



A Beacon on the Hill

Volume 72 Issue No. 5

Rev. Dr. Joshua Snyder, Minister

May, 2016

Josh's Journal

This Month's Theme: Reason

I am the biggest email hypocrite in the world. Let me explain to you what I mean.

Like most people I receive multiple emails every day. Some of these are from members or leaders who need help or are working on a project of some kind. Occasionally, and some days more than occasionally, I get emails from folks outside the congregation. It seems more often than not these "outside" emails have a sort of shrill urgency about them. "Here is X or Y event that you absolutely need to be at for your church and your ministry to thrive!"; "Give us and our cause money if you want to continue to be a good person!"; "Buy this book that unlocks the secrets to all your church's problems!" Other times these can come in the form of rather benign, and even kind requests from colleagues or the UUA. I prioritize the immediate work of the church and its people. So on those days when my inbox runneth over, I think, "Yes that is great. I will get to it when I get to it." Sometimes days, sometimes longer passes before I respond.

Yet when the shoe is on the other foot, I have even more impatience. When I am the "outside" email contacting one of my colleagues or someone at the UUA, I easily grow impatient and frustrated. "Don't they know how important my thing is? Maybe I didn't use enough exclamation points in typing up that email!" I expect them to respond to me right away, yet I know that I personally can't get to emails like mine for some time.

When you stop and think about it, this is irrational. I know what it is like to be a busy person so why are my expectations for myself so different than my expectations for others in the same situation? If I apply a little bit of reason to this situation, then I find that I am more patient and more open to giving people the space I expect for myself. Reason helps us to reflect on why we are the way we are and why we do the things we do. "The unexamined life is not worth living," quipped Socrates. This is as much as spiritual dictum as it is a philosophical assertion.

So let us lead an examined life, at least for the month of May!

May You Be Blessed Always,

Rev Dr Joshua Snyder

Ministerial Matters



Rev. Josh plans to be in the office Monday – Thursday
9 am – 4 pm. It's always a good idea to call first if you want to see him in person.

NOTE: Church office hours are Sunday - Thursday, 8:30 am – 2:30 pm.

NEW TO FIRST UU?

Please visit our website to learn about the church, how you can meet others and get involved:

<http://uusat.org/our-church-2/new-to-first-uu/>

Newcomers Meet and Greet

Coffee & conversation
Every Sunday 9:30 – 10:30am
Sophia Fahs Room

Summing Up

This has been a wonderful, exciting year and I have felt honored to be trusted by you to serve as President of the Board. You will be seeing the Report of the Board in the Annual Report, which won't be the same kind of report as some of the other committees. Reverend Josh sent a questionnaire for all of the committees to answer, and I thought I would use these for this column:

1. What were the regular "business as usual" programs or activities your committee accomplished in 2015-2016?

Once Reverend Josh came on board, we established a regular reporting schedule for his policy reports; established budget priorities reflective of the moral and ethical goals of our Church; worked with the Maintenance and Repair Committee on resolving the mold issue in the Sanctuary; worked with the Committee on Ministry for Josh's Installation Service; helped organize the Start Up weekend before the Minister's installation and assisted with the UUA's Heart of Texas leadership training; organized the Next Steps Weekend; revived The Strategic Planning Committee; and, most enjoyably, hosted the Christmas Social on Christmas Eve.

2. What special projects or accomplishments happened by or with your committee in 2015-2016?

The overarching theme is working with Reverend Josh during this first year of his Settled Ministry. It has been a true delight. The Next Steps Weekend is going to be a special project. Finally, we engaged with the congregation in an extended discussion of the open carry / concealed carry policies to be pursued by the Board and were rewarded with a great deal of wise and insightful input from the congregation.

3. How much did it cost (in terms of time, money, and volunteer resources) to accomplish each of these things?

There is no way to estimate the large number of hours each board member put in during this last year, and I cannot thank all the members of the Board enough for their time.

4. What do you wish you could have accomplished this year?

I know many wished us to be able to make a larger commitment to using solar power for the electrical use of the Church; however, budget constraints got in our way. As always with this Church, so much of what gets done gets done by other committees which the Board supports.

5. How are your accomplishments connected to your committee's mission?

We view whatever we do as forwarding the mission of the Church.

6. The following people are on my committee:

And a tremendous group they are. With great thanks and deep appreciation to Vice President Jim Noel, Treasurer Jennifer Johnson, Secretary David Ringer, Board Members Anne Peters, Dale Hibner, Terry Palin, and Gale Morrow.

Thank you all again for a wonderful year as your Board President. See you at the Annual Meeting on May 22,

Howard C. Berger, President

Board Minutes

You can find this month's Board minutes here: <http://uusat.org/our-church-2/governance/board-of-trustees/>. The board meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the conference room and all are invited to attend.

Emerson Bookshop *Plus*

We now have in stock Breakfast Blend whole bean coffee and Breakfast Blend single serve cups (for all Keurig® and Keurig®-compatible single serve machines EXCEPT the Keurig® 2.0 or the Vue®). June 1 our price for fair trade coffees will be \$9 and tea will be \$4. At <http://shop.equalexchange.coop/> learn about the coffee and tea choices and let us know what you would like the bookshop to carry:

Recent arrivals at our bookstore:

Considering Hate: Violence, Goodness, and Justice in American Culture and Politics (Beacon Press)
Tyranny of the Meritocracy : Democratizing Higher Education in America / Lani Guinier (Beacon Press)
Tying the Knot : A Gender-Neutral Guide to Handfasting or Weddings for Pagans and Goddess Worshippers / Jade River
Spirituality of Age : A Seeker's Guide to Growing Older
God Is Red : A Native View of Religion
Vital Signs : Discovering and Sustaining Your Passion for Life
Listening Life : Embracing Attentiveness in a World of Distraction
Fields of Blood :Religion and the World of Violence
Change the Story, Change the Future : A Living Economy for a Living Earth
Shift into Freedom : The Science and Practice of Open-Hearted Awareness
Reclaiming the Wild Soul : How Earth's Landscapes Restore Us to Wholeness
Caravan of No Despair : A Memoir of Loss and Transformation
Seeds for a Boundless Life : Zen Teachings from the Heart
Dog Songs : Poems / Mary Oliver
Between the Dark and the Daylight : Embracing the Contradictions of Life
Second Wind : Navigating the Passage to a Slower, Deeper, and More Connected Life
People's History of the United States / Howard Zinn
Yoga : Discipline of Freedom
Cold Anger : A Story of Faith and Power Politics (A history of COPS/Metro)
Caravan of No Despair : A Memoir of Loss and Transformation / Mirabal Starr
Power of Surrender : Let Go and Energize Your Relationships, Success and Well-Being
Essence of Shinto : Japan's Spiritual Heart
Meditation - The Complete Guide : Techniques from East to West to Calm the Mind, Heal the Body and Enrich the Spirit / Patrice Monaghan

For children and caregivers

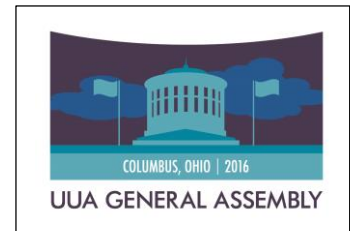
On the Day You Were Born (board book)
Changes : A Child's First Poetry Collection
My Brave Year of Firsts : Tries, Sighs and High Fives / Jamie Lee Curtis
Day the Crayons Came Home
Heather Has Two Mommies
Building Emotional Intelligence : Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children
NurtureShock : New Thinking About Children
God That Could Be Real : Spirituality, Science, and the Future of Our Planet
On the Day You Were Born (board book)
It's Okay to Be Different / Todd Parr
Book / David Miles (Children's)
Yes / Sarah Bee (Children's)
Look! (children's)

Denominational Connections

UUA General Assembly June 22-26, 2016 Columbus, Ohio

The theme for GA 2016 will be **Heart Land: Where Faiths Connect**. To register or for more information visit www.uua.org/ga. You will also find the tentative business agenda that describes the issues that will come before the delegates as well as the preliminary program schedule. If you are planning to attend and would be interested in serving as a delegate from First UU, please contact Donna Harrison by May 7 at denomconnect@uusat.org. Serving as a delegate will enable you to vote on the various issues that come before the delegate assembly.

Denominational Connections Co-chairs: June Kachtik and Donna Harrison



Our May Share-the-Plate Partner: Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas

We have all heard that the population in San Antonio will double by the year 2040, but what does that really mean to each of us and the natural areas that we count on to help us unplug, reconnect and recharge?

Whether you hike in a park, or just enjoy the scenic view of the natural landscape on your daily commute, you benefit from nature.



Our Share the Plate recipient for May is Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas, an environmental organization begun 17 years ago to sustain the natural environment and enhance urban spaces through land conservation, community engagement, and education. With a small and passionate staff and dedicated board, Green Spaces promotes and conducts land conservation, connecting people with each other and healthy lifestyles through community gardens, and engaging hundreds of children with their surrounding natural world through photography workshops. Green Spaces staff and volunteers hold workshops for gardeners and want-to-be gardeners. Staff meet with landowners who want to preserve their South Texas family land and save a part of the Texas Hill Country from the sprawl that is knocking on their door. Green Spaces lights the spark in future generations to see and love the magic and value of nature.

MEMBER TO MEMBER BULLETIN BOARD

We now have a Member to Member bulletin board on the kiosk on the patio. This will be a bulletin board for members to post personal notices. We envision postings for such things as people looking for work and people looking for help. Do you need someone to mow the lawn, care for children, paint the house, walk the dog or a million other possibilities? Are you looking for a used item or have one to sell

or give away? Want to share something of interest to other church members? (poetry, zentangles, pictures, etc.) This bulletin board is an option. If you have something you'd like to post, send it to: office@uusat.org. Include your name and contact number. This service is only available to registered church members and guests. We reserve the right to return items judged inappropriate. We will publish firmer guidelines as experience dictates.



Summer Religious Education at First UU

Religious education continues year-round at first UU San Antonio – with some modifications.

During June, July, and August this year, grades 5 and below will enjoy playground/free play at 9:30, and curriculum classes during the 11 am worship hour, with children attending the first part of the service. Middle-and high-school classes maintain their year-round schedule: class 9:30-10:30, attend worship service at 11. The summer curriculum for grades 5 and below will be “Sources - Raising Children in the Goddess Tradition,” based on the book *Circle Round: Raising children in the Goddess Tradition.*”



Parents are invited to come by the Summer RE teacher recruitment table on the patio (from 9:30 - 10:45 during the month of May) to view the curriculum and sign up to volunteer for a class!

Parents' Night Out

Member Care is considering doing a *Parents' Night Out* once a month on a Friday evening from approximately 6:30 to 9:30 pm, depending on interest and participation. We need answers to the following questions:

1. How many of you would be willing to volunteer as a child care provider probably once every other month?
2. How many of you would be interested in bringing your children? If so, what age are they?
3. Is there interest in doing a *Mothers, Day Out* on a Saturday from 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.?

Send your answers to membcare@uusat.org.

Used marker collection

Don't throw away your used-up markers! May 15-29, there will collection boxes on the patio and in the sanctuary wherein you may deposit your dried-up markers. The markers will be sent to a facility where they will be converted into clean fuel. This fuel can be used to power vehicles, heat homes, cook meals and more! Through this program, which is sponsored by Crayola, we can keep tons of plastic out of landfills each year. If you would like to bring markers before May 15, just bring them to the religious education office. Thanks in advance for participating!



Senior Lunch Concert, May 5

First UU members and friends who consider themselves “seniors” are invited to enjoy fellowship together on the first and third Thursday of each month. Just show up to the Fellowship Hall lounge with your brown bag lunch. On May 5, our own Mark Ackerman, along with his students Jesse Borjas and Denisse Chavez, will perform chamber music:

Mozart, Trio for Two oboes and English horn

Three Jazz pieces arranged for oboes and English horn by Richard Henderson

Prelude to a Kiss

Lullaby of Birdland

Mood Indigo

The concert will begin at noon, with brown-bag lunch to follow. See you there!



Adult Religious Education Ongoing Classes

- **Religious Explorations** Mark Ackerman Fellowship Hall Sun 9:30 am
April 17 - Adult Religious Explorations will listen to a 24 lecture series titled Emerson, Thoreau, and the Transcendentalists. Emerson, in the Divinity School Address, established Transcendentalism as the main source of his religious life. The lecture series, by Professor Ashton Nichols of Dickinson College, will include lectures on famous writers from mid-nineteenth Northeast America. The classes are at 9:30 on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall. The lectures are a half-hour followed by a half hour's moderated discussion. All are welcome!
- **Dialogue with Fellow Seekers** Jeff Addington Darwin Sun 9:30 a variety of spiritual topics/concerns discussed in a respectful & caring environment
- **World Faiths Book Club** Christine Chesnut Beatrix Potter Sun 9:30 am
Apr 10-May 1, 2016 - Terry Goddard - "Paul and Jesus: How the Apostle Transformed Christianity" by James D. Tabor
May 8, 15, 22 - Mark Stokes - "Stillness Speaks" by Eckhart Tolle
May 29 - Bill Bush begins discussion of "No Man Knows My History" by Fawn Brodie
- **Newcomers Meet & Greet** facilitators vary Sophia Fahs Sun 9:30 am
Meet and greet for those new to or considering joining First UU
- **UU Young Adults** Megan Janzen Beatrix Potter 4th Sundays 12:30 noon
Ages 18-35 meet for food and fellowship
- **UU Philosophy** Bruce Beck Fellowship Hall 2nd & 4th Sun 7:15 pm
"Big History: The Genesis Story of Science"

Stewardship Corner

appreciate

verb | ə-' prē-shē-, āt

: to recognize the full worth of; hold in high regard

We greatly appreciate the members and friends of First UU who responded during the annual Stewardship Campaign to let us know their level of financial commitment for the coming church year. Many members were able to increase their level of support, others pledged at the same level, while some had to decrease their pledge due to a change in their financial circumstances, but we are extremely grateful for all who pledged to share in the support of our church. Pledges are the primary source of funding for First UU's programs and operations. Non-pledge cash contributions that are collected during the worship services comprise about 3% of our yearly program budget. We depend, however, on our members to make a financial commitment each year to help the church plan responsibly. Your generous giving based upon your personal circumstances demonstrates your connection to our church and gives tangible expression to your values. Those who pledge are true stewards in sustaining First UU and helping it thrive.

Coming in May

For other activities, see the church [calendar](#).

NEXT STEPS WEEKEND REVIEW - *Sun, May 1, 12pm, Fellowship Hall* - The "Stewardship for Us" representative will be available after service to go over the information he has gathered during his visit and to answer any questions. This organization offers expertise in budget drives, stewardship campaigns, and capital campaigns and will be assisting us in moving forward with our long term goals.

YOUNG ADULTS HIKE - *Sat, May 7, 9am, Eisenhower Park, 19399 NW Military Hwy* – The Young Adults group meet for a hike in the park. We will meet near the circle of rocks by the entrance to the paved path. Bring some snacks to share for a picnic after the hike. Dogs, children welcome.

YOUNG ADULTS BRIDGERS PARTY - *Sun, May 8, 12:30pm, Dave & Busters @ Crossroads Mall* – Bridging Ceremony during the service. This is the service when high schoolers "bridge" from youth into young adults. Please join us for the service to welcome the four new members of young adults. Following a brief cake & punch ceremony on the patio after service, the Young Adults will host the Bridgers to a lunch at Dave & Busters.

FAMILY PICNIC/CARNIVAL – *Sat, May 14, 11am-3pm, Eisenhower Park, Pavillion #2, 19399 NW Military Hwy* – Celebrate the end of the church/school year and the beginning of summer at this fun family-friendly picnic in the park. Join us under Pavillion #2 with a dish to share in this potluck lunch. Drinks will be provided. We will have games and a piñata for the kids and there is a playground close by and beautiful hiking trails.

NEW MEMBER/LEADERSHIP POTLUCK – *Sat, May 14, 6pm, Fellowship Hall* -

This is a gathering of church leadership and the wonderful new people who joined our church this year! Bring your whole family and your favorite summertime dish to share! Membership will provide wine and iced tea. RSVP required at membership@uusat.org.

YRE VOLUNTEERS APPRECIATION BREAKFAST – *Sun, May 15, 9:30am, Fellowship Hall* - A breakfast honoring youth RE teachers and volunteers takes place this day instead of regular RE classes. All teachers and volunteers are invited. Parents and RE students are encouraged to attend to show your appreciation for all these volunteers do throughout the year.

FUUND LUNCH – *Sun, May 15, 12pm, Fellowship Hall* - Sponsored by the Social Justice Committee. Enjoy food and fellowship while raising funds to benefit the Texas UU Justice Ministry, an organization that educates and organizes member congregations and partners with sympathetic organizations in order to advocate for effective public policies.

FINANCE TEAM TOWN HALL – *Sun, May 15, 12:15pm, Conference Rm* - The Finance Team will be available to review next church year's proposed budget. The budget will be voted on during the May 22nd congregational meeting. Plan on attending this town hall meeting if you have any questions or concerns with next year's budget.

FIRST UU 101 – *Sun, May 15, 12:15pm, Jefferson Bldg* - Interested in finding out more about our church or becoming a member? Attend this class for answers to questions you have and learn how our church works.

MAY MARKER DRIVE – *Sundays, May 15-29, 9am-12:30pm, Sanctuary & Patio* - Don't throw away your used-up markers! Bring them to church and place them in the donation boxes on the patio and in the Sanctuary foyer. The markers will be sent to a facility where they will be converted into clean fuel. This fuel can be used to power vehicles, heat homes, cook meals and more! Through this program we can keep tons of plastic out of landfills each year.

"CATCHING THE SUN" FILM SCREENING – *Sat, May 21, 4pm, Fellowship Hall* - The Green Team presents a screening of "Catching the Sun," a documentary film exploring the international race to build a clean energy economy.

CIRCLE DINNERS – *Sat, May 21, 6pm, Off Campus* - Meet others for food and fellowship at each other's homes. Hosts rotate monthly. RSVP at circledinners@uusat.org if you want to attend.

FULL MOON LABYRINTH WALK – *Sat, May 21, 7pm, Large Labyrinth West of Sanctuary* - Join Celestial Celebrations Circle for a full moon labyrinth walk & drumming. Please bring a chair or blanket to sit on, drums and/or tarot cards if you wish to use them.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – *Sun, May 22, 12:15pm, Fellowship Hall* - The annual congregational meeting will be held immediately following service for the purpose of voting on next year's proposed budget, leadership slate, and Share the Plate recipients. Lists of eligible voters will be posted starting May 8th on the bulletin boards outside of Fellowship Hall. Childcare will be provided-check in your children in the nursery.

Save the Date:

ADVANCE NOTICE: Our annual Music Sunday is coming up on June 12. As part of the service, noted San Antonio drummer Dave Montalvo will engage the entire congregation in a drum circle. So everyone will need a percussion instrument. Be on the lookout for "found" instruments such as empty oatmeal boxes, chop sticks, empty coffee cans, plastic water bottles with a bit of pea gravel inside, gallon-size water bottles, wooden spoons, medicine bottles with BB's inside, or "real" drums, tambourines, etc. --you get the idea. It promises to be an engaging, inspiring experience. Don't miss it!

Jedi Academy summer camp

Aug. 1-5, 2016

First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio

Description: Many "pop culture" stories offer far more than mere fantasy. As modern mythology, these stories often have the ability to speak to a modern audience in ways that more traditional sources cannot. The world of the Star Wars saga has inspired real-life practices of spirituality. In this camp, children in rising grades K-5 will learn the way of the light side of the Force as it relates to Unitarian Universalist values and practices. Children will play games, do craft projects, and build community while exploring approaches to mindfulness and social justice. Older youth are encouraged to come as Jr. counselors and counselors in training. For more information and registration, visit uusat.org under the "children and teens" tab.

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Sermon Podcasts:
<http://uusat.org/worship/sermons/>

Facebook: First Unitarian
Universalist Church of
San Antonio

Twitter: @FirstUUChurchSA

Services for May

11:00 am – In the Sanctuary

Religious Education for All Ages at 9:30 am

– Various Locations

May 1: “The Heart and Mind of Unitarian Universalism” – Rev. Josh
Almost from the very beginning Unitarian Universalism has been a battle between the head and the heart. Which of these holds sway over our faith at any particular time has changed throughout our history. As we begin to explore reason as a central feature of Unitarian Universalism, we begin to recognize the diversity of values we hold together.

May 8: Youth Religious Education Sunday

Come and find out what our children and youth have been learning about all year in their religious education classes! Each class will create a present a short presentation on their exploration of UU values. Since this is Mother’s Day, our children’s choir will present a very special story-song. Also, our high school seniors will “bridge” into young adulthood. A cake reception on the patio for newly bridged youth will follow the service.

May 15: “Maya and the World We Inhabit” – Rev. Josh

Eastern tradition define salvation in terms of “enlightenment” or “release” from the world of suffering. They imply that the main reason that there is suffering and pain is because we have a false sense of understanding of the world. Yet this understanding is not necessarily a function of academic knowledge. What is the role of reason in coming to understand our interconnections?

May 22: “Moving Off the Map” – Rev. Josh

As we prepare for our Annual Meeting, it is important to reflect on where we are as a congregation and where we are headed. There are at least two major undertakings that have begun this year: revising the Ends and starting to write a new strategic plan. Both of these processes speak to who we are a church and what we would like to become. Please stay after the service to vote in the Annual Meeting!

May 29: Memorial Day Service featuring First UU Military Members

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Monthly Newsletter of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio

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