

November
2008



FIRST UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF
AUSTIN

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 compassion and love.



A group picture taken at noon time shows some of the 106 volunteers who completed the work on two homes for a very successful Hands on Housing Fall Project for the UU Churches of Austin. Thank you All!!

Fall Gathering &
Silent Auction for **YOU**

VOYAGers (Very Old Young Adult Group) is a social cohort of FUUCA comprised of community members born in the 60s and 70s. We invite **YOU**—all of you!—to our Fall Party and Silent Auction on November 15th in Howson

Hall from 7-11 pm. It will be a night of socializing, generating ideas, fabulous holiday shopping, yummy hors d'oeuvres and drinks, and later in the evening, dancing! Money raised will benefit church projects (in the past we've donated funds towards solar panels and playground equipment) and social programs. Childcare will be provided. \$5 entrance. If you're interested in more information (or want to lend a hand), email Jennifer at jfelion@yahoo.com.

Come Watch the Election
Returns at First UU!



Come watch the results of the election with friends and family in Howson Hall on Nov. 4th starting at 7 pm. Please bring your own drinks, food and snacks to share if you wish. If you are coming early, will you PLEASE bring some ice for the coolers!

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First UU Thanksgiving Feast

Please join us in Howson Hall for our annual Thanksgiving dinner. The Church will provide turkey, a vegan alternative, iced tea and coffee. Please bring a holiday side dish, bread, salad, or dessert. We will need lots of help assisting in the kitchen, hosting, setting up and cleaning up. So if you are willing to volunteer, please contact Ian Reed : dao_of_penguin@yahoo.com. You MUST RSVP to rsvp@austinuu.org by Nov. 25 and include what you will bring. You can watch live football games too!



Volume 57
No. 11



Davidson's Lore



Want some good news? Read a new article called "Best and Worst Bang for the Buck Cities" by Abha Bhattarai. Here are some excerpts:

"Your money will go farthest in Austin.

"The economic storm sweeping the country has left Americans with few places to hide.

"But those looking to hunker down might want to head to Texas, where they can get the best value for their dollar.

"That's because Austin and San Antonio lead our list of places where your money goes farthest. Residents of both enjoy affordable housing and promising prospects for job growth in coming years. Houston and Dallas also land in the top 10, at Nos. 4 and 7, respectively.

"Texas, as a whole, is one of the few economies that's performing extremely well because of the energy and technology sectors," says Andrew Gledhill, an economist at Moody's Economy.com. Plus, he added, military bases in San Antonio have continued to draw a steady stream of personnel and federal employees to the city, spurring widespread job growth.

"The state's manufacturing sector has also grown in recent years, and a reputation for affordable housing continues to lure people to the South. When accounting for median household income, a house in Dallas, for example--with a median price of about \$150,000--is four times more affordable than a house in Los Angeles, the worst-ranked city on our list.

"To ensure that our list reflected future value instead of past bargains, we began by looking at projected job growth through 2012 in the 40 largest U.S.-Census-defined metropolitan areas of the country with data from Moody's Economy.com.

"Texan cities were a clear winner, with economists predicting job growth of at least 2% by 2012 in Austin, San Antonio, Dallas and Houston. By comparison, job growth in cities at the bottom of our list, including Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Cleveland, is expected to be about 0.2%." (Wednesday, October 15, 2008 from Yahoo! Finance, provided by Forbes. See complete article at <http://finance.yahoo.com/real-estate/article/105954/Best-and-Worst-Bang-for-the-Buck-Cities>)

There. Feel better? In addition, our staff attended a one hour "webinar" in October put on by the Alban Institute on ministering in tough times – talking about doing pledge drives and capital campaigns. And one consultant pointed out that the coming months might actually be very good times to start capital campaigns, because both building costs and interest rates are down.

I'm sure it's not all happy-face news for those in our area. Some have been laid off, and some jobs seem at risk. If that's your situation, I want to offer some serious advice: don't go through it alone. Find a partner, a friend or a family member, counselor, minister etc., and talk with them. Share your stories and your fears, and you'll generally find your stress going down dramatically. When we're scared, we often want to crawl into a hole, feeling ashamed, and afraid that we're the only one going through this, or that it's somehow our fault. But we're never alone, and the quickest way out of the hole of solitary confinement is to share your story, remembering that "Trouble shared is trouble halved."

This reminds me of some sayings of Jesus. "Knock and it shall be opened," he said; "Ask, and you shall receive." One of the messages of this double-edged teaching was its other side, equally true: "Don't knock, and it won't be opened; Don't ask, and you won't receive." The sad message is that just when we don't want it there, the ball is in our court, and we have to act to keep from being alone with bad or scary news (just scary fears are enough!). The special power of scary news is that it can paralyze us, making us want to withdraw just when we need to reach out.

Friends and co-workers who are in a similar kind of fear may be the best for initial venting because they know just where you are. But relatives can also be a big help. Or therapists, counselors, chaplains or ministers. If you need to talk and can't find family or friends when you need them, you can try calling the church for one of our Listening Ministers (452-6168, ext.18), for Davidson (452-6168, ext. 11) or our Ministerial Intern, Brian Ferguson (452-6168, ext 13).

One of the blessings of life is that when we ask for help, we almost always get it. The doors open for us when we knock on them, and our friends and family are very glad to be of use. If you stay in your cave because you're scared, it can get pretty dark. But all you have to do to let in the light is knock, and the door will be opened; ask, and you shall receive. If you need help in these stressful times – even living in Austin, the Best-Bang-for-the-Buck city in the country – please do at least these two things: knock, and ask.

Then, we'll see you in church!

Davidson



What Can We Learn From a Five Year Old?

Teaching a five year old to ride a bike is an interesting experience. You set the appropriate expectations, provide comfort in the hardship and uncertainty, then celebrate the joy of success together. Last Friday afternoon, my daughter Isla and I were at Ramsey Park going through this traditional rite of passage. I took off the training wheels and attempted to set the appropriate expectations "Riding a bike is hard and you will fall. That is okay." She nodded earnestly. "Having the training wheels off is very different and will feel strange." She nodded with some hesitation. "And I know you will be able to do it, you just have to keep trying and keep moving." Her helmeted head nodded again and off we went. There were the stumbles and falls. There were the consoling and encouraging words. There was the acknowledgment of the courage it takes to try something new and difficult. Finally - the excitement and exhilaration of success as she rode around the park in disbelief at what she was doing.

I would imagine most of us can remember learning to ride a bike - the fear of the unknown, the disorientation of the balancing, pedaling and steering at the same time, the supportive person comforting and encouraging us, and then experiencing that exhilaration of success. While the act of riding a bike is not part of many of our lives today, the mixture of emotions and feelings from the experience probably are. When I am facing uncertainty in my life, I find it comforting to remember those times where I have overcome those fears and uncertainty, and the rich journey that awaits me as long as I just keep moving. Having been through my own anxiety before can help me empathize with others going through uncertainty. Some of us can be the source of support to others and some recipients of that help.

That is what being in community is about. There are exciting and exhilarating things awaiting us as a religious community in the future, if we remember to move towards them. Bring along those elements we cherish and love can make the journey easier. For my daughter knowing peanut butter and jelly sandwiches were for dinner after learning to ride her bike helped. Perhaps having her dad there was useful too.

Take care,

Brian

Seniors' Luncheon

Tues, Nov. 11th

Howson Hall at Noon

Soup, Salad & Dessert \$5

RSVP Alice Cashman 837-0988

PROGRAM: The Dirgibles

The Dirgibles will perform their eclectic folk music including two original songs. The band features Mary Jane Ford on guitar and vocals, Mark Skrabacz on harmonica and vocals, David Leibson on bass fiddle and vocals, Edward Sledge on violin, and Jim Barry on piano and vocals.



CABARET TO BENEFIT FIRST UU

Howson Hall on Saturday, Nov. 8, at 7:30 pm is the place to be! An evening of fine food, wine and music will raise funds for both the church and our resident community theater. Featured in an original musical revue entitled *That Fabulous Century* will be noted jazz pianist Dr. Charles Hill, with favorite singer-actors from Paradox Players, Bobbie Erb and Cynthia Scheibel (both seen in *The Oldest Profession*), Peter Blackwell (*Wrong Turn at Lungfish*), Keith Hale (River City Pops), and Poullette MacDougal (Artistic Director of Paradox Players).

The evening will include tapas from Sampaio's Brazilian Restaurant, a silent auction with opportunities to win dinners for two at a number of local restaurants and other fabulous goods and services, as well as door prizes. Paradox Players' 2009 season will be announced at this event. The price is only \$30 per person, and is limited to only 50 people. To make your reservations, send a check to Paradox Players at the First Unitarian Universalist Church, 4700 Grover Avenue, Austin, Texas 78756 by Nov 2. We hope to hear from you VERY soon, as tickets are selling fast.

Come to the Pre-Congregational Meeting Sunday November 2!

At 1:30 in Howson Hall, please come to a short Pre-Congregational meeting to preview the agenda and get your questions answered before the all-important Fall Congregational Meeting (December 7). **The Pre-Congregational meeting is also your opportunity to vote on which charities will be Split-the-Plate recipients for 2009.**



You Perform Magic!

Magical things happen here at First UU (and not just during Harry Potter Camp). Stewardship is one of many areas I've discovered during my first few weeks here that deserves special recognition. In a nutshell, our fundraising produces results 10 to 20 times greater than the average non-profit!

In the non-profit world, if you can keep your fundraising expenses under 20% of your budget you've done a good job; if you can keep them under 10% you've accomplished something extraordinary. First UU, on the other hand, spends less than 1% of its annual budget on our annual stewardship (fundraising) campaign! This is special. You might even call it magical.

How did First UU accomplish this feat when Austin Habitat for Humanity (16%), KUT Radio (15%), the Austin Museum of Art (17%) and other great organizations spend so much on fundraising? I suspect that, at least in part, you give generously of your time and treasure because this church does more than just provide a valuable service to members and the community.

The origin of the word "stewardship," most likely from Old English or Scotch Gaelic, takes us to the idea "guardian of the home." (I take guardian, by the way, to mean "looking after" and "caring for" the home rather than someone standing with a uniform and a gun.)

FUUCA is a special place for us because we come together here as a community. The congregation represents more than a group of like-minded people: it is our extended family. This facility and these grounds represent more than just a place where we have activities on Sunday or during the week: it is our home.

Our stewards also deserve special attention. They include our stewardship committee, which works tirelessly to remind us of how our investments as volunteers and donors help our hopes and dreams to bear fruit. They include our Board of Trustees and Finance Committee, who diligently oversee our resources and see that they're used wisely. They include our dedicated staff, who whether its pulpit, pianos, phones, pupils, or hundreds of words that don't begin with the letter p, provide consistent, dependable services that make everything else possible.

Most important among our stewards are people like you who, though you may not have a special title, your loving gifts of time, treasure, and talent have helped this church to flourish. Your care for this home makes possible so many things that nourish our minds, feed our souls, and impact the world around us. The rich variety of activities that fill up page after page of this newsletter are just a few of the ways that your investment has produced rich dividends.

That FUUCA can have so many meaningful activities, and mobilize so many people and resources, with such a small investment in fundraising, gives strong testimony to the work of all our stewards. Most other non-profits would be jealous. You have performed magic. *Sean Hale, Executive Director*

Gardens & Grounds Workday. Saturday, Nov. 8th!



. "It is always more fun to wash the dishes in someone else's kitchen." That was what one satisfied gardener said after a First UU Grounds workday. And it IS more fun: you get to meet some nice people, enjoy the wonderful Fall weather, and go home with the satisfaction that you helped take care of our church. Come join us on Saturday, Nov. 8th, 9:00 am to Noon for gardening work at the church. Please send an email to the Grounds Goddess, Elizabeth Gray at egray88@hotmail.com for more info or just show up. Bring gloves and tools--remember to mark them so you can go home with them. We can also use a few chain saws this time. We'll go to lunch afterwards for anyone who is able to join us.

Stewardship Update

In hard economic times, please consider the relative value to your life provided by this church, especially when compared to other expenditures. Your pledge is important to the church, to enable us to reach our goal of \$600,000 and to allow us to continue our existing programs for 2009. October was the last month of our official campaign, but if you haven't yet pledged your financial support for 2009, you can still do it. The budget must be set well in advance of the Congregational meeting on Dec. 7, so there is not a lot of time left. Please send in your pledge now.

You may mail your completed pledge card to the church office, call it in to Jim Scott at 452-6168 ext.14 in the church office, or you may pledge online at austinuu-pledge.org. You may also email it to jim@austinuu.org or to Mary Jane Ford, mjaneford@grandecom.net.

Readers' Theater

Join Readers' Theater Monday evening, November 10, at 7:30 in Room 13. We will be reading two tender plays about families. We always welcome newcomers, no experience required. Please join us for a pleasant evening!



President's Corner

If you've been hiding under a rock the past few weeks, you might not know it is Pledge Drive time at the Church! The Board of Trustees is ready to get to work on the 2009 budget, and we spent a good part of our October meeting talking about how to reach more than a third of our members who have not yet pledged this year. We talked about how passionate each of us is about giving our time and treasure to support this spiritual home of ours, and how to best communicate that passion to others. **Time is of the essence**, because we have to put the final budget together in the next couple of weeks, and we want to be able to fund as many of the programs you love as possible. When so many pledges are late, we have to adjust our projections downward, which means cutting costs in a painful way. How ironic it would be if we had to cut the beloved programs that make people want to pledge in the first place.

Please get your pledge in, and if you have already pledged, consider raising your commitment as a statement of hope, optimism and faith in these troubled times. We need our Church's presence in our lives and in our community now more than ever. If you have not yet pledged, volunteers will be contacting you soon. You can pledge on line at on our secure website at www.austinuupledge.org, you can visit the Stewardship table in the Gallery on Sunday, or you can call any Board member, Stewardship Committee member, or the Church office to make your pledge. Please contact any of us if you want to discuss your dreams or concerns about what the Church might accomplish in 2009.

Some upcoming meetings you should attend: At 1:30 on Sunday Nov. 2, come to the Pre-Congregational meeting to get a preview of the upcoming Fall Congregational Meeting and to vote on the Split-the-Plate charitable recipients for 2009. At 1:30 on Sunday Dec. 7, be sure to attend the Fall Congregational meeting, where, among other things, we vote on the 2009 Church budget. Please come! The Board of Trustees meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, and begins with a visitor's forum. You are welcome to attend and we welcome your input! .

Sheila Gladstone, President, FUUCA Board of Trustees.

Denominational Updates

SWUUC Fall Leadership Conference, begins Nov. 14, 2008, 6:00 pm; ends Nov. 16, 2008, 1:00 pm. There will intensive training tracks and multigenerational worship, meals, and socials at Glen Lake Retreat Center in Glen Rose, TX (southwest of Ft. Worth). Tracks planned are Worship for All Ages, Ageing to Sageing, Lay Chaplain Training, and Non-Violent Communication. For information, contact SWUUC office www.swuuc.org/.

November Split-The-Plates

Nov. 2: People United for Libraries in Africa (PULA) is a small volunteer organization founded in 2003 to build and stock libraries in African communities that lack library services of the sort Americans take for granted. PULA currently is focusing most of its resources on the construction of a community library in Sironko, Uganda. This leaves a service gap First UU can help fill by—for example, funding the provision of books to schools in Nigeria that have received hundreds of books but need more.

Nov. 16: Caritas of Austin provides a food pantry and emergency utility and rental assistance for people in crisis. Caritas helps 20,000 people each year meet basic needs in our community. Donations go directly to fighting homelessness and poverty in Travis County.

Monty Newton's Birthday Wish



For his 50th birthday in 2007, Monty Newton wanted to give more than receive, which is how he found himself in the bottom of a pit in Nicaragua, shovel in hand and sweating hard. He was participating in a work brigade organized by El Porvenir, an NGO that assists rural villages gain access to reliable, potable water. El Porvenir gives a community the tools to dig a well, build a wash house for laundry and showers, and install a simple and sustainable rope pump a child can operate. Each project is community-initiated, and villagers do the bulk of the work, but paying participants, like Monty, cover the cost of all of the materials and supply plenty of muscle investment.

Monty was one of 10 participants, ranging from age 11 to 80, and everyone helped with tasks ranging from mixing concrete to completing paperwork. Meals were excellent, the people were friendly, and the countryside was stunning — complete with smoking volcanoes! The experience was so rewarding that he came home ready to do it all again.

Next summer, in 2009, Monty wants to organize a group of UU's from Austin to participate in a work brigade, and have us make a difference for one village where water-borne illness otherwise cripples their prosperity. Look for more information in the near future, and consider spending a week of your summer vacation improving your Spanish and healing our world, one village at a time! If you are already interested, contact Monty Newton at 458-4903.



Membership Matters

Hopefully this space will become familiar to you all. What do you do if you are interested in joining the church? We recommend that you attend for awhile, get to know some folks, maybe attend a few activities....a spiritual movie, an Art Studio, an Orientation with Dr. Loehr, (this happens every third Wednesday at 7 pm in Room 17),....lots of things to do. When you are sure that you want to make a commitment to the church by joining, then you go to the **membership table in the Gallery after either service on the second and fourth Sunday of any month.** The folks there will be glad to get you signed up. Sunday, Nov. 9th and 23rd are the sign up times for this month.

About 4 times a year there is a Meet the Minister dinner in the Gallery for all those folks who have just joined the church. This is a nice easy way to discover who else is new just like you and chat with the Senior Minister of the Church.

Membership Committee Members are here every Sunday to answer your questions. Check the Visitor Table or find someone with a **RED** nametag!

NOVEMBER SHARING SUPPERS GETTING TO KNOW OTHER UUs IN A PERSONAL SETTING.

On **Nov. 15th**, groups of 6-10 people will gather for food, conversation and laughter in various participants' homes. Everyone contributes something to the dinner. Sharing Suppers are open to anyone in the church, new or established, couples or single, and you need not be a member to participate. The **deadline** for signing up is the **Sunday** before the suppers, **Nov 9th**. Then the hosts will call you on Monday or Tuesday with details. Then you just show up with your dish and enjoy the great food and conversation. Call or email **Grace Amborski: 391-2393**

(graceamborski@sbcglobal.net) or **sign up on the sheet posted outside Davidson's office.** If you'd like to be on an email list for time place and info send an email sharingsuppers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Children's Religious Education Needs VOLUNTEERS!!

The RE department urgently needs volunteers in the classrooms. Come and relax and hang out in RE. It takes

Help Wanted at First UU!

This will be the space available for those groups who need assistance. A new way to volunteer and get connected!

Send your request to news@austinuu.org and it will be published in announcements, bulletin, & newsletters . Be sure to add your contact info !!

Helping Hands Needs You !!!

We need meals, drivers, visitors and callers for many of our ill members. Thanks to all who help. In order to keep the program going, we need more people to step up to the plate and provide for those who started Helping Hands and Caring Cards to begin with. Contact: Mary Ann Stafford 587-8373 or mas1038166@aol.com.

Volunteers for VOYAGers Event!!

We, the Very Old Young Adults Group, are sponsoring an all-church fall social and silent auction, and **need your help** to make it happen. Specifically, we need help with set-up, decorating, serving food & beverages, arranging (and/or providing) childcare, tear-down/cleanup, etc. What's in it for you? Meeting some excellent people, getting into the party for free, and earning our everlasting gratitude. If interested, please contact jfelion@yahoo.com or subscribe to our VOYAGers email list at voyagers-announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Many thanks!

More Opportunities to Help PCC

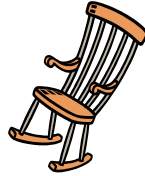
The People's Community Clinic satellites need our help compiling patient materials. They will transport the materials to and from the church if we will hold Sunday work sessions to put them together. We will hold our work session on **Sunday, Nov. 16, 1-2 pm (12:30 set up), in Room 15 of FUUCA.** If we have sufficient volunteers and interest, we will hold these Sunday work sessions on a monthly basis. You need not sign up ahead to help, just drop in. The Sunday work sessions will be in addition to our ongoing efforts to place individual volunteers into select PCC departments and group efforts to copy and compile patient education materials at PCC on a monthly basis. If you have questions, please call or email Sheri Overton (512-847-2685 or sherioverton@hotmail.com).

a village to raise our children and we need YOU to be that village! Volunteer sign up sheets are located outside the classrooms. Our Children's RE program will grow and your children will thrive with more volunteers



Refurbished Cry Room Thank UU! Maia Thomas

Thanks to **Maia Thomas** who single-handedly updated the quiet room off the sanctuary. **Maia** added some items which will give the parents and children who use this room more options.



Ushers Greeters and Lay Leaders



Once again we pause to thank our volunteer ushers, greeters, and lay leaders who make our Sunday morning services run smoothly. Thank you all! First the Lay Leaders: **Becky Harding, Eric Hepburn, and Craig Campbell.** Next the Ushers and Greeters: **Colin McIntyre, Lynn Westbrook, Evangelina Mangino, Melanie Walter-Mahoney, Ruth Marie, Grace Amborski, Sharon Finley, Russell Eskew, Alice Cashman, Barbara Denny, Joe Linsalata, Linda Buehlman, Cyndi Louden, Doug Ginn, Nancy Lehman, Joyce Wilson, Dwayne Windham, Kitty Traylor, Jim Burson, Annie Smith, and Matear Hudgens**



Serving the Homeless At the ARCH!



Exciting News! We have added another day of the month for UUs to volunteer with the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH)! Christy Seals has agreed to coordinate the 4th Monday. Karen and Mary Ann will still coordinate the 1st Sunday.

On those two days each month, teams of four volunteer serve dinner, cafeteria-style, from 5:30 -8:00 pm to 100 homeless men at the ARCH downtown Austin. No training is required. Call a coordinator to set a date. You will receive a general info sheet right away and a reminder closer to your service date. If you have any questions, contact the coordinators: **Mary Ann Copp** mac624@tstar.net, 830-693-5920. **Karen Franks** kfranks46@yahoo.com, 512-670-2221. **Christy Seals** seals@loop-d.net, 512-217- 9056. Thanks for FUUCA volunteers for August-October: **Betty & John Wood, Barbara & George Denny, Karen & John Franks, Christie & Eric Hepburn, Wendy Kuo, Kristy Quigley, Melanie Garnett, Dana & Mary Ann Copp, Elaine Carpenter, Anne Kanno, Stephen Davis, Michael Bicknell.** And a special thanks to **Christy Seals** for getting UUs to serve the 4th Tuesdays just for the summer months.

TEXAS WINE*TEXAS STARS*

U Bar U Fundraiser November 15-16, 2008

November is a beautiful time of year to spend a weekend in the Texas Hill Country. Nights are cool. Stars are bright. On Nov. 15, we'll be celebrating with a Texas wine tasting and dinner and an evening of star gazing and music, all to benefit U Bar U, our retreat center outside Kerrville, Texas.

If you already love U Bar U or if you've never visited, this is a great opportunity to enjoy our retreat center and join with other Southwest District UUs to raise money for much needed upgrades to the kitchen and other facilities. Check the U Bar U website, www.ubaru.org, to see plans and how U Bar U has grown in the last year.

There are 30 spaces for overnight guests, so make your reservations NOW! If you want to attend, but not spend the night at, you are welcome, but advance reservations are a must. The cost is \$120 per person (includes a \$60 tax deductible donation to U Bar U. For reservations and additional information, contact Rose Ann Reeser at 512-327-7951 or r.a.reeser@earthlink.net.



Shining the Spotlight on... Rebecca Henderson, oboist

We are very pleased to welcome church member, Rebecca Henderson, back from Washington DC, where she has been performing with the National Symphony for the past two years.

A prize winner in the 1995 New York International Competition for Solo Oboists and in the 1988 Lucarelli International Solo Oboe Competition, Rebecca has performed with some of the nation's most esteemed orchestras, including the Colorado Symphony, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Seattle Symphony, the Oregon Symphony, and the Rochester Philharmonic. She has been featured on numerous film scores and feature films, as well as network television mini-series. Her solo CD, "...is but a dream," has been hailed by critics as "exquisite...a CD that you will play over and over" (Gramophone). Rebecca serves on the faculty of The University of Texas at Austin, where she has been an Associate Professor since the fall of 2001. She will be sharing her music during several services this Fall - be sure not to miss any of them!



Sunday Worship Services 9:45 and 11:30

2 November: What Can the Dead Teach Us About Coming Alive? Brian Ferguson.

At this time of year, in many cultures, there is a focus on our friends and loved-ones who have died. The Mexican holiday of Day of the Dead and the Christian observance tradition of All Souls Day are just two of many examples of how people acknowledge and attempt to find meaning in death. Unitarian Universalist minister Forest Church describes religion as our human response to the dual reality of being alive and having to die. This service will explore our own attitudes about death and what the dead may be able to teach us about living.

9 November: Healing our World Through War? Davidson Loehr.

The title sounds like an oxymoron, but it's what soldiers usually believe they're doing. Most in the U.S. and Europe still believe it's what we did through World War II, and it's hard to argue against that. But we also know it isn't always true. What (if anything) can make war a "healing" endeavor?

16 November: The Transient and the Permanent, Davidson Loehr.

This is the third in the series of sermons on the only three Unitarian essays that all UU ministry students are required to read, the most recent of which was written 167 years ago, Theodore Parker's brilliant "The Transient and the Permanent in Christianity," delivered in 1841 and setting off a theological hoo-hah that lasted for decades. Parker has always been my favorite of these three men, and the insights in this sermon pointed far beyond the Christianity and theism that he was then defending. But besides the historical interest, what does any of this have to do with our actual lives and beliefs today? A lot.

23 November: Giving Thanks in Tough Times, Davidson Loehr and Brian Ferguson.

Brian and I will each be offering a homily (which means a short sermon), our different takes on this theme.

30 November: A Short History of Courage and Fear, Davidson Loehr.

This is the second time I've wanted to reflect on Anais Nin's saying that "Life shrinks and expands in proportion to one's courage." Grand sayings like this always sound good, but are seldom as factual or down-to-earth enough to feel convincing in a real-life way. But there are some very clear examples in support of her nine words, lying very close at hand.

Public Affairs Forum: Sundays—11:30 a.m. Howson Hall

2 November: D'Ann Johnson, "FLDS Case"

D'Ann Johnson, Attorney and Branch Manager for Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, will discuss representation of women of the Fundamentalist Church of Latter Day Saints, a group which lives outside of mainstream US culture. She will describe the challenges and difficulties of legal work with groups of differing attitudes, values, and beliefs, which may place them at odds with state regulatory authority, and her efforts to assist protecting children.

9 November: Gary Keith, "Post Election Analysis"

Gary Keith, political scientist, has spent his life working, teaching, researching and writing about politics and government. Gary will provide the best post-election analysis of the most important election of the last 75 years. Gary is also the author of last year's critically acclaimed biography "Bob Eckhardt."

16 November: Lee Nichols and other Austin Chronicle Staff, "The Media"

Lee Nichols, Staff Writer from the Austin Chronicle, and others from The Austin Chronicle staff, will present about today's media. They'll discuss The Austin Chronicle's history in Austin, their methodology of reporting, how reporting is changing in our society, and how important "Truth in media" is for our community.

23 November: NO FORUM

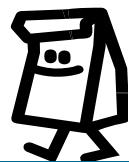
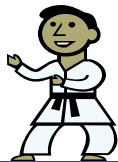
30 November: Lee Leffingwell "Town Hall Meeting"

Lee Leffingwell, City of Austin Council member, first elected in 2005 and recently re-elected, will discuss some major topics that have surfaced recently in our community. Some of the items will include, but are not limited to: Water and Energy Conservation, BioMass Energy contract, recent changes in Solid Waste collection policy, and city finances.



Events Happening Every Week During the Month of November

Every Sun.	9:30	Mind & Meaning Book Gr., Rm 13-A	Every Wed.	1:00	Philosophical Discussion, Rm 13
	9:30	Sunday Morning Book Gr., Rm 13-B		7:00	Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
	9:30	Philosophical Discussion, Rm 7		7:00	Tai Chi, Rm 15
	6:30	YRUU, Rm 11	Every Thu.	7:15	Scandinavian Dance, HH
Every Mon.	6:30	Sack Lunch Program, Kitchen	Every Sat.	10:00	Mighty Platypi CampfireUSA, Rm. 11& 15
Every Tue	10:00	Art Studio, Rm 13			



Church Events Through the Month of November

Nov. 1 Sat	10:00	Women's Spirituality, Rm 13	Nov. 12 Wed	6:30	Yew Grove Full Moon Ritual, Rm 13
	12:00	Children's Halloween Party HH	Nov. 13 Thu	7:00	Adult RE Meeting, Rm 9
Nov. 2 Sun	4:00	PP Rehearsal, HH	Nov. 14 Fri	7:00	English Country Dance, HH
	5:30	Voyagers Meeting, Rm 13		7:00	Metaphysical Salon
Nov. 3 Mon	6:00	Ancestors in Own Words, Rm 15	Nov. 15 Sat	10:00	Women's Spirituality Group, Rm 13
	7:00	Green Sanctuary Ckmitte, Rm 13		2:00	Ruby Zener Memorial Service, S G
	7:00	Village Country Dancing, HH		5:00	Voyagers Fundraiser, G HH
Nov. 4 Tue	10:00	Art Studio, Rm 13	Nov. 16 Sun	1:00	PPC Packets, Rm 15
	7:00	Election Turn Out Party, HH, K	Nov. 17 Mon	7:00	Village International Country Dancing HH
	7:00	Yew Grove Pagan Mtg, Rm 13	Nov. 18 Tues	6:00	Board Meeting G
Nov. 5 Wed	7:00	Building Committee, G	Nov. 19 Wed.	6:00	Wednesday Connections HH
	7:00	FUUCyaa, Rm 13		7:00	Building Committee G
	7:00	PP Rehearsal, HH		7:00	Facilities Committee O
Nov. 6 Thu	7:00	PP Rehearsal, HH		7:00	Orientation with Dr. Loehr, Rm 17
	7:15	Scandinavian Dance	Nov. 20 Thu	7:00	FUUCYaa Meeting, Rm 13
Nov. 7 Fri	7:00	PP Rehearsal, HH		7:00	Scandinavian Dance, HH
Nov. 8 Sat	8:00	Men's Breakfast, G	Nov. 21 Fri	7:00	Spiritual Movies, HH
	9:00	New UU Class, Rm 17	Nov. 24 Mon	7:00	Finance Committee, Rm 13
	5:30	PP Fundraiser, G, HH K	Nov. 27 Thurs	4:00	Thanksgiving Dinner and Games
Nov.10 Mon	7:00	Ancestors in Own Words, Rm 15			
	7:30	Reader's Theatre, Rm 13			
Nov. 11 Tues	7:30	Executive Committee, Min			
	7:30	Yew Grove Election, Rm 13			

Key for Abbreviations:

S	Sanctuary
HH	Howson Hall
G	Gallery
PP	Paradox Players
FUUCyaa	First Unitarian Universalist Church Young Adults
K	Kitchen
O	Administration Office
PPC	People's Community Clinic



Reflections from the Director of Religious Education

October was a month filled with many little jewels. Michael LeBurkien completed his three-week Sunday afternoon class, re-titled, "Conversations with the Rabbi" which was lively, instructive and left many of us wanting to know MORE! This class culminated with an intergenerational dinner honoring the Jewish High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur on Saturday night, October 11.

The children of course, knew all about the High Holy Days, since they are learning about Judaism this Fall. Dr. Loehr was the reader for this wonderful dinner. Allison Windsor read the four questions we were all asked to consider as we shared our communal meal:

- What things have I done in the past year which are good and of which I am proud?
- What things have I done in the past year that I would like to improve upon?
- What have I neglected to do that I could have and should have done during the past year?
- What do I hope to do in the coming year that I was unable to do in the year now ending?

The Kindergarten to Grade 2 OWL class is going extremely well. We have 19 children registered and attending, along with their parents/guardians.

The Adult OWL class has also filled to capacity. We are very proud to be offering this for the first time at our church. We are very grateful to Barb Tuttle and Michael West for attending the training and doing such a wonderful service for their class and this church.

The SW District YRUU Rally is being held at Live Oak on Oct.31. Amber Andrews, our YRUU advisor and some of the FUUCA Youth Leaders are helping Live Oak plan and implement this event.

I attended the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) conference in Albuquerque, NM at the end of October. This was my first national conference with this organization. I will have more information about my experience in next month's newsletter

By the time you get this newsletter, our congregation and children will have concluded our very first all-church Día de los Muertos, Day of the Dead and Halloween celebration. We are adding many new events this year, which I hope will become beloved traditions. These events and the traditions they offer us bring alive the best messages and intentions of all religions.

Please see the RE Save the Dates in this newsletter! See you in church,

Lara

Save the Date

Upcoming Children's Religious Education

November

- 11/1 Halloween/ Día De Los Muertos Event
 11/2 Children Programming Committee (CPC) Mtg
 11/23 Guest at Your Table Kick-off



December

- 12/7 Children Programming Committee (CPC) Mtg
 12/10 Christmas Pageant Practice 6:30 pm
 12/17 Christmas Pageant and Holiday Feast—6 pm—8 pm



Spiritual Exploration and Philosophical Inquiry Group.

Meets on Sunday at 9:30 in Room 7 and at 1 in Room 13 on Wednesday.



Art Studio

Aspiring artists and crafters work, share ideas, techniques, and learn from each other. Tuesday at 10 am in Room 13.





Tai Chi. Classic form of safe exercise practiced slowly for increased balance strength and flexibility taught by Jim Williams Wed. at 7 pm in Rm 15. Fee is \$10 a class.

The first class is free, come try it!



Hatha Yoga: Breathing, flexibility, posture and energy uniting mind & body. Becky Ballou, the instructor says the class is about "Practicing and teaching a gentle form of Yoga." Thursdays at 5:30 in Howson Hall. First class free, then \$10 a session.



International Village Dancing

Blended dance of village life from many countries. Bring your dancing shoes and join in. You do not need experience or a partner to come. The program focuses on the beginner and intermediate dancer. Suggested donation is \$2. 1st and 3rd Mon. in Howson Hall



Scandinavian Dance.

No partners necessary, experienced dancers welcome and beginners too.

Meets Thursdays 7:30 in Howson Hall. Formal teaching on 1st and 3rd Thursday. Suggested donation \$3.

English Country Dance.

We welcome newcomers and old timers alike. Join us the 2nd Friday 7:30 pm in Howson Hall.

Classes held Sept.

through June.

Suggested Donation: \$6



NEW UU Nov. 8, from 9am – 2 pm in Rm 17. Led by Luther Elmore and Lara Douglas. For new members and others who want to know more about UUism and its history. Brunch will be served and child care provided if requested. Sign up in the Gallery on Sundays or contact Peg Frye at peg@austinuu.org.



Welcome...Guest at Your Table

Each year at this time, friends and families in our congregation participate in the UU tradition of Guest at Your Table. Our Guest at Your Table drive will begin on Sunday, Nov. 23. By taking home a beautiful Guest at Your Table box or envelope, families and individuals help the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee put our shared principles into action around the world. Through combination of advocacy, education and partnerships with grassroots organizations, UUSC promotes [economic rights](#), advances [environmental justice](#), defends [civil liberties](#), and preserves the rights of people in times of [humanitarian crisis](#). In each household, we suggest that your Guest at Your Table box or envelope is placed in a prominent spot, often at the family meal table. When family and friends gather to enjoy their blessings, they can reflect on the contributions of their Guests and share generously. We will return our boxes and envelopes on Sunday, January 4, 2009.

Greenraising The CampFire USA 17 Fundraiser

Fundraising to support children's activities is part of the whole childhood experience these days. The Mighty Platypi, (CampFire group for 3-6 year olds) that meets here each Saturday, is no exception. CampFire USA's official fundraiser is a candy sale. We decided to try a new and innovative type of fundraising: **Greenraising**. You don't even have to set foot in a store! The **Greenraising** product offerings include: organic cleaning supplies, Fair-trade organic chocolate, tea, & coffee, 100% recycled gift wrap, natural bath products, recycled office supplies, environmentally friendly bags, more great gifts than we can list. From now to Nov.15 our group gets 40 cents of every dollar spent. All purchases help our CampFire USA and the environment. There are catalogs on the CampFire bulletin board. For these orders, contact [Andi adwindham@yahoo.com](mailto:Andi.adwindham@yahoo.com) or lara@austinuu.org. or talk to one of the cute kids in a Campfire shirt when you see them at church. Order yourself directly: www.greenraising.com/?AFID=603



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

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Executive Director:
Sean Hale**

**Director of Religious Education:
Lara Douglass**

**Director of Music: Brent Baldwin
President, Board of Trustees:**

Sheila Gladstone

Ministerial Intern:

Brian Ferguson

Church Phone: (512) 452-6168

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Next Newsletter Deadline

November 15th

***Please submit information to
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Return Service Requested

Please Welcome Some of Our Newest Members!

Where do they live?? In an effort to help neighbors become aware of each other, we list the zip codes of new members.

Nancy and Kevin Owens 78756 are happy to be a part of the UU Austin community. Close friends for almost 10 years, they tied the knot this past January and are settling nicely into married life. They both work for Austin Independent School District, Kevin as the IB Coordinator at Martin Middle School and Nancy as the Theatre Arts teacher at Burnet Middle School. They look forward to sharing their energy and talents with UU.

Gwen Carroll 78723 I am a single special education teacher, specializing in behavior disorder. I moved to Austin to be near my son and grandchildren.

Pat and Bill Walters 78759 are both retired and previously lived in Woodlands, Texas. Pat hopes to find challenge and a place to be involved and make a difference. They both enjoy UT LAMP and their grandchildren.

Katie Kreisenhart 78704 moved to Austin a bit over a year ago from Maryland. She hopes to find spirituality and friendships here at church. Her hobbies include running, reading, dancing and exploring Austin.

Martha Northington 78703 is retired, loves books, birds, music and friends. She volunteers at People's Community Clinic. Martha came here from Houston and is hopeful that she will find intelligent sermons and a sense of community here in Austin.

Anne Kanno 78731 Anne states, "It's my passion that each person know they are a bright and shining star, and I like to help others shine their light."