



# FIRST UU NEWS

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

## The Stretcher and the Swan

by Rev. Meg Barnhouse

As I write this, I'm at General Assembly receiving some further ministerial training with my colleagues from all over the world. I come here for inspiration, because it's not good for me or for you all if I run dry or get dull.



Coming to national and regional conferences is work, but it is energizing work. A person needs rest, too, though. I will be off for the month of July for my study leave. Study leave is when I plan my sermons for the upcoming year, when I read the books I didn't have time for during the year, when I go swimming every day to get back into the habit. This is a piece I wrote a couple of years ago about resting:

"I came upon an accident the other day. Emergency Services people were putting a woman on a stretcher. They were tender, attentive, capable. She was being taken care of. Traffic was being directed competently around the wreck. It would be cleaned up, hauled away. Taken care of. A fire truck was pulled up beside the ambulance, its chunky lights flashing. Standing by, just in case a fire erupted. So they could take care of it. That was one well-taken-care-of situation. I wanted to be on that stretcher. I wanted calm and capable people to be taking care of everything. It looked restful.

I was tired. I was the kind of tired you get at the end of a month-long project. I had pushed through to the finish and I'd make seven mistakes

along the way but the thing was done. I was the kind of tired you get when you have 10 different people feeling in their heart that you should have done it differently. Their way. I was the kind of tired you get when your house is messy, your grass is too long, your car is cluttered and there is a dent in the door and your gas tank is empty, along with your bank account. A tiny piece of me thought it would

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be restful to be lying down on clean sheets, fussed over in a clean hospital room, brought jello and chicken broth and straws that bend, have people worry about me.

Usually I think it's a good day when you don't have to take a ride in an ambulance, and I got back to that state of mind pretty fast. Anyway, I talked to a friend of mine who used to work in an emergency room and she said what happens when you come in is that fast moving people with big scissors

cut off all your clothes. That didn't sound restful at all. She suggested I pay for a day at a spa where helpful, calm people fuss over you all day long, and you get to rest, but no one cuts off your clothes with scissors. It's cheaper than a hospital stay, when everything is all added up, and you can drive your car home afterward.

I know now that when I have a "stretcher day," when being helpless looks good to me, that I just need to rest. How did I get to be a grown up and not know that I need to rest sometimes? I think I used to eat instead of resting. That doesn't work any more. Resting used to sound weak to me. I used to work sick. Well, I still do that. I used to have two speeds, a hundred miles an hour and full stop. Crash. I thought you were supposed to go and go at full speed until you couldn't go any longer, then you sleep. Then you wake up and start again. As I get older I'm adding more gears. I have "slow" now. Some days.

The poet Rilke wrote about a swan, how awkwardly he moves on the ground, but, lowering himself into the water, allowing himself to be carried, "wave after wave," he writes, while *continued on page 2*

*The Swan and the Stretcher*  
continued from page 1

the swan, unmoving and marvelously calm, is pleased to be carried, each moment more fully grown, more like a king, further and further on.”

The wisdom of one of my holy books, the “I Ching,” talks about the wisdom of not doing. I get tired when I forget and start to act like I’m the source of my energy, my love, my creativity, like I’m the one who works things out, who sustains my friends, who gets things done. I’m learning to begin to experiment with letting go, with allowing wave after wave to hold me up and move me along. May I be granted the wisdom to know when to paddle my feet now and then. ■

**Solar Facts**

Fact #1 To date, the First UU 12 kilowatt solar photo voltaic system has produced more 68,000 kilowatt hours of electricity.

Fact #2 To date, it has kept more than one million pounds of CO2 out of the atmosphere, based on a national average. ■

*From the Green Sanctuary Committee*

**PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS**

**Conversations**

**by Michael Kersey**

One of the principles that we UUs affirm and promote as a group is “the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”

My hope is that this portion of the newsletter can be a source for information about how this church is governed in between our regularly scheduled congregational meetings and a place to share the perspective of the church’s board of trustees with everyone. At the very least, people can watch this space for reminders about upcoming congregational meetings of which we typically have

two per year—one in December with a primary focus on approving a budget and one in May to vote on candidates for the nominating committee and the board of trustees. The Unitarian philosopher John Dewey once said that “democracy begins in conversation.” Here are a few things that

I would love to have a conversation about with folks here.

Since our last congregational meeting, veteran members of the board conducted a half-day workshop about governance at this church for the new board members. I think that those of us who prepared for and helped facilitate the workshop may have learned more than those who received the training. We reminded people that true to our congregationalist heritage,

the ultimate authority of the church rests with the congregation, the people who first started meeting together here in the 1950s and have been meeting together ever since with a stated purpose of promoting Unitarian Universalist principles through our shared values and mission. We talked about how very early on our bylaws es-



tablished a nominating committee to identify church leaders and a board of trustees to represent the interests of the larger congregational community. We also talked about how more recently we all came together in 2010 to identify some fundamental values that our community holds deeply—transformation, courage, compassion, transcendence,

and community—which were used in the development of the mission statement that we read in church every Sunday. We also drew a big picture on one of the RE chalkboards showing how the mission serves as a motive force to push us towards our identified goals of being an intentionally hospitable community, a source for nourishing souls and transforming lives, and a force for witnessing to justice in our personal lives and beyond. The picture showed how the board *continued on page 3*

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*continued from page 2*

of trustees is positioned within our governance system with the intent of having more of a “balcony perspective” that is future focused; while the senior minister is on the ground, in the front, as executive, making it happen; but she’s not alone. There’s also the staff and volunteers and all of us working together in shared ministry.

At the beginning of last month the whole board of trustees met together in a facilitated retreat over a day and a half to get to know each other better, to share teaching stories, and to sketch out our calendar of activities for the coming year. We concentrated on monitoring how we’re doing in moving towards our goals, and how we can improve our governance practice during the year. The board has a tradition of reading and discussing a book together during the course or the year. For this year, we selected “Community: The Structure of Belonging” by Peter Block. If others want to read it too, I’d love to have many conversations about it.

As president of the board of trustees I recently attended a President’s Convocation hosted by the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association. I had the opportunity to meet congregational presidents from all over our region. We spent a weekend together talking and reflecting from a UU perspective on what it means to build beloved community. We also explored three aspects of church (or really any organizational) governance that should be part of our leadership practice: fiduciary, strategic, and generative. Fiduciary in the sense of

making certain that we’re abiding by the proper rules and ensuring safety, like a seat-belt or bicycle helmet that one always wears, but hopes never to have to use. Strategic in the sense of charting a course towards where we want to go. This involves being in close communication and deep understanding of our community to point us towards a future consistent with our collective goals. Generative in terms of helping to create a space that is enlivening and inspiring where there is room for new contributions and ideas. This generative aspiration is already reflected in the disclaimer in bright red letters on the front of this church’s current governing policies manual: “Warning: This document unleashes energy and creativity. Handle with care!”

As I write I am preparing to attend General Assembly, the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association. GA is where UUs from across the nation and beyond come together to worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the association through democratic process. This will be the first GA that I’ve ever attended and I’m excited at the prospect of meeting with others, learning, and celebrating our shared faith.

I also want to publicly acknowledge the board’s gratitude to Laura Park, Betty Wood, Pam Quackenbush, Carol Ramsey (and her whole family), and all who helped make the June board retreat a success.

This coming year, I look forward to many conversations together as we continue to build the congregation of our best and most pleasant dreams. ■

## PARADOX Big news from Paradox Players



With our production of “Next Fall,” we have completed an incredibly successful 13th season of shows. How many theaters in Austin make it this long? You can count them on both hands, maybe just one. We have something unique and we’re proud of it. And to help us take things to the

next level we have a new chair person: outgoing First UU Board President Susan Thomson, a church leader who believes strongly in what we are doing, and wants us to fully realize our potential.

Over the years, Paradox Players has grown significantly in audience size and reputation. Despite our success, we still rely on the same set of volunteers to make it all work. Susan will be concentrating on recruiting more First UU members to be part of Paradox Players, whether it be onstage, backstage or the many critical support po-

sitions. Paradox is very proud of its affiliation with First UU and we think many of you are proud of the quality productions we consistently deliver. If not already, we would hope you would consider doing your part in this dynamic and vibrant mission of the church.

Our 2013-14 season will soon be announced. We guarantee to lift your spirit and provoke thought with another rich selection of plays. Top priorities in all productions are quality and fellowship. The First UU church community lends strong support to productions, reliably providing volunteers to fill crew and front-of-house positions. Won’t you consider joining the party?

Finally, we wish to thank Ann Edwards, who is stepping down from her leadership position but will remain a part of the company. Without Ann’s and Poullette MacDougal’s vision 14 years ago, and their perseverance and hard work since, Paradox Players would not exist today. ■

## Freshen UUp trim painting during July

During July, the goal for the First UU Freshen UUp project is to finish painting all of the trim in the hallways. This involves prep work as well as painting and clean-up (with some great side benefits: a real sense of community and accomplishment!). We welcome anyone who would like to help as we continue to make progress during the summer and into the fall. Please contact Vicki Almstrum, FreshenUUp@austinuu.org, so she can keep you informed about painting opportunities (and please check out the Freshen UUp job board outside the main office door). ■

## Four-hand benefit concert Thursday, July 18 7:30-9 p.m. Sanctuary

Bryan Uecker and Italian pianist Aldo de Vero will present a concert with works written for four hands on one piano. Goodwill donations will be graciously accepted with proceeds to benefit the Murr Music Fund, an endowment used to finance special choir performances at the church. They will present musical selections by Mozart, Chopin, Moskowski and Tchaikovsky. ■

## Member Profile

### Peter Roll: Webmaster extraordinaire

by Carla Jo Schaefer

Peter Roll is one of those wonderful First UU volunteers who work quietly behind the scenes providing day-to-day support to help ensure the smooth running of the church. As First UU webmaster, Peter maintains the church's website and email lists, not a small feat. However, it is a natural job for Peter, who was a pioneer in the use of the Internet, having worked with other Big 10 universities while at Northwestern University in Chicago to create CICNet—an academic network connecting the Big 10 schools to support research collaboration and communication—part of the original Internet before it became commercial. “I was involved in the Internet pretty early on,” says Peter. “In 1992, I left Northwestern to help develop netIllinois, a statewide organization that brought Internet access to about 115 schools, colleges and private non-profits and businesses before commercial Internet services were available.”

Peter grew up in the suburbs of Detroit. He went to college at Yale University in New Haven, where he earned a B.S. in 1954. After he graduated from Yale, Peter moved to Pittsburgh where he took a job with Westinghouse. About 10 days after Peter arrived for his new job in Pittsburgh, he met wife Nancy at a Unitarian Church. “I was invited to join a young adults club at the Unitarian church, called the Thomas Jefferson Club, and I met Nancy there. We got married in the Unitarian church in Meadville by the Rev. Dr. John B. Wolf in 1955. We lost track of him but found out later than he had risen to great prominence as the leader of All Souls, a mega-UU church in Tulsa, Okla., pretty unusual

for a UU.”

After Peter and Nancy got married, they moved to New Haven so Peter could attend graduate school in nuclear physics at Yale. After he earned his Ph.D., Peter went on to teach at Princeton University for five years, where he was involved in the discovery of the cosmic microwave radiation from the Big Bang. Then on to the University of Minnesota, where he transitioned from teaching and research to administration; and finally to Northwestern University as vice president for information services. During that time, Peter and Nancy had three children. Daughter Peggy and son Phillip were born in New Haven. John, their youngest, brags that he was born in Princeton in the same hospital where Einstein died.

One of the constants in Peter's life has always been music. Music also has played an important role in his involvement with UU churches. “While at Princeton, we joined the Princeton Unitarian Church where I sang in the choir and played my French horn at several services and concerts. I also played the horn in the New Haven Symphony as an undergratate and grad student.

Music is also what led Peter to First UU. “After I retired and Nancy I moved down to Sun City in Georgetown, I joined the Austin Horn Ensemble at St. Martin's Lutheran Church. I found out that there was an orchestra at First UU. I was invited to a rehearsal at the church two weeks after we moved to Texas. The rehearsal was on a dark rainy October night. ”It took me an hour and a half to find the church!”



**Peter Roll**

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Peter started playing with Bryan Uecker and in the orchestra and occasionally with Brian at church concerts and services, including the installation in late 1995 of Bill Zelazny as First UU minister. “The church and the music program reminded me a great deal of what we had at Princeton,” says Peter. “Nancy and I had been looking for a Unitarian church in the area. We attended a couple of services and joined in 1996.”

**Over the past 17 years at First UU, I’ve learned what a church should be and what it can be. It has nothing to do with the hereafter nor with theology. It has to do with living the life we are given and making the most of it, for ourselves and for others.\* It means having good friends and a sense of community. We have found that here at First UU.**

What led Peter and Nancy to Austin? “I had retired and we were looking for a warmer climate. Nancy already had a couple of artificial joints, and she needed to get away from the ice and snow. Our daughter, Peggy, lived in Austin and I had made some contacts there. We saw an announcement in the paper that Del Webb was building a community right outside of Georgetown called Sun City. We moved here in 1995.

While living in Sun City, Peter founded the Sun City Computer Club and with its initial members, built a computer lab. “The Computer Club now has 3,800 members,” says Peter proudly. “It is the largest organization in Sun City.” Peter and Nancy also became charter members of the San Gabriel UU Fellowship, formed by Sun City residents in 2007. Until they moved to Austin in 2010, they attended Friday night services in Sun City and managed the SGUUF website.

Peter and Nancy have been coming to First UU for 17 years. What has involvement in the church meant to Peter? “I realized when I retired how much I had missed by not being involved in a community like First UU when my children were growing up. I have watched my grandchildren grow up in a warm, open-minded church community in Minnesota and have seen how that has helped shape their lives. Over the past 17 years at First UU, I’ve learned what a church should be and what it can be. It has nothing to do with the hereafter nor with theology. It has to do with living the life we are given and making the most of it, for ourselves and for others.\* It means having good friends and a sense of community. We have found that here at First UU. ■

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\*I did not really appreciate this lesson consciously until the onset of First UU’s ministerial crisis beginning in late 2008, and the church’s remarkable recovery through the inspired work of new church leadership and the arrival of Meg Barnhouse in 2011.

**Heritage****Book Club**

**Friday, July 12  
7 p.m.**

We will meet for pot luck before the discussion at Frances Morey’s at the RBJ Tower, 21 Waller St. off IH35 near Lady Bird Lake. The name of the book is “Quiet, The Power of Introverts” by Susan Cain. Everyone is welcome. For directions, please call Frances at 512-517-3162. If you wish to read ahead the next book is “Language Older than Words” by Derek Jensen. We will meet at Jim Tucker’s in North Austin at 8300 High Oaks. Hope to see you there. ■ Sally Scott. ■

**Yew Grove  
Moon Circles**

**Thursday, July 18  
7:30 p.m.**

Join Yew Grove for a little meditation, a little fellowship, and a time to honor the place that Nature holds in our lives. Our Moon Circle begins at 7:30 p.m. under the oaks to the south of the sanctuary. If we are lucky enough to have rain, we’ll move indoors. For more informatin, visit [www.austinuu.org/yewgrove](http://www.austinuu.org/yewgrove). ■

## Reception for The Austin Lacemakers Guild

**Saturday, July 13  
Gallery, 6-8 p.m.**

Join us for a reception to meet and view the work of members of the Austin Lacemakers Guild. Their work will be displayed in the First UU Gallery throughout the month of July.

The Guild is a charter member of the International Old Lacers, Inc. Members practice the art of making lace by using a pattern mounted on a pillow and manipulating bobbins holding the thread. They also make lace using other techniques, such as tatting, crochet, knit and needle-lace.

Formed in 1987, the Guild is open to anyone who is interested in making, collecting or studying lace in its various forms.

For more information about the Guild, contact president Karen Hickman at [karenhic@yahoo.com](mailto:karenhic@yahoo.com) or visit [www.lacebobbins.com/AustinLace.htm](http://www.lacebobbins.com/AustinLace.htm) ■

*\*For a list of UUA's positions on the right to choose and the 1987 General Resolution, visit <http://www.uua.org/statements/statements/14499.shtml>*

## Governor Perry calls second special session\*

Texas legislators feigned civility ending their regular session May 31 but revealed their disdain for women and choice at the end of the special session June 25. Now, UUs must return in droves for a second special session to stop the unruly behavior of legislators playing games under the guise of parliamentary procedure.

While our First UU Action for Justice team has been advocating for women's reproductive rights since January, at least 25 other church members joined us at the Capitol Tuesday, June 25, to hear Senator Wendy Davis' epic 11-hour filibuster. Late in the evening, citizens in the gallery heard Senator Leticia Van de Putte ask, "At what point must a female senator raise her hand or her voice to be recognized over her male colleagues?" and started clapping for the last 15 minutes to delay the Senate vote until the session ended at midnight.

Our sound paled compared to the roar heard when the gallery doors were opened briefly to thousands booing throughout the Capitol. Now, we need to continue to let legislators around the state know we don't want these proposed so-called pro-life bills, which will deny needed legal health care to females, some as young as 11, who suffer from rape, incest or mental illness.

We want to turn out 10 times as many citizens to let all Texas legislators know we mean business. While our Austin legislators are with us for the most part, UUs must compel our friends and relatives from around Texas to make daily phone calls to their own legislators, particularly those who support the bills, and not let them take us backward to alleys with coat hangers. Legislators can now win a vote with a simple majority, rather than the statesman-like 2/3 vote required during the regular session. Even though 19 bad

## SOCIAL ACTION

abortion bills were discussed during the civil regular session, legislators didn't bring them up for a vote because they didn't have a majority. They waited until the last 10 days of the first special session. During the State House committee meeting Thursday, June 20, about 700 citizens signed up to testify against HB 16, which requires abortions by 20 weeks versus the federally approved 24 weeks, and HB 60, which makes unnecessary medical requirements to shut down 37 clinics around Texas, leaving only five open. Representative Byron Cook ended the meeting before hearing the testimony of 300 people who had signed up as much as 13 hours earlier.

Action for Justice Coordinator Samantha Fredrickson and Social Action Chair Peggy Morton were two of the voices cut off, but Senator Davis read their testimonies during her filibuster during the afternoon. Later, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst stopped the filibuster ruling it wasn't germane to the bill for Senator Davis to compare results of the 2011 session vote requiring invasive sonograms before abortions to expected results of the proposed bill decreasing available facilities. It's ironic he eventually called citizens in the Senate Gallery unruly.

UUs must show up in force and are planning to meet at the Capitol Monday, July 1 at 10 a.m. when the session starts and to gear up for a High Noon Planned Parenthood Rally, along with continuing to follow the lege throughout its 30-day second special session. Search for the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin Social Action page on Facebook for more updates throughout the session. ■

*Peggy Morton is chair of the First UU Social Action Committee.*

## July special collection: Interfaith Action of Central Texas

by Rev. Mari Caballero

The mission of Interfaith Action of Central Texas is to cultivate peace and respect through interfaith dialogue, service and celebration. iACT strives to build healthy relationships among the faith communities of central Texas through:

- Dialogue: The Red Bench—interfaith Conversations that Matter, iACT’s signature community dialogue program, and iACT’s Spirituality Book Club, which opens a circle of exploration and trust that calls people into relationship.

iACT believes that the “Golden Rule” of compassion guides all of the great faith traditions, and that one of the most powerful ways to enact that compassion is through interfaith service programs.

- **Service:** iACT invites individuals and teams from area faith communities to join in serving some of central Texas’ most vulnerable populations: impoverished senior citizens and international refugees through exemplary service programs, iACT for Refugees and Hands on Housing.

The word “refugee” is officially reserved for someone with a “well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of his or her race, religion, or nationality...” About 1,000 refugees are legally settled in the Austin area each year. iACT believes that all of the great faith traditions call on us to treat the vulnerable with acts of radical hospitality and compassion. Refugees are truly the down-trodden strangers in our midst!

iACT is the only agency in Austin that exclusively teaches English and essential life skills to newly arrived refugees.

Refugees come from Burma, where ethnic minorities have been persecuted, chased, and murdered. They come from Africa, where families are escaping from genocidal wars in Burundi and the Congo. They come from Iraq, where religious minorities are being attacked and those who worked with the U.S. military are threatened.

iACT for Refugees helps all of these individuals establish roots in their new hometown: Austin. They pride themselves on not only providing essential language and “cultural orientation” skills, but in making these traumatized families feel welcome.

**The mission of Interfaith Action of Central Texas is to cultivate peace and respect through interfaith dialogue, service and celebration.**

Hands on Housing is the largest volunteer-based home repair effort in Austin. Hands on Housing repairs and revitalizes the homes of senior citizens and disabled homeowners who are living in deep poverty. The goal is to help them safely remain in the homes they love and to provide an outlet for

the compassion shared by all of the great faith traditions. Since 1990, Hands on Housing volunteers have repaired more than 1,000 homes.

Hands on Housing believes that repairing homes restores hope to the individuals we work with and changes the hearts of those who do the work. Hands on Housing is a transformational expression of faith in action. Service is one of the most powerful expressions of our faiths and that is best enACTed together.

Please consider a generous donation and join in ensuring iACT thrives in its mission, a mission that so closely parallels First UU’s: We gather in community to nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice. ■

**To atone means more than just to say you’re sorry. It means to repair the damage, the emotional as well as the physical damage, and become whole, to become at-one again.**

Jeanne Harrison Nieuwejaar,  
Fluent in Faith: A Unitarian  
Universalist Embrace  
of Religious Language  
(Unitarian Universalist,  
educator, clergy)

## Deputy voter registrar training a huge success!

by **Carla Jo Schaefer**

For the past several Saturdays beginning in mid-April, First UU has been hosting deputy voter registrar training conducted by Bruce Elfant, Travis County Tax Assessor Collector. The turnout has been amazing. According to Elfant the classes have been averaging 25 to 30 participants. "That is an impressive number," says Elfant. "When we first started holding these classes back in April, I anticipated a small turnout of around 10 to 15 people, and that it would go for only a few weeks. Here it is late June and we are still going strong."

First UU member Mary Patrick was instrumental in getting the deputy voter registrar training started at the church. She approached Elfant and asked him if he was willing to come and train the volunteer registrars. He said yes, but that he needed at least 10 people in each class. He got that and more. When asked how long he planned on providing the free training at First UU, Elfant says that as long as people want to be trained, he will be there.

That is really good news for Elfant, who is trying to have a total of 800,000 registered voters by November 2014. "Right now, we have only 400,000 registered voters in Travis County, a far cry from the 750,000 we had registered in 2012," says Elfant. "That is why partnerships, such as the one we have with First UU is so important. It is these grassroots efforts in the community that will get the people registered."

Elfant has issued a challenge to all deputized registrars: register at least 1,000 Travis county residents on July 4th. "What a wonderful way to celebrate our democracy!" he says. "Getting people registered to vote is just the first step in getting them to the polls." Elfant is concerned with low voter turnout both nationally and locally. "The United States has one of the lowest voter participation rates of any democracy in the world," he says. "When only 50 percent of the people turn out to vote for the president, you are not getting a democracy. And, it is even worse in the local elections. During the last local election when voters were deciding whether or not to spend \$1 billion on our schools, only 10 percent of registered voters actual cast a ballot." That's why Elfant is so committed to training deputy voter registrars. "We need these individuals out in the community getting people registered to vote. I encourage them to staff tables at events, such as SXSW, neighborhood parades and to go door to door."

Elfant is excited about a software tool that Travis



*NPR's Don Gonyea and Bruce Elfant*



*Full house getting sworn in a deputy voter registrar training*



*Zosia and Joseph Hunt with other newly deputized voter registrar*



**Deputy voter registrar training**

*continued from page 8*

county will be the first county in the country to use that will allow you to zero in on a precinct, a ZIP code, even a street to see who is and who is not registered to vote. “This tool will be available this summer,” he says.

What does it take to be a deputy voter registrar in Travis county? “It’s pretty easy, says Elfant. “You must be eligible to vote, a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old, and, most important, you must want to make a difference.”

The training itself usually takes only about an hour or so with ample time for questions and answers. It ends with participants being sworn in and receiving their registrar packets. If you want to set up a table at an event, you can come by the county offices and pick one up. ■

*Classes will be held on Saturdays at 10 a.m. as long as interest continues. Email [maptrick@gmail.com](mailto:maptrick@gmail.com) to register.*



*Carla Jo Schaefer, Ron Buford and Lynda West at deputy registrar training*

**Men’s Fellowship breakfast: taking advantage of a cool spring morning**

On Saturday, June 13, members of the Men’s Fellowship gathered at the church for their monthly breakfast. With temperatures in the 60s, a rare event for Austin in June, the men were able to enjoy breakfast on the patio. “Who would have thought we’d have breakfast in 60 degree weather on the patio and with no bugs in June!” said Jon Montgomery. Join the group for the July breakfast on Saturday, July 13, at 7 a.m. Keep your fingers crossed for a little cooler weather. ■

*Photos courtesy of Jon Montgomery*



*The Men’s Fellowship group gathers for breakfast on the patio*



*Ernie Wood and Ken Pfluger enjoy breakfast and fellowship.*



*Waiting for breakfast on the patio*

## Path to Membership class

**Saturday, July 13  
9 a.m. - noon  
Howson Hall**

Please join others interested in finding out more about joining First UU in this three-hour class. All are welcome. Breakfast will be served. To register, please contact membership@austinuu.org. ■

## Covenant Yoga practice group Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m

For more information, contact yoga@austinuu.org ■

## Mindful Meditation practice Mondays 6:30-7:30 p.m.

For more information, contact meditation@austinuu.org ■

## LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Lifespan RE highlights

by Rev. Marisol Caballero



We will continue to have two services this summer, complete with a story for all ages. However, our Children's RE program will employ a pared down, yet equally fun, "two-room schoolhouse" model. Pre-K (3 and 4-year-olds) will continue to meet separately and remain engaging in the "We Are Many, We Are One" curriculum that they began this Spring. K-5th grade are using a curriculum called, "We're on Our Way," which explores ways in which kids can act against various forms of oppression and help create a more just and multicultural world. We had a great time at our kick-off Children's Chapel service on June 16. The next will be July 21.

### Reminder: Kids, bring your piggy bank money for our summer children's social action fund drive

Last year, our Sunday school kids participated in a social action fundraiser in which they brought in their pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters and raised more than enough money to send a child in Ghana to school for one year. We are again asking the kids to think twice about that extra trip to the ice cream truck and bring in their change. This year, we will be gathering our money and sending students right here in Austin to school with school supplies that their families would not otherwise be able to afford. For every \$15 we are able to raise for Austin's Back to School Parade, one student will be given a backpack filled with the supplies on their grade level's list. The festival and parade (at which backpacks will be distributed) are August 18, 1-7 p.m. at Bartholomew Park. Everyone is welcome!

### Join the RE Family!

Would you like to strengthen your connection to the larger First UU of Austin community, deepen your spiritual life, see the world through a whole new perspective, and have a ton of fun? If so, the RE department would love for you to join our great group of talented volunteer teachers! We are seeking those who would like to hang out and learn with our kids over the summer as a lead or assistant teacher. No experience necessary, as you will be given an orientation and curriculum.

This summer, our elementary-age curriculum is "We're on Our Way," a (FUN!) UU study in anti-oppression, multicultural values. Come join our team in nurturing our youngest Unitarian Universalists along their journey. Aside from being an awesome spiritual practice, some of the job perks include RE teacher happy hours and tons of First UU of Austin swag! Teach during one service, worship in the sanctuary during the other! Please contact: mari@austinuu.org for more info.

### Women invited to monthly Red Tent gatherings

Red Tents are monthly gatherings of women and girls coming together in solidarity, support and friendship. Each woman's and girl's voice is cherished as one that can help change the world. Inspired by Anita Diamant's historical fiction "The Red Tent," and based on women's time together in the past in menstrual huts, today 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. The next Red Tent is July 16, 6-9 p.m. Childcare provided. ■

## Women's Spirituality Group begins new series of spiritual practices

On July 20, the Women's Spirituality Group will begin a new series on Explorations of Spiritual Practices that can be incorporated into our daily lives. These practices include a celebration of the eight Goddess holidays (solstices, equinoxes, and the four cross-quarter holidays), as well as various forms of meditation, singing, creative activities, learning about Goddesses, home altars, rituals, and sharing personal experiences of how we connect with the sacred in our lives. At the July 20 meeting, we will begin by sharing briefly our own spiritual practices, topics we would like to facilitate, and topics we would like to explore.

On July 6 we will watch a DVD from the "Rise Up and Call Her Name" Goddess curriculum. Because the church is closed on this date, we will meet at an alternate location. Contact [women@austinuu.org](mailto:women@austinuu.org) for information on meeting place. The Women's Spirituality Group meets on the first and third Saturday mornings of each month, from 10:30 a.m.-noon in Rm. 13. This group is for women high school age and older. We are open to new members at all times. We hope you will join us. For more information: Linda Webster, [women@austinuu.org](mailto:women@austinuu.org). ■

## Screening of "Two Who Dared: The Sharps' War"

The Waitstill and Martha Sharp Chalice Circle and The Lifespan Religious Education Department will be screening the film "Two Who Dared: The Sharps' War," on Thursday, July 11, at 7 p.m. in Howson Hall. Donations to the filmmakers will be accepted. Childcare will be available.

The film is the never-before-told World War II and Holocaust story of Waitstill Sharp, a Unitarian minister, and Martha Sharp, a trained social worker, who, in February 1939, boldly committed to a life-threatening mission in Europe to assist refugees.

After 17 ministers declined the Unitarian Association's request for relief volunteers in Europe, Waitstill and Martha were the 18th call. When they committed to the dangerous undertaking, they left their two young children in the care of their congregation in Wellesley, Massachusetts, and traveled to Czechoslovakia at the onset of WWII. Over the course of two missions—in Prague (1939), and in Southern France (1940), the Sharps, and their underground confederates, played a vital role in saving hundreds from persecution.

In 2006, the Sharps were recognized

by the State of Israel as "Righteous Among the Nations" at Yad Vashem for risking their lives to save Jews and dissidents during the Holocaust. Of the 25,000 so honored, there are only three Americans: Varian Fry and the Sharps.

The documentary film is told from the point of view of Martha and Waitstill Sharp, drawing on their recorded interviews, letters and unpublished memoirs, and includes interviews with rescued children and noted Holocaust scholars. Through the inspiring true story of Waitstill and Martha Sharp, the film reveals a timeless lesson of personal sacrifice and courage to be shared with future generations.

There will be a discussion following the film. We will discuss the broader themes suggested by this film, such as the idea of Professor Irwin Straub of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, who believes that "goodness, like evil, begins with many small steps." He argues that "people become brave by doing brave acts. People become compassionate by doing compassionate acts. People become good citizens by engaging in acts of good citizenship." ■

## Sharing Supper Saturday, July 20

Attending sharing suppers is a great way to meet lots of newcomers and long-time UUs from across the greater Austin area. Sharing suppers are casual adult dinners, held the third Saturday of each month. Groups of six to 10 people gather in various participants' homes, and everyone contributes to the dinner. Sharing suppers are open to anyone in the church, new or established, couples or singles. You do not have to be a member to participate.

Sign up for one dinner at a time; no long-term commitment. Participants take turns hosting and planning the meal or helping co-host in another's home. This month's sharing supper is July 20. The signup deadline is Sunday July 14. Contact Jeanne Barker at [sharing@austinuu.org](mailto:sharing@austinuu.org) to signup. ■

## DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

### Jim Key Elected as New UUA Moderator

At this year's annual General Assembly (GA), Jim Key of Beaufort, S.C. was elected as the new Unitarian Universalist Association Moderator for a six-year term.

"It is a profound honor to have been chosen to be the new Moderator of the Unitarian Universalist Association. I pledge to do all I can to be worthy of this sacred trust. I look forward to working with our Board of Trustees and with the Administration of the UUA as we confront the challenges and embrace the opportunities the future holds for us," said Key after winning the election.

Key won with 51.1 percent of the vote, defeating Tamara Payne-Alex of San Jose, CA. He succeeds Gini Courter, who is the longest serving Moderator, with 10 years of service. The Moderator, a volunteer position, chairs the Association's Board of Trustees.

"I congratulate Jim on his victory and look forward to working with him in this new capacity to achieve the shared vision for our Association," said UUA President Rev. Peter Morales, who was also re-elected for a four-year term after running unopposed.

Key was raised in Virginia and North Carolina in the Methodist church. He attended Virginia Tech and

graduated from Syracuse University. He spent much of his career in a management position with IBM, overseeing diverse staff, and living in Tokyo for a time. In 1997, Key founded his own consulting business. The firm consults on governance, risk management, and compliance for a group of international clients.

Key found Unitarian Universalism in 1999. He helped build his congregation, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Beaufort, S.C., including serving as congregational president for five years. He has also been president of the Southeast District of the Unitarian Universalist Association, which changed its name from the Thomas Jefferson District during his tenure. And he has served the Association as chair of the Audit Committee and member of the board task force that proposed a smaller UUA Board of Trustees and of the board's Linkage Working Group.

More than 3,300 Unitarian Universalists from around the world gathered in Louisville, Ky., for the annual GA to participate in the democratic process that guides the work of this liberal religious denomination.

*Reprinted from UUA website*

### UUA President Issues Statement on Historic Decisions on Marriage Equality

UUA President Rev. Peter Morales issued a statement following the U.S. Supreme Court's historic decisions on marriage equality. "Today, the U.S. Supreme Court, the highest court of our country, stood on the side of love with its decision in *United States v. Windsor* declaring that the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional as a deprivation of the equal liberty of persons that is protected by the Fifth Amendment. This is a proud and momentous day for all who have suffered under this law and felt discrimination based on their sexual orientation. It is a victory for the principle that civil rights belong to all.

"While I am disappointed that the Supreme Court did not declare the freedom to marry as a constitutionally-protected 'equal protection' right that would apply to all states, I applaud this historic step towards equality.

The Unitarian Universalist Association joined two amicus curiae briefs in these cases with other religious organizations in support of marriage equality. In both cases, the UUA argued that a broad cross-section of religious denominations recognize the dignity of lesbian

and gay people and their relationships, recognize the necessary distinction between civil and religious marriage, and recognize that civil marriages of same-sex couples will not impinge upon religious beliefs or practices, but rather will prevent one set of religious beliefs from being imposed on others through civil law.

Unitarian Universalists have been vocal supporters of marriage equality for decades. I thank them for their dedicated commitment to our Unitarian Universalist principle of affirming the worth and dignity of every person.

There is still so much work to be done to ensure equal protection for all who live and love in our country. As we know, marriage equality strengthens families, protects children, and ensures the basic rights of citizenship for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender couples.

It remains my fervent hope that soon marriage equality is afforded to all in this country. Unitarian Universalists will continue to stand on the side of love with all families."

*Reprinted from UUA website*

## First UU's Camp Fire Kids Go Like Rockets!

by Jennifer Juday

First UU's Camp Fire Troop, the Mighty Platypi, recently concluded a great series of meetings on rockets! In the first two meetings, kids got an introduction to rocket flight and how rockets work, and then built and decorated their rockets. Finally, the week came for launching the rockets. Kids and their parents gathered at the playground in the park at Mueller, and then as a group drove to a field that offered good rocket launching conditions (key factors were that the site be away from people, and no trees where rockets could be lost). Launching rockets proved to be great fun both for kids and their parents. For three rocket launches, we had spotters, and those three rockets were later calculated as having gone up 150 feet, 1,100 feet, and 275 feet respectively. An enormously good time was had by all!

Do you have kids in your family five to 10 years old? If so, come see what First UU's Camp Fire troop is up to. You are welcome to try a few meetings to see if we are a good fit for your family. We are having a lot of fun, and we'd love to have you join us! Camp Fire kids and their parents participate in a variety of active learning activities, outdoor experiences, and community service. Other recent activities have included:

- A National Trails Day service project at Boggy Creek Park, with kids helping to mulch trees; and
- A solar energy day, where kids got a hands-on introduction to solar technology, put together solar-powered crab toys, and then took them outside to see them work.

We are working to put together some great outings for this summer. Ideas for upcoming Saturday sessions include a visit to LBJ Ranch followed by a picnic at Pedernales Falls Park, a visit to the Johnson Space Center in Houston, and a morning hike at Enchanted Rock. Since it's summer and weeknight schedules are more flexible, we are also going to visit at least one or two of the Thursday Nature Night sessions at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (the birds of prey session and the snakes sessions look especially fun). Coming up in the fall, we want to include a field trip to Canyon of the Eagles to attend one of the Austin Astronomical Society's public Star Parties. Other ideas that have been discussed include sun studies (including sunspot study with a kid-friendly Keplerian telescope, and sun prints), a series on electricity (making telegraphs and timers), and art projects (making paper, marbling paper, making books).

Our troop activities are put together based on the interests of Camp Fire kids and their parents. If you join us, you can help pick and choose.

Interested? Come try out a couple of meetings, and see if you would like to join! For more information, contact Jennifer Juday at [jjuday@yahoo.com](mailto:jjuday@yahoo.com). ■



*Camp Fire participant with his own rocket*

**We are all  
bound up  
together in one  
great bundle of  
humanity, and  
society cannot  
trample upon  
the weakest  
and feeblest of  
its members  
without  
receiving the  
curse in its own  
soul.**

Frances Ellen Watkins  
Harper (Unitarian,  
educator, reformer,  
suffragist, abolitionist),

**Eclectic Folk Jam****Friday, July 12****7:00–10:00 p.m.****First UU Church**

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.

**UU/Quaker Singalong****Saturday, July 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” are provided. This is an alcohol free event, round-robin format, held on the fourth Saturday of every month. Contact Larry Vaughn 469-0029 or Mary Jane Ford at singalong@austinuu.org.

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**

S A N C T U A R Y 9 : 1 5 A M A N D 1 0 : 4 5 A M

**JULY 7****Who or What Is God?**

REV. NATHAN RYAN

Who or what is God? How do we understand the most holy in a church where there is no creedal test and not everyone is a theist? Guest minister, Reverend Nathan Ryan, will lead us through this three letter journey.

The Reverend Nathan Ryan is the assistant minister at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge. He has served as the director of lay ministry for the First Unitarian Church of Dallas and director of lifespan religious education at Live Oak UU Church in Cedar Park. Nathan is a Credentialed Religious Educator and was inspired to begin his work after teaching Neighboring Faiths at church more than a decade ago.

*Special music provided violinist Paula Beard with pianist Kathryn Govier.*

**JULY 14****What is prayer?**

REV. MARISOL CABALLERO

In response to a Facebook post bemoaning my challenges in learning to drive a standard, someone wrote something along the lines of, “I would say ‘I’ll pray for you,’ but I guess that wouldn’t sound very UU of me!” Is it not UU to pray? I have heard this sentiment expressed before. Where do our misconceptions lie with regard to the spiritual practice of prayer and how might we explore this expression of faith, as Unitarian Universalists?

*Music provided by the First UU Choir and Band.*

**JULY 21****Hope—That Little Four-Letter Word**

CHRIS JIMMERSON

One of the theologians we studied in seminary last year says that basically there is no such thing as hope, and we should abandon hope and embrace struggle because the struggle is all we have. I am thinking that would not make a very inspiring sermon, but then what is hope? How do we have hope without it becoming just wishful thinking? Chris Jimmerson just completed his second year of seminary at Meadville Lombard School of Theology, one of only two Unitarian Universalist seminaries in the United States. He is currently the minister intern at Wildflower Church. Before entering seminary, he served in a variety of lay leadership positions at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin, where he helped to coordinate the church’s process of discerning its mission and reorganizing its governance structure. He served for seven years as executive director of American Gateways, a non-profit organization that assists immigrants with their immigration legal needs. He lives in Austin with his partner, Wayne Bockmon, and their two aging, spoiled rotten Basenji dogs.

*Special music provided by vibraphonist Jacob Hodges.*

**JULY 28****UU Minister—Some Dis-assembly Required**

NELL NEWTON

The process of building a minister includes a certain amount of disassembling the person who wanted to become a minister. There are many ways this is done—count-

**Sunday Worship**

*continued from page 14*

less personal essays, stacks of reading, somber committees that decide one’s fitness—but one of the most discombobulating assignments is chaplaincy work. The experience is expected to upend a student’s certainty. And afterwards, they usually write at least one sermon about the experience. This will be one of those sermons!

Nell Newton is a long-time member of First UU, who now is a candidate for the UU ministry. She is studying at Meadville Lombard Theological School and will begin her internship with the San Marcos UU Fellowship this fall. She and her husband Monty live nearby with their two teenage kids, a flock of chickens, too many cats, and one sweet dog.

*Music is provided by flutist Jeanne Barker with pianist Kathryn Govier.*

**No summer ever came back, and no two summers ever were alike. Times change, and people change; and if our hearts do not change as readily, so much the worse for us.**

Nathaniel Hawthorne,  
The Blithedale  
Romance (Unitarian,  
Transcendentalist, author)

**Hogwarts 2013 is upon us!**

**by Vicki Almstrum**

From July 29 through August 2, the annual Camp UU experience returns, inspired by the characters and events from the popular Harry Potter series. Each day, campers in the guise of young witches and wizards will participate in activities ranging from Quiddich to potions to social action. While enrollment for Hogwarts is nearly at capacity as of the end of June, there are a few spots remaining. Once those are full, we recommend joining our interest list, which is the basis for our wait list and also brings early information about next year’s camp.” We continue to seek adult volunteers as well as older teens to serve as prefects. For information, please see the website at <http://austinuu.org/wp2013/religious-education/camp-uu-hogwarts/> (see pull-down menu under the Religious Education -> Camp UU menu item for other options such as volunteer registration and the waiting list). Contact camp director Vicki Almstrum at [campuu@austinuu.org](mailto:campuu@austinuu.org). ■



*Hogwarts Professor Laura Miller guides campers through an Herbology exercise*



*Campers at Hogwarts prepare welcome cards.*

**First Unitarian  
Universalist  
Church of Austin**

512.452.6168  
austinuu.org

Senior Minister

**Rev. Meg Barnhouse**

Director of Finance  
and Operations

**Sean Hale**

Assistant Minister/Director  
of Lifespan RE

**Marisol Caballero**

Director of Music

**Brent Baldwin**

Director of Membership  
and Communications

**Carla Jo Schaefer**

Board President

**Michael Kersey**

president@austinuu.org

## People's Community Clinic needs your help

In 2006 First UU adopted the People's Community Clinic as a church-wide social action project. Since that time the church has partnered with the clinic to provide volunteers to support their work offering comprehensive health and wellness care to uninsured and underinsured central Texans.

Most of our projects are short-term commitments. The once-a-month Tuesday collating group is one where you can come once or more often, as your time permits. We gather on the second Tuesday of the month in the Clinic's second floor Board Room, at 2909 North I35, from 9:30 a.m. until noon. This group offers community and conversation while performing

needed work. Even with the lively interaction the work gets done under the capable supervision and direction of Frances Green. Frances is now happy to welcome Martha Worthington, who just returned to Austin and jumped right back in to assist her. The clinic is pleased to have dedicated church members who have made long-term commitments to their work. Our thanks to Rose Ann and Louise Reeser, Nora Hughes, Lori Summer and Megan Seaholm for all they do to make a difference in people's lives.

If you would like more information about the clinic, its work, or volunteer opportunities, contact us at: [pcc@austin.uu.org](mailto:pcc@austin.uu.org). ■

**First Unitarian  
Universalist  
Church of Austin**

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