

The Austin Unitarian Universalist

One Church. Many Beliefs.

www.AustinUU.org

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Volume 52, No. 5

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

Sunday, March 2

9:30 am and 11:30 am

Ten Days in Nicaragua: Some Reflections

Cathy Harrington

I will share my experiences of living with the people of Nicaragua in the barrios of Managua and in a poor village in the campos called San Diego. Nicaragua is a country in crisis. What role has the United States played? Is Free Trade fair? What in the world have we done? What in the world can we do?

5:20 pm

The Thou of Pooh

Cathy Harrington

Thomas Jefferson once said that an informed democracy would act responsibly. But Joseph Sittler believed that "there is sufficient evidence that human beings are quite capable of marching steadily into disaster fully equipped with the facts." Sittler suggests that "a change in the "spirit of our minds" requires something vastly more than a combination of frightening facts and moral concern." What then? What?

Singer/Songwriter Darden Smith will be playing at the 5:20 pm service.

Sunday, March 9

9:30 am and 11:30 am

The Soul's Code

Rev. Davidson Loehr

This is the first in a new series of sermons I'm calling "Junger than Springtime" because (a) they're looking at life through some lenses from Jungian psychology, (b) it's sort of springtime, and (c) I really love bad puns. It could be a series of fifty sermons, but I'll use just two authors for these. James Hillman wrote the book with the above title, and I like it as an alternative way of looking at our mission in life: to recognize and realize the calling of our own distinctive character or soul on us. (The second author is Robert A. Johnson; I'll use about five of his books.)

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The **First UU Choir** will present Morten Lauridsen's ethereal 17-minute work  
***Lux Aeterna*** during both morning services.  
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5:20 pm

Reconsidering the Concept of God

Rev. Davidson Loehr

If God isn't a Critter somewhere, it is still a powerful concept. But concepts are always influenced by the biases of those who are trying to sell them. Let's rethink this.

Enjoy **High Octane Rock-a-billy** from **Basin Street** at the 5:20 pm service.

Helen Nelson Memorial Service

Longtime member and friend Helen Nelson passed away on Sunday, February 16. A memorial service will be held at First UU Church of Austin in late March. Details will be available in the March 15 newsletter.



In the UU World

See page 49 of the March/April 2003 issue of *UU World* for information on First UU's National Wildlife Federation certification.

Learn About Notable American Unitarians

Read the fascinating stories of some representative women and men who made significant contributions to life in the quarter-century 1936-1961 by visiting www.harvardsquarelibrary.org.

Newsletter Deadlines

Articles (due by 9:30 am)

Fri. Feb. 28 (for Mar. 15 issue)
Fri. Mar. 21 (for Apr. 1 issue)
Fri. April 4 (for Apr. 15 issue)

Mailing Days

Thursday March 6
Thursday March 27
Thursday April 10

Contact Rita Rancken at 452-6168, x 13 or Rita@austinuu.org.

Davidson's Lore

When I first began in the ministry in 1986, I spent a couple years writing yearly sermons on theological and moral arguments for abortion. But the times weren't interested in thinking about the morality of abortion then. I quietly dropped out of this issue about fifteen years ago when — like more liberal ministers than you might imagine — I was no longer willing to pretend that abortion was merely about "a woman's choice."

Last summer, I was invited to speak for some sort of a sex-ed conference in Lubbock from February 27 – March 2nd. I accepted without knowing what I was getting into, and only learned a month or so ago that I'm now the keynote speaker, expected to give not one but four speeches, each to a different audience: Texas Tech, Planned Parenthood, the local Unitarian church, and somebody else.

I wasn't ready to get back into this, and have very mixed feelings about it, though some of my hosts assure me they are also ready to move on past the mere "choice" platform, and consider that life is sacred, including the developing life of a fetus. They say they're interested in developing moral arguments rather than just individual rights arguments — especially since we can expect virtually everything about *Roe v. Wade* to be overturned this year.

Perhaps the series of radio interviews I've done with this evangelical Christian (Dr. Stan Monteith, who has been a bright, well-informed and wonderful conversation partner) from Santa Cruz, California (four, so far) will have taught me something. What I learned there was that the people who are against the coming war, who feel we are being lied to by our president and his handlers, who feel the restructuring of the economy and the transfer-by-the-truckload of money from all segments of society to only the very wealthiest individuals and corporations — I learned that they cross all the so-called ideological lines. On the show, we have heard from Republicans, libertarians, "right-wingers," "far-right-wingers," "conservatives," people who pretty much hate all liberals, and so on. Yet the areas of agreement have been staggering.

I think there is a new "silent majority" in America that can't identify itself as such because it has no way to refer to itself. If that's true about the economy and the war, then I suspect (and hope) it's also true on the loaded topics of birth control, family planning and abortion.

It is very easy to construct powerful moral arguments for both birth

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Got Bricks?

Would you like to donate an engraved brick to the All-Ages Playground brick walkway? If you missed out the first time, or you have additional people or events to commemorate, here's your chance. We will use the funds for mulch and some additional improvements. Spring is coming, and the All-Ages Playground needs the mulch to keep back weeds and allow our new native landscaping to take root. Also, use of the playground is increasing, and we would like to add an outdoor lamp for evening use. A portion of the money raised will also go to the church's operating fund. The brick engraving can take up to 16 characters (including spaces) on up to three lines of text. Bricks are \$100. Contact Elizabeth Gray at egray88@hotmail.com, or look for the table in the Gallery between services. **Orders must be in by March 15.**

Membership Matters

Please Welcome Some of Our Newest Members!

Jenny Moon has joined First UU to find "a venue for spiritual exploration and a spiritual learning community for my children." Jenny, a flight attendant, is the mother of one and, come April, will be the mother of two. She's been in the Austin area for about 7 years after moving here from Lubbock; her interests include yoga, languages, reading, and cross-stitch.

Tom and Susan Thomson. Susan writes, "My husband Tom and I have been UUs for many years. In fact, we met at the UU church in Lubbock, which we both first attended in January 1978. We have been attending First UU in Austin since we moved here in 1996. It seems fitting that we finally officially join this church, which we have grown to love for all it has to offer, on the 25th anniversary of our meeting and becoming UUs."

Davelyn and Tom Forrest are long, *long-time* UUs who recently moved to Austin from Pensacola, Florida. Davelyn has been a member of churches in Pensacola, Corpus Christi, Plano, Houston, and Denver. "I love living in Austin. It's great to attend such an active church." Tom works for the city in the department of transportation, planning, and sustainability. Tom and Davelyn are the parents of three adult, married children.

Orientation Evenings

Orientation Evenings now take place on the third Wednesday of every month. Join **Dr. Davidson Loehr** on **March 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.

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, March 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.

A Liberal View

Watch *A Liberal View* on ACTV, Cable Channel 11, Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. Check each week's listings at www.austinuu.org.

Memorial/ Endowment Fund

From time to time, church friends and members tell us they would like to remember First UU in their wills. If we can help you with such a question, call Marian Maxwell, 454-1931, Chair of the Memorial/Endowment Fund Committee.

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).

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.

March in the Gallery

March in the Gallery features watercolors by FUUCA member Barbara Spurgeon. Please join us for an opening reception on Friday, March 7 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Gallery.



Paradox Players' Contributions to the Church

Thank you to all who've attended our productions over the last three years! We want to let you know what we do with the revenue collected from your ticket purchase.

After we pay royalties and other bills, one half of the remaining ticket revenue goes directly to the church's general fund. Last fall's play, *Waiting for MacArthur*, cleared nearly \$2000 for church coffers. The other half of the revenue collected from ticket sales is used by Paradox Players to purchase something for the church. The first year it was lighting for the stage and an improved sound system. The next year it was two dozen padded chairs, to bring the total close to 100 comfortable seats for the many events our church hosts in Howson Hall. This year's purchase is the new shed that sits out beyond the garden shed, at the north end of the RE wing. All these purchases are discussed and approved by relevant committees, in this case, Facilities and Grounds.

Intended for storage of theater paraphernalia, the new shed should relieve congestion in Howson Hall. Did you notice the smaller stage for the production of *Love Letters*? The stage extensions had been removed and stored in the shed, where they will stay until rehearsals start for next fall's production.

When you support Paradox Players' plays, you are also supporting our church. Look for a report in the next newsletter on the proceeds from *Love Letters*.

Bring a Friend to Sunday Night Live!

Looking for the perfect time to invite a friend to SNL? Well, the 3rd Sunday of each month is designed just for that purpose. Davidson will be preaching, the music will rock, and Movable Feast is always conveniently located at Central Market. Just three easy steps:

1. Bring your friend and introduce them to a few people.
2. Have them fill out a visitor info card in the Visitors Rock! packet.
3. Invite them to Movable Feast.

Can't think of anyone to bring? Invite someone who hasn't come to church in a while. At the very least, be sure to introduce yourself to visitors. Why? 80% of people attending a church for the first time do so because a friend, co-worker, or family member invited them.

Spread the Word Around Austin! Get a T-shirt.

Interested in getting matching t-shirts for your special church group? Sunday Night Live! has taken on the task of coordinating services to help any group in the church who would like to get T-shirts. Each group's shirt will be unique in many ways, but all of the T-shirts will be a similar style and say the same thing on the back. If you are interested in T-shirts for your group or would like to help with this project, contact Chris Heidel at 694-5870 or chris@chrisandtoby.com.

SWUUC Spring Conference

"Deepening Your Faith, Growing Your Soul" will take place April 25 to 27 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. This is a reasonably priced weekend of UU education, with lots of interesting topics. The conference is open to all ages. For more information or to register, see the green fliers on the Church bulletin board, call 918-743-2363, email info@allsoulschurch.org or visit their website at www.allsoulschurch.org.

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Davidson's Lore — continued

control and abortion. As Dan McGuire, the Jesuit scholar who I met at a Planned Parenthood lunch said, he could make the argument using only St. Thomas Aquinas!

The bigger issue for me, I think, is my belief that America's cultural liberals abandoned public arguments for morality and responsibility a generation ago, and this is part of the reason liberalism is nearly dead in American politics and social policies.

It also seems clear to me that it's easy to construct strong moral arguments for the death penalty (if the legal structures that impose it were much more equitable), as I said a while ago here. But so far, though I've been asking friends and contacts for good people in Austin who would be willing to be part of a panel discussion on this, I'm finding no takers. So maybe that's an idea that will have to wait for another time.

In the meantime, I invite you to think about moral arguments for abortion — not individual rights, not women's rights, flat-out moral arguments. I believe we'll all be in a stronger position if we can articulate our position in moral terms.

Oh yes: and if you have some good ideas, will you send them to me before the 27th? Thanks. In the meantime, see you in church!

Davidson

Internal Reflections

Having just returned from my travels to Nicaragua, my mind is fresh with the images and memories of a country in crisis. The picture from the inside is very different from the outside. I am committed to sharing what I have learned with anyone who will listen. I made a commitment when I became involved with the Faithful Fools to dedicate my life to fighting oppression and poverty. That vow took on a whole new meaning for me in Nicaragua where I witnessed poverty at its worst and where I found this quote, "When I bring food to the poor, they call me a saint. But when I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist." Why is this so true? Below are some excerpts from a report on "Inhuman Economics" from the Witness for Peace organization, active in Nicaragua and Central America since 1983.

President George W. Bush announced on January 16, 2002 that the United States will explore a free trade agreement with the countries of Central America (CAFTA). "Our purpose is to strengthen the economic ties we already have with these nations to reinforce their progress toward economic, political, and social reform."

What are the terms of free trade? Free Trade opens up markets by eliminating all taxes and tariffs on products being imported and exported, creating one large economy in which everyone competes. Free trade is part of the neoliberal model that encourages countries to produce for export rather than for their own consumption. Under this model, poor countries like Nicaragua are supposed to use their "comparative advantage" to compete against large economies like Mexico and the U.S. Nicaragua's comparative advantage is a cheap, abundant labor force. In order to exploit this "advantage", Nicaragua must drive down wages to compete with other poor countries that are also trying to attract foreign investment. This is the famous "race to the bottom".

CAFTA means food insecurity. Under free trade Nicaraguan farmers cannot compete with the produce imported from the U.S. where the average farmer receives \$21,000 a year in subsidies from the U.S. government. Many Nicaraguan farmers who have supported their families by growing staple crops to eat and sell, have been forced to sell their land and become more unemployed persons desperately looking for work in the cities or migrating to a wealthy country. Under Free Trade model, Nicaragua's most valuable export is its people. Almost one million Nicaraguans live in the U.S. and Costa Rica to find work and send money back home.

CAFTA means worker exploitation. A woman who sews the back pocket onto blue jeans for a major U.S. retailer, works for \$2.33 a day in a "maquila" (export assembly factory) in Nicaragua's Free Trade Zone, and who in spite of working overtime, still cannot afford to send her two children to school. Free Trade Zones invite foreign "investment" by offering companies a desperate work force, no taxes or tariffs, subsidized electricity and water, and poorly enforced labor and environmental standards.

The IMF requirements have forced the country's budget to eliminate free public education for the children of Nicaragua. The Education Minister of Nicaragua admits 860,000 children are out of school. The causes were said to be lack of school buildings and (money to pay for) teachers, family impoverishment, distance from the nearest school, delinquency, and simply that, "no one learns anything there anyway." While all those reasons are true, the Education Minister left out what may be the most important reason – IMF required user fees disguised as "school autonomy." A requirement for the continuation and expansion of "school autonomy" is

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Vespers Services

with Cathy Harrington

Friday, March 7

7:00 pm

Join us for a simple meal of soup and bread at 6:00 pm in Howson Hall followed by Vespers Services in the Sanctuary at 7:00 pm. The Spiritual Book-of-the-Month Club (details on page 7) meets afterwards at 8:00 pm.

Invitation From the Intern Committee

Your Intern Committee has been meeting regularly with Cathy Harrington and invites your feedback about her time here with us. We prepare evaluations of her ministry at mid-term and again in April.

You may contact Sharon Moore, Chair, Caroline Hadley, Drew Bridges, Mary MacGregor or Clinton Hopper while you are here on Sunday mornings, or you may contact Sharon at 349-2318 or spumonhighhol-low@msn.com. Thank you.

March Tea Time with Cathy Harrington

She's back from Nicaragua! Please stop by for a cup of tea with Cathy Harrington any Tuesday in March from 3:00 to 5:00 pm in Room 9.

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.

Children's Program Committee Meeting

First Tuesday in March and April
March 4 6:30 pm
Room 15
Childcare by reservation only

Youth Program Committee Meeting

Sunday afternoon
March 30 1pm
Room 9

YRUU

Youth Group for 14-19 year olds
Meets most Sundays at
6:30pm, Room 11

Looking Ahead



Feb 28-Mar 1 - YRUU Rally
March 1 - CROP Walk
March 4 - CPC Mtg
March 6 - Adult RE Mtg
March 9 - RE-Create Day
March 21 - Family Fun Night
March 30 - Youth & Young Adult Sunday
April 4-5 - Middle School Rally
April 18 - Seder Dinner (note new date)
April 20 - Easter Celebration
July 12 - CPC Retreat
May 3 - Curriculum Planning
May 18 - All-Church Picnic
Aug 4-8 - Camp UU&Me
Aug 16 - Teacher Training

Bon voyage!!

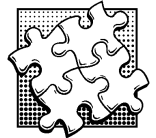
Our DRE will be away for two work-related trips and a vacation in March. Lara Douglass or Phyllis Barron will take your calls during Andrea's absences.

"Camp UU&Me" Summer Plans

As you make plans for your summer, remember that Camp UU and Me will be held **August 4-8, 2003**, for children entering 1st through 6th grades. Registration will take place in the spring. If you have any questions or suggestions, or if you would like to help with the camp, please contact Nahdiah Hoang at nahdiah@hotmail.com or 458-3680.

Family Fun Night March 21, 6-9pm

Join us for a night of fun and activities! Bring your favorite potluck dish to share! We'll play some games and watch a movie. We'll start with dinner in Room 13. RSVP to Phyllis Barron (see below)



Playground and RE Workday March 22

Things are really changing around here - new equipment, new playground monitoring between the morning services, new energy!! Come out on Saturday March 22 for a couple of hours or all day - tackle jobs big and small, inside and outside! Call Phyllis Barron PhyllisBarron@austin.rr.com 301-9045

Playground Policies - A Work in Progress

Monitored playground time is available ONLY from 10:30 to 11:15. Our first consideration is always safety. So that we can safely track who is in our care, the CPC committee has developed the following policy - your input is invited as we learn by doing - and we thank you for your cooperation

PLEASE SIGN IN your preschool-elementary children to the fenced play area on the west side of the RE wing. We will keep an eye on them until you return to sign them out at 11:15. They must remain in this closed area.

CHILDREN AGE 6 and over are welcome on the unfenced play area. While a monitor will be stationed in this area to address behavior issues and accidents, there is no practical way to track children coming and going. When you, as a parent or guardian, are comfortable with your older child moving about our campus on their own and confident of their abilities on the more challenging equipment, you may give your child permission to be on this play area. Until that time, we advise you to either stay with them on the unfenced play area or sign them into the fenced area. **VOLUNTEERS are needed - please contact Leslie Currens, 338-1067, lcurrens@yahoo.com**

Middle School Meeting March 2

As we move forward to our MS Cluster Conference on April 4-5, we will have several meetings. Parents and students are asked to stay after church on March 2 - lunch will be provided by the "food team" for the Conference - as practice. Other teams will present an update of their program planning.

Child Caregiver Positions

\$8/hour, 2-8 Hours per week, including most Sundays

Responsibilities: Care for infants and toddlers during Sunday morning or afternoon programming and for other events as scheduled: organize room and activities for safety and age-appropriateness, greet families, keep attendance, follow safety procedures, restore room to order, attend training.

Desired skills: Proficiency in caring for infants and young children, knowledge of safety guidelines, good people skills.

Please contact Jessica Porter - Jessica@austinuu.org

Winter Adult RE

SIGN UP FOR CLASSES in the gallery after service!!

Yoga

Mondays, 7pm, March 3-31, Room 15 Dan Brown is the instructor for this new yoga series on five Monday evenings.

Evensong I

Wednesdays, 7-9pm, April 2 - May 21, Room 11, Greg Thompson and Brian Moore, co-facilitators. We will share what we value most, our ideas of God or ultimate concern, our religious and spiritual experiences. Expect a structured worship service: a time to be quiet, listen to others and share.

Labyrinth Walks

March 9 and March 15-16. Nancy Bandiera and Linda Webster, co-facilitators, will lead us in a walking meditations on a portable canvas labyrinth. See the insert for detailed info.

Welcoming Diversity as a Spiritual Practice

Wednesdays, 7-9:30pm March 19 - April 9, Room 11 first night, then room 13

Carrie Stewart and Barbara Coeyman will facilitate this three-session program based on the National Coalition Building Institute's Welcoming Diversity model, which engages us by asking us to tell our own stories. The leaders will frame the course in the context of UU spirituality. As a religion of "deeds, not creeds," we are compelled toward social justice, including racial justice, embracing multiculturalism and ending oppression. cls2001@swbell.net 257-9317.

God and Reason

The Traditional Rational Proofs of Divine Existence

Two Wednesdays, 7-9:30pm, March 20-27, Room 15 In this course, Matthew Daude, PhD, Department Chair of Religion and Philosophy at ACC, will lead us in an examination of the traditional rational strategies for proving the existence of God as articulated by Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, William Paley, and others, and we will see how these arguments are deployed today. We will also explore the major objections to these arguments, which will lead us to consider whether these "proofs" make much progress in a rational approach to the Divine. \$5 per person to cover reading packet.

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.

Tai Chi

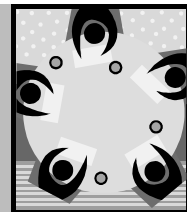
Sundays and Thursdays, 7pm in Howson Hall

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, March 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

CONTINUING...

Spiritual Book Club

First Fridays, after Vespers, 8pm, Room 9 The Gospel According to Jesus, by Stephen Mitchell. Leader, Cathy Harrington.

Crying

Sunday mornings, ending March 9, 10:35-11:25am, Room 11 Book discussion of *The Natural and Cultural History of Tears* by Tom Lutz. Barb Denny, facilitator.

Reading the Bible

Again for the First Time
Sundays until March 31, 3:30pm, Room 13. Join David Smith for discussion of, *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time : Taking the Bible Seriously But Not Literally.*

COMING IN APRIL...

Science and Religion

Thursdays 7pm, April 3-24, Sanctuary with Davidson Loehr Since most educated people today put their real faith in the sciences -- and since scientists have generated about as much bad mythology as modern theologians have -- we need to understand what kinds of things each field can legitimately claim, and how to dismantle illegitimate arguments from either camp.

Three Acres is the Place to be...

Mark your calendar for a **GROUND'S WORKDAY on Saturday, March 1 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm.** Rain date the following Saturday, March 8 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Hope you can join us to beautify our three acres. Many hands make lighter work.

The Grounds Committee thanks the CAMP FIRE GROUP for their generous donation of a nice yaupon holly tree which they planted on one of the parking lot peninsulas on the east property line. Thanks, young people. We will enjoy watching your tree grow up as we watch you grow up! They will also be doing some other service projects for the church in the future weeks.

If your COVENANT GROUP would like a SERVICE PROJECT we can certainly steer you to a one-time-job on the grounds.

A huge thank you to the nice folks who came out in Jan/Feb. to help beautify things: Drew Bridges, Tom Higgins, Elizabeth Grey, Carolyn Greminger, Rose Ann Reeser, Christy Seals, Christie Drescher, and our amazingly dedicated Pat and Dale Bulla. We're almost finished re-doing the mailbox area. Check it out.

Thanks to Ed Travis, sprinkler guy extraordinaire, who installed a sensor on our sprinkler system, so we don't water the grounds if we've had rain.

Thanks to Eugene Balaguer and Elizabeth Gray for putting wooden barrier railings outside the south west RE door. Hopefully we will have less foot traffic through the new plants in the All Ages Playground now. (Hint hint!)

Questions or comments on the church grounds contact Barbara Denny. See you on the grounds!

Campout & Sing-along at UbarU March 21 to 23

Visit the new Central Texas UU retreat center with fellow UU's from Texas congregations. Healthy food, inside accommodations available. Hear the story of UbarU and plans for improvements to the over-grazed land and facilities. Activities for all ages: nature walk, stewardship projects, children's songfest, inside guided sing-along, outside campfire and musical jam.

- Many tent sites under oaks with soft soil
- 12 bunk beds (\$15/ night) - must be reserved early
- Tent sites and inside space on the floor (\$5/ night) - reservation
- Healthy food with a vegetarian option (\$2.50/meal) - reservation
- Yoga Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning

Directions : From Kerrville go 15.7 miles West on I-10 to exit 492, right onto RR 479, immediately turn right onto Thrill Hill Road and go 2.6 miles to the end of pavement. Go straight through gate, turn left and follow road through the solar powered gate.

Please bring: Coffee cups, lawn chairs, flashlights, musical instruments.

Information & reservations: Contact Vince Harrison at 512-385-8862 or at vharrison1@grandecom.net.

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Internal Reflections — *continued*

included in the structural adjustment agreement the IMF recently negotiated with Nicaragua. Under "school autonomy" parents must pay part of the teacher's salary, pay for cleaning and maintenance of the school, pay for report cards and tests, etc. Many families cannot afford to send even one of their children to school due to these IMF-required fees.

This may seem like "fair trade" to some, but I can tell you that what this does to the lives of the people of Nicaragua isn't even close to fair. We consumers have the power to force companies to pay living wages. We would have to be willing to pay more for our clothes, and maybe we would have to do with less. We don't have to continue to participate in this injustice. WE HAVE A CHOICE! Demand fair trade goods. Find fair trade markets near you at www.ifat.org. Consume responsibly. Check out www.witnessforpeace.org, The Alliance for Responsible Trade at www.art-us.org and globalactionnetwork.org. Call your member of Congress and urge them to vote against CAFTA.

I was horrified to learn that the jeans that I have been buying from Target for \$21.99 are made in Nicaragua by the women working in the sweatshops. The women get paid less than two cents for each pair. The CEO of Target makes 3.2 million a year. If this is fair, I can't see it. If this benefits the economy of Nicaragua or its people, I didn't see any signs of it. A minority of the people have jobs. That's at least something. I'm open to being educated. But right now, fresh from these powerful experiences, I'm feeling other things: like hurt, confusion, anger, guilt, and frustration. Would I, could I, pay twice as much for my jeans in order to give the worker a living wage? After visiting Nicaragua and witnessing the inequity of this process firsthand, I would have to say, "yes." I am willing to pay more and have less. I pledge to practice conscious consumerism in every way possible, and I'm going to write to Target, J.C. Penney, The Gap, Wal-Mart, etc. and tell them I am no longer going to buy their merchandise until we can find a way to make Free Trade FAIR. The power lies in our consumer habits. If enough people speak out, they will listen. Surely, they will listen.

Cathy Harrington

Wendy Kuo Benefit Piano Recital

Wendy Kuo will perform a piano recital on Saturday, March 8 at 7:30 pm. Suggested donation is \$10. Proceeds will go to benefit the music program at the church. The recital will include works by McDowell, Haydn, Kabelevsky and Faure. She will be joined by Rebecca Maze in the performance of Faure's piano duet, "The Dolly Suite."

March Sharing Suppers

A special invitation to newcomers -- come and join other recent and long-term UUs at one of our Sharing Suppers. Participants take turns as guests and hosts at these adult potlucks, which add delightful evenings to our calendars on the third Saturday of every month. Usually we have 3-5 events scheduled. Dinners are sit-down or buffet, for approximately 6-12. This month they will be held Saturday, March 15. Sign up now on the list next to Davidson's office, or contact coordinator Barbara Tuttle, 794-2972 (hrtytutl@onr.com). Your host will call you early in the week of the supper. To present participants: if you haven't hosted yet, this is a great time to start! Or share your hosting talents at someone else's home, as a co-host. Many of us have made our large church feel more comfortable and friendly by participating in these wonderful evenings. We look forward to sharing them with you!

Camp Fire Activities

Hold the dates for several fun summer activities for kids ages 6-16. Camp Fire has a very pretty 400-acre resident camp on the Middle Bosque river near McGregor, Texas (Waco area). Kids who want to attend with their Austin friends should sign up for the third session, July 6-12. The price is a bargain--less than \$300 for the week--and the campers have a blast. Our local Camp Fire council also offers a week of day camp, June 9-13. This is a volunteer-led week of field trips all over the Central Texas region. Older kids will backpack in the Pecos Natural Wilderness Area, New Mexico the week of July 20-26. These dates do not conflict with FUUCA's Camp UU, so your family can attend all of it! Need-based scholarships available. You do not have to be a member of a Camp Fire club to participate in Camp Fire camps. For more info ask one of the leaders (Robert Norris, Elizabeth Gray, Mina Loomis) or see www.main.org/campfire.

March End-of-the-Month Party

Date and time: Saturday, March 29, at 8:00 pm

Hosts: Doris and Henry Hug, 8303 Summerwood Drive, 78759

For: Everyone, intergenerational UU's and friends

Why come? Meet old friends, make new ones in an informal atmosphere

Bring: A snack to share and your drink

Directions: From Mopac, take the Steck exit and go west four blocks, turn right (your only option) on Summerwood. For more info call 794-9282.

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 tableware and turn your porch light on. To offer your house, home or hotel, call Kelly Teese (927-2292) or Jean Wyllys (926-6353).

Senior Luncheon

UU Senior Luncheon group meets at 12:00 noon Tuesday, March 11 in Howson Hall. Panel discussion. \$3.00 donation.

Call church by noon Monday, March 10 to reserve. Reservations help food planners, but if you forget come anyway.

Heritage Club

Heritage Club, our lively book discussion group, will meet at 8:00 pm on Friday, March 14 at the home of Sheila Gladstone and Stephan Windsor, 4101 Northhills Drive, Tel 231-1007.

We'll discuss THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF KAVALIER AND CLAY by Michael Chabon. Bring a snack and drink to share and join us!

For those who read ahead, our April selection is FARENHEIGHT 451, by Ray Bradbury.

International Folk Dancing

Starting in March, on the first Monday of the month Jo Soto and Bruce Bostwick will facilitate a program in International Folk Dancing. The program will feature dances from many countries, with the focus on dance as village ritual.

Dance has been a part of village life and the passing of the seasons for thousands of years. Modern choreographers have built on these age-old rituals and added modern innovations resulting in a blend of harmony and history that is rooted in the ancient dances.

The time is 7 to 9 pm. The cost is \$2. The place is Howson Hall. You do not need dance experience or a partner to come; teaching will be provided! For information contact Jo at jo.soto@mail.utexas.edu or 836-7974.

Pathfinder Covenant Group

The Pathfinder Covenant Group is a "landing pad" group, serving as an entry point into the church for visitors and newer members who would like to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and meet other new UU's. We also welcome veteran church members who want to help integrate new members into the church, or for those who wish to experience the covenant group meeting format.

This open group will meet on Sunday mornings from 10:30 am to 11:30 a.m. in Room 9. Katie Winter and Mickey Moore will be co-facilitating the group. You may contact Katie at 450-1950 or by email at kwinter@austin.rr.com. You may also contact Mickey at mgmoore@mail.utexas.edu or 779-7234, or visit our website at 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.

Are you a VOYAGer?

VOYAGers is a community of members and friends of FUUCA born in the 60's and 70's. OUR MISSION: We come together in loving companionship to celebrate life, encourage spiritual growth and share our gifts with others.

Subscribe to our list-serve newsgroup by sending an email to voyagers-announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com, or for more information email the Quorum (VOYAGers leadership) at voyagers@austinuu.org, call Kristen at 451-5370 or meet Carolyn in the Gallery after the 11:30 service.

The President's Corner

There is apparently no time for winter hibernation at First UU Church. Much is going on, some of which I will include in this column. The board recently hosted a fundraising reception in conjunction with the opening night of "Love Letters" and netted about \$3,000 for the operating budget. Thanks to all who donated food and auction items and, of course, to those who attended and had a great time while benefiting the church. Another entertaining fundraising event recently held was a piano concert by the talented Tim Woolsey who donated his performance to support our church's music program.

You'll be hearing more about an upcoming opportunity to participate in the crafting of our new mission and vision statement. "We've already done that," you might say, and you would be correct. However, much has changed since we last created a mission statement about 8 years ago—we are a much different congregation with many new faces and voices. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, March 29, and make sure your voice is one that is heard.

I'm providing a brief summary of our most recent board meeting. As always, you are invited to attend our meetings, which are held at 6:30 pm. on the third Tuesday of each month.

--The 4 Austin UU congregations are planning a networking meeting on Saturday, May 31, 11 am to 2 pm for chairs of core committees from each congregation.

--Determined disposition of recent bequests with \$51,177 going to Memorial/Endowment Fund and \$7,599 going to the long-range fund in partial retirement of our intra-fund loan.

--Adopted new policy, "Caring Fund," to provide funds through Christmas Eve donations for the minister to use for church members in need.

--Began discussion of new "Minister's Discretionary Fund" to provide the minister with funds for church programming expenses not anticipated in the budget.

--Appointed task force to research and recommend process for handling political resolutions from the congregation. PLEASE CONTACT ME IF INTERESTED.

--Approved hiring of UUA consultant to facilitate mission/vision weekend.

--Appointed board members to work with Management Team to determine the church's response to the war in Iraq if this occurs.

Three board meetings to go until my term as president ends—but, who's counting?

Donna Howard
President, Board of Trustees

Calling All Affiliated Organizations!

In the course of updating the church's Policies and Procedures manual, it has become clear that the list of church Affiliated Organizations (AOs) is woefully out of date. If you represent an AO or a group that you think should be an AO, please contact Bill Forbes (forbes@worldpost.com or 420-0707). Let us know who you are and the status of your group. Bill will be glad to answer any questions you may have - like, "What does it mean to be an AO, anyway?" The Board will approve an updated list of AOs at its March 18th meeting.

Events at a Glance

Sun	YRUU RALLY CONTINUES	Sun	9:30 AM	Sunday Service
Mar 2	9:30 AM Sunday Service	Mar 9	10:30 AM	Parents Group
	10:30 AM Pathfinder Covenant Group		10:30 AM	Pathfinder Covenant Group
	10:35 AM Book Discussion: Tears/Crying		10:35 AM	Book Discussion: Tears/Crying
	11:30 AM Sunday Service		11:30 AM	Sunday Service
	11:30 AM Public Affairs Forum		11:30 AM	Public Affairs Forum
	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!		5:20 PM	Sunday Night Live!
	5:30 PM Camp Fire		5:30 PM	Camp Fire
	6:30 PM YRUU		6:30 PM	YRUU
	7:00 PM Tai Chi		7:00 PM	Tai Chi
Mon	7:00 PM Yoga with Dan Brown	Mon	7:00 PM	Yoga with Dan Brown
Mar 3	7:00 PM Open Covenant Group 1	Mar 10	7:00 PM	International Folk Dancing
	7:00 PM International Folk Dancing			
Tue	9:30 AM Deadline for 3/9 Order of Service	Tue	9:30 AM	Deadline for 3/16 Order of Service
Mar 4	3:00 PM Tea Time with Cathy Harrington	Mar 11	10:30 AM	Chat and Craft
	6:00 PM Executive Committee		12:00 PM	Senior Luncheon
	6:30 PM RE/CPC Committee Meeting		3:00 PM	Tea Time with Cathy Harrington
	7:30 PM Women's Spirituality		7:30 PM	Women's Spirituality
Wed	9:15 AM Listening Ministry	Wed	7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal w/ Childcare
Mar 5	7:00 PM Worship Services Committee	Mar 12	7:30 PM	Young Adult Religious Network
	7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal w/ Childcare			
	7:30 PM Young Adult Religious Network			
Thu	9:30 AM Newsletter Mailing	Thu	6:30 PM	Membership Committee
Mar 6	7:00 PM Special Choir Rehearsal w/ Childcare	Mar 13	7:00 PM	Intern Supervision Committee
	7:00 PM Tai Chi		7:00 PM	Tai Chi
Fri	6:00 PM Soup Meal before Vespers	Fri	8:00 PM	Heritage Club
Mar 7	7:00 PM Vespers	Mar 14		
	7:00 PM Gallery Art Opening Reception			
	8:00 PM Spiritual Book-of-the-Month Club			
Sat	8:00 AM Men's Breakfast	Sat	MARCH SHARING SUPPERS	
Mar 8	10:00 AM Special Choir Rehearsal w/ Childcare	Mar 15	10:30 AM	Women's Spirituality
	10:30 AM Women's Spirituality		5:00 PM	Family Labyrinth Walk with Children
	7:30 PM Wendy Kuo Benefit Piano Recital		7:00 PM	Brief Orientation to Labyrinth
			7:30 PM	Candlelight Labyrinth Walk/Teens, Adults

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).

March 2 Marimont Cafeteria 623 West 38th St.

March 9 Star of India 2900 Anderson Lane, # 12

...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

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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 on TV in room 21, or leave their children with our childcare staff in room 19.

Public Forum "Live" Sundays - Howson Hall at First UU Church of Austin

- Apocalyptic Thinking: 2003** **March 2, 11:30 am**
Dr. Michael White
 Dr. White is Professor of Classics and Director of the Religious Studies Program at the University of Texas in Austin. He has worked on archeological excavations in Israel and has done extensive work in Italy, Greece, and Turkey. He has held research appointments at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, the American Academy at Rome, and at Yale University.
- How U.S. Journalism Works (or Doesn't)** **March 9, 11:30 am**
Dr. Robert Jensen, Associate Professor - UT School of Journalism
 Dr. Jensen will use the current coverage of the Iraq crisis to illustrate some of the problems inherent in contemporary mainstream commercial journalism. He will discuss what citizens should expect from mass media and strategies for media activism.

Public Forum on Cable Access Channel 10 Sundays at 6 PM

March 2	Ashton Cumberbatch	Brick by Brick
March 9	Jim Harrington	Threats to Civil Liberties