



FIRST UU NEWS

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

We are believers.

by Rev. Meg Barnhouse

At one church auction I remember the bidding getting hot over the minister's sermon topic. I was offering to preach a sermon on the topic of the winner's choosing.

"\$700.00, \$720.00"—two men were having a good-natured war. Jim was one of the congregation's "out" Republicans, and we were grinning at each other. I knew he would ask me to talk about something having to do with Republicans in the UU movement. I put my hands together as if I were praying for the other man to win, but Jim got it. He asked me to preach about how liberal theology does not always go with liberal politics. I preached about "The Skeptical Mind," and learned some things. At one auction, the best seller was a chocolate cake that went for about \$500.00. That cake could have been bought elsewhere for somewhat less money, but an auction is a place to have fun giving money to your church and to its work. Our second annual Equinox Auction happens on Friday evening, Sept. 27. I'm going to give a concert, backed up by my band (aka Kiyā) and sing you the new songs I've written since my last CD. Among the songs are: "Born Just Fine the First Time," a song written in loving anger about the religion of my childhood; "House of Love," a UU gospel song, and "The Beauty in You," a song I wrote for people whose lives aren't exactly what their

families had in mind. There will be good food and drink before and after, and a (shhhhhhhhh) silent auction you may bid on either with a pencil or with your smart phone. You may donate items up until the night of the auction, so the catalog changes every day. You may begin bidding now, too. That's right, both bidding and donating can go on in the weeks leading up to auction night, so go visit the evolving catalog often at EquinoxAuction.org!

We are believers—in compassion, in love, in reason and experience, in learning, in the human spirit, in the Great Spirit, in things being connected, in the mystery, in community, in First UU.

While you have your phone out, you might go to the church's Facebook page and click "Like," and you'll get occasional news, photos, and all the sermons on video. There might be one, once in a while, that you will want to send to your friends and family.



The church is bustling these days. The Girls School of Austin is moving in while they do some construction, and they are having classes at First UU. Our offices will still be open, of course, so come visit and check out all the new faces. As I write this, we are saying goodbye to Carla Jo, who is going back into the family business with her daughter, and we are hiring two half-time people, one to be membership coordinator and one to be communications coordinator. You will still send your announcements to news@AustinUU.org.

Our stewardship season is coming, and we are training the congregation's canvassers, who will be asking us for our pledges, or, if we are three-year pledgers, asking us just for our feedback about our life in the church. The theme is "I'm a believer," so you know what kind of music Brent is coming up with for our fall Sundays. We are believers—in compassion, in love, in reason and experience, in learning, in the human spirit, in the Great Spirit, in things being connected, in the mystery, in community, in First UU. Think about the things/people/ideas in which you are a believer. Someone may invite you to talk about it! ■

RETROSPECTIVE

Jackie and Tellmond Richter

Invite you to a retrospective of their work, which includes collage, assemblage and found objects from the Texas Coast.

The mixed medium work represents more than 50 years of collaborative art by this couple who are presenting their work in our gallery.

September 2013
 First UU Church
 4700 Grover Ave.
 Contact: Tomas Rodriguez
 512-870-7306

**NAMIWalk:
 Changing Minds
 One Step at a
 Time**

**Saturday, Sept. 28,
 Auditorium Shores
 (check-in time: 8 a.m.;
 start time: 9 a.m.)**

All are welcome to walk, donate, get donations and represent First UU, along with other UU churches in Austin to form the UUUniques Team. For more information, visit the NAMIWalk table in the gallery during the month of September, or visit www.namiwalks.org. Austin team captains are Karl Weston and Kathryn Govier.

PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS

What does it mean to be “in community?”

by Michael Kersey

“We gather in community...” These are powerful words that we say each week as we affirm our mission statement. What does it mean to be in community?

This is one of the questions that the board of trustees is exploring this year as we read and reflect upon Peter Block’s book “Community: The Structure of Belonging.” Block’s definition of community very much focuses on belonging as a deeply felt sense that this is the right place. He says that “we are in community each time we find a place where we belong.” “First and foremost, to belong is to be related and a part of something. It is membership, the experience of being at home in the broadest sense of the phrase.

It is the opposite of thinking that wherever I am, I would be better off somewhere else. Or that I am still wandering, looking for that place where I belong. The opposite of belonging is to feel isolated and always (all ways) on the margin, an outsider. To belong is to know, even in the middle of the night, that I am among friends.” This is something to think about. He adds, “Belonging can also be thought of as a longing to be. Being is our capacity to find our deeper purpose in all that we do. It is the capacity to be present, and to discover our authenticity in all that we do. To belong to a community is to act as a creator and co-owner of that community.” A question to keep in mind is: How do we at First Unitarian



Universalist Church of Austin sustain and continue to cultivate a community of connection, engagement, co-creation, and belonging? My hope is that we are a community where everyone has the opportunity to feel a sense of commitment, contribution, and

My hope is that we are a community where everyone has the opportunity to feel a sense of commitment, contribution, and authenticity.

authenticity. One way I’ve been able to cultivate a sense of community is by being here for Sunday services and by also exploring and joining in other programs and activities. This fall, I encourage everyone to venture to

try something new. Some of the ways to deepen connection just this month might be to check out the Connections Fair, where you can meet and speak with people from the various programs and ministries and learn about what they do, or you might want to try donning some rainbows and helping out with our church’s participation in the Gay Pride Festival and Parade, or attend the new movie series and participate in the discussion, or introduce yourself to someone new at coffee hour. There are many things to do and many ways to make connections around here. If you’re in an existing group, *continued on page 3*

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be welcoming and helpful in getting new people involved and engaged. The Monday night meditation group makes it a practice to look down the hall to see who else might be coming to join in and always leaving a place or two open for newcomers. At some point being in community moves past simply “being in community” and into other realms of being. I think that UU Minister and Zen Priest James Ishmael Ford had some insight into this in a blog piece he wrote a couple of years ago, for “The Spiritual but Not Religious.”

He offered two recommendations. First to get a spiritual practice, to pay

attention and not know. “Doesn’t mean give up. It means don’t know, right down to the soles of your feet.” His second recommendation was to join a Unitarian Universalist church and do things. “Join the choir. Get on the social justice committee. Teach a religious education class. Have a life with people beyond the confines of family or a small circle of friends. We need each other. We need our rough edges bumped against, and worn down a little. And little does this as well as throwing one’s self into a spiritual community.” He speaks to the full spectrum of life in community,

when he writes, “Expect to have fun. Expect to be hurt. You aren’t really a member of a church until you’ve been disappointed or deeply hurt and you still come. Stretch. Get bigger. Become. That’s the way of the spiritual, religious or not.” I think these aspects of forgiveness and commitment that give us the opportunity to be in community, and to nourish our souls and transform our lives. ■



Music Matters by Brent Baldwin



ADULT CHOIR

The First UU Adult Choir meets Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The Choir sings on average two to three services per month, and features a wide variety of music. Open to ages 15 and up. No audition required. Childcare provided. Not sure about choir? No problem—come check out a commitment-free rehearsal to see if it’s the right fit

for you (fair warning: it’s a lot of fun!).

CHILDREN’S CHOIR

The Children’s Choirs meet during first service RE in Rm. 13 (Junior Choir, 4th-8th grades) and Room 11 (Primary Choir, K-3rd). If you’re a second-service kind of family, your children may simply join us at 10 a.m. Our excellent directors provide top-notch instruction—and a lot of fun!

Pick up your registration packet and schedule outside the RE office, or register online at <http://austinnu.org/>

[wp2013/religious-education/childrens-programming/re-family-registration/](http://austinnu.org/wp2013/religious-education/childrens-programming/re-family-registration/)

BRENT’S MUSICAL SUMMER

In addition to lining up the quality music programs at First UU over the summer, our director of music managed to fit in playing on Phil “The MoPac Miracle” Ajarapu’s new album (recorded with producer Kenn Stringfellow of Big Star/REM/Posies fame), complete a collaborative work with NYC’s Caroline Shaw (winner of the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for music) and conduct a sold-out run of the Brahms Requiem with Texas Choral Consort.

Brent was recently featured in the Austin American Statesman: <http://www.statesman.com/news/entertainment/arts-theater/brahms-requiem-a-life-wish-for-texas-choral-consort/nZJCf/>

Brent and Caroline Shaw were interviewed in the Austin Chronicle: <http://www.austinchronicle.com/arts/2013-08-16/texas-choral-consort/> ■

*Nourishing Souls and Transforming Lives
through Music*

Farewell

I have enjoyed working here at First UU over the past year. The staff is wonderful—professional and supportive. The

members of this congregation continue to amaze me with their commitment to making the world a better place, their vast knowledge and their love for this church.

I have gotten to know so many of you over the past year and look forward to working with you as a new member of First UU in the future.

Thanks for all of your support and friendship. Please join me in wishing Vickie and Chad good luck as they begin their positions here at First UU.

Carla Jo Schaefer

Member Profile

Vickie Valadez named First UU Communications Coordinator



Vickie Valadez was raised in the dusty west Texas town of Fort Stockton. In May 2009 she graduated from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, with a B.A. in Communications. During that time she spent four years on the university newspaper staff, two years as a supervising editor. She also helped create the student radio station, which she was a part of for a year and a half. After

graduating, she was accepted in Peace Corps and served as a Small Enterprise Development volunteer in Madagascar from January 2010 – December 2011.

Since her return to Austin in July 2012, she has held various positions, most recently as co-founder of the emerging non-profit, Folding Table Productions. When she is not spending her time learning about nonprofit development for Folding Table, she can often be found volunteering, cooking, writing or watching movies with her very bearded boyfriend.

“I am excited to explore the UU community and all that the First UU Church of Austin has to offer!” says Vickie. ■

First UU welcomes Chad Stanton as membership coordinator

Chad is a recent graduate of the University of Texas at Austin where he majored in government. Born in 1987 to Eric and Lisa Stanton, his hometown is Dallas. Chad also has lived in Washington, D.C., where he was a fundraising fellow and campaign manager for a short time. He counts his recently completed Americorp VISTA service as the most rewarding experience of his life. In addition to working at First UU, Chad begins a fellowship with Organizing for Action in September. ■



For one magical week, First UU is transformed

From July 29 through Aug. 2, First UU was transformed into the magical setting for the 2013 CampUU/Hogwarts. More than 70 campers and prefects converged on our church for an exciting program of activities inspired by the Harry Potter series of books and movies. The camp is made possible thanks to dozens of adult and teen volunteers, who help create a sense of wonder with costumes, wizard sports, crafts, and classes such as potions and herbology based on ideas from chemistry, physics, and biology. Each afternoon of the camp, students participate in service projects, including making sack lunches for the working homeless served by the ARCH program, finger labyrinths for the courage kits prepared by the chaplain at the Christopher House hospice, and welcome cards for refugees living at Casa Marianella. On the last day of camp, families and campers joined together for the Great Feast, where they ate delicious food, listened to beautiful music and enjoyed skits invented by the five groups of campers.

On Sunday, Aug. 4, the church service included magical elements left over from the camp: decorations in Howson Hall and the gallery; a musical offering of songs the campers had learned during the week; a Story for All Ages where Reverend Meg helped everyone learn how to use the magic wand of their finger to banish scary things; a sermon called Defense Against the Dark Arts by Reverend Meg; and delicious Hogwarts-themed celebratory cakes during both coffee hours.

This was another successful year for this popular camp! ■



The Great Feast



Making food under the trees



Musical Maestra



Making labyrinths for courage kits

SOCIAL ACTION

Human rights with a LGBTQ accent

First UU's Advocacy Rainbow will light up Howson Hall, Saturday, Sept. 28 when a panel of advocates—professional volunteers—share both usual and unusual ways they act for social justice to promote change. This is the first meeting of a brand-new First UU Social Action Committee program called Legalize Human, spearheaded by Cavan N. Ó Raghallaigh. The Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce President, a professional documentarian, an artist and representatives from Transgender Education Network of Texas, Equality Texas and Get EQUAL Texas will join forces in a panel discussion, speaking for 10-15 minutes each to explain how they advocate for change.

First UU member Cavan started the Legalize Human project and will host monthly gatherings at First UU as well as programming and activities in venues around Austin. His mission is to expand community and social horizons, engage the legislative process and advocate for equality and respect for all humans. Education and

multi-community experience will be key. After the first panel discussion and Q & A, panelists, UUs and visitors will meet and greet to start working in community to coordinate plans with how best to promote responsible change in the public arena for the LGBTQ community, friends and family.

Two weeks later, Legalize Human will host a movie and second panel discussion called “An Afternoon with Rare Birds and Rainbows,” Saturday, Oct. 12 from 1-5 p.m. Attendees will watch the film and then hear a panel discussion led by Oliver Blummer, D.O., who is both a World Professional Association for Transgender Health contributing professional and chairs the board of directors for T.E.N.T. After the Q & A, Legalize Human will provide a reception for Rare Birds—attendees may wear a variety of rainbow feathers. For more info or to get involved with volunteering to help organize the new Legalize Human Project, contact Cavan at legalize.human@gmail.com. ■

“The World According to Monsanto” film showing September 21, 7:00 p.m.

Please join us for this screening and panel discussion of “The World According to Monsanto.” The panelists include: Anthony Guicciardi, a writer, producer and consultant whose articles have been read by millions worldwide and are routinely featured on major alternative news websites such as Drudge Report, RT, and InfoWars; Brandy Clark, environmentalist and head of Austin Eco Newsletter whose latest project is on zero food waste; and Monika Mota, founder and organizer of March Against Monsanto Austin. Join us for more information and a lively discussion afterwards. We'll be serving GMO-free popcorn!

Monsanto is a far-reaching corporation that is poisoning our food supply. The company's reach has included the U.S. government. The “revolving door policy” between the corporation and high-ranking government official jobs started when George Bush Sr. was Vice President. Thanks to these links with the government, the U.S. government has approved genetically

engineered food and crops without proper long-term testing.

Monsanto owns 90 percent of all the GMOs used in the U.S. These crops are also being fed to animals. Long-term studies have implicated GMOs as causing cancer, leukemia, Parkinson's, and gastro-intestinal disorders with even more diseases coming to light every day.

Save the date on your calendar for the next March Against Monsanto in Austin on Oct. 12. For more information, please visit www.facebook.com/marchagainstmonsantoaustin. ■

People's Community Clinic and volunteering

by **Nanette Sechler**

The Peoples Community Clinic is among the nation's oldest independent clinics offering comprehensive health and wellness care to improve the quality of health for our uninsured and underinsured neighbors. It has offered services since 1970. As a social action project of our church, we have partnered with the clinic since 2006.

Much of the projects the church does for the clinic are short-term commitments. The most popular is the "once-a-month Tuesday morning collating group." Volunteers meet in the clinic's second floor conference room, at 2909 N. IH35, on the second Tuesday of each month, under the capable supervision of Frances Greene. All are welcome to join. We usually end by noon, and some of the group goes to lunch afterwards. There is no commitment; you can come as you are able.

We thank the following "collators" who helped during

the past few months and look forward to their spirited conversation and willing hands at the next work session on Sept. 10: Sally Aslan, Diane Barnet, Karen Franks, Alice Harris, Zosia Hunt, Jon Montgomery, Nancy Neavel, Martha Northington, Sheri Overton, Suzy Reid, Mae Schieb, Bob Sechler, Nan Sechler, Max Stout, Nancy Stout, Veryan Thompson and Barb Tuttle.

In addition to those "collating angels," we also thank our long-term clinic volunteers: Rose Ann Reeser, Louise Reeser, Nora Hughes, Lori Summer and Megan Seaholm. These ladies prepare materials, and send out health notices to the clinic's clients.

Finding a need that you can help with is rewarding. If fulfilling that need is also enjoyable, you have the best of both worlds. Do join us. For more information about the church's efforts or the clinic contact pcc@austinuu.org. ■

Action for Justice and Texas After Violence Project to host death penalty discussion

Monday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m.

by **Samantha Frederickson**

Join First UU's Action for Justice and the Texas After Violence Project for a potluck dinner and a short film screening followed by a discussion about the death penalty in Texas.

"Changing the Death Penalty Discourse: What You Can Do to Diminish the Culture of Violence in Texas" will be held on Monday, Sept. 23 at 7 p.m. in Howson Hall. Bring food and ideas to share with the group.

Texas After Violence Project is a small non-profit organization working to empower people affected by violence to share their experiences, to preserve unrepresented voices in the criminal justice system, and to inspire community conversations as a way to move toward a more just and less violent Texas. The organization has a storytelling program that collects stories about how the criminal justice system has affected people. Through video oral history and storytelling workshops, Texas After Violence Project records personal experiences that are often left out of public discourse and the media. These personal stories are then published on the organization's website and edited into mini-documentaries that serve as the basis for discussion.

This month's event at First UU will feature a screen-

ing of "The Corner," Texas After Violence Project's first short documentary based on oral histories. This film will transport the viewer just outside of the Walls Unit in Huntsville, Texas, to experience what it's like on an execution night. Featuring interviews with individuals who participate in protests and vigils during every execution, as well as observational footage and still photographs depicting some historic protests outside of the Walls Unit, "The Corner" raises questions about how we think and talk about the death penalty. The screening will also feature two stories of death row family members, who openly share their experiences in witnessing their loved ones' execution.

Following the videos, there will be an interactive discussion about the stories, and about how we can work together to change the conversation about the death penalty to include the personal experiences of people affected by it.

There will also be an opportunity to make a donation to the Texas After Violence Project to help it sustain its work. For more information about the organization, visit www.texasafterviolence.org. ■

Second Sunday Offering: Hands on Housing

Hands on Housing provides volunteer teams and building supplies to repair homes owned by low-income Austin residents—a concrete example of the first and second UU principles:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person
- Justice, equality and compassion in human relations.

Hands on Housing is a city-wide event sponsored by Interfaith Action of Central Texas with two project days each year—the spring Bluebonnet Blitz work day and the fall Raise the Roof work day. It is the largest volunteer home repair effort in Austin and a meaningful way for volunteers “to nourish souls, transform lives, and do justice.”

The All-UU Hands on Housing team includes volunteers from First UU, Live Oak UU, Wildflower UU, and San Marcos UU churches. First UU’s participation in Hands on Housing dates back to the early 1990s.

Parking at First UU

More people are returning to the church as summer ends and we begin the fall services. The parking lots are quick to fill up, particularly during the second service. In order to provide a welcoming experience for those who are new to our church, those with physical challenges and families with small children, we ask that members who are able to do so park in neighboring lots that our neighbors generously share with us on Sundays.

Texas Health Credit Union. The credit union parking lot is immediately to the north of the church. Park in any spaces except the drive-through lanes, which the credit union uses on Sundays.

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Access TSBVI through the Burnet Road entrance near 47th Street next to Phoenicia Bakery, entering through TSBVI’s internal street, Wildcat Run. Along this street, roughly halfway between Burnet and Lamar, there are spaces very close to the sanctuary door. The gate to cross over to the church is at the southeast corner of our property. ■

Beverly Donoghue has been First UU’s Hands on Housing volunteer coordinator for eight years. This includes project coordination for both workday events.

Hands on Housing has a variety of volunteer opportunities for UUs of all ages and skill levels. Before the actual workday, volunteers can:

- sign up volunteers in the gallery on Sundays between services;
- help pick out the house for our project;
- help plan, publicize, and organize the workday;
- help determine the tasks to be accomplished;
- power-wash the house; and
- deliver supplies, tables, and ladders.

Experienced craftspersons can go check out the project house options to help decide which one is the best match with our team.

On the actual workday, volunteers:

- with technical skills can complete the more complex tasks, such as making screens for windows, replacing windows, repairing window frames and window sills, replacing sheetrock, replacing part of the roof, and serving as shift leads;
- who are generalists can come an hour early to help set up the materials, apply caulk as needed, scrape paint, do gardening and pruning, help put items for the next bulk pick-up out near the curb, work as “gofers,” organize painting or gardening projects for children to do together, clean the brushes well so we can re-use them, pack up supplies, and deliver supplies, ladders, and tables to the church.

First UU usually has between 20 to 40 volunteers for each project. Hands On Housing is a family-friendly event: we welcome children who are supervised by their parents. Usually First UU volunteers contribute more than 100 hours to each project.

Hands On Housing is an all-day project, so there are two or three volunteer shift options. Between 12 noon and 1 p.m. on Saturday, volunteers have lunch together, and we take a group picture.

Funds collected from the second Sunday offering will be used to purchase building materials for the project and lunch for the volunteers. Please join us. This is a fun and rewarding opportunity to give back to your community. ■

PARADOX**PLAYERS**

Paradox Players to open season with “New Jerusalem”

by Gary Payne, creative director

We are excited to announce the first show of our new season:

“New Jerusalem, The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza at Talmud Torah Congregation: Amsterdam, July 27, 1656” by David Ives

Amsterdam’s Sephardic Jews, most having fled the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal, have made a fatal arrangement with the city, agreeing to police their own community for unorthodox beliefs in return for safe harbor. The young Spinoza (who would go on to be one of history’s greatest philosophers) is accused of atheism and summoned to the synagogue to defend himself against the Jewish and Christian hierarchy, with excommunication from the Jewish community a possible outcome. In this eloquent and masterful drama, David Ives attempts to open the temple doors to listen in on a dispute whose philosophical and political echoes still reverberate today.

I first heard about the play after it had a successful run in Ft. Worth a few years ago. The premise intrigued me and after reading it I realized that Spinoza was (if only symbolically) the first Unitarian Universalist! His beliefs, certainly out of the Jewish and Christian mainstream, meshed beautifully with what our denomination believes and professes (and what I suspect many people who consider themselves spiritual, but not “churched,” believe to this day). Here’s what The Village Voice had to say about the New York production:

“Theocracy vs. universalist science, a Reformation-era prequel to the Scopes

trial, Inherit the Wind with a chilling extra touch of proto-Nazism.”

The show opens on Friday, October 11 with our traditional post-show gala following the performance, and runs through Oct. 27. Tickets for opening night are \$25. For all other performances, tickets are \$20, \$15 for seniors and \$10 for students. Our flex season ticket, which includes six admissions, is priced at an unbelievable \$80. Do the math and you will see the savings. Free childcare is offered on Saturday, Oct. 12 and Sunday, Oct. 13. You can make reservations through our website (paradox-players.org), by calling 512-744-1495 or by visiting our table in the Gallery on Sundays starting Sept. 8.

Finally, we want to extend a special offer to all of you who have joined First UU during the past year. Come see New Jerusalem and get two-for-one tickets! (Good for any performance except opening night. Be sure and mention that you are a new member when making your reservation). I think you will be pleasantly surprised at the quality theater that’s right under your nose.

See you at the show! ■

“House of Love” Equinox Auction and CD Release Party

Friday, Sept. 27
6-10 p.m.

Join us for “House of Love,” First UU’s Annual Equinox Fundraiser. The theme, “House of Love” is in honor of Rev. Meg Barnhouse’s new CD with the same title.

A CD release concert at 8 p.m. is the main attraction of this year’s auction. There will be plenty of food and drink with a silent auction rounding out the festivities. Rev. Barnhouse’s CDs and t-shirts will be available for sale. Free childcare will be provided. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Children under 12 get in free. A catalog of our silent auction items, trips and services are available online at <http://www.equinoxauction.org/>. To help support the mission of this church you can donate your items, trips, cash or services at this website. ■

Lifespan RE highlights

by Rev. Marisol Caballero



I will be away from you all for most of the month of September, as I will be on vacation in Africa with my partner, Erin! We will be climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, going on a photo safari, and visiting the villages in Zambia where Erin served in the Peace Corps. I will miss this place, my pets, hot showers, and my soft

bed, but I know that I will return with tons of stories, pictures, and sermon fodder for years!

Wish me luck, Rev. Mari

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)

Children and Youth Religious Education 2013-14 year is under way!

Please register your child(ren) online or at the RE table in the gallery. Remember to choose the volunteer team that you would like to join (see August newsletter). Each parent of a registered child is required to pitch in eight hours minimum per year.

Children RE (K-5th Grade)

Children’s classes are held during the first service from 9:30-10:30 a.m., and during the second service 11 a.m.-noon.

Pre-K (3 and 4-year-olds): “Chalice Children,” Rm. 23

Based on the premise that children learn best through experience, this program helps nurture spiritual growth, creativity and a sense of community through imaginative activities and rituals, such as rhymes and fingerplays.

K-1st Grade, “Love Surrounds Us,” Rm. 17

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This program explores all the principles in the context of beloved community of family/home, school and neighborhood. Children engage in activities that emphasize the love they feel in community.

2nd-3rd Grade, “Love Will Guide Us,” Rm 15-B

In this program, children learn to seek guidance in life through the lens of our Unitarian Universalist sources, with an emphasis on love. Together we ask questions, such as “Where did we come from?” “What is our relationship to the Earth and other creatures?” “How can we respond with love, even in bad situations?” “What happens when you die?” Children will learn that asking questions is valued in Unitarian Universalism, even as they begin to shape their own answers.

4th-5th Grade, “Love Connects Us,” Rm. 15-A

“Love Connects Us” celebrates important ways Unitarian Universalists live our faith in covenanted community. Moved by love and gathered in spirit, we encourage the children to embrace responsibility toward one another and the world at large. We encourage one another’s search for truth and meaning and strive to be active in peace-making and other efforts to improve our world.

Children’s Primary Choir, K-3rd, Rm. 13, 10-10:40 a.m.

Children’s Secondary Choir, 4-6th Grades, Rm. 11, 10-10:40 a.m.

Youth RE - 6th-12th Grades

Youth classes are held from 10:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Jr. Youth Group, 5th-8th grades, “Heeding the Call: Qualities of a Justice Maker,” Rm. 13

“Heeding the Call” is a social justice curriculum that not only explores linked oppression in our society, but also encourages youth towards personal growth in values that counteract the marginalization of others. Workshops on empathy, courage, abundance, joy and other qualities ask participants to recognize how these standards can be tools for justice. Additionally, the program includes more concrete tools, such as suggestions on how to be a good ally and tips on the language of conflict resolution. True stories of courage, sacrifice and collaboration, role-playing, games, and a program-long justice project will, feed youth’s rising realization that as people of faith we are all called to love justice—not just with our words, but also with our deeds.

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High School Youth Group (YRUU), 9th-12th grades, “My Name is Earl,” Rm. 11

High school youth are invited to explore religious concepts through the life of Earl Hickey as he goes on a spiritual quest to be a better person. Based on the television series “My Name is Earl,” youth will learn about our Unitarian Universalist values and principles and define their ideas about the afterlife, sin, covenant, and many other important concepts that become part of our personal credos. ■

Nathan Brumbaugh joins RE team as childcare coordinator



Nathan Brumbaugh is a world-traveled virtuosic dancer with training in ballet, modern, Butoh, circus, and aerial. He received a BFA in Humanities and dance from Columbia College while concurrently training at Ruth Page School of Dance. During his training in Chicago, he developed an affinity for the therapeutic aspects of restorative

yoga, Nathan furthered his physical and mental discipline at San Francisco’s Yoga Tree.

Nathan was conferred the honor of de facto doula during his sister Elizabeth’s first childbirth. The emotional impact of this experience led Nathan to seek work with families on a more intimate level. He was soon honored with a position as a family nanny, caring for their son Julien. He attended the birth of their daughter Esther, and continued working with them for five years. After gaining popularity in the S.F. community as a performer, child care provider, and doula, Nathan was granted a scholarship to study at Corner Stone Doula, in Berkeley, California.

He relocated to Austin in June of 2011 after a year in Central and South America obtaining a massage therapy license. He quickly established and continues to operate a health and wellness center downtown. He also performs with several local dance companies.

Nathan feels very blessed to be afforded many opportunities to work with communities and individuals in such powerful, creative and intimate ways. ■

Helen DeMore joins RE team

Helen DeMore has joined the RE department as administration assistant. She is a fourth-generation Texan—born in Lubbock, grew up in Arlington, and came to Austin as fast as she could. She has lived and worked in Austin for the past 10 years.



Helen’s background is in social services. She has worked as an advocate for elderly nursing home residents with a local nonprofit agency, and as foster care coordinator with a private company, supporting foster parents of adults with special needs all over the state. Helen loves kids and worked as a preschool teacher and nanny when she first moved to Austin.

As she works on a degree in Women’s Studies, Helen makes time for music, sewing, and romping with her German Shepherd mix Sadie. ■



In today’s electronic and multitasking world, the true, personal story is making a comeback. Three top storytelling podcasts, This American Life, The Moth and Snap Judgment, have combined downloads in the millions. Besides being entertaining, listening to stories encourages understanding and telling stories encourages reflection and growth. Learn how to write and perform a compelling true, personal story and then perform the story for family and friends. ■

**The Power of True, Personal Stories,
to Understand, Reflect and Grow**
Tuesdays: Sept. 3, 10, 17 and 24, 6:30-8 p.m.
Performance Sunday, Sept. 29, 7 p.m.
\$25, Free babysitting provided!

**September
Seniors Luncheon**
*Wed., 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, senior@austinuu.org. ■

Sharing Supper
Saturday, Sept. 21
**(Signup deadline:
Sept. 15)**

Sharing Supper is a great way to meet lots of long-time church members and newcomers from across the greater Austin area. The suppers are casual adult dinners the third Saturday of each month. Groups of six to 10 people gather in various participants' homes, and everyone contributes to the meal. It is open to all adults 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 or co-hosting in another's home. The host/hostess plans the meal with the participants so vegetarian and vegan dishes are provided. Contact Mary Ann Stafford at: sharing@austinuu.org. ■

**Fall Harvest: Leadership Training for
the UUA Southern Region: EvoluUtion**
**Nov. 8-10, Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center
Glen Rose, Texas**

Evolution is all around us. Growth and change in congregational life is inevitable. It is possible to celebrate this part of life, rejoicing in the future and looking forward to what may come! Come learn about the evolution that take place in congregations, and how we can foster all kinds of growth and deepen our spiritual lives in the process.



Program

Lay Pastoral Care/Chaplain Training

Leaders: Penny Burnette, Director of Religious Education and Patty Bissar, Director of Religious Education

Change: It's Not So Bad

Leaders: Kathy McGowan, Congregational Life Consultant for the Southern Region of the UUA and Rev. Carlton Smith, Congregational Life Consultant for the Southern Region of the UUA

**Renaissance Module: Curriculum Planning
in the Congregation**

Leaders: Patti Withers, Credentialed DRE, Master's Level and Susan Caldwell, Credentialed DRE

The Church Plateau (What to do if you've stopped growing)

Leader: Natalie Briscoe, Congregational Life Consultant for the Southern Region of the UUA

The Purpose Driven Church

Leader: Sarah Prickett, Seminarian and Director of Lifespan Faith Development

The New Jim Crow

Leaders: Carrie Stewart, Right Relations Specialist for the Southern Region and Lewis Morris, Right Relations Specialist for the Southern Region

Children's EvoluUtion Camp

Leaders: Sean Briscoe, Coordinator of Religious Education and Rachel Finley, Director of Religious Education

Fresh Paint, Fresh Food and Our Health

by Richard Halpin

Have you noticed the beautiful yellow walls inside our church hallways? There is a clean secret behind that beauty. Have you ever been sick from the smell of fresh paint? Creative church volunteer Vicki Almstrum and her posse of fabulous remodeling and painting artists have brought this inside fix-up gift to all of us.

In preparing for this magic makeover, Vicki, consulting with our Green Sanctuary Committee, found out about non-VOC paints. VOC paint? What's that? Volatile Organic Compounds paints produce a 'just painted smell' that make some folks feel a headache, nausea, dizzy and generally ill. Those smells are solvents released into the air as the paint dries. Competitively priced and in some cases less expensive, non-VOC paints have cleaned up those volatile organic compound solvents and eliminated the bad side effects. Major paint companies carry non-VOC paints as standard products. Google VOC paints on Consumer Reports for more information. Our result is a beautiful clean inspiring finish to our walls that complement the skilled and terrific volunteers who did this for all of us. Hey! Y'all, thank you! Check it out and be sure to thank Vicki and the team who produced this beautiful makeover.

Oh, another important abbreviation is GMO. Like VOC's "GMOs, or "genetically modified organisms," are plants or animals that have been genetically engineered with DNA from bacteria, viruses or other plants and animals. These experimental combinations of genes from different species cannot occur in nature or in traditional crossbreeding.

Virtually all commercial GMOs



Vicki Almstrum points out the fresh yellow paint job gracing the First UU hallways.

are engineered to withstand direct application of herbicide and/or to produce an insecticide. Despite biotech industry promises, none of the GMO traits currently on the market offer increased yield, drought tolerance, enhanced nutrition, or any other consumer benefit.

Meanwhile, a growing body of evidence connects GMOs with health problems, environmental damage and violation of farmers' and consumers' rights. (From: nongmoproject.org)

And this just in from Christina Sarich, News Report: More than 1,000 acres found to have been planted with genetically altered maize crops have been destroyed in Hungary. Standing up to the biotech giants of Monsanto, Dow, and BASF, the country has boldly banned GMO seed. Peru has passed a ban for at least 10 years on GM foods, along with Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain and Austria with their own bans, as well as many other countries.

Join your Green Sanctuary Committee for a movie, non-GM popcorn and panel on this GMO issue in Howson Hall Saturday, Sept. 21, at 7 p.m. All are welcome. ■

Women's Spirituality Group update

The Women's Spirituality Group continues our focus on "Explorations of Spiritual Practices" in September with a group on Life Transitions on Sept. 7 and a Song Fest to celebrate fall equinox on Sept. 21. On Oct. 5, we will have a presentation on essential oils.

The Women's Spirituality Group meets on the first and third Saturday mornings of each month, from 10:30 a.m.-12 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 please contact: women@austinuu.org. ■

Eclectic Folk Jam

Friday, Sept. 13
Rm. 17, 7-10 p.m.

The Eclectic Folk Jam, an open jam session for singers and instrumentalists, is held on the second Friday of every month. We have “Rise Up Singing” songbooks. 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, Sept. 28
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 512-469-0029 or Mary Jane Ford at singalong@austinuu.org. ■

SUNDAY WORSHIP

SANCTUARY 9:15 AM AND 10:45 AM

SEPTEMBER 1

The Serious Business of Play

REV. MARISOL CABALLERO

So often we dismiss saccharine statements made by those who teach children as trite, “I learn just as much from them as they learn from me!” But, there is a sacred science behind it. The insights and discoveries of children and teens lend us a glimpse into ways of engaging with our universe and each other that the average adult brain no longer accesses on our own! Join us in exploring the spiritual practice of learning with, from and teaching children.

SEPTEMBER 8

Water Communion

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

All over North America, UUs are having their ingathering water service this Sunday. Please bring water from a place that has fed your spirit this summer. It might be water from Barton Springs, from your kitchen sink, or from the Nile. Prepare a sentence you might like to say about this place.

SEPTEMBER 15

What If You Can't keep Your Promise?

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

Yom Kippur is the final day of the Jewish High Holy Days, which are about repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation. It is also a day when you may work to be released from a vow you cannot keep. Let's talk about forgiving others, and forgiving ourselves too.

SEPTEMBER 22

Not So Good at Mindfulness

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

The sixth element of the Buddhist eight-fold path is “right mindfulness.” Do you have to give up multitasking? Do you have to do the dishes meditatively? Come see.

SEPTEMBER 29

Bedrock Values at the Heart of Humanism

REV. MEG BARNHOUSE

One of the sources from which Unitarian Universalism draws are “Humanist teachings that counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.” We are believers in clarity of mind without making our reason into something we worship.

THE FORUM

SANCTUARY AT NOON AFTER SECOND SERVICE

SEPTEMBER 8

A Broader Vision for the Labor Movement

WITH KEN ZARIFIS

Ken Zarifis, president of Education Austin, the union of teachers and other school employees in Austin ISD, will discuss attacks on public education and on workers in both the public and private sector. He'll also talk about the emergence of a broader vision of labor solidarity in response, uniting union and non-union workers and community allies. Zarifis will focus on the Austin-based Workers Defense Project, recently profiled in the New York Times, as a prime example of this trend. Education Austin itself exemplifies this alliance-building emphasis.

The union is a merged affiliate of both Texas AFT (the Texas branch of the American Federation of Teachers) and the Texas State Teachers Association, and it is a partner in community coalitions including Austin Interfaith.

SEPTEMBER 15

The Texas Drought: We Can't Build Our Way Out of It

WITH ANDY SANSOM

"Make no mistake about it; we are in a water crisis here in Texas. Consider these facts: our population is essentially going to double in the next half century or so and we have already given permission for more water to be withdrawn from many of our rivers than is actually in them...today."

Dr. Andrew Sansom is one of Texas' leading conservationists. He is a former executive director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and executive director of the Texas Nature Conservancy. He now serves as executive director of the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment where he coordinates university policy and research related to freshwater resources, manages the headwaters of the San Marcos River, administers the most extensive freshwater environmental education program in Texas, and supervises the training and coordination of more than 1,000 volunteer water monitors in rivers and streams throughout the state.

SEPTEMBER 22

No forum

SEPTEMBER 29

Responsibilities and Challenges of Policing in One of the Nation's Largest and Most Dynamic Cities: Austin

WITH ART ACEVEDO

Police Chief Art Acevedo will discuss the duties and responsibilities of the Austin police force and efforts to serve a large, diverse population. He will identify changing needs and trends in policing, challenges facing the police department, and what are considered best practices. He is dedicated to developing APD into a data-driven and intelligence-led policing organization and to keeping Austin one of the nation's safest cities of its size. He will discuss his vision for a well-trained, responsive, and accountable police force dedicated to preventing as well as solving crime, maintaining the peace, and fostering good community relations.

Chief Acevedo was born in Cuba, emigrated to the United States when he was four years old. He is the first Hispanic to lead the Austin Police Department. Acevedo is a graduate of University of La Verne in California with a degree in Public Administration. He worked his way up to the position of Chief, California Highway Patrol in 2005, and came to Austin in 2007. Acevedo holds leadership positions in the Major Cities Chiefs Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. ■

**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

Rev. Marisol Caballero

Director of Music
Brent Baldwin

Director of Membership
and Communications

Carla Jo Schaefer

Board President

Michael Kersey

president@austinuu.org

**Building Use Training
by Natalie Freeburg**

Attention all committees! If your group is planning on having any meetings or events at the church this year, please attend one of the First UU trainings about building use. You don't have to be the committee chair to attend.

There have been many changes in the past few months. We are sharing the space with the Girls' School and there has been a great increase in the demand for space. Because of this, things might not be the way they have always been.

We will not offer another training until the end of the year, so please invite someone else on your committee to join you so you can both

share the knowledge with others in your group.

If you have specific questions, please email any comments or questions to me at natalie@austinuu.org in advance. An RSVP is requested so that I can plan effectively, be prepared, and notify you if there are any changes to the schedule.

Thanks for your important work and for using our resources wisely. In order to respect your time, we will honor the start and end time of the training.

Sunday Sept. 8; 12:15-1 p.m.

Tuesday Sept.10; 12-12:45 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 18; 5-5:45 p.m.

Thank you for your leadership in our congregation. ■

**First Unitarian
Universalist
Church of Austin**

4700 Grover Ave.
Austin, TX 78756