



FIRST UU NEWS

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

“I’m going to have to let me go.”

by Rev. Meg Barnhouse

As I was walking across the parking lot toward the grocery store I saw a man pushing a full cart through the doors. It was one of the grocery carts with a little plastic car underneath where your child can sit and pretend to drive as you make your way up and down the aisles.

This dad’s toddler sat in the yellow plastic car, his hands firmly on the steering wheel, an intent and responsible expression on his face. He had done a good job steering and they hadn’t run into anything as they made the turns from vegetables to cereal to ice cream. As the doors swished open and they crossed the walkway into the parking lot, the kid’s mouth opened wide in terror and he started to scream. His dad hadn’t noticed yet. The parking lot was noisy, and he was focused on the cars whizzing by. It occurred to me that the little boy, who had been thinking that he was the one driving the cart, assumed he was still driving. Emerging into the parking lot, seeing the cars coming toward him, he knew he was in over his head, and he was panicking.

Sometimes I look at what’s coming up in my life, and I don’t see a way it can work out. I run all possible scenarios. I prepare for the worst. Time passes, and things work out, somehow. Or they don’t, and then other things happen. That’s life for all of us, isn’t it? Sometimes I feel that I’m driving, in charge, competent, oriented, in control, capable—more than capable. Other

times I suspect that my life is a grocery cart and my seat is in the little yellow plastic car underneath with the play steering wheel. Now comes the trouble with this metaphor that worries me. Is God a kind of cosmic “dad” at the wheel? I used to think that, back in my Campus Christian days. I don’t picture it that way anymore, but I still sometimes get the feeling that I’m being helped.

**When I’m feeling
the big dangerous
worrisome things
coming toward me,
I need to sink my
roots deep into the
Sauce and let my
wisdom drive.**

I’m not saying I don’t have responsibility for my life. I’m not singing “Jesus take the wheel,” as if I were too dumb to navigate, as if my intelligence and experience count for nothing and a heavenly being is in charge. I do think there is part of me that is smarter than the everyday

part. My inner wisdom is hooked up with the Source. Or the “Sauce,” as a friend from the deep South would pronounce it. In times of confusion, when I’m feeling overwhelmed, overdone, over my head, I feel like that kid panicking as he saw the big cars whizzing by. In our service a few weeks ago, Roy Zimmerman sang a song whose last line was “I’m going to have to let me go.” I think that is what I’m talking about. When I’m feeling the big dangerous worrisome things coming toward me, I need to sink my roots deep into the Sauce and let my wisdom drive. Is it mine? Is it a wisdom that belongs to all of us that we can access when we need it? Yes to both questions.

I don’t know if the toddler ever figured out that he wasn’t, in fact, driving the grocery cart. I know he got to the car safely, that his dad buckled him into his car seat and they drove home together. Maybe he felt he’d just gotten really lucky. Maybe he thought his panic had saved him. Maybe he thought he was just that good a driver. Or maybe he got a little taste of the Sauce and nodded off, smiling. ■



Let's talk about courage

One of the identified values of our church is courage—"to live lives of honesty, vulnerability, and beauty." As part of its linkage activities with the community it serves, the First UU Board of Trustees wants to hear more about what this means to you. What kind of courage do you expect from yourself, from your church leadership, from your church community in fulfilling our mission?

In order to facilitate dialogue, members of the board are hosting a conversational table during coffee hour this month. Look for the table with the yellow satin table cloth in Howson Hall following services. Please stop by and join the conversation. Let's talk about courage. ■

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Your vote counts.

by **Susan Thomson**

Our congregation approved a number of significant changes in our church bylaws in 2011. One of the changes we made was to convert the vice president position to president-elect.

This means that the president-elect automatically becomes the president the following year. We did this in order to better provide for continuity in leadership. I was the first person to hold this title. In accordance with the bylaws, I became the president this year and Bruce Barker was elected to be the president-elect. Bruce recently submitted his resignation to the board. The bylaws allow for the board to fill

vacancies that occur during the course of the year. The board considered this to be a critical vacancy, so in accordance with the bylaws, the board asked the nominat-

ing committee to interview prospective candidates for this position. The nominating committee enthusiastically recommended Michael Kersey, and the board at its March meeting elected him to be our president-elect. Michael will become the president in June. Many of you recall that Michael co-chaired the First UU Ministerial Search Committee whose great work resulted in the congregation calling Rev. Meg to be our settled minister. Michael has been a member of First UU for many years and has demonstrated his dedication to this congregation in many ways. We are very fortunate that he is willing to

serve in this new capacity. Please congratulate Michael—and thank him!

The spring congregational meeting is scheduled for May 5. The pre-congregational meeting is April 14. In addition to voting on a slate of nominees presented by the nominating committee for the board and the nominating committee, our agenda will also include recommendations by the board for additional changes in the bylaws. These changes primarily deal with



composition of the board, selection of officers, and nominating committee tasks and authority for sale of real estate gifted to the church. Details about these changes will be presented at the pre-congrega-

tional meeting and in the congregational meeting packet that will accompany the meeting announcement. The final agenda item will be a presentation of the revised Covenant of Healthy Relations that has been in the works for several months.

I hope to see you at both the pre-congregational and congregational meetings. I can't promise another record-setting brief meeting like the one we held in March to vote on Mari Caballero's ordination. Nevertheless, casting an informed vote at congregational meetings is an important part of membership and being in covenant with each other at First UU. ■

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Ordination journey begins and ends at First UU

For Marisol Caballero, her ordination as a UU minister at First UU on April 26 is the culmination and celebration of a journey that began here when she was 19 years old.

“I have been fostered by this congregation since I was a college student and now am being embraced by it,” says Mari. “It was members of First UU who first suggested that I pursue the ministry. At the time, I was already thinking about it, but hadn’t completely made up my mind. It just seemed like such an unattainable dream. But, when several First UU members came up to me after I gave a mini-sermon as part of a lay-led service by Interweave, UU GLBT/straight alliance, and encouraged me to pursue that dream, my path was set.”

At that time, Mari was a student at Austin Community College studying theater. “After I received the validation of my dream from the First UU congregation, I immediately went to an advisor at St. Edwards University to transfer as

a liberal studies major with a focus on English Lit and religious studies.”

Mari graduated from St. Edward’s in 2003, but her

path was not always easy. She worked full time while finishing her degree. But the hard work paid off as she was accepted to Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

Mari’s UU roots run deep. She grew up in Odessa, Texas attending a small lay-led UU congregation. “We had about 20 members,” she says. “But I loved it. Most kids my age had to be pushed to go to church. I, on the other hand, often had to drag my mother out of bed on Sunday mornings begging her to take me to church when she would rather have slept in.”

“Odessa was such a harsh, close-minded environment for the most part. But at

the UU fellowship I was among like-minded people. It was like an oasis.

I was held by that community. What was so great was that these adults who were part of that wonderful community took me seriously. Here I was, a 12-year-old girl and these doctors, lawyers, professors and other adults listened to me. They made me feel as if my ideas were worthy of consideration.”

Mari left Odessa in 1997 and came to Austin to attend college. The first year that Mari was in Austin, she didn’t attend church. Then, in 2000, she started coming to First UU. At that time Clyde Grubbs and Marjorie

Bowens Wheatley, a husband and wife team, were the interim ministers. “Coming from a very small lay-led congregation in Odessa, when I saw Clyde

and Marjorie, that was the first time that I realized that there were actual UU ministers,” says Mari. “I saw these people dressed in robes and thought, ‘how cool,’ and that maybe that was something that I could do, too.”

Clyde and Marjorie became friends and mentors. “Growing up in Odessa, with a limited experience with ministers of other congregations, I had only seen male ministers. And, now here was this dynamic woman minister and she was a woman of color. It was wonderful!”

After Mari finished Union Theological Seminary in 2007, she returned to Austin briefly before completing a min-



isterial education residency at the University of California at San Francisco and then as a pastoral intern at the Pasadena Neighborhood UU and Throop UU Churches. She returned to Austin in 2012 working as an itinerate preacher, an on-call chaplain and a substitute teacher before coming to First UU as the interim director of Lifespan Religious Education. She was recently named director of LRE by Rev. Meg.

When asked what getting ordained means to her, Mari answers “It is a validation, a recognition and a celebration of my journey with the people who first encouraged me in this journey. It feels like coming home.” ■

For details about Mari’s ordination celebration, go to page 12.

Seniors luncheon

**Tuesday, April 9
12 noon
Howson Hall**

Poet John Berry is our special guest. John wrote his first poem when he was in junior high school at age 12 or 13 and continued writing throughout high school. When he got to college, John was inspired by Robert Graves' book, "The White Goddess." He realized that a poet deals in archetypes, especially in the Triple-Goddess Muse of Maiden, Mother and Matriarch.

John learned the old stories and tales and uses them in his poems. He has written 11 books and has two more planned.

John will entertain us with his readings of poetry and tales. \$5 for lunch. RSVP to Alice Cashman at 512-837-0988. ■

Special Volunteer Opportunity

Put your faith and talents to work for North Central Caregivers! Your knowledge is needed for a bookkeeping/treasurer position. If you are interested, please call us North Central Caregivers at 512-302-5980 and talk with our executive director.

We love our volunteers. And, our volunteers get a really good feeling from helping us help seniors in our area. ■

So You Think You Can...?

...sing, dance, tell jokes, swallow swords or tap out the theme song from "Deliverance" on your teeth? If you watch "America's Got Talent" and think, yeah, I could be on that show—forget that ticket to L.A.! Come audition for the First UU Adult Choir's 2nd Annual Benefit Concert to be held on Thursday, May 9.

We'll have a potluck in Howson Hall before the show, followed by a fun evening of entertainment in the Sanctuary.

Interested in performing? Contact Brent Baldwin, director of music, to schedule an audition: brentb@austinuu.org, 512-452-6168 ext. 314.

Proceeds will benefit our choir member, Virginia Luehrsen, helping with medical expenses due to a recent accident. Virginia was our emcee last year—this year, she'll have a front row seat!

More concert details in the May newsletter! ■

Camp, enjoy community and a little music with friends at Krause Springs

The first UU campout is April 19-21 at Krause Springs. Please join us for a weekend of camping at a privately held campground near Spicewood. Some people arrive around 4 p.m. on Friday night; others arrive on Saturday. Bring food for Friday night plus breakfast and lunches. There's a swimming hole and a waterfall. You can hike to Lake Travis. There are restrooms and shower facilities nearby. There's a potluck meal at around 6 p.m. on Saturday. After the dinner we'll have a camp fire (if it's allowed) and musical jam. You don't have to camp but can just spend the day. Krause Springs is just 35 miles from Austin. On Sunday morning we fix a communal breakfast.

Bring: musical instruments; food and drinks to share; lawn chairs; a flashlight; and water for cooking, washing up and drinking. (No dogs are allowed). Bring tents, bedding, camping equipment and flashlights if you are spending the night.

Directions: go west on Hwy 71 through Bee Caves, go five 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 is on the left, slightly upgrade, after crossing a creek. Drive to the house where you pay. The cost is \$12 for adults and \$6 for children (4-11) per night if you are spending the night. If you are just coming for the day, the cost is \$6 for adults and \$4 for children. Make sure that you tell the people at the house that you are with the UUs. We usually camp close to the house. If you need additional information call Lynn Vaughan at 512-587-8221 or Krause Springs at 830-693-4181. You can also email Lynn, Lynn@Lynnspetsitting.com. ■

Spring Into Action kicks off this month

This month we kick off “Spring Into Action 2013,” our churchwide project focusing on immigration. We have lots of activities planned throughout the month so First UU members can select from a wide range of volunteer opportunities. Check out the calendar below to see what’s going on in the church and around the community.



Refugee Lunch, Monday, Central Presbyterian Church, April 1

Our congregation will provide lunch for adult refugees who come together to break bread and learn more about their new country. Limit 10. To participate contact Judy Sadegh (jsadegh@yahoo.com).

Movie Night: “Abused—The Postville Raid,” Howson Hall, Thursday, April 4, 6:30 p.m.

The young adults group invites the congregation to join them for a potluck dinner and to watch and discuss a documentary on immigration.

Public Affairs Forum: The Origins of Exclusionary U.S. Immigration Policy, Sanctuary Sunday, April 7

Dr. Madeline Hsu, an associate professor of history and director of the Center for Asian American Studies at UT Austin, will provide an historical perspective on American immigration policy.

Post-Forum Immigration Discussion, Howson Hall, 1 p.m.

After the forum, join fellow UUs for a light lunch and a discussion of immigration from the perspective of UU values and principles. Childcare provided.

East Austin Food Bank, Southwest Key Programs, Friday, April 12

Help register participants, distribute food, and carry food to cars at this monthly food bank with many immigrant participants. Limit 25. To participate contact Liz Nielsen (eon1225@gmail.com).

Movie Night: “Crossing Arizona,” Howson Hall, Thursday, April 18

The young adults group invites the congregation to join them for a potluck dinner and to watch and discuss a documentary on immigration

Dinner and Music from Pakistan. Howson Hall, Friday, April 19, 6 p.m.

Enjoy a Pakistani meal and music by an immigrant Sufi musician, while learning more about his family and their experiences as immigrants. Suggested donation is \$10. RSVP required to socialaction@austinuu.org.

Dinner at Casa Marianella, Tuesday, April 23, 4-7 p.m.

Help prepare, serve and share dinner with the residents at Casa Marianella, a shelter for recent immigrants. Limit 8. To participate contact Trish O’Day (today2@austin.rr.com).

Public Affairs Forum: Legislative Action on Immigration, Sanctuary, Sunday, April 14, 12 noon

Our speakers will discuss current legislative action on immigration both in Texas and at the federal level.

Information and Volunteer Opportunity Fair, Gallery and Patio, Sunday, May 5, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Visit the information fair to learn about immigration-related projects and volunteer opportunities with local non-profit organizations. A light lunch will be provided.

Toy and Book Drive, throughout April, First UU

Contribute new or gently-used toys and children’s books (ages infant to high school) for Casa Marianella’s Posada Esperanza shelter.

Immigration Book Reviews, throughout April

See the library bulletin board for reviews of books on immigration available in the First UU library

New coordinators seek volunteers for People's Community Clinic

SOCIAL ACTION

First UU members Nancy Dittmar Stout and Nan Sechler have answered the call to begin coordinating our partnership with the People's Community Clinic. Nancy and Nan replace Sheri Overton, who has been coordinating the project for the past several years.

Nancy and Nan have been volunteering with the project for a couple of years. "They bring new energy and ideas to the effort," says Sheri. "Also, I am most indebted to Nancy Neavel, who was instrumental in the project start-up and served as my helper and 'pusher-in-chief' all these years."

Additional volunteers are needed for the second Tuesday group that meets at People's Community Clinic. Volunteers collate and stuff patient information packets to help both underinsured and uninsured people receive access to health care. The team has taken on additional responsibilities lately and needs more volunteers to help.

The next work session on April 9 is open to everyone. Volunteers arrive sometime after 9:30 a.m. and leave when the work is done, which is usually by noon. Many enjoy going out to lunch together after finishing.

"It's a great opportunity for new members to develop community," Nan says. Nancy agrees. "As a new member over the past year and a half, it's been a fun way to develop deeper bonds with fellow UUs. We also have lively conversations."

To volunteer you don't have to participate each

month. There usually is anywhere from four to eight volunteers who show up each month.

Contact Nancy and Nan at pcc@austinuu.org for more information. If you see Sheri wheeling through the church one Sunday, give her a big thank you for her devotion to our PCC partnership over the past seven years, or better yet, show up for a work session and see her in her new role as a follower. ■



Seven-year project coordinator Sheri Overton (in front) welcomes her successors, Nan Sechler and Nancy Dittmar Stout, who have accepted the call to leadership for our First UU partnership with the People's Community Clinic. Thank you Sheri for your invaluable dedication to justice.



"Living with Reverence for Life" workshop participants

UU congregations come together for Living with "Reverence for Life" workshop

Around 40 members of First UU, Wildflower UU, and San Marcos UU, along with non-UUs, came together on Saturday, March 9, to hear the Reverend Dr. Lora-Kim Joyner lead this interactive workshop. The workshop was based on Albert Schweitzer's "Reverence for Life" ethic where he writes that by having reverence for life we enter into a spiritual relationship with the universe and "by practicing it we become good, deep and alive."

The workshop was co-sponsored by First UU and the San Marcos UU Fellowship. Participants enjoyed a plant-strong lunch. ■

April special collection: Casa Marianella

by Wendy Erisman

As part of Spring into Action 2103—our churchwide outreach project focusing on immigration—the recipient of the second Sunday special offering for April is Casa Marianella.

Casa Marianella has been in Austin since 1986. The organization runs two shelters, each located in several houses in East Austin. The main shelter serves recent adult immigrants, many of whom are refugees, as well as immigrants who have become homeless due to illness or injury. A second shelter, Posada Es-

peranza, serves immigrant women and their children who are escaping violence. In addition to a place to live temporarily, residents of both shelters are offered access to legal and medical resources, food, clothing, ESL classes, computer access, and assistance in finding work.

A representative from Casa Marianella will be in the gallery after both services to answer questions. Please donate generously to this great organization. ■

Social action update

We have been busy with various social action projects and have several coming up.

Saturday, April 13, 10

a.m. - Karen Neeley will be giving a Capitol building tour. To RSVP email Karen at kneeley@coxsmith.com so we can get an idea of how many folks are interested.

Monday, April 22, 7 p.m. -

Action for Justice meeting. We are continuing to coordinate advocacy for women's healthcare, immigration and education.

We have joined forces with the national Standing on the Side of Love for UUs across the nation to visit with their Congressional leaders. Small groups of First UU leaders visited with Senator Cruz' staff on March 25, attended an Interfaith Prayer vigil on March 26 and visited both Senator John Cornyn's and Rep. Roger Williams' offices on March 28. We are encouraging our representatives to pass legislation for comprehensive immigration reform that provides both a pathway to citizenship that brings undocumented immigrants out of the shadows, and more border security transparency. ■

Meet a family from Pakistan

Sweet aromas, tasty foods and the sounds of ancient Sufi music—you will experience all that and more when you have dinner with the Nizamis, a Pakistani family of 10. The dinner will be held on Friday, April 19, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. in Howson Hall. It is part of the Spring Into Action 2013 month-long series of events for First UU members and friends to learn about immigrants and their lives here in the U.S.

The Nizamis have lived in Austin for three years as political asylees. At dinner you will hear ancient music led by Ustad Nizami, a 17th generation Sufi musician. Nizami has performed for dignitaries around the world, including Princess Diana and President George Bush. Nizami will sing and perform music on the sitar and harmonium, accompanied by his 13-year-old son Faraz, who will also sing and play tabla.

The Nizamis are making the best of their new lives here, learning English and immersing themselves into American culture, while maintaining their Pakistani heritage, rich in music and a love of life.

On Thursday, April 18, Mama Fehmeda of the Nizami family will give

interested UUs the opportunity to learn to cook Pakistani food. She will be joined by Social Action Chair Peggy Morton. Those who want to join a small group of volunteer cooks may join her by contacting Peggy at socialaction@austinuu.org.

Everyone is invited to attend the dinner and concert. A \$10 donation is suggested. We want all ages to join in the fun, even if spicy food isn't their thing, so we will have a table for people to make their own peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. So we know how many people to cook for, sign up on the Social Action bulletin board or email socialaction@austinuu.org. We also will be prepared for people who may decide to attend at the last minute.

If you are interested in volunteering to help with setup for the dinner and concert or for cleanup, email socialaction@austinuu.org.

We look forward to this unique opportunity to experience the Pakistani culture by meeting and getting to know the Nizamis in our own Howson Hall. See you there. Assalamu alaikum. ■

**Art Mission/
First UU Austin
Youth Benefit**
Sunday, April 14
Sanctuary
6:30 p.m.

Join us for a concert by award-winning singer/songwriter Susan Gibson in the Sanctuary. Tickets are \$15 for adults. Children under 12 free. There will be refreshments, a youth auction and more. The youth will open the show. Childcare is available. All proceeds go to help Art Mission and First UU Austin's Youth Group. For more information on songwriter Susan Gibson, visit www.susangibson.com. ■

**UU/Quaker
Singalong**
Saturday, April 27
7:30–10:30 p.m.
**Friends Meeting
House**
3701 E. MLK Blvd.

Please bring snacks and finger foods, musical instruments, and copies of songs you want to sing. Copies of "Rise Up Singing" will be provided. This is an alcohol-free event, round-robin format, held on the fourth Saturday of every month. Contact Larry Vaughn 512-469-0029 or Mary Jane Ford at singalong@ustinuu.org. ■

**Join fellow UUs from around Austin
for the "Bluebonnet Blitz"**

by Beverly Donoghue

The all-UU Spring Hands On Housing project—also known as the "Bluebonnet Blitz"—is Saturday, April 13. Austin area UUs will team up to paint and repair the home of a low-income homeowner.

Hands On Housing is a family-friendly event. Children supervised by their parents are welcome to participate. All skill levels are welcome—from generalists (like me) to gurus with journeyworker construction skills. We will have plenty of painting and other repairs to do.

Our work shifts are:

9 a.m. - 12 noon

1 - 4 p.m.

4 - 6:30 p.m.

Between noon and 1 p.m., we will provide lunch for volunteers, and then take a group picture. We encourage morning volunteers to stay for lunch, and afternoon volunteers to come early for lunch, fellowship, and picture taking. We will have water for all volunteers.

We encourage "generalists" and painters to sign up for afternoon shifts. That way we can have a better balance of painters in the morning and afternoon shifts.

To sign up, email me (handsonhousing@ustinuu.org) and indicate:

- the shift you want to work
- if you have carpentry or other technical repair skills
- if you can bring any tools or ladders (for the painting crew)
- if you have a truck or van and can deliver supplies to the work site
- if you can help with setup at 8 a.m. on project day
- if you can be the morning

shift leader to help keep activities organized and safe. (Luther Elmore is the afternoon shift leader.)

- if you can bring nutritious, non-meltable snacks
- if you can help with HOH signups in the Gallery on March 31 and April 7.

On another note, this is my last project with HOH as coordinator. After eight years, it is time to pass the baton and get some "new blood" in this granddaddy of UU social action projects. If you are interested, it would be great if you could help with the planning for this project while you "learn the ropes." Please let me know if you are interested. Email handsonhousing@ustinuu.org or call me at 512-971-5402.

I'll be sending more info on the house location, tasks, and safety reminders to those who sign up. Hope you can join us! ■



Hands on Housing painting crew

PARADOX**PLAYERS**

Paradox Players needs you

Have you ever wondered what makes a theater production successful? You probably would say the play itself or the director or the actors, and you would be right. But, you would be leaving out all of the other individuals whose hard work makes a performance successful. These are the behind-the-scenes people who get the job done. The ticket seller, the props person, the costume designer, the scene designer, the PR person—all of those individuals who put in the hours without any hope of glory or recognition. Whether it is a Broadway play or a community theater performance, everyone involved in a production is important.

That is particularly true of Paradox Players. “We love (and need) our volunteers!” says director Ann Edwards. “From working backstage to running the concession stand, they are all important.”

The volunteers feel the same way. “I find it absolutely thrilling to be part of the Paradox Players team,” says long-time volunteer Alice Cashman. “I have done a little bit of everything. I have gathered props from around town, created props, and even sculpted props. I love it!”

Carolyn Gremminger agrees. Her volunteer effort with Paradox Players has been working the concessions. “I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Paradox Players. I have gotten to meet so many people and have developed great friendships while working concessions.”

Then there are those who provide technical support like Monty Newton, who has been doing the lights and sound for Paradox Players for awhile. “My ongoing involvement with Paradox Players has certainly been a rewarding experience. I have met many interesting people and have been happy to play a part in helping the company grow.”

Paradox Players needs more volun-

teers like Alice, Carolyn, and Monty. “Whatever your interest may be, we need you,” says Ann. “Maybe you’d like to learn the technical side of lights and sound, or experience the thrill of working backstage. How about designing postcards or strategizing publicity? Or perhaps planning parties is your passion?”

Ann adds that newcomers are especially welcome as Paradox Players prepares for the June show, the final production of the current theater season. “Flexibility is key to good theater, so we appreciate short-term jobs as well as commitments that span several days or weeks.”

How do you volunteer? “The best way to start connecting is to find one of us on Sunday mornings,” says Ann. “We all wear name tags. Just look for Gary Payne, Ann Edwards, Leslie Ashton, Amy Bennett, Jean or John Boehme, Phil Richardson and Barbara Weeks. Or, find us in the directory. Or email us at info@paradoxplayers.org. We can’t wait to welcome you to our world of theater!” ■

Readers’ Theater

April 8 and May 13

7:30 p.m., gallery

Readers’ Theater will be reading a full length play at our final meetings for this season—Mondays at 7:30 p.m. in the gallery on April 8 and May 13. “Postville,” an original script by Paradox Players playwright Don Fried, explores some of the issues at stake when a distinct ethnic group moves into an established community. Efforts to encourage and to resist assimilation are at the heart of this play—a subject universal to the plight of immigrants and “host” communities everywhere. We welcome newcomers! ■

Sharing Suppers for the younger set

Wee ones, bring your families for play, potluck dinner, and conversation. We’ll take turns hosting in our child-proofed homes.

We meet on the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. RSVP to Tina at Mercury@gmail.com by April 11 for the April 18 Little Supper. We all have young children, so if you’re tired, late, or overwhelmed by the thought of bringing an entree, you’ll be in good company!

Please join us for conversation and community, even if all you feel up for bringing is a bag of chips. ■

Save the Dates:

Pre-congregational meeting

Sunday, April 14

Sanctuary

1:30- 3:30 p.m.

Childcare provided.

Congregational meeting

Sunday, May 5

Sanctuary

1:30-3:30 p.m.

Childcare provided.

Children sign-in changes

Parents please sign your children in to Sunday School before heading into service. There will be four clipboards outside of the sanctuary, one for each class. This is just another step we are taking to ensure the safety of our kids. Newcomers and visitors, please complete a visitor's card before sending your kids to Religious Ed. If you do not see your child's name on our rosters, please fill out a registration form for this RE school year, available at the LRE table. ■

Child and youth spring curricula

This spring, we are beginning curricula that focus on helping the children understand and articulate the beliefs of faith traditions outside our own, while continuing to develop strategies for ethical decision-making.

*Pre-K (3 & 4 year olds):
We Are Many, We Are One*

K-1st: Picture Book World Religions

2nd-3rd: A World of New Friends: Introduction to World Religions

4th-5th: Why Do Bad Things Happen?

April 15 deadline for fall program submissions

For those of you who are interested in submitting proposals for fall Adult Religious Education programs, the deadline is April 15. For more information, please contact Marisol Caballero at mari@aubstnuu.org. ■

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Lifespan RE highlights

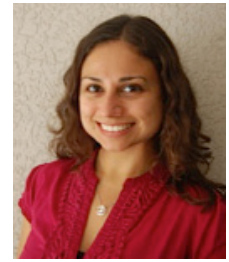
by Marisol Caballero

“Things we don't talk about: Healing narratives from the Red Tent” **6:30 p.m., Saturday, May 4** **Howson Hall**

First Unitarian Universalist Church Religious Education and Women's Spirituality Group presents “Things We Don't Talk About: Women's Stories from the Red Tent” a documentary film by Isadora Gabrielle Leidenfrost. The movie will be followed by an actual Red Tent experience in Rm. 13 for women and girls who wish to participate. There is a suggested donation of \$10. The film contains some mature subject matter so parental discretion is advised.

The event begins at 6:30 p.m. with the film starting at 6:45 p.m. At the conclusion of the showing, Isadora will be available to answer your questions. At the conclusion of the question and answer session, women and girls will go to Rm. 13 for the red tent experience. During this time Isadora will be available for further discussion.

The film documents stories of women reclaiming their sacredness, truth and voice. It explores “Red Tents,” monthly gatherings of women and girls coming together in solidarity, support and friendship, in which each woman and girl's voice is cherished as one that can help change the world. Inspired by Anita Diamant's historical fiction “The Red Tent,” based on the ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian and Canaanite practices of sending women during menstruation to a menstrual hut, red tents are being re-created and adapted as a way and/or place for women to gather and come together to rest, replenish, connect, share stories and share their lives.



Alisa Starkweather, founder of the movement, says this: “The Red Tent Temple offers women a

state of being rather than our continual doing mode. What happens when we don't have a plan or direction? Are we keeping ourselves busy so we don't feel? What are we hiding in our busyness that may speak in our hearts when we finally take the time to slow down? And, most important, we are growing a foundation of connections locally with Wise Women who are gathering in our tents sharing support and wisdom.” ■

Spring Into Action 2013: Children's RE toy and book drive!

Basic necessities for a good quality of life include more than just food, water, and shelter. Kids need toys and books, too. Children's Religious Ed. is joining in on the Spring into Action theme with an all-hands-on-deck toy and book drive to benefit the kids at Casa Marianella! Please search through your kids' or your grandkids' gently used toys and books and bring them up to church during the month of April. Thank you! ■

Children and youth RE spring calendar

Youth-led Worship Service (TBD)

Youth Bridging Ceremony (TBD)

April 21- Intergenerational Worship, Gaia Psalms

May 19 - “Thank-an-RE-volunteer” Sunday!

May 26 - Intergenerational Worship, Flower Communion

F.Re.D. continues on Wednesday nights

If you have not yet had an opportunity to participate in our Wednesday evenings of fellowship, religious education and dinner, please do so. It is a wonderful chance for First UU members to eat together, learn together and have fun together. Throughout the spring we continue our great Wednesday night RE offerings:

Evensong!

Wednesday nights

April 3-May 22, 7-9 p.m.

Evensong is another small group ministry that lasts for eight sessions and is led by Kitty Traylor, a longtime member and experienced facilitator. Evensong is an evening participatory worship service that is a practice in deep listening and hymn singing. If you are less-than-accomplished at either, not to worry! Evensong will offer you an opportunity to engage in these practices and grow spiritually. Each week revolves around a different topic and participants are sent away with creative “homework” to complete that will continue reflection on the topic throughout the week. Please sign up at the Lifespan RE table in the gallery. Space is limited.

Spirit in Practice, a Tapestry of Faith curriculum

April 10 - May 22, every other Wednesday

This class led by Marisol Caballero, First UU Director of Lifespan Religious Education, is designed to help Unitarian Universalists develop regular disciplines, or practices, of the spirit—practices that help them connect with the sacred ground of their being, however they understand it to be. Spirit in Practice affirms religious diversity while seeking unity in our communal quest for meaning and wholeness. “Whether participants follow a path they identify as Humanist, Jewish, Christian, Pagan, Theist, Atheist, Agnostic, Mystic, and/or any of the other paths we follow in our diverse congregations, the Spirit in Practice workshops offer a forum for learning, sharing, and growth that can enrich their faith journeys.” (uua.org) Register at the LRE table in the gallery. There is a \$15 fee. Scholarships are available. ■

First P4 great success!

The weather was beautiful on March 17 as several First UU families gathered together for our first Parent Playground Picnic Playdate or P4 as it is called. Parents and kids congregated on the large playground out back and had a picnic. Breakfast tacos were served, along with empanadas and pan dulce. Several families brought picnic food to share. Parents got to know one another while their kids played on the playground.

This was the first of several playground picnic playdates scheduled over the next year. “We will hold these every quarter,” says Marisol Caballero, First UU Director of LRE. “It is a wonderful opportunity for our families to get to know one another in a relaxed and fun setting.”

Information about future P4 dates will be available on the website and in our weekly announcements. Stay tuned. ■



First UU children play at first P4 event.



Parents and kids enjoy fellowship and food.

Join the celebration!

On April 26, Marisol Caballero, First UU Director of Lifespan Religious Education, will be ordained in an elaborate ceremony in our sanctuary. Her friends, family, and fellow UUs from near and far are coming to celebrate this momentous occasion. The ceremony will be followed by a fun night of eating and dancing “Texas style” in Howson Hall. The reception is potluck, so please bring an entree, side, or dessert that means “Texas” to you, whether that’s BBQ, Tex-Mex, Korean fusion, you name it! See you there!”

Padrinos and madrinass sought for Mari’s ordination

In the Mexican and Mexican American culture, there is a way for communities to come together to support one another’s milestones. This is known as the system of padrinos y madrinass. Within this community-building system, individuals, families, and couples give a financial contribution or a gift for the cake, the dress, the entertainment, etc., to a family who is organizing a big event, such as a wedding, baptism or quinceañera. The community rallies to help those who contributed, as well, when it is their turn to celebrate! Traditionally, these sponsors become the padrinos (godfathers) and madrinass (godmothers) of the primary recipient and will often be called by the nickname “Niño” or “Niña” by the recipient from then on. It is a loving way to strengthen community ties and create an ever-widening extended family.

The family of First UU Church of Austin is currently seeking padrinos and madrinass, from both within our community and beyond our walls, to assist us in putting our best foot forward in the celebration of Marisol Caballero’s ordination on April 26. Gifts of any amount will go toward expenses, such as travel for the many UU ministers participating in the ordination service who are traveling from out of state, entertainment for the reception to keep the party hoppin’, invitation design, and other incidentals. Larger opportunities for sponsorship are available if some would like to become the padrinos/madrinass of a specific element of the event. The names of the padrino and madrina sponsors will be listed in the order of service and each will be recognized with much

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF AUSTIN
invite you

TO THE

ORDINATION

OF

MARISOL ESTRELLA CABALLERO

ON

{

APRIL

26

2013

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF AUSTIN

4700 GROVER AVE.


AUSTIN, TEXAS 78756



at six o’clock in the evening

*A Texas-themed potluck reception
with dancing will follow in Howson Hall.
Ministers and seminarians are invited to process*

PLEASE RSVP TO EMAIL MARI@AUSTINUU.ORG



gratitude from our whole community during the service.

“Any funds left over will be sent to the UUA’s Living Tradition Fund that provides three types of support for UU ministers: need-based scholarships for theological students, new minister assistance to reduce the burden of high educational debt and repayment, and grants to ministers in times of emergency.”

If you or your family is interested in helping make this event special by becoming a padrino or madrina, please send a check to First UU at 4700 Grover Ave., Austin, TX 78756, payable to First UU Church of Austin, memo line: Ordination. You may make a contribution online by visiting the link on First UU Church of Austin’s Facebook page. Thank you so very much! ■

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

UUA 2013 General Assembly:**June 19-23 in Louisville, Kentucky**

Another exciting, educational, inspirational UUA General Assembly is in store for us this summer! "We will gather in Louisville, Kentucky, to examine and renew our covenant to our faith, one another, our congregations and the larger world," states the GA Planning Committee and the UUA Board of Trustees and Administration. General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the association through democratic process. They also have a lot of fun together!

Program highlights include the Ware Lecture, Service of the Living Tradition, the Banner Parade, worship choices, opening and closing events, and the 2013 Public Witness event, which focuses on environmental justice. General Assembly is the biggest event of the year for our denomination, with often 3,000 to 4,000 UUs in attendance. It is always a wonderful place to connect with others of all ages in our denomination and make new friends from across the continent and globe.

This is a multigenerational experience that is accessible and welcoming to families with children. New this year: Children who have not yet entered high school (or its equivalent) are welcome to attend GA events with their parents or guardians at no cost, but are still required to register. Childcare will be available at the Covenant Children's Camp.

Further information regarding children's programming, Youth Caucus (grades 9-12 in 2012-2013), registration, housing options, financial aid for GA, accessibility services, GA schedule, and preliminary workshop sessions are available on the Denominational Affairs bulletin board across the hall from Meg's office and at <http://www.uua.org/ga/>

Don't wait too long to make your summer plans. The GA 2013 Early Registration deadline is April 30. While several low-cost children's programs are available, advance registration is required and space is limited. Late registration ends on June 23. Come together in Louisville for five unforgettable days!

Prepare to be moved and excited by viewing this short recap video of Justice GA 2012: <http://www.uua.org/ga/past/2012/209898.shtml>. ■

**SWUUC Spring Conference and Annual Meeting
April 19-21, First UU Church of San Antonio**

Have you registered yet for this Southwest UU Conference event, "Journey to Justice?" It will be held close to home this year!

The keynote speaker is Rev. Dr. William F. Schulz, president and CEO of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, a nonsectarian organization that advances human rights and social justice in the U.S. and around the world. The special musical guest is fabulous singer-songwriter Peter Mayer.

Those who have less time available that weekend can register just for the keynote lecture at 10:45 a.m. and/or the fiesta (dinner) and Peter Mayer concert at 7:30 p.m. on April 20. Youths ages 12-18 who are attending the conference with an adult, are also welcome to attend these events. For information about the conference schedule, breakout sessions, lodging, childcare, registration and cost, see the Denominational Affairs bulletin board or this link <http://fd8.formdesk.com/swuuc1/spring2013>. If you are attending and would like to arrange to carpool or share a room, contact Karen Franks at denom@austinuu.org. ■

SAVE THE DATE

June 19-23 - UUA General Assembly, Louisville, Ken.

June 30-July 6 - SWUUC Primary Camp, UBarU, Kerrville, Texas, www.ubaru.org

July 7-13 - SWUUC Junior Camp, UBarU, Kerrville, Texas, www.ubaru.org

July 14-20 - SWUUC Senior Camp, UBarU, Kerrville, Texas, www.ubaru.org

July 21-26 - Southwest UU Summer Institute (SWUUSI), Western Hills Guest Ranch, Tahlequah,

**Eclectic
Folk Jam
April 12, Rm. 17
7-10 p.m.**

The Eclectic Folk Jam, an open jam session for singers and instrumentalists, is held on the second Friday of every month. We have Rise Up Singing song books, and some people like to bring copies of their favorite songs to pass out. Bring drinks and snacks to share. Contact Pete and Kim Akenhead at 512-834-0188 or Mary Jane Ford at 512-926-4122 or singalong@austinuu.org. ■

Martha's Free Breakfast*

Come join us every Sunday morning at 8:45 a.m. for Martha's Free Breakfast. We'll meet in Howson Hall before the first Sunday service for breakfast tacos, coffee and juice. What a great way to start the day—fellowship and food! ■

*Funded by a bequest from Martha Leipziger.

Freshen UUp Painting Party Sat., April 6 (prep. April 4-5)

First UU hallway,
8:30 a.m. (set-up beginning 8 a.m.)

We need a good crew of willing helpers to paint the walls from the kitchen all the way around to the outdoor playground. Please volunteer to help us plan (for both supplies and food!), via this Doodle: <http://tinyurl.com/FUU-CA-hallway>.

We also will need help with preparations in the days before April 6 and for detail work in the days following.

For more information about Operation Freshen UUp, please contact coordinator Vicki Almstrum at freshenUUp@austinuu.org. ■

SUNDAY WORSHIP

SANCTUARY 9:15 AM AND 10:45 AM

APRIL 7

Will You Harbor Me?

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

Immigration is an issue that is getting a lot of attention in the public arena. What are some of the elements to consider? How does our stance relate to First UU's goal of being an intentionally hospitable church?

The First UU Adult Choir will present Sweet Honey in the Rock's "Would You Harbor Me?"

APRIL 14

Lies, Gossip and Fighting Words

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

The third element of the Eightfold Path of Buddhism is "Right Speech." What does "right speech" entail?

Touring guest musician Chuck Pyle will share his music for morning services. Visit <http://www.chuckpyle.com>.

APRIL 21

The Gaia Psalms

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

A celebration of the creatures of the earth and our relationship with one another. Electronic music by Kiya Heartwood, Litany by Meg Barnhouse. Children may come dressed as animals. Very meditative. Altars by some of the congregation's artists.

APRIL 28

Fiery and Fearless: Olympia Brown

WITH REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

A few months ago we talked about Theodore Parker. This morning, meet another "saint" in the UU pantheon. Rev. Olympia Brown, a suffragist, is seen as the first woman to graduate from theological seminary, and the first woman ordained to full-time professional ministry in the U.S.

Vibraphonist Jacob Hodges will provide the service music.

FUUCA Grounds "Work Day"

Sat., April 13, First UU grounds
9 a.m.-12 noon

Spring is here and it is a great time to spruce up the First UU grounds. We need your help. Bring your hat, your gloves and your favorite gardening utensils—bring the whole family! Spend a few hours with fellow UU members weeding, replacing mulch, cleaning and doing just general grounds maintenance. It doesn't

matter what level gardening experience you have. We need you whether you are a novice or a master gardener. Come prepared to get your hands dirty!

We look forward to seeing you! ■

THE FORUM

SANCTUARY AT NOON AFTER SECOND SERVICE

APRIL 7

Historical Perspective: The Origins of Exclusionary U.S. Immigration Policy.”

WITH DR. MADELINE HSU

Dr. Madeline Hsu of the University of Texas at Austin is a historian who traces the roots of current U.S. immigration policy and institutions to the response to Chinese immigrants in the 19th century. These responses included passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Dr. Hsu is both an associate professor in the UT Austin History Department and director of the university's Center for Asian American Studies.

As part of Spring Into Action 2013, join fellow UUs in Howson Hall after the Forum for a light lunch and a moderated discussion of immigration from the perspective of UU values and principles. Childcare provided.

APRIL 14

Ethics in Texas government? An oxymoron?

WITH TOM “SMITTY” SMITH

Texas government is reeling due to scandals in the way we fund our cancer research. Our Lieutenant Governor has been robbed by a trusted aide and failed to notice. The power of the lobby is once again taking over the capitol. Citizens United has allowed corporations to secretly fund elections. What solutions are being offered? And can they pass? And how can the average citizen help?

Smitty has been director of Public Citizen's Texas Office since 1985. He has testified more than 1,000 times on energy and other issues before the Texas Legislature and Congress. His primary goal is to combat global warming. He has helped pass many laws that have reduced use of carbon fuels in Texas. He has won more than a dozen awards for his advocacy work, including the Heinz award. He recently was recognized by Politico magazine as one of the 25 most influential Democrats in Texas.

APRIL 21

The Nature Conservancy: Its History, Work and Priorities in Texas

WITH RICHARD KOSTECKE

Texas is one of the most biologically diverse states in the U.S. However, many of these species and the natural systems they rely on are under greater and greater stress from a variety of sources (e.g., climate change, disruption of natural ecological processes, habitat alteration and loss). These same natural systems are also important for sustaining human wellbeing. If we are not proactive on important conservation issues such as dwindling freshwater supplies, the economic, ecological, and social/cultural losses will be steep. Clearly, we need to start viewing conservation as a necessity, not just a luxury. The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters upon which all life depends. Our goal is to address the most pressing conservation/natural resource challenges at sufficient scale to protect nature for people today and future generations. Rich Kostecke will provide examples of how The Nature Conservancy has gone about this work in Texas over the last 50 years.

APRIL 28

Status of Current Immigration Legislation in Texas and the U.S.

WITH ESTHER REYES

What can we do to support good legislation from a human rights perspective? Esther Reyes, Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition Executive Director will bring updates on Legislation, as well as information on what advocacy groups are doing and how we can make a difference. This is a churchwide Spring Into Action 2013 event that strengthens the inherent capacity of the younger generation so they may lead their country toward a self-determined, equitable, and just future. This interactive discussion will draw on storytelling, photography, and documentary video to share the moving, evolutionary journey of this organization and highlight the challenges, possibilities, and successes it encounters participating in the everyday work of a nation rebuilding itself. ■

**First Unitarian
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512.452.6168
austinuu.org

Senior Minister

Rev. Meg Barnhouse

Director of Finance
and Operations

Sean Hale

Director of
Lifespan Religious Ed.

Marisol Caballero

Director of Music

Brent Baldwin

Director of Membership
and Communications

Carla Jo Schaefer

Board President

Susan Thomson

president@austinuu.org

Membership at First UU: What does it mean?

It's pretty easy to become a member of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin. You attend a Path to Membership class or meet with the Rev. Meg, fill out the membership forms and make a gift of record. You are now a voting member of the church.

But that is just the first step. The fact that you joined First UU means that there is something about this congregation that connected with you. Perhaps it is the sense of community with like-minded people; perhaps it is the church's commitment to social justice; or, perhaps it is the opportunity for spiritual growth. Whatever the

reason, as a member of First UU you have many opportunities to become fully engaged in this community, and contribute your time or your talent. For new members, a good way to get fully engaged in this community is to be an usher/greeter. Another way is to serve on a specific project, such as Spring Into Action 2013 or to get involved in long-term opportunities, such as helping with Paradox Players as discussed on page 9. Whatever volunteer opportunity you choose, it will enrich your membership in First UU and provide you the opportunity to be more fully engaged in the life of this vibrant community. ■

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Austin, TX 78756