

# The Austin Unitarian Universalist

*One Church. Many Beliefs.*

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**Sunday Worship Services: 9:30 am and 11:30 am — Sunday Night Live! at 5:20 pm**

## **Sunday, February 2**

9:30 am, 11:30 am and 5:20 pm

### ***In the Beginning...***

**Rev. Davidson Loehr**

When the Rev. Donald Wheat preached here on 12-29, he said religious liberals lose out to Christians because, among other things, we don't have a coherent or compelling "story." I agree with Don, and want to take the month of February to ask what is the honest story about our origins, nature, problems and prescriptions that can satisfy both head and heart? I'm bound to fail at this, but perhaps my failures can give you some ideas about how to improve the story.

**Damnations TX** will be playing **alternative country rock** at the 5:20 pm service.

## **Sunday, February 9**

9:30 am, 11:30 am and 5:20 pm

### ***Original Blessings and Sins***

**Rev. Davidson Loehr**

What are we made of? What is our human nature? All the good and all the evil in the world come from and through us. What are our gifts, what tendencies toward "sin" are part of us? What are the hungers, the yearnings, that seem to arise from our human condition in all times and places, and which give birth to our religious and mythic stories?

Texas troubadour **Eddie Collins** will play **bluegrass and folk** music at the 5:20 pm service.

## **Friday, February 7**

### ***Vespers Services with Cathy Harrington First Friday of Each Month***

**6:00 pm**

A simple meal of soup and bread  
in Howson Hall

**7:00 pm**

Vespers Services in the Sanctuary

**8:00 pm**

Spiritual Book-of-the-Month Club  
— details page 7

## **Saturday, February 8**

### ***TO ALL OF OUR MEMBERS***

Help Plan the Future of Our Church

**It's up to us**

Saturday, February 8 - 10:00 am to 12:30 pm

UUA Consultant David Rickard will help us articulate our vision for the future and how to get there. Mr. Rickard has 17 years of experience helping UU churches - including Austin's own Wildflower and Live Oak - plan and build for the future. Watch for details. If you need childcare contact Jessica Porter at [jessica@austinuu.org](mailto:jessica@austinuu.org) as soon as possible.

## Calling All Psych Types

Psychologists and clinical social workers interested in joining an occasional round table (probably rectangle) to meet with the Head Knight (Davidson) to pursue the Holy Grail (reaching human potential), please contact Dana Lehman at [dr.dana@Juno.com](mailto:dr.dana@Juno.com) or 833-7380.

## A Liberal View

On ACTV, Cable Channel 11 Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. Check [www.austinuu.org](http://www.austinuu.org) for listings.

## Listening Ministry

New in town, feeling blue, ending a relationship or lost a job? Coping with illness, loss of a loved one, parenting, aging or career change? Life can be full of stressful situations, and sometimes just having someone to talk to can make all the difference. The Listening Ministry is for church members going through times of transition. If you would like the emotional support of someone trained in listening skills, call 452-6168, ext. 18. A member of the Listening Ministry will try to return your call within a day.

## Newsletter Deadlines

### Articles (due by 9:30 am)

Fri. Jan. 31 (for Feb. 15 issue)  
Fri. Feb. 14 (for Mar. 1 issue)  
Fri. Feb. 28 (for Mar. 15 issue)

### Mailing Days

Thursday February 6  
Thursday February 20  
Thursday March 6

Contact Rita Rancken at 452-6168, x 13 or [Rita@austinuu.org](mailto:Rita@austinuu.org).

## Davidson's Lore

I'll be in Berkeley, California from 20-26 January. First, for a meeting of interns and supervisors at the Starr King School for the Ministry, where Cathy attended. That runs through the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Then I'm staying for a four-day history colloquium, which might provide some intellectual stimulation, maybe even nourishment.

While there, I'll be doing a second one-hour live radio/webcast on Wednesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> for a show called Radio Liberty. I was invited to do the first interview on January 14<sup>th</sup>. You can listen to rebroadcasts of both shows at [www.soundwaves2000.com/radio\\_liberty/index.asp?how=1](http://www.soundwaves2000.com/radio_liberty/index.asp?how=1). Just scroll down to the appropriate date.

The host does four programs to four different audiences, but all of them are for evangelical Christians. He's "Dr. Stan Monteith," an evangelical Christian who started these programs after retiring as an orthopedic surgeon. He's bright and civil, the first program was fun to do, and popular enough with his audience that he phoned the next night to ask if I'd be a "regular" for awhile.

It's a funny, and new, feeling. I've never had the chance to speak to this kind of audience, and never found an audience like this to be at all interested in anything I'd have to say. It's a new experience, as well, to be getting a few e-mails from evangelical and fundamentalist Christians from around the country — who are writing after having read some sermons on our website.

The chance to communicate this far across confessional lines has been sobering and humbling. We share few surface assumptions about religion, yet my own faith is that at a deeper level we must be alike, and that our deep similarities can trump our more superficial differences, if only we can communicate. These experiences will test that faith.

I've also learned that if I can respect someone's character, even when I don't respect their beliefs, then there's the possibility of authentic communication. So I try to live up to the kind of character I think can open those doors. That isn't always easy, either.

Maybe our own religious beliefs are never really tested until we have to relate to others, or to a world, that's not made in the image of our faith. Then we find what we're really made of, and whether it's adequate.

I imagine I'll continue to be invited on his program until I begin boring his listeners. That might not take long, so I hope I can get some good experience, and maybe the chance to do some other shows.

Christopher Hitchens wrote an interesting piece for the Wall Street Jour-

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Usher Thank-You's

We wish to acknowledge and express our appreciation to all those who usher for us on Sundays. Beginning with the next issue we will resume listing the names of those individuals who serve in this way.

So, if you've ever wanted to see your name "in lights" come usher on Sundays and look for your name here.

## An Evening of Classical Piano Music with Tim Woolsey

Saturday, February 8 at 8:00 pm in the Sanctuary

Free Will Donations will be Accepted

Half of the Proceeds will Benefit the First UU Music Program

For more information contact Brent Baldwin at 452-6168, ext. 16

### Membership Matters

Please Welcome Our Newest Members!

**Lois Gintunca** moved to Austin about seven years ago from San Diego, CA, where she was a member of a UU Fellowship. She works as a scorer for TASP, TAAS, and teacher-competency tests and enjoys reading, writing, music, and travel.

**David Byers** and **Wei-Li Huang** are the parents of two young children, and religious education (for both the children and themselves) was a prime reason for joining First UU. David is an anesthesiologist by profession and enjoys chess, water sports, music, and art.

**Virginia Moore** is a long-time (20+ years) Austin resident with the mixed religious background common to many of us. She is an office manager for TDMHMR, and enjoys reading, camping, hiking, art, yoga, and gardening.

**Dottie Roark** and her husband Tom recently moved to Austin from Houston and feel like they are returning home. They visited First UU (the first UU experience for both of them) some 20 years ago when they were at UT. They later landed in the Tyler UU Fellowship and UU churches in Dallas and Houston. They are happy to be back in Austin and anxious to make new friends and put down roots here. Dottie works as a communications coordinator and enjoys dancing, walking/hiking, reading, and jazz.

**Tom Roark** worked as an electrical engineer for 12 years before deciding to enter medical school – a decision that grew from a “Private Spiritual Practice” seminar at a Dallas UU Church. He recently completed his dermatology residency at Baylor in Houston and has joined a practice in Austin. His interests include golf, cooking, and dancing.

**Kevin Chamness** spent most of his life in central North Carolina, and graduated from NCSU before coming to Austin in 1999 to pursue a graduate degree in chemical engineering at UT. While working on his degree at UT, he has been working at TEL designing software for control systems in semiconductor processing equipment.

**Joseph** and **Linda Rank** are the parents of four children, including one-year old twins. Joseph is a software engineer at Joulesoft, Inc., and Linda will complete certification for teaching art in May. Joseph writes that “We are a family of gifted musicians, artists, and athletes. Our favorite family pastime is to get away outdoors, camping or hiking.”

### Orientation Evenings Have Changed ...

... to the third Wednesday of every month. Join **Dr. Davidson Loehr** on **February 19** for an informative discussion of our church history, faith journey, and programs. Bring your questions and prepare to be fascinated!

Meetings take place from **7-8:30 p.m.** in room 13, and registration is not required. Future orientation dates are posted in the Membership Information display case in the foyer. For more information, contact Nancy Groblewski, Membership Chair, at 458-6797 or nangrob@cs.com.

*(Continued on page 9)*

### Volunteers Needed to Help AAIM Move

On Friday, January 31 AAIM will move its offices from 2026 Guadalupe to East Austin. We will begin at 8:00 am and continue until finished. If you can help or if can provide a dolly or large flat-bed or pickup truck, please contact John Williams at 472-7627, ext. 15 or johnw@aaimaustin.org.

### Caring Cards

We would like to send church members and friends a caring card acknowledging a life event such as illness, death, marriage, birthday, anniversary, new baby or other occasion. Let the church office know of your occasion or that of someone else in the church family or call ext. 18 and follow the directions given on that line (Helping Hands/Hearts).

### UUADP Update

John "Jackie" Elliott, scheduled for execution in Texas on February 4, apparently holds dual United States and United Kingdom citizenship. Britain, which has no death penalty, is protesting.

Lawyers for Gregory Van Alstyne, scheduled for execution on February 18, maintain that he received incompetent defense. Other executions are presently scheduled for February 5, Bobby Clark; February 25, Richard Williams; February 26, Michael Johnson.

January was an exceptionally heavy month at the Huntsville death house with seven executions by lethal injection scheduled. Several UUADP members attended the annual meeting of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty that was held in Austin on January 18.

## The Grapevine

Happy Birthday to **Tommi Urbanski** who recently turned 80! What a joy to have you in the church, Tommi!

**Henry Hug** recently had a daytime surgical procedure and is doing fine.

**Alice Kandick** had major surgery and extensive hospitalization. Alice welcomes cards and phone check-ins.

**Genell Happel** continues to deal with a debilitating illness at home with top-notch assist of her husband **Carl** and a physical therapist. She welcomes cards and visits from her friends.

## Camp Fire Club

The Discovery Club (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) backpacked into the primitive camping area at Enchanted Rock for a weekend in mid-January. It was cold and wet, and they learned self-reliance along with having lots of fun. The Adventure Club (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade) played Games in the Dark, and is inviting a Vietnam Veteran to talk with them as part of Camp Fire's annual national service project, Valentines for Vets. They will deliver the valentines to a nursing home. The Starflight Club (K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade) learned about nature awareness and animal protection by making a wild animal texture collage. Along with the other two clubs, they also participated in the All-Council campout in late January.

All Camp Fire clubs are attending the Council-wide annual Skating Party on Sunday February 2 from 5:00-7:00 pm. Families from the church are specifically invited. Remember, it's boys AND girls! This is a great chance to learn more about Camp Fire. Contact Elizabeth Gray at egray88@hotmail.com for more information.

PARADOX



PLAYERS

## Paradox Players Spring Production

Grab your honey and head to Howson Hall in February! We conclude our season of letters with a Valentine's Day Gala Opening of **Love Letters**, by renowned playwright A.R. Gurney.

The cast of two characters read the letters they've been writing to each other starting in their childhood of the 1930's. Their correspondence portrays a relationship that endures the expectations and pressures of a privileged upbringing, unfolding two very different life stories. We recommend this play for mature audiences ages 16 and over.

This production runs two weekends, alternating casts on different days. Nancy Groblewski and Ed Farrell will open and close the show, performing Friday, February 14 and Sunday, February 23. Kathleen Lawson and George Denny will perform Saturday, February 15 and Friday, February 21. Adrienne Harrell and Ed Nichols will perform Sunday, February 16 and Saturday, February 22. Curtain times are 8:00 Fridays and Saturdays, 3:00 Sundays.

**Save your ticket stub!** Because each cast is rehearsing separately with a different director, we are producing essentially three different plays, so many folks will want to attend more than once. To make this easy and affordable, we are offering a \$2 discount to anyone holding a ticket stub from a previous performance. And because we like our audience members to introduce our theater to their friends, this offer is transferable.

Tickets are \$10 for all performances (group rates available) except the Valentine's Day Opening Gala, which will be \$25 with champagne, food, music and more. Please see the accompanying pink insert for more about this special evening; proceeds from the Opening Gala will benefit the church General Fund. Ticket reservation line is 989-9985.

(Continued from page 2)

## Davidson's Lore – continued

nal a few days ago, in which he made an unsettling observation about a difference between liberals and conservatives today. He thinks the health of a movement can be measured by its ability openly to discuss differences within the movement. He notes that conservatives are beginning to differ on issues ranging from war to the economy, while liberals seem desperate to keep the wagons circled around an ideology whose spirit may have died a generation ago.

As he and others have noted, with conservatives now almost completely in charge of the government, if liberals want to have an impact, it will probably mean we have to learn how to talk to, and persuade, conservatives.

I'm not sure I've ever really tried to do that before, and that's not a proud thing to say. So one of my growing edges right now will be trying to engage religious conservatives in discussions of important issues, and to communicate well enough to be persuasive.

Immediately after returning from Berkeley, I leave the next morning to drive to Galveston for the annual three-day district ministers' retreat. There, I'll be with UU ministers and a few interns (Cathy will be in Nicaragua, so won't be able to make this). By then, it might be interesting to see which group is really the easiest to communicate with on substantial issues: the conservatives, or the Unitarians...

See you in church!

Davidson

## Internal Reflections

Barbara Lighthead held a High Tea this afternoon to honor the women of this church for their volunteer service. It was quite remarkable to hear each woman, one by one, give a brief detailing of the work they have done over the years for this church. I have to tell you, I was in complete AWE. I learned something very valuable today. Many of them have performed a multitude of tasks, both mundane and innovative, for DECADES! I have a greater understanding of the feeling of ownership and of the passionate dissent that arises on occasion about matters pertaining to an institution that wouldn't be here without the "sweat equity" of these motivated, committed people. I co-founded a UU Fellowship in Seward, Alaska and so I understand the devotion and energy that is required to create and maintain a church community. Up until that point, I had merely enjoyed the fruits of others labor and I was oblivious to the hard work that goes on behind the scenes. Starting a church from scratch may be the easiest part. Growth from fellowship to large church is the hard part. Growing and changing and continuing to meet the needs of so many different members, staff, leaders, and volunteers can be challenging and at times virtually impossible.

In a survey done by the UUA in 1997, the most important challenge facing congregations was that volunteers get burned out and tired. I was in a roomful of women today that have somehow managed to maintain the stamina and level of commitment to serve again and again, on this committee and that, only to come back again and GIVE MORE of their time. Why? What is the motivating source of this love and power? When asked what is the glue that binds individual UU's and congregations together, the top answers were, "Shared values and principles, and acceptance and respect for each other as individuals." Ah, yes, shared values and respect for one another. There is definitely that element here.

I think the founders of this church who also sacrificed and toiled that we might enjoy the rewards of this beloved community, would be proud of the people who are stewards of their legacy. The growth this church has experienced in the past two years has not been without its struggles. Growth is always accompanied by discomfort. With this in mind, a church can begin to explore the possibilities of new opportunity or it can resist with all its might and go backwards. Many churches make that choice, to stay the same and resist change. A healthy congregation is not without problems, but will channel the energy that is born of growth and change and find ways to actively address and heal its disturbances. Acknowledgment of the problem is the first step. From there, the answers will come with the combined talents and wisdom of the dedicated individuals who are willing to join together in creative problem solving. The Chinese symbol for crisis has the dual meaning of "opportunity." A open-minded, open-hearted discussion, keeping in mind our shared values and respect for one another, can produce opportunities and results that no one could have imagined alone.

Our Unitarian Universalist history is rich with dedicated individuals who

worked tirelessly for the betterment of humanity. The list is endless and I am tremendously proud of our Unitarian and Universalist heritage. It is with this in mind that I am inspired to go to Nicaragua and learn what I can do, as a Unitarian Universalist minister, to help lift

*(Continued on page 8)*

**NEW!**

## Y.A.R.N. (Young Adult Religious Network)

The brand new Young Adult Religious Network (Y.A.R.N.) is for all Austin area Unitarian Universalists (and their friends) 18 to 35 years old. Six young adults came to a planning meeting and decided on the name and meeting schedule. Meetings will take place at First UU Church, 4700 Grover Avenue, each Wednesday from 7:30 to 9:30. Whether you're in college or not, if you're old enough to vote, come check us out! Spread the word!!! For more information contact Kathleen Ellis at [revktellis@aol.com](mailto:revktellis@aol.com) or 447-3053.

## Pathfinder Covenant Group

**NEW!**

The Pathfinder Covenant Group is a "landing pad" group, serving as an entry point into the church for visitors and newer members looking to meet each other and learn about UU. The group also welcomes veteran church members who want to help integrate new members into the church or who wish to experience what a covenant group is like. This group will meet on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am in Room 9 beginning February 2. Katie Winter and Mickey Moore will be facilitating the group initially. Contact Mickey at [mgmoore@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:mgmoore@mail.utexas.edu) or 779-7234 or visit our website at [www.austinuu.org/members/covenantgroups.htm](http://www.austinuu.org/members/covenantgroups.htm) for information on covenant groups, including existing groups, resources available for small groups, and opportunities to expand our Covenant Group program.

## Change in February Tea Time with Cathy

Since Cathy Harrington will be out of the office the first week of February, Tea Time with Cathy will resume on Tuesday, February 11 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm in Room 9.

## Children's Program Committee Meeting

Second Tuesdays  
**February 11 6:30pm**  
**Room 13**

Childcare by reservation only

## Youth Program Committee Meeting

Usually the Fourth Sundays, but  
the next meetings will be on  
**February 2 1pm and**  
**February 23 1pm**  
**Room 9**

## YRUU

Youth Group for those  
14-19 years old  
Meets most Sundays at  
**6:30pm, Room 11**

## Please RE-gister your Children!!



Make sure we have  
all your important in-  
formation. Pick up a  
form from the table  
outside the RE Office.

## Looking Ahead



**Feb 2** - YPC Mtg  
**Feb 6** - Adult RE Mtg  
**Feb 11** - CPC Mtg  
**Feb 16** - Surprise Pals Revealed  
**Feb 16** - Volunteer Fair  
**Feb 23** - YPC Mtg  
**Feb 28-Mar 1** - YRUU Rally  
**March 1** - CROP Walk  
**April 4-5** - Middle School Rally

## Surprise Pals - Remember to Write!

Please write weekly to your pal - no one likes an empty mailbag... Both children and adults make long-lasting church friends this way. Identities will be revealed at our February 16th celebration. Questions? contact Karen Langsley at [klangsley@austin.rr.com](mailto:klangsley@austin.rr.com) or 894-4411.

## You Can Help Select Next Year's Curricula

Please consider being part of the group that will meet in retreat on **May 3, from 9am - 2pm**. We will review the past years' programs, look at what things we consider essential for our children and youth to learn and plan for our next programming year. If you are interested, please contact Phyllis Barron, [PhyllisBarron@austin.rr.com](mailto:PhyllisBarron@austin.rr.com) or 301-9045.

## Travels with Andrea

This is the beginning of a very hectic spring season. Besides my at-church duties, I am also called to represent our church within the district and share my skills nationally. I recently attended the District RE Committee Meeting (I'm the secretary), and the District RE Conference. February 17-22, I will attend the LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Assn) Board meeting (I'm the Board Member for Membership) and the Meadville/Lombard Winter Institute. The speaker will be Parker Palmer, on *Spirituality and Education within the Faith Community*. While I am away, I am always thinking of better ways to serve this church, and am always available by email.

I've also just re-joined the board of the UUJA - UUs for Jewish Awareness. We have monthly phone meetings to plan programming for General Assembly in June. As someone in an interfaith marriage, I have always felt it to be essential for us to find effective ways to honor all our heritages. Our website is [www.uuja.org](http://www.uuja.org).

## YPC RE-Cruitment - We Need You!!

Our Youth Program Committee is made up of youth and adults working together to oversee youth programming - both religious education and social programming. This year this group spearheaded the popular book sale - raising funds toward a heritage trip to Boston. Next year, we'll plan the trip, along with other great youth programming!

Two youth and one parent are selected by YRUU and also by the middle school youth. A YRUU advisor is selected by YRUU, and a middle school teacher and a high school teacher are chosen by the teaching teams. The DRE selects 3 at-large High School youth and a High School parent. These positions are your chance to make a difference for the youth programming. Please make your wish to be part of this vibrant group known to the DRE or appropriate group for consideration for YPC membership beginning in May.

## We're Wishing for a Sectional Sofa

If your New Year redecorating plans call for replacing a sectional sofa in good condition, our youth would like to you donate the old one for use in Room 11. Their old garage sale brown sofa, which they CARRIED to church, is on its last legs. Let's give them a new sofa to love!



## Winter Adult RE

### **SIGN UP FOR CLASSES in the gallery after service!!**

#### **Crying**

**Sunday mornings, February 2-23, 10:35-11:25am, Room 11** Join Barbara Denny, for a book discussion of *The Natural and Cultural History of Tears* by Tom Lutz. This provocative and indispensable book explores the natural and cultural history of our most mysterious and complex human function: our ability to shed tears.

#### **Tarot**

**Sunday mornings February 2-23, 10:40-11:25am, room 15.** Larry Gilstrap will facilitate an investigation of the tarot.

#### **Dream Drama**

**Monday evenings, February 3-24, 7-9:30 pm, room 13.** A reprise of last fall's program with Katya Walter. Find out what part dreams play in your life. \$25 per person

#### **Living on Purpose**

**Thursdays February 6-27, 7-9pm, Room 15.** Are you consciously creating your life - or merely living by default? By the end of this program, you will have a clear picture of the real you, your life purpose and how to create a life you love! Join Chas Schreiber for this fun, life-altering experience. \$50 per participant, limit 20.

#### **Spiritual Book-of-the-Month Club**

**First Fridays, following Vespers, 8pm, Room 9** Our first book will be *The Gospel According to Jesus*, by Stephen Mitchell. For more details, or to suggest other books, contact our intern Cathy Harrington.

#### **Monday Night Philosophy & Theology Book Group**

**Mondays, 7pm, Room 11**

*(Please help us rename this group!)*

Cool People, Cool Books, Cool Conversation!! Join Clinton Hopper for great books, starting with *Zen Keys* by Tich Nhat Hanh. Camus00@hotmail.com or 418-0928.

## Adult RE-Minders

#### **Spiritual Exploration & Philosophical Inquiry**

Sundays, 9:30-10:30am in Room 9. All are welcome to join this free and open discussion group. Facilitation rotates among the participants.

#### **Book Discussion Groups**      **Sundays, 9:30-10:30am in Rooms 13-A&B**

Both groups ask that you keep current with the readings to participate.

**Room 13B Book Group** - *Ethics for the New Millennium* by The Dalai Lama. Call Jim Burson 794-1086 or jeburson@aol.com for more info.

**Mind & Meaning Book Group** - Room 13A - *The Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins. For more info, PollyR6934@aol.com or 371-3257.

#### **Mindfulness Through Meditation**

On hiatus

If you are interested in arranging alternative times for this class, please contact Margaret Borden 458-4502, margaretborden@alumni.utexas.net

#### **Tai Chi**

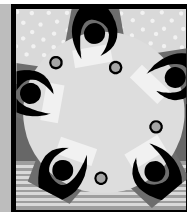
**Sundays and Thursdays, 7pm in Howson Hall**

Explore this graceful martial art. \$25 for six weeks. For info, call Nell at 458-4903 or enewton@hoovers.com

#### **World Religions in Your Car!**

Lectures on tape available from the DRE. Five sets are available on Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and the religions of China and India. \$25 deposit.

### **Adult RE Committee Mtg**



**Thursday, February 6  
7:00pm Room 13**

This is a fun, interesting committee! We interview prospective class facilitators and schedule classes. For more info, contact Sharon Moore 349-2318 spumonhighhollow@msn.com

### **Coming this Spring!**



#### **Yoga**

Join Dan Brown for this yoga series on Monday evenings, beginning March 3

#### **Evensong II**

Cathy Harrington will lead this 8 week program on Wednesdays, March 5-April 23, room 9. This class is for those who have taken Evensong I, and there is no fee.

#### **Science and Religion**

7pm Thursdays, April 3-24 with Davidson Loehr in the Sanctuary.

## **CONTINUING.....**

### **Reading the Bible Again for the First Time**

**Sundays, January 12-March 31, 3:30pm, Room 13.** Join David Smith for a discussion of the book, *"Reading the Bible Again for the First Time : Taking the Bible Seriously But Not Literally,"* by Marcus Borg, who helps us to discover the meaning of these stories, providing the knowledge and perspective to make the wisdom of the Bible an essential part of our modern lives. David\_Smith@unforgettable.com or 459-8270.

## **February in the Gallery**

In February the Gallery is presenting the unique work of Lauritz Williams. His medium is watercolor, and his style is bright, bold and passionate. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, February 6 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

## **Our Romanian Partner Church**

Viola Gal, widow of the former minister of our Feketehalom Partner Church, has experienced a recurrence of breast cancer for which she has been treated in Budapest.

From the sale of the embroidered wall hangings which she made and sent to us we have received \$150 which will be sent to her. The Social Action Committee of our church is also sending \$100 to the Feketehalom church.

## **Memorial/ Endowment Fund**

Our Church is like a family; we need living expenses, and we need something set aside to secure our future and help with capital expenses. The Canvass provides the Church's living expenses and our Memorial Endowment Fund is "money in the bank".

Spending from the Memorial Fund can occur only after two votes of the congregation, six months apart. If the congregation so votes, it can be used to help with major renovation or expansion of our building.

Please consider building up this vital asset as you think about your annual giving or estate planning. Questions? Call Marian Maxwell, 454-1931.

## **2003 Sunday Flower Sign-up**

The Sunday services flower sign-up calendar is now available outside the minister's office for those who wish to provide flowers in honor of a specific event. Contact Margaret Burnette at margaretburnette@yahoo.com or 458-6127.

## **Barbara's Briefing — The Truth About Office Hours**

Cathy stole my thunder by writing about the High Tea for Volunteer Leader Appreciation, hosted by Maxine Barkan on January 16. Eighteen (all we could handle for the program we had) long-serving women were invited for a thank-you tea catered by Cathy, followed by a brief presentation on how to prevent burnout, develop more new leaders and mobilize volunteers from all services to the many attractive roles First UU offers. The response to the first 32 invitations was so positive I can see I must do this twice a year! I'll follow up on the ideas we discussed in future Briefings.

Office Hours! I apologize for offending some members by the way in which I announced the office closure over Christmas. The fact is that most staff worked most days, trying like mad to finish 2002 and start 2003. I wrote that we would check messages, and we did, and returned them. We were here in case of emergency. But we needed uninterrupted time to focus on the tasks before us, and I should have said that more clearly.

Same situation with our posted hours of 10 am - 2 pm daily: Staff members are here both earlier and later than those hours, but we turn off the phones to allow undistracted trains of thought. If you want to see any of us, call and let us know, and we'll do our best to meet you. Of course, Lyndsay and Rita are not here 40 hours, so their schedules are tight, especially in newsletter weeks.

This is one reason why volunteers are so warmly welcomed, and have such interesting jobs to do - Sue, Nancy, Linda, Constance and Joan are important parts of this team, and you are always invited to join us.

Barbara Lighthouse  
Director of Administration

*(Continued from page 5)*

## **Internal Reflections □ contin□ e□**

people out of poverty and oppression. As a teaching church, this congregation, in a sense, is "growing a minister." You have provided a safe environment for me to experience all aspects of parish ministry. You are empowering me to go out into the world and practice Unitarian Universalist ministry. This is no small thing, and is not without some sacrifice on your part. I am aware that having an Intern for the first time has been a change and that for some, it meant not having the opportunity to create lay lead services. There's a change that may not suit everyone in the church. But just like all growth and change, there always seems to be a trade off. I hope that having an Intern this year has been more of a plus than a minus, and I want to say, "thank you."

Thank you for the warm and loving support that you offer to me and for giving me the opportunity to test my wings and for helping me become a minister. Seminary education is only just a fraction of what is needed to prepare a person for the work of ministry. Internships are where the student transforms and actually becomes a "minister" and without you it cannot happen. Thank you, all of you, for your patience, love, and sacrifice.

**Cathy Harrington**

## **End-of-Month Party**

**Date and time:** Saturday, February 22, at 8 pm.

**Hosts:** Suzy and Bill Reid, 1104 Wayside. From Mopac, take the Enfield exit and go west. At the first light (Exposition) turn left. After one long block turn left on West 12th. Wayside is the second on the right, and 1104 is RIGHT THERE. When lost, call 474-2696.

**For:** Everyone, intergenerational UU's and friends.

**The why of it:** EOM parties stretch back into the mists of time and are a pleasant way of meeting new and old friends in a relaxed atmosphere.

**Bring:** A snack to share and your drink.

**HOSTS ARE NEEDED FOR FUTURE PARTIES**, which are always held on the last Saturday of the month. Your duties as host are: to lay in some disposable plates, cups and napkins, sweep the floor if you want, and turn your porch light on. To offer your house, home or hovel, call Kelly Teese at 927-2292 or Jean Wyllys at 926-6353.

## **"Ancient Echoes"**

On Saturday, February 1 Congregation Beth Israel and Austin Area Interreligious Ministries will present a benefit performance by the SAN ANTONIO VOCAL ARTS ENSEMBLE. The music has been recreated from Hebrew melodic fragments, Babylonian Jewish music, and traditional songs that have passed down through the ages from the first century when Jesus walked the Holy Land.

The concert at Congregation Beth Israel will take place on Saturday, Feb. 1 at 7:00 pm in the congregation's sanctuary. The entire Austin community is invited; there will be a suggested donation of five-to-fifty dollars to benefit hunger organizations Mazon and CROP WALK, plus a can of food, at the door. The evening will begin with a short Interfaith Havdallah service. For information contact Susan Reid at sbreid1@juno.com or 474-2696.

*(Continued from page 3)*

## **Membership Matters — continued**

### **Visitor Information Cards**

For visitors who would like to obtain more information about the church, sign up for the newsletter, share their interests, or request a call from the membership committee, we provide visitor information cards. Take an information card from the back of one of the benches in the sanctuary, fill it out, and leave it in the collection plate or in the Visitor Information Drop Box, located at the Membership display case in the foyer.

### **Are You Ready to Become a Member?**

The only requirement for membership in this church is signing the Membership Record Book. If you are ready to join First UU Church, you can sign the book on the fourth Sunday of any month. Enrollment takes place immediately following each of the three church services at the Membership Table in the gallery. (You will be asked to complete a new-member information form before signing.)

We look forward to having you join us. The next new member signing will take place after services on Sunday, February 23.

We encourage all new or prospective members to attend one of the monthly Orientation Evenings with the minister (see above) as well as one of the New U Classes, which are offered every three months.

## **Heritage Club**

Heritage Club, our lively book discussion group, will gather at the home of Kitty Clark at 8:00 pm Friday, February 14 (yes, Valentine's Day)! We'll discuss EMPIRE FALLS, by Richard Russo. This entertaining and rich novel will provoke a lot of discussion. Bring a snack and a drink to share and join us! For those who read ahead, our March book will be THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF KAVALIER AND CLAY by Michael Chabon.

## **Senior Luncheon**

The Senior Luncheon group will meet at 12:00 noon in Howson Hall Tuesday, February 11. Paradox Players will give us a sampler from their new production, "Love Letters." Reservations are helpful to the cooks but if you forget, come anyway. \$3 donation requested.

## **Sharing Suppers**

Many of us find attending Sharing Suppers to be one of the most valuable ways to become acquainted with other interesting adult UUs in a small group setting.. If you haven't joined us yet, you're in for a treat! This month's potluck dinners will take place in members' homes on February 15. The sign-up sheet is next to Davidson's office, or call Barbara Tuttle, Coordinator, 794-2972. Deadline is Sunday, February 9, after the second service. In January we had four simultaneous dinners -- let's try for six this month! New members and friends are especially welcome! Come along; we look forward to getting to know you! (Haven't hosted or co-hosted in a while? Call Barb and volunteer today!)

## **Summary from All-Church Council Meeting**

On Sunday, January 12, the FUUCA All-Church Council met in Howson Hall. Over 40 Committee chairs and members, Trustees, staff and interested parties attended. The Youth of the church served a delicious lunch prior to the meeting.

Bill Forbes summarized the actions of the Board since the last Council meeting in October. The Council discussed the issues that have been raised recently regarding the Ministerial Discretionary Fund Policy. Rose Ann Reeser gave an update on the activities of the Strategic Planning Task Force. Bill Forbes alerted the Council to the Board's plan to review and update the list of church Affiliated Organizations. The Council recognized outgoing Finance committee chair Nancy Reiter's dedication and hard work during her tenure. Ron Turner called out the need to start planning now for Davidson's and Andrea's sabbatical leaves, which start in 2005. Rose Ann Reeser asked for Council members and other members for feedback on the new Sunday morning schedule, as modified in August of last year.

The Council members and Staff reported on their activities. The level of energy and enthusiasm evidenced in their reports is truly amazing. Our church is a wonderfully dynamic and exciting community! A full summary of committee reports may be found posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. Don't miss it!

Thanks to all who attended and to the many dedicated members and friends who couldn't be present.

Bill Forbes  
Board Vice-President

## **The President's Corner**

We've entered 2003 with high hopes and much work to do—work that I think many of us find rewarding as we continue to make our church the kind of spiritual home that can make a positive difference in our lives as well as those of our larger community. Along with this guiding principle, we are also trying to nurture a culture of optimism and trust. And it's in regard to this particular guiding principle that I wish to devote this column.

Though many are probably content to know that the Board of Trustees meets on a monthly basis "to conduct the business of the church" (per our bylaws), some have requested newsletter updates of board actions to supplement the monthly posting of minutes on the bulletin board outside the church office (as well as our new intranet postings). The following is a summary of the January 21, 2003 board meeting.

- ◆ Attendance averages 9/8/02 – 1/19/03, inclusive of holidays:
  - All Worship Services = 418
  - Sunday Night Live (third service) = 82
  - Religious Education for Children and Youth = 91
- ◆ Policies approved: Split-the-Plate, Privacy, and Memorial Services
- ◆ Accepted 14 new church members and one resignation
- ◆ Church membership as of 1/9/03 = 604 (408 pledging units)
- ◆ Deferred until next month, pending the collection of more information:
  - Church resolutions guidelines
  - Establishment of two funds, one for minister's discretion/one for charitable use
  - Bequest designation
- ◆ Annual financial report for 1/1/02 – 12/31/02:
  - 95% of pledge income received
  - 100% of budgeted income realized due to additional contributions and grants
  - 2002 approved deficit of \$38,000+ reduced to \$32,000+
  - Did not need to "borrow" approved transfer from sabbatical funds of \$10,000+ (which would have increased our deficit even more)
  - But were not able to transfer approved \$14,000 from Memorial/Endowment Fund to offset deficit due to downturn in market.

The good news is that we had our most successful pledge canvass in 2003, resulting in 361 pledging units who pledged a total of \$395,000, or about \$100/pledge/month. The bad news is that our \$36,000-deficit budget costs us \$565,000. Rentals and fundraisers only go so far. And the deficits we've been running for the past couple of years cannot be continued as we deplete our reserves.

So—though you may get tired of hearing about money (and, for gosh sakes, we just finished our canvass), your board of trustees has been elected and charged with conducting the business of the church. We take our charge seriously and, therefore, are doing everything we can to manage a responsible budget. For now, we get by with less than we wish, but the future may require cutting back unless and until the overall economy as well as the church's income can catch up.

With a hopeful heart,  
Donna Howard  
Board President

## Events at a Glance

<b>Sun</b>	9:30 AM	Sunday Service	<b>Sun</b>	9:30 AM	Sunday Service
<b>Feb 2</b>	10:35 AM	Book Discussion: Tears/Crying	<b>Feb 9</b>	10:30 AM	Parents Group
	10:40 AM	Tarot Investigation		10:35 AM	Book Discussion: Tears/Crying
	11:30 AM	Sunday Service		10:40 AM	Tarot Investigation
	11:30 AM	Public Affairs Forum		11:30 AM	Sunday Service
	1:00 PM	YPC Meeting		11:30 AM	Public Affairs Forum
	3:00 PM	Lay Leader Training		3:30 PM	Reading the Bible Again for the First Time
	3:30 PM	Reading the Bible Again for the First Time		5:20 PM	Sunday Night Live!
	5:00 PM	Camp Fire		6:30 PM	YRUU
	5:20 PM	Sunday Night Live!		7:00 PM	Tai Chi
	6:30 PM	YRUU			
	7:00 PM	Tai Chi			
<b>Mon</b>	6:30 PM	New U Class	<b>Mon</b>	6:30 PM	New U Class
<b>Feb 3</b>	7:00 PM	Dream Drama	<b>Feb 10</b>	7:00 PM	Dream Drama
	7:00 PM	Philo and Theo Book Group		7:00 PM	Philo and Theo Book Group
	7:00 PM	Open Covenant Group 1		7:00 PM	Open Covenant Group 1
<b>Tue</b>	9:30 AM	Deadline for 2/9 Order of Service	<b>Tue</b>	9:30 AM	Deadline for 2/16 Order of Service
<b>Feb 4</b>	3:00 PM	No Tea Time with Cathy Today	<b>Feb 11</b>	10:30 AM	Chat and Craft
	6:00 PM	Executive Committee		12:00 PM	Senior Luncheon
	7:30 PM	Women's Spirituality		3:00 PM	Tea Time with Cathy Resumes
				6:30 PM	RE/CPC Committee
				7:30 PM	Women's Spirituality
<b>Wed</b>	7:00 PM	Worship Services Committee	<b>Wed</b>	9:15 AM	Listening Ministry
<b>Feb 5</b>	7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal w/ Childcare	<b>Feb 12</b>	7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal w/ Childcare
	7:30 PM	Young Adult Religious Network		7:30 PM	Young Adult Religious Network
<b>Thu</b>	9:30 AM	Newsletter Mailing	<b>Thu</b>	6:30 PM	Membership Committee
<b>Feb 6</b>	7:00 PM	Gallery Art Opening Reception	<b>Feb 13</b>	7:00 PM	Living on Purpose
	7:00 PM	Living on Purpose		7:00 PM	Intern Supervision Committee
	7:00 PM	Adult RE Committee		7:00 PM	Tai Chi
	7:00 PM	Tai Chi			
<b>Fri</b>	6:00 PM	Soup Meal before Vespers	<b>Fri</b>	<b>9:30 AM</b>	<b>Deadline for Mar. 1 Newsletter</b>
<b>Feb 7</b>	7:00 PM	Vespers	<b>Feb 14</b>	7:00 PM	Practice -- One of Everything
	7:00 PM	Practice -- One of Everything		8:00 PM	<i>Love Letters</i> from Paradox Players
				8:00 PM	Heritage Club
<b>Sat</b>	8:00 AM	Men's Breakfast	<b>Sat</b>	10:30 AM	Women's Spirituality
<b>Feb 8</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Help Plan the Future of Our Church</b>	<b>Feb 15</b>	8:00 PM	<i>Love Letters</i> from Paradox Players
	10:30 AM	Women's Spirituality			
	8:00 PM	Tim Woolsey Fundraiser Concert			

### Join Sunday Sociables in the Afternoon...

Sociables is an informal brunch gathering each Sunday. All are invited. Folks start arriving around 1:15. If you have questions or suggestions, contact Larry Gilstrap (708-1226 or gilstrap@texas.net).

February 2            Tres Amigos            1206 West 38th St. (26 Doors Shopping Center)

February 9            Jim's            807 Camino La Costa (IH-35 northbound frontage road)

### ...Come in the Evening for a Movable Feast!

All are invited to attend dinner with us after Sunday Night Live beginning at 7 pm. Check the poster board outside the office for details on Sunday evenings. If no host is listed that week, the Movable Feast can be considered cancelled. Also listen for an announcement by the lay leader during the service. If host or hostess is listed, give this name to the restaurant host in order to be shown to the correct table. Typically directions and a phone number will be posted as well.

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
 CHURCH OF AUSTIN**  
 4700 Grover Avenue  
 Austin, TX 78756  
*One Church. Many Beliefs.*

**Minister: Dr. Davidson Loehr**  
**Director of Religious Education:**  
 Andrea Lerner  
**Director of Administration:**  
 Barbara Lighthouse  
**Director of Music: Brent Baldwin**  
**President, Board of Trustees:**  
 Donna Howard  
**Intern Minister: Cathy Harrington**

Church Phone: (512) 452-6168  
 Church Fax: (512) 453-5912  
 E-Mail: info@AustinUU.org  
[www.AustinUU.org](http://www.AustinUU.org)

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## ***Sunday Morning Religious Education***

***ADULT CLASSES***

- Spiritual Exploration & Philosophical Inquiry Group**  
 Room 9 ..... 9:30 am
- Book Discussion Groups:**  
**Sunday Book Group** — Call Jim Burson (794-1086)  
 Room 13A ..... 9:30 am
- Mind & Meaning** — Call Polly Robertus (371-3257)  
 Room 13B ..... 9:30 am
- Meditation** — Call Margaret Borden (458-4502)  
 On hiatus — details on page 7.

***CHILDREN & YOUTH CLASSES***

- Children and youth K-8th grade attend the first part of the second and third worship services with their families before they go to class.
- First Session: 9:30 am - 10:30 am**  
**Second Session 11:30 am - 12:45 am**  
**Grades 6-8 & 9-12 - 11:30 am only**  
**Third Session: 5:40 pm - 6:30 pm**  
**Third Session is Pre-K through Elementary only**
- INFANTS AND TODDLERS***
- Parents with infants may attend the service with their children, view the service through the quiet room window, watch the service on TV in room 21, or leave their children with our childcare staff in room 19.

### ***Public Forum "Live" Sundays at First UU Church of Austin***

**Turning Right at the State Capitol** **February 2, 11:30 am**  
**Glen Maxey** **Howson Hall**  
 Former State Representative Glen Maxey will provide expert analysis of the 2003 Texas legislative session, with special emphasis on the power shift toward the political right, the policy changes it portends, and the continuing scope for citizen action to influence lawmakers' decisions.

**The Many Faces of Islam in Africa** **February 9, 11:30 am**  
**Jean Davison** **Howson Hall**  
 Jean, a member of our church and its choir, was a professor of sociology at American University in Washington, DC and has been on the faculty of three African universities. She has done research and consulting all over Africa for 25 years and has a PhD from Stanford in International Development and Anthropology.

### ***Public Forum on Cable Access Channel 10 Sundays at 6 PM***

- |            |                  |  |
|------------|------------------|--|
| February 2 | Elizabeth Fernea | Women of Islam   |
| February 9 | Patrick Cox      | The People's Senator: A Historian Looks at Ralph Yarborough's Legacy |