

January NEWSLETTER

Congregational Meeting set for January 16th

There are two very important dates in the life of this church community every year. The two congregational meetings. What if every member made an effort to be in the sanctuary at 1:30 p.m. on January 16th. To listen carefully, ask questions, discuss and vote! We are voting on our budget. We are voting on a new staff position. If we do not have a significant number of voting members there at the meeting, the meeting will not happen. So I have a challenge for all of you. It is simple: come to the meeting and invite two other members to come with you. What a great meeting it would be if we hadlet's pick a number 300+ people in attendance who are voting members of the church. You have been in church services; your children have been attending the Religious Education programs; you attend Eat and Meets, Spiritual Movie Nights, covenant groups, book groups, committees, and classes. It is time to vote on the actions that will give us a successful year. See you there.

Need additional information? The agenda, budget and job description for the proposed new Membership/Volunteer Coordinator position are available in the mail room across the hall from the office or contact a leader of the church at leadership@austinuu.org

BIG Announcement



Chris Jimmerson has been accepted at the Meadville-Lombard Theological school.

The school has a long distance program that will take three years to complete. Chris will be able to continue living right here in Austin. **Congratulations from all of us Chris!**

Beyond Categorical Thinking On January 23

Mark your calendars

News from the Settled Minister Search Committee: The UUA strongly recommends that all congregations in search participate in a Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop. Ministers in our faith who are people of color, bisexual, gay, lesbian, female, transgender, differently abled, young, old, ethnically different, or of a different class still face discrimination as part of the ministerial search process. The purpose of the Beyond Categorical Thinking workshop is for the search committee and the congregation to learn more about how we can be more inclusive in our consideration of ministerial candidates. The workshop helps to surface subtle, often unintentional, and unconscious biases we may hold that can affect the decision we make to call a minister.

Keith Kron, UUA director of transitions, will conduct the workshop on January 23. He will meet the congregation, lead our Sunday service, and facilitate a three-hour conversation examining how we can avoid prejudice in our search process. **The church will provide lunch after the second service and child care during the program, which will be held from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Howson Hall.**

As of mid-December we have received applications from 29 ministers who are interested in our church! We are continuing to review their applications with the goal of narrowing our choices to five or six candidates whom we will interview in the coming weeks. For more information about the search process, visit the web site at <http://www.austinuu.org/wp/ministry/minister-search/timeline/>. As always, we welcome your questions and feedback 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.

At some distant future date, when church members gather round to compose a history of First UU, I believe they will choose to frame their remarks in terms of



Ed Brock,
Interim Minister

B.P.G. and A.P.G. - or "Before Policy Governance" and "After Policy Governance" -for the difference in the well being and prosperity of the church before and after Policy Governance will be, I believe, striking and unequivocal.

These future First UU historians will furthermore suggest, I believe, that the pioneering Board members who ushered in the era of policy governance be honored at the same level as those who originally started the church; for the inauguration of policy governance will be, in so many ways, a "second birth."

Watching the Board labor at formulating policy governance with great care and a constant eye on the well being of the congregation, under the wise and thoughtful guidance of Church Consultant Joe Sullivan, has been a privilege to me.

Policy governance is the best way known to organize a church to empower all, define responsibility clearly, and provide clear lines of authority in a way that maximizes transparency.

Some ask, why is the issue of policy governance coming up? Why are we even talking about policy governance and seeking to implement it? I can only state my very clear convictions: this church has taken on a conversion to policy governance because it allows a congregation to function in a way that minimizes the possibilities for burn-out, confusion, self defeating behavior, conflict, dysfunction and the prevalence of "going-around-in-circles-itis" and maximizes the possibility of success, clarity, calmness, rationality, the personal fulfillment of church members, and living our values, fulfilling our dreams, and being the change we want to see in the world.

Under policy governance, the Board will work with the congregation to define where the

Church wants to go and what it wants to be (vision, mission, goals, ends); sets policies that limit staff to what is legal, ethical and prudent; and monitors adherence to those policies and progress toward the goals and mission of the church.

Under policy governance, the minister, staff and committees are freed to pursue the church's mission and goals with all the creativity they can muster, under the monitoring eye of the Board. The minister would lead and facilitate, for example, the Church Council in a way that moves toward the church's vision and goals.

Under policy governance, the Board is freed to create goals and ends and then make sure that they are being pursued because they are not getting pulled into the minutia of the day to day operations of a church - while the minister(s) and staff of the church in conjunction with the committees of the church are empowered to do their work.

This will have a freeing and enlivening effect on committees. Committee chairs will work directly with the Senior Minister to carry on the work that matters to them the most within the perimeters of the church's mission and goals.

My brief comments in this newsletter and in other places cannot, of course, describe policy governance with the detail it deserves and requires. Furthermore, change, even of the most benign type, sometimes creates anxiety. For these reasons, over the next six months I am eager to meet with as many people who wish to, as often as people wish to, to discuss what policy governance means. I have already hosted two such meetings, which were well attended and a very satisfying experience for all. I am eager to host as many meetings as needed to satiate people's wish to learn and understand. The Board, as well, will host a number of similar meetings.

If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this in person, don't hesitate to e-mail me at austinnuu.org or call me at the church office x 304.

-Ed Brock, Interim Minister



Sunday Worship



The time for Sunday Worship on January 2 and 9 is 10:00 p.m.

The time for Sunday Worship on January 16, 23, and 30 is 9:45 and 11:30 a.m.

January 2: Apologies for 2011. Viva La Resolution. Mike LeBurkien. A discussion and definition of what an apology is, its elements, a measure of sincerity, and goal achievement: peace, closure, eternal life, resurrection. Do we owe God apologies? Brief looks at Jewish, Christian and Muslim metaphors, Biblical origins, and sources and liturgy.

January 9 Rev. Brock speaking

January 16 Rev. Brock speaking

January 23: Beyond Categorical Thinking. Rev. Keith Kron. Think outside the box as we consider choosing our staff and how to be a more inclusive church community.

January 30 Rev. Brock speaking



Sunday Forum



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

January 2: Alan Pogue "War-centered Economies, Societal Problems, and the International Prison Reform Movement" As a photographic artist, social justice advocate, and peace activist Austinite Alan Pogue has spent most of his life documenting the struggles of oppressed groups around the world to effect social change. He is an exceptionally gifted fine artist who uses his photos to make a difference in the lives of his subjects. Alan has received international recognition and awards for his work. A selection of his photos was recently shown at the United Nations, and a selection will also be shown in the First Unitarian Universalist Church Art Gallery in January 2011.

January 9: Dick Lavine, Sr. Fiscal Analyst, Center for Public Policy Priorities "The 2011 Legislative Session: How to Avoid Disaster." The Texas legislative session kicks off on Tues. Jan. 11th. We invited Dick Lavine to discuss his prospects for the 2011 legislative session, with a focus on the projected multi-billion dollar shortfall in state revenue. He will also point out the dangers of proposed constitutional amendments that would permanently limit the ability of the state to make investments in Texas' future. Don't miss this very timely and important presentation/ audience Q&A by an esteemed expert in Texas fiscal policy!

January 16: Ann Marshall - "Robert Burns of Scotland: His Relevance Then and Today" Ann has hosted many Robbie Burns Dinners in Austin including one at our Church last year. She is a famous leader in the Austin Celtic Community. This is the time of Robert Burns Birthday. Come join us to learn more about Scottish culture and enjoy Ann's lovely Scottish accent.

January 23: H.W. Brands - "How to be a Great President" H. W. Brands is a best selling author and the Dickson Allen Anderson Centennial Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin. Two of his books, *Traitor to His Class* and *The First American*, were finalists for the Pulitzer Prize. He lectures frequently on historical and current events, and can be seen and heard on national and international television and radio programs.

January 30: Public Radio Panel

Justice is L♥VE in Action

Hello dear, fellow congregant: I have fabulous news for you! The **UU Journey with Food** is coming! What, you may ask, is a UU Journey with Food? Well, it is five fabulous weeks starting March 20 of nothing but yummy food! OK, well maybe I should say it is five weeks of inspiration, challenge, fun, reflection, and action around our food choices. But yes, there will be lots of yummy food too. There will be:

- **Cooking classes**
- **Planting of a church garden**
- **Composting demonstration**
- **Spiritual Movie Nights about what else – food!**
- **A “Menu for the Future” Adult RE Class**
- **Kids field trip to the Farmer’s Market**
- **All-ages trip to the food bank to sort food (age 7 and up)**
- **And more – gotta keep a few surprises!**
- **Kids field trip to Sunshine Gardens**
- **“Share Your Values” potluck dinner**
- **Children’s Stories about....food!**
- **Meet n Eat and discussion**
- **Restaurant field trips**
- **Sharing suppers**
- **Foodie-friendly Public Affairs Forums**
- **Even music about food!**

So now, you know this part was coming....do you want to help? We need volunteers to help cook, pass out information, chaperone trips, get dirty and dig, read to children, collect canned goods, help in the classrooms, you name it. The UU Food task group has been hard at work organizing this journey for our congregation, but we need more people to help pull it off. If you like food, we need you!

Don't delay – contact us now! You can email corinna@austin.rr.com, or you can stop by the social action table in the gallery and pick up an interest form.

Thanks!

Your UU Food task group...Karen Franks, Lansing Bicknell, Cyndi Stein, Ruby Edmond, Mary Ann Stafford, Wendy Armstrong, Corinna Whiteaker-Lewis



Volunteers needed on Tuesdays at Peoples Community Clinic



Additional volunteers are needed for the 2nd Tuesday

Collate Group at People's Community Clinic to collate and stuff patient information packets. We have taken on additional responsibilities and need more help. We meet next on January 11th from 10am-12pm in the workroom at PCC. You don't have to participate each month, just as you can. There are usually around 4 to 8 of us and it is a nice opportunity to visit with each other. Please call or email Sheri Overton 847-2685 or sherioverton@hotmail.com.

First UU Reaches Out to Homeless Women and Children Do your part.

Search your closets and storage places.

We are collecting gloves, mittens, socks, hats, scarfs, and thermal underwear (from small to extra large for the women). Blankets that are small enough to be carried in a backpack are welcomed (if you have backpacks to donate that will be great too).

There is a collection box in the foyer for donated items.

Thank you all very much for your kindness given to Austin's homeless population.

Thank you all very much for supporting Freeze Nights. **Mary Ann Stafford**
587-8373





Brent Baldwin
Music Director

MUSIC MATTERS

Nourishing Souls and Transforming Lives Through Music

Adult Choir to Begin Winter Rehearsals

The FUUCA Adult Choir begins rehearsals for the Fall on Wednesday, January 19th at 7:30pm 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 January 16th (Sundays 10:40 - 11:25 a.m.) 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!

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



Danielle Solan



Kelan Latimer

December Board of Trustee Meeting Summary

In the interest of increased transparency, the Board of Trustees has decided to place a brief summary of the business of the monthly board meeting in the newsletter that follows the meeting. What follows are brief notes from the meeting.

The board will begin posting our draft agenda on the web and at church the week before meetings. We heard an update on efforts to start a planned giving program at the church. In a policy-based governance exercise, the board brain-stormed desirable traits, characteristics, and skills plus expectations of a person serving on a policy-based governance board.

We began reviewing the first subcommittee report on proposed executive limitation policies. These policies were initially drafted by the board over a Friday evening and day-long Saturday meeting facilitated by Joe Sullivan. The policies will set the limits within which the senior minister must operate. After final editing and review, the board will vote to adopt them when we are ready to operate under policy governance, probably sometime this summer.

The board reviewed and endorsed the serious breach of covenant policy presented by the minister.

The executive director reported that current voting membership is about 425-450. He will have a final count for the voting list for the January congregational meeting. The minister and executive director present a revised budget adjusted as follows: 1) pledges were discounted 4%, 2) \$5,000 from Paradox Players was added, 3) based on advice of Rev Breen, the Director of Religious Education will become a credentialed position and reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and 4) the events team time was reduced for savings anticipated with a switch to an in-house event team/custodian/sexton. This budget plus explanatory comments will be mailed or emailed to members for the Jan meeting.

The board discussed what it means to speak with one voice to members. And we reviewed information gained at the two pre-congregational meetings to more clearly present the budget and volunteer/member coordinator proposal at the January meeting. [NOTE: Official board minutes are posted on the web and outside the church office after approval at the following month's board meeting.]

-Margaret Borden, Board of Trustee Member

Just a few notes from the Young Adults group...

Weds, Jan 5th, 6:30 - 8:30pm (please note new time!): First UU Young Adults potluck and games night. Meet at First UU room 15, and bring your favorite board or other games.

Thurs, Jan 20th, 6:30- 8:30pm: First UU Young Adults potluck, planning meeting, and happy hour. Meet at First UU room 15 at 6:30 p.m. for dinner and a brief planning meeting, then we will be relocating to nearby coffee house or bar for drinks.

FUUCAYA is a fellowship group for people in their 20s and 30s; guests and new members are always welcome. For more information, sign up for our email list at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fuucyaa/>.

Cheers,
Tierney Kyle



Denominational Affairs

Meet with others from our church to discuss and vote on a congregational response to UUA Social Action Resolutions.

Sunday, January 30, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. (after second service)

Every June Unitarian Universalists throughout the country convene for a UUA General Assembly. At each General Assembly UUs express, by resolutions, thoughts about social action in our world. These resolutions are discussed and voted on by churches in all areas of the country. We haven't done that much, in our church, but your denominational affairs committee thinks we should, and so you are invited, to come after the second service, on January 30, to discuss and vote on two such resolutions, one on eating, and the other on immigration. Here's a link to these resolutions, from our Unitarian Universalist Association www.uua.org/csw. Previews of the comment forms as well as directions on how to vote, can be accessed at the same link. Texas Monthly magazine, Nov. 2010, has a good discussion of immigration.



For more on these resolutions, or information concerning our upcoming meeting on January 30, contact any of these members of our church.

- 1) Committee members Gary Bennett, John Franks, and Sally Scott have recently attended GA.
- 2) John Keohane, committee chair of Denominational Affairs, attended GA twice, but years ago. He does have more information, and is the author of this analysis.

--John Keohane keohane@prodigy.net (512) 371-3853

Chalice Lighter Program Fall 2010 Call

The third and final Chalice Lighter call of 2010 for the Southwestern Conference has been issued: the UU Fellowship of Hidalgo County is seeking support from us of \$20,000 in order to create a master plan for a new sanctuary; in one of the poorest areas of the state and the one in which UUs are probably least represented, they have grown significantly over the past few years and need to plan for more. If you are not presently a member of the program, each Chalice Lighter is asked to give a minimum of \$10 (no maximums stated!) three times a year to meet specific needs of other UU congregations in our district; 100% of contributions goes directly to the designated group for the specified purpose. Amy and I joined about 25 years ago, after the small church we belonged to was awarded a grant to help us build a new sanctuary. To find out more about this project and about joining, go to the district website: <http://www.swuuc.org/pages/stewardship/support.php>.



Congratulations To Us

Quite a feat – We raised about \$550,000, or \$100,000 more in the 2011 Canvass than we raised in the 2010 canvass.

Of that \$100,000 increase, \$50,000 (half the increase) came from the 13 families who contributed to the Bridge to the Future special pledge drive.

Of the remaining \$50,000 in increase, \$37,000 came from increases in the gifts of the top 40 pledging families.

The remaining \$13,000 increase came from the pledges of the other 350 families in our congregation. -Bill Edwards, Chair of the Stewardship Committee



Independence a Theme for 2011

PARADOX



PLAYERS

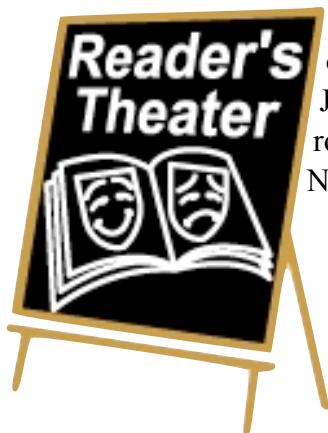
Biography, a sophisticated drawing room comedy by S.N. Behrman, opens our 2011 season on February 11. Featuring the intrigue and opportunism surrounding an independent portrait artist, this play explores celebrity, politics and corruption - themes as relevant today as when it was written in 1932! An art deco set designed by the Bethkes will anchor this snappy production directed by Dr. Charles R. Hill.

The 2011 season continues with the June production of *Independence*, set in the Iowa town of the same name. Directed by Lisa Foster, this comedy examines the struggles and assumptions of an offbeat mother and her three grown daughters. *Guest Artist* concludes the season in October with a comic drama directed by Karen Jambon that explores the independence of artistic creation.

You can treat yourself to tickets to all three shows, plus two guest passes, with a 2011 Season Ticket – on sale in the Gallery on Sundays or on the website paradoxplayers.org.

Sponsored by Paradox Players, but separate from our regular season, is a one-woman play written by our artistic director Poullette MacDougal – *Crazy Bett*. It will be performed at FronteraFest at Hyde Park Theater on January 19 (details are in the article for Senior Lunch on this page). Tickets are available from the Hyde Park box office, (512) 478-7529, or online at nowplayingaustin.tix.com.

Readers' Theater



meets to read one-acts on Monday evening, January 10, at 7:30 in room 13. Newcomers welcome!

Senior's Luncheon

Tuesday, December 14th
Howson Hall at Noon



Soup, Salad & Dessert \$5

RSVP to Alice Cashman 837-0988

Program: *Crazy Bett*

During the Civil War, a courageous woman took her convictions in her hands and lived her life in defiance of convention. Elizabeth Van Lew grew up near Richmond, Virginia and spent the majority of the Civil War gathering information and getting it to Lincoln and his generals about the movements of the Confederate Army. She ran a very successful spy ring and also managed to get many slaves north on the Underground Railroad. Come to the monthly luncheon and hear more about "Crazy Bett." This one-woman play was written by Poullette MacDougal, directed by Gaia Farnham and acted by Rae Petersen.



Kickoff Nominating Season for 2011-2012



Leadership and committee service are an important part of UU religious commitment. In January, the Nominating Committee will begin its search for committed and enthusiastic leadership for 2011-2012.

Starting Sunday, January 16, the Nominating Committee will be available in the gallery to discuss and answer your questions about the recruiting process. A flowchart outlining the nominating process, applications and sample interview questions will be available. The complete nominating process is available on the FUUCA website under Nominating Committee.

If you would like to participate in the 2011-2012 leadership of our church, contact any member of the Nominating Committee: Sandra Ries, Chair; Mike LeBurkien; Derek Howard; Pat Walters; or Linda Buehlmann.

Introducing Rev. Lena Breen, Interim Director of Religious Education

My consulting role with the RE program at First UU has ended, and I am now changing hats to take on the role of Interim Director of Religious Education (DRE). My ministry has always focused on Religious Education and I am pleased to offer my experience and serve you in this capacity. This position will continue until the end of May.

My onsite schedule is as follows:

January 15th-24th, April 16th-25th, and
February 19th-28th, May 21st-30th.
March 19th-28th,

When I am not onsite, I will be available by phone (206.679.1158) and consistent e-mail (clenabreen@fidalgo.net) each Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

for immediate response. I will try to respond within 24 hours on alternative days. My phone message and e-mail address will indicate if and when I am out of the country and unavailable. You may also reach me at the church at ext 305. Warmly,

-From the desk of Rev. Lena Breen, your new Interim Director of Religious Education



New Member Orientation Class: In a silo-smashing collaborative effort, the Membership and Adult RE committees have had two successful and well attended design sessions for the New Membership Orientation class. In our last session we decided to have a pilot class ready to offer by the end of January. We plan to invite the church's recent new members to attend this and give us feedback on it's value to them. The next design session for this effort is Thursday, January 20th from 7-9 pm at Church, and is open to all. We will be completing the content and format for the pilot Membership Orientation class. Stay tuned for the Pilot's first scheduled date.

*We gather in
community to
nourish souls,
transform lives,
and do justice.* **Adult
Religious
Education**

Chalice Circle Program

Thanks to the generosity of one of our members, our church is applying to be a Congregational Member of the UU Small Group Ministry Network (UU SGM). This gives our entire church discounts on UU SGM network courses, retreats and training materials. Our first discounted purchase will be the Chalice Circle Covenant Group Leader Training. We have 5 people who have committed so far to attend the course when it gets scheduled for Jan or early Feb. **This course is open to everyone in the church and is a great opportunity to develop deep listening and sharing, creating a safe environment for both.** Taking the course does not mean you are obligated to be a Chalice Circle facilitator, instead, it gives you the opportunity explore if that is what is next for you in your church ministry.

For more information on any of our Adult RE programs, contact Lansing at 512 453 6168 ext 312 or lansing@austinuu.org.

Spiritual Movie of the Month

Last month we had record breaking attendance for "Lord Save Us from Your Followers" with 50 people attending both showings and donating over \$170. There have been many requests for an encore showing of this great film- so stay tuned to your Sunday bulletin and email announcements - we may work one in this month or in February. I have been getting a steady stream of film suggestions - so keep them coming and let me know if you are interested in screening any of the films.

NEW SUNDAY EVENING ADULT RE CLASS Famous Characters from the Bible and the Qur'an



For six Sunday evenings from January 30 to March 6, in the Sanctuary from 7 to 9 pm, Jimmy Stanley and Stephan Windsor will compare and contrast some of

the best known characters that appear in both the Bible and the Qur'an, examining how they are presented within Judaic, Christian, and Islamic traditions. You will be enlightened, surprised, and maybe amused at how the same literary characters are described in different texts.

We plan to have guest speakers for the last two sessions.

Here's the schedule:

<p>Jan 30 Adam, Noah</p> <p>Feb 6 Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac</p> <p>Feb 13 Jacob and Joseph, Moses</p> <p>Feb 20 David and Solomon, Jonah and Jesus</p>	<p>Feb 27 How these stories are used in the life, culture and worship of the Jewish people.</p> <p>Mar 6 How these stories are used in the life, culture and worship of the Muslim people.</p>
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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 issues of concern to U.S. policymakers

today. The eight topics for 2011 are:

- Rebuilding Haiti**
- U.S. National Security**
- Horn of Africa**
- Responding to the Financial Crisis**
- Germany Ascendant**
- Sanctions and Nonproliferation**
- The Caucasus Global Governance**

Sign up and book orders for the group begins January 2011. Come by the Adult RE table in the gallery to pick up your copy of the 2011 book. The sessions will meet at church every Sunday in February and March in 2011 from 4-5:30 pm. For more information contact Lansing at 452-6168 ext. 312 or lansing@austinuu.org

Spiritual Movie for January



"BEING THERE" is an absolute jewel of a film. The main character, played by Peter Sellers, Chauncey/Chance is simple, vapid, unconcerned and utterly unselfconscious, yet he radiates an image of being ponderous, calculating, and complex. "BEING THERE" is deceptively straightforward and uncomplicated on the surface, but is rich and complex upon reflection. The film is enigmatic and lends itself to varied interpretations. This is one of those films that you have to talk about after seeing it, and you'll find endless points of view to consider. More than that, however, this film is historically fascinating. Made in 1979, the film gives us a chance to explore how far we think we have come in 2011 regarding racism, power, politics and the media. "BEING THERE" allows us to examine the assumptions we make of each other, and the imaginary realities that rise from them. **If you have seen this film before, it's probably time to see it again. If you haven't yet, maybe now is the time.**

***FREE Movie & Popcorn in Howson Hall**

**MATINEE: Thursday, January 20th at 1:30 pm &
EVENING: Friday, January 21st at 7:00 pm**

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

Call 512 452 6168 ext 312 more information.

Children & Youth Religious Education

Winter & Spring Curriculum Briefs

January 16th begins our new Winter & Spring Curricula!

Pre-K: *We Are Many, We Are One* offers young children the opportunity to learn about their religious community and tradition, as well as the freedom to discuss and express their uniqueness.

K-2nd and 3rd-5th: *A Tapestry of Faith* explains all seven UU principles - the core of our community - in the context of "beloved community".

Middle School: Continues with the ***Traditions with a Wink*** curricula. It will be taught at 11:30 a.m. by a newly hired member of our trained teaching staff.

High School: *The Our Whole Lives* sexuality education program will be offered during the 11:30 a.m. RE class time. This program will begin January 23rd. There will be no high school meeting in the Church on January 16th.

What a rich smorgasbord it will be for our children and youth!

NEW Children's Worship

Children's Worship will be initiated and led by Rev. Lena Breen on Jan 23rd and continue each 4th Sunday. Each worship runs for 15 minutes at the beginning of RE class, in place of a visit to the sanctuary. Children will need to be dropped off in their respective RE classes before parents and guardians attend service in the sanctuary.

NEW Childcare Offering

We will be introducing a new Childcare Activity Room on January 16th. The room will be open from **11:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.** This childcare is available only for registered RE children in Pre-K through 5th grade who have already been to their respective RE class during the first service and whose parents or guardians are involved in "Official Church Business" during this time frame.

Volunteering in Our Community

The RE Department has many volunteer opportunities available! Currently we need volunteers to work with our trained teaching staff and licensed childcare workers in the RE rooms on Sundays. Please consider joining us and offering – as well as receiving – the gift of community.

Coming of Age Program First-Hand Report!



Ever since late October, the Coming of Age program has been meeting every Sunday after the second service. The program is for eighth and ninth graders, and is very popular with its members. The program had its first retreat last weekend with programs from other churches, and it was, for the most part, a success (though I'm told one member characterized it as "boring" and "a bunch of kids running around screaming". But what do you expect at a retreat for young teens?).

I'm a member of the Coming of Age program, and I certainly enjoyed myself. The best part was definitely the interaction between churches and all of the friends made (and I believe I'm speaking for everyone, with or without romantic drama, which there was plenty of). The activities were interesting and stimulating, and the whole retreat was themed Wizard of Oz, which I think is an excellent example of unique Unitarian Universalism, seeing as I doubt any other religion would theme anything after a children's movie from the 1930s. But the part I will certainly remember the most will be the long nights spent awake playing on U-bar-U's ping-pong table, piano, and Foosball table, and lying in bed talking with new friends as if you had known them for years. - *Audrey Lewis*

A big shout-out to the other members of the Coming of Age program, Nick, Henry, and Claudia. Thanks to Andrew and the Youth RE teachers from the other churches for organizing the retreat, and the staff at U-bar-U. Thanks especially to all the Coming of Age program members from Live Oak and San Antonio, who made the trip so fun and are probably never going to read this.

First Unitarian Universalist

Church of Austin

4700 Grover Avenue

Austin, TX 78756

Interim Minister:

Rev. Ed Brock ext 304

Executive Director:

Sean Hale ext 308

Interim Director of Religious Educ.:

Rev. Lena Breen ext 305

Director of Music: Brent Baldwin

Board President: Eric Stimell

Church Phone: (512) 452-6168

Church Fax: (512) 453-5912

E-Mail: info@AustinUU.org

www.AustinUU.org

Next Newsletter Deadline

15th of the month

Please submit information to

news@austinuu.org

Bits and Pieces

Singalong will be held on the fourth Saturday, January 22, from 7:30 to 10:30 pm 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. If you want to add somebody to the email list, contact Mary Jane Ford at mjaneford@grandecom.net.

Yes! The Heritage Book Club is still going strong after 50 years!

Our next book is "Olive Kitterage" . We will be meeting at 7:00 p.m. on January 14th for Pot luck dinner at the home of Tom and Barbara Moran, 4504 Doliver Drive, Austin, Tx. Call 233-6488 for directions. If you read ahead the February book is "Ford County" by John Grisham.

Upcoming Yew Grove Pagan Interfaith events – Brighid's Day planning meeting at the church on Thursday January 6, 7:30 pm. Next Yew Grove Pagan Interfaith monthly meeting will be at the Church on Jan 21st at 7:30 pm in Room 13. And mark your calendars for our Imbolc/Brighid's Day Celebration on Feb, 3rd at 7:30 pm in the Church Gallery!