

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER



Ed Brock,
Interim Minister

The Rev. Lena Breen will arrive in Austin at the end of October to begin seven days of intensive review, analysis and assessment of our religious education program. Lena is an extraordinary, accomplished, experienced, and highly regarded leader in the religious education field of the

UUA. Lena is a Minister of Religious Education and a Board Certified Chaplain, with years of experience as a Director of Religious Education at some of the largest congregations in the Pacific Northwest.

Among her many accomplishments, Lena was the Director of the Department of Religious Education of the Unitarian Universalist Association from 1998 to 2001. She is the author of The 15 Minute Worship Packet for Children's Worship and one of the authors of the Renaissance Modules used by virtually every RE program across the country. She has recently been the Chaplain for Youth, Pacific Northwest District. She is coming out of semi-retirement to help, and be of service to, the Austin congregation.

During her time with us Lena will be talking to all religious education staff and all committee members related to religious education to help her develop a thoughtful assessment of our religious education program and its future needs. She is very eager to talk to anyone in the First UU community who can help her help the church. Lena is approaching her task with an open mind and an open heart, with the eyes of someone who sees as an "outsider" with ample practical experience to understand what she sees and give good counsel for setting a future course.

Some of the issues that will be on Lena's mind are these: what would a religious education that is focused on faith development for all ages while encompassing diverse faith

perspectives look like? What does it mean for a religious education program to be fully integrated with all aspects of the life of a congregation?

Lena will be introduced to the congregation during the Oct. 31st service and she will preach during the Nov. 7th service. I hope you can take the time to meet and welcome Lena on these occasions. And don't hesitate to seek her out for an appointment if you feel you have something important to share with her about FUUCA's religious education program.

Come to the Pre-Congregational Meeting

Sunday, November 14!

We worked hard to craft our values, our mission, and our covenant of healthy relations. Now we have the opportunity to put them to work for us. For long time UUs this is not news, but for those of us who are beginning to get involved, just joined the church, or are somewhere in between, November 14th is the time to show up.

Our pre-congregational meeting will be in Howson Hall on Sunday, November 14th at 1:30 pm. The proposed budget for 2011 and the draft agenda for the December Congregational Meeting will be presented for review and feedback. No decisions (votes)

will be made at this time. This meeting is a time for informal discussion with time for questions for the Board of Trustees. The meeting is a great way to learn how our church makes decisions about our resources, with an opportunity to give your input. Please make a note to be there if you can!



John Sanders steps down as First UU Pianist and Sexton



It's 9:15 and if you are at church on a Sunday morning you will see a quiet man walking down the halls ringing a small bell to let the folks know that the service is starting. No more. In late October, John Sanders announced he would be retiring from his decades-long service to First UU as both service pianist and sexton. He has been an invaluable member of our church staff, and will be deeply missed.

We are indebted to John for his amazing piano skills, which have been an integral part of our worship services for half a century. As the longest-serving member of our musical staff, he has had a profound effect on shaping First UU's vibrant music program. While we will miss his artistic presence in our services, John remains a vital part of our church's history and heritage.

We could attempt to list the many sexton duties rendered by John during any given week, but such a list could easily fill an entire newsletter! His reliability and acute attention-to-detail have been profound gifts to our church, and in ways impossible to measure. We will certainly have our work cut out for us as we attempt to cover the jobs so faithfully fulfilled by John all these years.

John is also a church historian. When he started playing during the services back in the 60's, John saved all the orders of service. Folks who were trying to find out some historical information could come to him and he would search through the years and help out with accurate information. John lent several pianos to the church to be used in various classrooms. He also became the unofficial proofreader of the Sunday Bulletin and the order of service in the past 4 years. In the morning the staff would come in to work and the publications would be on the desk with corrections clearly marked.

Although it saddens us to see John step down, the happy news is, John will continue to share his music on special occasions, and will remain a valuable member of our religious community.

We plan to honor John more formally in the near future. In the meantime, we thank John for all he has done for the First Unitarian Universalist Church.

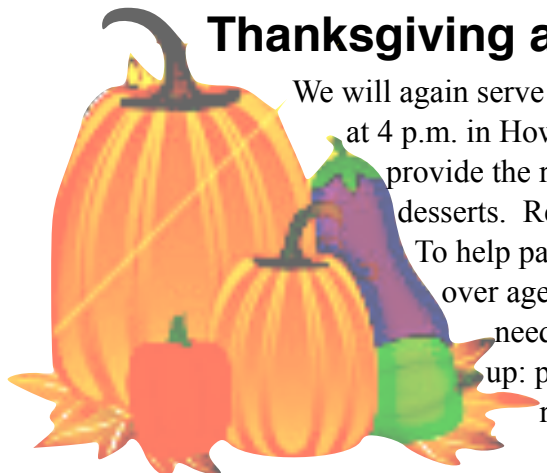
-Brent Baldwin, Director of Music



Thanksgiving at the Church!

We will again serve Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner at the Church, at 4 p.m. in Howson Hall, Thanksgiving Day (November 25). We will provide the roasted turkey, you bring your favorite side dishes, salads and desserts. Reservations will be required as this event usually fills the room.

To help pay for the turkeys, please bring \$5 per adult and \$3 per child over age 4. More details as we get closer to the event. Volunteers needed for sign up table, set up, carving, and especially clean up: please contact Sheila Gladstone – sglad@earthlink.net for reservations and to volunteer to help.





Sunday Worship



The time for the Sunday morning Worship Services is 9:45 and 11:30

November 7: "Play Above What You Know" by Rev. Lena Breen and Rev. Ed Brock. Miles Davis's words can inspire us in how we view what we do as playing above and beyond what we know guided by a vision of hope beyond empirical knowledge.

November 14: "Eight Characteristics of Vibrant and Flourishing Congregations" by Rev. Ed Brock. A reflection on eight universal characteristics of all congregations which are flourishing and thriving in today's society.

November 21: "What Thanksgiving Means To Me" Rev. Ed Brock. A reflection on the roots of our Thanksgiving Holiday and the contemporary meaning of being thankful.

November 28: "A Unitarian Universalist View of Prayer" by Nell Newton. What does prayer mean to a community which is "post-religious"? Where, if at all, does prayer fit into our understanding of who we are and what we are called to be in the world?



Sunday Forum



The time for the Sunday Forum is 11:30 in Howson Hall

November 7: Quorum Report Editor, Harvey Kronberg; "Post Election Day Analysis". Harvey Kronberg, Editor of The Quorum Report, the "Newsletter of Political Texas" since 1989. Tues., Nov. 2nd will be another historic election and Harvey will fill us in on all that happened on this 1st Sunday after Election Day. Kronberg was a political analyst for News8 Austin and has been quoted in The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Congressional Quarterly, and many other publications. In 2005, Texas Monthly declared him one of the 25 most powerful individuals in Texas politics. Join us for this recap and Q&A on the fascinating world of politics and the November 2nd election!

November 14: Dr. Don Carleton, Directory UT History Center "The life and times of Walter Cronkite. His genius for relating to the American people who took his word at face value. How he rose in the ranks of prime time anchors and befriended politicians and Presidents. Will be related to the exhibit on Walter Cronkite at the LBJ library."

November 21: Alternative Gift Fair will be in Howson Hall (No Forum)

November 28: David Coleman, Curator of Photography at UT Harry Ransom Center. The history of photography as seen through the remarkable collections at the Harry Ransom Center. The cornerstone of the Ransom Center's photography collection is the renowned Gernsheim collection, which is best known for its treasures of nineteenth-century photography, including the world's first photograph, and celebrated through the Ransom Center's current exhibition, Discovering the Language of Photography: The Gernsheim Collection. Since that landmark acquisition, the photography collection has expanded into such diverse areas as fine art, photojournalism, documentary photography, the history of photography, and its technology. These holdings currently amount to over five million prints and negatives, supplemented by books, manuscripts, journals, and memorabilia of significant photographers since the medium's invention.

Name Tags...Community begins with an easy "Hello"

The name-tags have now been attached to the wire on the racks. Please let us know if you are having difficulty with the binder clips, and we will try to make it easier for you. If you have requested a name-tag and have not found it or picked it up yet, you may find it on one of the racks. Name-tags that were requested before May 9 can be found on the south rack under a RED sign that reads NAME-TAGS REQUESTED BEFORE MAY 9. If you requested a name-tag after May 9 it will be found on the second rack from the south door under a YELLOW sign that reads NAME-TAGS REQUESTED AFTER MAY 9. If you have any questions, please call Jim Burson at 794-1086, or jimburson@sbcglobal.



Canvass for 2011

We are winding up our all-church Canvass for 2011. I hope you are reading this after you have made your own generous pledge for the year that begins on January 1, 2011. This is a time of great hope and opportunity for our Church. The results so far of our current Canvass show us breaking the chains of our old and tired culture of pessimism and scarcity. The results so far show us bursting forth into the freedom of a culture of optimism and abundance.

What a year 2010 has been. What a year 2011 will be. With your help. With our help.

-Bill Edwards Chair of the Stewardship Committee

Justice is LOVE in Action

It was with great pain that we learned of a series of suicides related to anti-gay bullying this past month. It was with a measure of pride, however, that I often learned of these horrible events through the UUA's "Standing on the Side of Love" campaign: pride that our denomination is staying on top of the news, informing its members in a timely fashion, and giving us a common space to both grieve and act. You can be a part of this community. Sign up to receive emails, tweets, and facebook posts by joining the campaign at: www.standingonthesideoflove.org. I also have great pride in our congregation. Over 75 signatures were gathered for a petition for full equality for LGBT



people in one Sunday! The petition is still available at the social action table in the gallery if you would like to add your name. And thank you to our Rev. Ed Brock, who so eloquently reminded us of our spiritual connection to the vulnerable and disenfranchised, through his sermon on our first principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

And what about Texas? What do we do here, and now, to help shape a Texas that reflects our values? The 82nd Texas Legislature convenes on January 11, 2011. On the agenda: redistricting, major environmental and energy legislation, contentious immigration proposals, and the worst budget shortfall in a generation.

Where do mainstream individuals and communities of faith fit into this picture? What wisdom can our traditions offer to the secular policy debate? How can citizens participate effectively in the discussion without getting "in the weeds"? Does one voice really make a difference? -



Texas Impact is an interfaith organization working for justice in response to the religious right. Please join me on Nov. 13 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Austin Presbyterian Seminary for "A Spirit of Power" Legislative Training. This free half-day training and discussion event will guide participants through information about current public policy issues in Texas and how they can bear effective, informed witness in the upcoming legislative session. Registration is required; please contact me at corinna@austin.rr.com if you'd like to attend.

- Corrina Whiteaker-Lewis Co-Chair of Social

Sixteen Churches Join Together for North Central Caregivers Concert

Sunday November 14 is the day our church will collect a special offering for North Central Caregivers. With the help of our church and 15 other churches, wthe elderly of our neighborhood maintain their independent living as they reach old age. Friday, December 3rd, at 7:30 our own choir will join those of the North Central neighborhood in representing each church by singing their own choir's selection in a spectacular concert at St. Louis Church on Burnet Road. That has become a big fundraiser for Caregivers. All sixteen churches take part in the concert.

For twenty years our UU church has taken part in giving rides to people over 60 who live in the neighborhood of our 16 churches. This makes it possible to maintain their homes. Because of the willing help of this church we have over 250 seniors who have each year received free assistance in getting to necessary appointments.

Every week we have thirteen or more members who give more than 2 to 3 hours in driving and visiting these independent elderly. They keep close ties to their neighbors. You can understand how important our place is in the Austin activity.

If you need more information to bring you in as a volunteer, please contact Marilyn Wilson: musicwilson@att.net, or 512 2 51 0479. Also Nancy Bene: nanbene@austin.rr.com or 512 459 5457. On Sunday, November 14 please come to church prepared to give to the Special Offering for the North Central Caregivers.
Marilyn Willson, Social Action Committee, for North Central Caregivers.



Dear First UU
Friends of



Because of your generosity of time and money, the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Walk this year was a resounding success. More that 2000 walkers participated and over \$182,000.00 was raised. The three UU teams making up the UUUniques raised over \$5000.00. Our efforts will go a long way in overcoming the stigma of mental illness. Thanks to all of you for your concerted efforts.

-Kathryn Govier and Donna Pauler, Co-captains

Social Action at PCC



First UU has a number of ongoing activities in support of People's Community Clinic, and are working on new plans too. Currently we are in need of:

Shopper for Cooking Classes: Classes are offered to help patients learn to prepare healthier foods. We need a reliable person to do the weekly food shopping prior to these Wednesday evening classes, using pre-paid shopping cards. You could shop on Tues or Wed, bring the groceries to PCC, and put them away.

Additional volunteers for 2nd Tuesday Collate Group: We have taken on additional responsibilities and need more volunteers. We meet from 10am-12pm in the workroom at PCC to collate and stuff patient information packets. You don't have to participate each month, just as you can; usually around 4-8 of us and a nice opportunity to visit with each other.

-Sheri Overton



**GUEST AT YOUR TABLE
2010-2011
BEGINS NOVEMBER 21ST !
DETAILS ARE ON PAGE 15**



Brent Baldwin
Music Director

MUSIC MATTERS

Nourishing Souls and Transforming Lives Through Music

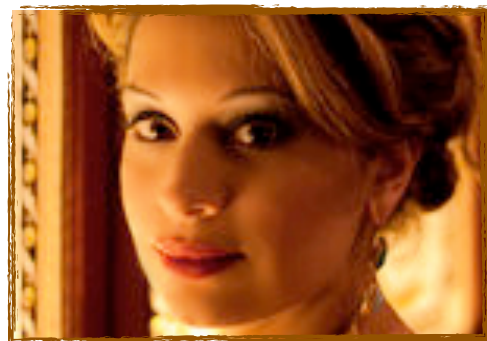
First Unitarian Universalist Church is extremely proud to partner with the Austin Chamber Music Center for the second year in a row. As our musical Artists-in-Residence, we will experience some of their incredible music during select services. We will also serve as host for a number of ACMC's amazing concerts throughout the year – and First UU Church of Austin members are eligible for a 50% discount for these performances.



Austin Chamber Music Center presents:

Birthday Suit (E)

Celebrate in song the Big Birthdays of Robert Schumann, Hugo Wolf, Samuel Barber, and Osvaldo Golijov. Featuring English National Opera Soprano, Hanan Alattar with Michelle Schumann, piano.



English National Opera Soprano Hana Alattar

Four Songs:

Opus 13 | Samuel Barber

Goethe Lieder | Hugo Wolf

Lúa Descolorida (2002) | Osvaldo Golijov

Frauenliebe und Leben, Opus 42 | Robert Schumann

**Saturday, Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Universalist Church,
Tickets: \$25 (\$12.50 for First UU Church of Austin members)**



Michelle Schumann, Piano



Kathlene Ritch & Klondike Steadman

On October 24th, guitarist Klondike Steadman and soprano Kathlene Ritch presented a FUUCA fundraiser concert of works by Benjamin Britten and John Downland. Turnout was terrific, the music stunning, and the event generated over \$1,300 for the church. This was followed by a fun high-tea event sponsored by the

Fellowship Committee. This event is living proof of the power of music and fellowship, which combined underscore our values of Transcendence, Community and Transformation. **More please!**

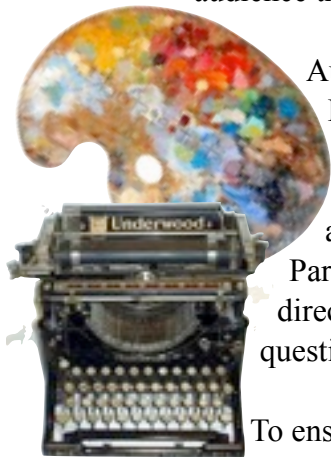
Adult Choir Rehearsal is Wednesday Evening at 7:30 in the Sanctuary. Come and Check us out....Remember. We nourish souls and transform lives through music.



2010 Season Conclusion and 2011 Auditions

Our church's resident community theatre company concluded its 10th Anniversary season with a successful production of *Incorruptible: A Dark Comedy About the Dark Ages*, directed by Gary Payne. The audiences seemed to love the dark humor, and so did the reviewers, as evidenced by two very favorable online reviews. Thanks to all who worked onstage and off, as well as our valuable audience members. Our theater doesn't solicit grants, so your ticket purchases are what make our productions financially possible.

But our theater isn't resting on its laurels. As part of our ongoing outreach program, Paradox Players sponsored a performance of David Mamet's *The Duck Variations* for LAMP on October 14, reprising the April event we staged for our season ticket holders. The LAMP performance was staged before a large (150+) audience in the auditorium of the Thompson Conference center at UT. Our cast, Ed Nichols and Bob Brody, caught every nuance, each bit of subtle humor, and truly expressed "feeling the music" of this special piece. The enthusiastic audience thought so, too.



Auditions for *Biography*, our February production, are November 20 and 21 at 2:00 in Howson Hall. Scripts are available for check-out in the Paradox Players mailbox. Please call director Charles Hill with any questions, at 305-3705 or 293-4015.

To ensure that you are part of next season's fun, you can purchase 2011 season tickets online at paradoxplayers.org. *Biography*, a 1932 drawing room comedy by S.N. Behrman, will be followed in June by Lee Blessing's *Independence*, a title which sets the theme for the entire season. The October play will be *Guest Artist* by Jeff Daniels.
-Paullette MacDougal



Senior's Luncheon

Tuesday, November 9th
Howson Hall at Noon

Soup, Salad & Dessert \$5
RSVP to Alice Cashman 837-0988

Program: The Dirgibles will be performing-
Mary Jane Ford, Edward Sledge,
Jim Barry, Jay Barnett



Reader's Theatre

Monday, November 8th
In Room 15 at 7 p.m.

SHARING SUPPERS

Did you know that the Sharing Suppers have been an ongoing part of the FUUCA community for over 20 years? Now is the time to check us out to see what's changed and what's stayed the same.



Sharing Suppers are always held the third Saturday evening of the month. Please mark your calendars for November 20th and join others for food, conversation and laughter. Groups of 6 – 10 people gather in various participants' homes. Everyone in the church, new or established, couples or singles are very welcome to attend. It's easy to sign up – just call Linda Buehlmann at 323-5334 or email her at lindabuehlmann@sbcglobal.net. You may also sign up on the sheet posted on the membership table and on the bulletin board outside Room 8.



Nell's News

Until I was actually on the board, I wasn't sure what went on at the meetings, but I quickly learned that there was lots of talking, sometimes *loud* talking, and the meetings ran late. Even with a strong resolve to stay on time and on topic the meetings rambled, small matters turned into major sticking points, and we'd all stagger off after several hours wondering if anything had been accomplished.

Three years later I can say that things are much better now. We start on time, take a break midway, and wrap up within three hours! What changed? The improvements grew out of suggestions

from our Executive Director, Sean Hale, our Interim Ministers, and new board members. Some improvements are a direct result of our steady shift towards policy-based governance. But the only reason the changes are *working* is because we have a board of folks who agree to all work together on behalf of the church.

When we sit down together, (on time!) we read our Board Covenant, and then light a chalice to remind ourselves that our time together is distinct and the work we will do is holy work. We've already electronically received, read, and responded to the reports from our executives and senior staff. At the meeting we quickly approve those and move onto items that require discussion and/or action. We are mindful of staying close to the allotted time for each agenda item, and we frequently check to make sure that we are moving forward and not down rabbit holes.

Yes, it's more work to be this mindful, but knowing that the meeting is on track keeps us all in good spirits and there is plenty of laughter as we work. Are we getting more done? Seems like it! Is the church better for it? Absolutely!

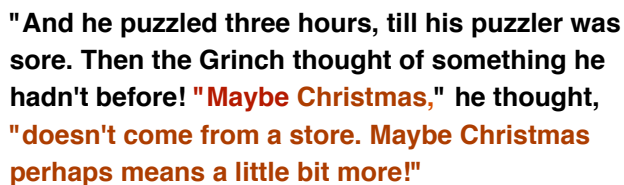
Our board of trustees meets at 6:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month. We'd love to have you come observe us at work and we'll even share our snacks. You might even come away with desire to serve as a trustee! *Nell Newton, Past President of the Board of Trustees.*

Alternative Holiday Gift Fair... Nov. 21st

Mark your calendars! The date for our Alternative Holiday Gift Fair on Sunday, Nov. 21st.

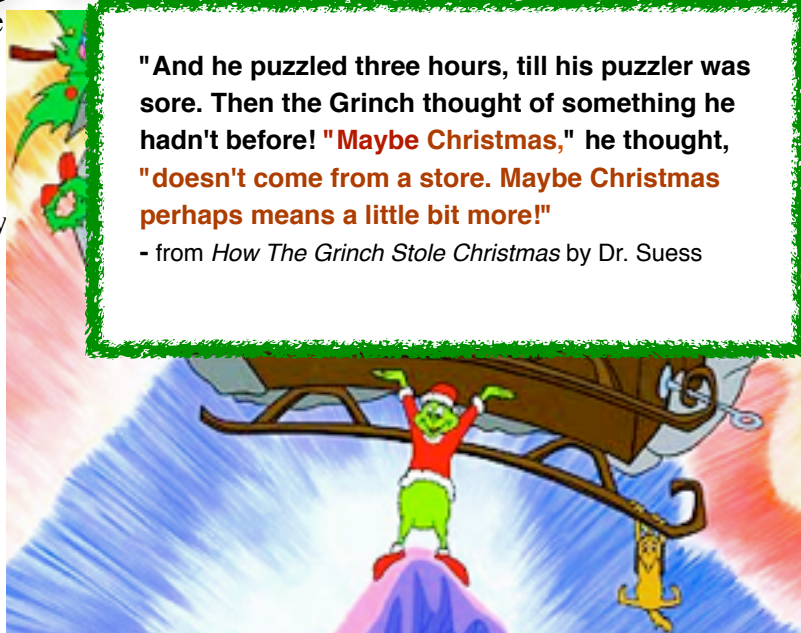
Many Unitarian Universalist congregations hold alternative gift fairs between Thanksgiving and Christmas, offering churchgoers the opportunity to contribute to several dozen charitable projects locally and around the world. Shop early this year for special gifts of meaning. Honor friends and family with gifts given in their name to help others.

You will receive a gift card explaining the donation. We will also have Fair Trade and unique gifts and cards available from UUSC, Romanian Partner Church, and others. If you have an idea of a group which should be involved or if you would like to volunteer to help, **contact Judy Sadegh. 512-496-5771 jsadegh@yahoo.com.**



"And he puzzled three hours, till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! **"Maybe Christmas,"** he thought, **"doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more!"**

- from *How The Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss



News from the Settled Minister Search Committee

The results from the survey and focus groups are in!

You've told us what you think — about your experiences in the church, your interests and activities, what you like best and where you'd like to see improvement, and the qualities and skills you want in our next minister. We will share this information with ministerial candidates, and it will guide us in selecting the best minister for our congregation.

From August 22 through September 19, 2010, the search committee conducted a survey of members and friends. We modeled it on the sample provided by the UUA and tailored the questions to the First UU community. We delivered the survey online through SurveyMonkey and mailed print copies to those for whom we did not have email addresses. We distributed a total of 515 electronic and paper copies; 296 individuals completed the survey for a 57 percent return rate.

Here is a brief summary of what you told us:

- You come to First UU for Unitarian Universalist beliefs (63 percent), intellectual stimulation (58 percent), and community (57 percent).
- You identify most closely with humanism (57 percent) and naturalistic theism (31 percent) viewpoints.
- Other faiths—Christianity (74 percent), Buddhism (40 percent), and Religious Humanism (26 percent)—have influenced your religious development.
- You want our next minister to be first and foremost a strong spiritual and intellectual leader, followed in descending order by: skilled at involving people in congregational life, committed to social activism, good at pastoral care, and an effective administrator.
- The minister's chief priority is to present stimulating and challenging Sunday services (83 percent).
- Demographically, ours is an aging congregation (27 percent are ages 60-69). Sixty percent are women. We are highly educated, with 91 percent holding bachelor's degrees or above.

During the month of September, we also conducted four focus groups to get additional feedback from congregants and met with students in RE classes. A full report on the survey and group meetings can be found on the web site at www.austinuu.org/wp/minister-search/survey/. If you have questions or would like additional information, please email us at search@austinuu.org.

Your Settled Minister Search Committee,

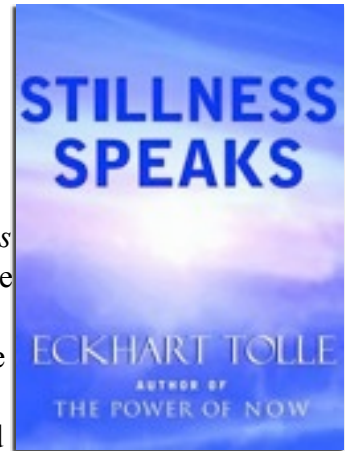
Co-Chairs Michael Kersey and Sharon Moore, Gary Bennett, John Franks, Maria Nehring, Jill Smith, Lynda West, Dale Whiteaker-Lewis, Jill Wiggins

We gather in community to nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice.

Adult Religious Education

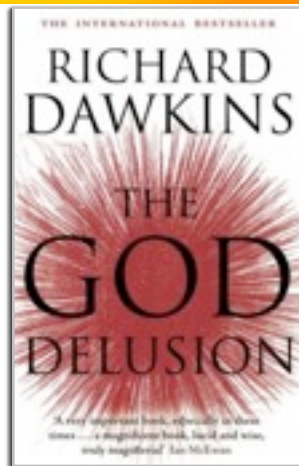
Eckhart Tolle Group

We are reading *Stillness Speaks*. Whether you're an avid reader of Eckhart Tolle, or you're curious to know more about his teachings and philosophy, we encourage you to join our discussion. We meet at new time on Thursdays from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. On the first Thursday of every month, we view a video selection from Eckhart Tolle's recorded lectures. If you have questions, feel free to contact the group facilitator, Thomas Najar, via email at tomnajar@mac.com.



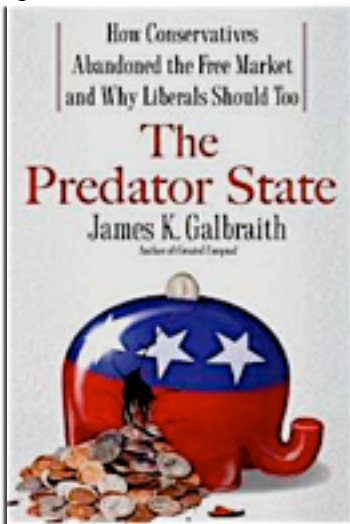
The Sunday Book Group

In Room 13B at 9:30 a.m. We have started Richard Dawkins *The GOD Delusion*. The book group is open to anyone interested. Contact Jim Burson at 794-1086 for any questions.



The Mind and Meaning Book Group:

Sundays in Room 13A at 9:30 a.m. We are reading *Predator State* by James K. Galbraith. If interested, please come by Room 13A any Sunday between 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. For information contact June Beach at junembeach@aol.com.



Great Decisions Book Group is Coming February 2011!

Published annually by the Foreign Policy Association, the *Great Decisions* briefing book features impartial, thought-provoking analyses on eight issues of concern to

U.S. policymakers today. Sign up and book orders for the group begins in December. The sessions will meet at church every Sunday in February and March in 2011 from 4-5:30 pm.

Lansing Bicknell: New Adult Religious Education Staff



Many of you may have met me already since I started working at the church in August helping the Event Team with room set up. Or maybe we met a few years back when I did some volunteer work with our board and the local UU'S on leadership development. I started working as the Adult Religious Education Assistant just over a month ago and I'm beginning to get into the swing of things. My background is in post merger and acquisition integration in oil and banking where I did executive coaching, leadership development, team building, and conference design and facilitation as a consultant both independently and for a large firm. After taking a longer than planned sabbatical, I discovered that while I loved my work, I hated being a road warrior every week. So I took a big adjustment in income and have found myself having a blast with the community here at First UU. I am passionate about learning and collaboration, and hope that it serves me well here at the Church. If you have any questions about or

requests for the future of Adult RE feel free to schedule some time with me or drop by the Adult Religious Education table in the Gallery on Sundays.

-Lansing Bicknell, Adult Religious Education 512-452-6168 ext 312 lansing@austinuu.org

Harvest The Power

Harvest the Power provides leadership skill development that goes hand-in-hand with faith development. The program helps lay leaders grow in spirit as they grow as leaders. Harvest the Power addresses the reality that today's leaders operate at a time of rapid cultural change, both in and outside our congregations. Leaders need a broad range of skills, both technical and visionary. The program's 12 workshops offer opportunities for both new and experienced leaders to enrich the skills they bring to their leadership and to experience their leadership journey as a Unitarian Universalist faith journey.

The workshops are open to everyone.

Workshop 11: Keeping Distress Productive is on Wednesday, November 17th from 7-9 p.m right after the Meet and Eat at 6pm. This workshop will:

- Explore tensions between our longings for individuality and for community
- Provide a new way to think about uncivil or hostile behavior when it surfaces in congregational life
- Promote effective ways to "give the work back to the people" as part of adaptive leadership.

Workshop 12: Adaptive Leadership will be on Wednesday, December 8th from 7-9 p.m.



How many UU's does it take ... ?

There are over fifty committees, activities, and projects that contribute to making our church the vibrant community that it is.

Beginning in November, Ed is adding a new element to the Board members' notes, in order to make our church leadership more visible, and to give them some well-deserved recognition.

Every Sunday, Board members will briefly showcase one committee and its activities. Then a committee representative will join the Worship Leader, the Lay Leader, and the Board representative in the lobby to greet you after the service, and answer any questions you may have.

-Carol Ginn, Chair, Worship Service Committee

Living Our Faith: Unitarian Universalism at Work

SWUUC Fall Leadership Training
November 12-14, 2010 at Glen Lakes Retreat
Center, Glen Rose TX

Spend a fall weekend in beautiful surroundings with amiable UUs from across the district. Learn new skills, enjoy discussions and relax, all at a low cost that includes classes, housing and meals. Senior high youth are welcome in all tracks. Detailed information is available at www.swuuc.org. The four tracks are:

Conflict Management Skills for Congregations - learn how to better practice what we preach.

Small Group Ministry - learn more about starting and sustaining covenant groups and how they can foster family within a large congregation.

Examining Whiteness - understanding what it means to be a white person in a culture based on white privilege; all hues are welcome.

Curriculum Development Renaissance Module - for interested members, volunteers and professional staff; learn to create the course you always wished someone would offer. Talk to Margaret Borden (m.borden@sbcglobal.net), who is presenting the conflict training, about her first-hand experience at previous fall conferences.

Cost: \$200 includes registration fee and all meals. Housing is not included. Prices range from \$50 to \$150 per person for housing.

We're taking Spiritual Movies to a new level at First UU of Austin.

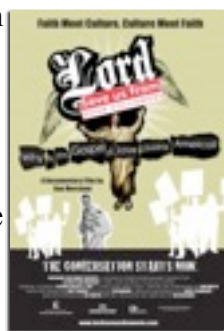
Watching a beautifully made film can bring about powerful and deep experiences, especially when you see a film with the intent to get more than just entertainment from it. Don't get me wrong, **I like being entertained as much as anyone-** but our monthly Spiritual Movies let me reflect more deeply on what it means to be human in ways I don't normally do.

In the span of a couple of hours you can travel to any where in the world at any time in history and walk in the shoes of heroes, villains, saints, sinners, beggars and royalty. After each film, you have a chance to reflect on your journey with your fellow movie travelers. How do you feel about what you witnessed? Did you have any insights? What moved you- maybe to tears? Why? Have you been inspired to change how you act? Has your world view changed in any way?

All of that while eating free popcorn.

So what's new?

More Showings of our Spiritual Monthly Movie: Beginning in November you'll notice that we have two showings of "*Babette's Feast*" - our regular 3rd Friday of the month evening showing on November 19th at 7 pm and a weekday matinee showing on Tuesday, November 16th at 1:30 pm. This makes it possible for church members who don't like to travel at night or who are off during the day to be able to see the film. If there are other times during the week you would like a showing of our monthly spiritual movie, just contact me at lansing@austinuu.org or stop by the Adult Religious Education table in the Gallery on Sunday morning and let me know what you want. We will pass a basket around to collect donations from those who are able before each film.



SPIRITUAL MOVIE MONTH

Custom Spiritual Movie showings and discussion topics for UU groups and committees. A thoughtfully selected movie with the right questions for discussion can be a transformative experience for church committees, covenant and interest groups. Maybe you want to see the Spiritual Movie of the Month, but only with the members of your group. How about sponsoring a movie showing and using it as a fundraising opportunity? We would like to build a library of movies that cover the values of our congregation- and a selection of discussion group questions that can be used before and after each showing.

The formulation of a SHINY NEW First UU Church of Austin Spiritual Movie Group or FUUCASMG for short. I promise this will be the absolutely coolest new group to be formed by a new staff member this week. Seriously though, eventually I would like this group to evolve into an open covenant group that was interested in screening movies and brainstorming related discussion topics, especially as they help illuminate our church values and mission.

And now...as a special reward for those of you that read this far- I am announcing the next 3 Spiritual Movies of the Month. In December we will watch the inspiring documentary "Lord Save Us from Your Followers," in January we will see "Being There" with Peter Sellers, and in February, in honor of Black History Month and what true leadership means, we will see "Invictus."

*-Lansing Bicknell, Adult Religious Education Staff
512 452 -6168 ext. 312 lansing@austinuu.org*



Babette's Feast



In 19th century Denmark, two adult sisters live in an isolated village with their father, who is the honored pastor of a small Protestant church that is almost a sect unto itself. Although they each are presented with a real opportunity to leave the village, the sisters choose to stay with their father, to serve him and their church. After some years, a French woman refugee, Babette, arrives at their door, begs them to take her in, and commits herself to work for them as maid/housekeeper/cook. Sometime after their father dies, the sisters decide to hold a dinner to commemorate the 100th anniversary of his birth. Babette experiences unexpected good fortune and implores the sisters to allow her to take charge of the preparation of the meal. Although they are secretly concerned about what Babette, a Catholic and a foreigner, might do, the sisters allow her to go ahead. Babette then prepares the feast of a lifetime for the members of the tiny church and an important gentleman related to one of them. This Danish film, which won



the 1987 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, is based on a short story by Isak Dinesen, author of "Out of Africa". Written and directed by Gabriel Axel, this literate and lovely-to-look-at film compels us to meditate upon the

needs of the flesh and the needs of the spirit. It is also about choices, talent, gratitude, friendship, grace, and hope. D. H. Lawrence once stated: "The sense of wonder, that is our sixth sense. And it is a natural religious sense." This film speaks lovingly to all six of your senses.

November Spiritual Movie

*FREE Movie & Popcorn in Howson Hall

MATINEE: Tuesday, November 16th at 1:30 pm

&

EVENING: Friday, November 19th at 7:00 pm

*Donations of \$5 or what you can contribute are encouraged.

Youth Religious Education



**“IN SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH BE READY FOR THE
UNEXPECTED,
CHANGE ALONE IS UNCHANGING.”**

-Heraklietos of Ephesos, Reading 655, Singing the Living Tradition

The only thing that never changes about the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin is that it is constantly changing, transforming, evolving and transitioning. We will never be static, goddess forbid if we are. And so, it is no surprise that the Religious Education Department is going through some major changes right now.

Lara Douglass, our Director of Religious Education for the past three years, has resigned her position. In order to pick up where she left off, the RE assistants - myself, Lansing Bicknell (Adult RE), and Andrew Young (Youth RE) - are working hard with the Children’s Programming Committee, Youth Programming Committee, Adult RE Committee, and Executive Director Sean Hale, to make the changes needed to continue to provide quality Religious Education programming.

There are, of course, many ways you can help out as a religious education parent or a church member. We need you to volunteer some of your time to help us help you. Below are just some of the available opportunities to help the Religious Education program continue to grow and change:

Sit in on a Sunday Religious Education Class! Our church can only afford one paid teacher per classroom, but our Child Safety Policy states that we need at least two adults in each classroom to ensure the safety, availability, and sanity of our teachers and children. By sitting in on a class, you will help us maintain our safety bylaws, and you will get a different kind of spiritual Sunday experience.

Sign-up for a special event! We need people to help out in coordinating and running special events like the Christmas Pageant.

Help out at the Youth Religious Education Information table! We need one volunteer per Sunday to sit at the Children’s Information table and talk to new visitors and members about the many different and amazing things the Department offers. You’ll get to discuss how wonderful RE Teachers are, what the Spiritual Movie is for the month, and talk about your volunteer experience to recruit others to volunteer.

Volunteer in the Religious Education Office! The whole church is getting a new comprehensive database system soon. We will need volunteers to help us enter class and registration information into the database and to help us organize, file and clean out all of the paper documents we have. We also will need help following up with new members and visitors through phone calls, e-mails, and letters. Remember, we can only change for the good of the congregation if you are involved. Please contact me by e-mail at beth@austinuu.org, by phone at 512.924.8721, or in person on Sundays to sign up.





GUEST AT YOUR TABLE 2010-2011

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's (UUSC) "Guest at Your Table" social service project combines advocacy, education, and partnerships with grassroots organizations, to promote economic rights, advance environmental justice, defend civil liberties, and preserve the rights of people in times of humanitarian crisis.

This is how it works: each family or individual will receive one "Guest at Your Table" box to take home and place in a prominent spot (usually at the meal table). The box is a reminder of this year's different "guests," and the contributions they make to the movement for universal human rights. Families are asked to put small change, checks, or cash in the boxes on a daily basis. This money will go to the UUSC, and then to this year's guests.



Each box is accompanied by a "Stories of Hope" booklet, which connects people in the United States and around the world who have shared their personal struggles and are working hard for human rights in partnership with UUSC.

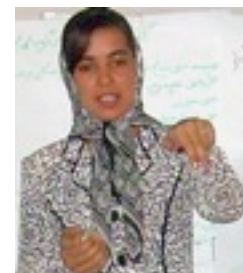
This year we are kicking off the "Guest at your Table program" on Sunday, November 21st. You may pick up your box at the RE Table in the Gallery on this date. The program will end on January 30th.

This year's "guests" are:



Opoka Kenneth. A Northern Uganda villager who has just recently returned home from an internally displaced persons camp, where he was forced to live. UUSC is working with him, and other villagers like him, to help rebuild homes, revitalize traditions, and come together as a community to heal.

Maral. An Afghani teacher. She participated in the UUSC's Teacher Training for Human Rights, and now incorporates that knowledge into her lessons. She helps her students to better understand their individual human rights, focusing especially on the rights of women and girls. Maral also trains other teachers to include these rights in their curriculum.



Carmen Molina. A Guatemalan leader for worker's rights with UUSC's partner STITCH. Carmen worked for more than 24 years on a banana plantation in Guatemala, and witnessed many injustices against workers, particularly women. She learned leadership and activist skills through STITCH and was empowered to bring women's issues to the table in union negotiations.

El Movimiento Mi Cometa a UUSC partner in Ecuador is helping to implement the human right to water.

You can read more about these "guests" in your "Stories of Hope" booklet. Sharing our blessings through "Guest at Your Table" ensures that UUSC's human rights work continues. Please consider making a contribution that meets membership levels. Since UUSC is an independent organization that receives no funding from the UUA or the U.S. government, UUSC members are vitally important.



If you would prefer not to bring home a box, you can take a donation envelope or support UUSC directly online at www.uusc.org.

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Sean Hale ext 308

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Next Newsletter Deadline

15th of the month

Please submit information to

news@austinuu.org

Last Minute Updates:

Freeze Night Orientation is for those who signed up and those who would like to find out what it is all about. It is on Wednesday, November 17th just after Meet and Eat. For those of you who would like to refresh your interest in Freeze Night or are joining for the first time, this is the place to start. You may join Meet and Eat then stay for the orientation. It usually takes 45 minutes to an hour.

The Singles' Retreat still has some spaces left for \$110. Check out our WEB site at: <https://sites.google.com/site/uusinglesretreat> or Call Mary Ann at: 512-587-8373

Don't Forget Thanksgiving Dinner at Church- see page 2.