



FIRST  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH *of* Austin



FIRST UU  
NEWS

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

Graphic Credit: "Philly Peacock" - Bear W. Qolezcua - The fanned colours are based on the 2017 Philadelphia Pride Flag which added a black and brown band to include our LGBTQI+ Siblings of Colour.

**Racism Unlearning  
Circle****Saturday, August 18  
Rm. 15  
10 a.m.–12 p.m.**

This group is 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 third Saturday of every month. Check First UU Facebook events for more event info to prepare for meetings. Childcare RSVP: [childcare@austinuu.org](mailto:childcare@austinuu.org). Info: [racismunlearning@austinuu.org](mailto:racismunlearning@austinuu.org).

**“Getting to Know  
UU” Class****Sunday, August 19  
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](mailto:membership@austinuu.org). Childcare is provided.

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**Saying ‘See You Later’**

Dear First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin,  
Thank you all for the opportunity to serve you at First UU Austin. It’s been my great honor and pleasure to support the aims of the congregation.

With Warm Regards,  
Katherine Patton

# SUNDAY SERVICES

SANCTUARY | 9:15 AM AND 10:45 AM

## AUGUST 5

### Making Our Alphabet Soup

WITH REV. CHRIS JIMMERSON

With the LGBTQ Pride Festival and Parade coming the following Saturday, members of our “Alphabet Soup” group will share their stories of finding a spiritual home at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin.

## AUGUST 12

### Truth Telling

WITH REV. KYE FLANNERY

So many people in so many ways have said, “the truth shall set you free.” What are the truths that set us free? What sounds like truth but doesn’t liberate us at all? Together we’ll be exploring our experience, how we know ourselves, and how we speak from our deep truth to create better relationships and a better world.

## AUGUST 19

### Loving, Laughing, Living

WITH REV. CHRIS JIMMERSON

For many of us, the stories and images we have been witnessing in our news and social media have felt like trauma. In fact, some notable authors have suggested that Americans have begun to show the signs of trauma as a people. We will explore some of the ways to lower our trauma responses and foster resilience, love, and joy.

## AUGUST 26

### Muppet Theology

WITH REV. CHRIS JIMMERSON

Jim and Jane Henson created their loveable puppet characters over six decades ago, and the Muppets really began to gain prominence in the early 1970s. Through their decades of television and movies, what have the Muppets had to tell us about life, love, and creating community?

## Eclectic Folk Jam

*Friday, August 10*

*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](mailto:singalong@austinuu.org).

## UU/Quaker Singalong

*Saturday, August 25*

*Friends Meeting House  
(3701 E. MLK Blvd.)*

*7:00–10:00 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](mailto:singalong@austinuu.org).

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

## August in Berkeley

**Rev. Meg Barnhouse**  
Senior Minister



For the month of August I will be in California with Kiya. I will be working on a book project while she is taking classes at Starr-King Seminary.

She and I will preach and sing on the way out there for the people of Amarillo,

Colorado Springs, and Palo Alto.

We will miss you all. Please, follow either of us on Facebook! ·

Meg: [facebook.com/dearmegb](https://facebook.com/dearmegb)

Kiya: [facebook.com/kiya.heartwood](https://facebook.com/kiya.heartwood)

## UU and You: Learning Our History

Sometimes congregants and visitors want to know who we are by looking deep into who we have been. Our past as Unitarians, Universalists, and Unitarian Universalists helps inform a future of liberal religion, seeking truth and meaning in this world, and delighting in the spark we see within one another. There are so many good resources for the history of our church before and after the unification of the two branches of Unitarianism and Universalism. Here is a short list of excellent books that can walk you through the phases, faces, and places that make us who we are and how we work in this world. We hope that these, and any further sources you find, are helpful to you as you learn more about the spiritual and historic nature of the Unitarian Universalist movement.

All of these titles are available in the UUA Bookstore. You can call them at 1-800-215-9076 or go to [www.uua.org/bookstore!](http://www.uua.org/bookstore!)

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*American Universalism* by George Hunston Williams, fourth edition (Skinner House Books, 2002). A classic, digestible study of two hundred years of Universalist history in the United States of America.

*A Faith People Make: Illustrated Unitarian Universalist Lives* by Stephen Kendrick (Unitarian Church of West Hartford, CT, 1997). Good capsule portrayals of twenty-one notables, from Priestley to Reeb.

*We Would Be One: A History of Unitarian Universalist Youth Movements* by Wayne Arnason and Rebecca Scott (Skinner House Books, 1993). A thorough treatment of how Unitarian and Universalist youth organizations evolved from the late 19th century to the present; with photos!

*The Gospel of Universalism: Hope, Courage, and the Love of God* by Tom Owen-Towle (Skinner House Books, 1989). A thin, but resonant, volume of twenty vignettes that reflect on the power of Universalism's guiding principles.

*A Stream of Light: A Short Story of American Universalism* edited by Conrad Wright, second edition (Skinner House Books, 1989). A scholarly set of five essays that present five early generations of Unitarianism.

*Three Prophets of Religious Liberalism* edited by Conrad Wright, second edition (Skinner House Books, 1986). A powerful portrayal of the most influential sermons by Unitarians William Ellery Channing, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Theodore Parker, with good contextual and explanatory material about each.

*The Unitarians and the Universalists* by David Robinson (Greenwood Press, 1985). A concise but thorough summary of our American UU story, with a helpful biographical dictionary. ·

## YOUR FIRST UU BOARD



## Pathways to Membership

**Sean Ramsey**

President  
Board of Trustees

Every 3 months we have a 'Pathways to Membership' class that allows prospective members to meet one another, to learn a little history about Unitarian Universalism and our Church, and to learn more about all the ways in which our community lives out its mission for its members. As the current Board President, I was invited to attend and speak to prospective members. Our former Board President, Carolyn Gremminger, used to tell me this was one of her favorite jobs as President -- and now I can see why!

If you've never attended one of our 'Pathways to Membership' classes, I would highly encourage you to do so. It was truly energizing to hear these people who were on the first steps of discovery to speak about finding our community, being inspired by our mission, and learning about all that First UU and the greater Unitarian Universalist Association has to offer.

Honestly, it allowed me to see our community through a set of fresh eyes, and it got me thinking not of the Pathways to Membership, but rather the *Pathways to Membership*.

While Membership is the act of becoming a member, Memberhood is the act of being an active and engaged member. As the father of three daughters, this got me thinking... If there were Girl Scout-style badges for memberhood, what would they be?

Perhaps a badge for "Spiritual Inquirer" given for participation in one of our Lifespan RE classes for adults, like the Women's Spirituality Group, the Philosophical Inquiry Group, the Religion and Worldviews Book Club or Chalice Circles.

A badge for "Social Justice Warrior" could be given to those members who demonstrate our faith through action perhaps by making lunches for ARCH, repairing homes through the Hands on Housing

projects, working with the Austin Sanctuary Network, or exploring patterns of White Supremacist thinking as a White ally.

We could have one for "Facilities Facilitator" for working on the grounds, the gardens, or the building ministries. Or, my personal favorite, the "Lifespanner" for volunteering to help in the Lifespan RE as an advisor for High School or Jr High kids, as a teacher in the lower grades, or perhaps even as Prefect at Hogwarts Camp!

I wonder what badges you all would think of? If you were to sit down and create your own pathway to Memberhood, what would it look like? What badges would you design for yourselves? How would you be intentional about earning your badges? But of course, the biggest questions are -- how proudly would you wear those badges and who will you become having earned them?

## STEWARDSHIP

## SAVE THE DATE!



Celebration Sunday is coming up on Sunday, September 23rd! After second service, the Stewardship Ministry invites you to celebrate our new mission and our ongoing construction! There will be food trucks, music, and fun for all ages! The day will start with inspiring services and the opportunity to support our church in fulfilling its mission to nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice to build the Beloved Community. Put it on your calendar: Celebration Sunday is September 23.



## LIFESPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Children and Youth Faith Development

**Jules Jaramillo**  
 Director  
 Lifespan Faith Development

**Welcome to Our Learning Community!**

Our faith development classes are designed to enrich the spiritual lives of children, youth, and families. We strive to help one another grow in spiritual practice, deepen understanding and respect of our religiously diverse world, and live UU principles in daily life. We encourage parents to ask questions, visit classrooms, and participate in a variety of programs to support your spiritual growth. We look forward to working with you to nurture the spiritual lives of our children and youth!

**Worship**

Worship is an integral part of what we do as a spiritual community. Most Sundays, children in Kindergarten through Grade 5 attend the first 20 minutes of worship with their families. We also offer All Church Worship throughout the year, when all ages attend the full service. We hope you will join us for these important times of sharing worship together.

**Cooperative Program**

Our faith development program is supported through the annual church budget, so your generous pledge to the annual fund is requested. The vitality of our program also depends on the generous support of many dedicated volunteers. When you register your child, please let us know how you'd like to share your gifts with our community. Helping in the faith development program is a great way to get acquainted and learn more about our living faith. Successful background checks and a signed covenant of ethics are required of all volunteers working with children and youth.

**Sunday Faith Development Classes****Nursery**

Every Sunday, childcare is provided for infants and toddlers during the worship services. We have professional childcare staff to provide a safe and nurturing experience for our youngest church goers.

**Pre-K**

Our faith development begins when learning begins and the 'Celebrating Me and My World' curriculum provides preschoolers with experiences and opportunities to grow in their sense of trust and caring and to develop their self-identity and their sense of connectedness with all of life. We encourage our youngest learners to make a connection to our UU 7 Rainbow Principles through stories, music, movement, and art. Children spend time in community where they build friendships and celebrate learning together.

**K-2nd Grades****3rd -5th Grades****Head, Heart, and Hands**

This year we will be introducing an experiential learning program from grades Kindergarten through 5th grade. We will offer two different classrooms: Kindergarten through 2nd grade and 3rd through 5th grade. The purpose of the age distinction is that children will not only be able to focus in groups with common developmental ranges but they will also have common spiritual development focuses.

## LIFESPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

# HEAD HEART HANDS

## Methodology Behind Each Center:

**Head Center:** Individuals that tend to think before acting are driven more by cognitive logic than by emotion. These individuals tend to learn by thinking. They typically theorize first about something and then try it out later, with a 'think-try-think' approach. In addition, introverted personalities tend to process internally and appreciate space to do so through thought and reflection.

**Heart Center:** Individuals that identify as using their feelings first learn and grow the most when they make emotional connections. They learn by experiencing and seeing how they feel about their environment with a "feel-try-feel" approach.

**Hands Center:** People who are driven by doing prefer to do things to learn and experience life. They move first into action and find out practically what works and what does not work. Hand learners respond and grow best by direct experience with a "try-think-try" approach.

Our Head, Heart, and Hands program is based in Unitarian Universalist curriculum and each center will contain activities that supports the weekly lesson. The overall program honors individual learning styles providing opportunities for each child to discover and embrace lessons in ways that speak best to them. This method naturally aligns with our UU tradition affirming that each person has a yearning to learn and that children are closely connected with our source of awe and wonder.

## **Middle School Youth Group (Grades 6th-8th)**

### **Amazing Grace**

Our Middle School Youth spend time together developing relationships and learning from one another. They gather in community for social events and justice causes that speak to the entire group. This year they will be exploring Amazing Grace a curriculum that helps young people develop a greater understanding of right and wrong and act on their new understanding. It equips them for moving safely and productively through middle school, where they will be continually tugged toward both ends of the ethics continuum. Through their involvement in Amazing Grace, middle school youth will come to recognize and depend on their Unitarian Universalist identity and resources as essential to their movement toward understanding, independence, and fulfillment of their promise.

## **Senior High Youth Group**

Our Senior High Youth Group share time together building community, peer support, and developing a closer connection to Unitarian Universalism. They are involved in many youth activities throughout the year in our local area and beyond. They are active in outreach, social justice and connected to the larger First UU Church faith community. On Sunday mornings, they will be using 'Soul Matters', a theme based curriculum, to better understand themselves in the context of Unitarian Universalism. •

## FROM THE LFD DIRECTOR'S DESK

## Preparing the Future

Jules Jaramillo

Director  
Lifespan Faith Development

It has been a whirlwind first month at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin that has been filled with so much information, general orientation, and warm welcomes from all of you. Thank you! It has been a joy to meet you, and I am looking forward to creating our future in Lifespan Faith Development together.

As August approaches, I am very excited to share that our 2018-2019 children and youth faith development program has been created. Full details about the classes, curricula, and methodology are available in the prospectus included in this newsletter. Lifespan Faith Development gives us an opportunity to create connections to all ages in our faith; therefore, the foundation of our children and youth program is intentionally built around our mission: Together we nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice to build the Beloved Community. As our preschoolers through high schoolers learn, grow, and develop their Unitarian Universalist identity, they will also be learning more about our mission, what it means in this community, and in their own lives. May it be so!

**Teacher and Advisor Team Development**

One of my favorite things about being a religious educator is working with teaching teams. My greatest joy is seeing adult lives transformed from their experiences of not only teaching and mentoring children and youth but by being members of the teaching community.

Amazing benefits of being on a faith development teaching team!

- Healthy relationship building among children and youth that lasts well into their adulthood
- Developing meaningful adult relationships with your team to support one another in life challenges and celebrations
- Deepening the sense of belonging and meaning in this faith community
- Gaining new knowledge or insights in your own faith and spiritual development

- Engaging in spiritual practices more regularly and on deeper levels

As we begin coordinating teams, we would love to speak to you further about opportunities to serve as lead or support teachers. If you are curious about what we are looking for when we create our teams, it is excitement for:

- Collaborating closely with the Director of Lifespan Faith Development and First UU's faith development community in a spirit of love, flexibility, creativity, and humor.
- Supporting our children and youth to strengthen their Unitarian Universalist identity and encourage spiritual development
- Growing the hearts and minds of young Unitarian Universalists while deepening your own adult faith development and spiritual practices
- Enthusiastically engaging in the mission of First UU Church of Austin through the eyes of our children and youth

Being a part of a teaching team is well supported as we provide the curriculum materials and resources, as well as the supplies. You will also have a comprehensive teacher orientation before the program begins and ongoing teacher development throughout the year. My commitment is to support each team as a small group ministry so that you may grow and develop as a teacher and as an individual in your adult faith journey.

Please contact Faith Development if you have previously been a teacher, a helper (support teacher), advisor, or you are interested in joining a team at [faithdevelopment@austinuu.org](mailto:faithdevelopment@austinuu.org)

in faith and love,  
jules



## ACADEMIC YEAR IN AMERICA



With school just six weeks away, Academic Year in America ([www.academyyear.org](http://www.academyyear.org)) has some 100 foreign-exchange students in need of Host Families for the upcoming school year. Ages 15 to 17, they hail from Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Germany, Holland, India, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tanzania, Tunisia and Vietnam. Some of the students are late additions. Others were actually assigned families back during the spring but

are now in limbo because their Host Families de-committed for one reason or another.

Additionally, 13 deserving students have qualified for scholarship dollars via the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program, a grant initiative administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Established by Congress in response to the 9-11 attacks, the YES program specifically awards students from predominately Muslim countries.

The goal is to build “bridges of understanding” between the U.S. and participant countries. Students engage in activities designed to maximize cultural exchange (i.e. students acclimate to a value-based American society, and we gain insight into global regions currently shrouded in misconception). You can direct all questions to Garland Hancock 24/7 at (254) 216-0460. Remember, though, school begins soon so the quicker the better. •

 A photograph of a group of five diverse young people (three women and two men) smiling and posing together outdoors. In the top right corner of the photo is a small version of the AYA logo. Below the photo is a white banner with the text 'BRING THE WORLD TO YOUR HOME!' in blue, followed by the website 'www.academyyear.org' and the hashtag '#WeAreAYA' in green.
 

BRING THE WORLD TO YOUR HOME!

[www.academyyear.org](http://www.academyyear.org) | #WeAreAYA

## UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE!  
Women's Alliance Meeting  
Tuesday, September 11, 2018  
Howson Hall

Potluck Dinner at 6:00 p.m., Speaker at 7:00 p.m.

Rev. Meg Barnhouse - "Beyond Tomorrow"

Please, plan to join us for the Fall kick-off meeting of the Women's Alliance.

All are welcome.

Childcare provided if requested by August 30.

Contact: Mary Overton, [womensalliance@austinuu.org](mailto:womensalliance@austinuu.org)

AUSTIN LGBTQIA PRIDE AND FIRST UU

Austin's annual LGBTQIA pride celebration is on Saturday, August 11th, and includes both a festival during the day and a parade in the evening.

At First UU, we're participating in Austin Pride by holding our annual Pride service on Sunday, August 5, and by having a booth at the festival on August 11.

The festival is at Fiesta Gardens, 2101 Jesse E. Segovia Street, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. This year, we'll again be sharing the booth with other area UU churches. Planning for our booth is being organized by First UU's Alphabet Soup Social Club but we welcome participation from everyone. If you'd like to take a 2 hour shift staffing the table with other UUs, you can sign up at the Social Action table in the gallery before or after Sunday services or by contacting Tomas Medina at [alphabet-soup@austinuu.org](mailto:alphabet-soup@austinuu.org). You'll need a ticket to attend the festival, regardless of whether or not you're volunteering. Tickets are available at: [www.austinpride.org](http://www.austinpride.org).

The parade route on Saturday evening is on Congress from the Capitol to 4th Street, kicking off at 8 p.m. This year First UU is focusing all our efforts on the festival and will not have a float in the parade. Instead, we'll be joining the festivities by marching with other contingents or cheering on parade participants. No ticket is needed to watch the parade. Hope to see you at Pride service, the festival, and the parade!

## DENOMINATIONAL CONNECTIONS

### General Assembly Highlights

This June, 15 members of First UU Austin attended General Assembly, including four youth. We were on hand for the bridging ceremony for First UU Austin youth member Bridgett Lewis, and Rev. Chris Jimmerson was recognized for receiving Final Fellowship as a UU Minister. Our delegates also helped to select a new “Congregational Study/Action Issue” and three “Actions of Immediate Witness”.

### •2018-2022 Study/Action Issue – Undoing Intersectional White Supremacy

Every two years, delegates at General Assembly debate and vote on a new “Congregational Study/Action Issue”, or CSAI. A CSAI is an opportunity for UU congregations to take a topic of concern and engage, reflect, learn, and take action. More information, and the complete text of the new CSAI, can be found at <https://www.uua.org/action/process/csais/undoing-intersectional-white-supremacy>.

### •“Actions of Immediate Witness”

In addition to the multi-year CSAI, delegates debated and selected three Actions of Immediate Witness, or AIW’s, which

call for action on urgent social justice issues. The three selected AIW’s are entitled “End Family Separation and Detention of Asylum Seekers and abolish ICE”; “Dismantle Predatory Medical Care Practices in Prisons and End Prisons for Profit”; and “We are all Related: Solidarity NOW with Indigenous Water Protectors.” The complete text of the AIW’s can be found at <https://www.uua.org/justice/blog/actions-immediate-witness-affirmed-general-assembly-2018>

### OWL Facilitator Training Live Oak UU, August 24 – 26

The UUA Southern Region is sponsoring this training at Live Oak UU for those who would like to teach the Our Whole Lives curriculum in their congregations. More information and registration is at <http://www.liveoakuu.org/2018-owl-facilitator-training/>

### Carpool Opportunities

Want to carpool to an event outside Austin? Email Denominational Connections at [denom@austinuu.org](mailto:denom@austinuu.org) and we will try to put you together with someone to share the ride.

### “Path to Membership”

**Saturday, November 10**

**9 a.m.–12 p.m.**

**Howson Hall**

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](mailto: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.

### Senior Luncheon

**Wednesday, September 12**

**Howson Hall**

**12 p.m.**

Soup, salad and dessert will be served for \$5 and there is always an engaging program planned to bring community information. Join us as we enjoy a meal and a lesson together. Please RSVP to Alice Cashman: (512) 217-2615.



## UBarU Camp & Retreat Center

### August 2-5: Youth Astronomy Camp

UBarU is proud to offer its first youth astronomy camp! Over this long weekend campers ages 12-18 will be immersed in a variety of astronomy- related activities including nightly observing and star parties, learning how to recognize constellations to navigate the night sky, an introduction to imaging with smaller telescopes, solar viewing, and sky lore. Cost of the camp is \$300 per camper.

### August 31- September 3: UBarU Labor Day Weekend Star Party

For more information and to register, visit [www.ubaru.org](http://www.ubaru.org) and look under “events.”

## MONTHLY SPECIAL OFFERING

# This Month's MSO: grassroots leadership

**Cristina Parker**  
Communications Director  
Grassroots Leadership

Many in the First Unitarian Universalist congregation and community are acquainted with Grassroots Leadership, as they have been partners in fighting for sanctuary for our friends Alirio, Hilda, and Ivan, and the congregation voted to focus on them Sunday, Aug. 12 with a monthly special offering. They have also joined forces on other issues impacting our community, like stopping deportations, confronting police brutality, and fighting immigrant detention.

But if you're not familiar with Grassroots Leadership and our team, allow me to introduce you.

When they are not organizing all around Austin, or in Williamson County and Houston, you can find them at their meeting space on Cesar Chavez St. in East Austin. The staff is a diverse team of experts who approach their work with profound knowledge of how the criminal justice and immigration systems impact people and communities. That's because most of the staff have been directly impacted by criminalization in the criminal justice system, immigration system, or both.

Grassroots Leadership has existed for more than 35 years and opened its Austin office about 15 years ago. They believe that working locally is the best strategy to achieve lasting change at the national level. The change we seek is a world where prison profiteering, mass incarceration, deportation and criminalization are things of the past.

See the team in action and get to know staff members like Austin Sanctuary Network Organizer, Sulma Franco at: [bit.ly/GrassrootsLeadership](http://bit.ly/GrassrootsLeadership).



## A sample of their latest work:

### Mothers Fight Back

This summer, they learned of 35-40 women in the T. Don Hutto Detention Center who had been separated from their children at the border. The immigration team organized mothers inside Hutto to fight for their release and to be reunited with their children. So far, four families have been reunited, and seven women have been bonded out of Hutto as part of this campaign.

### Austin is a Freedom City

This was a joint response to the crisis created by anti-immigrant state law SB4, and research that proved racist jailing practices in the community. At Grassroots Leadership, they believe in local resistance, so they joined local partners to pass the Freedom City policy, which will limit arrest and jail time for people of color and immigrants in Austin.

### Laura Monterrosa and #EllaHabra

At the same time that the #metoo movement was at a fever pitch, Laura Monterrosa told a visitor about the sexual assault she experienced while detained at Hutto. What followed was an intense campaign to release Laura, who was facing severe retaliation inside for speaking out.

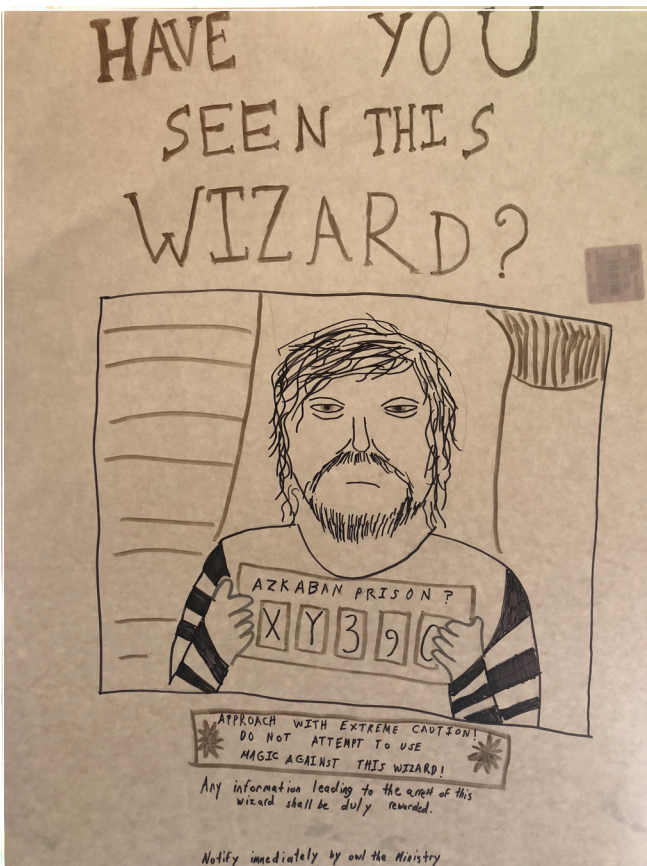


## FIRST UU IN PICTURES

## The Magic We Make - Hogwarts Camp

Bear W. Qolezcua

JULY 23-27, 2018





## MUSIC NOTES

## Music to Anticipate in August

August 5

Vocalists Annabeth Novitzki and Katrina Saporsantos will be singing. Additional music by Joe Drennan.

August 19

Music provided by Joe Drennan.

August 26

Music provided by a jazz trio comprised of First UU member Peter Pope and his friends.

The First UU Adult Choir and band will be providing the music for the services.

Nourishing souls and transforming lives through music

## Blessing of the Backpacks

August 19, 2018

During the worship services we will be blessing backpacks and briefcases (or whatever your chosen mode of stuff carrying).

Bring yours with you and we will offer blessings to you for the coming school and work year.

Registration is Open  
for Chalice Circles

Chalice Circles are a wonderful way for members of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin to deepen their connection to each other while expanding their personal and spiritual growth. These groups of six to twelve members meet monthly for sharing and discussing themes that invite participants to consider their deep convictions, beliefs, and experiences and how they relate to Unitarian Universalism. The sharing and deep listening that occurs during the process cultivates trust and develops strong bonds among the group. Chalice Circles are facilitated by lay members and are supported by Adult Faith Development at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin. Registration begins this Sunday and will continue through the month of August or until the Chalice Circles are filled. You can pick up a registration form at the Lifespan Faith Development table outside the sanctuary on Sundays.

For more info: [faithdevelopment@austinuu.org](mailto:faithdevelopment@austinuu.org).

## THE COMCOORD BLOTTER



# Hi, I'm Bear. Yes, really.

**Bear W. Qolezcua**  
Communications Coordinator

Where to start with introductions? Some of you remember me and mine from when we attended First UU from the fall of 2014 to the spring of 2016. Some of you have no idea who I am and are probably thinking “who’s this guy suddenly haunting the sanctuary and church office?” Well \*curtsy\*, how do you do? I’m Bear W. Qolezcua.

A little background on who I am and what I do here at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin...

I am the child of immigrants. My Mom was Jewish, practicing Kabbalah, and from the Palestinian Territory. My Dad was a Spanish (Basque and Catalanian) Catholic cum Southern Fundamental Baptist Minister. Personally, I’m a spiritual humanist who finds my connection to the great spark of life through music, though my little traditions are greatly informed by my Louisiana upbringing and Jewish heritage. My Dad was a military chaplain for most of my young life and, because of that, I spent much of my childhood living in places like the USSR, Germany, France, Argentina, Brazil, New Zealand, China, and South Africa to name a few. This granted me a view of the world and its people that my family otherwise could never have afforded me or my siblings.

I hold a BA in English (Creative Writing - Poetry) from Texas State

University and an MA in Theological Studies from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

While at seminary I was the editor of the student publication, KAIROS, directed the digital signboard (we have one here at the Welcome Center, you should check it out!), worked as a resident assistant, and helped in classes as an Instructor’s Aide for Hebrew exegesis. My passion, however, was firmly within KAIROS and the media I was allowed to produce.

In the time I was editor, we took what was normally a 4 - 8 page student powered newsletter and turned it into a 24-32 page newsjournal that featured voices within and without the seminary’s halls and classrooms. Theologians, activists, poets, historians, linguistics experts, Christians, Jewish folks, Muslims, Atheists, Buddhists, Black, White, Asian, First Nations, Women, Non-Binary Folk, Men, Young and Elder Adult... we had contributions across a broad swathe of our community and heard stories and opinions that often challenged and inspired us to greater work as people and students of theology.

I could not do the work alone, though. My right-hand and brain-trust, Madie, gave me more than a few moments of pause and education with her own vast experience and education in English and journalism. Between the two of us we brought KAIROS

out of a place of malaise and revived it into a modern digital and print publication for the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of Austin Seminary. It is my proudest achievement from my time in those halls. More so than even the education and degree with which I was honoured.

One plan for the future of this newsletter is to begin featuring art and voices from the church. Whatever fuels and inspires you, I would like to share that with our First UU family. Submissions can be sent to: [news@firstunitarian.org](mailto:news@firstunitarian.org). Also, in some issues I hope to include a personal piece; be it a letter to the community about current issues in the life of First UU or the world in which we live, a poem, or a photo spread. It is a venue for me to do my job, communications, and be active in the community in my own writerly way.

My little family unit (Gilbert, Frank, and me) is so excited to be here among y’all; learning, working, and getting to see what it is to be a full-fledged UU family. We are all grateful for this opportunity for me to be your FirstUU Communications Coordinator in this thriving, growing community.

So, let’s journey into the coming days, months, and years together and see what becomes our communal fortune. Big Church, Big Dreams, Big Future Ahead! Onward! .

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST****CHURCH OF AUSTIN**

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SEAN RAMSEY

**WHITE ALLIES FOR RACIAL EQUITY***Sunday, August 12**Rm 13**12:30–2 p.m.*

During the August meeting of our White Allies group, we will be learning about white fragility. We will be starting our discussion with a reading by Robin DiAngelo, who originally coined the phrase. We will talk about how white fragility has impacted our own journeys towards racial justice and how it impacts the People of Color around us. We will work to identify white fragility

in ourselves, and will explore strategies we can use to identify it and reduce it. We will identify practices that will help us pause, listen, and be open hearted so that we can move towards greater understanding and towards racial justice. Valerie Sterne will be facilitating this month's meeting.

For more information, contact Scott at [sbutki@gmail.com](mailto:sbutki@gmail.com). To be added to the email list, contact Elizabeth Kubala at [elizkubala@gmail.com](mailto:elizkubala@gmail.com).

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