experts in music education, run each Sunday from 9:30–10:30 a.m. Join in on the fun!

Instrumental opportunities within the community

If you play an instrument, let us know! Reach out to us so we can get to know you. Help us help you get connected with other musicians in our community!

Other ways to support the music program

If you are not a musician but are looking to help the work we do for the community, there are many ways to support us. Ask us how!

Questions about musical and other volunteer opportunities at First UU of Austin Music Program? Contact our Executive Assistant Katrina Saporantos at katrina.saporantos@austinuu.org. ■

Mindfulness Meditation Group: Labyrinth Walk

**Monday, January 22
Room 15
6:30–7:30 p.m.**

The Mindfulness Meditation group will be hosting a labyrinth walk for the new year. Everyone who wants to participate is welcome to attend.

LIFESPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Lifespan FD highlights

by **Laine Young, Interim Director of Lifespan Faith Development**



*In this new year, let us be amazed.
Let us search for new life and hope in our midst.
Let us nurture creativity in every form.
Let us be reminded that new insights of the universe
are always being made.
In this new year, let us be amazed.*

– Rev. Aaron Stockwell

In fellowship,
Laine Young

First Sunday Seminars, January 7

First Sunday Seminars take place on the first Sunday of the month. This multi-track, adult religious education experience has options in areas such as leadership development, spiritual identity, UU identity development, and spiritual practices. No prior registration is required for any of the First Sunday Seminars, and childcare is available. A simple lunch is provided in Howson Hall from 12–1 p.m. for \$5 (available to-go for forum attendees). Seminars take place from 1–2:30 p.m.

Interested in teaching a First Sunday Seminar? Please send your class proposal to laine.young@austinuu.org.

Church Matters Track: “How Does This Church Work?” with Meg Barnhouse & Chris Jimmerson

Join us in this seminar on policy-based governance. Chris Jimmerson and Meg Barnhouse will lead a refresher course for those of you who are in leadership in the church or who are just curious about how things work around here. What does the board do? What are

things to take to the board? What are the ministers’ responsibilities? Why is there not a vote on as many things anymore?

Church Matters Track: “OWL Parent Orientation” with Amanda Ray & Laine Young

We will be proudly offering OWL (Our Whole Lives), a comprehensive and progressive sex education curriculum, to 7th–9th graders in the spring semester. In order for youth to participate, parents/guardians must attend one of the OWL parent orientations. We’ll be discussing the OWL program, giving an overview of what the youth will be learning while in class, and have the opportunity to ask questions about OWL. The other parent orientation will be on Wednesday, Jan. 10 at 6:30 p.m. (*See next page.*)

Faith Formation Track: “Science & Religion, Build Your Own Theology: the Science-Compatible Way”

Religion and spirituality are ubiquitous features of human cultures throughout the globe, which undoubtedly reflects an evolutionary match between religious/spiritual concepts and our brains. Since Unitarian Universalism espouses no traditional theology, we will begin a process of helping science-oriented seekers to gradually construct their own science-compatible thought system. The goal is to re-acquire critical aspects of the sense of the world that historic spiritual thought provided, but to do so with a new foundation drawn from science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

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OWL Classes Starting January 17 (7th–9th grade)

**Parent orientations: Jan. 7, 1 p.m. &
Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m.**

We will be proudly offering OWL (Our Whole Lives), a comprehensive and progressive sex education curriculum, to 7th–9th graders in the spring semester. The classes will meet on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. beginning January 17 and continuing through May 23, including two lock-ins.

OWL registration forms are on the LFD table outside the sanctuary. In order for youth to participate in the class, there is a mandatory parent orientation on Jan. 7 at 1 p.m. (as part of the First Sunday Seminars), or Jan. 10 at 6:30 p.m. The registration fee for the OWL class is \$60 and scholarships are available. Get more info on registration and classes: laine.young@austinuu.org.

LFD Family Day! January 14, 12:30 p.m.

All parents whose children or teens will participate in the 2017–18 Faith Development program are encouraged to attend this information session. We will discuss the current curricula, have enrollment forms available, and you can get information about the different ways to help our children and youth programming. Bring your kids, your curiosity, your questions, and your appetite (we will be serving lunch). We truly want to get to know you and hear what you'd like in a Lifespan Faith Development program! RSVP to faithdevelopment@austinuu.org. Hope to see you all there!

Midweek Connect Starts January 10!

F.R.E.D. Night, now called Midweek Connect, will have a 5-week run starting January 10–February 7. Here's what you can expect at Midweek Connect.

- **5:30 p.m. Dinner!** Vegetarian as well as kid-friendly options. Dinner is \$6/person and kids eat for free!
- **6 p.m. Vespers!** Midweek Connect Vespers is for all ages!
- **6:30 p.m. Classes!** There will be both adult and children education options, and childcare is available as well. Classes will include:

Low Pressure Life, facilitated by Jeanette Hargreaves

Tired of being stressed out? Learn how to reduce anxiety through awareness about how you influence others and how they influence you. This is a six-week program based on systems theory. Participants will work through an online class at home (with two hours per week of homework) and then reflect in our gatherings. Led by teacher and storyteller Jeanette Hargreaves. Learn more at www.thelowpressurelife.com.

Meet Your Brain, facilitated by Bruce Naylor

Are you puzzled about how your mind works? Do you wonder why other people think and behave differently, including those closest to you? Neuroscientists have been busy unlocking the answers to these very important questions. Join us in an introduction to the mind-brain connection and learn a new paradigm for human understanding based on science.

Wonderful Wednesdays!

Wonderful Wednesdays! is a program for kids from K–4th grade. Along with learning about our UU values and principles, each Wednesday has a focus of arts & crafts, learning more about a famous Unitarian Universalist, social action, or gardening.

Racism Unlearning Circle January 20, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Based on Undoing White Supremacy Austin's unlearning circles, this group will be a place for white folks to discuss the creation and meaning of whiteness, white supremacy, racism, our role in perpetuating oppressive systems (intentionally or not), and how we can take accountable action to dismantle white supremacy and show up with minoritized peoples to demand an end to dehumanization. Meetings are the third Saturday of every month. Check the First UU Facebook page events section for more event info, to see the monthly topic, and to access readings and videos to prepare for meetings. Childcare provided. Please RSVP to childcare@austinuu.org. For questions: racismunlearning@austinuu.org.

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NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Leadership: How we do what we say we will do

Michelle Obama said, “Service is a limitless opportunity; it is the reason why we breathe.” Service as a church leader on a committee or on the board of trustees is how we do what we say we will do: nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice.

In the next several weeks during Sunday services, we’ll hear stories from individuals who have served our church in leadership positions, to tell us how their lives were impacted by their service with First

UU. These stories will invite us all to consider how the act of leading enables us to grow as individuals, while making connections with fellow members.

The Nominating Committee is currently working to identify new leaders to fill critical positions on our First UU Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee. Perhaps listening to a leadership moment on a Sunday morning will resonate with you, or alert you to the opportunity

for service. If you feel the pull of leadership or have special talents that you’d like to offer, there are many ways to lead within our community, and it’s easy to learn what that entails!

We invite interested church members to complete a leadership interest form and talk to us in the gallery between services in January or February.

Join us for the annual CROP Walk

Sunday, February 25
Camp Mabry

Join the First UU team and congregations from around the city as we walk to end hunger in Central Texas and around the world. If you are attending the Southwest UU Women’s conference that weekend, choose CROP Walk as one of your optional events on your registration form.

Last year’s walk drew 60 teams and 725 walkers, raising \$70,000 to fight hunger locally and globally. The First UU team raised \$1,385 of that total. Our team provided 941 meals for families in need through the Central Texas Food Bank. Furthermore, for the portion that went to global efforts to reduce poverty and hunger, our team’s funds equated to providing seeds

and gardening tools to 17 farmers in Myanmar.

Participants walking with the First UU team will enjoy lunch after the second service and then carpool a short distance to Camp Mabry for registration at 1:40 p.m. Register to raise money from family and friends for walking, donate to the First UU team, or just walk with good company and learn about hunger issues around the world along the way. To donate or register as a walker, go to www.crophungerwalk.org/austintx/FirstUUChurch. All are welcome on this 2.4 mile route that includes a wheelchair-friendly one-mile option. For questions or additional information: Emily Speight, cropwalk@austinuu.org or (512) 636-7005.



LFD highlights, continued

Hogwarts Winter Celebration! **January 21, 1 p.m.**

Come celebrate Hogwarts style with our First UU Austin camp Hogwarts Winter Celebration! We will have magical crafts and treats, including butterbeer. We'll also have information on what the camp is all about. All are welcome! For more info, email campuu@austinuu.org.

Register for Chalice Circles!

Time and time again, Chalice Circles are cited by our members as the best way to establish deep and meaningful connections here at First UU. Chalice Circles are primarily monthly, lay-led small groups that are dedicated to intentional, deep listening in a confidential, covenanted group of no more

than a dozen adults. Each group plans and participates in a service project together. Monthly topics are predetermined, so that each group will discuss the same theme each month. Grab a registration form on the Lifespan Faith Development table outside the sanctuary or by the coffee in Howson Hall on Sundays throughout the month of January to join a Chalice Circle group in February! Childcare available upon request.

New! Rose for Families with Babies

Have you welcomed a new little one into your home? We are starting a new program here at First UU where we put an announcement in the order of service and have a rose at the pulpit to celebrate your new arrival! Contact Laine at laine.young@austinuu.org.

P.S. from Women's Alliance

Registration is open for the Southwest UU Women's Conference to be held here in Austin on February 23–25. Go to www.swuuw.org for more information. Early bird pricing ends on January 19. (See Denominational Connections, pg. 13.)

Next Women's Alliance meeting

by Mary Overton

Tuesday, January 9
Howson Hall
6–8:30 p.m.

Join us for the first Women's Alliance meeting of 2018 with speaker Wendy Erisman. Meet us at 6 p.m. for a pot-luck dinner and presentation at 7. All welcome.

"And You May Ask Yourself, 'Well... How Did I Get Here?'"
Wendy Erisman, Ph.D.

"When I was working on my doctorate in cultural anthropology, I never

anticipated that some of my most interesting field experiences would involve visiting prisons or that I would spend my career working as a think-tank researcher and independent consultant rather than as a college professor. This presentation will tell the story of how I moved from studying the cultural poetics of historical re-creation to the role of correctional education in reducing recidivism, with stops along the way to consider the role of women in the computer game industry, and how to get high school seniors to apply for financial aid for college."

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Senior Luncheon

**Wednesday, January 10
Howson Hall
12 p.m.**

We will have a book review by Ron Buford’s son, Greg Buford. His book is “Making Ghosts Dance,” about children in Cambodia and the sexual slavery business. He lived there while his wife served in the US Foreign Service from 2004–07. His account is fiction but reflects closely what’s happening to children there.

Soup, salad and dessert will be served for \$5. Please RSVP to Alice Cashman: (512) 837-0988.

2018 Monthly Special Offering recipients selected!

On December 17, a total of 125 members of First UU voted on ten of our 2018 monthly special offering recipients. Nine organizations that were funded in 2017 will continue as special offering recipients in 2018: ACLU of Texas, Austin Child Guidance Center, Grassroots Leadership, Inside Books Project, Interfaith Action of Central Texas, People’s Community Clinic, Planned Parenthood, SAFE (formerly SafePlace), and UBarU Retreat and Conference Center.

First UU members this year also voted to provide funding to one organization that did not receive funding last year: the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). UUSC advances human rights and social justice in the US and around the world through a

combination of advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations. This organization also promotes economic rights, advances environmental justice, defends civil liberties, and preserves the rights of people in humanitarian crises.

The organizations that received the most votes this year were SAFE, People’s Community Clinic, and Planned Parenthood. The most first-place votes went to Planned Parenthood, People’s Community Clinic, and ACLU of Texas.

The remaining two monthly special offering slots will go to the Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry and an organization selected as part of Spring into Action.



Photo by Chris Jimmerson

Meg and the Holiday Monstrosity

For years Meg and us First UU office staff have been asking ourselves: *what is this thing?* An ugly pineapple? A rare jungle fruit? Bizarre abstract sculpture art? We’ve still yet to discern, but the curiosity is a regular point of delight in our annual staff White Elephant gift exchanges. Meg bestowed the monstrosity into the exchange several years ago, and this year we’re proud to announce it has finally made its way back to her, thanks in part to Katherine’s very charming gift-wrapping skills. Congratulations, Meg!

Important Financial Notices

Year-End Statements

Thank you for your generous giving over the past year. Your church office will spend the month of January closing up the books and accounts for 2017, including verifying the completeness and accuracy of the records. Once that is finished, we will mail statements to everyone of their donations during 2017 (Jan–Dec). Your giving statement will go in the mail no later than January 31.

Reminder About Setting Up Pledge Payments

If you set up your pledging through MyFirstUU, you may need to set up payments again too. Log in to MyFirstUU, then click on the “Giving” menu. Select “My Scheduled Giving.” Any current scheduled payments will be listed. To add your monthly pledge payment for 2018, click on “Add New Gift.” A new window appears, with fields for you to fill

in your information. Where it says “Select a fund,” click and hold to see your selections. 2018 Pledge is for stewardship, and it is near the top of the list. Capital Campaign 2018 is near the bottom.

If you have any questions, call your Financial Administrator Katherine Patton at (512) 452-6168, ext. 1300.

DENOMINATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Southwest UU Women Conference, Feb. 23–25, Embassy Suites, Central Austin

Join UU women from around our region for fellowship, celebration and learning. Keynote speakers include State Rep. Donna Howard and UUSC Board Chair Lyssa Jenkins. Kiya Heartwood is the featured musician and Rev. Meg Barnhouse our conference minister. Registration now open! More information at the SWUW website: www.swuuw.org.

Save the Date: Upcoming UBarU events

UbarU Fiber Arts Retreat, February 16–19. Opportunities to learn and share about your projects.

All are welcome, long-term fiber artists and those who are just getting started. More information: www.ubaru.org/home/NeedleArtsRetreat.

Heart of Texas Men’s Retreat, April 6–8. Come and enjoy fellowship in the Texas Hill Country. Rest, relax, enjoy delicious meals and use the time as a break from your normal routines and schedules. The retreat will be facilitated by Rev. Josh Snyder from First UU Church of San Antonio.

UBarU Women’s Retreat, April 13–15. This is a weekend to recharge your body, mind and spirit in the companionship of other Unitarian Universalist women.

UU Service Committee Responds to Rohingya Crisis

Over 600,000 Rohingya people have fled Burma into Bangladesh to escape a campaign of ethnic cleansing being waged by the Burmese military. The UU Service Committee and its allies have been working with members of Congress on legislation introduced Nov. 2 that will pressure the military of Burma to stop their attacks and hold them accountable. Support this effort by writing your members of Congress at www.uusc.org.

Questions and Carpooling

Want to carpool to an event outside Austin? Email denom@austinuu.org and we’ll try to put you together with someone to share the ride.

HEALTHY RELATIONS MINISTRY

Austin Presence Group

January 2 & 16
Room 17
7–8 p.m.

We are currently discussing Michael Singer's "The Untethered Soul." A \$5 donation is requested in order to support the church. Visit us at www.meetup.com/AustinPresence.

Come light another candle to illuminate your understanding along the spiritual path called life. Contact: Joe Linsalata, (512) 327-5000 or linsalata@austin.twcbc.com.

Advice from Covenant Corner: *The trouble with triangles*

Dear Covenant,

At a recent meeting of our church's committee chairs, another chair came up to me to tell me a member had complained to him about something I did in one of my committee meetings. The speaker didn't know what to do. And neither did I when he finished telling the story! I'm not even clear when the incident occurred nor the details surrounding it. I don't know whether to approach the person who complained or whether to ignore the whole thing.

— *Discouraged*

Dear Discouraged,

Thank you for your question. We appreciate your willingness to seek better ways to handle difficult situations. It's hard listening to any complaint. But to hear unpleasant news without being able to respond leaves you with no way to improve the unpleasant situation.

You are experiencing triangulation. If the member (let's call him Austin) had simply wanted the chair (let's call him Bob) to help with problem-solving how to approach you, that is not triangulation. Triangulation occurred because Bob, who has no role in the situation between you and Austin, intervened on Austin's behalf with you.

Our Healthy Relations Covenant calls on us to communicate directly with one another in a spirit of compassion and good will. In your case, it calls on Austin to communicate directly with you. And it calls on Bob to encourage

Austin to do so and to provide help with that if needed.

Because Bob said he did not know what to do, you can offer him information. Ask Bob to go back to Austin, explain about our promise to communicate directly, and then ask if Austin has talked to you. If not, and especially if Austin is reluctant to do so, ask Bob to offer to accompany Austin to speak with you.

At this point, Bob may ask, and you may wonder, what if Austin isn't willing to talk to you? What about the complaint? In truth, it is best for you to do nothing about Austin's complaint if Austin is unwilling to bring it to you. It is difficult to sit with discomfort rather than act, but in this situation that is the covenantal challenge. Triangulation does far more harm than good.

What we can do is keep another covenant promise, to encourage each other in our spiritual growth, and remember that our covenant is aspirational. We are not perfect. We will make mistakes. We acknowledge that in our promise to forgive ourselves and others when we fall short of expectations.

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

Sincerely,

Healthy Relations Ministry

MONTHLY SPECIAL OFFERING



The Texas UU Justice Ministry, led by Rev. Chuck Freeman, educates and organizes its 34 member congregations and partners with sympathetic organizations to advocate effectively for public policies that reflect UU values. The following represent some of the work TXUUJM has done in the last year:

- Rev. Freeman serves as the only UU on the board of the religious grassroots network Texas Impact. He helped chart and implement the organization's agenda for the 2017 legislative session.
- Rev. Freeman is also one of the founders of Texas Faith Voices for Reproductive Justice and serves on its advisory board. This is the first interfaith organization of its kind in our state.
- TXUUJM is encouraging congregations sign on as "Reproductive Justice Congregations." There are now eight UU congregations with this designation—more than any other faith group in Texas.
- During the legislative session, TXUUJM worked in concert with Texas Network of Organizations to secure state funding for long-term job training programs to enroll more low-income adults in community colleges to train for living wage jobs. The programs that will benefit are in the Valley, Austin, El Paso, San Antonio, Dallas and Houston.
- TXUUJM received a \$15,000

Texas UU Justice Ministry

grant from the UUSC in recognition of and to continue its work in developing immigration and refugee sanctuary networks in our major metro cities in Texas. Lessons learned from UU sanctuary work in Texas are being shared with a coalition of eight UU statewide justice ministries.

- More than 20 TXUUJM leaders from four congregations stood with 40 interfaith allies at the San Antonio Immigration and Customs Enforcement field office demanding an end to detention of refugee children and mothers in private prisons at Dilley and Karnes City, Texas. Rev. Freeman moderated the subsequent press conference that featured UUSC Associate Director for Justice Building, Pam Sparr.

On Sunday, January 14, TXUUJM will be the recipient of the monthly special offering. Your generous donations are greatly appreciated and will help demonstrate our congregation's commitment to bend Texas towards justice. For more information on how to become involved with TXUUJM, stop by the Social Action table in the gallery after worship services, or visit TXUUJM's Facebook page and website.

Monthly Special Offerings are done every second Sunday of the month at worship services. All groups supported by MSOs receive a check at the end of the year, with the total of the 12 monthly donations divided equally.

White Allies for Racial Equity

Sunday, January 14
Location TBA
1–2:30 p.m.

Beginning in January, we will be meeting the second Sunday of each month. At our next meeting we'll watch short videos and read book excerpts on the subject of white privilege. Each video/reading will be followed by a pause for silent reflection, and then small or large group discussion.

The UU White Allies for Racial Equity is a group of self-identified white Austin-area UUs and friends. Through training and self-examination, we educate ourselves about racism and whiteness in order to be good allies as we go out and do anti-racism work in our church and our communities. For more info or to be added to our email list, contact Scott at sbutki@gmail.com.

FIRST UU IN PICTURES

A thanks from the newly ordained Rev. Erin Walter



Dearest First UU,

I can scarcely believe I am writing to you almost two months since my ordination. The bright colors and vibrant energy of our gathering still warm my heart. Thank you so much for the honor of being ordained by you, my home congregation.

I hope you felt something like I felt—faith in our multicultural vision of Unitarian Universalism and hope for Beloved Community. I am forever grateful for all the ways that so many of you showed up—in person, in spirit, as volunteers, and most of all, co-creators of a shared ministry. Muchisimas gracias.

Now I strive for my ministry live up to the gift of such a moving ordination.

With deep love and gratitude,
Rev. Erin Walter



photos by Heather McLeod, David Comeau and Jane Steig Parsons



Eclectic Folk Jam**Friday, January 12****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, January 27
Friends Meeting House
(3701 E. MLK Blvd.)
7:30–10:30 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.

SUNDAY SERVICES

S A N C T U A R Y 9 : 1 5 A M A N D 1 0 : 4 5 A M

JANUARY 7**How to Make Changes in Your Life**

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

How are those resolutions? Still holding strong? Do you make the same ones every year? What might some good ways be of sneaking change past that mule that wakes up and resists everything different?

JANUARY 14**Legacies**

REV. CHRIS JIMMERSON

Despite his life being taken from him early, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. left behind a legacy of human/civil rights advances and a strong call toward justice. What will the legacy of this generation of Unitarian Universalists be?

JANUARY 21**The Power in the #MeToo Movement**

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

The cover of Time magazine featured the “silence-breakers.” Why is this movement so revolutionary? Are there any problems with it? How might we respond to the stories?

JANUARY 28**Animal Blessing Service**

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

All creatures young, old, great and small, furry and scaly are invited to our annual intergenerational service honoring our beloved animal companions. If your pet is not able to come join us in the sanctuary or has passed away, you are invited to bring a photograph of them. We will have treats for the well behaved, and cleanup supplies for owners of the “still-learning-what-not-to-do-in-church” critters!

PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM

SANCTUARY AT NOON AFTER SECOND SERVICE

JANUARY 7

What To Do About Gun Rights?

WITH DR. ZACHARY ELKINS

Dr. Elkins will discuss the second amendment to the U.S. Constitution dealing with the “right to bear arms,” and explore its history and future.

Dr. Zachary Elkins is a government professor at the University of Texas at Austin. He earned a B.A. from Yale University, an M.A. from UT, and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley. He recently completed the book “The Endurance of National Constitutions.” Along with Tom Ginsberg from the University of Chicago, he co-directs both the Comparative Constitutions Projects, an initiative funded by the National Science Foundation to understand the causes and consequences of constitutional choices, and the website www.constituteproject.org, which provides resources and analysis for constitutional drafters in new democracies.

JANUARY 14

No forum

JANUARY 21

Exploring Genomics, the Ultimate in Personalized Medicine

WITH DR. SHARON HAUSMAN-COHEN

Join Sharon Hausman-Cohen, M.D. as she explores the field of genomics and helps us to understand how the small changes in an individual’s DNA, called single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), can reveal more than you can imagine about your personal health.

Physicians who utilize this completely personalized data can effectively identify both genetic health risks and benefits for their patients and can then develop more targeted, customized prevention and intervention treatment plans for a multitude of medical conditions

including common illnesses such as heart disease, thyroid disease, diabetes, blood clots and more. Some of these customized plans can be targeted toward the prevention or improvement of Alzheimer’s disease and can reduce cognitive impairment. Pharmacogenomics, too, can offer much help to patients in reducing ineffective medication choices, medication complications, or unwanted side effects.

Dr. Hausman-Cohen’s talk will focus on understanding what SNPs are, how various genes interact and how they convey risks and benefits about health. She will use case studies to illustrate how genomics can help patients with everything from anesthesia, pain medications and tamoxifen to heart disease, clotting disorders and macular degeneration.

Dr. Sharon Hausman-Cohen has been a physician and innovator in the field of family medicine for over 20 years. She founded Balcones Woods Family Medicine, a blended full-spectrum evidence-based family medicine and integrative medicine practice that was the medical home to 7,000 patients. She is currently the owner and co-founder of Resilient Health Austin, a concierge-style integrative medicine practice.

JANUARY 28

The Austin Police Department: Where We Are Today and Directions for the Future

WITH BRIAN MANLEY

Austin is widely cited as a relatively safe city despite its size and rapid growth. Chief of Police Brian Manley will give us an overview of prevalence and patterns of criminal behavior in our city and explain what the Austin Police Department (APD) is doing to prevent, reduce, and contain crime. The success of a police force is at least partly due to citizen involvement and support. Chief Manley will discuss strategies for community policing and community engagement, as well as

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THE FORUM, *continued*

evolving policies on use of force under his leadership.

Brian Manley has been with APD since 1990 and currently serves as the chief of police. In his 27 years with the APD, he has served in and supervised many areas of the department, including patrol, narcotics, child abuse, homicide, highway enforcement, internal affairs, special operations,

homeland security, and recruiting and training. Additionally, he led a delegation of APD officers during the 2009 presidential inauguration in Washington DC, commanded a group of Special Response Team officers in a deployment to Houston in the wake of Hurricane Ike, and attended the Senior Counterterrorism Officials Seminar in Israel. ■



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