

# Meet Meg

# APRIL NEWSLETTER



Meg with her sons, Sam and Ned

**Your Settled Minister Search Committee is proud to introduce Reverend Meg Barnhouse**, who currently serves as interim minister at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Princeton, New Jersey. In addition to her ministry, Rev. Barnhouse is known nationwide as an author, speaker, singer/songwriter and humorist.

Meg Barnhouse grew up in North Carolina and Philadelphia. After graduating from Duke University and Princeton Theological Seminary she spent a chapter of her life in Spartanburg, South Carolina, working first as a college chaplain teaching public speaking, human sexuality and world religions, trying not to get them mixed up. Earning her credentials as a pastoral counselor, she ran her own counseling practice while raising her two sons, who are now in their

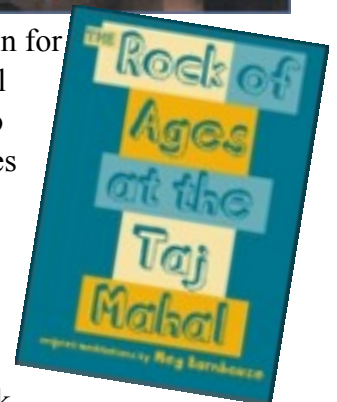
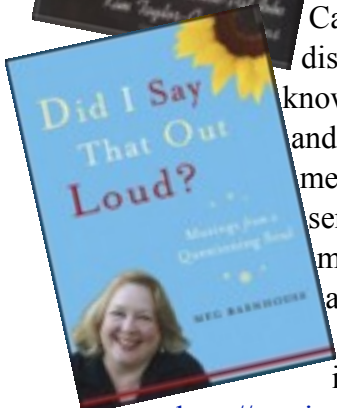
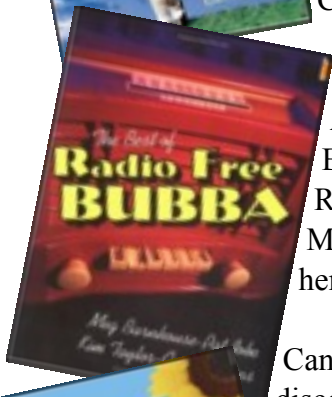
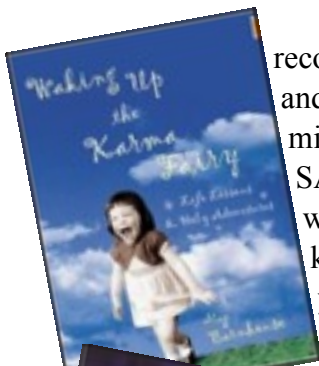
twenties. She was active in the community, preaching and teaching in many churches, recording commentaries for North Carolina Public Radio and “Weekend All things Considered,” serving as interim minister in several congregations and helping to found the SAFE Homes Network for battered women. Along the way she earned a second-degree black belt in American karate. She finished up her southern sojourn with seven years as the minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg.

Meg is a regular columnist for UU World magazine and the author of several books: “Rock of Ages at the Taj Mahal,” “The Best of Radio Free Bubba,” “Waking Up the Karma Fairy,” “Return of Radio Free Bubba” and “Did I Say That Out Loud?” More information about Rev. Barnhouse is available on her website at <http://www.megbarnhouse.com/>



Meg and her partner, Kiya Heartwood, will join us in Austin for Candidating Week, May 14–22. Candidating Week is a time of mutual discovery, an opportunity for Meg, Kiya and the congregation to get to know each other. During this busy week, Meg will meet with committees and staff and participate in receptions, dinners and gatherings with members of the congregation. She will also preach at both Sunday services on May 15 and 22. The congregation will vote to call the minister following the second service on May 22. Please plan to attend!

We will share detailed information about Candidating Week, including a full calendar of events, in the coming weeks. Please check our church website at <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/leadership/administrative/smsc/> for updates. If you have questions or need more information, come to our table in the gallery on Sundays or email us at [search@austinuu.org](mailto:search@austinuu.org). These are exciting times for our church! *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*



## Why Rev. Meg Barnhouse?

When the Settled Minister Search Committee received its charge to find a settled minister to meet the needs of our diverse congregation, one of our first activities was an extensive survey of what the congregation wanted in a minister.

### You described your ideal minister this way:

- Delivers inspiring, intellectually challenging sermons
- Is kind and caring to congregants and staff
- Continues the momentum of the work over the past two years to create our mission, values, and vision
- Provides leadership for social action
- Has a strong understanding of UU principles and values and can educate the congregation
- Values the diverse talents and skills of congregants and motivates people to use those skills and talents
- Is a capable administrator and able to delegate

### As you prioritized what you felt the church needed, you ranked the needs as:

The minister should first and foremost be a strong spiritual and intellectual leader, (83% said the minister's chief priority is to present stimulating and challenging Sunday services) followed in descending order by:

- Skill at involving people in congregational life
- Commitment to social activism
- Support for pastoral care
- Effective administration

## When we looked at Rev. Barnhouse's record and listened to what she said, this is what we found:

**a) Presents inspiring, challenging sermons.** We as a committee were awed by the sermon Rev. Barnhouse presented at a neutral pulpit, as well as by a number of others we read or witnessed. You can hear Rev. Barnhouse from our pulpit and others at the following sites:

- <http://austinuu.org/wp2011/2008/05/the-rapture-in-america/>. This sermon was delivered to First UU Austin on May 4, 2008 as part of our Distinguished Speaker Series.
- <http://lortie.net/?p=451>. Hear the sermon that wowed your search committee.
- <http://www.uua.org/searchoursite.shtml?q=meg+barnhouse>. There are entries of hers on youtube.

### **b) Provides leadership for social action.**

- Soon after Rev. Barnhouse moved to Spartanburg, SC, she started a shelter for battered women and served as Board President for four years. The SAFE Homes / Rape Crisis agency is still going strong.
- As a minister she guided the UU church in Spartanburg to focus on a single project: a 6 year partnership six with a local elementary school in which 99% of the students receive free lunch (see her packet for more info)
- Her Princeton, NJ, congregation donated nearly ten percent of their budget to local social action organizations.
- The youth group has been engaged in ongoing trips to help (and learn from) New Orleans

**c) Has a strong understanding of the UU principles and values and can educate the congregation.** She is a frequent and eloquent contributor to *UUWorld*, our denominational magazine. <http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/153287.shtml>

**d) Is kind and caring to congregants and staff; good at pastoral care.** Rev. Barnhouse spent years working as a counselor developing and practicing great listening and counseling skills. The kindness, consideration and attention that she pays to each individual was a theme we heard over and over from each reference.

**e) Values the diverse talents and skills of congregants and motivates people to use those skills and talents; skilled at involving people in congregational life.** References spoke of her many skills, growth of social action, and the growth of the Spartanburg church in the seven years she was there.

**f) Is a capable administrator and able to delegate.** This has a special meaning for our church; as we move toward policy governance, we realize that few ministers have experience with it. Fortunately, Rev. Barnhouse has spent the last two years as interim minister at a church that does have such a policy in place, gaining experience which we will find valuable as we move to implement policy based governance.

**g) The congregational wish list and beyond.** After much reading, observing, interviewing and studying, members of the search committee believe that Rev. Barnhouse fulfills what our church members have called for: a person of deep spirituality and compassion, a personally engaging leader and a preacher of sermons of intellectual and emotional depth. She also brings some delightful extras: she is a denominational leader, a popular public speaker, a best selling author, a radio personality and a musician of note. Not only can we expect these talents to enrich her ministry, but also to increase our visibility and the reach of our message in our community and in our denomination



## Sunday Worship

The time for Sunday Worship is 9:45 and 11:30 a.m.

Rev. Ed Brock will be speaking at the Worship Services in April

In our UU Journey with Food, we have partnered with the Sustainable Food Center for several activities: the Healthy Local Cooking Class, the Farmers' Market Tour, and they also helped fund the Foodshed that Karen Banks spoke about during Public Affairs Forum on March 20. Please join us in giving generously to the Sustainable Food Center during services on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Sunday Forum

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

**Sunday, April 3:** Sarah Wheat, Interim CEO of Planned Parenthood in Austin, "Standing up for Planned Parenthood - Why Healthy Texas Women and Families Matter." Sarah will provide an overview of the national and state-level coordinated attacks on Planned Parenthood that are underway and why this extremist agenda undermines healthy families and threatens federal and local programs.

**Sunday, April 10:** The Cost of 20 Years of Lost Wars Paul Sullivan, Executive Director of Veterans for Common Sense. Paul Sullivan will describe the devastating human, financial and opportunity costs of waging war in Southwest Asia for 20 years. Paul provides legislative and public relations advocacy to improve veterans' access to VA healthcare and benefits. dal at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. He also has testified before Congress many times on behalf of Veterans.

**Sunday, April 17:** The Trials and Triumphs of Tecolote Farm. Katie Kraemer Pitre co-founded Tecolote Farm, a certified organic vegetable farm on the blackland prairie east of Austin, with her husband David 18 years ago. Chosen to serve as the only farmer representative on Austin's inaugural Sustainable Food Policy Board, and driven to unite local farmers in the fledgling Growers' Alliance of Central Texas (GroACT),

**Sunday, April 24:** No Forum. Easter Sunday.

### Easter Service, April 24<sup>th</sup>

All children and youth will accompany their families to both the 9:45 and 11:30 services. There will be an extended special story, skit, and musical offering.

After most of the service, the children will exit the sanctuary accompanied by their teachers.

There will be an egg hunt, snacks, and other fun planned activities for all to enjoy.

### Easter Brunch

There will be an Easter brunch sponsored by the Membership Committee following our second service on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Visitors are welcome to attend. Vegetarian soup and bread will be provided, please bring a salad/vegetable or dessert to share as we gather for fellowship and in celebration of this season of renewal.

### Calling All Young Adults (20s and 30s)

First UU Church of Austin's Young Adults is a fellowship group for those in their 20s and 30s; guests are always welcome! Weds, Apr 6th, 6:30 - 8:30pm: Games night with the Young Adults group. Meet in room 15 for a potluck and games night - bring your favorites or learn something new! Thurs, Apr 21st: The YA group will be volunteering at the Inside Books Project (IBP) starting at 8pm. For directions and more info about the IBP, see

<http://www.insidebooksproject.org/>.

Meet in room 15 at 6:30pm for a potluck and discussion before heading out to volunteer.



## Our Journey with Food Continues!

We hope you have been enjoying your travels as we journey together, discovering the many different aspects of food and food choice. Our Journey with Food will officially end on April 17, when Rev. Brock preaches his concluding sermon, and our choir sings “Food Glorious Food!” But we still have many stops before we get there. Please see us at the Journey with Food table to sign up for these remaining events:

**Saturday April 2:** Trip to Sort Food at the Capital Area Food Bank

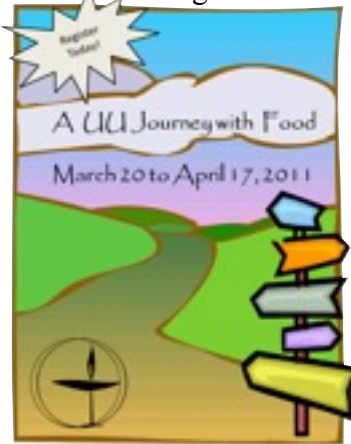
**Wednesday April 6:** Field trip to the Farmer’s Market at the Triangle

**Saturday April 9:** Sharing Suppers: Taco and Salad Bar

**Sunday April 10:** Monthly Special Offering: Sustainable Food Center

**Compost Challenge** composting demo

**Friday April 15:** Spiritual Movie: Babe



**Sunday April 17:** Service: Our UU Journey with Food Ends

**Public Affairs Forum:** Tecolote Farm  
**Urban Patchwork Workday**

**Wednesday: April 20** Meet N Eat with Local Food and Journey Reflection\*

**Thank you again** for your understanding, enthusiasm, patience and kindness as we undertake this journey together. Please give a journey task group member your feedback!

## UUs Rally for Public Schools!



After a heartfelt and moving sermon by Rev. Brock, several church members joined together at the capitol for the Save Texas Schools Rally. Unfortunately, our state’s budget crisis has impacted some of the teachers in our congregation personally – they may not have a job to return to next school year. Many thanks to Geri Neemidge for helping coordinate an awesome sign-making party the night before and getting a wonderful professionally-made banner printed up!



## Another Great Turnout for CROPWalk

Church friends recently walked on a beautiful Sunday in the fight against hunger. Our congregation raised over \$1000 to help hunger programs both here in Central Texas and around the world. As we walked, we learned about how our donations will help combat poverty and hunger in the many countries we “visited” at the country-stations along the walk. The children particularly enjoyed this aspect of our walk, as they collected stamps in their “passports.” Thanks to everyone who walked and donated!





# Sparkle Plenty...

## A Moment In Time

First UU has been through many changes since the last *Sparkle Plenty* in 2007. Change is rarely easy, but there has been tremendous dedication and commitment demonstrated throughout these years. *Sparkle Plenty* is an opportunity to celebrate the many accomplishments achieved during this time while raising money for the church's many important programs. We've added "A Moment in Time" to the name of our auction to acknowledge what a special time this is in First UU's history. We will soon be receiving a new settled minister and all the hard work from congregants over the past couple of years is coming into fruition.

**What:** Silent and live auction fundraiser for First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin and it's many programs

**When:** April 16, 2011, 6:30 – 9:00pm

**Where:** FUUCA, 4700 Grover Ave., in Howson Hall, the Gallery and the Sanctuary.

**How can you participate?** You can participate in the success of this event in a number of ways. First, you can donate something to be auctioned off at the event. It can be an item, a service or an event. Secondly, you can make plans to attend the event and invite friends, family, neighbors – the more the merrier. Tickets are \$12 if purchased before April 10 and \$15 at the door. Childcare is available

for children 11 and under at \$5 per child. Lastly, come planning to bid high on the many items that will be available due in large part to the generosity of our members. The food, fun, friendly competitive bidding and entertainment will make this an enjoyable way to participate in and support our church.

Items donated should be new or in new condition or an antique that will bring value to the auction. Services are popular at auctions – massages, spa treatments like manicures, pedicures and facials, personal computer / software training, handyman services, interior decorating or personal wardrobe consultations are just a few of the services you can donate. Events like hosting themed dinners in your home or offering a hiking or sailing excursion can spark exciting bidding wars. Donation forms must be submitted for every donation by March 27. We are accepting donations at the church on Sundays following the 2<sup>nd</sup> service from 1-2pm, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am-1pm through April 3. Call Lisa Carrell at the number listed below if you need to make special arrangements to drop off donated items. For more ideas about what to donate, donation and event registration forms, and information about the event, visit [www.austinuu.org](http://www.austinuu.org) and click on the Sparkle Plenty button on the right hand menu. Contact Lisa Carrell at [auction@austinuu.org](mailto:auction@austinuu.org) or 512-698-2831 for any additional questions/concerns.

### Denominational Affairs

The Denominational Affairs Committee's main job is to provide and encourage opportunities for each of us to learn and develop a wider community. We can learn from others, and others can learn from us. Accordingly, let me encourage your participation in activities that will strengthen the community as a whole.

**General Assembly.** Once a year, nation-wide. Next one, this June 22-26 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Those going from our church include Chris Jimmerson, Sally Scott, John and Karen Franks. More on the UUA www site. <http://www.uua.org/ga/>

**Southwest District.** Twice a year. Next one, this April 29-May 1 in Oklahoma City. Margaret Borden and John and Karen Franks are planning to attend: More information available at <http://www.swuuc.org/>

**UUA email discussion lists.** Some of the most relevant are UU-Leaders, UU-Money, Memb-I (membership and growth issues), Adult-re, Reach-I (children's RE), and Swuuc-I (SW District). Free, sign/quit anytime. Cyndi Loudon and I among others have joined: <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo>

--John Keohane Chair, Denominational Affairs committee [denom@austinuu.org](mailto:denom@austinuu.org). (512) 371-3853



Chris Carter

## Mowing our Values

Your church is renewing its commitment to reducing our environmental impact this year. In addition to renewing our contract with Austin Energy's Green Choice program, we have renewed our contract with the environmentally-friendly Clean Air Lawn Care.

Clean Air works in partnership with our Grounds Committee to keep our lawn and landscaping looking good. They use clean, quiet battery powered equipment powered by solar energy during the work day and Austin Energy's GreenChoice at night. To top it off, they buy certified carbon offsets from Carbonfund.org reducing total emissions to zero and thereby making the entire company carbon neutral. This partnership shows that First UU is making a significant commitment to Austin's environment and further reducing our carbon footprint. How much?

First UU will prevent over 609 pounds of air pollution from being released into Austin's environment on the turf maintenance alone. This is the equivalent of the pollution from a car driven more than 18,665 miles. Chris Carter is the person on site getting the work done.

When you see Chris Carter, from Clean Air, working on our grounds, please stop and say hi!

## Summary of March 15<sup>th</sup> Board meeting

Lisa Carrell reported on progress for the Sparkle Plenty auction and suggested ways that board members could contribute to the event's success.

During negotiations, the candidate for settled minister indicated a desire, if called, to begin work Aug 15 rather than the Sep 1 date stated in the contract. The board agreed this would be beneficial for the church and approved \$6,000 to cover this time period.

The treasurer reported on efforts to recruit members with experience in finance issues for the audit committee. Because of the important nature of this committee's work, the board will revisit this issue monthly until such committee is adequately formed.

To better understand the use of executive interpretations under policy-based governance, the board requested the minister and executive director provide an interpretation of the following board policy at the April board meeting: "The Senior Minister shall not fail to maintain and enforce procedures to ensure the safety of congregants and children while at the Church or at Church functions." This is an exercise only. Official interpretations will be the responsibility of the settled minister. The board participated in a governance exercise with a role play of a typical board meeting not using, then

using policy-based governance. We also reviewed a typical board agenda under both conditions and discussed the implications for our own work.

The board discussed preparation for the pre-congregations meeting April 10 and board meeting May 15. With the number of items being discussed and the scope of change involved (board slate, new coordinator position, proposed by-laws changes), we want to provide sufficient and complete information to address previously stated and anticipated concerns so that members are making fully-informed choices. To assist in informing members, the board will hold a brown bag luncheon Apr 3 at 1pm to present and discuss proposed by-laws changes.

Susan Thomson presented plans for the Mar 16 FUUCAFE. This event uses a dialog model designed to elicit deep conversation from participants. The event, combined with Meet N Eat, asks questions about our end of promoting radical hospitality. We want to discover what differences radical hospitality will enable us to make in our own and others' lives.

The board reviewed the need for a trustee to be available at each service to greet and be available for linkage with members. A sign-up sheet for the next six



ANNUAL

# KRAUSE SPRINGS CAMPOUT

APRIL  
29TH



Please join us for a weekend of camping at a privately held campground near Spicewood. Some people arrive

around 4:00 p.m. on Friday night and others arrive on Saturday to camp. Bring food for Friday night plus breakfast and lunches. It's a beautiful campground. There's a swimming hole and a waterfall. You can also hike to Lake Travis. There are restrooms and shower facilities nearby. There's a potluck meal at around 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. Afterwards there's a campfire and musical jam. You don't have to camp. You can just spend the day-it's just 35 miles from Austin. On Sunday morning we fix a communal breakfast.

**Bring:** Musical instruments, food and drinks to share, lawn chairs and water for cooking, washing up and drinking. Tents, bedding, camping equipment and flashlights if you are staying overnight. No dogs are allowed.

**Directions:** Go west on Hwy 71 through Bee Caves, go 5 miles past the Pedernales river, and then take a right at the Exxon station/store to Spicewood. Take the second right at the County Road 404 sign. The road into Krause Springs will be on the left, slightly upgrade, after crossing a creek. Drive to the house where you pay. It's \$10/adults, \$5/children (4-11) per night and if you're just spending the day, it's Adults/\$5 and children/\$4. Tell them that you're with the Unitarians. We're camped close by the house.

**Information:** Lynn Vaughan at 989-5701 or 587-8221 or [Lynn@Lynnspetsitting.com](mailto:Lynn@Lynnspetsitting.com) or Krause Springs at (830) 693-4181.



## Upcoming Fellowship Events...

**Tuesday, April 12** The Fellowship Meeting is at 7:00 p.m. at the church everyone is welcome.



**Friday, April 16th** Fellowship will be helping with the Auction.

**Friday, April 22nd, Unitarian SEDER...** there will be a pot luck, for all families, sign up will be in the gallery. There will be a hard boiled egg per person, wine and other foods associated with the traditional Jewish Seder. (no leavened bread). Starts at 6:30.



**Friday, April 29th** We will have a Spring Chocolate festival pot luck. Yew Groves will provide all the chocolate desserts. May day is not far away, so come and celebrate. Starts at 6:30. P.M. in Howson Hall.

**Saturday, May 21st** A fellowship event and opportunity to meet Meg Barnhouse, our candidating minister.



## April Abundance

April is the ideal month to try out a role with Paradox Players opportunities are many and varied.

**April auditions:** Lisa Foster will be holding auditions for four women in Lee Blessing's play, *Independence*, which opens in June in Howson Hall. Auditions will be Mon and Tue evenings, April 4 and 5, at Dougherty Arts Center, 1110 Barton Springs Road, at 7:00. Lisa requests that all auditionees read the script, available for checkout in the PP mailbox at church. Roles include the mother, age 50's to 60's, and her three daughters, ages 19 to late 30's. All these roles are well-written, completely developed characters.

It promises to be a rich experience to work on this play, written by one of today's leading playwrights and directed by an experienced actress (Lisa starred in our Feb production of *Biography*) and director (she most recently directed last June's *Charlie Cox Runs with Scissors*).

**Off-stage roles:** Lisa is seeking an Assistant Director. Treat yourself to the opportunity of experiencing the craft of comedy from the other side of the footlights; contact Lisa at [info@paradoxplayers.org](mailto:info@paradoxplayers.org). Satisfy your technical skills, become a PP Techie and learn how to run lights or sound – contact Ann Edwards at [paradoxplayers.org](http://paradoxplayers.org) or Jean Boehme at [info@paradoxplayers.org](mailto:info@paradoxplayers.org). Indulge your pleasure in being the boss; contact John Boehme at [infor@paradoxplayers.org](mailto:infor@paradoxplayers.org) to learn the role of Assistant Stage Manager

**Sunday Shorts** returns to worship services on April 17, with a short play on the theme of food: hunger in the midst of extravagance.

## Yew Grove Meets on the Full Moon

Yew Grove will be changing format, and meeting on the Full Moons each month. For April, we will meet under the oaks to the south of the sanctuary if the weather is fine, or in room 13 otherwise on April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. Please come and enjoy the sacred time together.



## Senior's Luncheon

Tuesday, April 12th (2<sup>nd</sup> Tues.)  
Howson Hall at Noon

Soup, Salad & Dessert \$5

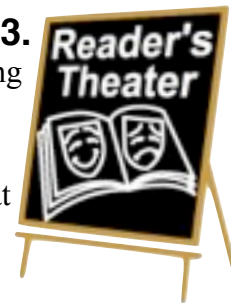
RSVP to Alice Cashman  
837-0988

Program: Speaker from our neighbors at 4804 Grover, the Huntington-Surrey School. It



## Monday evening, April 11, at 7:30 in Room 13.

We offer the experience of acting without stage fright! Enjoy unrehearsed reading aloud – one act plays – Monday evening, April 11, at 7:30 in room 13. Newcomers are always welcome.



## Spring Cleaning Book Sale for the First UU Library - April 2

Your library will again be holding a Book Sale to raise funds for library supplies and acquisitions. The sale is Saturday, April 2nd in Howson Hall. Please bring **books to donate** for the sale from 10-11 am that morning. We will start selling books from 11 am - 1:00 pm. Bring any books which are not intended for our collection, all books will be sold that day. We especially appreciate books which are delivered in boxes or paper bags!

We would love to have some volunteers to help pack and/or transport books which are left behind, as these will be taken to Half Price Books to sell after the sale at 1 pm. So please plan to stay after and help if you can! Many thanks, Andi Windham & Stephanie Gill, Library Co-Chairs.

See Page 12 for Info on the Board  
Brown Bag, Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> and  
Pre-Congregational Meeting Sunday,  
April 10<sup>th</sup>!



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

# Religious Education



## *Pathway to Membership First UU Church of Austin Pilot Class*

Was a big success. Thanks to everyone who participated: presenters, elves who helped pull it off behind the scenes, and most of all to the people who have been visiting our church and recent new members who came to participate in our pilot class. After we incorporate the feed back from the evaluations and other lessons learned we should be able to regularly schedule classes for people to participate in who want to join or just joined the church.

### **Journey with Food Family Movie for April....**

**BABE!** Come join us Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm or 7pm for this family classic that is sure to make you smile. Free Popcorn and Movie- \$5 donation or what you can afford is accepted.



### **Unitarian Universalists: A Short History**

The course will cover the separate and distinct origins of Unitarians and Universalists from their European roots to the formation of the Unitarian Universalist Association. The course will be led by Luther Elmore, history teacher and member of the Adult Religious Education committee at First UU Church of Austin.

The course will be held on three consecutive Sundays from 1:30-3:30pm at First UU Church of Austin on April 3rd, April 10th, and April 17th. For more information or to RSVP for the class please contact Lansing at [lansing@austinuu.org](mailto:lansing@austinuu.org)



## *Vipassana Meditation Beginners Class*

Vipassana is a Pali word which means "insight". Insight meditation is a simple and direct practice of the moment to moment investigation of the mind/body process through calm and focused awareness. As insight deepens, wisdom and compassion arise. **Join Rev. Lena Breen, meditation practitioner for 35 years, for an introductory class from 6:30-9:00 pm on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>.** The class includes seated and walking meditation.. Wear comfortable clothes, bring a mat or pillow for sitting, and good walking shoes as well. For more information or to RSVP for the class please contact Lansing at [lansing@austinuu.org](mailto:lansing@austinuu.org)

# Children's Religious Education

**APRIL UPDATE...** From the desk of Rev. Lena Breen

## A Note on Intergenerational Services

We have a mostly Intergenerational Easter service planned on April 24<sup>th</sup>. There will also be a complete Intergenerational service on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Intergenerational services are special opportunities for children, youth and adults at First UU to spend time together in worship in our sanctuary. We sing and celebrate; we share our thoughts and feelings; we learn and grow from our experiences.

Life becomes religious whenever we make it so:

when some new light is seen,  
when some deeper appreciation is felt,  
when some larger outlook is gained,  
when some nobler purpose is formed,  
when some task is well done.

- Sophia Lyon Fahs

Children and young people are fully important members of our faith community and they learn by doing and experiencing firsthand, just as adults do. We believe it is important for them to participate in whole church worship. Regardless of whether they understand everything that happens, we believe they will absorb the overall meaning of the worship and experience the sense of being a valued and welcome member of the congregation.

### ***How can we welcome them, knowing it's tough for young people to sit still for long periods of time?***

Parents, get settled early and consider sitting near the front. Children who are able to see what is happening will feel more involved. Introduce yourself and your child to the people sitting nearby. Review the order of service and help them understand what will be happening. Share the hymnal at your child's eye level, underlining words with your finger. Feel free to whisper instructions to help young people learn the worship etiquette. If your toddler or young child becomes disruptive there is a quiet room behind the sanctuary where you can retreat to.

Congregants, please greet the young people. They will have their name tags on. Expect and encourage children to behave appropriately during worship. When they share, respond to them as participants in worship, not as performers or observers. Be understanding and patient with the learning process. Remember the commitments we make when we dedicate a child during our child dedication services (upcoming on May 29<sup>th</sup>); we dedicate ourselves to the tenderness of understanding, the fairness of good care, and wisdom of devotion. And, above all, open yourself to what you can learn from our young people as well as what you might be able to teach them.

### **Easter Service, April 24<sup>th</sup>**

All children and youth will accompany their families to both the 9:45 and 11:30 intergenerational services. There will be an extended special story, skit, and musical offering. After most of the service, they will exit the sanctuary accompanied by their teachers. There will be an egg hunt, snacks, and other fun planned activities for all to enjoy.

### **A Note to the Parents/Guardians**

Thank you for bringing yourself and your child(ren) to church regularly. I know there are other options for you as a family on Sunday mornings, I am pleased you chose to prioritize First UU. WE want our children and youth to experience both our faith and our unique UU identity in such a profound way that they will grow up with a faith they can grow with and contribute to as adults. Our beliefs and assumptions have strengths and challenges we can draw upon from cradle to grave. Every person and every activity in our congregation can be an asset to our individual development and our general vitality.

In her book, *The Gift of Faith, Tending the Spiritual Lives of Children*, UU minister Jeanna Nieuwejaar says:

Those families who are cultivating the habit of church-going are giving their children a precious gift – a gift that enlivens their childhood and provides deep and sustaining roots for the future. The simple habit of church-going acknowledges that the spiritual life is of value and weaves connections to a web of faithful folks, connecting to a religious community that can be life-sustaining and life transforming.



## The Magic of Summer at First UU



Hogwarts Organizers: Vicky Alstrom, Andi Windham, & Melissa Smith

The 2011 summer camp at First UU will take place the week of July 25-29, 2011. We continue with the popular theme of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Each morning, the children will enjoy games such as Quidditch and Wizard Chess, make joyful sounds during Musical Charms, and learn via exciting hands-on activities in classes: Herbology, Potions, and Defense Against the Dark Arts. Each afternoon, we will work together on social action projects and have fun activities: like movies, games, and field trips to local muggle sites.

Registration opens in late March. Witches and wizards in the age range 6-11 years old (entering grades 1-6) are eligible to enroll at Hogwarts. Those who are 12-14 years old (entering grades 7-9) may enroll as assistant prefects, while those 15 and older (entering grades 10 and above, including college) will serve as full prefects and assist with running the camp. The cost for the week is \$200 for campers (with a \$50 discount for UU members), \$100 for assistant prefects, and free for regular prefects (who, on successful completion of their obligations, will also receive letters certifying their volunteer hours).

We seek adults to participate as volunteer professors for morning classes, house elves, chaperones for afternoon field trips, or members of the Ministry of Magic. (It is a great gig – volunteers get to dress up and role play every day as part of the general atmosphere of magic.)

For more information, please do one or more of the following:

- Visit the camp webpage, which we will update as plans evolve: [www.austinuu.org/wp/religious-education/campuu/](http://www.austinuu.org/wp/religious-education/campuu/)
- Join the camp participant mailing list at [groups.yahoo.com/group/CampUU-info/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CampUU-info/) (please include a brief note about yourself and your interest in the camp)
- Direct an email to the camp directors at [CHARM-committee@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CHARM-committee@yahoogroups.com)

The worship service and fellowship after church on the Sunday following the camp, July 31, will include special opportunities for the entire congregation to experience a bit of the magic themselves!



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**Church of Austin**

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**Rev. Ed Brock ext 304**

**Executive Director:**

**Sean Hale ext 308**

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*Next Newsletter Deadline*

*15<sup>th</sup> of the month*

*Please submit information to*

[news@austinuu.org](mailto:news@austinuu.org)

**The Spring Pre-congregational Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, April 10, beginning at 1:30 in Howson Hall. The purpose of the meeting is to review major items on the agenda for the Spring Congregational Meeting, which will be Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. These include election of new board trustees and officers, the 2nd vote for use of savings funds for a new staff position focused on membership development and revision of our bylaws.

The Board has been hard at work reviewing and identifying areas of the bylaws that require revisions to support our thriving congregation and to best enable us to fulfill our new mission, values and ends. The congregation will have multiple opportunities to review and comment on the proposed changes prior to the Spring Congregational Meeting. The first opportunity will be at our Brown Bag Lunch With the Board, scheduled for Sunday, April 3, from 1:00 to 2:30 in Howson Hall. Please plan to grab a lunch and join the board to review the proposed changes.