



FIRST UU NEWS

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

The meaning of life?

It's to learn to love and be loved.

by Rev. Meg Barnhouse



Most of us grow in our ability to love faster than we grow in our capacity to be loved. Is love a feeling, an action, or both? The Christian and Jewish scriptures both speak of love as if it were not a feeling at all, but a series of loving actions, fair actions, respectful actions. How you feel about a particular person shouldn't make a difference (if you were a fully actualized, extremely soulful person) in how loving you act toward them. We are urged by the Jewish and Christian scriptures to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Instead of being about a feeling, this is an encouragement to act in loving ways toward ourselves, to one another, and to the Force that flows through the world. For those who believe in a higher power, it makes sense that Spirit would love in those ways too. Why would the Divine one ask us to love in a way that s/he/they do not?

The famous passage from 1 Corinthians 13 says: "Love is patient and kind, not jealous or boastful or proud or rude; it does not demand its own way and is not irritable; it does not keep a record of wrongdoings and is sad when there is injustice, but glad when truth wins out; this kind of love never gives up or loses faith, is always hopeful and endures through every circumstance."

The end of the piece in Corinthians says, "Faith, hope, and love abide, but the greatest of these is love." Love is one of the three things that lasts forever. Who we love and how we love matters. It carries on into the universe, like ripples from a thrown pebble, like a radio signal continuing on out into space. Love is the thing we are here for—giving and receiving love.

Last month at a Midweek Connect Vespers service, Chris asked us to think about how we would speak about God, or the

Ultimate. I think there is a river of love running through the universe that is added to by every loving interaction between and among all beings. It keeps getting larger because there are more beings, and the energy of love does not dissipate. This is what I call God. This river is alive, and it is made of love and it loves. I choose to believe that it loves us, that love thinks we are fascinating and admirable, that is patient with our missteps, that is longing for things to be right for us, and right with us.

My hope and prayer is that we allow ourselves to feel loved. It may be hard to let it in. But if you could, if you were feeling really loved, you would feel okay. Your fear would be gone. You would feel like you go together with yourself, like you have something cool about you, something to offer. If you were loved, you would feel safe. You wouldn't have to control things as much. You could make mistakes and learn from

continued on page 3

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Leading the way forward

by Jairy Grisaffe

I'm always looking for new people to be inspired by. Most of the time, I find myself drawn towards leaders. This is largely because I find myself in more positions of leadership now than at any other point in my life. I am the manager of a growing team at my job. And perhaps the most important leadership position I am in is that of a parent. It's the one I think about most of the time.

Growing up, I wasn't interested in joining anything at all. I was more interested in playing video games and spending time with friends. It wasn't until I was in college, when I was part of a co-ed business fraternity, that I really started my journey into being a part of a team and, furthermore, leadership. While it wasn't the best experience, it was not one I allowed to keep me from trying again. Over the years I've been called into various leadership roles, be it at work, life, or in church ministry. I've welcomed them with open arms, because I believe personal growth comes from positioning yourself outside your comfort zone. It also causes me to look beyond myself and learn from others. I've come to appreciate

the lessons that so many leaders I've known have taught me.

Prior to joining the board of trustees, I didn't really know much about the role it served. I was hesitant to say yes to being on the slate of nominees, and subsequently as president. But a little voice inside me that often pushes me to go beyond my limits inspired me to say yes to those things. I wanted to learn and grow, and I hoped to contribute. As I've learned more, I've become more enamored with the role the board embodies within our congregation and the work it does.

As a board, we play many roles. First and foremost, we represent the congregation in setting the vision for the church, which is done through interpretations of our end statements. The process is carried out through several activities, most of which involve feedback from the congregation. These interpretations are used by Rev. Meg (often referred to as the executive) and the staff.

We also have several initiatives throughout the year that we explore. (I wrote about our ongoing initiatives in January.) This is all done

under the philosophy of policy-based governance, a philosophy employed by many UU congregations. Policy-based governance allows the executive to manage the operations of the church while the board spends its time and energy making directional decisions. If you're unfamiliar with it, I invite you to learn more about it. It's a wonderful system.

Board leadership is very important to our congregation. Selection for trustees happens from our Nominating Committee. They are a group of congregants who are selected each year with the task of finding congregants to be on our board. They interview candidates and decide on a few, called a slate, each spring to bring to the congregation to vote on during the congregational meeting. If you think church governance is something you might be interested in, I invite you to find a trustee or member of the Nominating Committee and have a conversation about how board service works and learn more about it. For me, it's been a wonderful and rewarding experience. ■

“The Meaning of Life?” continued

them. You wouldn't have to be perfect, defensive. You wouldn't feel like your lovability was connected to how much money you can make or how beautiful you are, or how smart you are or how right you are or whether your kitchen floor is made of perfect Mexican tile or

whether you had not made a mistake today.

Open to it, want it, be quiet enough to hear it and feel it, look for its language. Sometimes you are loved but not the way you're looking for. Shhhhh. What if you were really loved? ■

Next Women's Alliance meeting

by Mary Overton

Tuesday, February 13

Howson Hall

6–8:30 p.m.

Dr. Gretchen Riehl, Associate Vice President for Workforce Education at Austin Community College, will speak at our next meeting of the Women's Alliance. She will speak on her work at ACC and how she folds Unitarian principles into her worklife.

The meeting starts with a potluck at 6 p.m., followed by the talk at 7. The meeting is open to everyone, First UU Austin members and guests.

Dr. Gretchen Riehl: “Workforce Education at Austin Community College, or How a Lifelong Unitarian Lives Her Theology”

Dr. Riehl joined ACC in February 2017 after a 25-year career at the Dallas County Community College District. The daughter of college professors, she says education is part of her DNA.

Riehl started her career as a respiratory therapist in Kansas City, Missouri, and then spent two years in Costa Rica founding a respiratory care program in the National University of Costa Rica. After completing work there, she moved to Dallas to oversee the pulmonary rehabilitation program at Baylor University Medical Center. Four years later, she became a full-time faculty member at El Centro College, part of the Dallas County Community College District.

Dr. Riehl holds a bachelor's of health science in respiratory therapy from the University of Missouri, and a master's in health studies along with a doctorate of philosophy in health studies from Texas Woman's University. A lifelong Unitarian, Dr. Riehl attended Unitarian churches and fellowships in Carbondale, Illinois; Columbia, Missouri; San Jose, California; Costa Rica, and Dallas, Texas, before joining First UU Austin.

“Path to Membership” class

Saturday, February 17

Howson Hall

9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Breakfast and childcare are provided for this quarterly class designed for those interested in becoming members. Learn about the responsibilities of membership; learn about UU history and the history of this church; share faith stories with other prospective members (optional); hear about ways to connect in the church; and sign the membership book and fill out new member paperwork, if you feel ready!

Please RSVP to membership@austinuu.org as soon as possible or with Shannon at the visitor table, so we can get an accurate head count for food and childcare.

“Getting to Know UU” class

Sunday, February 25

Rm. 15A

12:15–1:30 p.m.

This informal class is a good way to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and this church. Sign up for the class at the membership/visitor's table in the foyer on any Sunday morning, or email membership@austinuu.org. Childcare is provided.

LIFESPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Lifespan FD highlights

by Laine Young, Interim Director of Lifespan Faith Development



First Sunday Seminars, February 4

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 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: “LFD Visioning Session” with Laine Young, Rev. Meg Barnhouse, and Rev. Chris Jimmerson

What if we offered children’s choir during first service, and Sunday school classes during second service? What if we had Sunday School for all ages in between services on Sunday mornings? What if we did inter-generational worship every Sunday? What if you have an amazing idea for a Sunday School model that we haven’t imagined yet? Join Interim Director of Lifespan Faith Development Laine Young, Rev. Meg Barnhouse, and Rev. Chris Jimmerson as we discuss Lifespan Faith Development programming and explore possibilities for the future of the children and youth programming here at First UU Austin!

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.

Midweek Connect Ends February 7

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:

continued on next page

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.

**Garden Club Meeting
Saturday, February 10, 9 a.m.**

Join the Garden Club on the big kid playground as we prepare for spring! We need helpers to assist building a new garden bed and cleaning up the existing planters. It's also time for us to plant potatoes and add more carrots to the garden. All ages are welcome! If you want to help but cannot make it to the work day, please sign up to bring supplies before Feb. 10 on the garden table in Howson Hall. Contact info@austinuu.org for more information.

**Sanctuary Valentines for Alirio!
Sunday, February 11**

Please join us in Howson Hall on Sunday, February 11 after both services as we create valentines to send to Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials Norma Lacy and Daniel Bible in solidarity with Alirio. All valentine-making supplies will be provided, and there will also be Valentine's Day snacks to enjoy!

**Racism Unlearning Circle
February 17, 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.

**Classroom Helper Training
February 21, 6 p.m.**

Are you one of our Sunday School classroom helpers, or considering joining our fabulous classroom helper crew? Would you like to get to know Unitarian Universalism in a deeper way? Are you yearning for more wonder and awe in your life, more playtime, more silliness? If you answered yes to any of these questions, please consider attending this classroom helper training! You do not need to be a parent or a teacher to join this team! Dinner and childcare will be provided. Please contact Laine Young to RSVP at faithdevelopment@austinuu.org. ■

SERVICE SATURDAYS

**First UU Austin
CROP Hunger Walk****Sunday, February 25
Camp Mabry (2200 W 35th)**

Participants with our First UU team will enjoy lunch after second service, then carpool to Camp Mabry for registration at 1:40 p.m. Register to raise money for walking, donate to the First UU team, or just walk with good company and learn about worldwide hunger issues along the way: www.crophungerwalk.org/austintx/FirstUUChurch. Visit the Social Action table in the gallery, or contact: cropwalk@austinuu.org or (512) 636-7005.

**White Allies for
Racial Equity****Sunday, February 11
12:30–2 p.m.**

This month we'll be discussing implicit bias. There'll also be an opportunity to share experiences at recent events where participants have experienced racism or noticed white privilege.

The UU White Allies for Racial Equity is a group of self-identified white Austin area UUs and friends educating ourselves on racism and whiteness in order to be good allies in anti-racism work. Contact: sbutki@gmail.com. Read more at <http://bit.ly/UUwhiteallies>.


**Join fellow UUs to support the
Central Texas Food Bank****Saturday, February 3
Central Texas Food Bank
(6500 Metropolis Dr)
9 a.m.–12 p.m.**

Join others from First UU as we inspect, clean, sort, box and make donated food ready to go out to the food bank partner agencies across Central Texas. The Central Texas Food Bank's mission is to nourish hungry people and lead the community in the fight against hunger. Advance signup is required, and space is limited to 25 people. All volunteers must be at least eight years old to participate. Register online at <http://bit.do/ServiceSats> or at the Social Action table in the gallery after Sunday services. In addition to

signing up here, each volunteer must also sign up directly at the food bank's own link here: <http://fuuchurchofaustin.caftb.volunteerhub.com>.

The food bank policy requires that all volunteers be in appropriate attire in order to enter the workspace. Please dress comfortably and note that anyone wearing sleeveless tops or open-toed shoes will not be permitted into the warehouse to volunteer.

The Central Texas Food Bank is located in far southeast Austin, so we'll meet in the church parking lot at 8 a.m. to carpool. For more info, contact Celeste Padilla at celestehpadilla@yahoo.com or at (512) 470-2201.




Pop Portraits

New Work by Dan Gremminger

February 24, 2018, 7-10pm, First UU Austin Gallery
4700 Grover Ave. Austin, TX 78756

Dan Gremminger's **Pop Portraits** is an ambitious portrait series inspired by iconic personalities in pop culture. Using a rigid grid structure as a base, the works combine the artist's experience in screen printing, pixelated digital art and his respect for the work of artist Chuck Close. Each portrait is acrylic on canvas and mounted to a custom frame.



DENOMINATIONAL CONNECTIONS

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.

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 SWUuw website: www.swuuw.org.

Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival March 16–17, Richmond, VA

When people describe their experience of Christian identity and practice within UUism in the last twenty years, they have often told a story about a revival. And it often sounds like the story of homecoming. Of having found “my people.” This spring, you are invited to come home. To attend a revival. To connect with your people. The Healing Spirit in a Wounded World is a time for you to gather with others, to go deep, to feel held. Regular admission, \$125; students, \$65.

More info and registration: www.uuchristian.org/revival.

UU United Nations Office Intergenerational Spring Seminar: April 5–7, NYC

The intergenerational seminar is an opportunity to collaborate with others while learning how to be a global activist. Through workshops, peer and expert-led panel discussions, community-building activities, and worship services, participants explore some of the most challenging issues facing humanity today. The topic for this year's seminar is “When Crisis Calls: Advancing Just Migration for All.” More info and registration: www.uua.org/international-justice/un/spring-seminar.

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.

February fellowship fun for the whole family!

Parents Night Out Feb 10, 5–8 p.m.

Parents, come enjoy a night out with fellow UUs. Drop your young children off at the church, then join us for dinner and drinks at La Mancha. Young children can play in the nursery, and the older kids will have a pizza party and watch

a G-rated movie. Please RSVP to fellowship@austinuu.org the number of adults and the number/ages of kids attending.



Game Night! Feb 24, 7–9 p.m.

What's your game—poker? Settlers of Catan? Ticket to Ride? D&D? Chutes and Ladders? Join us for board game night brought to you by the Fellowship Ministry! Eat dinner before you arrive, but bring some drinks and snacks to share.

HEALTHY RELATIONS MINISTRY

Austin Presence Group

February 6 & 20
Rm. 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.

Senior Luncheon

Wednesday, February 14
Howson Hall
12 p.m.

Leslie Ashton has kindly volunteered to speak at our next lunch. She will talk about her visit to Lotusland, a beautiful botanical garden in Montecito near Santa Barbara, CA. The garden is the historic estate of Madame Ganna Walska. Her talk will include many photographs of this magnificent garden.

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

Advice from Covenant Corner: *Must we all be super welcomers?*

Dear Covenant,

I've been attending this church for a couple of years, so I still remember what it was like to be a newcomer. That's why I make it a point after the service to seek out new people and have a conversation with them. It concerns me that most of the old-timers huddle up with their old-timer friends and don't seem to notice or care about the new people. We talk a lot about being welcoming, but many members of our congregation don't seem to have taken that message to heart. What can be done about this?

— *Concerned*

Dear Concerned,

We are so glad you are making a special effort to reach out to newcomers. You are one of several congregants at First UU who seem to have an empathic understanding of the challenges newcomers face and a willingness to do something about it. This is a wonderful way to serve the church. Please know that not everyone has the personality or inclination to be helpful in this way. Many people are shy about talking to new people and don't know what to say. Others may reach out occasionally,

but also see the value in connecting with friends and deepening established relationships.

Since you have been coming to this church for a couple of years, you probably know about our twice-a-year potluck for new members? This is an event devoted to welcoming and getting to know new people. If you have attended any of these potlucks, you will have noticed that a good number of old-timers attend as well.

Still, your letter is a nice reminder to all of us that we could step out of our established patterns (and maybe our comfort zones) and make an effort to be more welcoming. After all, our healthy relations covenant asks us to be intentionally hospitable to all people of good will. So thank you for your question and for your service to First UU.

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



American Civil Liberties Union of Texas

"This is why I am going to leave my money to the ACLU. Every time someone on down the line is irreverent about authority, I'll have my monument. Every time some kid who was born...just a plain maverick lifts up her head and dares anyone to stop her, I'll have my monument. Every time they peaceably assemble to petition their government for redress of a grievance, I'll be there. Whenever they worship as they please (or not at all), I'll

be there. Whenever they speak up and speak out and raise hell, I'll be there. And every time some blue-bellied, full-blooded nincompoop who holds elected office is called to the floor for deciding to keep us safe by rewriting the Constitution, or by suspending due process and holding a citizen indefinitely without legal representation, I'll be there. Now that is immortality."

– Molly Ivins

This month on February 11 the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas (ACLU-TX) will be featured as one of the nonprofit recipients of the monthly service offering. Victor Cornell, a First UU member, is their statewide advocacy manager. He will speak on the organization's work and its mission, and how it fits in with the mission of the First UU. He'll also be in the gallery between and after services to answer questions, sign up volunteers, and distribute "Know Your Rights" materials.

ACLU-TX is the leading civil rights organization in the Lone Star State. Since our formation in 1938, we've worked in the courts, the legislature, and through public education to protect civil rights and individual liberty.

We work every day to secure and protect civil rights for Texans throughout the state. We fight

for smart criminal justice reforms that treat everyone fairly. We fight for immigrants who have been unconstitutionally detained and discriminated against. We fight for all the issues protected in the First Amendment, racial equality, LGBTQ equality, students' rights, and women's rights. In short, we are passionate defenders of liberty, movement builders, an empowering force for civil rights, a compassionate teacher of constitutional values, and a vigilant watchdog against government abuse.

Some facts about ACLU-TX:

- Our commitment to defending the Constitution transcends partisan and ideological boundaries. Throughout our storied history, we have defended the Lovings' right to marry, Gideon's right to an attorney, and Rush Limbaugh's right to privacy. We partner with

groups like Planned Parenthood, Texas Association of Business, the Christian Life Commission, the Anti-Defamation League, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, Equality Texas, the Greater Houston Partnership. In other words, we will work with anyone who fights for constitutional rights, and defend anyone whose constitutional rights are threatened.

- The ACLU defends the Constitution regardless of who sits in the White House. We've sued nearly every president from Warren G. Harding to Barack Obama. We've fought measures pushed by nearly every Texas governor from James Allred to John Connally to Ann Richards to Rick Perry. And we will continue to intervene whenever—and by whomever—our constitutional rights are put in jeopardy.

- ACLU-TX is one of 53 affiliates of the national ACLU, our nation's guardian of liberty. For nearly a century, the ACLU has been at the forefront of virtually every major battle for civil liberties and equal justice in this country. Together, the affiliates and the national organization work to ensure that every American in every state, regardless of race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or immigration status, has the full protection of the Bill of Rights. ■

Eclectic Folk Jam**Friday, February 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, February 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.

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

FEBRUARY 4**Love, Like a Carefully Loaded Ship...**

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

What values do we want to pass on to our children? When we look to their faith development, what do we do? As we begin to look for a new Director of Faith Development, how do we describe their job? What do we want our program to look like? At 1 p.m. one of the First Sunday Seminars will be a talk with Rev. Meg, Rev. Chris and Laine about your vision for First UU's transmission of our values.

FEBRUARY 11**The Problem of Evil**

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

Why do bad things happen? Are there evil people? In the “Question Box” sermon a couple of years ago, this was one of the most frequently asked questions.

FEBRUARY 18**Powerful Moments**

REV. CHRIS JIMMERSON

We have experiences in life that we remember long afterwards and that often were moments that changed us. Are there common characteristics that create such moments? If so, can we create more such experiences in our lives?

FEBRUARY 25**Be the Spark**

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

Fire is one of the central metaphors and symbols of our faith. The fire of commitment, the warmth of community, the spark of truth, the spark of the divine inside us all. What re-ignites your spark when it is going out? How might we tend one another's spark?

PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM

SANCTUARY AT NOON AFTER SECOND SERVICE

FEBRUARY 4

Capital City Village

WITH LINDA KEELING & TOM KNUTSEN

Capital City Village is a nonprofit organization in Austin that helps local seniors stay in their homes and connected to community for as long as possible. They do this by operating with volunteers who help out with tasks in members' homes, and drive members to medical or other appointments; maintaining a list of vetted service providers that are available to members, with many providing discounts; and offering social, educational and other enriching programs, most free to members.

FEBRUARY 11

My Perspective: The State of Everything

WITH EVAN SMITH

Evan Smith will share with us his perspective on the current state of affairs. Smith is the CEO and co-founder of the Texas Tribune (www.texastribune.org), a pioneering nonprofit, nonpartisan digital news organization whose deep coverage of Texas politics and public policy can be found in newspapers, on TV and radio stations across the state, and in print and online editions of the Washington Post. Since its launch in 2009, the Tribune has won international acclaim and numerous honors, including a Peabody Award, 13 national Edward R. Murrow awards from the Radio Television Digital News Association, and three general excellence awards from the Online News Association. Evan is also host of "Overheard with Evan Smith," a weekly half-hour interview program that airs on PBS stations across the country. Previously he spent nearly 18 years at Texas Monthly, including eight years as the magazine's editor and a year as its president and editor in chief.

FEBRUARY 18

Populism in the Era of Donald Trump

WITH JIM CULLEN

Jim Cullen is the editor of the Progressive Populist. He will discuss the beginnings of the populist movement in Texas and other rural states, and the directions the populist movement has taken over time. Cullen will identify the challenges posed by Donald Trump and his administration to our democratic principles, to our nation's commitment to a social and economic safety net for disadvantaged persons, to the protection of the environment, and to the overall health and wellbeing of the public.

Jim Cullen will discuss the efforts of various modern-day populist groups to organize resistance to the dismantling of government protections and to ensure that government is more responsive to ordinary citizens. Jim Cullen is a former Austin Capitol Bureau reporter for Hearst Newspapers in Texas, and former associate editor of the Texas Observer. For the past 24 years he has been the founding editor of the Progressive Populist, a twice-monthly magazine of politics, economics, and general news for workers, small businesses, and family farmers and ranchers. The Progressive Populist itself is a family-owned and operated enterprise. Get a free sample by calling (512) 828-7245, email populist@usa.net, or see the website at www.populist.com.

FEBRUARY 25

Monolithic Dome Institute

WITH DAVID B. SOUTH

David B. South conceived of and developed his idea of monolithic domes in the 1960s and '70s, beginning construction on his first monolithic dome in 1975. The process he developed revolutionized dome construction. Beginning in high school in the 1950s, he was

continued on page 16

**First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Austin**
(512) 452-6168
www.austinuu.org

First UU Ministers
Rev. Meg Barnhouse
Rev. Chris Jimmerson

Director of Music
Brent Baldwin

Interim Director of Lifespan
Faith Development
Laine Young

Congregational Administrator
Shannon Posern

Communications Coordinator
Victoria M. Valadez

Financial Administrator
Katherine Patton

Board President
Jairy Grisaffe

THE FORUM, *continued*

enamored by the impact that dome buildings could have on construction around the world. He continued developing his ideas including hopes to help alleviate homelessness through his company Monolithic Dome Institute, and his nonprofit Domes for the World. Throughout his career, David has continued to expand his monolithic dome design to include “grow” domes, that provide atmospherically-controlled environments for farms to significantly increase yield year-round; FEMA-approved domes to aid in recovery after natural disasters; and large domes for schools and churches

that also serve as tornado shelters (the domes have survived hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, fires, and even bombings). David’s design is being used by a number of other organizations in cooperation with Monolithic Dome Institute to house people in Haiti and to develop a fully self-sustainable farm/ranch in East Texas.

David’s monolithic dome design has demonstrated that it is a micro-energy user, possesses the strength to survive natural disasters, and is considered among the greenest of today’s building alternatives. Visit the monolithic website at: www.monolithic.org. ■



**First Unitarian Universalist
Church of Austin**

4700 Grover Ave.
Austin, TX 78756