

What is First UU
here for?

What is our
saving message?

What difference
are we here to make & for whom?

APRIL NEWSLETTER

ALL First UU Austin members, non-members and newcomers are invited to participate in the biggest, most important conversation taking place in our church this year.



Bridge to our Future

Both Peter Steinke, author and expert on congregational systems, and Stefan Jonasson, UUA Director for Large Congregations, have said the most important thing that we can do right now, as we transition from a medium-sized community church into a larger program-based church, is reexamine and reenergize our mission.

**What is good here?
What are we proud of?**

How can we build on our strengths?

What can we become?

What can we do in the world?

These questions and more are at the heart of the Bridge to our Future forums taking place during April. With the assistance of Joe Sullivan, Dean of the Southwest District Leadership Experience, the First UU Austin Board of Trustees has launched the Bridge to our Future forums. Each forum will provide attendees with an opportunity to be heard, and an opportunity to listen to others, as we jointly imagine the future of First UU Austin.

Each forum will be 3 hours maximum, and are offered at a variety of times for your convenience. Child care will be provided at each session (please indicate this when you sign up). You can sign up at a

table in the Gallery between services, or online by visiting austinuu.org, and selecting Bridgebuilder on the left hand side. **This is an important opportunity to be heard, so speak up! Chose one from the schedule below.**

Wednesday, April 7 th	7 p.m. - 10 p.m.	Young Adults Group Session
Saturday, April 10 th	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Saturday Morning Session
Saturday, April 10 th	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Mens Group Retreat, @ U-Bar-U
Wednesday, April 21 st	6 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Wed Eat and Meet Session
Sunday, April 25 th	2 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Sunday Afternoon Session



In the Interim by Janet Newman

The theme of last month's sermons, everything you ever wanted to know about ministry, was intended to get congregants thinking about the path ahead that leads to calling a settled minister.

In April, the Interim Minister Task Force will take on the task of applying for an Interim Minister for 2010-2011 and finding that person. When I attend the continuing education conference for Accredited Interim Ministers in mid-April, I plan to speak very highly of First UU and recommend that all of the participants pay attention to this congregation. I'm sure you'll have plenty of applicants for the position.

Meanwhile, plans are afoot to send a First UU team to the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association in order to bring back information, wisdom, and opportunities that can benefit the church.

The team is developing a strategy to make the most of General Assembly. Some goals include finding stewardship resources, developing peer networks (especially for executive staff and church officers), forging a stronger connection to the UUA and the liberal movement, creating a positive buzz about First UU, and finding resources to help in the ongoing implementation of the Bridge Builder Action Plan.

Regretfully, this year's church budget does not provide finances to help send people to G.A. So the team, composed of executive staff and church officers, is appealing to the congregation to donate frequent flyer miles and gifts of cash so that support is available to those on the team who cannot dedicate personal resources to attend. The checks for the GA team should be made out to the First UU Church and in the memo it should say "for GA." These checks will be entered into the Minister's Discretionary Account and will enable elected leaders and staff to go to the General Assembly. Expenses for General Assembly include transportation to Minneapolis, registration (\$310) per person, lodging (\$150 per night per room) and meals. Anyone who can help with frequent flyer miles or support for expenses listed above is asked to contact me directly: email janet@austinuu.org or 452-6168 x 304. Best regards, *Janet E. Newman, Interim Minister*



Easter Egg Hunt!
Sunday April 4th, bring a dozen eggs per child...
Drop off in kitchen.
The earlier the better!!!



Passover Seder 2010

This year's Passover Seder will be Saturday evening, April 3th, at 6:00 pm in Howson Hall. You can RSVP and pay in advance at our Passover table in the Gallery on Sunday or register on the church website at www.austinuu.org.

Flower Communion:
It's so easy, everyone bring one fresh flower with you to the Sunday April 4th Service!



Cookie Cafe...
Sunday April 4th, 10am to 1:00pm
Howson Hall.
Join us for a spring celebration of fellowship and pastries...
See you there!



Sunday Worship



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

April 4: "So Much in Bud" by Rev. Dr. Janet E. Newman. Typically, Unitarian Universalists have difficulty with the traditional miracle story of Easter. During this sermon I hope to provide resources that fit with our liberal understanding of miracle. Additionally, the service will include a naming ceremony for Charlotte Rebecca Reed (first service only), a flower communion, music by the intergenerational choir, and the much-loved Easter egg hunt – and then the cookie feast later!

April 11: "Liberal Religion Education: Then and Now" Ms. Lara Douglass, Director of Religious Education. Exploring the origins and evolution of our current theological perspectives in Religious Education. Guest pianist Michelle Schumann, Artistic Director of the Austin Chamber Music Center, will provide the music for services

April 18: "Environmentalism and a Culture of Caring: An Earth Day Message" Rev. Mark Skrabacz, Kerrville UU Church of the Hill Country, returns to our church to share why he is feeling hopeful in spite of the many problems threatening the health and future of Mother Earth. Come receive inspiration on this Earth Day Sunday. First UU Adult Choir will sing selections from Randall Thompson's "Frostiana" (choral settings of Robert Frost poems).

April 25: "I Do! I Do! The Joy of Volunteering" by Rev. Dr. Janet Newman. How often we take each other for granted, and how seldom we recognize that the church would not exist were it not for the volunteers who serve it. In this service I plan to allow lots of opportunity for recognition, celebration, and hurrahs for church volunteers. Guest touring singer/songwriter Michael Mandrell will share his songs in both services.



Sunday Forum



The time for the Sunday Forum is 11:30 a.m.

April 4: No Forum this week. Enjoy the Egg hunts, Flower Communion, and cooky Potluck!

April 11: Mary Gordon Spence, Writer, Commentator, Storyteller "Finding Magic in the Mundane" Austin *humorologist* (Mary made up that word) had an epiphany during a recent funeral service. She decided to celebrate all the paradoxes in life rather than trying to resolve them. Mary Gordon is always on the lookout for magic amid the mundane. As a writer, commentator and storyteller, she regales her audiences with that magic. A master of diversity, Mary Gordon has taught school—from kindergarten to college, lived in Latin America, worked for a former US president and always keeps her television volume on an even number. She delivers engaging presentations around the nation. She writes a regular column for the Austin American Statesman (that appears irregularly), provides commentary for KUT Radio, and is working on her second book. Get ready to be entertained and stimulated by Austin author and master storyteller Mary Gordon Spence.

April 18: "Reinventing the Energy Delivery System" Brewster McCracken, former Austin City Council Member and now the Executive Director of the Pecan Street Project, will share this exciting adventure in community-wide collaboration to establish Austin as America's Clean Energy Laboratory and fully re-invent the energy delivery system. The Pecan Street Project is an ambitious effort to empower customers and innovators to use the energy system in new ways while making energy cleaner, water usage more efficient, and the economy stronger.

April 25: "The Middle East: Poetry and Politics," Fady Joudah, Palestinian Poet, Translator, and Physician. Fady Joudah was born in Austin, Texas in a Palestinian refugee home. He is a physician of internal medicine in Houston and a field member of Doctors Without Borders. He is also a world class translator and poet. He is well published in the field of medicine. He has held posts in Darfur and Zambia. His literary works have appeared in several journals and anthologies. His translation of Mahmoud Darwish's most recent poetry is in the Butterfly's Burden from Copper Canyon Press. He is the recipient of the Yale Series for Younger Poets Award for 2007 (the first Arab American to be awarded the prize); he was finalist for ForeWord magazine poetry book of the year in 2008. Dr. Joudah will speak on the Middle East and how his experiences have shaped his careers in medicine and poetry. Please welcome this outstanding native son of Austin.

Interim Minister Task Force is Meeting and the Search is Underway

The Interim Minister Search process is underway and will seek input from the Board and the Congregation. Five capable and energetic volunteers have been gathered to assemble our church's application for an interim minister for the second of a planned two-year interim period. The volunteers on the Interim Task Force reflect a wide variety of experience at First UU and in their professional lives. **Gillian Redfearn** was elected by the group as its chair. She is a parent, long time member and former Religious Education teacher. **Nancy Bene** served as a member of the Interim search team last year and is a member of Rev. Janet Newman's Interim Transition Team. **Kae McLaughlin** is one of the most visible members of the group. She's a former congregational (temple) administrator, active with several current First UU committees and has hands' on experience with Policy Style Governance. **Ken Pfluger** and **Brian Miller** are both parents and members of the Men's Fellowship Breakfast. Ken participated in Bridgebuilders and Brian has worked with the Finance Committee. **Michael West**, Board Trustee is the Board's liaison to the Task Force.

The Task Force has held their first full meeting and received an overview of the Interim Search process as conducted within the framework of the UUA Transitions program. The Task Force will seek some in put from the congregation in order to communicate the considerable progress we at First UU Austin have made over the past year. As part of the UUA guidelines, the chosen Interim minister will not be a candidate for our called minister. The Task Force understands that while this task is not the same as that of selecting a candidate for a called minister, it is extremely important in the life and transition of this church.

In terms of timing, the Task Force is working on the Interim Application and plans to submit it to the UUA Transitions Office by mid-April. The Transitions office is the clearinghouse for congregations seeking an Interim Minister and for ministers seeking an Interim position. The Task Force will begin to review the available candidates as soon as late April according to John Weston of UUA. The Task Force will review the qualifications and references of the candidates and make a recommendation of their choice to the Board. The Board of Trustees will contract with the selected candidate to begin at the church around September 1st. A wide variety of resources on the transition process are available on the UUA.org website. The Task Force looks forward to their work and the successful completion of a second year of interim ministry. *Michael West, Board of Trustees*

Next Congregational Votes at First UU

Please mark your calendars for the next congregational meeting, your chance to participate in our democratic processes at First UU Church (including electing new trustees), which will happen on Sunday, May 16th. Details of the meeting will be mailed beforehand, and a Pre-Congregational Meeting on Sunday, April 18th, will provide discussion of items that will appear on the May agenda.

In order to vote at the May meeting, you must be a voting member. Requirements are:

1. Must sign the membership book at least 30 days before a congregational meeting. Currently, the Membership book is available for signing in the Gallery on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. The last signing opportunity before the deadline is Sunday, April 11.
- 2) Make a "contribution of record" at least 30 days prior to a congregational meeting. A contribution of record includes pledge payments and other recorded contributions. An unfulfilled pledge is not a contribution of record. For more information about becoming a member, please contact the membership committee: Jacob Williamson jvw@io.com. If you have other questions, comments, or concerns, please contact Sean Hale, Executive Director, sean@austinuu.org.



Rev. Kathleen Ellis

Settled Ministry Search is Underway


First UU Austin is embarking on the long-anticipated search for its next Settled Minister. The journey will take a yearlong path of inquiry and engage the entire congregation. One of the first critical steps is the selection of a Settled Ministry Search Committee. According to the 1st UU By-Laws, the Settled Ministry Search Committee is selected by your Board of Trustees. The Board has asked trustee, Michael West, to oversee that selection.

On Sunday March 14, First UU hosted the Rev. Kathleen Ellis in her role of Ministerial Settlement Representative for the Southwestern District of the UUA. Her sermon addressed the responsibilities of our congregation as we look toward calling a settled minister after two years of guiding interim ministry. After

the two services, she provided a more in-depth overview of the process overall, the kinds of persons best suited to the tasks at hand and the level of commitment required to successfully carry out the responsibilities of the Search Committee. She pointed out that the best candidates for the Search Committee are those members whose overall perspective and demonstrated commitment is to the nature, purpose and activities of our church community. Contrary to what might be expected, she does not recommend that the Search Committee be made up of representatives of special interests within the church. The top two characteristics on her list of the kind of persons to seek include:

- One who is committed to UU pluralism in every area: theology, life styles, and social concern.
 - One who is patiently able to work for consensus rather than insisting upon majority rule or minority tyranny.
- The persons chosen will have a demonstrated commitment of time and energy and have the evident confidence of our Congregation.

Quite aside from the requirements of goodwill and emotional and spiritual energy, Rev. Ellis pointed out that it is not unusual for members of the Search Committee to devote some 400 or more hours to the search process over the next year.

If you are interested in serving as a member of the Settled Ministry Search Committee, please notify Michael West (mlwesttx@earthlink.net) or any member of the Board of Trustees. You will be asked to complete a short Application Form  that provides information on your interests and experience in church activities and to identify the gifts you might bring to the Search. You will also be asked to acknowledge your awareness of the level of commitment required to participate in the year-long search process. *Michael West, Board of Trustees*

[Click words "Application Form to download it!](#)

Sack Lunch for the Working Homeless: Special Offering April 11th

The Monthly Special Offering promotes our UU values in the larger community. This month's collection is for the Sack Lunch Program for the Working Homeless. Each Monday a team meets to prepare lunches and deliver them to the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless.

The Sack Lunch Program requires money as well as labor to operate. Please give generously to support one of the church's major social action programs and to nurture the worth and dignity of the working homeless. Membership is open. If you are interested in joining, please stop by the Social Action table in the Gallery any Sunday or contact Mary Jane Ford at mjaneford@grandecom.net.



Theater Community

Find Yourself a Role!



April Auditions – CHARLIE COX RUNS WITH SCISSORS, directed by Lisa Foster, is a dramatic comedy – a battle between Love and Death over the fate of Charlie Cox, a man who never took a risk about anything. Lisa requests that auditionees read the script first, then audition. All roles are open, ages 20 to 60. You can check out a script from the PP mailbox at church, or contact Paul to make other arrangements, at paradoxplayers@hotmail.com. So read the script, then audition on Wed, April 7, at 7:00 in room 13 or Sat, April 10, at 3:00 in Howson Hall. Callbacks will be Sun, April 11, at 3:30 in Howson Hall. Performances run June 4 – 20.

Other roles open – new roles are now open to anyone wanting to play with us offstage! Whether you enjoy shopping, sewing, learning a new skill or supervising folks to be sure all the parts work together, we have a role for you. And the best part about getting involved with Paradox Players – the people you'll meet, all supporting a creative muse that contributes so much to the church community, spiritually and financially. We are like an extended family, working and playing together. Please contact Ann Edwards, at paradoxplayers@hotmail.com to explore what role you'd like to play.

Props needed – artificial flowers and plants. Please contact Ann at paradoxplayers@hotmail.com, and bring to the area behind the curtain on side of stage. *Ann Edwards, Paradox Players*



Readers' Theater

Readers' Theater: Acting without stage fright! Enjoy unrehearsed reading aloud – one act plays – Monday evening, April 12, at 7:30 in room 13. Newcomers always welcome.

Opportunities to make a difference!

In the next few months, Unitarian Universalists from all over the Southwest and North America have two golden opportunities to make a difference in the direction of our district and association.

First, **the annual meeting of the Southwest Conference**. This year folks from Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Tennessee will assemble at Community UU Church, Plano, Texas, April 23-25 to enjoy worship, a keynote speaker, workshops, music, and great fellowship. Make new UU friends and greet longtime friends at the meeting and learn about the directions and future of the district. Community UU has put together a very informative brochure. You can go to www.communityuuchurch.org/page/springconf for details on the conference and an opportunity to register.

Second comes **the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association**. This is the largest collection of UU's you'll likely ever see! Participants come from nearly all congregations in North America to worship, learn, influence the business of the association, make music together, meet new friends, enjoy great company – and much more. There is excellent information on the website of the association: UUA.org/generalassembly. Where and when: Minneapolis, Minnesota; June 23-27. please don't miss these events! For more info, please write me (janet@austinuu.org) or call me (452-6168 x 304) or anyone else who has taken part through the years. *Rev. Dr. Janet E. Newman, Interim Minister*



Celebration-Potluck-Book Sale

The Church Library Grand Reopening

We are very excited to reopen the library, and to have the opportunity to let you know about our future library projects on Saturday, April 17th from 11 to 2.

We are counting on you to bring books for the sale (not books to be donated to the library), and to come and have a good time with us. We are also asking for volunteers to help with the sale, please contact Stephanie 512 291 3106 or email at ThunderhoofDesigns@Yahoo.com to help. Please check out our new bulletin board space in the R E Hall!

Seniors' Luncheon

Tuesday, April 13th
Howson Hall at Noon

Soup,
Salad &
Dessert \$5

RSVP to
Alice Cashman
837-0988

Program: Enjoy another one of Greg & Vryan Thompson's exciting adventures as they show us pictures of their recent trip to Iceland.



THE RECOVERY SPIRAL



A PAGAN PATH TO HEALING
CYNTHIA JANE COLLINS, M.DIV.

The Recovery Circle For Alternative Faiths

We are working our way together through the 12 step rituals from *The Recovery Spiral: A Pagan Path to Healing* by Cynthia Jane Collins. All ritual items are provided, and we have extra copies of the book for you to use. This is an inclusive recovery group for Atheists, Pagans, and anyone whose faith preference is not "mainstream." Our intention is to open a door for healing and hope, tolerance, and growth. Come and explore the possibilities with us.

This is a healing time for us to share sacred space together. Please come! We meet each Wednesday, at 7:00 p.m. alternating between a home in N. Austin and one in S. Austin. Please call or email for directions to:

Stephanie at 512-291-3106, ([ThunderhoofDesigns at yahoo dot com](mailto:ThunderhoofDesigns@yahoo.com)), or
Brooks at 512-512-371-3228 ([brooksie153 at Yahoo dot com](mailto:brooksie153@yahoo.com)) and it's okay to leave a message at either number. -- Sponsored by Yew Grove Pagan Interfaith

NUTS and BOLTS

The nuts-and-bolts of Stewardship over the next few months will include helping our members keep on top of their Pledge commitments. Our members – you, we – made our Pledges willingly and freely. In the past, it has often fallen to our members themselves to remember to make their own payments. Our Church has made the process of paying easier over the years though the options of automatic bank drafts and scheduled credit card transfers. Still and all, our Church has found that credit cards require such maintenance as updating the expiration dates. Further, payments by check-in-the-mail or into the Sunday plate are sometimes easy to overlook. The Stewardship committee will begin with the simplest of reminders – the reminder of the dollar amount of your pledge for 2010, and the amount paid through the date of the report. No high pressure, no moralizing, no guilt: a simple accounting of two numbers.

The nuts-and-bolts of Stewardship over the next few months and beyond will also include the consolidation of our growing sense of community and commitment to our Church from within ourselves. The definition of Stewardship has to do with the bedrock of commitment of our Congregation to our Church, and the commitment of our Church to our Congregation. This goes well beyond an annual Canvass, and sending reminders of where everybody stands in meeting their own pledge commitments. This is where you come in.

Bill Edwards, Chairperson of Stewardship

Social Action: Reaching Out to the World

Hands On Housing Saturday, April 17th



It's that time again – Saturday, April 17th is our spring “Bluebonnet Blitz” Hands On Housing project with UUs from Live Oak UU and other UU churches in the area.

We will be repairing the home owned by an elderly disabled couple in East Austin. Their house needs carpentry repairs and outside painting, so there will be tasks for all skill levels on Saturday –

with volunteer shifts from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., 1 to 4 p.m., and 4 to 7 p.m. To make

the best use of our volunteers, we need more workers to sign up for the afternoon shifts. Hands On Housing is a family-friendly event: supervised children are welcome. Between 12 and 1 p.m., lunch will be provided for all volunteers, and we'll take a group picture. We're also planning on hosting a short meeting the following weekend to reflect on the impact of working with Hands On Housing on volunteers and on the homeowners. To sign up or get more information, contact Beverly Donoghue at 971-5402 or

beverlydonoghue@yahoo.com. You can also sign up at the Social Action table in the Gallery between and after Sunday services. Join us! -*Beverly Donoghue*



Beverly Donoghue



Songs of Hope

Sat., April 10 at the Quaker Meeting House, 3701 E. MLK Blvd, come to the 2nd annual Death Row Ministry Benefit featuring Quaker and UU musicians as well as others. This event starts at 7:00 p.m., and the doors open at 6:00 p.m. It's for a good cause within our church's mission and will be a wholesome event, smoke and alcohol free, in an intimate setting.

There is a suggested donation at the door of \$10.00 per person, but nobody will be turned away. -*Mary Jane Ford*



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. The next 2nd Tuesday Collate Group meets at PCC on April 13th from 10am-12pm to collate & stuff patient information packets. You don't have to participate each month, just as you can. There are usually around 6-8 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. If you are interested in helping with any of these activities, please contact Sheri Overton at sherioverton@hotmail.com or 512-847-2685.



*Brent Baldwin
Music Director*

MUSIC MATTERS

The First UU Austin Intergenerational Choir: SINGING THROUGH THE AGES



In the past year, the First UU music program has featured a number of collaborations between members of the Adult and Children's Choirs. Collectively, this musical entity has become known as the First UU Austin Intergenerational Choir.

Often infused with the energy of bass and drums, the Intergenerational Choir represents one of the church's largest organizations, with an age-span of nearly eight-decades.

In addition to the musical fun that the group has together, the collaboration represents one of the strongest bridges between the RE and Worship areas of the church—as one church member put it, the Intergenerational Choir “is the epitome of what our church is all about!”

We have recently begun to invite Children's Choir parents (and grandparents!) to take a part in the group, which is another exciting opportunity for intergenerational interaction. We welcome all guests who want to come sing with us, even if you are not a member of our Adult or Children's Choirs. Simply come and join in the fun. The next Intergenerational Choir offering happens on Easter Sunday (4/4). Hope to see you there!



*Kelan Latimer & Danielle Solan
Primary & Youth Choir Directors*

First UU Camp...

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry



This year's First UU camp will take place the week of July 26-30, 2010, and once again the theme is:

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

The mornings will include activities such as Quidditch and Wizard Chess as well as classes such as Herbology, Potions, and Magical Creatures. Afternoon activities will include social action projects and field trips to local muggle sites. Please visit our webpage for specific information: <http://www.austinuu.org/wp/religious-education/campuu/>

Witches and wizards entering grades 1-6 are eligible to enroll at Hogwarts. Those entering grades 7-9 may enroll as assistant prefects, while those entering grades 10 and above (including college) will serve as full prefects and assist with running the camp. The cost for the week is \$200 for campers (with a \$50 discount for UU members), \$100 for assistant prefects, and free for regular prefects (who, on successful completion of their obligations, will also receive letters certifying their volunteer hours).

We will begin accepting registrations in late March. We plan to delay announcing the camp outside of the UU community to give preference to children from UU families.

We are seeking adults to participate as volunteer professors for morning classes, as house elves, as chaperones for afternoon field trips, or as members of the Ministry of Magic. Please contact the camp directors at CHARM-committee@yahoogroups.com.

With magical anticipation,
Professor Esmirelda McGonagall, Head Mistress 2010
(aka Vicki Almstrum, almstrum)

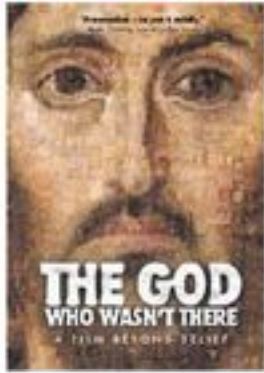
Dear UU Families,

*Which house are your campers
going to be in?*

The sorting hat will decide...

*Ravenclaw, Slytherin,
Gryffindor or Hufflepuff.*





The April movie for Spirituality Night will be "The God Who Wasn't There." The movie will be shown at 7 p.m. on April 23. The documentary is about the fundamental questions: Is there a God? What does historical evidence say? We'll get into a good ol' debate about atheists and other skeptics. We can talk about my new favorite word - apatheist which the Urban Dictionary defines as "someone who just doesn't care whether God exists or not and realizes that such a fact won't effect their life anyway, comes from the word 'apathy' meaning "absence of emotion" and 'theism' meaning "belief in God"

There will also be a children's movie so there will be childcare for kids over age 5. For more information contact, Scott, at Scott@austinuu.org

Great Activities in the Junior and Senior High Programs

The Middle School and High School Religious Education classes are learning about Islam. They have had guest speakers who explained to them what it is like to a muslim and a media portrayal separating what many think they know about Islam from what their holy book actually says. The last Sunday in March they attended a prayer service, to which they were invited by the interfaith group which made the video presentation.

The classes also discussed the first two UU principals: The inherent worth and dignity of every person; Justice, equity and compassion in human relations. With this discussion we spoke of cults and what to watch out for regarding them. The consensus of the students was that the most difficult of the UU principals to follow are the first two, showing compassion to others especially when someone is acting, in their words, like jerks or bullies. This matches my own experience when discussing the principals with adults. Put simply it is hard to treat someone with compassion and dignity when that person is not showing compassion and being quite rude. It was a good discussion, as I would ask each of them to explain in their own words what they felt each principal was all about.

Some of the high school students will be attending a youth rally in Dallas the weekend of April 11-12. Separately in San Antonio, but the same weekend, some of the middle school students will be attending a new event I have helped organize and promote, at the behest of the district: An event for middle school students throughout our district. This will be an overnight event similar to the lock-ins we have periodically for the high schoolers.

A rally is when students from throughout our church district get together for a weekend and have a wide variety of activities ranging from a worship service to a social action event to a dance and talent show. A "lock-in" is when students stay in a building and do activities together, from board games to watching a movie to just talking. Both events are, essentially, about community and seem to result in better relations, and more empathy, among members.

I will report back in the next newsletter on how those events went. Meanwhile, we need volunteers to attend both events so if available to attend and/or drive please email me.

Meanwhile, the classes are going great as the students are learning about what all the religions we have looked at have in common, particularly the importance and value of family, community and love. We will have time for examining one or two more religions after islam but we have not picked which those will be.

Some from both class walked that talk, literally, by participating in the CROP walk last Sunday.

Scott Butki, Adult and Youth Religious Education Assistant

First Unitarian Universalist

Church of Austin

4700 Grover Avenue

Austin, TX 78756

One Church. Many Beliefs.

Interim Minister

Rev. Janet Newman

Executive Director:

Sean Hale ext 308

Director of Religious Education:

Lara Douglass ext 305

Director of Music: Brent Baldwin

Board President: Nell Newton

Church Phone: (512) 452-6168

Church Fax: (512) 453-5912

E-Mail: info@AustinUU.org

Bits and Pieces

Sing-a-Long will be held on the fourth Saturday, April 24, from 7:30 to 10:30 at the Friend's Meeting House on 3701 E. MLK Blvd. Please bring snacks and finger foods, musical instruments, and copies of songs you want to sing with the group. Copies of "Rise Up Singing" will be available. Please do not bring alcohol, since this is not a custom of the Quakers. For more information contact Larry Vaughn 469-0029 or email lavest@sbcglobal.net. To be added to the email list, contact Mary Jane Ford at mjaneford@grandecom.net.

Sharing Suppers will be held on **Saturday, April 17th at 6:30 pm**. Sharing Suppers is a get together of UU's for an informal dinner and good conversation in a home setting. The host/hostess furnishes the entrée and the participants each bring one food item. It's an inexpensive way to have a dinner with interesting folks that have many of your same interests. Please sign up for this month's get-together by Sunday, April 11th. Just call Linda Buehlmann@323-5334 or e-mail her at

lindabuehlmann@sbcglobal.net. Or if you wish, you may sign up on the sheet posted outside office 8.

The Membership Committee's third Wednesday Meet and Eat / Informal Forum will host one of the Bridge to Our Future forums from 6-9 in Howson Hall on April 21. (See Brendan Sterne's article) Please sign up by April 19 with Jeanette Swenson at 524-1973 or at jeanetteswenson@yahoo.com; at the Visitors Table in the foyer; on the wall between Rooms 6 and 8. Childcare may be reserved directly at childcare@austinuu.org. NOTE: Leadership Development "Harvest the Power", Session 4, will meet in the Gallery at 7PM. If you are attending "Harvest the Power", please plan to attend one of the other Bridge to our Future Forums.