

# Inspire



The quarterly newsletter of  
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio  
Summer 2021



## Inspire

newsletter@uusat.org

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### Cover photo

First UU member, Carol Collins, at a rally at the state capitol in Austin supporting Transgender rights.

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# *Be Inspired*

by Rev. Mark Skrabacz

This edition of our Inspire Newsletter reveals how our Congregation practices the Principles of our Living Faith. As Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove explains, “The Principles are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a guide for those of us who choose to join and participate in Unitarian Universalist religious communities.”



1. 1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person.  
Read about how our Congregation serves as a vital part of the Interfaith Welcome Coalition in providing radical hospitality to migrant families seeking to build a new life in these United States of America.
2. 2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.  
See the articles of our activism on behalf of Trans rights, Voting rights and other rights being infringed upon by our Texas Legislature.
3. 3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.  
Enjoy spirit coming alive in the events co-created by our Celestial Celebrations Circle and other congregational groups.
4. 4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.  
Learn how our Children practiced their faith in an Easter Egg Hunt that provided financial support for worthy organizations with which they had become familiar.
5. 5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.  
Read inside about our Congregational Meeting and how we are supporting each other in building the Beloved Community.
6. 6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.  
Support the Coahuiltecan peoples, whom we recognize each Sunday Service as ancestral stewards of our land, in their quest for justice.
7. 7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.  
Read about the zoom presentation of “My Feral Cat Colony” as a demonstration of the beauty and necessity of co-existence within our interdependent web of life.

# A Foundation for the Future

## *Virginia & Charles Bowden Make Historic Gift to First UU*

By Bill Bush

The First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio has paid off the mortgage on its state-of-the-art sanctuary building, thanks to a \$300,000 donation from long-time members Virginia Massey Bowden and Charles L. Bowden.



Not only does this unprecedented gift retire First UU's mortgage "several years in advance," notes First UU minister Reverend Mark Skrabacz, it also "empowers us to expand our professional staff, a vital step in growing our church."

### **"The Life on This Earth"**

Charles and Virginia met as undergraduate students at the University of Texas at Austin in the late 1950's. Both were native Texans, although they each grew up in different parts of the state, Virginia in Houston and Charles from Brady, a small town west of Austin in central Texas. The young couple attended their first Unitarian service at the Emerson Unitarian Church in Houston while Charles was studying psychiatry at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston in the early 1960's. During this time, however, they more commonly attended Methodist, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian church services.

Years later, after Charles had completed his medical degree, he began a two-year residency at a hospital run by the United States Public Health Service in Lexington, Kentucky. Meanwhile, Virginia enrolled in a Master's of Library Science program at the University of Kentucky. It was during this time that the Bowdens once again ventured into a Unitarian church, this one located near the university campus.

Charles remembers being attracted to the church's emphasis on "science" and "learned experience... the life on this earth, not the life on some other earth." Charles and Virginia began attending Unitarian services regularly, before taking an opportunity to return home to Texas in 1970.

### **Making a Difference in San Antonio**

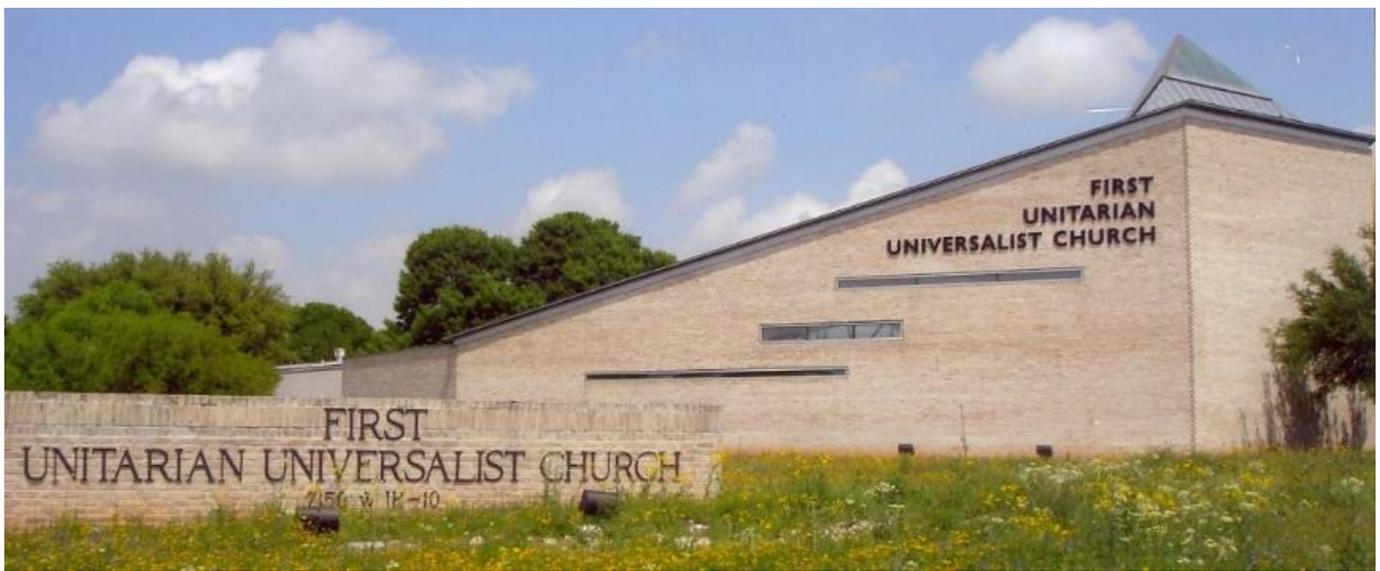
Charles joined the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio (UTHSCSA) as an assistant professor of psychiatry, where he is now an Emeritus Professor. Virginia joined the UTHSCSA as an associate library director, helping to design the institution's first library building and taking over as

director in 1979 (she also holds Emeritus distinction). They joined First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio in 1970, at a time when First UU was welcoming a new minister, 34-year-old Rolfe Gerhardt, and a generation of new members who would go on to major leadership roles in the church.

Charles and Virginia formed community over the next few decades with Rowena Rogers, Hank and Peggy Lippert, and many others. They sent their youngest child to the church's Discovery School, led by Marian Swellander. Meanwhile, Charles delivered seven guest sermons that explored the intellectual and moral foundations of Unitarian Universalism, spanning the decades between the Nixon and Clinton presidencies. He went on to serve as First UU board president twice (1974-76 and 1981-83), as well as numerous other critical leadership roles. One of Charles' pivotal contributions was chairing the ministerial search committee that brought the Reverend Arthur Severance to First UU in 1991.

Dedicated in 1997, the 500-seat sanctuary building resulted from a multi-year capital campaign led by Reverend Art and longtime First UU members including Charles and Virginia. Designed by architect Dan Wigodsky of the architectural firm Kell, Munoz, and Wigodsky, the nearly all-wood sanctuary features horizontal panels and vertical beams intended to evoke two trees, while the rear window faces a courtyard with a large oak tree in the center. A pyramidal dome at the top of the sanctuary's slanting roof evokes the UU chalice, with glass comprised of crystals donated by congregation members. During the day, sunlight passes through these crystals and windows to create a rainbow pattern along the walls; at night, the top lights up to resemble a chalice flame. In a 2010 interview with *UU World* magazine, architect Wigodsky described the lighting as a sort of "twenty-first-century stained glass. It's nature passing through the experience and history of these objects that creates the stained glass."

With their historic gift to First UU, Charles and Virginia have completed the sanctuary project they helped begin over 30 years ago. "Charles and Virginia Bowden have contributed in so many ways for so many years to our church and greater community," recounts Reverend Mark. "Their motivation is to target their generosity to what makes the greatest difference." The church and the community will be forever grateful.



# *Hosting Immigrant Families*

By Rue Wood

Food, the universal language. We can always enjoy it and it continues to teach us so much about one another. That's been made increasingly evident over the past few months as First UU has coordinated with the Interfaith Welcome Coalition (IWC) to host immigrant families on our church campus.

Due to our church closure during the pandemic, the First UU Board approved the use of the Fellowship Hall and an area in Building 6 to house one, or if necessary, two families concurrently. Members donated or bought bedding, cribs, clothing, mattresses, towels--everything necessary for making the families feel at home. The other main need was food for the families, and that's where "Team Eats" swung into action.

"Team Eats" is a group of about a dozen UUs who came together in 2020 to provide meals to families sheltered at bungalows and housing arranged by IWC. Once First UU started housing families, the team shifted its focus to feeding them on site. Between March and May of 2021, we've welcomed nine families, from three nations--Haiti, the Ivory Coast, and Venezuela. Our own Moon Brand coordinates with IWC to receive the families and assist them in their journeys to sponsors and permanent homes. Housing the families requires an entire list of tasks, so "crews" were assembled--Moon heads up the Welcome, Transportation, and Set-Up Crews, Debra Loya heads the Cleaning and Laundry Crews, Esperanza Garza-Danweber leads the Supplies Crew, Rue Wood leads the Food Crew (i.e. "Team Eats"), and Donna Pereira serves as the church liaison.

Since families arrive from long journeys and detention, they're eager to cook their own meals. "Team Eats" set up two safe, well-stocked cooking areas. Haitians eat a great deal of rice--sometimes two or three times a day--so David Rodriguez and Tina Solis loaned their rice cookers. We also received donated electric fry pans, toasters, and cooking equipment. Esperanza was able to hook us up with a second fridge for Building 6, and Rick Espinoza, Sean Danweber, and Mike Brand did the installation. Each family requests specific food items (thank goodness for Google Translate!) and a Team Eats member buys and delivers the items to the church patio (contactless). Plantains, hot red peppers, tilapia, mangoes, eggs, chicken, beans, and other goodies are delivered by Pat Beck, Beth and Tim Chandler, Claudia Glass, Justine Hansen, Lysa Hieber, Betsy Kropp, Debra Loya, Sheri Phillabaum, Jan Realini or Darcy Walker.

The families' favorite treat is "Pizza Night." Once during each family's stay, a UU volunteer has pizza and wings delivered. It seems that pizza advertising really DOES work, since many of the families associate pizza delivery with America. Pizza Night always results in smiles all around and texts of thanks! One unforgettable request was for Church's fried chicken, which a family had seen advertised and thought looked yummy.

Due to privacy concerns, we can't share photos and details about our guest families, but thanks to First UU members' donations of money, time, food, supplies, and generosity, eight new American families received a friendly welcome to their new homes. And they have given us insights into Haitian culture, warm memories, and the gift of sharing that most basic human need--food.

# *Radical Hospitality for Asylum Seekers*

By Moon Brand

As of February 24, our church has welcomed, sheltered, nourished and supplied 22 individuals (9 families--12 adults...10 children) for a total of 44+ days--we currently are hosting a Venezuelan family of 5 staying in the Fellowship Hall. The majority of the families have been Haitian with the exception of two from Venezuela and one from the Ivory Coast.

There are so many people that need to be thanked--Rue Wood did an excellent job in her writeup, but she didn't thank herself. Thank you Rue for being just what our guests need. Thank you to Rev. Mark for taking the time to meet with all the families and supporting this mission. He has visited each family several times and brought a Haitian Native with him to help communicate in their native Haitian Creole language. There are so many sweet moments...It's a task to choose which ones to share.

Imagine opening the doors to the Fellowship Hall while explaining to a family this will be their sleeping area. Seconds later the children start running, twirling, summersaulting and yelling as if they were given permission to be kids again.

When I take the family to the kitchen to show them all the food they have at their disposal, at first there is stunned silence, then, questions--"All of this food is for us??..." Various forms of heartfelt gratitude have been thoroughly expressed in that UU kitchen of ours.

Equally exciting is when our church family come together to supply our guest with clothes, luggage and a little bit of travel money. When I take families to the bus station or airport, they seem confident in their "new" garb and luggage. They depart showering our church with blessings and appreciation. One father kissed his hand and pressed it against the door to the Fellowship Hall. A mother texted me a week after she arrived to her final destination...she asked, "How are things in that 'heaven' of yours?" --referring to our special church.

## **Volunteer Opportunity for Migrants**

**Clean/Set-up Crew:** After families depart, the space they occupied needs to be cleaned, organized and replenished with supplies for the next family. Debra Loya has been the ardent leader for this crew. She will be out-of-town for the Summer, so we desperately need a dozen folks to do what she has been doing. Email: [moonbrand3@gmail.com](mailto:moonbrand3@gmail.com)

**Team Eats:** Rue Wood needs volunteers to grocery shop and deliver food and supplies to families staying at the church. Email: [ruewood@gmail.com](mailto:ruewood@gmail.com)

**Interfaith Welcome Coalition:** IWC needs volunteers to welcome and assist traveling migrants with supplies and travel explanation at the bus station and airport. Spanish, French and Portuguese are helpful but not required. Volunteers are needed every day. Times range from 9am-11pm (morning, noon, early evening & late evening). Go to this link to learn more and sign up: <https://interfaithwelcomecoalition.org/get-involved/>

# *Breathe: A Letter to My Sons: UUA's 2021 Common Read*

By Terri Chadwick and Diane Duesterhoeft

On the evening of March 18th, seven people enjoyed a zoom discussion of the UUA Common Read book, *Breathe: A Letter to My Sons* by Imani Perry. Dr. Perry wrote the "Letter" to her two sons about their experience growing up "Black in the United States" and her own experiences. Diane Duesterhoeft and Terri Chadwick facilitated the discussion using the Discussion Guide from the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA.) All present agreed that Dr. Perry writes beautifully. After check-ins and approving a covenant, the group discussed page one where the author tells her sons that she wants people to acknowledge that they are in fact human. That they are not less than or other than but, in fact, human like every other race: especially the whites. She writes, "I want them to admit that you are people....This fact, simple as it is, shouldn't linger on the surface. It should penetrate." We also talked about Dr. Perry's fear of not being able to keep her sons safe. That no matter what she does, she can never fully and completely protect them from all they will face as Black boys and then Black men in this country.

The author told of her traumatic high school experiences in a majority white high school. One teacher showed obvious disdain towards her and gave much criticism. Dr. Perry writes on page nine, "...you learn early on, that the aversion to Blackness can turn perfectly lovely people grotesque." She could tell some of her classmates noticed the injustice but chose not speak on her behalf. She writes, "They were disciplined into passive acceptance, into reaping rewards, while I was humiliated over and over again."

Furthermore, we discussed her view on white people. On page 71, she writes: "Here is a confession: Recently, I have wondered if white people are irredeemable. Again, I have to issue a caveat for the sensitive. No, I do not mean individuals. Individuals are the precious bulwark against total desperation – in them we find the persistence of possibility."

Finally, we listed actions we could take to create a country that is not based on white supremacy. Here are some of them:

1. Sign up for our church's "Culture of Inclusion" workshops.
2. When someone tells you of their experience, believe them.
3. Participate in our church's Black Lives Matter Work Group (BLMWG).
4. Participate in Black Lives & Allies in Community (BLAC)  
- <https://www.facebook.com/BlackLivesandAllies/>
5. Get involved with the SA Black International Film Festival (SABIFF).
6. Be prepared to question your own assumptions.
8. Get involved with FixSAPD for police reform.
9. Follow, rather than try to lead, people of color in justice efforts.
10. Support Black-owned businesses - <https://www.sanantoniomag.com/black-owned-businesses-to-support-in-san-antonio/>
11. Attend the 8th Principle Learning Groups via Zoom. Facebook: 8th Principle Community Discussion or email Paula Jones <[pcolejones@gmail.com](mailto:pcolejones@gmail.com)>
12. Have another Unlearning White Supremacy discussion program in our church.

# FixSAPD/Proposition B

By John Faultersack

After the slow public realization of the lethality of policing nationwide, after the popularization of smartphone cameras, after public attention was drawn to numerous police killings of Black and Hispanic men in San Antonio, after the gruesome death of George Floyd last summer in Minnesota, after the death of Brianna Taylor in her own bed in Nashville, after the public outrage of the continuing misdeeds of numerous police departments, after the police and governmental suppression of and violent responses to Black Lives Matter demonstrations all over the country, after continuing killings of Black men and women all over the country, FixSAPD was born in San Antonio, NOT to “Defund” police, but to hold them accountable.

FixSAPD took on the Herculean task of actually doing something: collecting petition signatures from San Antonio residents. The petitions targeted the two previously adopted (in 1947 and 1974) San Antonio chapters of state law, which were Chapters 143 and 174, which gave relative advantage to police unions (which at the time may have been warranted).

The petition drive was begun in the midst of the Pandemic that had the city essentially on lockdown. The petition drive task was supported by First UU Church of San Antonio in a September 19th drive-thru event in the Church’s front parking lot to start collecting signatures. First UU and FixSAPD collected about 200 signatures that day.

FixSAPD continued their drive, block-walking, whatever it took. First UU Church supported those efforts. FixSAPD managed to get the required 20,000 signatures to get Chapter 174 repeal on the ballot in the May 1, 2021 city election, known as Proposition B.



The campaign was an uphill battle all the way, and although the vote resulted in only 49% approval, the closeness of that vote was a wakeup call to those in power. The battle to require police accountability will continue. Right is a powerful motivator. Stay tuned.

# *Peer-to-Peer Pastoral Care for Youth*

By Sheri Phillabaum

In March, two teens from First UU San Antonio, Sammy Sobzcak and Caroline Edgin-Adair, attended a six-hour training in peer-to-peer pastoral care. The on-line training was offered by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

When we think of pastoral care, we might think of it as the exclusive province of ministers. Actually, pastoral care is an important part of what people do for each other within a religious community, and youth are no exception. In fact, friends can be a first resource for youth experiencing difficulties.

In this training, youth learned about the different forms that pastoral care can take and practiced skills through role play. They learned about the importance of compassion, witness, listening, and empathy. They learned about safety issues and when to bring adults into a situation.

Sammy said of the class, "Pastoral training was an enlightening experience. I learned a lot about how to help my peers. The learning environment was nice and I got to interact with people from all over the country. With the knowledge that I have acquired, I can say that I know a lot more about how to help the people around me."

Sammy and Caroline now officially qualify to serve as youth chaplains at rallies and other youth events. Unofficially, the skills and knowledge attained in the class will certainly complement their natural compassion and empathy to help them be better friends and peers in any context.

Congratulations, Sammy and Caroline!



*Sammy Sobzcak*



*Caroline Edgin-Adair*

# *Plant Sale for Summer Camp Scholarships*

By Mary Wright

In April, the Religious Education program sponsored a plant sale to raise money for UBarU camp scholarships. UBarU is a Unitarian Universalist Camp & Retreat Center located near Kerrville that serves UU congregations, as well as other groups. Every year UBarU hosts summer camps for youth ages 9-18. In addition to fun recreational activities, these camps help youth learn more about and connect with our UU values. I have spoken with many children and teens over the years who say that UBarU is one of the most meaningful experiences they have had and that they look forward to it every year.



Here at First UU, we try to make sure that all youth who want to attend summer camp at UBarU are able to attend. We have held various types of fundraisers over the years to provide summer camp tuition assistance to families. This year we held a plant sale. Members of the congregation donated plants which were then sold here on campus. The sale raised \$484 to go towards scholarships and many thanks go out to everyone who participated.

*Debra Loya*

Plants that were leftover were planted, under the guidance of the Green Sanctuary Team, in the garden bed down on the playground during one of our outdoor Religious Education classes.

The results of the fundraiser were great, but additional donations are always welcome. If you did not need any plants but would still like to contribute to the scholarship fund, you can send a check with 'UBarU Scholarships' in the memo line to:

First UU Church of San Antonio  
7150 IH 10 W  
San Antonio, TX 78213

or donate on-line: <https://uusat.org/give/> (Click on **Online Giving**, type the amount in the **Other** box, and type UBarU scholarships on the memo line.)

Thank you for your continued support!



*Gina Del Castillo & Linda Nash*

# *Saturn and “Ch’ella Mi Creda”*

By Roy Ellzey

I suppose that on occasion we all have an experience that triggers a memory of a significant event that profoundly affected our lives from that moment on. However, on October 27, 2018 this happened to me twice on that same day. Surely it was a matter of coincidence, but perhaps there was some metaphysical alignment of planets at work. Actually, at least the alignment of one planet did have a part to play in the double occurrences.

The first memory trigger happened when I attended a “Live from the Met” broadcast of the New York Metropolitan Opera Saturday matinee performance of Puccini’s “La Fanciulla del West” that was being streamed into a local San Antonio movie theater. The second trigger occurred that evening when I was conducting a star party at the UBarU Camp & Retreat Center for a group of UU high school kids at a weekend state-wide rally there. The two triggers brought back memories of two events that both occurred during my sophomore year at Ole Miss (1956-57) and had lasting effects.

Throughout my collective writings in “Musings of a Rusty Knight” I have often mentioned how singing has played such an important role for much of my life and that it was one of two passions that affected a number of decisions along the way. It turns out that in the fall of my sophomore year in college I was becoming more and more interested in seriously

studying voice/singing so went to the music library and began checking out and listening to most if not all the tenor vocal recordings. To my surprise, virtually all of the ones that impressed me were of tenors singing opera, and the one that absolutely “blew me away” was a recording of the great Swedish tenor, Jussi Bjoerling, singing “Ch’ella Mi Creda” from “La Fanciulla del West.” What I heard became the standard by which I would judge all other tenors going forward, and the goal for what I would like to achieve for my own singing. In fact, I was so taken with the recording that I “borrowed” the recording from the library (without checking it out) and kept it in my dormitory room at least a month to listen to over and over before returning it. Many years later the recording became available on CD which I still have today.

So, as I watched the current broadcast of the Met’s very excellent 2018 production of “La Fanciulla del West” and heard the third-act aria Ch’ella Mi Creda, I was carried right back to that watershed musical moment I had at the Ole Miss Music Library in 1956. However, in my opinion, the tenor’s performance, though very good, wasn’t quite up to the Jussi Bjoerling gold standard that captivated me in 1956.



*Jussi Bjoerling*

The other triggered memory of a truly significant event that I referred to was the first time I viewed the planet Saturn in all of its glory through a large telescope. Jim Seawright, a friend and fraternity brother, was in his senior year and was completing a minor in astronomy. When he learned of my interest in astronomy and most things extra-terrestrial he invited me to accompany him to the university's Kennon Observatory to help with one of his projects and to look through the main observatory telescope, a 15-inch, F/15 refractor built by Grubb & Sons in 1892. Prior to that time I had never viewed the sky through anything larger than a pair of ordinary field binoculars, so the first time I saw Saturn I was "blown away" emotionally and intellectually for a second time that same school year. Jim and I (mostly Jim with me assisting when needed) went on to take photographs of Saturn of which I still have the faded prints today.

So when I used the primary observatory telescope at UBarU to show the high-school kids attending the rally a view of Saturn, the awe and excitement of those experiencing that sight for the first time carried me back to that same feeling I had many years before. The rally was attended by 56 kids and their supervisors from UU congregations throughout Texas, including those from Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Austin and others. Some had seen Saturn before, so tended to concentrate more on the finer details of the planet such as the markings on the surface and how well they could see the separation between the rings, yet were still impressed with the views from the dark, clear skies that we had at UBarU. But, for those seeing Saturn for the very first time there was no better description than that they were "blown away" by what they saw. The picture below was a time exposure taken by a professional photographer (John Phelps) who wanted to capture a view of the main telescope at the UBarU observatory with the roof open. I did not know the shot was in progress so entered the scene to make final adjustments before admitting viewers to the star party. The result appears to have my essence overseeing the telescope to ensure that all who view Saturn for the first time will experience the awe as I once did.



# *First UU Supports Transgender Equality*

By Dorothy Wallace & Mary Wright

On May 20th, fifteen people from First UU, including our Minister and Director of Lifespan Religious Education, went to Austin to stand proudly for Transgender Equality. Our state, like many others, has targeted the transgender community with several anti-trans bills, including ones that affect children and hurt families. The event was hosted by Equality Texas. Equality Texas works to secure full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Texans through political action, education, community organizing, and collaboration.



*Annaliese Cothron*

Several people in our congregation spent weeks traveling back and forth to the capital in an attempt to keep these bills from passing. None more so than Cassie Villela and Annaliese Cothron. Cassie and Annaliese spent countless hours traveling to Austin, testifying before the legislature, lobbying with politicians, and rallying the community for support. The local news station KENS5 featured the work of Cassie and Annaliese on behalf of their families and the transgender community. You can read the article at this link: [Two San Antonio moms respond to 'anti-trans' bills failing during Texas legislative session \(msn.com\)](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/story/two-san-antonio-moms-respond-to-anti-trans-bills-failing-during-texas-legislative-session)

As of the time this article, all 30+ anti-LGBTQ+ bills filed this session are officially dead, including 13 direct attacks on transgender youth. Of course, nothing is over until Sine Die (the last day of session.) Justice groups around the state will be watching all amendments closely to ensure that anti-LGBTQ+ bills aren't revived.



*Cassie Villela*

# *2021 Wade Richmond Scholarship Recipient*

By Sheri Phillabaum

Each year our congregation awards a scholarship to a high school senior who has distinguished themselves through active involvement in our church community, as well as academic achievement and admirable personal characteristics. The scholarship is made possible by Jack and Laura Richmond, long-time members and parents of Wade Richmond, for whom the scholarship is named.

This year's recipient is Thomas Yost. Thomas is a third-generation UU. His mother, father, and grandmother have all been very active at First UU San Antonio. He has been attending since he was four years old. He has participated in K-12 religious education, youth groups, Coming of Age, and *Our Whole Lives* sexuality religious education. He has also participated in the church's yearly summer camp, both as a camper and as a junior counselor.

Thomas believes in the importance of extending compassion to people, plants, animals, and the earth itself. He hopes to use his knack for science and mathematics in a career that will help people and the environment. He is currently considering a career in environmental engineering, a field in which he may help resolve the tension between meeting human needs and safeguarding the environment.

Congratulations, Thomas Yost!



According to the CDC, when fully vaccinated we can resume many of our pre-pandemic activities without risking hospitalization and death. Is it time to act on some of those things we dreamed about when we were all in quarantine?

## *When This Pandemic Ends*

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With ideas contributed by members of First UUSA Choir!

VERSE Since this pandemic started I've forgotten how to smile  
I feel like I'm abandoned on some lonely desert isle  
Locking down in quarantine is really not my style  
So when it ends I'm planning to go absolutely wild!

I'll build a great big bonfire and I'll throw in all my masks  
Then I'll go out to dine and dance with anyone who asks  
I will party all night long with everyone I know  
And when I feel like traveling I'll pack my bags and go

CHORUS Do what you can to stay alive  
We'll celebrate when we survive  
We'll reconnect with friends  
When this pandemic ends

I'll get up close to say hello to strangers on the street  
I'll shake their hands and then I'll try to kiss them on both cheeks  
I won't wash my groceries, I won't sanitize my shoes  
Won't overdose on tragic stories from the nightly news

I'll burn those pajamas I've been wearing day and night  
Start work on my appearance so I don't look such a fright  
Soon I'll be in my fancy clothes onstage where I belong  
'Cause I will have some gigs again, where I will sing this song

Yes, I'll reclaim my self-respect  
By making up for my neglect  
A brand new day will dawn  
When this pandemic's gone

I'll stand there in front of students when I teach my class  
And I will tell those nasty germs that they can take a pass!  
I'll go to the movies and I'll sing in several choirs  
Yes, joyful pandemonium will be my one desire

We will camp while we catch up on festivals and fairs  
Where we will mingle with the crowds and bravely breathe the air

When family come to visit we can sit in the same room  
And never, never-ever will we have to talk on Zoom!

I will really hug my Mom  
And once again we'll play Mah-Jong  
Then we'll go out and shop  
When this pandemic stops!

I'll go back to hanging out in all the local clubs  
I'll get on a dating site to search for my new love  
He can hold me close and I will whisper in his ear  
We'll cuddle and we'll snuggle and I'll kiss away his tears

I'll open up my house, inviting everyone inside  
And then we'll pile into a car. Together we will ride  
I'll go back to doing all the things that used to thrill me  
And I'll be full of confidence that none of them can kill me

We will go from place to place

We'll meet each other face to face

We're gonna have some fun

When this pandemic's done



To hear the song and watch the video go to: [www.danaclarkmusic.com/videos](http://www.danaclarkmusic.com/videos)

# *Celestial Celebrations Circle Spring Happenings*

By Sylvia Wheeler

We were VERY pleased to be able to have our Spring Equinox ritual on the grounds of the church this year. It was a BYOC event - Bring Your Own Chair - with masks & social distancing on the Religious Education playground. We had a mix of people, familiar & unfamiliar, old & young. It was the first time we had been able to be together in real space since Imbolc in February of 2020. The energy was immense and truly felt like the reawakening that fuels Spring Equinox. No one wanted to leave the space after the ritual, despite the oncoming darkness of night.

Our labyrinth walk for April was cancelled due to rain, but we were thrilled that our rain spell from Spring Equinox was working.

Once again, we celebrated Beltane on the church grounds. This time, the rain spell was still working, so we moved the Ritual to the Patio. NO, we will not cancel Beltane just because nature gave us what we asked for. The energy, once again, was immense, as this was the time for frolicking and making merry AND we could do it together, in the company of others! Ritualers filled the Patio in the same manner as Spring Equinox and one of the Patio posts became the Maypole. As it became time to jump the Bellfire, the rain ceased and we were able to enjoy this traditional part of the ritual.

It is with great joy that we, as pagans, are once again able to celebrate the sacred circle of life together in the outdoors. Not being able to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature to which we are accustomed has sapped our ritual energy, but we have persevered and now we are back where we are more comfortable.

Blessed Be.



*Pre-pandemic photo of children dancing around the Maypole here at First UU.*

# *Brush Pile Gone*

By Diane Duesterhoeft

We had a group of more than 20 members help saw, pull, haul, and pile brush as several City of San Antonio Solid Waste Management workers skillfully loaded a couple trucks with the brush on Saturday morning, May 22.

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped make the task much lighter!



# *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man*

By John Faultersack



During their monthly meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays at 2pm), the Black Lives Matter Working Group (BLMWG) has screened numerous videos featuring Emmanuel Acho in his series “Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man”, which is available on line at <https://uncomfortableconvos.com/watch> . The series features Acho, a former NFL linebacker in conversations with various personalities, including media personalities and even members of a suburban police department. Topics of conversation cover racism, discrimination and relevant issues affecting people of color. These videos are startlingly frank, thought-provoking, and well worth watching.



# *Easter Egg Philanthropy*

By Sheri Phillabaum

Families were back on campus for Easter this year! We held two egg hunts in order to keep numbers limited and manageable. We even had a visit from the Easter Bunny! As always children hunted plastic eggs filled with treats such as small toys and candy. This year there was a little something extra in most eggs - a slip of paper with a dollar amount on it.

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation who donated ahead of the event, we had over \$800 to divide among various organizations that children had learned about in their social action classes. Children placed their slips of paper in jars labeled with the names of organizations. They could donate all to one organization, or donate to two or more. Black Lives Matter received the most support with \$217; each of the remaining organizations received tidy sums as well:

TANG (First UU's Trans and Non-binary group): \$166

Morgan's Wonderland: \$162

RAICES: \$107

American Indian Movement: \$90

Anti Defamation League: \$88

Thank you to everyone who helped us make a difference in the world!



# *About the UU Reading Group*

By Linda Schmidt

You might ask why a group that usually numbers 12 to 35 people on a Sunday morning would be motivated to stay together for the past seven years. I find that it revolves around four things: curiosity, finding answers together, courageous openness, and a safe place. My early comment to my husband after attending this group for several weeks was "I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR A GROUP LIKE THIS ALL MY LIFE". A strong statement, but I learned that this group was not only about books, but also about connection and community. Folks come even when they aren't really into the particular book that much because "they always learn a new perspective on living from someone in the group no matter what the topic of the book may be" or "they learn something more about others and themselves." To me, this adds up to connection and wisdom which never gets old and never ends.

We are not in a room together right now, but we seem to be managing our purpose on Zoom in a quite acceptable way. Zoom discussions may even have some perks, in that we can attend even when we are not feeling up to snuff or don't feel like donning our finest apparel. Some folks like giving their opinion on the topics raised and others prefer to listen. Some may attend even when they have not had a chance to read the book that week. It is all allowed in our group. Reading a book does serve as a basis for the direction of our discussions though - we do love books!

Speaking of books, we have discussed over 100 books and articles since February 2014. Our favorite authors have included topics on faith and values from Karen Armstrong, Elaine Pagels, Jonathan Haidt, Stephen Prothero, Yuval Harari and others too numerous to add here. Recently, we have broadened our horizons to include topics of current interest in the world of science, psychology, philosophy, ethics and world events.

On Sundays, we always seem to run out of time for our discussions and usually stay on Zoom for a bit after our end time to continue to share our views and concerns. To me, that is a positive sign that our group is fulfilling a need for connection and sharing. Our curiosity extends not just to a topic but also to a curiosity to get to know other people in the group. The group is constantly having new folks pop in and out, although there is a core of 12 to 20 folks who have been attending a long time, some for the whole 7 years. Both are "most welcome", new or old. I have always thought that analysis of our values, concerns, intentions and beliefs were very necessary, before we pursue our actions in the world. We try do that in the reading group. With this kind of preparation, taking action is less impulsive and includes more wisdom.

UU's concepts inherent in the 7 Principles are: worth and dignity; equity and compassion; acceptance of one another; search for truth; the democratic process; peace, liberty and justice for all; and respect. Of course, not everyone agrees with others on all topics. It would be less interesting or maybe even boring without our diversity. We do our best to live these guidelines in our group. It takes courage to tell the truth about how we feel, especially since we don't know how it will be perceived or received. But opening ourselves to others can also be a gift to others....it invites them to do the same. Hence, we strive to have a safe place to be open and share. Come join us if you love these same intentions!

The UU Reading Group meets every Sunday at 9:30am, currently on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83704100412?pwd=OVp1RzBDNWFpR1NvaU0rcHBhcVZVUT09>

# *Living Out Our Fifth Principle*

By Dorothy Wallace

For the second year in a row, due to the COVID Pandemic, we held a virtual version of our Congregational Meeting. It went a little easier than the first year, but we continue to learn lessons as we go. Just like our virtual Sunday services, some aspects of the virtual Congregational Meeting might continue even after we come back to in person church.

The virtual Congregational Meeting process has several key components. First, the Congregational Call, which, according to our bylaws, must be sent out to the congregation no later than 14 days before the date of the meeting. We do this by Mail Chimp only to eligible voting members of the congregation. For those without email, we mail the information so that they receive it at least 14 days before the meeting.

The second key component is the ZOOM Live Town Halls – where people can ask questions about the issues being voted on.

The third key component, a You Tube video, is developed to serve as the meeting – like our Sunday service, and is premiered at a specific time.

The last key component, the ballot, is sent out via Survey Monkey for congregants to vote. We keep the voting open from the conclusion of the You Tube video to midnight. Votes are tallied and the results sent out to the congregation the following day.

Reminders and other important information is sent out via pulpit announcements, What's Happening, and Mail Chimp.

The Pro for this format is that we really enfranchise more people than we normally do with in-person Congregational Meetings, where only about 75 people stay after church. Under the virtual method, between 160 and 180 people vote. The Con for the virtual method is that some members have challenges with the technology or our messages wind up in their spam folders.

The Town Hall meetings are a real plus for the virtual method - people can really ask questions and additional information can be disseminated in a meaningful way – much better than in the Fellowship Hall.

As we move back to our campus, tentatively planned for September, we will need to take a good look at how we do congregational meetings in the future. Likely, it will be a mix of in person and virtual gatherings. We want as many voices heard and to enfranchise as many members as possible through technology.

While our virtual Congregational Meetings may have had some flaws, it was a good way to exercise more democracy within our congregation under the difficult circumstances of the COVID Pandemic.

# *Trust Fund for Endowments*

By Arlis Olson

Thanks to the following people for contributions to the Trust Fund since the last newsletter article:

February: Gail Reinhart, Bill & Katy Evans- undesignated; Virginia Shapiro and Carol Bertsch – celebrating birthdays.

March: Bill & Katy Evans, Claudia Glass, Kelly Timmons & Melissa Marsh – undesignated; Diane Duesterhoeft & Mike Phillips, William Christ, Mary Grace Ketner and Arlis Olson – in memoriam for Bettie Ward.

April: Bill & Katy Evans, Janet Realini, Kelly Timmons & Melissa Marsh – undesignated; William Christ, Diane Duesterhoeft & Mike Phillips, Arlis Olson, Gary & Marianne Ross – in memoriam for Bill Stavinoha.

We received a total of \$1,829.00 this quarter and \$10,160.45 in donations so far this year. Thanks to those of you who contributed so generously. The total amount in this fund was \$183,715.32 as of the end of March. A representative of the Unitarian Universalist Association who evaluated various aspects of our church in 2016 stated, “In most congregations this endowment reaches 2-3 times annual giving levels before any of its resources may be used. First UU is a long distance from that goal at this time.” The Trust Fund for Endowment was a “Share the Plate” designee in May. I hope some of you contributed. If you haven’t, please consider it.

Donations can be made by check with ‘Trust Fund’ written on the memo line and mailed to the church office (7150 West Interstate 10, San Antonio, TX 78213) or can be made online on our website: : <https://uusat.org/give/> (Click on **Online Giving** and type the amount in the **Trust Fund** box.)

## *Time to Nominate a Worthy Non-Profit*

By Diane Carl

Since 1982 the First UU has managed and administered the Community Responsibility Endowment Fund (CREF). Each year CREF awards grants to support projects that address the community needs in the San Antonio metropolitan area and that reflect the values of the members of the church. The CREF Committee is accepting nominations in June for the 2021 award season.

Previous awardees include groups such as Stand Up for Kids, Thrive Youth Center, the Children’s Bereavement Center, CASA, Each One Teach One, Yoga Day, Good Samaritan Community Services, Planned Parenthood, SA Youth Literacy, UBarU Camp & Retreat Center, Clarity Child Guidance Center, RAICES, Healthy Futures, Project Mend, the ARC of SA, Bexar Co. Detention Ministries, the Inspire Art Center, and Posada Guadalupe.

From our 2020 awardees, the Roy Mass Youth Alternatives organization was able to provide clothing necessities (315 sports bras, 530 pairs of underwear, and 100 pairs of basketball shorts) for children, youth and young adults who receive RMYA's services at their drop-in center, emergency shelter and transitional living programs.

**Nominate now!**

Nominations must be from church members. Previous awardees can be nominated if the project is different. If qualified, the non-profit will receive notification this summer of their opportunity to apply for an upcoming project or activity.



To nominate, please complete the online form on the CREF page of our website:

<https://uusat.org/first-unitarian-universalist-church-san-antonio/2016-cref-nomination-page/>

See how exciting and meaningful the CREF award program is for the organizations and for our membership! You may view the 2020 awardee video on our webpage and this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHkB1bN4rh0>



# *UBarU After the Winter Storm*

By Roy Ellzey, UBarU Board Trustee since 2009

When the winter storm of mid-February 2021 hit UBarU, we, like most of Texas, had to deal with the severe cold weather and consequences related to power outages. However, most of our First UU members may not have been aware of the degree to which these affected UBarU. The good news is that after a considerable amount of hard work, UBarU is now fully operational and back on track for our normal calendar of events and activities. But what follows is an account of how this was achieved.

The first problem we faced was an exceptional icing event that occurred because of a heavy rain that just preceded the rapid drop into subfreezing temperatures. This caused massive damage to the trees throughout the entire 142-acre site as ice-laden limbs broke off and, in some cases, caused trees to be uprooted. So much so that much of the campus and the Loop Trail leading up to the Labyrinth were impassable.

To add to the problems, our local electric co-op grid (CTEP) failed, and UBarU was without power for more than 12 days and without water for 14 days. Since the temperatures in the Mountain Home area were well below freezing, it was six days before the local roads were open enough for anyone to be able to reach UBarU to inspect the damage and start recovery operations.



Fortunately, our Maintenance Director, Donnie Bunch, and Kerrville board member, Kevin Harley, were able to take preventative action, such as turning off the water to the buildings, etc. just before the storm hit, so that we received very little damage to the buildings, other than one broken line in the Meeting House. We did lose the booster-pump at the campus well along with some water shut-off valves because these retained some internal water and were not protected enough for the extended periods of single digit temperatures that existed.

The second day that UBarU was reachable, a small group consisting of Donnie, Kevin, Director Robyn Stout and her husband, Peter, along with myself and my son, Clifton started the clean up, working generally outward from the Meeting House. We were pretty impressed by how much we got done in a single day until we started to view what was left; we had barely scratched the surface! We needed more help well beyond what we could do ourselves or expect from more volunteers. And, to our great relief, we got it!

The H-E-B Sustainable Affairs Division has given UBarU grants each year since 2017 to help us to become more environmentally sustainable with respect to water conservation and renewable energy. So, when we contacted them to see if they could justify funds to help us, they responded quickly with a \$15,000 grant to

hire a professional land management service to clean up the debris throughout the campus and tend to our damaged trees in order to save as many of our oaks as possible. We continued with staff and volunteer workers for smaller projects, so that the professionals could concentrate on the bigger tasks. In about two weeks' time working together we had the campus ready to hold normal events safely.

Meanwhile we applied for and received a disaster-relief grant from the UUA for \$6,450 that allowed us to bring back the professional team (with their specialized equipment and expertise) for an additional few days' work and cover some of the other repair costs. This time the debris clean-up and tree repair were directed along the full Loop Trail and a previous section of the site watershed outside of the campus that had become heavily encroached on by Mountain Cedar (Ashe Juniper.) This allowed us to open up a new section along the dry creek bed (Fall Branch) starting at the northwest edge of the athletic field and care for some fine, large, old oak trees; this is a section that has largely been hidden and, more recently, inaccessible to humans because of Juniper encroachment.

What to expect when you next visit UBarU? Most will find UBarU pretty much the same; more open but providing the same accessible areas and activities that it has for the past few years. We are in the process of completing a new bird blind just off of the Loop Trail and slightly north of the Ranch House, which will be ready by summer and is a nice enhancement. There is still heavy damage to the trees within large sections of the thickly wooded parts of the property, which we hope to work on next year if we have the funds to do so; this would help with water conservation, and lessen the potential danger from wild fires.

An additional feature at UBarU is the new Memorial Trail that was created just before the storm hit. Its purpose is for the placement of memorials and/or markers along the sides of the trail to honor those who have contributed to UBarU and their loved ones. The head of the trail is located at the Loop Trail near the Labyrinth and extends through a wooded area to reconnect with the western leg of the Loop Trail just north of the Observatory. The Memorial Trail will be open to all who come to UBarU, but the placement of memorials is restricted to those who have supported UBarU in some significant way.



Of course, UBarU always welcome donations, and especially new members to the UBarU Membership Program at any one of the three membership levels. These membership dues help provide supplemental funds for the operation of UBarU beyond just the usage fees. They also help keep the usage fees lower and are particularly helpful during periods of light usage or when events like the winter storm prevent normal operations. And, being a UBarU Member for two or more years is one way to be eligible to place monuments/markers along the Memorial Trail. To become a Member visit the UBarU website at

[Become a UBarU Member.](#)

# Who are the Coahuiltecan?

by Diane Duesterhoeft

At the beginning of our recent worship services, the Words of Welcome include the following sentence: "Let us acknowledge this geographic place where we are currently located, the home and traditional lands of the Coahuiltecan people, original and indigenous stewards of this land, now called Bexar County and San Antonio, Texas."



Who are the Coahuiltecan people, you might ask?

The answer can be complex. There were numerous indigenous groups in what is now northern Mexico and southern Texas at the time that Spaniards invaded this area in the 1500s and 1600s. After hundreds of small, autonomous, distinctively named Indian groups that lived by hunting and gathering were displaced by the Spaniards, there was an attempt to classify these groups based on language, even though many of these indigenous groups had been annihilated. In the mid-1800s, Mexican linguists designated some Indian groups as Coahuilteco, believing they may have spoken various dialects of a language in Coahuila and Texas ("[Coahuiltecan Indians](#)").

During 2020, through [monthly virtual webinars](#), our First UU members had the opportunity to learn about one of the Coahuiltecan tribes: the Esto'k Gna or [Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe of Texas](#). In the [Winter 2020 Inspire issue](#), Linda Nash, our Green Sanctuary Team Co-Chair, provided a description and summary of this virtual series about the Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe in an article titled "People of the Land Series: Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe of Texas." The virtual series was co-sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), the UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE), and the Texas UU

Justice Ministry (TXUUM). Our congregation provided financial support to the Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe through our September 2020 Share the Plate collection.

The [Story Wisdom](#) segment of the April 18, 2021 Earth Day worship service, that was organized by the Green Sanctuary Team, featured Linda Ximenes, a Tribal Council member of the [Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation](#). The Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation is a local indigenous group that had ancestors who were buried at the Alamo. However, the nonprofit Alamo Trust, which has run the Alamo shrine under contract with the state of Texas for the last several years, has denied Tap Pilam any voice in the handling of human remains exposed by excavations at the site. During the previous two decades when the Daughters of the Republic of Texas managed the Alamo, Tap Pilam had a seat at the table.

[Tap Pilam](#) has received numerous recognitions. In 2001 the 77th Texas State Legislature recognized the nation for “its immeasurable contributions as an indigenous people of Texas.” They have been recognized by the City of San Antonio for “the outstanding preservation of their heritage, and for their many contributions to not only the State of Texas, but to San Antonio as well” and by the Archdiocese of San Antonio for “its immeasurable contributions as an indigenous people of Texas and commend the tribe’s efforts to preserve its cultural and spiritual heritage and traditions.” Despite these recognitions the struggle for formal state and federal recognition continues. During this most recent [87th Texas Legislative session](#), SB 805 filed by Sen. Jose Menéndez and HB 1661 and HB 1663 filed by Rep. Leo Pacheco, relating to state recognition of the Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan Nation, failed to pass out of committee.

While there are currently [574 federally recognized Indian Nations in the United States](#), there are as many as [400 unrecognized tribes in the United States](#). Federal recognition for an Indian Nation provides opportunities to participate in decision-making processes that are usually denied to unrecognized tribes. In 2019, Tap Pilam established a nonprofit legal defense fund. This spring, the Green Sanctuary Team contributed some of its budget to this fund. This fall, the Green Sanctuary Team plans to invite members of Tap Pilam and its legal defense fund to make a presentation to our congregants.



# *Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry: Working for Social Justice*

By Jan Realini

Guided by UU principles, the Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry (TXUUJM) educates and organizes its 36 member congregations to advocate effectively for public policies that:

- Uphold the worth and dignity of every person
- Further justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
- Ensure the use of the democratic process
- Protect religious freedom
- Promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence

You may have heard Rev. Chuck Freeman, the Executive Director of TXUUJM, give sermons at our church. I have always found his words to be wonderfully engaging, down-to-earth, and inspiring. As Co-Chair of First UU San Antonio's Social Justice Committee, I serve on the TXUUJM Advisory Council. Representatives from around the state meet once a month to share information and organize our advocacy.

The 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative session that just finished was difficult, to say the least. Before the legislative session, member congregations voted to prioritize racial justice, environmental justice, health care access (including reproductive health care), economic justice, and voting rights. During the course of the session, it quickly became apparent that defending the wellbeing of transgender youth from legislative threats was also urgent and equally important. Part of my role was to deliver calls to action to our congregation. Thanks to all who responded, contacted legislators, and came to rallies.

With some victories and numerous defeats, we appreciate all those who responded to our calls to action. The bills threatening trans youth are dead at this writing, but, unfortunately, so are the meaningful reforms of the George Floyd Act. Severe limitations to abortion access passed, as did voting restrictions. Medicaid was not expanded, although post-childbirth coverage was extended from 2 to 6 months.

I also serve on the Board of TXUUJM as Treasurer of the organization. Mike Phillips of our congregation serves as President. As Treasurer, I am excited to let you know that you can *double your impact* with your individual donation to TXUUJM because of a \$10,000.00 matching grant!

Donate online at [www.txuujm.org](http://www.txuujm.org), where it is easy to make a recurring monthly donation or a one-time donation using PayPal (no PayPal account needed)! You can also mail a check to TXUUJM, PO Box 170064, Austin TX 78717. Every donation helps!

In these times, our voices are more important than ever.

# Feral Cats

By Gina Humble

What do feral cats have to do with Unitarian values? This topic among others was discussed during my Zoom presentation "My Feral Cat Colony." I enjoyed having the opportunity to talk with our high school youth, as well as our adult members this past winter/spring, sharing my experiences in caring for a feral cat colony of eight! We discussed the plight of feral cats in San Antonio and in the nation and talked about the joys and responsibilities of managing a colony. We heard from a number of volunteers in our congregation who have lovingly tended to cats in their own neighborhoods. We also learned about the "Trap Neuter Return" method of managing community cats which offers a humane and ethical approach to attending to free roaming cats.

I am looking for ways to further involve our congregation in my efforts to care for my colony of eight. Shelter building projects are currently underway. Papa Bear, Shadow, Britches, Marci, Tenderfoot, Calimazoo, Buda and Braveheart would like to meet you. We are in need of volunteers to help address a number of challenges. Possible projects for the future: canned cat food drive, fundraising efforts, cat toy making party, and substitute feeder training (help me feed my babies.)

Contact me with ideas/questions  
a [humblegina@yahoo.com](mailto:humblegina@yahoo.com) The "My Feral Cat Colony" slideshow is also available upon request. Thank you all!

In service, remembering our 7th Principle, "Respect for the interdependent web of existence, of which we are a part."



## When the Purring Stops

By Arthur Severance

The cat left last night  
And will not be back  
At least in any form  
Which we remember  
Which we loved  
Which we named.  
The purr motor  
has been silenced  
And the silence  
Of her walking,  
Her jumping to the counter  
Where she knew  
She shouldn't be  
Has disappeared.  
There is a place in the house  
Where she should be  
And isn't anymore;  
That cat emptiness  
Is like a weight  
Upon our hearts,  
A grief of missing  
a family member  
Like seeing the empty chair  
At the first Thanksgiving  
dinner  
After they have passed.  
Churches need  
Cat memorial services  
For our grief is spiritual.  
The cat is gone.

# Condolences

...to the family and friends of Bettie Ward who passed away on February 21, 2021.

...to the family and friends of Bill Stavinoha who passed away on March 28, 2021.

*If you have a milestone you would like to share in our next newsletter, contact [newsletter@uusat.org](mailto:newsletter@uusat.org)*

## **We are a Compassionate Congregation**

We encourage San Antonio to be a more compassionate city.

## **We are a Green Sanctuary Congregation.**

We develop our congregation's environmental ethic through worship, education, sustainability, and environmental justice.

## **We are a Racial Justice Congregation**

We are a congregation committed to racial equity and justice, within ourselves, our church and the wider community.

## **We are a Reproductive Justice Congregation.**

We stand for the right to make one's own reproductive decisions.

## **We are a Sanctuary Congregation.**

We protect and defend refugees, asylum seekers, and at-risk immigrants.

## **We are a Welcoming Congregation.**

Families and individuals of all sexual orientations and gender identities contribute to the joyful life of this church.

**First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio**

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