

JUNE NEWSLETTER

Spotlight On... Interim Minister Janet Newman



Dear Friends,

I am delighted to have the privilege of serving the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin as your Interim Minister. I will start work with you in mid-August, and I will pay you a visit June 15 – 18, but this brief letter will serve to introduce me to you in the meantime.

It has been almost 26 years since my ordination and my graduation from Meadville Lombard Theological School at the University of Chicago. As a matter of fact, I knew Davidson Loehr, your former minister, while we were both students there. In my career as a called minister, I served UU congregations in Fayetteville, AR, and Tulsa, OK – both in your Southwest Conference. So, although I have never been to Austin, I expect to feel a sense of homecoming to this part of the world.

I have served UU congregations all over North America as an Accredited Interim Minister, including one in Toronto, Ontario, and one in the capital of Canada, Ottawa, ON. If you ask me how many congregations I have ministered to, I'd need a minute to count them – but I do know that each was a unique joy and challenge.

I am very eager to get to know you and to guide you during your transition period between called ministers. There is a lot of good that we can do together. Let's make the most of our time in ministry!

Best wishes,

Janet E. Newman, Interim Senior Minister

Birmingham Unitarian Church, Bloomfield Hills, Illinois



➔ **Inside this Issue...** Meet Janet pg 3, Meet the Young Adults pg 4, What's the Spiritual Movie? pg. 5, Circle of Friends Covenant, pg. 10, Adults needed for YAC! pg. 11, and much more!



Hocus Focus

Have you ever had to count a lot of money (or playing cards, toothpicks, etc.) then something interrupts you? It might be a phone call, someone saying hi, or the cat rubbing on your leg. Sometimes the interruption lasts five seconds, sometimes it lasts five minutes, but either way you lost your concentration and lost count of where you were, meaning you have to start all over again. This has happened to me plenty of times in my life; I bet it has happened to you, and I can tell you that it happens many times every day here at the church office.

So in honor of Harry Potter Camp, which we look forward to hosting here this summer, I want to let you in on a little “magic spell” we’re trying to cast to help us improve our focus, concentration, and productivity here at the office.

You see, very little of our work is “light clerical,” the kind you can do on autopilot while singing along to your favorite song on the radio. In fact, the bulk of your office staff’s work requires focus and concentration. When we’re doing detail-oriented work, even a brief interruption can set us back 15-30 minutes because it can take that long to get back into what we were doing.

Our recipe for success includes such exotic ingredients as *qahwat al-būnn*, cold winds from a Carrier AC, and familiars by such names as PC, HP, and Sharp. However, the most important (and most elusive) ingredient is large blocks of uninterrupted time so we can stay focused long enough to see complex projects through from beginning to end.

By focusing and using staff time more efficiently, we will serve you and First UU better. To that end, the business office will be closed to the public and congregants on Mondays. The office will remain open to congregants and the public Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Natalie (room scheduling), Linda (publications), and I will aim to respond to (or at least acknowledge) emails and voice mails within 1-2 business days. Because his work can get heavy at certain times of year and certain times of the month, Jim (bookkeeping) will aim to respond (or at least acknowledge) emails and voice mail within 3 business days. (If interested, you’ll find more details on our new summer schedule posted in the hall outside the office.)

You can also help make this magic spell stick (on Mondays and every other day):

- If you need to see a staff person face-to-face, please email us first to set up an appointment rather than just dropping in (even if it will “just take a minute”)
- If you would like to request a room or inquire about availability, please do so at least a week in advance either through our website or using the paper forms you can pick up in the office during regular hours.

Thank you for reading to the end of this article. By reading to it, you’ve cast a little spell on yourself and can now participate in the magic!

Sean Hale, *Executive Director*

Split the Plate for June

On the first and third Sundays of each month the First UU congregation shares the non-pledge offertory plate with a nonprofit organization whose work puts our social-justice values into action.

On June 7th we will split the plate with the Equal Justice Center/Immigrant Workers' Rights Project. The Austin-based EJC helps low-wage immigrant workers recover their unpaid wages when employers withhold the pay these workers have earned by their labor.

The organization offers legal assistance to help workers uphold their basic wage rights and defend their dignity regardless of their immigration status. The EJC also works to ensure that all such workers are guaranteed equal access to the justice system as a critical step toward building a more inclusive sense of community that overcomes barriers of national origin, race, language, class, and immigration status.

On June 21st our split-the-plate beneficiary will be the Volunteer Health Clinic. The mission of this local clinic is to provide quality health care for the most vulnerable.

The VHC for more than 40 years has provided non-emergency health care to low-income adults and children who have no access to medical care. Services to 4,700 patients annually include: primary care for acute and chronic conditions, laboratory work, x-rays, referrals to medical specialists, and medication assistance. Services are provided by volunteer physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, pharmacists, dietitians, medical technologists, clerical staff, and interpreters—some 400 volunteers in all. The minimal full-time, paid staff includes a social worker who steers patients to appropriate state and city medical assistance.



President's Corner

“Why would you agree to be president after all that you’ve already been through?” That question has been posed to me several times in the past month, and I appreciate the gentle humor with which it’s generally delivered. Why would I agree to be the main lightning rod for every discontent, big idea, or emergency that might rise up over the next 12 months? In this past board year I have already sat through more gut-wrenching meetings than I planned on and I have already received and read more vitriolic and hateful emails than is really healthy. Why -- when I had a chance to step away from the board and go back to baking cookies -- why would I agree to be president of the

board of trustees for this big, noisy congregation?

I agreed to serve, partly because I am ox-patient, and because I am deeply curious to see what is coming next. This big, noisy congregation has a lot of very cool energy moving right now. We are currently looking at all parts of our church life and re-examining, sorting, discerning, and building. We have pledged over \$100,000 to support this work, and we are bringing in an interim minister who will encourage us to greater work. A couple of my big goals for this next year include creating a covenant for members to enter into together and to work with our sister UU churches in Austin to expand our social action efforts.

Now, here’s the real reason I agreed to serve as president: I love this church. And I love this church with an ox-patient love that sees the long-term in each moment. When I think about my service to this church, I recall and re-word a vow Monty and I exchanged when we were married here in 1994: “I love this church for what it is and what it may become.” Nell Newton, *President of the Board of Trustees*

Meet Janet !!

**Set Church Goals: Mon. June 15th
6:30 p.m.**

- **First: Meet the Rev. Janet Newton over dinner.**
- **Next: guide the Fall Canvass.**

The Board and the Stewardship Committee seek congregational guidance in discovering the inspiring project that will form the focus of our Fall Canvass. It comes as no surprise that UU congregations give generously when the canvass focuses on one special aspiration – a *dream* – that is built into the bones of the fundraising.

Nobody knows what our dream project may be – the congregation may decide, for example, that we need an expanded music program, or a greater garden, or expanded RE resources, or an assistant minister, or an up-graded kitchen, or [insert your own favorite project here].

The purpose of this meeting will be for our congregation – us – to discover that dream for 2010.

This is where you come in.



**Meet and Eat: Wed. June 17th
6:00 p.m.**



- First: Meet the Rev. Janet Newton over dinner.**
- Next: Have fun, chat, and enjoy!**

This is an exciting time for our Church. Please join the Membership Committee at our usual **Meet and Eat**. We continue our informal forums combined with delicious food.

This will be an opportunity for YOU to welcome and chat with Rev. Newman during her visit. There is no agenda! Come and enjoy? Sign up at Visitors Table, on the Church Bulletin board, or email, jeanetteswenson@yahoo.com. Childcare reservations at childcare@austinuu.org.

From janetnewman.com. “...On the page of my babybook titled ‘Ambitions,’ I printed ‘I want to be a missionary(sic).’ Later I penciled in ‘a veterinarian,’ ...Clearly, the ambition to help people and animals was close to my heart from the beginning.”

How To Get Involved...

Meet the Young Adults Group

What defines a Young Adult? Good question! The UUA says 18-35, but we're a little flexible. The Young Adults group (aka FuucYaa) provides a space to get to know each other, share good times, have interesting conversations, and support each other in our attempts to live up to our ideals and beliefs. It's fellowship, education and spiritual practice all rolled together.

We meet twice per month in the evenings at the church in Room 17 (7-9 pm) for a simple potluck and discussion, followed by (non-alcoholic or alcoholic) drinks at the Spider House Cafe (9 pm+). We usually have around a dozen participants at each meeting, and there's almost always a new face. We also get together for lunch one Sunday per month after the second service at Mandola's Restaurant (nearby in the Triangle). The best way to find out what's going on is to join the Young Adults Yahoo Group and email list: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FuucYaa> Past Young Adult Group activities include:

- Watching and discussing the environmental documentary "The 11th Hour."
- Raising over \$1200 while participating in the Hill Country Ride for Aids.
- Discussing Buddhism and Theology with Tom Spencer from AAIM.
- Watching & discussing Michael Dowd's "Thank God for Evolution" video series.
- Enjoying a talk and guided meditation with a guest from the Austin Zen Center
- Christmas Potluck and Social Party...And much, much, more

For new Young Adults looking to join, some upcoming June activities are: Jun 03 (Wed): 7pm-9pm Potluck & Meeting, Jun 18 (Thu): 7pm-9pm Potluck & Meeting, Jun 28 (Sun): 12:30pm Lunch (meet @ TV in Foyer)

For further info, join our Yahoo Group (FuucYaa), or contact Brendan Sterne: brendansterne@yahoo.com, 512-992-8589



Readers' Theatre

June 8th 7:00 pm Rm 13

Last meeting until September. We will read a full-length play with numerous roles. Snacks would be welcome, as well as newcomers!

Food donations for Caritas.



Please remember to bring your donations of non-perishable food items such as canned goods, cereals, pasta, beans to church on Sundays. The Caritas Committee delivers the food to Caritas once a week and recently the donations have been low.



Each month, our church sends multiple teams of volunteers to the People's Community Clinic to prepare patient education materials and send out immunization reminders. Over 75 church members/friends have been involved in one or more activities in last three years. One way you can help is to come to the 2nd Tuesday Collate Group. This group meets next on June 9th from 10 am-12 pm to collate & stuff patient information packets. You don't have to participate each month, just as often as you can. There are usually around 6-10 of us

and it is a nice opportunity to visit with each other. There are other opportunities as well, including individual volunteers to help in various departments at PCC. Additionally, we hope to develop teams to: 1) provide programming for children during evening parent classes, and 2) provide storytime to children in the waiting room. If you are interested in helping with any of these activities, please contact Sheri Overton at sherioverton@hotmail.com or 512-847-2685.

Serving Supper to the Homeless

A special thanks to the UUs who volunteered to serve supper to the homeless men at the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH). In May, Stephen Davis, Julia Gregory and Nancy Owens served suppers

Since September of 2006, UUs have served dinner on the First Sunday of each month at ARCH which is located in downtown Austin.



Three to four volunteers are needed for future First Sunday Suppers. Volunteers don't cook or clean, but they do set the tables and serve food cafeteria style to 100 men from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. Our efforts are a small part of the city of Austin's ten-year plan to end homelessness.

To volunteer please contact Karen Franks: 670-2221 kfranks46@yahoo.com, or Mary Ann Copp: mac624@tstar.net, 830-693-5920.

Every volunteer has enjoyed this service project.

Join us!

Seniors' Luncheon

Tuesday, June 9th
Howson Hall at Noon

Soup, Salad & Dessert \$5

RSVP to
Alice Cashman
837-0988



Paradox Players will present an excerpt or two from the play *Trying*, which opens Sept 12 on the Bethke Stage. Director Gary Payne will facilitate discussion of this richly crafted story. Please see a complete description of the play on page 6. Our "pictured" Senior is Martha Poe.



We Are A Caring Congregation

The new Congregational Care Committee has solidified out of the weeks of planning by the Task Force, bringing together all the efforts of Joys and Concerns, Caring Cards and Listening Ministry to serve our congregation even better.

***Our Mission is to support consistent and sensitive pastoral care within the church community while respecting the worth and dignity of all involved.**

We are structuring our efforts to serve the community so each volunteer is able to help in a manageable way. Some examples of ways we can contribute to the church community are to post joys and concerns, send cards and flowers, make phone calls and visits, give rides or meals on a short term basis and listen when people need someone. We are seeking volunteers who can contribute small amounts of their time. We are also ready to welcome members of our community who need some TLC.

Spiritual Movie Night... Friday, June 19

Yes, movie time is 7 p.m., however, this month's presentation will be held in Rooms 15 & 17. Prices remain \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. All concessions are \$1.

Feature film is "King of California" starring Michael Douglas. Douglas portrays a recently released mental patient and is reunited with his teenage daughter. Along the way in his obsessive quest to find 'buried gold' near their neighbor, the estranged parent and child rekindle a long-list bond with each other.

One or more shorts will be shown in addition to the feature film. Children's film is ALWAYS a surprise. See you there.





Pledge and Play



At the May congregational meeting Sheila Gladstone announced that to help ease the church's current financial crisis, Paradox Players has decided to pledge 100% of its 2009 profits to the church, instead of the usual 50%. This means that when you attend a performance, what you spend will go twice as far toward filling the church coffers.

It's now time to reserve your tickets for the next show, *Trying* - a smart, funny, touching drama directed by Gary Payne. Opening is June 12 on the Bethke Stage in Howson Hall.



Here's the story: Francis Biddle, Attorney General under FDR, was the primary American judge at the Nuremberg Military Tribunal. Nobody disputed Francis Biddle until his wife hires a feisty young woman from Saskatchewan to help him put things in order in the December of his life. Sparks fly when his eastern elitism clashes with her prairie populism and the two struggle to find ways to communicate. This richly crafted story, based on the playwright's own experience, shows how two strangers from very different backgrounds can unexpectedly and forever change each others' lives. A magical evening of theatre. "One of the finest pieces of theatre I have seen in many years, a glittering, diamond-hard script that is all but flawless" --The Chicago Sun-Times.

Tickets can be purchased on Sundays in the Gallery or online at paradoxplayers.org. Season ticket subscribers will need to reserve seats for the date of their choice. The reservation line is 744-1495.

Thank You Hands On Housing Volunteers

Over 60 hard-working folks, ages 3 to 83, from First UU, Live Oak, and Wildflower UU churches and the Austin Fellowship participated on April 25th in Austin Area Interreligious Ministries' Hands On Housing Bluebonnet Blitz. Some helpful neighbors also pitched right in. We painted, replaced rotten wood, replaced damaged awnings, installed flashing on the roof, repaired an indoor ceiling, and more. And we benefitted from the youthful energy and muscle of more teens and 20 somethings this time. The worker bees from First UU included: Carol and Jim Reed, Veryan Thompson, Shannon, Avalyse, and Avianna Vyff, Monty and Henry Newton, Connor Blake, Richard Mauldin, Phil Hemphill, Michael West, Lori and Rich Sommer, Joe Linsalata, Jenell Scherbel, Russell Eskew, Edward Balaguer, Chloe Barnett, Wes Gandy, and Beverly Donoghue. Working together, we made a difference for Vera Reyes and her family.



SWUUSI 2009 The Way to Peace is Through UUs!

Join UUs from the Southwestern Conference for rest, renewal, and inspiration for peacemaking under the guidance of Dr. Qiyamah Rahman, Director of Contextual Ministry of the Meadville Lombard Theological School. In four morning sessions Dr. Rahman will interpret our UU heritage and teach ways of understanding life that point toward acceptance of difference and cooperation. The interdependent web is a sacred image. Peacemaking resolve moves us to speak from empathy, solve problems, and reconcile differences. We can collaborate with gratitude and challenge unfairness kindly.

The per person registration fee increases by \$20 after June 20, so register early! Brochures and registration forms are available in the Church office. Also, on-line registration and information will be available at www.swuuc.org/swuusi. You can mail in the registration form with your check. You may also go to your Paypal account and send your payment, to payments@swuuc.org. If you pay on-line, you can email your form to SWDUUA@aol.com, or send it through the regular mail with a notation about the on-line payment. Please make sure you identify the payment as being for SWUUSI. If you have any questions Contact Mary Jane Ford, member, Denominational Affairs Committee, phone 926-4122 or email, mjaneford@grandecom.net.



Sunday Worship



The times for the Sunday morning Worship Services are 9:45 and 11:30 a.m

June 7: Rev. Kathleen Ellis, Boundaries and Bridges So often we are divided by age, race, nationality, or personality. The boundaries may be permeable but they sometimes require building bridges specifically to cross the divide.

June 14: Rev. Chuck Freeman & Mary K. Isaacs, "When You Sit, When You Walk, When You Lie Down, When You Rise" Dynamically, Unitarian Universalism has much in common with Judaism. Our ethical sensibilities draw from the Hebrew prophets. Neither religion believes in proselytizing, yet both groups have made a profound impact on culture relative to their numerical size. One difference is that Jews heavily invest in cultivating their identity. Whether one is a religious Jew or not, they are always a Jew. What can UUs and First Church gain from this practice? How can we create lifelong UUs without being sectarian?

June 21: Dr. Wendy Domjan, Ph.D. "The Psychology of Religion" At the core of religion is the personal experience of G-d, a mystical connection with the transcendent other. Yet recent research has demonstrated the neurological mechanisms that seem to be responsible for mystical experiences. What does this say about the nature of G-d and religion? Wendy Domjan is currently a Senior Lecturer in Psychology and the Assistant Director of the Plan II Honors Program at UT. She has won numerous teaching awards from Plan II, the Psychology Department and the College of Liberal Arts. Her most recent interests have centered on the psychology of religion and positive psychology.

June 28: Dr. Wendy Domjan, Ph.D. "The Psychology of Hope and Virtue" that positive emotions, such as happiness and optimism, and traditionally virtuous behaviors, have enormous beneficial effects for the person experiencing or engaging in them. Interestingly enough, these are the very emotions and behaviors promoted by religion.

Public Affairs Forum 11:30 a.m.

June 7: Is That All There Is? Donna Howard, Texas State Representative. The legislature comes in like a cyclone every other January, stirs things up for 5 months, and then moves on. What was accomplished in the 81st legislative session? Or what wasn't accomplished? Meeting every other year for 140 days to consider thousands of bills means little gets done--and that's exactly how some think it should be. State Representative Donna Howard, First UU member, shares her perceptions about what really happened under the dome.

June 14: "100 years and counting, there is still a need for the NAACP bitwithstanding the Historic Election of Barack Obama" Gary Bledsoe President of the Texas NAACP since 1991. The Austin lawyer, who specializes in public interest law, employment and civil rights law, has a longstanding relationship with the NAACP as a member of its National Board since 2003, and is currently the Chair of the National Criminal Justice Committee of the NAACP. Bledsoe has also received the Kelly Alexander State President of the Year Award, the Juanita Jackson Mitchell Award for Legal Advocacy and the Benjamin Hooks Keeper of the Flame Award and is on the Houston Hall of Fame at Riverside General Hospital. He also served as Texas' Assistant Attorney General from 1979 to 1994.

June 21: Terrorism and Islam: An Overview. Rabbi Michael LeBurkien will present an historical background and a geographical analysis of the issues surrounding terrorism and Islam. He will address the questions: Where are we now? When will it end? What role does Pakistan play? What does it mean for America? Rabbi Michael P. LeBurkien is Rabbi Emeritus of the Houston Congregation for Reform Judaism, and a retired lawyer. Previously he was an Assistant District Attorney in Brazoria Co. and an Assistant Attorney General of Environmental Law. He studied in Jerusalem before, during, and after The Six Day War. He has done graduate studies in international politics at the Sorbonne, the School of Advanced International Studies in Bologna, and the University of Wisconsin,

June 28: Cliff Brown, City of Austin Police Monitor We are excited to have Cliff Brown, as our speaker. Brown began his position on January 2nd, 2007 and reports directly to the City Manager. He's the city's 3rd police monitor and is responsible for accepting complaints from the public regarding actions and conduct of Austin Police officers, overseeing the investigation complaints, and making policy recommendations to the Chief of Police.

Denominational UUpdates

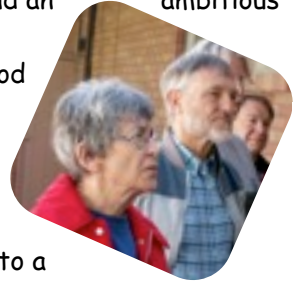
General Assembly is almost here (June 24-28, 2009, Salt Lake City, Utah). If you are interested in going, you will need to get a delegate credential card signed by Board President, Nell Newton, before you leave (yes, you can attend GA without this, but will not be eligible to vote in the UU Presidential race between Lauren Hallman and Peter Morales). Think about being a delegate to GA as a great way to get involved at First UU.

One of the biggest denominational events of our district is Southwest Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute (August 2-7, 2009); look for the full article about this year's camp (article on page 6.) And as of this month, the new Denominational Affairs Chair will be John Keohane.

The 637-Person Membership Committee



Advertisements in the Austin Chronicle. A **website** that regularly brings guests—strangely well-informed guests who come to the visitor's table with a better knowledge of our calendar and staff than the table greeter—to our Sunday service. **A sterling music program** and an **ambitious** list of Forum speakers that reach beyond our walls to the greater Austin audience. These are our tools to attract visitors, new members—the lifeblood of any church! And they're excellent, excellent tools—even during the Summer we regularly met a dozen new faces a week. **And that's only the first half of the story.**



The rest of the story is a new couple waiting for someone to talk to them in Howson Hall, a coffee hour with only 20 or so people—visitors coming to a church of opinionated, talkative people, committed to dialogue and an exchange of ideas, without having a chance to participate in that dialogue. Fabulous product, but a so-so marketing effort. Marketing isn't just the initial sell—it's the conversation leading up to the sell, crafting a product that draws the customer in the first place, and participating in the customer's experience until they buy again. Each visitor that stays with us might easily co-chair a committee in three years, but it'd be only one year if we found the perfect committee for them in their first week!



This month, join the Membership Committee. You don't have to come to our meetings, or staff a table, or get a station at the front door—just make a pledge to be a part of the church's



Welcoming Army, the 600. Make a sacred vow to the deific force of your choice to take a quick tour through Howson Hall this Sunday...and the next Sunday, and every Sunday, and find someone you don't recognize. Begin the

conversation with "Have we met?" or "How long have you been coming to the church?" or "What a great shirt/dress/opinion you have!" If one visitor has two or three conversations on their first Sunday, we may very well have a new member. Think back to your first Sunday here, and be the person you would have wanted to meet.



Join us at the **Meet and Eat** in Howson on June 17. The program this evening will focus on being an open, welcoming congregation, and it will be an excellent, positive discussion with **Janet Newman**
See you there!



The First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin Music Program Presents:

Der Herr denket an uns

by
Johann Sebastian Bach

The FUUCA Choir
Musicians of the Austin Symphony
Members of the Texas Choral Consort

Sunday, June 7th 2009

9:45am and 11:30am services

4700 Greener Avenue
Austin TX 78756

**A Musical Offering:
"Der Herr Denket An
Uns" by J.S. Bach
Sunday, June 7th
(both morning services)**

The FUUCA Choir will wrap up their Spring season with this extended orchestral work by Johann Sebastian Bach. They will be joined by musicians of the Austin Symphony, Tosca, Barton Strings and the Texas Choral Consort. Don't miss this musical treat!



Brent Baldwin,
Music Director



- * The church will save about \$200 every month because people are now receiving their newsletter electronically rather than through the mail?
- * Austin's Carnival Brasileiro, the largest indoor Brazilian Carnival in the world, got its start at First UU in 1975.
- * It costs about \$350 every week to keep the church clean.
- * Our Memorial Butterfly Wall was inspired by an ancient Mayan belief that the butterfly represents all consciousness that has ever existed in this galaxy.
- * Our spring canvass this year raised twice as much as our last one ten years ago.

**Congratulations to
Lee Leffingwell
Folks Speak of him....**

The New Mayor of Austin is an old time member of First UU. He was very active in the 90's in the Public Affairs Forum. According to Suzy and Bill Reid, "He was very involved for a long time in getting good programs. He had excellent ideas for topics of interest and also had many connections for getting good speakers."



Henry Hug commented, "Lee has shown a steady hand and maturity as befits someone who flew the international routes of Delta as captain of DC10's. This is what the City of Austin needs at this time."

When asked what was the most important characteristic of Lee, Nancy Neavel replied that he was a man of integrity in every situation she could think of..... Congratulations Lee! We feel happy and proud of your achievement and look forward to all the good you will do for Austin.

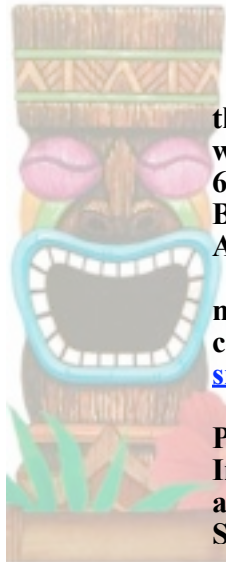
Religious Education

Couples Club Luau

Couples of the church are invited to the first monthly Couples Club which will take place on Saturday, June 6 at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Sharon and Brian Moore, 8000 High Hollow Drive, Austin, Texas 78750.

Bring either an appetizer, salad, main dish, or dessert. Soft drinks and coffee served. BYOB. Sign up at smoore779@austin.rr.com

Bring your swimsuits and towels! Prizes awarded for best hula dance!!! In the meantime, be thinking of activities we can offer on the first Saturday of each month.



Spiritual Discussion is Underway

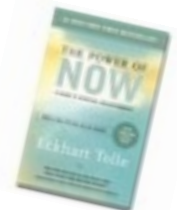
Larry Gilstrap facilitates this new and interesting group. Meetings are in Room 7 every Sunday from 2:30-4:30 pm.

June topics include: 7th Is Violence Ever Morally Justified? From self-defense to preemptive war, are the reasons given justified, or simply convenient excuses? 14th Heaven and Hell. If all spiritual paths lead to Heaven, why do so many of life's journeys seem to pass straight through Hell? 21st Salvation! (through Therapy?!) What are we to be saved from? And can the right approach to (psycho-) therapy actually get us there? 28th Waiting for the Messiah? If there is indeed a Messiah coming, how will we recognize him? Her?! Them??!! And what will they really do for us?

Eckhart Tolle Discussion Group

Eckhart Tolle is a spiritual teacher and author who was born in Germany and educated at the Universities of London and Cambridge. He is the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller, **The Power of Now** and the highly acclaimed follow-up **A New Earth**, which are widely regarded as two of the most influential spiritual books of our time. Eckhart's profound, yet simple teachings have already helped countless people throughout the world find inner peace and greater fulfillment in their lives.

We meet every Thursday, 7:30 to 9:00 PM, in Room 13 where we discuss a chapter each week from **The Power of Now**. At the June 4th meeting we will show a video of Eckhart teaching at a seminar. A donation of \$5.00 per person is requested. Should you have any questions contact Joe Linsalata 512-327-5000 or Linsalata@austin.rr.com



Circle of Friends - A covenant group for single adults

This group for singles of all ages is forming now and invites single folks from all the UU churches in the area to participate. The intention of this group is to support singles with both social activities and an Evensong and/or covenant group experience. Members can choose to attend just the social outings, just the covenant group or both. We hope to provide an

environment for single adults that is both fun and supportive of deeper connection. Singles of the church are invited to a potluck and first meeting of the group which will take place on Saturday, June 6 at 7:00 p.m. in Howson Hall. Bring either an appetizer, salad, main dish, or dessert. Soft drinks and coffee served. Please contact Mary Ann Stafford at mas1038166@aol.com for more information and to RSVP.



FUUCA & OPRAH



Keep an eye out for the July 2009 issue of "O" (Oprah) magazine. An Adult Religious Education class will be mentioned...which one? Wait & see.

Children's Religious Education

Scott Bukti New Youth Leader

You may have noticed a new adviser hanging out with the YRUU group. Scott Butki has joined our staff as the new Youth Advisor. Scott brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to his new position. For the last three years Scott was a major part of the Religious Education programs in the Unitarian Universalist Church of Frederick, MD. He worked with all ages, but particularly connected with the youth. On his last day there he was given a t-shirt and most of the youth signed the back of it. Scott still wears the shirt with great pride.



In his work with the MD Youth, he was part of their rally, participated in monthly movie nights and was a constant supporting presence to both the youth and his fellow congregates. If you would like more information on Scott's experiences with the MD church, please check out his very touching piece on leaving the church to come to Austin to be close to his family. <http://sbutki.newsvine.com>

Children and Youth RE Social Action Project

The Summer Social Action project for the children and youth will be performed in-house this year. The children and youth, in coordination with the Congregational Care Community, will identify church members who are not able to fully participate in the life of the church. The children will then "adopt" those folks for the summer by finding out if they can perform some tasks, run some errands, bake them cookies and/or use other creative ways of reaching out to members who cannot be physically with us in church as much as they would like to be.

If you would like to help the children with this project or know of someone who would like to be "adopted" by the children, please contact Lara Douglass, lara@austinuu.org.

YRUU Busy Month!

The YRUU folks have been very busy this month, doing everything from meeting the new Youth Advisor/YRUU adviser, to preparing and serving up food for the May 3 Congregational Meeting and nurturing our souls with the youth-led service on Mother's Day. Two of our youth, Edward and Josh, are preparing to graduate high school and will head off to college in the Fall. The Bridging Ceremony for these seniors will be held on Sunday, June 7. Special thanks to Elizabeth Gray for coordinating this event. Among the tasks and fun times we hope to accomplish this summer are to attend a district rally and have an important lock-in to choose the new leadership for YRUU and make calendar plans for the 09/10 church year.



We have GREAT Youth!
We have a New Leader
with great experience!
WANTED: Interested
ADULTS to be on
the :Youth Advisory



Join Ruth Marie!

Please consider volunteering with the youth. AZ and Mark Beavers are stalwarts, Ruth Marie is a constant delight and inspiration, but we need to broaden our volunteer base. We can always use more volunteers, be it as advisers for the youth-led meetings each Sunday at 2:30 p.m. or for special events. The youth also have classes at 11:30 during the morning church service. We are also looking for people to serve on a Youth Advisory Committee (also sometimes known as YAC), which is being revived and reestablished. Ideally a YAC has both teens and adults and preferably adults whose kids are not in the program. You can read about how these programs work at this article at UU World: <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/leaderslibrary/interconnections/43579.shtml>. For information contact Lara Douglass, lara@austinuu.org or Scott Bukti Scott@austinuu.org.

That information just scratches the surface of all that is going on in the youth program this summer. Please come join us as we as young leaders develop our skills and make a

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*One Church. Many Beliefs.***

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Next Newsletter Deadline

15th of the month

Please submit information to

news@austinuu.org

Office Summer Schedule: Closed for work on Mondays

In the interest of using staff time more efficiently and serving this community better, the business office will be closed to the public and congregants on Mondays. By reducing interruptions, staff performance and productivity will improve on the many tasks that require focus and our undivided attention. The office will remain open to congregants and the public Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please see page 2 for more details.

Announcements and Newsletter Requests

As we continue to develop a more user friendly (we hope) news system at First UU, a reiteration of the deadlines and style requests seem to be in order. The Announcements are due on Wednesday at noon. The Newsletter deadline is the 15th of the month at noon. Contribute a story about the church or an individual or event at the church. If you have suggestions on ways to improve our publications, or items of interest that might be included in the newsletter, please share them with us. Finally, remember a picture is worth a thousand words. If you have pictures (jpeg please) to go with the article or story, send them along. Linda Taylor, publications coordinator, can be reached most easily by email linda@austinuu.org if you have questions, comments, or suggestions.

SECURITY SITUATION

Do you access the building before/after hours? We are changing our alarm code and key distribution system, so if you have a key to any door/classroom/closet of the building, please contact Natalie in the office via email natalie@austinuu.org. If you try to access the building after the alarm code is changed, and the alarm goes off, unfortunately you will be responsible for the fee charged by the alarm company. If you no longer need to access the building, please return your keys to Natalie to reduce our hardware expenses. Thank you for helping us to maintain the security of our building.