

FIRST UU
SAN ANTONIO

Spring 2024

Inspire

**The Official Magazine of First Unitarian
Universalist Church of San Antonio**



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Campus at night, photo by Kam Davison

Inspire

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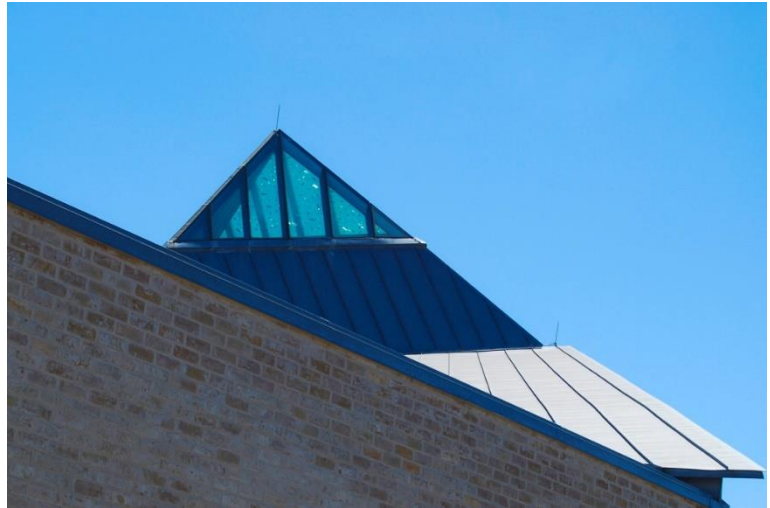
Inspire is a publication of First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio. We welcome submissions of original articles, short stories, or poetry that encompass a UU theme. All submissions become the property of First UU. Publication of submissions is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of the editor. Send submissions to Inspire@uusat.org.

Cover photo: Taken by Dale Moore during Celestial Celebrations Circle's February Labyrinth walk.

The Joys of Generosity

by Rev. Mark Skrabacz

Financial giving is a spiritual practice. There is a deep potential for meaning and life-affirmation when we transform ourselves from occasional or



casual donors to deliberate, effective and ambitious philanthropists. Philanthropist, you say? That is not something I can achieve. Are you sure? Let me share some ideas that are designed to help us find clarity.

Almost everyone would like to make a difference—to matter—whether in our own life, our family, community, or our world. To make such a difference there is one necessary ingredient and that is generosity. It can be demonstrated by the giving of time, care, skill, intelligence, commitment, gifts and money. Of all these expressions of generosity, financial giving is for some the most challenging, yet it also holds the most opportunity for making a difference in our world and in our own personal well-being. A financial gift offers the recipients the greatest opportunity to use it as most needed. In the case of this church, for example, there are myriad of opportunities from improving the playground, to enhancing the buildings, developing ministries of service, or hiring talented staff.

The word *generous* comes from the Latin *generosus*, which means "noble, magnanimous." *Magnanimous* comes from the Latin words *magna* "great" and *animus* "soul." According to the Oxford English Dictionary *generous* means "freely

giving more than is necessary or expected." Generosity includes the idea of an external open-handedness, as deeply connected to our internal experience of open-heartedness.

Generosity's rich meaning can inspire us. It implies giving freely with a happy heart. Givers have choice and control about their largesse, and this sort of freedom always feels good. Generosity is about giving far more than the bare minimum, so it is not limited to doing only what is required. Generosity is about giving more than is expected, going beyond obligation. Generosity actually is an ennobling action. It makes us magnanimous—great souls. Think about a recent time when you felt like a generous person? Satisfying, isn't it?

Philanthropy is a wonderful word from the greek roots *philo* "love" and *anthropos* "human." Philanthropy means loving humankind. It is a form of generosity. Yet it has become associated with a rare few who have great wealth and power. It's time to redefine and reclaim the term and make it available to everyone, regardless of their resources of finances and power. You, no matter your level of income, savings or financial worth, can be a philanthropist. You can be a philanthropist with a budget that allows for generous giving—a gift that is generous to you.

Research by the Harvard Business School shows that spending money on someone or something else—as little as \$5/day—can significantly boost your happiness. Students who practiced generosity and random acts of kindness were significantly happier than those who didn't. In another student study, some were given money to spend either on themselves or on social causes to benefit others.

Those who gave the money to others were significantly happier than those who spent it on themselves. For example, how many pairs of shoes do you need? How many does a poor person even have? To whom does one more pair of shoes matter most?

Commitment follows involvement. The more a member becomes involved with and benefits from their church, the more their commitment needs to grow. The ministry of stewardship encourages members to become more committed and connected.

All contributions are important and must be acknowledged and appreciated. Some gifts are important because they are larger; we depend on these lead gifts to keep the budget balanced. Other gifts are important because though smaller, they are more frequent and dependable. For example, two people giving \$25,000 each produces \$50,000 in pledges. Ten people giving \$5,000 each does the same. All gifts, in addition to helping balance the budget, demonstrate to the outside world and to ourselves that we are a broad-based, steady, and committed religious community. We need to make sure that every member understands the importance of their gift, regardless of size, and how it fits into the overall structure of contributions.

We need each member to know that “other people” are not paying for this church. All of us are responsible for funding this church and each one of us needs to be generous in order for our lights to be kept on--both the lights of our facilities and the lights of our own lives.

We have a very few larger donors who contribute at the \$10,000 annual level or above. This is a good start, and we need several more at the \$8,000-\$15,000 levels. The bulk of our donors contribute at the \$500 level or less, about 25% of the Congregation. We cannot sustain this church, its ministries and programs, facilities and staffing at that level.

We respectfully encourage all our members to increase your annual Pledge to at least \$1,500 to \$5,000. We currently have 85 pledges at this level and we need a big increase by adding another 60 to this giving range. This will require many of you to increase your pledge. At these annual levels, we will have sufficient capacity not only to keep our lights on, but also to grow our church. Remember, it is each one of you who fund this church, not “the others.”

Finally, most of you know that I am now in the last few months of my service to you and our church. On July 31, 2024, I will retire as your minister and also from employment spanning 60 years. I have cherished the opportunities you have given me at First UU Church during these last 4+ years, as a highpoint in my work life. I am very grateful to you for your support. You have blessed Carolyn and me more than you’ll ever know. May your continued commitment to this church bring encouragement and new energies to the direction and growth that will come from your work together.

May you welcome your new Interim Minister as a church in strong financial shape and filled with robust ministries, love, and care. Remember to be magnanimous and to experience the joys of generosity in blessing each other and our Church!

It Takes a Village

By Betty Burgner, Board Trustee at Large

When I joined the Board last year there was a learning curve, and the financial aspect was my weakest area. While I familiarized myself with the budget, there was still so much I didn't understand going into the "budget season" last year, that became painfully clear as the Board attempted to put forth a budget to reflect all we needed, and wanted, and yet was fiscally responsible. It was impossible. We spent many hours, of many days, hashing out scenario after scenario, trying to make it work. After taking a sharp knife to the budget, and a valiant rally from the congregation, a budget was passed. But sacrifices were made. And I came to realize I wasn't the only one who was lacking a full grasp of the financial situation, and felt a bit blindsided, despite the hard work of our Finance Committee and Treasurer to educate us otherwise. This year I've been determined to go into the budget season with a better understanding, and to be as transparent with others in our congregation, so we all may understand the challenge before us and make choices accordingly.

Our expenses have only increased since last year, and we find ourselves in a similar situation regarding the budget. It is a time of transition for a couple of our staff. As a result, there will be moving expenses to pay for newly hired staff relocating to San Antonio. All we hold dear, such as keeping the lights on, the music flowing, funding our committees, growing our youth programs, and keeping a second minister, are all under the microscope, and again sacrifices will likely need to be made. This next month will be a very important one for our church. I understand it is a busy time of year for many, emails come faster than we can

keep up with, and our time, attention, and finances are in demand, but please consider these 2 requests:

1. The Stewardship Committee will be sharing a strategy of success as they launch this year's campaign on March 3rd. They have worked hard to create a Pledging Goal Chart that presents a path to how we can achieve our desired budget for this next year. Please take a look at it to see what category you have been in, and what category you might consider moving into, to help our congregation fulfill this worthy endeavor.
2. The Board will host Listening Sessions March 24th (in person after service) and March 26th (via zoom) reviewing the Budget and answering what questions you may have. Please plan to attend one of these sessions if you are able.

Many thanks to all that commit their heart, their time, and their financial support to our beloved church. It takes a village and I'm so grateful to be part of this village.



Our Stewardship Campaign kicks off on Sunday, March 3rd with a special Worship Service followed by a catered BBQ lunch. Stewards will be available at that time to take your pledge. The campaign will run throughout the month of March. To make your pledge online go to [2024-2025 Stewardship Campaign Pledge Form \(breezechms.com\)](https://breezechms.com) If you have any questions, email stewardship@uusat.org

Capital Campaign Celebrates Success; Fund Raising Efforts Continue

By Carolyn Skrabacz & Polly Noël

The Capital Campaign Committee reports that \$702,251.21 has been raised to date. We have spent approximately \$179,910.73 on four completed projects, plus initial architectural design and consultant fees. Significant additional funds are needed to update the Lounge and Kitchen in Fellowship Hall, the next and final major project.

The architect recently delivered new schematic designs for the Kitchen/Lounge project at our request. The initial plans were pared down based on current fund-raising expectations. While somewhat more modest, the revised design represents important improvements in both function and visual appeal to the Kitchen and Lounge. We expect to get a revised construction estimate in March and will share that information with the congregation in early April.

To date, the church, under the leadership of the Committee and its chair Dorothy Wallace, has completed four projects, most recently a newly installed fence, gates and locks around the campus



The recently completed perimeter fencing will provide improved safety on our campus.

including the playground. Other improvements to the playground include leveling the ground and reseeding the lawn. Several new trees will be planted in March. A fence ribbon cutting is planned for Sunday, March 10 after the service. The other completed projects are an updated foyer, a restriped and resealed parking lot, and newly installed/expanded WiFi in all buildings.

As stewardship pledges are being made for the 2024-2025 year, we remind all donors that Capital Campaign contributions, called commitments, are in addition to annual stewardship pledges. Stewardship pledges should not and may not be used to fund Capital needs. All payments are due by December 31, 2025, but we encourage early funding so we can begin work on the Kitchen/Lounge project. Having commitments and money in hand will be important to the ability to proceed. The goal is to undertake the much-needed repairs and remodeling updates as early as possible, perhaps by the end of this year. If you have not previously had an opportunity to make a Capital Campaign Commitment and are interested in doing so, please contact capitalcampaign@uusat.org.

Members of the Capital Campaign Committee are Dorothy Wallace, Carolyn Skrabacz and new member, Jessica Latimer. Polly Noël also serves as Board Liaison to the Committee. Please contact any of us with your questions. Stay up to date with all Capital Campaign news at www.uusat.org/capital-campaign

This is an exciting time for First UU and our future! Thank you for your continued support as we improve our church home.

Roof Cleanup and Piping Removal at the Sanctuary

By John Faultersack, Maintenance Committee Co-chair

Last Thursday, five brave volunteers assisted me in a “cleanup” project” – focused on the low roofs of the Sanctuary Building. We removed years of leaf litter from the roof and gutters, cut and removed abandoned refrigerant piping, re-supported some existing conduit serving the choir room’s air conditioner and cleaned up the equipment yard. Jim and Kathy Coronado, Becky Brenner, Jessica Latimer, and Rico Espinosa provided the “sweat equity”. (I am really grateful for their support, as I’m getting too old for this stuff!)

About ten large bags of leaf litter and compost were removed from the roof and spread around the back of the Sanctuary grounds. The refrigerant lines (valuable copper) were cut up and Jim and Kathy hauled the metal to a recycler. The church received over \$400! That’s the good news. The not-so-good news is that we had to spend \$300 to provide new (and proper!) roof supports for the existing conduit. The old block-and-metal supports were “somersaulting” along with the conduit over the roof as it expanded/contracted with the weather, potentially gouging the roofing materials.

This effort was done in order to “clear the decks” (literally!) for the upcoming HVAC project that will replace the condensing unit for the— late and not-so-great – right-rear Sanctuary air conditioning system. That unit has been non-functional for the past couple of years, and we have been limping along during the Texas summers!! The Board has just approved a proposal for this work. Hopefully, it will be done before the worst of the summer heat.

After the work was done, Reverend Nell provided the hearty work crew a delicious lunch and drinks, and we enjoyed the food and talk with her and Reverend Mark. I don't know about the rest of the crew, but I was sated and tired enough to enjoy a 2-hour nap afterward!

2023 Christmas Festivities

By Mary Wright

December is always a busy time of year and 2023 was no exception. Our congregation participated in the annual Giving Tree program, gifting presents to 7 families with a total of 30 individuals. On December 10, members participated in a holiday wrapping party before the gifts were delivered to the Family Service Association. On Christmas Eve, members of the staff hosted a pancake brunch. That evening was our tradition Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, followed by a Cookie & Egg Nog social hosted by the Board of Trustees.



West Side Rising

By Diane Duesterhoeft

Inspired by Char Miller's book, *West Side Rising*, a group of Green Team and Environmental Book Group members and guests walked part of the West Side creeks watershed on Sunday afternoon, December 10, 2023. Several of us read and discussed Char Miller's book during the Fall of 2023. We took a stroll and appreciated the creek restoration efforts. After gathering at Elmendorf Lake near Our Lady of the Lake University, we strolled along a portion of the Apache Creek Greenway, enjoying a sunny afternoon and some of the birds and other wildlife that inhabit the area.

“To walk a watershed is to recognize our place within it – and that of our predecessors, too: putting foot to ground and moving through space is critical to encountering other moments in time. This valley is an archive, a human and environmental repository that contains memories we might recover, even if only partially.” ~ Char Miller, from *West Side Rising: How San Antonio's 1921 Flood Devastated a City and Sparked a Latino Environmental Justice Movement*.

In the last issue of Inspire, we reported on a recent visit to Unbroken Circle Green Cemetery, a trip coordinated by our Green Sanctuary Team. Unbroken Circle is San Antonio's first and only conservation burial ground. If you are interested in services for either yourself, a loved one, or a pet, contact Susan at unbrokencirclegreencemetery.com





The group that explored Apache Creek and Elmendorf Lake in December: Mike Phillips, Cheryl Lardy, Brian Lamb, Jennifer Courtwright, Alison Hom-Crosier, and Linda Nash. Photo by Diane Duesterhoeft.



Water retention structures at Elmendorf Lake. Photo by Diane Duesterhoeft

Pagan Happenings

By Sylvia Wheeler

Celestial Celebrations Circle is the official Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) group associated with First UU Church of San Antonio. We hold Rituals for all eight Sabbats (the Pagan Holy Days). In months where there are no Rituals, we sponsor a Labyrinth walk with drum circle on the west side of the Sanctuary on the church property. This Labyrinth became a joint project of all Celestial Celebrations Circle members. It is available to whomever wishes to walk it - whenever they wish to make the journey.

Since the last Inspire Magazine came out, Celestial Celebrations Circle has had two Rituals and one Labyrinth walk. Our December Ritual was Winter Solstice. This Holy Day is an astronomical occurrence. In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the start of the Winter season. For early peoples who depended on the land for their existence, this was a very anxious time. No crops could be grown, animals & people had to be protected from the ever present cold, and the lack of sunlight made the outdoors dark and often damp. With this in mind, the energy of our Winter Solstice focused on going within - in many different ways. This year, we decided to start an ongoing part in our Rituals: marking 'Time'. At Winter and Summer Solstice, the movement of Time seems to be very slow and now starts to move more quickly. We demonstrated this movement by dimming the lights in Ritual space in order to experience the energy of darkness. This is one of our most inclusive Rituals as we have speaking parts for many participants. After the darkness, we suddenly brought forth what appeared to be great light thru a fire in a cauldron. We celebrated the 'rebirth' of the Sun.

As the Wheel of the Year moved around, our Ritual focused on Brigid's Day or Imbolc. This is what is known as a 'cross quarter' day. This means it is across the quarter of the year, between Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox. Usually, it has our least attendance. In Nature, the Sun has usually regained some of its strength; therefore, energy has picked up somewhat as there is more available natural light. For this Ritual, our Intention read: "This is the first stirring of the Light. The Goddess is again young ... She banishes all that is outworn; She sweeps away the debris of winter and She prepares for the new". We then had several people light candles and proclaim - in different ways - "The light has returned once again". With this introduction, we transitioned into a meditation to focus on 'sweeping away debris in order to prepare for the new'.



Photo by Dale Moore, taken at the February Labyrinth Walk.

In February, Celestial Celebrations Circle sponsored a Labyrinth walk and Drum Jam. On a brightly moon lit clear and cool Saturday night, twelve people participated. The energy was magnetic and magical. The participants included a church family with small children, people who usually participate in the walks (who often are different from those who attend Rituals), & three planners and drummers. Celestial Celebrations Circle's next ritual will celebrate Spring Equinox, also called Ostara, and will take place on Saturday, March 16 at 7:00 pm on our Playground. All who are interested are welcome!

The End of an Era

By Carol Collins

After 25 years Emerson Bookshop Plus is now closed. Room 101, where the bookshop was formerly located, is now available for other activities. But that doesn't mean you can't purchase Fair Trade and UU items.

Equal Exchange is an online seller of coffee, chocolate, tea, food, gifts, and more. Their mission is to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound, to foster mutually beneficial relationships between farmers and consumers, and to demonstrate the contribution of worker co-operatives and Fair Trade to a more equitable, democratic, and sustainable world. From January 2014 to its December closing, the bookshop purchased \$12,640 in Equal Exchange fair trade merchandise. You can purchase items from Equal Exchange on their website at www.shop.equalexchange.coop (Note: chocolate should stay below 75° during shipping.) Orders of at least \$135 get free shipping. Equal Exchange fair trade purchases benefit the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC).

You can order UU jewelry, clothing, stickers, holiday cards and books from the UUA's InSpirit Book and Gift Shop at www.uuabookstore.org You can order stickers, buttons, shirts, flags, calendars, rainbow pulsera bracelets, and more from www.northernsun.com You can also get ideas for other great books at www.SpiritualityandPractice.com For 25 years Emerson Bookshop Plus used these sites to select its purchases.

Don't forget that after Sunday services people can borrow books from the church's Mauk Lending Library in room 602, across the patio from the Fellowship Hall.

Thanks to all who helped clear out the many books, jewelry, stickers, buttons, flags, and fair trade coffee, tea and Palestinian olive oil.

Circle Dinners

By Mary Wright

Circle dinners have been a well-loved activity at First UU for many, many years. They are a great way to meet new people from church in a more intimate setting. We meet in the evenings at people's homes or at the church if extra space is needed. You will be matched with new people each month. Hosts will open their home and provide the entrees. Guests attend and provide the sides. They are a lot of fun and a great way to build lifelong bonds with other members of your church family. If you have never participated in a Circle dinner, or haven't participated in a while, consider giving it a try. Our next circle dinner will be on Saturday, March 9. Contact circledinners@uusat.org to sign up.



Walk on the River: A Dream Week Event

By John Faultersack

The DreamWeek event this year was organized by the Racial Justice-Black Lives Matter Committee. We contacted Melaneyes Media, Inc. for permission to show their film, *Walk on the River, 2.0: The African Influence in San Antonio*. The 45 minute video covered African impacts on the local area and the Western Hemisphere. The film explored the religious, artistic, and cultural influences of Africans in the West, such as the Black Madonna on Christianity and art, apparent pyramid technology transfer from Africa to Central America, and Moorish (Black African) influences on language, technology, and education. Also shown were the local remnants of Black Moorish culture in San Antonio, such as finials on local bridges and monuments in local cemeteries. These influences have been largely ignored or forgotten, especially in history lessons in American education. This video, and numerous others, are available online at

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEEY_4U5P-IduEG5QtYvmEw

About 40 people viewed the film and participated in a question and discussion session, facilitated by Rev. Nell Newton, Maggie Joseph, with Aundar Maat and Born Logic Allah from Melaneyes Media.



Free Battered Texas Women Updates

by Cathy Marston, PhD

We had our biggest crowd ever on Sunday, December 3 for our annual party to send our newsletter and holiday cards to our incarcerated and released sisters and allies. We'd like to thank Mary Wright for designing our beautiful newsletter! We'd also like to thank the nearly 20 of you who showed up for snacks and worked hard!



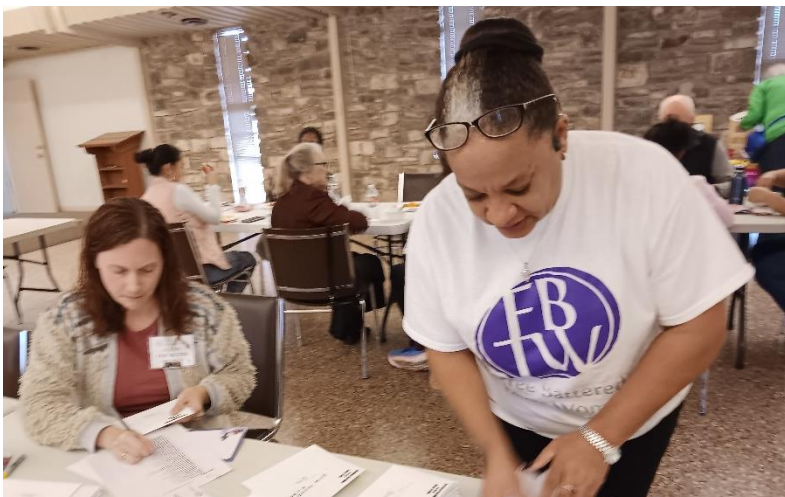
Volunteers filling out cards and stuffing envelopes to be sent to incarcerated sisters.

Everyone may be horrified to know that the sisters on the inside still have not received these items. In fact, one of them wrote to tell us that she had just received a letter we sent in November! This is why we need funding to help support more hours for staff, so that they can dedicate time to set up and pay for digital accounts for the incarcerated sisters. This is so important now that the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) is scanning all of the inmate mail. For example, Program Assistant Mia Garcia currently gets paid to work 10 hours a month at a rate of \$16 an hour: a donation of \$160 pays her salary for a month. To get her up to 10 hours a week, we would need \$160 a week or \$640 a month: \$7680 for the year. To donate on PayPal, please go to:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=245ZCSWWJJ2P2 Or, we certainly accept checks at the address below.

We also have reports from the inside that TDCJ is refusing to comply with the new law that requires correctional officers (Cos) to let incarcerated citizens on transport vans use the toilet on long trips. On one recent trip between Gatesville and Galveston, a CO refused to let a sister use the toilet. So, she had to urinate anyway and sit in it for the rest of the trip – as did her seatmate to whom she was handcuffed.

On the bright side, I was honored to take part in the December 30 inaugural meeting of the San Antonio hub of the Statewide Leadership Council (SLC). The SLC organizes on the local, grassroots level for the Texas Center for Justice and Equity. I communed with at least a dozen other formerly incarcerated citizens doing work to reform the criminal legal system. I will keep you posted on any future events of this great group.



FBTW Board members Alison Hom-Crosier and Cheryl Craig double check the envelopes and list at our December 3 Holiday card event.

For MLK weekend, Free Battered Texas Women (FBTW) sent me to a recent writer's retreat at U Bar U Camp & Retreat Center. This gave me safe space and time to edit the final essay for our upcoming exhibit and to workshop another essay with the great folks who were there.

The exhibit will be premiering on Sunday, April 21 in the Fellowship Hall at the church. Stay tuned!

I also want to share that committees were formed at the January meeting of the Survivors Project, our statewide clemency coalition. These committees will meet separately until the next quarterly meeting of the Survivors Project.

New Member Ceremony

By Mary Wright

On December 19th we welcomed our newest members during our Sunday Worship Service. New Member ceremonies are held every few months and are a lovely way to welcome our new church members and introduce them to the congregation.



L to R: Rev. Mark Skrabacz, Gary Anholt, Shammi Anholt, A. J. Herrera, & Membership Chair Donna Pereira

Member Profile: William Westney

By Mary Wright

One of the new-ish members of the congregation is pianist William Westney. William and his wife, Emilia, joined First UU Church of San Antonio in November 2020. William is a world-renowned pianist, author, educator, and speaker. He holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Yale University and is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the School of Music at Texas Tech University. Emilia also taught at Texas Tech in the College of Business and prior to that was a professional singer and voice teacher. Since joining the church, they have both treated us to their musical talents multiple times during Sunday Worship services.



William has been the winner of numerous performance prizes, most notably the Geneva International Competition. He has concertized on four continents to critical acclaim, both as recitalist and as soloist with such orchestras as the Houston Symphony, the San Antonio Symphony, and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Westney's trailblazing, refreshing performance workshop "The Un-Master Class" ® was profiled in a New York Times feature article and has been given at major conservatories around the world.

We are pleased to announce that our First UU Retired Women's Group is sponsoring a concert with Mr. Westney on Sunday, April 14 at 3:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Admission is a minimum donation of \$20 and all proceeds benefit the First UU Capital Campaign Fund. A reception will follow the concert in the Fellowship Hall.

In addition to his music, William has also authored several articles and books. His latest book is titled *Eros at the Piano: The Life-Energy of Classical Music*. In it, Westney takes readers on a remarkable journey, combining intellectual vigor with down-to-earth wisdom for performers, teachers, and students. Using a conversational tone and rich with cross-disciplinary insight, Westney weaves together the philosophical concept of Eros with the art and practice of classical musicians. To learn more about Mr. Westney or to order his book, visit www.williamwestney.com

BENEFIT CONCERT:

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Classical Masterpieces
with Lively Commentary”*

FEATURING WORKS BY:

**Haydn, Schubert,
Chopin and Debussy**

“A triumph!” - Houston Post

“Riveting!” - New York Post

Sunday, April 14, 2024

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Minimum \$20.00 Donation at the Door

Sanctuary, First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio

7150 I-10, San Antonio, TX

Proceeds: UU Capital Campaign

Reception to Follow in the Fellowship Hall

Sponsored by the UU Retired Women’s Group



Why Don't You Believe In Me?

By Rev. Art Severance

And in my dream a voice asks,
"why don't you believe in me?"

It is an ancient voice
Male, of course,
Sounding, perhaps, somewhat Shakespearean
Or, of course, Biblical,
definitely Old Testament,
As if the New Testament God
would not ask that question.

When someone asks me,
"Do you believe in God?"
I answer by saying such things as-
"It depends on what YOU mean by the word, 'God,'"
Or even 'believe'."

Or I might say, "That's not really a 'yes' or 'no' question."

I might ask the questioner
to actually define the God that they believe in
and what difference it makes.

I don't believe in the traditional concept of God,
Defining myself as a spiritual humanist,
So, when the seemingly divine voice
Rumbles through my slumber,
asking "why don't you believe in me?"
I wake and want to answer,
But whom or what?

I have not "given up" on God,
I have embraced God as Love,
The Spirit and Meaning of life.

Part of the Cosmos
That beckons us to justice and love for all,
Because we are all interconnected,
All children of the love cosmos.

That's what I believe.

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.

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