



FIRST UU NEWS

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

Your household shrine?

by Rev. Meg Barnhouse

One of my friends from Alabama has a shrine in the hallway of his house. Over a little shelf with candles on it hangs a picture of Jesus. On one side of Jesus hangs another picture, this one of President Jimmy Carter. On the other side is University of Alabama football coach Bear Bryant.



One of the sources of our Unitarian Universalist faith is the prophetic words and deeds of great men and women. In believing that there is ongoing revelation about the truth of things, one lets go of thinking that all truth has been laid out for us, that a sacred book could have answers to everything. Truth is revealed through actions and words, not only of ancient people but of people who have made history in our own lifetimes. We also learn from the words and deeds of the people down the street in our neighborhood, sitting next to us on the subway, dancing to the swing band while we play the fiddle.

I have been thinking for years about whose pictures might make up my shrine, if I were to build one. I might have pictures of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Robin Hood, Margaret Sanger, Bette Midler. I wasn't raised to have heroes, in the sense of believing someone was without flaws. My father taught me that the line between creation and destruction runs down the middle of every person. He adored JFK, and maybe he thought of him as a hero, but he was well aware of at least a few of the man's weaknesses. This sense that everyone is flawed has kept me from building a shrine like my friend's.

It's getting harder and harder to admire people with your whole heart. We come to realize unsavory things about Thomas Jefferson or Jimmy Carter. Someone says Bette Midler wasn't kind to the little people on her way to the top. Bear Bryant certainly wasn't a perfect hero. Apparently Gandhi had a difficult relationship with his children.

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Should we allow ourselves to enshrine people who do a variety of deeds, some enlightened and some egregious? Perhaps we could keep our sense of purity if we allow as much of their picture in our shrine as represents the percentage of them that is admirable, so we would have torn up confetti photographs in a montage.

I would hate to think how I might have to rip off chunks of my photograph if I wanted to be up there amongst my heroes. If I demand

perfection of them, surely I must demand it of myself, right?

So I'm stuck. I want to draw from words and deeds of great men and women, but how do you tell who is great and who isn't? What if I love some of the things Emerson said and did and I don't love others? What if one of my friends is brave and kind, adventuresome, healthy and skilled, but clumsy at relationships and bad with money? I still admire my friend.

The ancient Greek heroes all had flaws, and their gods had flaws. The characters moving through the Hebrew Scriptures had flaws, yet they are held up to us as models of faithfulness and bravery. Where did I get this idea that the people in my shrine should be perfect? Where did I get the idea that perfection had anything to do with greatness? The revelation of truth, in my life, has come from things people have written and said, from a painting by Mark Rothko, and from music by Josquin des Prez.

I just got a swift and lovely "beyond categorical thinking" lesson from a burly Alaskan man in his seventies. His hair was white and somewhat uncombed, his boots

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Shrine*continued from page 1*

were scuffed and his khakis wrinkled. He was getting a pedicure in the Fairbanks nail salon where we were doing the same. That took me aback a little, but it was when I saw him hand the lady a bottle of autumn bronze polish that I had to admit I had looked at him and judged him as a certain type of man. He showed me handily that I had no idea what type of man he was, and for that I thank him. His picture would be in my shrine for a while, at least.

Suddenly it has occurred to me that those I enshrine don't have to be the same people year in and year out. Guides need to change as the path changes. I might need a model of insane courage at one point in my life, while at another point I may not be taking the same risks I would were I responsible only for myself. At that point I may want a model of care and gentle thoroughness.

I can relax. Perfection and greatness, I think, are unrelated. I can now respond with equanimity to the people who love to burst my bubble about people I admire by telling me Gandhi's children hated him, or that Bette Midler was rude to them, or that Robin Hood is fictional. I'll just mutter "Your mom's fictional" under my breath and light my candles in peace. ■

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**Inspiration at GA****by Michael Kersey**

At our water communion this year, I'll be sharing a few drops of water from the Ohio river. Water communion is the service where we come together and mix water gathered from the places we've traveled to over the summer.

In June I attended the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, our national convention, in Louisville, Ky. There I received the small vial of Ohio River water at a rally in support and solidarity with those working for environmental justice in the area. In addition to the water, I received a lot of inspiration at GA. It's pretty exciting to be together with thousands of UUs over the course of five days. GA is full workshops, panel discussions, hours of governance plenaries, vibrant worship services, and more.

I had the opportunity to hear scholars from Meadville Lombard Theological School speak at a program entitled "In Praise of Imperfect Commitment," which acknowledged a theology of ongoing revelation in which there is room for risk, experimentation, and creativity in working towards making the world a better place. They were joined by a minister from a church that has a church-wide, multi-generational ministry addressing homelessness. As part of their practice, this church not only works in the world, but also integrates reflective shared spiritual practices in small groups intended to cultivate

connection, enrichment, resilience, and renewal

in approaching what Parker Palmer calls "the tragic gap between the world as it is and as it can be." Our efforts may not be perfect, but we have to start somewhere. Later in the week, I attended a panel discussion about "Spiritual Tools For Activists" put on by the UU Legislative Ministry of California featuring gradu-



I want to extend heartfelt gratitude for everyone who attended General Assembly from our Church, and to those who helped to make Camp UU a success, and reaching beyond our church to the UU Southern Region...

ates of their young adult Spiritual Activist Leadership Training (SALT) program. The focus of the panel was about how to identify and to contribute from one's core talent to increase community and commitment. The

environmental activist Tim DeChristopher was on this panel and a phrase of his has stuck with me, "apathy sucks and activism is a better way to live."

A special highlight of GA was the Service of the Living Tradition which was a raucous and energetic service. It's also the service where our association recognizes significant milestones in the careers of our religious leaders. As our own Rev. Marisol Cabellero was called forth to be recognized for entering into preliminary fellowship, we Austin folks let loose with

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a mighty cheer from the floor. Also at this service, the Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern gave an inspiring sermon addressing the Unitarian Universalist potential to grow and be an even more dynamic force in the world. A video and transcript of the Service of the Living Tradition is available on the UUA web-site (<http://www.uua.org/ga/2013/worship/286915.shtml>) if you'd like to experience a little bit of GA for yourself.

Back at First UU, the board of trustees is working through its annual process of monitoring and reviewing policies and how we're doing in moving towards our goals. The reviews are scheduled throughout the year at

a regular cadence. In July the board reviewed its own governance practices. This month we'll look at financial planning and conditions, the continuous operation plan, and compensation and benefits. The board also recently reviewed a draft of the long-range plan for the church, and continues to prepare for the December congregational meeting.

I want to extend heartfelt gratitude for everyone who attended General Assembly from our church, and to those who helped to make Camp UU a success, and reaching beyond our church to the UU Southern Region, a special thanks for those who made the primary, middle-school, and high school camps at our U-U retreat center happen this summer. ■

Welcome New Members

We are excited to announce that since September 1, 2012, 98 new members have joined the church. The most recent group joined after the July 13 Path to Membership class.

Below is a list of new members who have joined the church since April 28. They will be recognized at the new member ceremony that will be held in conjunction with Sunday services on August 4. Look for their red new member ribbon and take a moment to say hello and welcome them to First UU. ■

*Gabriel Bodeen
Tiffany Brandt
Aaron Chandler
Alanna Fraase
Keith Fraase*

*Anglea Funk
Sarah Lambert
CC Liedecke
Daryl Liedecke
Wendy Marquardt
Carissa Neff
Robert Neff
Robin Orlowski
Jack Shanks
Jenny Shea
Helen (Betty) Skwarek
Joe Trungale
Erin Walter
Brianna Walther
Nathan Walther
Laura West*

UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP EVENTS

Getting to Know UU class Sunday, Aug. 11, 12:15-1:15 p.m.

This class a great opportunity to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and this church. To enroll, sign up for the class at the Membership/Visitors table in the foyer on any Sunday morning, or email the membership committee at membership@austinuu.org.

Path to Membership class

Oct. 12, 9 a.m.-noon

For those who are ready to consider membership more seriously, this class allows you to meet other prospective members, learn about Unitarian Universalist history and principles, and discover the diverse programs at First UU. To enroll, sign up for the class at the Membership/Visitors table in the foyer on any Sunday morning, or email the membership committee at membership@austinuu.org

Member Profile

The First UU Board of Trustees

Members of the 2013-14 First UU Board of Trustees were elected in June during the church-wide congregational meeting. These individuals bring years of commitment to the church and to the community as well as a willingness to move the church forward in harmony with our mission and with UU principles.



MICHAEL KERSEY, PRESIDENT

My wife, Karen Cleary, and I have been attending First UU for more than 20 years. Our son is in the middle school RE. Since I've been at the church, I have coordinated Hands on Housing teams; co-founded an Amnesty International

local group; volunteered in Lifespan Education; developed and presented a leadership skills seminar; served on the interim minister's Transition Team that developed our initial congregational covenant; and served as co-chair of the Ministerial Search Committee which presented our current Senior Minister to the congregation. I have a bachelor's degree in history and political science from the University of Tulsa, and a master's degree in organizational leadership and ethics from St. Edward's University. In addition to my family and church community, I enjoy running, reading, and have recently taken up sculling on Lake Lady Bird.

My vision for our church is that it always be a vibrant and inspiring community deeply concerned with questions of human and ultimate meaning while caring for one another and this world. I also see us as intentionally progressing together, sometimes imperfectly, but with humaneness, playfulness, joy and just the right amount of seriousness towards our 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.



CAROLYN GREMMINGER, PRESIDENT ELECT

I am a life-long Texan born in Weatherford. I moved to Austin in 1981 to attend the University of Texas at Austin and, like so many others, never moved away. I received a bachelors degree in social work in 1985, and worked as a licensed

chemical dependency counselor before becoming an

adult probation officer for Travis County in 1997.

Throughout my career as an adult probation office I have worked a specialized case load for substance abuse.

I was raised Roman Catholic but left that religion when I was a teenager. I now consider myself to be a Unitarian Buddhist. I have attended First UU since 2001. My interests include film, art, cycling, yoga, hiking, swimming and organic gardening, and my main spiritual practice is mindfulness meditation.

I have enjoyed being on the board of trustees because of the new friendships I have made. It has deepened my faith journey. I enjoy the service work, and I get to meet new people all the time. I also enjoy being a part of shaping where the church is headed in the future.



JERRY PERKINS, TREASURER

A life-long Unitarian, I have been a member of First UU of Austin for five years. My church-related activities at the church include Chalice Circle facilitation, serving on the North Central Caregivers board and volunteering for

Hands On Housing. My community activities include membership on the City of Austin Mueller Commission, serving as the Austin Neighborhood Council (ANC) as vice president for membership, and facilitating the ANC-East sectors (east of IH35).

My hobby time is dominated by going to the gym and studying Chinese language and culture. My previous involvement centered on neighborhood volunteerism here and elsewhere, including being president of a large POA in the Atlanta area. I was awarded a PhD in political science by Emory University and held teaching and/or administrative positions at several universities.



DWAYNE WINDHAM, SECRETARY

I have been a member of First UU for six years. I have served on the DLRE Search Committee, the Worship Committee, and have been a youth advisor for the senior high program. Outside the church, I have served in multiple leadership positions within

Toastmasters International, including public relations officer.”

As a singer, I have performed with the Longhorn Singers and A Cappella Texas, a men’s barbershop chorus. Since 1998, I have worked for Dell in a variety of technical roles and holds multiple technical certifications. With my daughter Evie (age 10), I enjoy singing karaoke, swimming, and debate.”



ANN EDWARDS, TRUSTEE

Born in Boston and raised in the mid-west, I was around 10 years old when my parents joined the Unitarian Church in Pgh, where Bill and I returned when our kids were small. Since Bill’s grandparents were Unitarians in Tulsa, we feel steeped in

UU lore! Two of our three kids have chosen to join UU churches as adults.

My formal education was child development, and I spent several years working with disturbed children. I’ve always gravitated to positions related to serving people—community organizing in Chicago and Pgh, hospice volunteer, board member of a pre-school, Girl Scout leader. Most weekends we spend at the family ranch in Spicewood, which we enjoy sharing with Audubon and our church family.

Serving on the First UU Board feels like a privilege—joining with dedicated members to work on policies that guide the direction our church family wants to go as we strive to achieve our mission. It’s still amazing to me that our meetings include time dedicated to discussion of a book that we’re all reading!



JOHN FRANKS, TRUSTEE

I have been a member of First UU since 2002, and have served on the Website and Media Committees. Also, I have participated in the Men’s Breakfast group, UBarU men’s retreats, Hands On Housing and

many other activities in the life of the church. One of my most rewarding involvements with First UU was serving on the minister search committee that selected Rev. Meg Barnhouse.

I was born in Iowa, and grew up in Wisconsin and Minnesota. I was baptized in the Missouri Synod Lutheran church. I served in the US Air Force working on B52-H’s in the upper peninsula of Michigan. After leaving the service, I worked in the computer industry as a troubleshooter and headquarters support engineer for Control Data Corporation and Amdahl Corporation. I enjoy travel, reading and genealogy research. I am married to fellow UU Karen Franks, and we have three children and three lovely grandchildren.



JULIE PAASCHE, TRUSTEE

My partner, Christopher Schorre, and I moved to Austin the first time in the fall of 2001. We took a round-about journey to get here. It began in the Michigan winter of the year 2000. Having decided that life is too short to endure gray skies, snow, slush, and sleet

six months out of the year, we packed up belongings, sold the house and cars, quit corporate-America jobs, dropped pets at parents’ house, and traveled around the Mediterranean and North America. In the fall of 2002, we put roots in Austin buying our house in the Old West Austin (Clarkesville) neighborhood. I began attending First UU around 2004. I participated in a Chalice Circle recently and on the Stewardship Creative Team. I have a degree in economics and history from Hope College and have focused my career in marketing research spanning exciting topics, such as transportation behavior and retirement savings but mostly trying to figure out what makes people tick.



KEN PFLUGER, TRUSTEE

I grew up in Austin, and moved to Seattle for graduate school at the University of Washington. I earned a masters degree in Urban Planning. After 20 years in Seattle, my wife, Kay, and I and our two daughters returned to Austin. We have been members of First UU for six years. “I want to do more for the church. My interests and abilities

are in the areas of planning and policy work, which is a good fit with the policy-based governance approach.

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RUSSELL SMITH, TRUSTEE

I have more than 20 years' experience running nonprofit and governmental organizations in Houston and Austin, including five and a half years running a Head Start program in Houston that served more

than 1,100 children and their families. I have worked all across the age spectrum, from early childhood to school reform to the Alzheimer's Association. I currently am executive director of the Austin Child Guidance Center.

I have a Master's degree in business from UT Austin as well as a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Houston. I inherited my passion for working in the public sector from my grandmother, Bert Kruger Smith, an Austin icon who was active in philanthropy for more than 50 years.

My wife and I live in north Austin with twelve-year-old twin daughters Abby and Alexis. Our daughter Kaileigh (21) lives in South Austin.



STEVE SWINNEA, TRUSTEE

I am a long-time resident of Austin having arrived here from Marlin, Texas in the early '70s to study chemical engineering at The University of Texas. After receiving my PhD in 1981, I was fortunate

enough to remain gainfully employed at UT lecturing in Chemical Engineering and managing an X-ray crystallography lab for the Texas Materials Institute.

I came to First UU at the invitation of my wife Carolyn in the early '90s. Carolyn and I were married at First UU by Fred Wooden, and I finally became a member in 1994. Since that time I've served on the Membership and Nominating Committees. For quite awhile, Carolyn and I were active in Sharing Suppers and now are active in our neighborhood FUUN group.

I am excited to be on the Board of Trustees. I'm learning about policy-based governance and beginning to see what great diversity of talent is here at FUUC. Hopefully we can harness that talent and continue to develop a dynamic, caring community. ■

August special collection: Planned Parenthood

On Sunday, Aug. 11, congregants will have an opportunity to support our local Planned Parenthood clinics with our monthly split-the-plate offering. Texas has the highest number of uninsured residents in the nation. Most of Planned Parenthood's clients are uninsured or underinsured, live paycheck to paycheck, and pay out of pocket for health care. For most of their clients, Planned Parenthood is their only source of health care.

The 2011 Texas Legislature slashed two-thirds of the state budget for basic women's health screenings and birth control, putting more than 300,000 Texas women's health at risk. While the 2013 Legislature added \$100 million to the state's primary care program for women's health, including family planning, Planned Parenthood health centers were excluded from public funding. The new funding for women's health will primarily go to public hospitals and clinics and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), organizations that

have not traditionally been the lead provider of family planning services in Texas. Concerns remain about whether all of the 130,000 uninsured women who lost access to care following the 2011 Texas Legislature's actions will receive health care and family planning services from these new funds.

More than 90 percent of the health services provided by Planned Parenthood is preventive, primary care, which helps prevent unintended pregnancies through contraception, reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections through testing and treatment, and screen for cervical and other cancers.

In further support of UU values to provide health care without discrimination, Planned Parenthood is a trusted resource for confidential, non-judgemental health care and education within the LGBTQ community. ■

A NOTE ABOUT SPECIAL OFFERINGS

On the second Sunday of every month our church collects a special offering. Your generous donations at the worship service go to the First UU Justice Fund, which is divided among worthy organizations, thereby extending our church's mission into the greater community. Organizations are nominated and then approved by the congregation.

North Central Caregivers needs your help

SOCIAL ACTION

by Peggy Morton

If I ever need a ride when I get old, I hope I find someone like Kitty Traylor, who'll take my sometimes grumpy husband and me to a doctor's appointment because she enjoys us.

"I've been picking up more jobs lately to transport couples," volunteer driver Kitty said, "because I find that with three of us it's like a party. Some of them are real comedians and sometimes we have deep conversations. I've made some friends and they're in their late 80s or 90s."

UU volunteers find a variety of experiences when giving the elderly rides to doctors' appointments or grocery stores as they meet all types of people, reflecting the myriad of personal styles both in our 1st UU church and the bigger community.

UU Linda Buehlmann, who coordinates First UU's North Central Caregivers project, said once trained, volunteers choose rides to fit their schedules. "They check an email list of needs to pick when and who to drive and where to take them. Some days volunteers may offer 45 minutes to help and other days may commit to 1 1/2 hours or up to 3-4 hours. Most volunteers help once a week, but when schedules allow, they may help fewer or more days," says Linda.

UU Tom Thomson isn't sure how long he's been driving "maybe five years or so," because it has become a routine. He said he enjoys giving back. Lately he's been driving two or three main people, which helps him get to know them better.

"I enjoy hearing their stories," Tom said. "One woman was a Hitler youth when she was a kid. She described it like being in the Girl Scouts, not like you'd imagine."

Another fellow described himself as a military sharp shooter. "Now, he couldn't walk 15 feet without resting because of emphysema," Tom said. One of his clients needs kidney dialysis three times a week and he drives her one way for one of her rides, which he said is easy for him. "I like helping them out because it keeps them going in the community."

A sense of community has kept UU volunteer Margaret Borden offering rides for about a year. She said she helps because some of these people are old and frail and need a way to get things done. "They're dependent on strangers, and I'm grateful to do this," Margaret said, "out of my own sense of gratitude." Margaret hopes she's as strong as some of her passengers when she's their age. "I see them being true to themselves in spite of their poor health and it makes me hope I don't shut myself in a hole if I ever get in a similar situation. It's a good lesson in life."

Volunteer Joseph Hunt has been giving grateful people rides for about five years: "I get to know people and find it most pleasurable." They listen to his stories and he gets to hear theirs. "They're very appreciative and sometimes want to give me money," Joseph said, "I tell them to keep their money and keep calling back for rides."

Kitty said when she doesn't take their money, often they'll donate it to North Central Caregivers, which project coordinator Linda says is needed because when they don't have enough volunteers, NCC pays for taxi rides.

Volunteers provided 385 rides in June; however, NCC. was short volunteers and paid for 12 taxi rides on its limited budget. Linda said new volunteers are always welcome. As a new volunteer, you may meet the guy whose dad worked for Gene Autry or the 88-year-old who loves to laugh or the couple who recycles stuff into folksy artwork, which may soon show up in our church Gallery. To volunteer for North Central Caregivers, contact Linda Buehlmann at ncc@austinuu.org. ■

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LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Rev. Marisol Caballero
Assistant Minister/
Director of Lifespan RE

AN AWESOME OPPORTUNITY

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 Religious Education department would love for you to join our great group of talented volunteer teachers! 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, multi-cultural values. Please contact: mari@austinuu.org for more info.

Lifespan RE highlights

SIGN UP FOR FALL F.R.E.D CLASSES!

F.R.E.D. (Fellowship, Religious Education, and Dinner!) returns from summer hiatus! Join the First UU Church of Austin family at 6 p.m. on Wednesday evenings, beginning in September, for a delicious meal and great company, followed by Religious Education for the adults and play time in child care for the kids. Dinner is \$6 a plate for ages 12 and up. It always includes a vegetarian option. We will, again, alternate between two courses this year (descriptions below). Sign up now at the R.E. Table in the gallery!

ACTIVE RECONNECTION

*Facilitated by Juliana Kunz
(co-facilitator pending)
Alternating Wednesdays,
7-8:30 p.m.*

Sept. 11-Jan. 29

\$15 registration fee (scholarships available)

According to her website, Joanna Macy is “a scholar of Buddhism, general systems theory, and deep ecology. A respected voice in the movements for peace, justice, and ecology, she interweaves her scholarship with five decades of activism.” She is also the creator of the “Work That Reconnects,” a workshop for activists that “helps people transform despair and apathy, in the face of overwhelming social and ecological crises, into constructive, collaborative action.”

Each week in this class, we will watch Joanna Macy’s own video introductions to exercises in the workshop, engaging in the exercises as a group, and discussing our responses to them as well as to their underlying philosophical framework. The book “Coming Back to Life” by Joanna Macy and

Molly Young Brown is strongly suggested supplemental reading to this class.

Juliana Kunz has been interested in Buddhist practice and philosophy since attending a retreat with Thich Nhat Hanh in Plum Village, France in 2006. She first heard about Joanna Macy the following year while practicing with the Old Path Sangha in Boston. She currently is active in the Austin chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby, and has found Macy’s work to be a great support when facing down frightening information about the impacts of climate change. She has been a member of First UU since January 2013 and currently serves on the Pastoral Care Associates team.

BUILDING THE WORLD WE DREAM ABOUT

*Facilitated by Rev. Marisol Caballero
(co-facilitator pending)*

Alternating Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.

Oct. 16-April 30, 2014

\$15 registration fee (scholarships available)

In an effort to become an intentionally anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural and radically hospitable congregation, First UU Church of Austin will embark on the two-year workshop series, “Building the World We Dream about,” by Dr. Mark Hicks, the Angus MacLean Professor of Religious Education at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago. Join us in this journey to realize the beloved community.

“Building the World We Dream About” is a 24-workshop curriculum to support Unitarian Universalists and our congregations in building the multicultural beloved community we want to embody. It seeks to disrupt the workings of racism and transform how we relate across racial, ethnic, and cultural

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Introducing Sean Briscoe, Religious Education Coordinator!

First UU Church of Austin extends a warm welcome to Sean Briscoe, our new religious education coordinator! Sean will be assuming the responsibilities of the children's RE teacher coordinator (formerly, Laine Young) and the youth programs coordinator (formerly, Andrew Young.) We are thrilled to have him on board!

Sean was born in Dallas and grew up on the Pacific Island of Guam. A lifelong Unitarian Universalist, his father was a UU minister serving many congregations in North Texas. Sean received his B.A. in Philosophy with a concentration in comparative religion from the University of Guam. After college he worked for the 26th Guam Legislature. That experience led him to 14 years as a political consultant where he has worked for more than 27 campaigns. Sean served as the first young adult board member at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock. Feeling a call to UU ministry, he began a career as a director of religious education in 2010. He is married to Natalie Briscoe, a congregational life consultant with the UUA, whom he met at a youth adviser conference in 2004. The couple welcomed their son, Ian William, in June 2012. ■



Sean with son Ian

FLOWER POWER

The flowers on Sunday make a beautiful addition to the worship service. Usually someone donates the flowers to honor or memorialize a special person or to recognize a special event, such as an anniversary—but sometimes some one donates the flowers just to make the day a little brighter.

If you would like to donate flowers to the Sunday service, please sign up in the hallway or email carlajo@austinuu.org. ■

differences, in our congregations and beyond. Participants develop their anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural habits and skills and prepare to nurture a multiculturally competent, actively anti-racist congregation.” (uua.org)

Friday Night Film Series

Long Strange Trip: A Journey through 2000 Years of Unitarian Universalism”

led by Luther Elmore

Come and join us in Howson Hall for popcorn and discussion of this six-part history of our faith! Sign up at the RE table in the gallery.

Sept. 6 - In the Beginning
(0-1553 CE),

Sept. 20 - The Birth of Unitarianism
(1552-1794)

Oct. 4 - American Unitarianism
(1620-1860)

Oct. 18 - Universalism (1600- 1860)
(in Sanctuary)

Nov. 1 - Evolution (1861-1961)

Nov. 15 - Unitarian Universalism
(1961- present)

Luther teaches history at Austin Community College. He is chair of the First UU Mrmbership Committee and teaches the Introduction to UU class for the church.

Past R.E. Volunteers- Pick up Your Swag!

All volunteer RE teachers receive teacher appreciation gifts at the end of each term. Currently, the RE office has a growing pile of unclaimed teacher and youth advisor appreciation gifts. If you have taught, advised, or assisted in an RE classroom in any capacity in the past twelve months, please pop by the RE office (Tues-Thurs. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m.-noon) or stop by the RE table in the gallery to pick up your swag!

Children & Youth RE Update

Summertime is coming to a rapid end! It is now time to register your children and youth for 2013-2014 RE and children's choir! Please hand in your paper registration form (in the mail or at the

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CD Release Party and Equinox Silent Auction

Friday, Sept. 27,

The theme for this year's silent auction is "House of Love." Rev. Meg will play music from her new "House of Love" CD. The concert will be followed by food and drink, dancing and bidding! Watch the announcements for how to offer items and services for the auction. ■

Little Suppers

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 Kristina.Bordine@gmail.com by the tenth of the month. ■

Update from Hogwarts

CampUU / Hogwarts is ending another successful year as this newsletter goes to press. Watch for magical additions to the Sunday morning service on August 4th. There will be a full report from the Headmistress in the September newsletter!! ■

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RE table in the gallery) or complete it online at www.austinuu.org. Be on the lookout for the 2013-14 prospectus and September newsletter that will announce the fall curricula!

Children and youth RE is always evolving so we can better serve our mission. This year, we will begin using a cooperative model of RE involvement. The cooperative model is the natural next step in building on the community our fledgling teaching teams created.

What do we mean by a cooperative RE program?

Cooperatives in all forms thrive in Austin, from grocery stores to nursery schools. The vision of First UU's RE co-op is to build a supportive community that thrives on commitment, love and investment to nourish the faith journey of young and old.

Where you come in: parents and guardians of RE registered children and youth acknowledge that by participating in First UU RE, you enter into an agreement to help nourish the community and faith development of our children and youth. Eight hours of cooperative RE involvement will be required of each parent/guardian each calendar year. Please join at least one of the five following teams when submitting this year's registration form:

Research Team: Help investigate best RE practices, for example those implemented in other UU churches.

Congregational Events Team: Spearhead (or help out with) an RE event such as a tree-trimming party or Surprise Pals.

Social Team: Organize opportunities for fellowship (potlucks, cook-outs at the park, etc.) so parents can get to know the parents of their children's friends!

RE Office Team: A whiz at organizational tasks and available during the week? This may be for you!

Farewell, from Liz Cook

At the end of the month I will be departing First UU in order to devote more time to my studies at the University of Texas. It is a bittersweet announcement as I consider the church extended family and have come to know many congregants young and young at heart.

Within the almost two years since I came aboard as the Assistant Director of Lifespan Religious Education, I have been lucky enough to be one of the close-knit staff members in a supportive, creative, and nurturing team. Their collective sense of humor, devotion and drive are inspiring. I will take with me many fond memories and pearls of wisdom.

I leave the RE children and youth program in the visionary hands of Rev. Mari Caballero and Sean Briscoe with 100% confidence and faith in its growth and success.

See you on a Sunday soon!

In gratitude,
Liz Cook, Assistant to the DLRE

Educators Team: Teaching or assisting in teaching a class is less intimidating than it may sound. Youth advisors will tell you that they have a great time getting to know our brilliant and talented teens. All interested volunteers attend an orientation and are equipped with curricula and a ton of support!

The co-op model works when all are involved in its success, which is why non-parent members are encouraged, but not required, to support the religious education of our children and youth by giving their time, as well. By becoming an active part of the "village" that raises our kids, a deeper connection to this community and our shared tradition will surely transform many lives and souls are sure to be nourished! ■

Joint Statement on Raising the Minimum Wage - A Moral Imperative

The Rev. Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), and the Rev. Bill Schulz, president and CEO of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), have issued this joint statement in support of legislation to raise minimum wages in the United States:

“We’ve been told we’re in the middle of an economic recovery. But the truth is that while the stock market is closing at unprecedented highs, workers who make minimum wage are not recovering — they’re barely putting food on the table. Millions of low-wage workers in our country work hard day in and day out and still can’t afford life’s basic necessities. They are the restaurant servers feeding us, the people caring for our elderly or sick loved ones, and the workers keeping our buildings clean. They are our brothers, mothers, friends, congregants, and community members — and they are suffering silently, choosing between buying food, getting to work, and paying the rent. This is an outrage that our moral values insist be remedied. And there is a simple common-sense solution: we must raise the federal minimum wage to a living wage.

How can we expect hardworking people to support themselves and their families on \$7.25 an hour? That’s just \$15,080 a year for a full-time worker, which is \$3,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. While minimum wage has stagnated and left workers further and further behind, income inequality is now at an all-time high. The CEOs of the 500 largest U.S. companies make an average salary of \$10.5 million. It is time to ask that everyone share in corporate success, not just a handful of executives. As people of faith, we believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and raising the minimum wage is vital in ensuring that dignity.

We believe in models in which employers treat their workers as human beings rather than as just another cost of doing business. We believe in putting purchasing power back into the hands of workers, who will spend those dollars in their local communities. We believe in an economy that is strong because workers have enough to live on and create demand for business. Better wages mean a real recovery: sustainable jobs, thriving families, and flourishing economies.

Legislation that raises the minimum wage is an important part of creating this vision. We will hold our legislators to the highest standard in pressing for laws that do the following:

Raise the minimum wage closer to a living wage, ensuring working families can meet their basic needs with dignity

Index the minimum wage to inflation, so that worker purchasing power is no longer eroded as a result of Congressional inaction

Significantly increase the minimum wage for tipped employees, which currently is an abominable \$2.13 an hour, and anchor it to at least 70 percent of the regular minimum wage

This is more than a political issue — it is a moral imperative. And legislation is just the starting point. We must act as our faith dictates; we must be true to the values that we hold dear.

We stand in solidarity with people throughout the country struggling to survive on minimum wage. We call upon all people of faith to join us. And we come together to urge this: stop making workers pay the price for corporate greed — raise the minimum wage!”

"Cherish your doubts, for doubt is the attendant of truth. Doubt is the key to the door of knowledge; it is the servant of discovery. A belief which may not be questioned binds us to error, for there is incompleteness and imperfection in every belief. Doubt is the touchstone of truth; it is an acid which eats away the false. Let no one fear for the truth, that doubt may consume it; for doubt is the testing of belief. The truth stands boldly and unafraid; it is not shaken by the testing."

- Robert T. Weston

Calendar of Events

Volunteer Deputy Registrar Training, Saturdays: Aug. 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31

We continue to have an amazing turnout at the training each Saturday. In fact, July 20, we trained 84 new volunteer registrars. Due to the continued high turnout, we are happy to announce that the training will continue through Dec. 21. Sign up by sending email to: maptrick@gmail.com. Use Volunteer Deputy Registrar training as the subject line.

New member recognition ceremony Sunday, August 4, 9:15 & 10:45

Members who have joined since April 28, 2013, will be recognized and welcomed by the congregation. Look for the red ribbons worn by our new members and say hello.

Covenant Yoga practice group Wednesdays, Aug. 7, 14, 21, 28

2:30-4 p.m., Howson Hall

For more information, contact yoga@austinuu.org

Eclectic Folk Jam

Aug. 9, 7-10 p.m., Rm. 17

This is an open jam session for singers and instrumentalists 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.

Getting to Know UU class

Sunday, Aug. 11, 12:15-1:15 p.m.

This class is a great opportunity to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and this church. To enroll, sign up for the class at the Membership/Visitors table in the foyer on any Sunday morning, email the membership committee at membership@austinuu.org. The class is offered every other month.

Yew Grove Moon Circle

Thursday, August 15, 7:30 p.m.

Christianity has borrowed many concepts from Paganism. In this Moon Circle; we will take a look at some Christian terms, and play with redefining them into tenets which support our own personal view of spiritual-

ity. Join us under the oaks at 7:30pm on Aug. 15 or - if we are fortunate enough to have rain - we'll move inside. www.austinuu.org/yewgrove.

Sharing Supper

Aug. 17 (sign up by Aug. 11)

Attending Sharing Suppers is a great way to meet lots of newcomers and long-time UUs from across the greater Austin area. They 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, and you need not 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. Contact Mary Ann Stafford at sharing@austinuu.org to sign up.

UU/Quaker Singalong

August 24, 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.

September Seniors Luncheon

Wednesday, Sept. 11, noon, Howson Hall

Beginning in September, the Seniors Luncheon will be held on the second Wednesday of the month at noon. This is a change from the past when the luncheon was held on the second Tuesday. For more information, contact Alice Cashman at 512-837-0988, or email at alicedllas@aol.com.

F.R.E.D. CLASSES!

Wednesdays, Sept. 11-April 30

It's back! F.R.E.D. (Fellowship, Religious Education, and Dinner!) returns this September, for a delicious meal and great company, followed by Religious Education for the adults and play time in child care for the kids.

Active Reconnection
 Alternating Wednesdays,
 7-8:30 p.m.
 Sept. 11-Jan. 2

**Building the World We
 Dream About**
 Alternating Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.
 Oct. 16-April 30, 2014

Friday Night Film Series
**"Long Strange Trip: A Journey
 through 2000 Years of Unitarian
 Universalism"**
 Sept. 6, 20; Oct. 4, 18; Nov. 1, 15

**CD Release Party and
 Equinox Silent Auction**
 Friday, Sept. 27,

The theme for this year's silent auction is "House of Love." Rev Meg will play music from her new "House of Love" CD. The concert will be followed by food and drink, dancing and bidding! Watch the announcements for how to offer items and services for the auction.

**NAMIWalk: Changing
 Minds One Step at a Time**
 Sunday, Sept. 28, Auditorium
 Shores
 Check-in Time: 8 a.m.;
 start time: 9 a.m.

All are welcome to walk, donate, and represent First UU along with the other UU churches in Austin, forming the UUUniques Team. Austin Team Captains are Karl Weston and Kathryn Govier.

For more information visit our table in gallery during the month of September, or visit dwww.namiwalks.org/

**North Central
 Caregivers
 presents a
 Screening of "Age
 of Champions"
 Fundraiser**
 Sat., Aug. 7, 1 p.m.,
 Resurrection Episcopal
 Church, Parish Hall,
 2200 Justin Lane, 78757

"Age of Champions" is an inspiring and award-winning documentary following five competitors who sprint, leap and swim for gold at the National Senior Olympics. You'll meet a 100-year-old tennis champion, an 86-year-old pole-vaulter and rough and tumble basketball grandmothers as they discover the power of the human spirit and triumph over the limitations of age.



**Alternative
 Space Gallery**
 Aug. 5-31
 Featuring
 Deborah McLouth,
 Printmaker.

Using traditional gyo-taku methods, Deborah creates prints of fish on paper and silk. These



new works feature perch, pompano, a speckled trout and a largemouth bass with background of lemons, grass and watercolor washes. In addition to the fish prints, this exhibition will include several collages with found objects and an intaglio print. Deborah will be at First UU on Sunday, Aug. 11 and Sunday, Aug. 25. so please say hello to her.



**Join us at the Austin Pride
 Festival and Parade 2013**
 Sept. 7, Fiesta Gardens, Lady
 Bird Lake

Queer, straight, transgender and cisgender; come and join First UU Church of Austin in celebrating Austin Pride Festival and Parade 2013, Sept. 7! We need people to staff the First UU booth at the festival (in shifts) from 11 a.m. -6 p.m. We hope that the entire congregation chooses to march in the parade with us at the state Capitol at 8 p.m.!! Bring your kids and your dogs and dress up in rainbows to show all of Austin that we are a welcoming faith community! Sign up at the RE table in the gallery or email mari@austinuu.org.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

SANCTUARY 9:15 AM AND 10:45 AM

**"All religions,
arts and sciences
are branches of
the same tree.
All these aspira-
tions are directed
toward ennobling
man's life, lifting
it from the sphere
of mere physical
existence and
leading the indi-
vidual towards
freedom."**

- Albert Einstein

AUGUST 4

Defense Against the Dark Arts

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE
We're afraid of all the wrong things.

Music provided by The First UU of Austin Adult Choir & Band

AUGUST 11

The Oversoul

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE
So much of UU conversation has been about what we don't believe. Let's talk about one thing handed down to us by Emerson and the Transcendentalists, that there is one soul of all things. Second Sunday Special offering: People's Community Clinic

Music provided by violinist Paula Beard and pianist Kathryn Govier.

AUGUST 18

Life of Pi

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

In this book, a young Indian boy is shipwrecked, and ends up in a small lifeboat with a tiger. What might the tiger be in his life? What might it be in ours?

Special music provided by Kiya Heartwood and Christa Hillhouse

AUGUST 25

Margaret Sanger

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

This early activist for women's reproductive health was ridiculed, vilified and persecuted. She was far from perfect, but she still can be one of our heroes.

Music provided by Guest jazz trumpeter Eundo Park & the First UU of Austin Jazz Combo

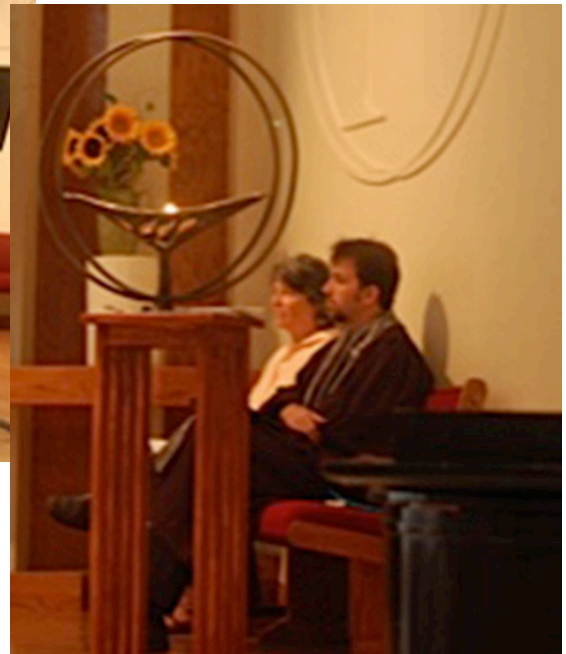
Guest speakers shine at First UU in July

With Rev. Meg on vacation in July, some great guest worship leaders at our Sunday services, all of with a First UU connection.

On July 7, Rev. Nathan Ryan, a former First UU member and assistant minister at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, spoke on “Who or What Is God?” On July 21, Chris Jimmerson, a past president of First UU and the minister intern at Wildflower Church, presented a sermon on “Hope--that Little Four-letter Word.” On July 28, First UU member and minister in training, Nell Newton, presented a sermon entitled “UU Minister-Some Dis-assembly Required.” ■



Kathryn Govier on piano and Paula Beard on violin at July 7 service.



Rose Ann Reeser and Nathan Ryan at July 7 service



Nell Newton and lay leader Michael Senechal Le Burkien greet congregants after July 28 service



Jeanne Barker on flute and Kathryn Govier on piano during the July 28 service led by Nell Newton

**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

**First Unitarian
Universalist
Church of Austin**

4700 Grover Ave.
Austin, TX 78756

Fun in the Sun at Solar Fest

by **Richard and Becki Halpin**

We were shining bright Sunday June 30! Our Green Sanctuary sponsored Solar Fest was a big hit. Yes, we were celebrating our solar panels which have kept approximately one million pounds of CO2 out of the atmosphere. They live right on the classroom building roof and you can

see them from the north parking lot. In the last billing period the panels generated \$200 worth of electricity that the church did not have to pay for, or around \$2,400 a year. Very few churches in Austin have solar panels and we are pioneers in this effort. Congratulations to our church members who had the vision and donated the resources to make this

happen. Besides the solar race cars and children's activities, representatives from the city and Solar Austin told participants about residential solar opportunities. Music by the Dirigibles made the whole event come alive. Thanks to everyone who attended or helped out. ■

