



A Beacon on the Hill

Volume 72 Issue No. 10

Rev. Dr. Joshua Snyder, Minister

October, 2016

Josh's Journal

October's Theme: Fear

I love a number of genres of film, but one of the ones I dislike is horror movies. It stems, I think, from when I was a little kid. I saw "Amityville Horror" on TV. Why or how I was allowed to see this movie at such a young and tender age I do not know. Yet somehow I saw it – and I did not sleep for weeks afterwards. The closet in my bedroom had to be shut tight, lest any of the ghosts that resided there escape. Ever since that experience I have not wanted to be scared at the movies again. I have made a couple of exceptions to this, but now even in adulthood I avoid the genre whenever possible. There are some things you just can't un-see.

Now before you think ill of my parents bear this in mind: my sister, who is three years younger than me, LOVES horror movies! They are her favorite genre of movie; far and away. This is useful for me because my boys have a titillating curiosity about horror movies that is typical of young people. So I use my sister as a sounding board for what is and is not appropriate for their ages – she has seen them all.

I have asked my sister a few times about why she likes these movies. Why would anyone want to be scared at the movies? Her best analogy was to food: why would anyone want to eat a habanero chili pepper? They are super hot and hurt your mouth. Most people are in pain after eating a habanero, so why do they buy them? I like spicy food because it is interesting. The heat hurts but it also releases endorphins and feels good in a strange way.

Fear is often an alarm bell in our minds and emotions to steer clear of dangerous situations. It is rightly to be heeded. But moving past fear could be a way for us to grow – to experience the zest of life that we might otherwise have missed. No wonder young people are intrigued by horror movies. They are a safe way to experience fear so that no one gets hurt. They are the psychological equivalent of adding cayenne pepper to your food. It hurts but it's kind of fun too.

Let us be brave enough to face our fears, in safe ways, and dare to grow beyond our limits.

May You Be Blessed Always,

Rev. Josh

Ministerial Matters



Rev. Josh's usual office hours are Monday-Thursday, 9:30am – 4:00pm, but it is always best to call first.

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/>

President's Column

Recently some folks in my neighborhood decided they wanted to form a community garden. Polly and I signed right up. We've had meetings, and recently we've had work days. Beds are being laid out, soil is being delivered, plans are being made. But probably equally important is that we are getting better acquainted with neighbors we know and meeting neighbors we have not known before. Who knows how to plan the lot and take into account dry and wet spots, sunny and shady areas? Who wants to grow vegetables to give away, and who prefers flowers? Who has a black thumb but is willing to push a wheelbarrow or bring out some lemonade?

It's not that we don't already have gardening projects at home, some more successful than others, but those are just for us. What's appealing about the community garden, for me anyway, is the idea that we might build a spot of beauty together with others who share this interest, whatever their skill level, as a benefit to everyone who lives nearby. At the same time we can learn each others' stories.

In some ways this church is like our community garden, although at over 70 years old it is much further along. We have meetings, we have work days, we make plans. And in the meetings and the covenant groups, the services and the FUUnd lunches, we get to know each other, little by little. Over the years we have built, and continue to build, a spot of beauty and a benefit to our community. And we can learn each others' stories.

Jim Noël, President

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

The Stewardship Committee will be hosting an interactive session on "Fostering a Culture of Stewardship" after the worship service on October 23rd in the Fellowship Hall. This interactive session will provide a forum to exchange ideas for developing stewardship as a shared ministry at First UU. A light lunch will be provided and child care will be arranged for those who RSVP to stewardship@uusat.org. Details to follow.

- Polly Noël

GREETINGS FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE!

We are ready for the next phase of our project to begin. This phase involves you, all the members and friends of our church. We will soon be visiting with various groups involved with the church, including covenant groups, committees, and Sunday morning groups, to get your feedback on the future of our church. We will have a list of targeted questions to ask and we will be excited to hear what you have to say.

So, be on the lookout in October and November for the times when we will be visiting your group. We will also be setting up some open dates to capture those of you outside of the targeted groups. In all, we hope to reach as many of you as possible in the next few months. So start thinking about the church of your dreams! And be ready to share that with us!

Regards,
Stacy Barnwell
Megan Janzen
David Rodriguez
David Ringer
Rev. Joshua Snyder

CHILDCARE STAFF UPDATE

Questions arose last month as to the childcare staff we have in this year's budget. Faith Raithman is the "Playground Monitor." She was a childcare person with us last year. Currently we have two paid childcare providers who watch the littlest kids for both hours on Sunday. They are Ashley Howard and Kennedy McGovern, who is the newest addition to the team. All three, Faith, Ashley, and Kennedy, are children of active members of the church. Note that because of adult to kid safety ratios, it is still necessary to recruit parent volunteers to assist with playground monitoring in order to maintain required ratios.

[COPS/Metro](#) (Click on title to follow link.)

Commissioner's Court unanimously approved a budget for FY2017 that will increase the wages of their lowest paid employees from \$13/hour to \$13.75/hour. Judge Nelson Wolff commended COPS/Metro and BOCAS leaders, who packed the court to celebrate a victory on living wages for the lowest paid county workers, as well as for the county's advances in paving roads in the unincorporated community of Highland Oaks. "The work COPS/Metro does is so important," said Judge Wolff. "For many years, our city has been a low-wage town, and at times has even marketed itself that way. Everyone deserves a wage that can support their family, and we're glad the county can do this."

COPS/Metro leader Mike Phillips thanked the Judge for listening to the workers and the community and asked the commissioners to keep raising the bar, both for direct and outsourced employees. "And commissioners, call your city council members and tell them to follow your lead!" **COPS/Metro will ask City Council to raise wages for their entry level employees to \$14/hour.** See Ms. Maria Tijerina's editorial in The Rivard Report, reminding the Mayor and Council that [living wages are a right, not a privilege.](#)

CREF

It's fall so that means it's CREF season! During the month of October we ask members and friends to add to the principle of the CREF endowment. The Wade Richmond Foundation has generously agreed to match contributions of \$50 or more. Donations can be made each Sunday in October or through the church office. This year's grant recipients were the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas, San Antonio Youth Literacy and Child Advocates San Antonio (CASA). All great organizations serving needs in the San Antonio area. With your efforts we hope to be able to reach other worthy organizations. Thank you for your generosity.

HYMNAL DRIVE

The Worship Committee held a successful hymnal drive on September 25, with 32 hardbacks and 13 teal paperbacks sold. Buyers filled out a form to dedicate their hymnals to family, fellow church members, and even a favorite cause or two. Thanks to everyone who bought a hymnal!

If you weren't here for the drive, you can always order hymnals in the Emerson Bookstore after church. Hardbacks are \$32 and paperbacks are \$18.

Emerson Bookshop *Plus*

Our church bookshop is open in the sanctuary classroom after the morning service most Sundays.

UU Chalice Journals are now available! **Marked down to \$5!** UU jewelry items in stock and almost five crates of great books—now somewhat sorted by topic!

Highlights of great books in stock for you. Check the bookstore for others.

Turning Point : Essays on a New Unitarian Universalism / Fredric Muir
Einstein's God : Conversations About Science and the Human Spirit / Krista Tippett
Waking Up : A Guide to Spirituality Without Religion / Sam Harris
Swerve : How the World Became Modern / Greenblatt
Next America : Boomers, Millennials, and the Looming Generational Showdown
Finding God Beyond Religion : A Guide for Skeptics, Agnostics and Unorthodox Believers Inside & Outside the Church

Especially for Children

Two Shy Pandas
Mira and the Big Story / Alary – some nice people have beliefs that seem strange to a girl
I Love You Stinky Face / McCourt
My Neighbor Is a Dog

Meditation, Contemplation

Buddhist Voices in Unitarian Universalism
99 Blessings: An Invitation to Life
From Beginning to End / Robert Fulghum
Fully Awake and Truly Alive: Spiritual Practices to Nurture Your Soul

Social Justice

Defying the Nazis : The Sharps' War
Mandela's Way: Lessons on Life, Love, and Courage / Stengel, Richard
Black Prophetic Fire / Cornel West
Islam and the Future of Tolerance : A Dialogue / Sam Harris
Cultivating Empathy : The World and Dignity of Every Person--Without Exception

LGBTQ

I Am Jazz / Herthel (transgender child)
Beyond Magenta : Transgender Teens Speak Out
Struggling in Good Faith : LGBTQI Inclusion from 13 American Religious Perspectives

Jesus and Christianity

Christ for Unitarian Universalists : A New Dialogue with Traditional Christianity
Saving the Original Sinner : How Christians Have Used the Bible's First Man to Oppress, Inspire, and Make Sense of the World

Poetry

Rumi's Little Book of Love : 150 Poems That Speak to the Heart
Liberation : New Works on Freedom from Internationally Renowned Poets
Love Beyond God
Dream Work / Oliver
House of Light / Oliver
Red Bird / Mary Oliver

Sickness and Death

How to Say Yes When Your Body Says No : Discover the Silver Linings to Life's Toughest Health Challenges / Jampolsky
Good Death : An Exploration of Dying in America
Nothing Gold Can Stay : The Colors of Grief

Share-the-Plate:

There is no Share the Plate in October due to the CREF campaign.



INTERFAITH WELCOME COALITION

Dear friends,

UU congregations have long been such an encouraging and vital part of the collective voice against family detention, and the gratitude of the San Antonio InterFaith Welcome Coalition runs the spectrum from a powerful voice of protest to the fun of an "Undie Sunday." You certainly outdid yourselves a couple of weeks ago when you brought in dozens of beautiful undies for the moms who are our guests at the Casa de RAICES. I just wish that each of you who contributed could see the look of delight as these women see what is available. After 5-6 weeks of dangerous and difficult travel across Mexico and being treated as criminals, they are eagerly anticipating being reunited with husbands, parents, cousins, friends, and they really want to look and feel good again. You have helped in a very practical way!

So on behalf of each of these young women,
¡Muchísimas gracias!

Jo Pendleton
Clothing Collections, Interfaith Welcome Coalition

SEPTEMBER CAMPUS WORK DAY

We had great turnout for our September campus work day. Volunteers of all ages made our playground area look remarkable. Special thanks to Girl Scout troop 839 for all of their help!



First UU Halloween party



October 28, 2015

6PM-10PM

Bring your favorite dish or dessert and enjoy good company, friends, and food.
Patio/Fellowship Hall

Adult Religious Education Ongoing Classes

Religious Explorations Mark Ackerman * Fellowship Hall * Sun 9:30 am * Fellowship Hall "Emerson, Thoreau, and the Transcendentalists", a lecture series, by Professor Ashton Nichols of Dickinson College. The lectures are a half-hour followed by a half hour's moderated discussion. All are welcome!

Spiritual Seekers Jeff Addington * Darwin * Sun 9:30 * variety of spiritual topics and concerns discussed in a respectful & caring environment

World Faiths Book Club Christine Chesnut * Beatrix Potter * Sun * 9:30 am
October 2 – Mary Ringer – “A Short History of Myth,” Karen Armstrong
October 9, 16, 23, 30 – Sarah Blossom - “The Happiness Hypothesis,” Jonathan Haidt
November 6, 13, 20, 27, December 4, 11 – Terry Goddard – “How Jesus became God,” Bart Ehrman

Parenting Group facilitators vary * Sophia Fahs * Sun * 9:30 am

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

Denominational Connections

We will be showing the DVD of “Defying the Nazis: The Sharps’ War, on Saturday, November 5th at 4 pm in Fellowship Hall. It is a 90 minute documentary film by Ken Burns about a UU minister and his wife who learned the art of spying in order assist dissidents to escape Nazi-occupied Europe at great personal peril. Discussion of the film and its relevance to our social justice ministry will follow.

A book that might be of interest to you is Turning Point: Essays on a New Unitarian Universalism edited by Fredric Muir. The book was mentioned as a must read by the moderator at General Assembly 2016. It is a collection of 20 essays by Unitarian Universalist leaders who write about the obstacles we face when attracting people to be a part of our denomination, and how we can build on our strengths to make it a more inclusive, multicultural, Beloved Community. You can listen to the moderator speak to these important issues by going to www.youtube.com and type in “#403 Moderator’s Report at UUA General Assembly 2016”. I think you will find what is said to be cause for much reflection and discussion.

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

BULVERDE OAKS TOUR – *Sat, Oct 1, 9am, Loop 1604 & Judson (carpool from church at 8:30am)* – The Green Team is planning on volunteering with Green Spaces Alliance to build hiking trails and educational signage on property at Bulverde Oaks. Anyone interested in helping with this project are invited to attend this public tour of the property.

“GET OUT THE VOTE” BLOCK WALK – *Sun, Oct 2, 12pm, meet on Patio* - After service we will be doing a block walk in the neighborhood surrounding the church. The purpose is to distribute voting information flyers to our neighbors. With enough volunteers, the walking itself should not take too long. If you can help, gather on the patio immediately after service. Water will be provided.

FUUND LUNCH – *Sun, Oct 9, 12:00pm, Fellowship Hall* - Sponsored by the Grounds committee. Enjoy food and fellowship while raising funds to help maintain the campus grounds.

FIRST UU 101 – *Sun, Oct 9, 12:15pm, Jefferson Bldg* - The Membership Committee presents our newcomer orientation class, perfect for anyone new to the church and considering membership. Grab some food from the FUUnd Lunch and head down.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF STEWARDSHIP – *Sun, Oct 23, 12:00pm, Fellowship Hall* - Interactive session to exchange ideas for developing Stewardship as a shared ministry at First UU. Light lunch provided for those who RSVP to stewardship@uusat.org

HALLOWEEN PARTY – *Fri, Oct 28, 6:00pm, Entire Campus* – Join us for our annual Halloween party. Past year’s parties have been super fun and included a haunted house, dancing with a DJ, a costume contest, photo booth, games, and a yummy potluck dinner. Volunteers needed – contact the church office to help out.

SAMHAIN RITUAL – *Sat, Oct 29, 7:00pm, Jefferson Bldg* - Celebrate the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter with Celestial Celebrations Circle at this ritual and dessert. This is a remembrance type ritual to honor those who have gone before us. This is not a cultural celebration involving masks and costumes. You may bring a special candle for your loved one or we will provide them. Bring your memories of loved ones and as we know "What is remember lives." Joan Wells 210 377-2942 celestial@uusat.org

READING BUDDIES TRAINING - *Sunday, October 30, 12:15pm, Fellowship Hall* – Representatives from San Antonio Youth Literacy will be on campus to provide training for their Reading Buddies program. If you volunteered to be a Reading Buddy or are interested, please plan on attending this session.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST October 14-16: Deep in the Heart: Women's Retreat at UBarU

Join us for a weekend to recharge your spirit in the fellowship of Unitarian Universalist women. Every fall and spring UU women gather for a weekend of relaxing, having fun and Sharing Our Stories. Please join us for this Friday evening through Sunday morning retreat at UBarU! This will be a weekend with no responsibilities other than to be your own true beautiful, authentic self. This is a weekend where you can deepen your relationship with old friends and also build new friendships. This is a weekend to sing, meditate, dance, take a walk in the hill country, visit the labyrinth or do whatever else your spirit needs. This is a weekend you won't want to miss! Join us! The cost for the weekend is \$125. After Oct. 1 the cost goes up to \$140. One-day registration available. You may pay with PayPal or by mail. The details of how to pay will be given in more detail upon completion of registration. To register, visit UbarU.org

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, November 15: Healthy Futures Luncheon with the Stars. 11:30 to 1:00 pm at The Plaza Club. \$250 per ticket. Let's show our continued support for this amazing organization with a table of 10 for \$2,500. If you cannot attend, any contribution provides a partial scholarship for others who would like to attend but are not able to cover the full cost of \$250 per ticket. Donations may be made by check to HEALTHY FUTURES OF TEXAS and given to either June Kachtik or Lani Van Petten of the Social Justice Committee or sent to Lani at 10007 Terrace Park, SATX 78250 <https://www.hf-tx.org/>

Wednesday, November 16: Project Quest's Luncheon "A Legacy for the Future. Grand Hyatt 11:30am to 1:00pm. If you cannot attend, please help sponsor a guest at our table of ten, \$150 pp. For many years, our First UU of San Antonio has been a firm supporter for the efforts of Project Quest. This week, after many years of dedicated advocacy by COPS/Metro (and our own Mike Phillips!) Project Quest became a "**line item**" in the **City budget!** Let's celebrate this success and offer our ongoing support by attending Checks should be written to PROJECT QUEST and given to June Kachtik or Lani Van Petten of the Social Justice Committee or mailed to Lani at 10007 Terrace Park, SATX 78250. <http://www.questsa.org/>

Bee-Sustainable Weekend Postponed to December 2-4

at UBarU Camp & Retreat Center in the beautiful Texas Hill Country

Friday, December 2nd thru Sunday, December 4th. Adults: \$140; Children 4-11: \$50; Youth 12-19: \$75 - before November 11th. (includes accommodations, meals and all activities!)

Log on to <http://ubaru.org/home/beeSustainable> for full details and to register.



Contacts

Rev. Dr. Josh Snyder, Minister
minister@uusat.org
210.344.4695

Dr. Sheri Phillabaum, Director
of Lifespan Religious
Education
dlre@uusat.org
210.344.2431

Dr. Susan Dill,
Music Director
music@uusat.org

Mary Wright,
Office Manager
office@uusat.org
210.344.4695

Dr. Betty Dabney,
Newsletter Editor
newsletter@uusat.org

•••

Website: www.uusat.org

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

Facebook: First Unitarian
Universalist Church of
San Antonio

Twitter: @FirstUUChurchSA

Services for October

11:00 am – In the Sanctuary

Religious Education for All Ages at 9:30 am– Various Locations

October 2: “Tender Mercies” - Rev. Marisol Caballero

The word rahmah appears more times in the Qur’an than any other to describe God’s attributes. It is often translated as “mercy,” but an English speaker’s understanding of mercy does not begin to comprehend the complexity of what rahmah, Islam’s central teaching, means to a Muslim. The wisdom of rahmah has much to teach Unitarian Universalists.

October 9: “The Eyes of God Are Watching” – Rev. Josh

This month we examine the theme of fear. Did you know that there is an existential condition of fear called “angst” that for some philosophers and theologians has a spiritual component to it? Nietzsche called it the “Death of God” in the modern world. Woody Allen made an entire movie around that feeling! As we begin our examination of fear, let us also remember and celebrate the High Holy Days with our Jewish brothers and sisters.

October 16: “Driving on a Roller Coaster to Canada” – Rev. Josh

Fear can keep us paralyzed and frozen into inaction. Sometimes fear is an important response to the world. Yet there are other times when fear is a road sign telling us that we have reached our personal limits. Perhaps, in that context, fear is a good thing – a sign that we are growing in ways we may need to grow.

October 23: “You Know Who You Are” – Erin Walter

How does sharing ourselves with others lead to healing and transformation? After performing her song “For My Body” at an Orlando vigil in the queer community, a multicultural young adult gathering in Washington, D.C., a nursing home in Austin, and her seminary in Chicago, Erin Walter will perform the song and reflect on the experiences and “aha!” moments of singing “I love you just the way you are” to different audiences.

October 30: “Day of the Dead” – Rev. Josh

Join us for our annual Day of the Dead service at First UU! We will be building an *ofrenda* so remember to bring a picture or some other memento of a loved one who has passed away this year. Let us take the fear out of death and remember fondly those we love. We are proud to worship with our children at this intergenerational service.

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Monthly Newsletter of the
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio

First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio
7150 West Interstate 10
San Antonio, TX 78213-3465
210.344.4695 / www.uusat.org

TO: