

February

The **VISION** of First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin: As an inclusive religious and spiritual community, we support each individual's search for meaning and purpose, and join together to help create a world filled with



Coming Soon!!!...to a website near you!!!



...all you ever wanted to know about the **Southwestern UU District Spring Conference, April 25-27, hosted by our church.** Dr. Loehr has chosen the theme: What the World Needs from Religious Liberals.

All the details will be on our website (www.AustinUU.org) this month. Check it out and register early (conference fees go up for late registration).

The First UU Spring Conference Planning Committee has arranged for lots of social time, worship services, lunch and dinner meals, theme speakers, workshops, entertainment, book signings and sales, a special youth program at U-Bar-U, early bird activities on Saturday morning, childcare -- something for everybody.

First Unitarian
Universalist Church
of Austin

Heatsheet Deliveries by Adventurous UUs!

The emergency Heatsheets were distributed on January 16th, in anticipation of freezing weather overnight and the rest of this week. When the project was formalized, we set our goal. We wanted to reach the homeless in remote areas of Austin, those who would not come in for assistance and those who could not find space in full shelters.

Phillip Hemphill has worked with Mobile Loaves and Fishes for the past several years. He has also assisted with Freeze Nights at our church. Several times in January, Phillip drove to some of the sites where the homeless were reported to be. He then planned the trip and drew maps to our designations. We met at church and discussed the plan. Then we were ready for the excursion. Kitty Traylor stopped by with 20 sweatshirts and Roseanne Graham brought several coats for us to distribute. For the Heatsheets to work, the wearer needs to wrap the sheet over a coat or other clothing. Russell Eskew came along so we had the second man with us. Ruth Marie joined Roseanne Graham and Mary Ann Stafford as the women who would approach the female homeless. Sometimes, the homeless women are leery of men because of the abuse they typically suffer while they live on the streets.

Phillip drove us to several sites around town. One stop was decided against because Phillip estimated that there might be 30 to 40 homeless people living in that area in the woods. We did not want to be mobbed especially since we only had 30 Heatsheets. At one stop, at an overpass on 183, Russell braved three lanes of traffic and sprinted over to deliver a Heatsheet to a man panhandling along the thoroughfare. We were planning to wait in Phil's truck at a red light for Russell to return. Alas, the light turned green and we were forced to make a turn around in the heavy traffic to pick up Russell. On another stop, Russell, Phillip and Mary Ann threaded themselves across the access road on I-35 to deliver the sheets to two men and one woman who were washing windshields for a fee. We gave them each a Heatsheet and gave the woman a coat that fit her nicely. She taught us the easiest way to cross the busy streets at that corner. On our last stop, we went to the area around the main library. We distributed the rest of the Heatsheets except for four. We gave away most of the sweatshirts and another coat. There were two men who were foraging in the trash for food. Mobile Loaves and Fishes had been in the area at 5:00 PM and the two men had not come into the area until 6:00 PM. We did not have either food or money with us and weren't able to help the men.

It was a mixed experience. The times were ugly in seeing the way of life of these people; they were beautiful when hearing the appreciation spoken and in seeing them hold up sweatshirts to their bodies, realizing that they would fit. The five of us returned to the church feeling a little overwhelmed by the number of people we couldn't help. We felt hungry and knew that we would eat while realizing that some we left behind on the street would not.



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No. 2

Davidson's Lane —

I want to mention some of the costs of losing a full-time staff person for six months (our intern), by sharing some of the ways in which I've used our interns.

When I came here in 2000, church members were responsible for, and were arranging, 18 Sundays a year – I was contracted to be responsible for 34 Sundays, four of which are guest ministers I arrange. This meant about 18 lay-led services each year – about one a month, September – June, and 8 more in the summer. Attendance was lower, sometimes much lower, during these services – and so was the money in the collection plate.

I decided to begin using interns as transitions toward hiring a second minister, by assigning them duties for worship services, which I felt was not appropriate for a church this size to keep pushing off on volunteers. This has also given interns quite a rich experience, with real-world responsibilities. I have had the interns preach at least ten Sundays a year, and arrange the approximately eight summer services, adding some "quality control." This meant that I told the interns some of the standards I wanted us to maintain as much as we could, and had them try to screen and work with applicants for summer services. To some extent, we can't really do this, because unless we keep the intern for twelve months rather than ten, we have too many extra services to fill, and can't be all that picky. Our first intern did stay for 12 months, and preached all but about two of the summer services. Our second intern stayed eleven months, our third stayed ten. When we can hire a second minister, the ministers can assume meaningful responsibility for all 52 Sundays, but we're not there yet – we're the largest church in the UUA with only one minister.

What this reflects is the fact that as our size increases, people simply expect a good quality service on Sunday, no matter who is in the pulpit. Also during the past seven years, we've gone from 12 Split-the-Plate Sundays to 24. Now we split all the non-pledge money, 24 weeks a year, with two dozen non-profit organizations whose values and actions we are proud to support. The more lay services (or poorly-done services by interns) we have, the more the attendance falls, collections fall, affecting both our church's budget and the amount of money our 24 non-profit friends will receive from us. The better we get, the more other people and organizations we want to help – and the more people there are who are impacted by our problems.

As this newsletter goes to print, I'm recommending to the board that they make available most of the unspent money already budgeted for the intern, February through June, so I can try to hire ministers for most of the 13 Sundays yet to be filled. I can try to bring in other ministers, both UU and from other religions, asking them what they would like to say to an audience of Unitarians who wouldn't understand their religious jargon. This could be quite an interesting series of guest speakers! We also need to hire extra office hours to handle some of the other scheduling things for which I've been using interns (partly because I am scheduling-impaired; I've had to hire a bookkeeping firm to pay my bills and balance my checkbook – whatever that means). The unspent money can be put back into the general fund by September 1. This will involve a lot of extra time for me, which I'll have to take out of sermon preparation time. (Some people wonder how much time it takes to prepare a sermon. I've found the same formula that I've always heard from good preachers: about one hour per minute. I spent an average of 25-30 hours a week on the sermon.) So for some of these Sundays, I'd be using old sermons (which most people here have never heard). I suspect the board will either approve this, or come up with an even better way to meet the needs of a large church with high expectations and about a \$700,000 budget.

Actually, this whole experience has been very good, in a real-world kind of way, and will help us improve in ways we hadn't even imagined before. That's all good stuff! See you in church!

Davidson

Sharing Suppers February 16th

Next Sharing Suppers February 16

Come meet other UUs!

Casual atmosphere in host homes. **6-10 guests each location**

Guests contribute to the meal

Sign up by the Sunday before, Feb. 10th! Signup sheet outside Davidson's Office

Call Sheri Overton, 512 847 2685 or sherioverton@hotmail.com

Join email list sharingsuppers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Join email list: sharingsuppers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com



Sunday Worship Services 9:45 and 11:30

3 February: "The Kingdom of Heaven is Like...."

Davidson Loehr

Some of the finest and most powerful/disturbing parables in history are those attributed to the man Jesus. Almost every one of them is a slap in the face to our customary way of seeing things. When the Jesus Seminar ranked the parables by the likelihood that they were authentic, the one ranked the highest was the parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33b and Luke 13:20-b-21). What can honest religion do with this?

10 February: "Equal Pay for Unequal Work?"

Davidson Loehr

Another parable considered to be close to the authentic voice of Jesus is one of the rudest: the parable of the Vineyard Laborers (Matthew 20:1-15). It's one of my favorites – and I don't think it has a thing to do with economics.

17 February: Speaker and Topic to be announced

24 February: A Theological Argument for Abortion

Davidson Loehr

I've thought for a long time that all the preacher-prattle about abortion as an evil thing rests only on very shallow religious reasoning – and that a deeper theological argument can be made for abortion as something that can be the most moral and decent choice available. To make it more interesting, I'm basing this on an argument from one of the most famous (and very best) Papal Encyclicals in Roman Catholic history: the Rerum Novarum of 1891.

Public Affairs Forum: Sundays: 11:30 am Howson Hall

3 February "Eckhardt: There Once Was a Congressman from Texas" Speaker: **Gary Keith**, Political Science Professor at the University of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio); Previously at UT for five yrs. Gary Keith is a First UU member who has spoken previous Forums about elections and democracy. Dr. Keith recently finished writing a book that is a biography of an important, witty, and eccentric man, Congressman Bob Eckhardt (whose daughter Sarah is a First UU member). Eckhardt grew up in Austin, so there is a lot of Austin history in the book. He then practiced labor law in Houston, fought in the bruising political battles in Texas in the 1950s and 1960s, served in the Texas legislature, and finally went off to Washington, where he was a celebrated Congressman. Eckhardt was also a lifelong political cartoonist. Dr. Keith will speak about the book and the significant contributions that Eckhardt made to public life. Over the years of working on the book, he learned that lots of people have Eckhardt stories. Bring yours!

10 February No Forum Valentine Making Party



17 February "The Paradox of Pornography: A Path for Men to Understanding the Problem of Patriarchy"

Speaker: **Dr. Robert Jensen**, School of Journalism, University of Texas at Austin In U.S. culture, men typically are trained to see feminism as a threat not only to their power and privilege but to their masculinity and sense of self. An expansion of meaningful participation by men in the movement to end violence against women requires a challenge to those fear-based assumptions about feminist analyses of gender and sexuality, and a critical examination of pornography provides such an opportunity. Although pornography use by men is common, men also often feel conflicted about the effects on their emotional lives and relationships. In this program, Robert Jensen will report on 20 years of research on the pornography industry and men's use of pornography. Drawing on hundreds of formal interviews and informal discussions with men, Jensen will explore strategies for reaching men through this issue in ways that can open doors to a larger discussion of sex and violence. The central question to frame the discussion will be: In the past two decades, pornography has become increasingly normalized and mainstream in U.S. culture, while at the same time the content of the material has become more and more overtly cruel and degrading to women. How do we explain this apparent paradox?

24 February "The History of the Save Our Springs Alliance and the Opportunities Going Forward to Save the Edwards Aquifer" Speaker: **Bill Bunch**, Executive Director, Save Our Springs Alliance. Mr. Bunch will discuss the SOS, and its history relating to the Edwards Aquifer, its springs and contributing streams, the natural and cultural heritage of the Hill Country Region, and its future opportunities to save the aquifer. He will also highlight the extraordinary documentary, "The Unforeseen", a film about the development around Barton Springs.

From the Building Committee:

We Have Selected Our Architect!

The Building Committee is pleased to announce the selection of **Hurt Partners Architects** to design Phase I of the Master Plan. We were lucky to have a good group from which to make our selection, and we're excited to have Tom Hurt on board. We expect to begin work in early February. Please keep your eyes and ears open to learn of opportunities to have input into the design. We will begin by reviewing the Master Plan and further defining the program (what exact spaces are needed, the size of the spaces, etc.) but we will move rapidly into design.

As a reminder, the Phase I building will be for religious education and will include at least one multi-use room that will take some of the pressure off of Howson Hall. This space was referred to as a Children's Chapel in the Master Plan but it has always been conceived as a space that serves a host of functions. Once the new building is complete the existing RE wing can be used for additional office space and other uses. If you have questions about this process, please talk to any member of the Building Committee: **Brian Moore, Tom Martin, Christy Seals, Jeff Hutchens and Don Smith**. The expansion and upgrade of the facilities has been a long time coming and is desperately needed. We hope that all members of First UU will get involved and make this dream a reality. No definite plans have been made yet regarding the Capital Campaign that will be required, but you'll be hearing about that in the not-too-distant future as well.

The Three Rs of sustainability:

Reduce, Re-use, Recycle

The beginning—reducing—is sometimes easier than you think. In the 1970s, a survey asked marketing professionals to name the single most successful word ever used in advertising. The overwhelming majority agreed that the word was 'Repeat'. The folks market-

ing shampoo had figured out that people actually pay attention to directions on bottles. By adding the word 'repeat' to their use instructions, they nearly doubled their sales! Of course, no one's hair was any cleaner. We all use products that we don't need, or use more of products than we need. Look for ways to avoid doing that. The other major way to reduce is to select products that have less packaging. Face it; there are only so many plastic containers that one person can re-use and most of them are going to end up in the landfill because they're not a '1' or a '2'. Also look for products that have minimal packaging and when you shop in a department store, ask them to leave out all the tissue paper they like to stuff in bags. No one cares whether your bags have tissue coming out the top (except for the department store marketing folks—it is, after all, their bag that they're decorating.)

Green Sanctuary Committee



Our Intern Challenges Ahead...

The ending of our intern's service at First UU has presented an excellent opportunity for our church community and this program which has brought five ministerial interns since its inception. Our challenge is to learn from this experience and mold this program into one of which we can be proud, one that stands out as enhancing liberal religion. Though we've had successes, we've also experienced problems

First, the pool of candidates has been unacceptably low. Our five interns have been selected from a total of seven candidates; three interns selected were the only applicants. This has occurred despite First UU's offering among the highest pay in the UUA for interns; in some years the top salary. The good news is, a more proactive approach already has attracted six applicants for the internship that starts in the fall. Second, the recent situation exposed possible problems in the procedures, policies and practices regarding our internship. What changes might help achieve success? Third, we receive confusing and sometimes conflicting information about how our program fits into the overall scheme of the UUA.

As Dr. Davidson Loehr will tell you, this program not only is aimed at preparing interns for the ministry, but also acts as a "gatekeeper" to screen out those who either are unsuited or unprepared for ministry in the UUA. That's a big responsibility, for the minister as well as First UU.

Before our next intern enters the door in the fall, we must take an in-depth look at our program — from start to finish, from top to bottom. A task force is being assembled to do just that. They will be looking at ways to attract a larger, more qualified pool of candidates, at the program itself, at our procedures and infrastructure related to the program, at the program's relationship with the UUA, and more. Our ministerial internship can, and should be, a signature program of First UU. With improvements, it can shine like a beacon across the UUA. — **Mark Kilpatrick, President**

Split The Plate



On the first and third Sundays of each month we split our offer-tory plate with a non-profit organization that puts our common social-justice values into action.

On **February 3**: the Ashera Project, a local non-profit fo-cused on youth development and teen pregnancy prevention will be our recipient. Ashera provides comprehensive sexuality edu-cation in order to promote healthy behaviors, and it is ineligible to receive government funding because of this comprehensive approach. Facilitators encourage teens to develop healthy self-esteem, get involved in the community through service projects, and look toward their future by setting future goals. Our 2007 donation has helped implement the fourth year of Ashera pro-grams at Reagan High School.

On **February 17** we share with People's Community Clinic This clinic makes high-quality primary care, counseling, and health education accessible and affordable for individuals and families in Austin. People's Community Clinic is dedicated to meeting the needs of low-income patients. The Clinic promotes community involvement in providing health care and stresses health maintenance and disease prevention in all treatment pro-grams. PCC is the focus of a major, congregation-wide Social Action initiative of First UU; many UUs serve as volunteers.

Social Action Continues with Info Packs

Help us prepare informational packets for patients at PCC on Wednesday, February 13th from 10 am to 12:30. We have done this several times at church, and many of you have participated. Now we have a chance to send a group to PCC –we'd like to spare them the trouble of preparing and delivering materials to us. Their need is tremendous, so if this works out, we'd like to send a group each month. Please contact Sheri Overton (sherioverton@hotmail.com or 512-847-2685).

H Martha, Poe, Dorothy Carter, Dorothy Garmon, Huie
O Lamb, John L Wood, Virginia Kerbow, Louise Ernst,
R James Bowie, Myra McIlvain, Marianne Foley, Jimmy
B Stanley, Catherine Weaver, Kenneth Pfluger, Bill Ed-
U wards, Ann Gardner, Carol Ginn, Lara Douglass, Lynn
S Crismon, Joan Forbes, Kim Osmer, Gwen Sullivan, Evan
E Quenon, Alan Nelson, Julie Kniseley, Kyle Huff, Bryan
R Uecker, Diane Bohman, Kristy Quigley, Tom Gerrow,
N Brian Miller, Carolyn Gremminger, Monica E. Gonzalez,
S Leslie Smart, Katari Grassell, Anne Mason, Christie Dre-
C scher, Janet Kerwick, David Sprengelmeyer, Brent Bald-
H win, Carthy Bouressa, Jonas Miller, Chelsea DeKruyff,
A Marie Catrett, Carlene Townley, Kristy Cunniongham,
S Daniel Forbes, Taylor Ellison, Amy Reed, and Patrick
E McVeety-Mill.

Seniors' Luncheon

Tues. February 12th
Noon in Howson Hall
Soup, Salad &
Dessert
Cost: \$5.00



RSVP: Alice Cashman, 837-0988

Members of **Paradox Players** will entertain with a musical and dramatic program based upon the current production, **The Rain-maker**, to open on February 8. Annalee Langham (you may remember her from BUS STOP) and Robert Kraft, actors from the show, will perform scenes. Mark Skrabacz, Paullette MacDougal and Ed Nichols will sing songs from **110 in the Shade**, the musical version of **The Rainmaker**.



Fifth Annual

Distinguished Speaker Event

Rev.
Meg
Barnhouse



Spartanburg,
South
Carolina

Meg Barnhouse, a graduate of Princeton's Theological Seminary, was ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1981. She also began private counseling and earned a Black Belt in karate. In the 1990's, she became acquainted with Unitarian-Universalism and made a transition from college chaplain to Minister of the Unitarian Church in Spartanburg, South Carolina. She is now completing her 6th year of ministry, and has continued counseling as a pastor. A creative, humorous person, "Meg B" has also been described as "awesome" and "fun". A person of many talents, she is also a singer-songwriter, an author, a columnist, and a commentator on Carolinas' National Public Radio's show "Radio Free Bubba".



Thanks to UUs One and All



Freeze Nite ThankUU



Thank UUs: Usher/Greeter/Lay Leaders

Each of our Freeze Nights has its own dynamics and gives us a new look at the elderly, the infirm and the handicapped. It breaks our hearts to know that these men live on the streets. We have a variety of men who come in. Some are very friendly. Some don't speak and turn away if spoken to. Some are helpful while others steer away from sweeping food particles off the floor or cleaning up. Regardless of their status, we treat each and everyone with respect.

Edward Sledge, Phillip Hemphill, Mary Jane Ford, Bob Porter, John Carey, Camille Hemlock, Rose Ann Reeser, John Payne, Mike Wilkes, Barbara Owens, Dick Fralin, Jesse Fralin, Kitty Traylor, Thomas Bodine, Karen Franks, Renae Pachero, Rick Diker, Julia Gregory, Ruth Marie, Megan Seaholm, Becky Moon, Vince Harrison, Dyanne Cortez, Javier Cortez, Barbara Tuttle, Carrie Evans, Sarah Stevens, Russell Eskew, Sterling Heraty, Robin Fremin, Susy Reid, Roseanne Graham, Bill Freeman, James Freeman, Dave Dunkman, and last but not least, our coordinator, **Mary Ann Stafford.**

Without the camaraderie of our crew, it would be difficult to confront the task at hand. The inclusive spirit of caring, giving and honoring others is an incredible experience that can't be duplicated. Give thanks to these special people and the others who participate in the Freeze Night program.

January 1st was a different night from others as is usual. The gentlemen were hungry when they arrived. They loved the wild pig stew. They said it tasted like the food they grew up with. Next they ate the meat stew and minestrone. They devoured the black eyed pea soup and the turkey pot pie. And (since I made it) they loved the cabbage and ham hocks and ate it all up. Actually they were so hungry we were afraid that we would run out of food. Our mouths watered as we watched them from the kitchen as Karen Franks passed out the brownies. Some got in line twice to savor the precious chocolate. Those of us in the kitchen got crumbs. We scrounged the refrigerators and freezers for cookies and they ate all of them. We made an urn and a half of coffee. They drank three gallons of milk and two containers of half n half. One pound of butter was spread over their cornbread. They finished off one container of margarine.

Applause for our Lay Leaders: **Nell Newton, Sheila Gladstone, and Cindy Raab.** Next, Cheers for the Ushers and Greeters: **Don Smith, Joe Linsalata, Linda Taylor, Doug Ginn, Geri Mosher, Barb Denny, Sandra Ries, Betty Bowie, Jim Bowie, Sharon Finley, Tom Priem, Beth Priem, Kitty Traylor, Luther Elmore, David Leibson, Theron Kook-Kasssens, Juanita Salinas, John Carey, Courtney King, and Joyce Wilson.**



On the first Sunday of each month, four members of FUUCA volunteer to serve dinner to 100 homeless men in the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH). We are pleased to acknowledge our volunteers for JANUARY... **Elaine Carpenter, Steve Davis, Betty and John Wood.** If you would like to volunteer, contact **Mary Ann Copp** (mac624@tstar.net) or **Karen Franks** (kfranks46@yahoo.com).



Serving the Homeless



2008 SWUW Conference in February!

February 8th and 9th: The 2008 SWUW Conference in Little Rock promises to be a fabulous conference. Below are just a few of the conference attractions:

- UU Songwriter Carolyn McDade will be our theme speaker
- Entertainment by performer/songwriter Emily Kaitz, Saturday
- Friday Night Art Walk in Downtown Little Rock
- Tours of the Clinton Library and Heifer International
- Staying at the luxurious Peabody Hotel right on the riverwalk
- Sensational shopping at the Artists' Bazaar
- And, the fabulous company of UU women from across our District!

Early bird registration is over. Registration is online at swuww.com where you will see the complete program brochure and download a mail-in registration form. Hope you will gather together a group from your church and arrange to carpool to Little Rock and join us! Thank you so much for your help!
Laura Nagel, SWUW Administrator, 713.524.5608

Wednesday Connections

Wednesday Connections (formerly known as **Wednesday Night Eat and Meet**) offers dinner at the church every Wednesday as a way to help the church connect with itself. 6 p.m. in Howson Hall. Free childcare starts at 6:30. Dinner is \$5/adult, \$3/child, \$12/family. Sign up to volunteer, and you eat for free!

February 6: Dinner hosted by the FUUCYAA (First UU Church's Young Adults Association) a group that was formed recently for the 20's and 30's folks.

February 13: Selections from the Soup Peddler, plus a cake to celebrate our February Birthdays, hosted by the Fellowship Committee.

February 20: Meat loaf, veggie loaf, and all the fixings hosted by the Membership Committee

February 27: TBD. Would your group like to host a dinner? It doesn't cost you any money.

RSVP/Volunteer/Questions: 538-1249 or Nahdiah@hotmail.com. To join our yahoo group, send an email to 1stuueatmeet-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.



Denominational UUupdates



General Assembly will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, June 25-29. Beginning March 1, register at <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/registrationhousing/index.shtml>. Beyond the South Florida summer humidity, however, there's another hazard this year: Big Brother will be watching. All attendees will be required to show government-issued ID to enter the facility. And word has it that convention center staff are instructed to report Un-American sentiments expressed. For an explanation go to <http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/60906.shtml>. An open letter has been sent to Congregations by top UU officials: access it at <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/updatesannouncements/61436.shtml>. If you **still** want to go, consider going as a delegate, as we are perpetually underrepresented at GA..



February Frolics

A month full of theater treats! Our spring play, *The Rainmaker*, is "an old-fashioned valentine" that you can savor in a variety of ways. The Opening Night Gala is Friday, February 8, followed by Free Childcare at the Sunday, Feb. 10 matinee (advance reservations needed at child-care@austinuu.org). Then a program of *Rainmaker* scenes and related songs will be presented at Senior Lunch on Feb. 12. Attend our Valentine Gala on Feb. 14 and enjoy truffles and champagne at intermission. Volunteers working on any job in this production are welcome to join the Cast Party after the final performance on Feb 24 (contact Kathryn at kbg@io.com or Barbara at blyfordweeks@aol.com to volunteer). Whichever performance you choose to attend, please remember to make a reservation in advance so you will be assured of a seat. You can phone 744-1495 or contact us on the website, paradoxplayers.org.

UU United Nations Office Intergenerational Spring Seminar

UU United Nations Office Intergenerational Spring Seminar, "**Picking Up the Pieces: Building a Culture of Peace**" will take place in New York City from April 3- 5. This is an excellent conference for youth as well as adults. Space for this conference is limited so don't let this opportunity pass you by **intergenerational**. You may register on-line at uu-uno.org or contact Judy Sadegh at 272-4373 for further information.

Orientation Evenings

Orientation with Davidson Loehr, the third Wednesday of the month (Feb. 20th) from 7 to 8:30 pm in Room 13, is open to everyone. The setting is informal - a great place to meet folks who are interested in becoming part of our church. This is a chance to discuss our church, faith journeys, our programs and what being part of this church may entail. Bring your thoughts and questions and be prepared to be fascinated. Have your questions will be addressed.



CHURCH EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Feb 1	Fri	7:00	Brigid's Day, HH	Feb 8	Fri	5:00	High School OWL Lock In, Rm 15
Feb 2	Sat	9:00	New UU Class, Rm 17			8:00	Paradox Players Performance, HH
		9:00	Paradox Players Rehearsal, HH	Feb 9	Sat		High School OWL Lock In, Continued
		10:30	Women's Spirituality, Rm. 13			8:00	Men's Breakfast, G
		10:30	World Peace Meditation, L			10:30	World Peace Meditation, L
Feb 3	Sun	9:30	Book Groups, Rms 13A & 13B			8:00	Paradox Players Performance, HH
		9:30	Philosophical Discussion Group, L	Feb 10	Sun	9:30	Book Groups, Rms 13A & 13B
		9:45	Worship Service, Sanctuary			9:30	Philosophical Discussion Group, L
		11:30	Worship Service, Sanctuary			9:45	Worship Service, Sanctuary
		11:30	Public Affairs Forum, HH			11:30	Worship Service, Sanctuary
		1:00	Yew Grove Spiral Scouts, Rms 15 & 17			11:30	Public Affairs Forum, HH
		4:00	Meditation Course, Rm 15			3:00	Paradox Players Performance, HH
		5:30	Voyagers, Rm 13			4:00	Meditation Course, Rm 15
		6:00	YRUU, Rm 11			6:00	YRUU, Rm 11
Feb 4	Mon	6:00	Committed Couples 101, Rm 17	Feb 11	Mon	6:00	Committed Couples 101, Rm 17
		6:30	Sack Lunch Program, K			6:30	Sack Lunch Program, K
		6:30	Campfire Little Stars, Rm 23			6:30	Campfire Little Stars, Rm 23
		7:00	Green Sanctuary Committee, Rm 11			7:00	Village Int'l Country Dancing, Rm 15
		7:00	Village Int'l Country Dancing, Rm 15			7:30	PP Readers Theater, Rm 13
		7:00	Paradox Players Rehearsal, HH	Feb 12	Tue	12:00	Senior Luncheon, HH
Feb 5	Tue	7:00	Campfire, Rm 11			7:00	Campfire, Rm 11
		7:00	Great Decisions, Rm 17			7:00	Evensong, Rm 13
		7:00	Paradox Players Rehearsal, Rm 17			7:00	Great Decisions, Rm 17
		7:00	Yew Grove Pagan Interfaith Mtg, Rm 13			7:30	Executive Committee Meeting, M
Feb 6	Wed	12:00	Spiritual/Philosophical Discussion, 13	Feb 13	Wed	12:00	Spiritual/Philosophical Discussion, 13
		6:00	Eat 'n Meet, HH			6:00	Eat 'n Meet, HH
		7:00	CPC Meeting, Rm 9			7:00	Building Committee Meeting, G
		7:00	Fuucyaa Meeting, Rm 13			7:00	Tai Chi, Rm 15
		7:00	Tai Chi, Rm 17	Feb 14	Thu	5:30	Yoga, Rm 15
		7:30	Choir Rehearsal, S			7:00	Adult RE Meeting, Rm 9
		7:30	Paradox Players Rehearsal, HH			7:30	Scandinavian Dancing, Rm 15
Feb 7	Thu	5:30	Yoga, Rm 15			8:00	Paradox Players Performance, HH
		7:30	Scandinavian Dancing, Rm 15				
		8:00	Paradox Players Benefit, HH				

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION February 2008

ART STUDIO: Tuesdays from 10 to 2:30 pm in Rm 13. Judith Gostisha judithgostisha@yahoo.com

TAI CHI Jim Williams. Meets every Wednesday at 7 pm in Rm 15. First session is free, then \$10/session

HATHA YOGA Becky Ballou bballou@hotmail.com Meets Thursdays 5:30 pm Howson Hall. \$10 per session.

FOLK DANCING: 3 different programs. Newcomers welcome. In Howson Hall. Request a donation.

English Country Dancing Ann McCracken (H) 266-9949 ann@mccr.org Second Friday at 7:30 pm \$6.

Scandinavian Dance Stephanie Files (H) 454-0598 jfiles@ix.netcom.com Thursday 7:30 pm Howson Hall \$3

International Village Dance Jo Soto 836-7974 every first, third and fifth Monday at 7:30 pm. Howson Hall \$2

World Peace Meditation with Swami Jee @459-5261 Saturdays 10:30 am – 12:30 pm in the Library. \$1.00.

Committed Couples 101: Remaining classes 2/4 & 2/11. Meet in Room 17 at 6pm

CHURCH EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Feb 15	Fri	8:00	Paradox Players Performance, HH	Feb 23	Sat	10:30	World Peace Meditation, L
Feb 16	Sat	10:30	Women's Spirituality, Rm 13	Feb 24	Sun	9:30	Book Groups, Rms 13A & 13 B
		10:30	World Peace Meditation, L			9:30	Philosophical Discussion Group, L
		8:00	Paradox Players Performance, HH			9:45	Worship Service, Sanctuary
Feb 17	Sun	9:30	Book Groups, Rms 13A & 13 B			11:30	Worship Service, Sanctuary
		9:30	Philosophical Discussion Group, L			11:30	Public Affairs Forum, HH
		9:45	Worship Service, Sanctuary			1:00	Yew Grove Spiral Scouts, Rms 15 & 17
		11:30	Worship Service, Sanctuary			4:00	Meditation Course, Rm 15
		11:30	Public Affairs Forum, HH			6:00	YRUU, Rm 11
		1:00	Yew Grove Spiral Scouts, Rms 15 & 17	Feb 25	Mon	6:30	Sack Lunch Program, K
		1:00	Social Action Committee, Rm 13			6:30	Campfire Little Stars
		3:00	Paradox Players Performance, HH			7:00	Finance Committee, Rm 13
		4:00	Meditation Course, Rm 15			7:00	Village Int'l Country Dancing, HH
		6:00	YRUU, Rm 11	Feb 26	Tue	7:00	Campfire, Rm 11
Feb 18	Mon	6:30	Sack Lunch Program, K			7:00	Evensong, Rm 13
		6:30	Campfire Little Stars, Rm 23			7:00	Great Decisions, Rm 17
		7:00	Village Int'l Country Dancing, HH	Feb 27	Wed	12:00	Spiritual Exploration & Philosophical, 13
Feb 19	Tue	6:30	Board Meeting, G			6:00	Eat 'n Meet, HH
		7:00	Campfire, Rm 13			7:00	Building Committee Meeting, G
		7:00	Evensong, Rm 11			7:00	Tai Chi, Rm 15
		7:00	Great Decisions, Rm 17			7:30	Choir Practice, S
Feb 20	Wed	12:00	Spiritual Exploration & Philosophical, 13	Feb 28	Thu	6:30	Committee on Ministries, Rm 13
		6:00	Eat 'n Meet, HH			7:30	Scandinavian Dancing, HH
		7:00	Facilities Committee Meeting, Office				
		7:00	Tai Chi, Rm 15				
		7:30	Choir Practice, S				
Feb 21	Thu	5:30	Yoga, HH				
		6:30	Full Moon Ritual, Rm 17				
		7:00	Fuucayaa Meeting, Rm 13				
		7:30	Scandinavian Dancing, HH				



Spiritual Exploration and Philosophical Marcus Barnes aerodyne@prodigy.net (H) 338-1816.9:30 am in Library every Sunday.

Meditation Choices from Diverse Traditions: Learn about Meditation and its many cultural origins, from known guides with long and authentic experience.

Fifth Annual Distinguished Speaker May 2-4, 2008 May 2-4, 2008. Rev. Meg Barnhouse of Spartanburg, South Carolina. A weekend of creativity and spirituality with a Carolina NPR Commentator (Radio Free Bubba), musician, Unitarian humorist and Black Belt.

Membership Matters

623 Members

10 Youth Members

282 Associate Members

Reflections of the Director of Religious Education

February in RE is a very busy creative time. Surprise Pals will begin on February 27. There will be a sign up table in the gallery and the application form is printed in this newsletter. Participants can apply by email or sign up at church. For those of you unfamiliar with this intergenerational activity, please see the information in this newsletter.

RE is also hosting our annual "Make Your Own Valentine Party" in Howson Hall on Feb. 10. We need volunteers to help the kids and the congregants in making their valentines, so if you can help, please contact me. Also, please remember to bring a desert to share for the Valentine Making Party.

Field-testing of the new UUA children's curricula started on January 13. So far, it seems the kids seem very enthusiastic about the curriculum. Our Spring 2008 Children's RE flyer is available outside the classrooms and at the visitors' table each Sunday. There is a comprehensive description of each curriculum in the flyer.

See you in church, *Lara Douglass*

Surprise Pals will run from February 24 to April 6.

Each adult applicant is matched with a child applicant, and they correspond for six weeks through our own Surprise Pal Mailbox System, located in Howson Hall. Small gifts are allowed, but only under \$1 (stickers, candy, etc).

Pals meet each other at the Surprise Pals Party on April 6. Child pals from 1st-5th grade are invited to participate. Parent/guardians must sign the application on behalf of their child and will be informed of the identity of their child's surprise pal in advance. ALL pals must make a firm commitment to correspond weekly – everyone loves to get mail!! Use the application below, email lara@austinuu.org for an application, or pick one up in the Gallery from Jan. 27th to Feb. 17th.

Valentine Making Party! Feb. 10th

Please join the Religious Education Department in a celebration of Valentine's Day between services on Sunday, February 11 in Howson Hall. We will have all the supplies you need to make Valentines for your friends and family.

Please bring a dessert to share for the party. Crafty, artsy folks are needed to volunteer to help the congregation and the kids make their valentines.

Contact Lara Douglass, lara@austinuu.org or call 452-6168, ext. 12 for more information.



Surprise Pals Application!!

I am ___ an adult pal - My Occupation _____

___ a child pal - Grade ___ Age ___

My Name _____ I attend the ___ 9:45 ___ 11:30 service

Parent/Guardian's Name (if child application) _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address (if you are absent we will put your message in the mail)

_____ City _____ Zip _____

The following info will be used to match pairs, and also to aid the adults in customizing letters.

My Hobbies or Interests _____

Favorite Game or Sport _____ Pets _____

Favorite TV, Books, Music or Movies: _____

Allergies or dietary limits (to guide pals in treat-giving) _____

I promise to write weekly!! (pal signature) _____

Parent/Guardian signature _____

Please turn this form in by February 17 at church or adults can email information to:

Lara Douglass, email: lara@austinuu.org. More Info: Lara, 452 6168 ext 12

Heritage Book Club

Time: Friday, February 8, 8 pm. Host: Charlette and Jim Tucker, 8300 High Oak, Phone 345-2728. Book: "My Mother's Hip" by Luisa Margolies. All are welcome. Bring your own drink and a snack to share.



March book: "A Thousand Splendid Sons" by Khaled Hosseini. Several copies in the Public Library. Kitty Clark: 453-6246.

Mind and Meaning Book Club

Room 13A at 9:30. Currently reading "The First Word: The Search for the Origins of Language" by Christine Kenneally. For further information contact June Beach 382-7551 or email junembeach@aol.com



Sunday Morning Book Club

The Sunday Book Group: meets in Room 13B at 9:30 am. We are reading "God: a Biography" by Jack Miles. This was the first book that the group read 11 years ago. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Burson, 794-1086.



Voyager's Voice

Contacts: Effie Jarrett (effie@speer.geo.utexas.edu) and Chris Ford (cmonee@yahoo.com).

Standing activities are as follows:

1st Sunday: Discussion group, topics vary. 5:30 pm Rm 13

2nd Sunday: Moveable Feast after 2nd service.

3rd Sunday: Movie Night. 5:30 pm Rm 13

4th Sunday: Potluck & Games Night. 5:30 pm Rm 13

Meditation Choices From Diverse Traditions

Learn about Meditation and its many cultural origins, from known guides with long and authentic experience.

Sunday afternoon from 4-6 pm in Room 15. The fee is \$5 per session; pay at the door. The sessions in February are join for one session or all sessions.

2/3 *qi gong* (Jim Williams), 2/10 *hindu kirtan* (Godwins), 2/16 *zazen* (M Skrabacz), 2/24 *centering prayer* (M Skrabacz), 3/2 *breathwork* (E. Mangina).

Great Decisions Discussions 2008 Begin Feb. 5th!

The US Foreign Policy Council has issued a list of the 2008 topics in the order these will be published & discussed in the new Briefing Book (now on order). **Topical discussions begin on Tuesday, February 5, 2008** at 7 pm in Room 13 and continue thru March 25. Cost: \$20 for Briefing Book. If you see a topic of particular interest to you or in which you have expertise, please contact Judy Sadegh at jsadegh@yahoo.com so you can be the discussant for that topic.

Iraq: End Game 2/5 *U.S. Defense & Security Policy* 3/4 *European Union at 50* 2/12 *Latin America: Shift to the Left?* 3/11 *Talking to Our Enemies* 2/19 *US-China Trade Policy* 3/18 *Russia* 2/26 *Private Philanthropy* 3/25

New Course! Join UUs: A Short History

Taught by Luther Elmore, American history teacher and Chair of Adult Religious Education. Sundays 4-6 pm RM 15 on March 16, March 30, April 6, April 13 & April 20. Suggested donation \$5.00. This is a five week, ten hour overview of Unitarian Universalist history taught by Luther Elmore, history teacher, and Chair of Adult Religious Education. The course will cover the separate and distinct origins of Unitarians and Universalists from their European roots to the formation of the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1961. Emphasis will be placed on theological controversies and distinctions as well as the dynamic leaders who have played a significant part in this shared history.

All Church Read In Discussion Date Set...Join in...Read...Enjoy!

The book selected for all church READ IN is by Frances Moore Lappe and titled "**Getting a Grip: Clarity, Creativity & Courage in an Age Gone Mad**". All the Austin bookstores are out of copies to sell so please go to Amazon or Barnes & Noble to place an on-line order which normally will reach you very fast - 2/3 days tops.

The Discussion will be on Saturday, March 8 from 3-5 pm in Howson Hall and only for those actually reading the book! Our discussants will be Jean Davison (who knows the author) and Luther Elmore. We will have a relaxed afternoon with some refreshments.

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

CHURCH OF AUSTIN

4700 Grover Avenue

Austin, TX 78756

One Church. Many Beliefs.

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Director of Religious Education:

Lara Douglass

Director of Music: Brent Baldwin

President, Board of Trustees:

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Newsletter Deadline: Feb. 15th

news@austinuu.org

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Please Welcome Some of Our Newest Members

Where do they live?? Who knows what great people might live down the block from you? In an effort to help neighbors become aware of each other, we list the zip codes of new members.

Maia Thomas (zip code 78702) says, "Hello. I'm a speech language pathologist, Buddhist, and single mom to my beautiful baby girl, Ruby. Before motherhood, I was active in many grass roots, progressive causes. These days my contribution is raising a happy, healthy new person!"

Mary Beth Serff (78747), currently a student, hails from Lancaster, PA, where she was a member of the Lancaster UU church. In Lancaster she was also active in programs dealing with domestic violence and combating homelessness.