

Spotlight On...

Sally Scott

If you were in church on Sunday July 18th you experienced the “unveiling” of our vision, mission and ends. It seemed like a good idea to shine the spotlight on one of the many members of our church who exhibits these qualities not only within the church but in the world community as well. The choice is Sally Scott.

Sally Scott has been attending first UU since she moved to Austin in 1971. Her mother raised her as a Unitarian, Sally has been active in this church for 40 years and is still going strong. Sally loves First UU. She has fond memories of attending “meetings” on Sunday at Waterloo Park and swimming parties with Religious Education.

For years Sally was a kindergarten teacher; she really likes working with the little ones best. The All Austin Coop was housed at First UU for years and Sally taught the kindergarten children in that program.

Sally is no stranger to Sunday morning church goers. She is often in the pulpit as the Lay Leader or telling the children the story for all ages. Wander down the hall on another Sunday, and she will be in the classrooms helping with the little ones.

Sally is the volunteer extraordinaire. She served on the Nominating Committee. She is currently a member of the Stewardship Committee and stepped up to the helm of the Fellowship Committee recently. And for sure every time the Senior Lunch has music for the entertainment, Sally is the first one up dancing!

In the wider community Sally’s involvement begins with what’s beyond her backyard: Bright Leaf Preserve. She is a past President of the Friends of Bright Leaf. Sally is also still working as a Ranger at Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve. The Basin's Tiny Footprints program offers four themes: butterflies and caterpillars; spiders and scorpions; ants and rolypolies; and nutty squirrels. To cap it all off she is a Capitol Area Master Naturalist.

Sally is a role model in our church demonstrating our newly formed...

VALUES:

Transcendence: To connect with the wonder and awe of the unity of life.

Community: To connect in joy, sorrow and service with those whose lives we touch.

Compassion: To treat ourselves and others with love.

Courage: To live lives of honesty, vulnerability and beauty.

Transformation: To pursue the growth that changes our lives and heals our world.

MISSION:

At First UU Church of Austin we gather in community to nourish souls, transform lives and do justice.

-Linda Taylor, Newsletter Editor



Why is mission important?



Your church now has a compelling, succinct, and clear mission. As Jim Collins confirms in his influential study and book, *From Good to Great*, this is one of the key ingredients of organizations that have sustained success and excellence (“What are our core people deeply passionate about?” www.tiny.cc/wcha6).

I feel great gratitude to the 132 people who participated in the Bridge to the Future activities that provided the raw input and to our trustees who took your input, hopes, and ideas, carefully discerned, then distilled them into a manageable set of values, a mission, and ends statements.

What makes this so important and exciting? For starters, how about health and vitality?

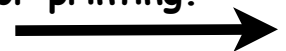
"The stronger a congregation's distinctiveness and sense of direction, the more likely it is to be spiritually vital and growing. ... Having a clear sense of mission and purpose is strongly related to distinctiveness. Strong self identity has a positive relationship to spiritual vitality, financial health, worship attendance growth, and lack of conflict." (Lewis Center for Church Leadership, www.tiny.cc/rrmus)

Equipped with a clear identify, we as a community can make better decisions about the choices we make and in evaluating the results we get. When deciding where to focus our limited resources like time and talent, we now have objective criteria based on what you most value. If, for example, someone proposes a new building improvement (like a swimming pool), program (like save the brine shrimp) or fundraiser (like a Coke vending machine), we can determine its merit based on our values and relative to other programs and activities, then allocate resources appropriately.

Likewise, when evaluating our work, we have a solid basis now for holding ourselves accountable. The ends statements, especially, give a clear, measurable basis on which we can determine our success. We can measure whether “all people feel welcomed and are treated with respect and dignity” and whether we are “practicing liberal religious values in the public arena.”

You’ve helped your church community to take another step on our own road from good to great. I have waited two years for us to get here. I now look forward to working with you to take the next step and put your mission, values, and ends into action. *-Sean Hale, Executive Director*

See our Values, Mission and Ends on the next page, formatted for printing.



The Stewardship / Canvass Menu

Here are some Stewardship activities you can join at any point between now and Halloween:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Committee Fair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Canvassing of congregants |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recruiting of Team Leaders | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> “Money Talks” talks |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team Leader training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stewardship table in Howson Hall |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recruiting of Canvassers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pulpit Testimonials |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conclusion of Canvass |

We’ll have details on how to participate in future newsletters.

- Bill Edwards, Chairman of Stewardship Committee

Values

Transcendence

To connect with the wonder and awe of the unity of life.

Community

To connect in joy, sorrow and service with those whose lives we touch.

Compassion

To treat ourselves and others with love.

Courage

To live lives of honesty, vulnerability and beauty.

Transformation

To pursue the growth that changes our lives and heals our world.

Mission (Global End)

At First UU Church of Austin, we gather in community to
nourish souls,
transform lives,
and do justice.

Ends

First UU Church of Austin is a radically hospitable community where:

- All people feel welcomed and are treated with respect and dignity
- Members and their families feel supported in times of joy and need
- Members find connection with one another in fellowship
- People are fully engaged and generous with time, treasure and talent

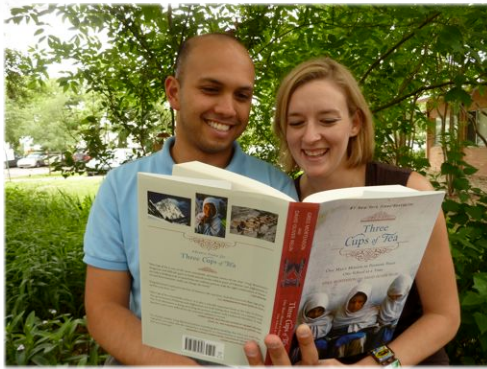
First UU Church of Austin nourishes souls and transforms lives by:

- Engaging and supporting members in spiritual practice and growth
- Providing worship, programs and activities that awaken meaning and transcendence
- Ensuring that members have a caring, supportive and safe place to rekindle the spirit

First UU Church of Austin witnesses to justice in our personal lives and beyond, by

- Practicing liberal religious values in the public arena
- Empowering all people to access the richness of life
- Providing leadership to the greater UUA community to expand the reach of our movement
- Partnering with the interfaith community to live our shared values

We're All Drinking Tea!



Thank you EVERYONE for reading the book *Three Cups of Tea* in support of our children's summer social action program, *Pennies for Peace*. (*Pennies for Peace* was developed by Greg Mortenson, and his amazing journey from climbing K2 to building over 130 schools in Afghanistan & Pakistan is what *Three Cups of Tea* is about.) We have had brisk sales of the book in the gallery, and the four copies in our library have been checked out regularly. Through *Pennies for Peace* the children have collected over \$200 to help build schools in Afghanistan

and Pakistan! And on Sunday, August 8 they will be selling homemade chai tea and baked goods – please come hungry to church that day! The more we buy, the more money we can send to help educate children, especially girls, in this war-torn part of the world.



So what have you learned from the book? On **August 22** we will wrap up our “Summer UU Book Club” with a **potluck luncheon and discussion** (11:30, Howson Hall.) Sandwich fixings and beverages will be provided - we ask that you bring bread, salad or dessert to share. Stop by the Social Action table in the gallery and let us know you'll be coming. In the meantime we have posters around church where you can share your thoughts. (Barbara Denny, church member, commented that the book gives great background to what you hear on the news.) In their Religious Education classes, the children have been learning folk tales from Pakistan and Afghanistan to give greater context to the story, and have been asking for more detail about Dr. Greg's experiences, beyond what they read in *Listen to the Wind* and the junior edition of *Three Cups*. The middle school class is reading the book chapter by chapter and then discussing. For example, the first chapter was a catalyst for sharing times when one has felt lost, physically or spiritually. As we bring our summer program to a close, be sure to attend service on August 22 and watch the special presentation our children will give about what they learned from

Pennies for Peace.

Thank you for supporting our children as they learn how to be agents for social change!

-Lara Douglass,
Director of Religious Education &
-Corinna Whiteaker-Lewis,
co-chair, Social Action Committee



UUs Do the Heavy Lifting!

Yes – a group of your fabulous UU friends sorted 8,100 pounds of food at the Capital Area Food Bank! Following a wonderful Monthly Special Offering for the food bank of \$800 in July, we went down to get a behind the scenes look. The food bank is wonderfully organized to receive volunteers, who work in shifts to process food recovered from both institutions like grocery stores and bakeries, and individuals. Call me if you'd like your group to take a shift! It is great fun, fellowship, and all the while - socially active!

Corinna Whiteaker-Lewis, co-chair, Social Action Committee



No, those aren't boxes of bananas – we processed frozen bread and pastries!

Help! Expanding Volunteer Opportunities at PCC



First UU has been sending volunteers to the People's Community Clinic for years. Our largest commitment has been to the Patient Education Department, copying and compiling materials that are provided to patients. This requires an organizer, a production crew, and a compiler group. Over the years we have become a trusted

and valued partner of PCC. They appreciate our reliability, long-standing commitment, and ability to provide a consistent product, no matter how seemingly small. With the belt tightening from bad economic times, we have been approached to help in several new areas:

- Pediatrics has asked us to compile the materials they use with patients. July, was our first time doing this work, and we quickly realized the enormity of their need. Our copy team has already doubled it's effort. With additional volunteers we can duplicate our effort on another night. We are considering bringing materials to church on a regular basis to compile after the service.
- The volunteer who directs our work with these materials, Francie Green, puts in a great deal of time each week at the clinic. She needs an assistant to prepare for the Tuesday Compilers. This would involve meeting her on Monday to ready the materials that the Tuesday group will use.
- PCC is transitioning to electronic medical records, and in the process of abstracting the paper records. They need volunteers with a medical background who will come in for a few hours in the evening to go through the patient's record and enter data into the electronic record. It requires familiarity with some medical abbreviations and terminology, a familiarity with computers, and careful attention to detail.

If you would be able to volunteer for one of these efforts, not necessarily every month, but at least from time to time, please contact Sheri Overton at sherioverton@hotmail.com. *Sheri Overton*



Sunday Worship



The time for the Sunday morning Worship Services is 10:00 a.m.

August 1 Sermon: “Buy the Ticket, Take the Ride*: Surrender as Spiritual Practice” by Ron Phares. Surrender, in its various permutations, has been promoted by many religious traditions as a way method of spiritual transformation. Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism and Hinduism all promote it as a way to live the blessed life. In fact, Islam means surrender. Yet, surrender can be and has been exploited by those seeking to dominate others. So it is a great boon, but also quite dangerous. The stuff of heroes. Or, as Cheap Trick wrote, "Surrender. Surrender. But don't give yourself away." Yet if surrender is a legitimate path, how are we UU's to approach it? To what are we to surrender? *Hunter S. Thompson

August 8 Sermon: “Born to Run” by Eric Hepburn. Origin myths are powerful and important narratives. Inspired by the book by Christopher McDougall of the same title, this sermon will explore the alternative origin narrative that emerges out of the cutting edge evolutionary and anthropological explorations of the book. What if we aren't 'born broken'? What if we are breaking ourselves by trying to 'fix things that aren't broken'. In the process we'll take a look at the religious ideas of humility and hubris and how these ideas might help us to discern some of the truths of this emerging narrative of our evolutionary story.

August 15 Sermon: “Forgiveness is for Giving” by Rev. Mark Skrabacz. We sometimes hear the phrase forgive and forget. Yet forgiveness is anything but forgetting. Rather it's about mindfulness -- awareness of what has happened and its true value in our lives. Mark invites us to understand the process of forgiveness as a timely and timeless practice.

August 22 "Abner Kneeland and Freedom of Religion" by Luther Elmore. For over twenty years in the early 1800s Abner Kneeland served as a Universalist minister. However, his views changed, he moved away from Universalism, and he came to define himself as a "Pantheist." For his radical beliefs he was tried for blasphemy and ultimately served sixty days in jail - becoming the last man jailed for blasphemy. His defense of Freedom of Religion still speaks to us today.

August 29 Sermon: “Are You Saved? A UU View of Salvation” by the Rev. Mark Skrabacz. How can UUs genuinely respond to questions about our salvation? Come hear of our historical roots and their contemporary applications to the idea of salvation.

Monthly Special Offering for August: Austin Groups for the Elderly (AGE)

*“There are only 4 kinds of people in the world: those who **have been** caregivers, those who **currently are** caregivers, those who **will be** caregivers, and those who **need** caregivers.” - Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter*

AGE works to empower elders and their caregivers in the journey of aging. Why? Because they believe in elders; because caring for an older loved one is uncharted territory; because growing older is our future. AGE provides direct assistance to seniors and their families through their unique programs, including Elderhaven, The Caregiver Resource Center, Durable Medical Equipment Lending Closet, and SeniorNet. Every year AGE receives thousands of requests for help:

- **Sometimes** it starts with a request for a wheelchair.
- **Sometimes** it is a need for more help to care for their loved one.
- **Frequently** it begins with confusion, tears and heartache.
- **Always** AGE is there to listen, guide, support---and help them connect to what they need. Please give as generously as you can. Stop by the social action table in the gallery to meet with an AGE representative, to get more information, and to learn how you can volunteer. Your support of AGE will help us meet the ever increasing needs of our community-- as all of us: **have been, currently are, will be or need---caregivers.** The Monthly Special Offering on Sunday, August 15 is for Austin Groups for the Elderly.





Brent Baldwin
Music Director

MUSIC MATTERS

ADULT CHOIR TO BEGIN FALL REHEARSALS

The FUUCA Adult Choir begins rehearsals for the fall on Wednesday, September 1st at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The Choir sings on average 2-3 services per month, and features a wide variety of music. Open to ages 15 and up. No audition required.

Not sure about choir? No problem! Come check out a rehearsal with no commitment to stay. For more info, email Director Brent Baldwin at brentb@austinuu.org.

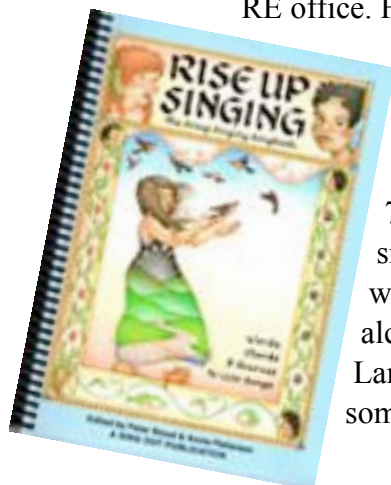


CHILDREN'S CHOIR CORNER

Children's Choir rehearsal starts September 12th (Sundays 10:40 - 11:25 AM) in room 15 (Youth Choir, Grades 4 - 8) and room 17 (Primary Choir, Grades K - 3). Our excellent directors Danielle Solan and Kelan Latimer provide top-notch instruction – and a lot of fun!

There is a nominal fee, and scholarships are available. If you're not sure, just come try out a class for free!

Pick up your registration packet and Fall Session 1 schedule outside the RE office. For more information, contact Chris Heidel, Children's Choir Coordinator 512-694-5970



SINGALONG

This month's Singalong will be held on the fourth Saturday, August 28th, 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 lvest@sbcglobal.net. If you want to add somebody to the email list, contact Mary Jane Ford at mjaneford@grandecom.net.

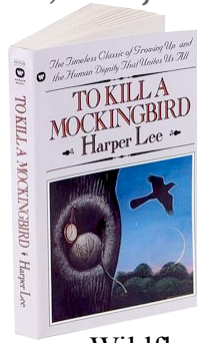


Behind the Scenes at Paradox Players

August is prep month for a thrilling fall season! *Incorruptible*, our October show is cast and actors are rehearsing.

Designers are planning the set, lights, sound, costumes and props. Producers are lining up backstage help. If you think you'd enjoy learning behind-the-scenes stage craft, or front-of-house ushering skills - now is the time to step forward! Props are also needed: human skeleton, bones, set of costume pigs' ears, wooden sword.

Please contact Barbara Weeks if you could lend anything. (blyfordweeks@aol.com). Please contact Ann Edwards for back stage activities (383-9914; annann@austin.rr.com) or Kathryn Govier for ushering (832-6379; kamargo72@att.net). Too often folks offer to help after all our positions are filled, so now is the time to sign up!

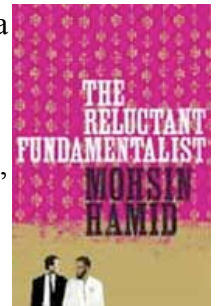


Heritage Book Club 50th Anniversary.

The book club started in 1960 and has been going along ever since. As First UU has grown and offshoots have grown and prospered the club now has members from Live Oak and

Wildflower as well. The current practice is to select a book and read it and meet in someone's home to talk once a month, on the second friday, after a delicious Pot Luck. The Anniversary meeting will be at Sally Scott's home, 4906 Beverly Hills Drive (453-2289), on September 10th. Dinner is at 6:30 and the discussion starts at 8:00.

For August 13th, we will read "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee (also celebrating its 50th year). We will meet at Kitty Clark's house, 4308 Ave. D, to discuss "The Reluctant Fundamentalist" by Mohsin Hamid. Please join us! As usual bring your own beverage. We would like to welcome all the old members back and new folks too!



Reader's Theater prep work is reading, reading, reading.

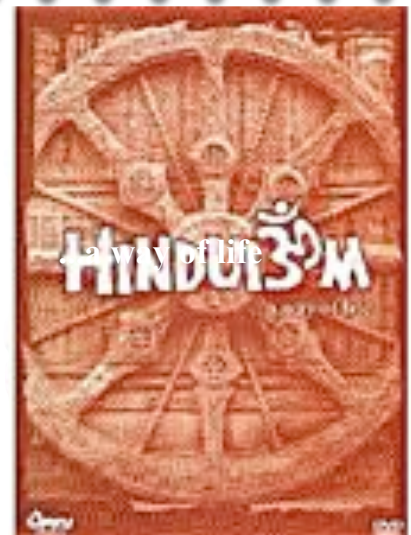
Please contact Barbara Weeks if you're curious about how we prepare scripts for the monthly meetings that will resume Sept 13 (835-1744; blyfordweeks@aol.com). If you can read you can help, no other requirements! Newcomers always welcome.

Spiritual Movie Night: August 20th Hinduism...a way of life

Continuing with a theme of movies about religious figures and religions, the August Spiritual Movie Night will be "Hinduism... A Way of Life." This is a documentary directed by Sanjay Visharia. It is a journey into the Hindu World – a brief introduction plus explanation of some of the important deities and teachings of Hinduism.

The movie will be on Aug. 20 at 7 p.m. We will, as usual, discuss not only what we think of the film but also what thoughts the movie sparks about Hinduism and spirituality.

There will be a children's movie for ages 5-12, with child care available by RSVP ONLY! There will be no child care for children under five or without RSVP.



Camp Fire Paddle Adventures: Gather in Community to Nourish Your Soul

Join other UU families who have discovered the joy of outdoor adventure in community with others.

The annual Camp Fire Intro to Paddle class will be held on Saturday, Sept. 11. This fun class is a requirement to participate in Paddle Program trips. Spend the day tipping over canoes, playing with kayaks, and learning about self-rescue and basic boat care. Participants in the Intro to Paddle class receive FREE registration to the Webberville day trip the following Sunday Sept. 19. And then join us on trips to Boquillas Canyon (Rio Grande), South Llano River, Caddo Lake, and other great destinations.

For more information, see the FAQ and registration form on the Camp Fire Balcones web site [http://](http://www.campfireusabalcones.org/clubs_and_programs/)

www.campfireusabalcones.org/clubs_and_programs/ (scroll all the way down to the bottom of the page to see the Paddle Program information). For further information, check with one of the recent participants, including the Gray-Balaguer family, Rich and Lori Sommer, Sylvia Pope, the Whiteaker-Lewis family, and the Newton family.



*We are all Invited...
Community,
Compassion,
Transcendence,
Courage, &
Transformation:
How will we live First
UU's values?*

Please join your fellow members and your board to discuss how we will live our new values and mission. What do these values and mission mean to us? What can we do to make them a part of our daily practice here at the church? What will it look like when we do?

Please join us at in Howson Hall on August 1st from 12:30 to 1:45.

HARVEST THE POWER: Imagination and Creativity

AUGUST 18TH Harvest the Power, a twelve month UU leadership development curriculum, will continue with session 8, "Imagination and Creativity". It will be co-facilitated by Mary Jane Ford and Sally Scott in the Gallery from 7 - 9 p.m..

Please note that you are welcome whether it's your first or eighth session. You may sign up at the Adult Religious Education table in the Gallery on Sundays or you may e-mail Nominating Committee Chair, Sandra Reis, success@sandraries.com. Please join us for Meet and Eat in Howson Hall at 6p.m. prior to class.

There will be no Sharing Suppers in August.

Please mark your calendar's for the third Saturday in September (September 19th) and we can all share stories about our summer. See you then.

Children's Religious Education!

What to expect for the Fall Curricula:

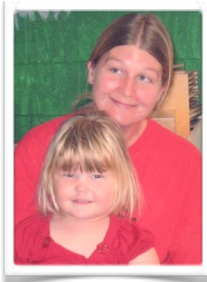
Pre-Kindergarten: The "Just Because I Am" curriculum is based on the book *Just Because I Am: A Child's Book of Affirmation*. The book uses illustrations, questions and fun activities to help children develop and strengthen their self-esteem.

Kindergarten -2 grade: The "Picture Book of World Religions" curriculum is based on many different picture books related to Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. The curriculum aims to introduce children to different world religions through stories, allowing them to discover the similarities and differences in their own lives.

3 grade-5 grade: The "Buddhism" curriculum will use many different materials, including the "Jataka Tale" series of books based on stories about The Buddha's different reincarnations.

Middle and High School: The "Traditions With a Wink" curriculum teaches an understanding of the Unitarian Universalist faith in a fun and entertaining way.

For more information on the teachers and this curricula, read this section in the September Newsletter!



Introducing our Childcare Providers Part 1:

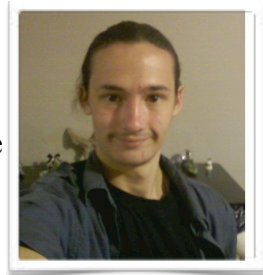
Karyn Skwarek, the Childcare Coordinator, has worked at the church since 2005. She likes spending time with her daughter, listening to live music and reading. "I like working with children because I love kids," she says. "I feel like I'm making a positive contribution in their lives and helping them to grow up to be awesome adults."

Suzanne Lander enjoys seeing her kids grow up. She works in bakeries as a baker and delivery driver. She tends to dislike office jobs. She attended to Trinity University in San Antonio years and years ago and majored in music... but hasn't used her degree since. She says "Working in the [Childcare Rooms] has been a way to make myself begin to get a little more involved in the church community – with the extra benefit of seeing all those cute kids on Sundays!"



Kirsten Clay lives in the Allandale neighborhood with her husband Brandon La Bash and their two great kids. She likes kids, art, nature, strong coffee and buying organic. She has a BFA (Ceramics) from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and plans to go back for an MFA sometime within the next 5 years. She says, "My favorite things about working in the [Childcare Rooms] are the kids and being able to see how much they have learned and grown each week."

Milenko Loncar is a student at Westwood High School. He'll be a Junior in the fall. He's interested in all kinds of art, but has yet to be able to just stick with one type of media. "One of the things I dislike is seeing someone I care about being sad," he says. "I guess that's kind of the reason that I began working in child care, because it makes my day that much better when I am able to bring a smile to someone's face."



News from Hogwarts

The week of
July 26-30,
about 60
children



enjoyed CampUU with the theme of Harry Potter, as the R.E. wing, the Gallery, and Howson Hall were transformed into the castle of Hogwarts. Each morning, campers participated in wizard sports, learned magical music, and attended classes on topics ranging from Potions to Transformation to Defense Against the Dark Arts -- all based in "muggle" experiences, but customized to help the fantasy of Hogwarts come alive. In the afternoons campers participated in service activities and free time activities such as movies, swimming, bowling, and games. The week culminated in a Great Feast, to which all family members were invited. During services on August 1st, the congregation experienced some of the CampUU magic as well, both during the service and during the expanded coffee hour afterwards. Watch for a full report, including pictures, in the September newsletter!!

**Coming up next month...
More on the Fall Curricula...
Get another update on the
painting process... and find
out about all our RE
volunteer opportunities!**

Summer...a time for trying new things and planning ahead.

July found the middle and high schoolers digging in to Three Cups of Tea to be ready for the discussion in August with the rest of the church. So far we talked about times when we got lost and found (physically or emotionally) and what it was like. To coincide with the second chapter the discussion was about trying new things that might not seem appealing at first (different food and drinks)

Meanwhile Patrick Balaguer, Milenko Loncar, Buddy Wilkes, Henry Newton and Aaron Osmer joined First UU of San Antonio and Live Oak for a lock-in to plan for the fall rally for the church district at Live Oak, October 15 - 17.

A great deal of planning took place for what promises to be an interesting rally of about 100 young people. The rally theme was selected, "Doctoring Our Souls." The group also planned workshops, special events, and are looking forward to the Fall Rally in October.



Due to the lack of volunteer participation, the Painting Committee has decided to bring in a professional contractor to paint the church. To keep our cost as low as possible *we still will need volunteers*. You'll help scrub the walls and move all the furniture and other insides of each room before the contractors come in. If you're interested in helping out, please e-mail me at Beth@austinuu.org.

*And don't forget to pick up your Summer RE Curriculum Pamphlet
or
Calendar of RE Dates to Remember outside the RE Office!*

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

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**Bridge
to our
Future**

