

MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio, Texas
Rev. Bret Lortie, May 15, 2008

What an exciting first year this has been together. Covenant groups are gathering in full swing, worship services are gaining momentum and energy with your presence in increasing numbers, and religious education is moving ahead with our new director of lifespan religious education. We have accomplished much, and what's more we're being intentional about our actions. We're looking ahead at responsible stewardship and appropriate revisions to our governance structures, so that as we grow we have the infrastructure that can meet the needs of a large church. As I look to the next year, I anticipate further thoughtful discernment and mindfulness as our Board and Council lead our programs forward. For my leadership next year, I hope to further strengthen our lay supported ministries by enhancing our worship associate and pastoral care programs—building both into more robust shared ministries.

Below are a lot of required facts and figures for the year, reflecting how I have lived out your call taken last April. May this year be the first of many together as we build this "church of our dreams."

Worship and preaching

- Number of sermons delivered for 2007/2008 church year: 34
- Number of services led for 2007/2008 church year: 40
- Changes to worship service include: re-introduction of spoken joys and sorrows (being spoken by service leader); projected hymns and readings to elevate congregation engagement during service; monthly "contemporary" music with outside musicians when minister of music is out.

Adult education

- Covenant groups: The biggest news this year is covenant groups. We went through intense planning beginning in late September, with sign-ups in November and start-ups in January. Currently we have ten groups serving approximately 80 people. Facilitators meet once monthly for their own small group ministry experience as well as ongoing training and

support. Jeff Addington co-chairs with the minister.

- Roots classes: Taught the "New UU" class in 2007 and decided that once a quarter wasn't serving the many inquires we were getting. We've moved to a once monthly model, hoping that the regular frequency of the class will help newer guests onto the pathway to membership.
- Insight meditation: Taught a 12-week course on Buddhist fundamentals and insight meditation. It is my hope that the group will start again in the fall and take advantage of the insight meditation group meeting on Monday nights.

Denominational activities

- Delivered the offertory at the ordination of Aaron White, May 2008
- Delivered the prayer at the installation of the Rev. John Cullinan, April, 2008
- Delivered the opening words at the installation of the Rev. Eliza Gallaher, March 2008
- Led worship and a covenant group at the annual winter UUMA retreat, January, 2008
- Monthly cluster meeting with the Heart of Texas (HOT) minister's group
- SWUUSI summer institute, July, 2007
- Ministry days in Portland, Oregon, June 2007
- General Assembly, June 2007

Professional obligations and activities

- Lectio Divina retreat, annual seminar
- San Antonio New Thought minister's gathering, monthly meetings
- Pro-San Antonio interfaith meeting, monthly meetings
- COPS/Metro clergy meetings, monthly meetings

Social justice

- Attended COPS/Metro action for tax justice, November, 2007
- Attended two, two-day COPS/Metro trainings in 2007
- Attended Martin Luther King, Jr., interfaith service and march, January 2008
- Delivered speech on proposed border wall, Brownsville, March 2008
- Delivered homily, Caesar Chavez interfaith service,

March 2008

- Delivered prayer, Annual Day of Prayer service, April 2008

Monthly committee obligations

- Board of Directors
- Church Council
- Worship Committee
- Committee on Ministry
- Covenant group facilitators

Other committees and meetings attended (estimates)

- Youth religious education council (4x)
- Sound and technology (2x)
- Finance (2x)
- Social justice (5x)
- DLRE search (4x)
- Membership (2x)
- Youth/Adult council (3x)
- Nominating
- Church start-up
- Board retreat
- San Antonio Community of Congregations (4x)
- COPS/Metro leader (3); COPS/Metro "relational" (5x)
- Delivered opening words, Animal blessing ceremony, April 2008

Administration

- Staffing: We changed to a minister-supervised staff at the end of 2007, just in time to hire our Director of Lifespan Religious Education. Staff morale is good and we're working toward enjoying continuing stability in the workplace.
- Sound system: Led sound reinforcement task force to identify and correct quality of amplified voice in the sanctuary. With a budget of \$6,000 we corrected this problem, which was absolutely the most often-heard complaint in my first two months here. (e.g. "I don't come to service because I can't understand a word coming through the speakers.") Usually the minister would not, or will not in the future, get this hands-on with such a project, but in this case it was mission critical, and with my 20-plus years of sound tech experience, it seemed a justifiable use of my time.
- Telephone: The phone system is needing to be upgraded to include modern conveniences such as integrated voice mail and call transfer functions, as well as the kind of "menu driven" access that

people expect to find when they call an organization of excellence. The staff is looking at voice-over-internet (VoIP) and PBX systems.

Rites of passage

Celebrations of life:

- David Moss, July 28, 2007
- Christopher Hoyt, August 13, 2007
- June Henderson, funeral and graveside service, December 29, 2007
- June Henderson, memorial, January 5, 2008
- George Pankratz, December 20, 2007
- Scarlett King, January 18, 2008
- Eloise Ross Barclay, March 13, 2008

Weddings:

- Bryan and Melissa Tucker, October 13, 2007
- Kurt and Corey Rutherford-Shaw, October 20, 2007
- Tara and Joseph Quinn, December 26, 2007
- Sarah and Ian Gray, March 15, 2007
- Kenny Van Eimeren and Alisha Worth, May 17, 2008
- Sam and Patience Blevins, August 30, 2008

Baby dedications:

- Sydney Isabella Fry
- Kira Sutter

Study Leave

- 1/10-1/12, 3
- 2/20-2/23, 4
- 3/26-3/29, 4
- 4/28-4/30, 3
- 5/7-5/9, 3
- 5/12-5/15, 4
- 5/19-5/20, 2
- 5/22-5/24, 3
- 5/26-5/29, 4

Vacation

- 6/16-6/21, 6
- 6/30-7/20, 21
- 8/29-8/31, 3

Summer denominational obligations

- 6/23-6/25, Professional ministry days
- 6/26-6/29, General Assembly
- 7/21-7/25, SWUUSI

Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Annual Report to the Board of Trustees,
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio
2008

Well, I can't actually provide an annual report, but I can sum up some what's been happening in youth religious education, and with the DLRE since January of this year!

The second half of 2007 saw the resignation of a beloved DRE, and from all appearances it seems that Director of Worship and Education Polly Noel and the YRE Council under co-chairs Stacy Barnwell and Moon Brand did a superb job keeping the program not only afloat but going strong in the interim months. I believe the leadership transition went smoothly, with the new DLRE (me!) starting part-time and taking over responsibilities gradually. I can honestly not think of any huge glitches or glaring gaps that have occurred (so far!) All scheduled classes, programs, and events, from family worships to curriculum classes, from YRE Sunday to teacher appreciation BrUUnch, from OWL classes to art and social action Sundays, have gone well, thanks to an array of competent, dedicated, and creative volunteers. Work on the adult RE front is coming more slowly, but it was suggested to me at the start that I concentrate on YRE initially. A look at the annual report from the adult religious education committee will show that we offer a large array of opportunities for adults to pursue their spiritual and intellectual interests. Very soon I will be working with stakeholders in the adult RE program to define my role in those endeavors.

We have scheduled a "start-up" retreat with the Southwest District Lifespan Religious Education consultant for August 2. Everyone with a stake in religious education is invited to attend.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Sheri Phillabaum

Church Office Administrator 2008 Annual Report

June 2007, the beginning of a new church year, found us at the Leadership Bridging meeting, with missing smoke detectors, a noisy, leaking soft drink machine and a bright new future with called minister Rev. Bret Lortie. The meeting went well, the soft machine was repaired, and the smoke detectors replaced and at the end of July we said goodbye to Rev. Eric Posa and welcomed Rev. Lortie.

We had a time of mourning with the loss of Bob Terrell, Judy Christ, Merva Pankratz, and David Moss.

The Social Action Committee set up the Share the Plate program and the Stewardship Fundraising Committee held a profitable rummage sale.

Necessary repairs to the sanctuary fire alarm and AC/HEAT controls got done. The office was rearranged to make room for the file cabinets for the church archives. Helen Mauk began work on the archive records.

In September, with great sadness, First UU said goodbye to DRE Mary Alice Partain. On Friday, September 28th, the congregation was invited to participate in START UP. Facilitators: Margaret Roseboom, Susan Smith (SWUUC Executive Director) charted the history of the church as told by participating members. The next morning, the Board, Committee on Ministry and staff attended the second part of START-UP and charted out the future plans for First UU.

In October, a new Sunday Sexton was hired. All campus building doors were rekeyed, and new codes for the sanctuary and office were implemented. A color printer was donated by Steve Feinstein's company and it was installed by the First UU computer group. The Fall Festival, the YRUU Youth Rally and the Halloween party all took place and were successful.

In November, the church moved to policy governance. A new staff organizational chart was created

and the Manual of Operations was modified to reflect the change.

At the December congregational meeting the 2008 budget was approved. The report on the church finances was very good.

The congregation mourned again for four more friends and members: George Pankratz, Bob Mullen, Shirley Morrison and June Henderson.

In January, Church Mutual insurance provided us with a list of safety recommendations. The Maintenance and Repair committee did as many repairs and changes as could be done to make the campus safer and more handicap accessible. Search for a new Sunday morning sexton began. End of year statements were sent to members. A new DLRE, Dr. Sheri Phillabaum, joined the staff. She soon went to work and has implemented the SAFE Church program as required by the church's insurance policy.

In February, a new Sunday sexton was hired. The wedding fee schedule was revised to reflect the cost of things and may have to go up again soon. The church is receiving more requests this year for weddings. The carpet was removed from the Fellowship Hall floor and the old terrazzo floor was back. A couple of spots that have no floor covering will be addressed later.

On March 9th, Rev. Bret Lortie was officially installed as First UU called minister in a beautiful ceremony. The color printer was put to good use for the beautiful order of service prepared by Bret.

After discovering the shortcomings of the current messaging system, the search began for a new phone system for the church office. Two companies have given estimates and soon we will have a new state of the art telephone system.

In April, the Stewardship Fundraising Committee had a successful auction and casino night fundraising event. A new microwave oven was purchased for the office and a new water heater for the Fellowship Hall.

It is May now, and the parking lot has been newly stripped after being sealed some time ago. The patched area will be sealed next month. The notices for the upcoming congregational meeting were sent to all members via mail and email.

On June 15th, Minister of Music William James Ross will take a leave of absence until September 2009.

Respectfully submitted,
Elena J. Manzano-Lusk (aka Julie Lusk)

Board President's Annual Report

What a wonderful year this has been to be Board President! We've experienced almost a full year of Bret Lortie's ministry, seen major increases in church attendance, hired Sheri Phillabaum as our new Director of Lifespan Religious Education, fine-tuned Board and Council roles, and developed an increasingly rational approach to church finances.

Bret's ministry has had a strong positive effect on the entire congregation. Average church attendance has grown by thirty or forty every Sunday, with one occasion of almost one hundred above average! Bret's sermons have sparked lively positive discussion after every Sunday service and have had great spiritual impact. Bret has tackled all other aspects of his ministry at First UU, from his involved participation in Board, Council, and committee meetings to connecting with members on a group and one-to-one basis. There's a great enthusiasm and upbeat feeling among the congregation, and I attribute much of this to Bret's influence.

Additionally, Bret has taken on the role of supervisor of the Office Administrator, Director of Lifespan Religious Education, and upcoming Volunteer Coordinator. This came about as the Board fine-tuned its role and its relation to church employees. Creation of an organizational chart helped the Board to see how lines of authority were confused or non-existent. This new arrangement is much better; we now have clear lines of supervision for all

church employees/contractors. Board members see themselves as liaisons, not supervisors.

This year has also seen an expansion of the Council's role as a decision-making group. The Council has done well with its new responsibilities as the Board continues to focus on financial and policy issues.

Church finances continue to improve as the increased generosity of the congregation is coupled with improvements in budget development. The establishment of the Finance Committee had a major impact on the way the budget was created. More individuals and groups than ever were able to have a say about how resources were allocated for the 2008 fiscal year. Thanks to the thoughtful action of the Finance Committee, we are doing much better at anticipating future needs and building up funds to meet upcoming issues. Despite some unanticipated expenses, budgets are running well in the black.

Another change this year is the arrival of Sheri Phillabaum as Director of Lifespan Religious Education. She has done much commuting while in the process of relocating from Corpus Christi to San Antonio. Most of her work this year has been on a part-time basis. In spite of her limited time in place, Sheri has already made her presence known in a very positive way, and she has done an incredible amount of work. Her Words for All Ages during the service have been consistently well done. We look forward to Sheri's expert touch as she completes her transition to First UU.

Being President has been a joyful, rewarding experience, and I thank you for the opportunity to serve. I have been continually impressed with dedicated members who contribute time, energy, skills, and financial support to First UU. We're on our way.

In Faith, Reason, and Community,
Allan Kropp

Annual Report of the President-Elect

As President-Elect, I have had the privilege to sit on the Board of Directors, and to act as Chair of the Council, which consists of the church's various Committee Chairs. I have had a steep "learning curve" during this time, and I have learned so much about our church and its wonderful members and staff. My main experience has been one of being totally AMAZED to learn about all the wonderful work so many people do on behalf of the church.

This year has been one of tremendous change for our church—with a wonderful new Minister, a wonderful new Director of Lifespan Religious Education, a wonderful new Sunday Sexton, and our wonderful continuing staff. The promise of growth—both in numbers and in spiritual depth—is real for our church.

During this church year, as the Board moved into a more "Policy Governance" role, the Council developed its function of leadership and decision-making for most church activities. This means that, other than policy and financial issues, which are handled by the Board, the Council is the way to get things done in our church.

I helped to develop a proposal to revise our organization and re-draw our Staff Organization Chart, so that the Minister supervises staff (rather than the old model of individual Board members supervising staff.)

As President-Elect, I also served on the Finance Committee.

It is a good thing we have a year as President-Elect before becoming President of the Congregation. I have learned a great deal, and Allan Kropp has been a wonderful role model.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Realini

Annual Report from the Past President

This year, as Past President, I focused on both the development of a Facilities Needs Assessment and the Long Range Plan.

Facilities Needs Assessment

The completed Facilities Needs Assessment will consist of three phases which are: (1) an initial assessment of the current status of the physical plant noting current and potential problems; (2) information gathered from all committees; and (3) information gathered from our renters. One, 3, 5, 7, and 10 year time frame are used for each phase.

Phase 1 was completed last Church year and Phase 2 was completed this Church year. Phase 3 should be completed during the next Church year.

Phases one and two have been combined and from this input, the Council has begun transitioning the assessment into a Facilities Plan by beginning to establish priorities and cost estimates.

The Facilities Plan will be a living document that will assist the Board and Council in such areas as expending capital funds when they become available, developing the Annual Church Budget and estimating our present and future capital needs.

2007-2008 Long Range Plan

Key items accomplished:

We hired a full-time Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE).

Our Sunday services have improved by implementing an alternative format for Joys and Concerns.

Our Small/Covenant Groups Program is in place including facilitator training and expansion of topics.

Key item deleted:

The Music Fest.

Key item added:

To conduct capital improvement campaign to upgrade facilities.

Respectfully submitted
Lee Hampton

Annual Report of the Treasurer, June 2007 – May 2008

I am nearing the end of my first year as Treasurer of FUUCSA and am looking forward to serving the remainder of my two-year term.

Highlights:

- 2007 was another good financial year for our church. For the year ending 31 Dec 2007, FUUCSA had a budget surplus of \$41,587. In addition, excluding CREF and Endowment Funds, cash holdings for the year ending 31 Dec 2007 were \$267,228—an increase of \$34,587 over the previous twelve months. We achieved a budget surplus and increased cash holdings because actual expenses were 97.03% of budgeted expenses and actual income was 108.35% of budgeted income.
- In early 2007, the previous Treasurer and current Director of Finance placed all church funds with The Frost Companies: Frost Bank and Frost Brokerage Services. Doing so has facilitated managing the financial affairs of the church and increased interest earned on investments. Specifically, 2007 investment earnings were \$11,706—an increase of \$6019 over the previous year.
- In February 2008, the board allocated funds from the 2007 budget surplus to the Capital Improvement Reserve for repairs, maintenance, and upgrades to church facilities. During the first few months of 2008, the board expended funds to resurface the parking lot, update the sanctuary sound system, and improve safety and accessibility features in the sanctuary.

It is a pleasure to serve as Treasurer of FUUCSA. Please let me know if I can provide any further information.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucy M. Norton

Annual Report of the Finance Director

The most significant financial event this year was our 2008 Stewardship Campaign (See stewardship report).

Other items of importance are as follows:

- Ended 2007 with a \$43,000 budget surplus.
The Board approved placing the entire 2007 surplus into our Capital Improvement Fund for updating and maintaining the church campus.
- Ended fiscal year with \$285,000 on deposit in all accounts.
This is the second year in a row that we have added significant funds to our reserve accounts.
- Reduced emphasis on fundraising in the 2008 budget by 35%.
It is our plan that, by 2009, all fundraising activities will be for specific purposes. We also rewrote our fundraising guidelines, and implemented a policy that moves most of our fundraising activities, such as the sale of HEB Gift Cards, from the patio to the bookstore.
- Worked with Special Fundraising volunteers to revise fundraising events.

We will be having major events in the fall and spring. Smaller events will be limited to a few easily prepared functions. We are working to create more fun and greater fellowship at our *fund*raising events.

- Increased our payment of UUA dues.
In 2007 we paid 10%; in 2008 we will pay 75% of our allotted amount.

- Established the Finance Committee.
This committee has been instrumental in preparing the recommended budget and in helping to monitor various other financial demands. We also established a new method for assembling our annual budget, with the guidance of the Council and Finance Committee, so that the process is much more transparent the budget is being designed.

- Sent quarterly Finance Director Reports to members.
These were mailed to all of our membership with their quarterly pledge statements.

- Assisted in coordination of our employee benefit package.

First UU Church is a very exciting place to worship and make lasting friendships. It is a great joy to be able to participate in the process of supporting this wonderful church.

Alan Chase
Finance Director

Annual Report of the Director of Fellowship

MEMBER CARE: Member Care continued to care for the sick and help our member with their joys and concerns. Member Care is always cited by our congregation as an area of excellence. This year we had more than the usual number of deaths in our congregation and consequently, many of Member Care's resources were dedicated to memorial services.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: There were no Social Activities chairpersons this year but there continues to be at least one social activity each month in addition to all the interest groups that are ongoing. We were pleased to have a new "family friendly" circle dinner initiated.

DENOMINATIONAL CONNECTIONS: Denominational Connections kept us well informed of Unitarian Universalist issues and events. Their enthusiasm has generated good attendance at Unitarian Universalist conferences.

MEMBERSHIP: Membership has worked diligently to not only increase our membership but to ensure that membership is a meaningful experience. One of the things they have instituted is a pot luck supper for new members.

SOCIAL ACTION: Social Action has broadened their activities to include a wide range of Social Action initiatives and special programs. Some of their initiatives are Communities organized for Public Service/Metro Alliance; Under the Bridge (which feeds the hungry); UU Housing ; Basura Bash (cleaning the river banks); Cesar Chavez march; and San Antonio Community of Churches.

Some of the special programs they have initiated are the *Music for Life* concert featuring Sara Hickman;

Martin Luther King Holiday Dinner; and the building rehabilitation project for All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Brownsville .

Special note should be made of the Share the Plate project wherein one Sunday a month the collection is given to a worthwhile community organization.

Arlis Olson
Fellowship Director

Annual Report of the Director of Worship & Education

Worship

Our new minister, Rev. Bret Lortie, has instilled vitality and spirituality in our worship services this year. Rev. Lortie has developed a liturgical calendar to celebrate our UU heritage and mission, while incorporating innovation. As a result, average attendance at our Sunday morning worship services has noticeably increased.

In addition to delivering personal, relevant, and thought-provoking sermons during his Sundays in the pulpit, Rev. Lortie has worked hard to insure that his Sundays off are either covered by other ministers or vetted lay speakers. Several other aspects of the worship service have been enhanced or added to improve the overall quality of the worship experience: These include:

- upgrades to the sound system and purchase of new assisted listening devices for our hearing-impaired members
- re-introduction of spoken joys and sorrows (by the worship leader)
- projected text (hymns, readings) and visual elements
- monthly “contemporary” music with outside musicians when minister of music is out
- greater inclusion of children & youth through increased number of intergenerational services or participation opportunities (e.g., chalice lighting)

Our worship services have also continued to be graced this past year by the wonderful music brought to us by our long-time minister of music, Bill Ross, our dedicated choir members, and the many talented musicians in our congregation such as Mark Ackerman

Rev. Lortie has been supported during his first year by the Worship Committee, which has been very ably headed by Co-Chairs David Rodriguez and Ron Dodson. Together, the Worship Committee and Rev. Lortie have developed a “Worship Associates” program to increase and improve the quality of lay participation.

Youth Religious Education

We were all very saddened by Mary Alice Partain’s decision to resign her position as Director of Religious Education (DRE) as of September 23, 2007, but wish her well in her pursuit of a new career in Environmental Education, a logical extension of her training as a Master Naturalist. Mary Alice brought much needed stability to the Youth RE program during her 3-year tenure.

In response to Mary Alice’s departure, the Board accepted a proposal to transform the part-time DRE position into a full-time Director of Lifespan Religious Education. The Board established a search

committee and unanimously accepted the committee's recommendation to hire an experienced religious educator, Dr. Sheri Phillabaum, who had been the part-time DRE at the UU Church of Corpus Christi since 2001. Prior to that she served for a shorter time as DRE of the UU Church of Tampa. Sheri has a BA in Religious Studies and PhD in English Literature. Earlier in her life, she taught at the college level as an instructor and visiting professor, so is also experienced in working with adult learners. She also has extensive experience in the theatre and playwriting. During her brief time with us thus far, Sheri has demonstrated wonderful organizational skills and delighted young and old with her imaginative Words for All Ages. Sheri also is pitching in to help the Board update and develop comprehensive safety policies for the Congregation as recently required by our insurance carrier.

Sheri assumed her responsibilities as DLRE part-time in January 2008 and full-time as of April 1, 2008. Our two wonderful Youth RE Co-Chairs, Stacy Barnwell and Moon Brand, volunteered considerable time above and beyond the call of duty to keep the Youth RE programs going during the time between Mary Alice's last day in September and when Sheri started full-time. Thanks to Stacy and Moon; our new RE Aide, Faith Rathman; and our many wonderful teachers, youth advisors, and other RE volunteers, we were able to offer a full contingent of YRE programming this year, including OWL classes.

Adult Religious Education

Bryant Mauk and Mark Ackerman continued their service this year as Adult RE Co-Chairs. In addition to our regular Sunday morning offerings for adults (Religious Explorations, Spiritual Seekers, Parenting Class, and Forums highlighting Share the Plate Recipients) our congregation offers a variety of educational and affinity groups that meet throughout the week. To better meet the growing demand from visitors and new members, Rev. Lortie has begun offering monthly "New UU" classes. Rev. Lortie also organized the start-up of several covenant groups and provides ongoing training and support with the assistance of Jeff Addington. After concentrating initially on Youth RE, Sheri Phillabaum will begin to spend more time and effort towards the development and coordination of a Lifespan RE program for our congregation. Future possibilities include the adoption of the UUA's new "Tapestry of Faith" for children, youth, and adults. A start-up" retreat with the Southwest District Lifespan Religious Education consultant has been scheduled for August 2 to help First UU of San Antonio transition from Religious Education to Lifespan Education.

Respectfully submitted
Polly Noel

Communications Committee Annual Report

The main activities for the year were as follows:

1. Announced Rev. Lortie's arrival to the larger community through TPR Radio Messages and local press. Approximately fifteen, 20-second messages, announced over a one-month period (***Thank-you, Brian Lytle for your hard work!***) and press-releases to numerous local newspapers
2. Publicized Guest speakers Michael Down January 27, 2008 - *Thank God for Evolution*
3. Renegotiated the AT&T Yellow Pages contract. Printed listings were down-sized to reduce costs.
4. Wireless access points installed to improve signal in patio area and fellowship hall / library.

5. The website continues to be ably handled by Mike Brand. *Thank-you, Mike for all your hard work!*
6. With the growing importance of web-based mapping and directions, as well as GPS navigation, we are looking into improving some of the more peculiar results these sometimes yield to potential visitors trying to find their way here.
7. New Sign/wayside pulpit on access road installed, thanks to Brian Lyttle's hard work. *Thank-you again, Brian!*
8. Automated monthly reminders regarding newsletter submissions were set up.
9. Monthly newsletters distributed electronically and/or hard copy mailed to all members.

Submitted by Theresa Addington & Jim Noel

Grounds Committee Annual Report

The Grounds Committee Co-chairs would like to thank Jordan Reed, Carrie Salas, Sandy Barnwell, Stacy Barnwell, Elke Wilfong, Kay Allison, Donna Reed, David Rodriguez, Morgan Yost, Thomas Yost, and Vanessa Lucio for helping with watering, weeding, pruning, planting, and shoveling around the grounds during the year. We would like to acknowledge any and all church members who helped with the grounds that we may have missed mentioning

Ant colonies have been popping up everywhere on the grounds. Colonies near footpaths, on the playground, and adjacent to the parking lots were applied with Safer Brand organic insecticide (Spinosad). Please inform the Grounds committee if untreated ant mounds need attention.

A representative from the Grounds Committee attended several new member orientation sessions, served on the personnel committee where new evaluation guidelines were developed, and served as part of the long range facilities task force.

Thirteen cubic yards of pecan-shell mulch was purchased for spreading around the grounds on several of the formal planting areas.

A special workday was scheduled that was staffed as a social action project by the YRUU during their October rally. Weeding, pruning roses, turning playground mulch, and spreading pecan shell mulch were accomplished. The Co-chairs would like to acknowledge Anna Chatillon-Reed for organizing the YRUU activity and the following youth: Sama'an Ashrawi, Austin Chatillon-Reed, Alicia Sanchez, Graham Cook, and Laura Hall for their manual labor.

Developed plans for a Composting site, then purchased 90-gallon compost bin and put it on the slab where the old BBQ pit used to be outside the sanctuary. The bin is made out of recycled plastic, and could easily be moved to another location if the current site is not adequate. Only vegetable, fruit, grass, leaves, coffee grounds, and things of that nature should be put in the bin. No meat.

A volunteer donated and planted the Violas, Cyclamen and Gerber daisies around the Peace Pole. Additional shade tolerant plants were added around the Peace Pole.

Plans are being made for plantings for the Richmond bed. The plantings will include two types of Day Lillies, Clematis, Mandavilla, Amaryllis, Ecanacias, Shasta Daisies, and Spreading Asters. Sandy Barnwell has developed the planting plans for the bed.

The Grounds Co-chairs and several volunteers have been increasing the amount of watering being done on plantings, since there hasn't been as much rain this past Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Every few years it is a good idea to have a certified arborist examine the large trees on our grounds. It has been more than two years to our knowledge since that's been done. We're especially concerned about safety: dead limbs that could fall from the large red oak outside the sanctuary or from the cedar elms on the north side. We also want to make sure the trees are healthy and properly trimmed away from buildings. With Oak Wilt a real problem in the area, we didn't want to attempt to do this with volunteers. Two certified arborists examined the Red Oak, Cedar Elms, and two Crepe Myrtles on the west side of the Fellowship Hall and gave estimates for various degrees of service.

The Committee recommendation based on discussions with the arborists are to Prune the Red Oak and to Remove the Diseased Cedar Elm. It is hard to gauge how long the leaning Cedar Elm will live. It depends on how long it has lived with the root rot so far. It could be just a season or two until it needs removal. Given the proximity to nearby buildings, it should be removed soon.

Doug Yost ('08)
Devin Zimmerman ('09)

Maintenance and Repair Committee Report

Tri Chairs: Robert Kadanka, Bill Pridgen, Jack Melton,

BIG PICTURE:

- SIGNS - New and Old Direction Signs
 - Directional Signs (two purchase waves) put up with backer boards
 - Building Name Signs updated with backer boards
- CAMPUS MAPS
 - Old Maps relocated and updated with backer boards
 - New Maps being researched/made
 - ALL MAPS ORIENTATED FOR BEST COMPREHENSION
- ROOF LEAK - Sanctuary
 - temporary sealing applied
 - Bentley, the contractor who installed the roof on the Sanctuary, is responding to our calls and has worked on the roof and replaced calking. During the last big rain of about ½ an inch, no leaks were detected.
 - Still to Do – Replace the roof, address the mold and painting inside, ...
- RAMP for the Sanctuaries Emergency Exit researched, contracted, and installed
- FIRE ALARM - New Fire Alarm System to replace the old on at the Sanctuary
- Little things
 - Painted over the graffiti on the three Highway Control Boxes (at least 4 times this year)
 - Insurance Inspection – discrepancy report resulted in many minor fixes
 - Replace the original hot water heater in Channing-Murray
- Routines – established routines done

CONTRACTED WORK

- Sanctuary Emergency and E Mechanical Rm Door Repairs

- Kitchen Stove and Oven
- Installation of the hot water heater in Channing-Murray
- Ramp at the Sanctuaries emergency Exit

ASSISTANCE:

- Patrick Kenney (A/C programming help)
- Dave Stafford (good general help)
- Tracey Knouse (sign painting)

DONATIONS:

- Pat Cummins – Mirror and Wall Aesthetics
- Church members for the Kitchen Stove and Oven via Fund Lunch

COMMUNICATIONS:

RESEARCH:

- ROOF LEAK - Sanctuary
- SIDING - Estimates to put siding on Jefferson (to eliminate painting and other exterior needs)
 - Concrete siding \$34T, Vinyl - \$15T
 - Researching Contracted Painting

WORK DONE:

--- **BUILDINGS** ---

SANCTUARY:

- Hung a picture in the men's bathroom
- Collected donations for aesthetic improvements
- Emergency and E Mechanical Rm Doors – Rust removal and Painting
- Re-hung a foyer acoustic ceiling tile
- Roof leak research
- Calking added to the roof at the probable leaks
- Researched the Fire Alarm going off
- Searched for Fire Alarm papers – none found and company out of business
- ADA ramp for the emergency exit. concrete added to gap, rocks added to the end
- Prep / Research for contracted construction
- Roof recalking by the original contractor

CHANNING-MURRAY (Fellowship Hall, Library, Kitchen):

- Replaced 3 AAA batteries in the Library AC controller
- Reprogrammed the AC controller
- Moved the Refrigerator from the Jefferson to the Library for the music festival
- Mover the Warmer from storage to the Library for the music festival
- Mounted the old wooden “Channing-Murray” sign on a backer board
- Prep for Music Festival – Relocated Jefferson refrigerator, moved the warmer out of storage
- Fellowship Hall, Sound Closet – Removed the passage lock
- Contracted Work – New Stove and Oven and Installation
- Fixed a screen door
- Library – research of stain in ceiling tiles (nothing discerned)
- Gathered material to keep hands off the Library A/C controls
- Replace the hot water heater

DORTHEA DIX (Office):

- Roof sealant applied to pipe protrusions and flashing
- Replaced the entry hall switch
- Replaced a ballast in the entry hall
- Replaced a light bulb in the entry hall
- Replaced the AC switch in the Minister's office
- N side – security light's photoelectric cell replaced

- S side – security light’s photoelectric cell replaced

THOREAU:

- sign added
- Center N Entry Door – Replaced the missing door latch

LONGFELLOW (Nursery):

- sign added
- nursery sign added
- Upgraded the name sign to current backboard standards
- Moved the name sign and the bulletin board
- Replaced a fluorescent light

JEFFERSON:

- Removed sheet rock sheets to the dumpster
- 2 signs added
- Entry Door – Replaced the door closer by moving the one from the emergency exit (E room)
- NW room – Replaced the missing door latch
- Upgraded the name sign to current backboard standards
- E side – security light’s photoelectric cell replaced

PATIO, PORCHES, WALKWAYS:

- playground sign added
- replaced a playground fence board
- removal of boards left out (probably for several years)
- Filled a gap in the walkway between Channing-Murray and the Dorthea Dix buildings with some rocks
- Built and painted backer board for the “old maps”
- Updated the maps by removing unnecessary info
- Installed all 4 “old maps” --- Locations: 1) On the porch from the main I-10 parking lot to the Fellowship hall, 2&3) At the start of the covered walk from the north parking lot (on the right at the Dorthea Dix (office) and on the left at the Longfellow (nursery) buildings, the 4th one in the center of the patio.
- ALL 4 signs are hung in a manner that puts the orientation direction of a sign in exactly the same direction that one is looking AND which gives the least confusion.
- Removed several wasps nest and wasps

PARKING LOTS, FENCES, EQUIPMENT: {Equipment includes {Play Ground, Furniture [Inside (tables, chairs, desks...), Outside (Picnic tables...)], Tools (Housekeeping, Shop...)} }

- Toddler Playground Gate Repair

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Painter over the graffiti vandalized Highway Control Boxes (3 or 4 times)
- Ant spray applied to porch posts
- For the Master Color Interior & Exterior Plan provided by Linda Manning (Interior Designer) - paint chips were obtained and organized for easy use
- Fixing the “Mystery Pals” broken wheels 75%
- Touch-up on the entry sign by the access road
- Putting the M&R Facilities Report onto the Web Site, Waiting for Web Master’s timing for software implementation

Denominational Connections Annual Report

Our goal in denominational connections is to help our congregation further its mission by taking advantage of the resources of the larger UU community – both within the Southwest UU Conference and within the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

Activities during the past year:

Co-hosted with Social Action the film screening of *USA vs. Al-Arian* on April 2. Forty people attended the film, including eight members of the local Muslim community.

Sponsored the Great Decisions discussion group. Great Decisions is a long standing global affairs education program developed by the Foreign Policy Association. Discussion groups meet 8 times to discuss a wide range of foreign policy issues. Each week has a specific issue and background info is provided via a briefing book. Issues were wide ranging and included such items as U.S. – China Economic Relations; Latin America: The Next U.S. President’s Agenda; and Iraq: Strategies for Dealing with Uncertainty.

Provided a newsletter article on the two declared candidates for president of the UUA. The election of a new president of the UUA will take place in 2009.

Sponsored a FUUND lunch on May 18 to facilitate discussion of the 2 Congregational Study/Action Issues that are on the agenda for the UUA’s General Assembly in June. The two issues are Nuclear Disarmament and Ethical Eating: Food & Environmental Justice. One of these will be selected at the General Assembly as an area of focus for all UU congregations to learn about and to take action on over the next four years.

Hosted a FUUND lunch in the fall to raise funds that will enable church leadership to attend Southwest UU Conference trainings or conferences. Southwest UU Conferences are designed to provide training to congregational leadership and also to build connections between UU congregations in our region.

Ellen Shrouf
Donna Harrison

Member Care Annual Report

Members:

Memorial service reception co-chairs: Donna Reed and Pat Cummins

Telephone tree: Diane Duesterhoeft, Marian Swellander, Atalie Watts, Bryant & Helen Mauk, Arlis Olson, Betsy Kropp, Jane Tuck, Susanne Rupp, Marilyn Kurtz, Stanna Welch

On-going grief group facilitator: Marianne Ross

Additional members: Rowena Rodgers, Lou Stafford, Sylvia Wheeler, Jordan Reed, Marion Moss

Carolers during the Week of Caroling: Bill & Frances Ross, Jim, Polly, & Olivia Noel, Mara Jewell, Jim Dauchy, Nola Westbrook, Markay Cheney, Jean Graham, Gloria Metcalf, Linda Ewing, Diane Duesterhoeft & Mike Phillips, Ann, Alena, & Leah Hildalgo, Atalie Watts, Carrie & Dylan Salas, Jeanna & Sarah Stephen, Eva Gonzales, Martha Cooley & Dave Minnich, Sandy Barnwell, Susanne & Nevin Rupp, Shannon Hawkins, Heather Hedquist, Jessie & Sarah Allen, Jim Reiff, Sasha Menard, Cheryl Lardy, Jim Chenault, Marilyn Stavinoah, Keith & Linda Rodgers, Kathy & Steve Feinstein, Donna Harrison, Don & Mary Lou Hymel, Karen Davis, Stanna Welch

Member Care co-chairs: Atalie Watts and Stanna Welch

In addition to the people listed above, our compassionate church community has also shown its love and support for our members. The following are some of the ways that we have demonstrated we care:

- 1) nine memorial receptions
- 2) flowers or donations made in memory of our departed
- 3) donations of food; grocery deliveries
- 4) birthday, new baby, sympathy, and other cards
- 5) rides to doctor, church
- 6) caroling to seventeen people in fourteen locations
- 7) assistance with relocating
- 8) hospital, special care facilities, home visitations
- 9) celebration of special occasions
- 10) phone calls

The truth is that we are all members of the Member Care committee. Time and again this church has shown its love through its actions. We do "support one another in a community of love and fellowship."

Thank you for caring,
Atalie Watts and Stanna Welch

Membership Annual Report

Submitted by Shannon Hawkins and Dorothy Wallace, Co-chairs

Total membership gain for calendar year 2007: 63 families (86 people)

Church Membership total as of April 2008: 254 families, 357 members

Since June 2007, we have:

*presented a workshop on Growth February 6, 2008 for interested members of the congregation using the DVD "Welcoming the Newcomer" This DVD was produced by the Jefferson UU Church in Golden, Colorado. We were encouraged that we are already doing much of what they recommend, but need to do better at integrating people into church life once they've become members. The approval of the new staff position of Volunteer Coordinator and New Member Potlucks are things added this year to address that.

*started having quarterly New Member Potluck Dinners (new and old members welcome) to encourage fellowship between recent members and also with more "seasoned" members

*held New UU Orientation classes in August 2007, November 2007, February 2008, April 2008, and May 2008. In the spring we started offering classes monthly instead of quarterly.

* the format of New UU Orientation classes has changed slightly as our new minister, Rev. Bret Lortie, tweaks it...a little less history and more time for Q&A with the attendees.

*held New Member Recognition Services December 16, 2007 and May 18, 2008.

*increased the greeter core from 2 to 4 per Sunday (thanks to Pat Beck's recruiting efforts) so we now

have one stationed near the door, 2 at the greeter table, and one on the patio. Starting in April, one of the greeters now counts people on campus who are not in the worship service and hands that number to the head usher. This gives a more accurate count of all the people who come to us on Sundays and is in line with policy of most other UU churches.

Social Action Committee 2007-2008 Report

Submitted by Diane Duesterhoeft, Chair

In addition to ongoing Social Action portfolios, several new initiatives were implemented this year.

The **Share the Plate** program was initiated in August 2007. Congregants have been informed about recipient organizations through newsletter articles, announcements, Forum presentations, informal conversations with recipient organization representatives, the web site, and brief testimonials at the 2nd Sunday of the month Worship Service where the Share the Plate collection is gathered. Due to low attendance, the Forum portion of the program has been suspended beginning in May 2008. The 2008-2009 cycle is scheduled to begin in September. Nominations will be solicited during the month of June through the newsletter and announcements. See end of this report for 2007-2008 collections to date.

On December 8, 2007, we hosted The "**Music for Life**" concert and dialogue featuring Sara Hickman and Shelley King (the 2008 Official Texas State Musician) in our sanctuary. Former Bexar County District Attorney Sam Millsap and Dr. Roger Barnes spoke. Rev. Bret Lortie opened and closed the event and Bob Van Steenburg of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (TCADP) served as emcee. The concert was mentioned in the *San Antonio Current* and the *San Antonio Express-News' Weekender*. It had 19 co-sponsors, 115 people attended, and \$1500 was raised for TCADP through ticket and merchandise sales and donations.

Nearly 90 people attended a Southern-style potluck dinner at First UU honoring **Martin Luther King** on January 19. Rev. Lortie recounted UU involvement in the Civil Rights movement. Dr. Carey Latimore, IV (Assistant Professor of History, Trinity University) delivered the keynote address. \$372 was raised for the city's Martin Luther King Scholarship. About 50 from our congregation participated in the Citywide **March** on January 21.

In December we coordinated a **fund lunch** that raised **\$550** for painting, tiling and roofing repairs materials for **building rehabilitation** at **All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church** of Brownsville (TX). Three youth and ten adults from First UU either **worked on repairs** and/or worshipped the weekend of March 14-16 in Brownsville. In addition to working on the building, selling books and t-shirts, and cooking for others, members attended a rally culminating a 9-day March protesting the Homeland Security plan to build a wall along the border that would divide the UT-Brownsville campus. Rev. Lortie spoke at the rally.

Debbie Curtis represented First UU at **Cesar Chavez Events** planning meetings. Ten First UUs participated in a **March 25th Interfaith Service**. Rev Lortie represented our congregation among the eleven religious organizations that participated in the service.

Denominational Connections and Social Action Committees co-hosted the film screening of *USA vs. Al-Arian* on April 2. Forty people attended the film, including eight members of the local Muslim community.

Social Action coordinated a Fiesta-theme **fund lunch** on **April 20**. **\$486.25** was raised and sent to the **Unitarian Universalist Service Committee**.

□ Ongoing portfolios:

○ **Basura Bash/River(bank) Clean Up**: Howard Haradon and Melanie Constantinides co-coordinated First UU's efforts. Twenty multi-generational participants helped clean our adopted river section on March 29.

- o **Metro Alliance/COPS:** Six new potential leaders from First UU participated in a COPS/Metro leadership session held at our campus in January 2008. We now count 10 leaders as part of our COPS/Metro "organizing team" of leaders. At least six of us at First UU took the time to go to Austin in 2007 to meet with our legislators on a range of issues, including lengthening the coverage period of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) from 6 to 12 months. COPS/Metro Alliance and the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) were credited with this victory. All through the summer of 2007 our leaders met with our city council and reminded them of the commitments they made on funding for QUEST, After School Challenge and the Education Partnership. It was a hard fight, all the programs we advocated for saw substantial increases in the city budget. We took a stand against a proposed increase in trash and drainage fees. As a result of our speaking out, we worked out a compromise with the city manager to create a \$1.6 million dollar fund that waives the fee increases for 66,000 low income families. In September, ten First UU leaders participated with 100 other leaders in a two-day training session with IAF Supervisors Sr. Christine Stephens and Ernie Cortes. At the end of November, several First UU leaders participated in an Economic Summit in Houston with IAF leaders from throughout the Southwest. In December 2007 we won a huge victory for Project QUEST when we got the City Council to vote 9-2 to lower the matching funds that QUEST has to find from outside sources. Nine First UU leaders participated in a Delegates Assembly of 200 leaders held April 29. Mike Phillips was a co-chair of the assembly that laid out an organizational strategy for the coming year. The latest COPS/Metro victory was the successful passage of the Tourist/Venue Tax Extension Election on May 10. COPS/Metro supported the Youth and Athletic Fields Proposition. Eleven First UU members participated in Get Out the Vote efforts through phone calls and block walking. All four propositions passed.
- o **Under the Bridge** volunteers continued to prepared food and serve the hungry on the first Sunday of every other month.
- o **UU Housing Assistance Corporation:** In addition to several of our members who serve on the Board, volunteers worked on minor repairs and cleaning on a home at 1015 W. Mulberry in the Beacon Hill neighborhood.

Thank you to all who have supported Social Action efforts through contributions of time, money, food, and supplies. Special thanks to Debbie Curtis, Marilyn Stavinoha, Jane Tuck, Arlis Olson, Mike Phillips, Gary Ross, Susanne Rupp, Bill Holler, Howard Haradon, Melanie Constantinides, Robin Gara, Lucinda Maxwell, Connie Rayes, Luann Tomkinson, and Rev. Bret Lortie.

Share the Plate: 2007-2008

<u>Month</u>	<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Forum Date</u>	<u>Forum Presenter</u>	<u>Forum Attendance</u>	<u>STP Sunday</u>	<u>Amount Gathered</u>
May 2008	Dare to Love (Rainbow Room) www.daretolove.info	<i>noneno Forum</i>		n/a	5/11/2008	\$860.13
Nominator	Chris Boyle					
April 2008	Child Advocates of San Antonio (CASA) casa-satx.org	4/6/2008	Janet Ketcham	7	4/13/2008	\$1,305.71
Nominator	Chris Boyle					
March 2008	Community Responsibility Endowment Fund (CREF)	<i>nonen/a</i>		n/a	3/9/2008	\$2,477.00 +\$700.00 prior to collection
February 2008	San Antonio AIDS Foundation www.saaftx.org	2/3/2008	Jill Rips	11 + 19 @ Rel.Expl. = 30	2/10/2008	\$1,800.25
Nominator	Jane Tuck	Note: Needle-exchange letter writing campaign				

January 2008	San Antonio Students Stand & Deliver	1/6/2008	Teresa Van Hoy	6	1/13/2008	\$1,075.46
Nominator	Pat Beck	Note: test fiesta on 1/26/2008; refurbished computers for students, YRE Social Action project in April				
December 2007	Under the Bridge	12/2/2007	Ellen Ott	8	12/9/2007	\$971.17
Nominator	Pat Beck	Note: Toiletries collected				
November 2007	Fisher House	11/4/2007	Russ Fritz	26	11/11/2007	\$1,369.96
Nominator	Dorothy Wallace	Note: 2/12/2008 tour of facilities				
October 2007	Battered Women's & Children's Shelter of Bexar County (Family Violence Prevention Services [FVPS])	10/7/2007	Atalie Watts	7	10/14/2007	\$824.53
Nominator	Atalie Watts					
September 2007	UU Housing Assistance Corp.	9/2/2007	Gary Lewis	12	9/9/2007	\$1,127.98
Nominator	Chris Boyle					
August 2007	San Antonio Youth Literacy	8/12/2007	Pat Medina	7	8/12/2007	\$560.80
Nominator	Donna Harrison					

Social Activities Annual Report

We had no committee chairs for Social Activities this year; nevertheless, there were Social Activities planned for most of the major holidays. We owe a debt of gratitude to all the other committees that planned events with a social component. This helped round out our calendar.

Circle dinners is being facilitated by Susanne Rupp and continues to be an enjoyable activity for all participating.

We had a new "family friendly" Circle dinner initiated this year, for people with children, facilitated by Ann Hidalgo.

We had our second past president's luncheon with over twenty people attending.

There are several interest groups that continue to meet. They include the Book group, Young Adult Group, Amateur Piano Group, Quilting Group, Seniors Lunch Bunch, Interweave and Simplicity Circle.

Arlis Olson
Acting Social Activities Chair

Stewardship Committee Annual Report

The 2008 Stewardship Campaign kicked off October 1st and officially ended on October 29th. By November 7th, the results of the drive were as follows:

Total Pledges	\$ 364,600.00	Members Pledged	95%
Increase over 2007	\$28,847.00	Members Who Increased Pledges	34%
Average Increase	8.6%	Members Who Decreased Pledges	11%

We ended the fiscal year with total pledges of \$364,600.00. Fourteen members of the congregation made no pledge at all and one member was moved to Emeritus member status (no pledge is required).

This year's drive saw changes over those of recent years, and was fundamentally conducted in the following manner:

- The focus for giving shifted away from the budget; instead, members were urged to assess the importance of the church in their lives and encouraged to give accordingly
- In September, every church member received two letters (from our board president, minister, and from the campaign co-chairs) announcing when the campaign would begin, and asking their support in "Building our Vision; Faith, Reason & Community"
- Each letter contained a copy of UUA's "Suggested Giving Guide"; this guide was used as a reference throughout the campaign
- A leadership dinner was held the evening before the campaign began; all in attendance were asked to pledge before they left; 100% of our board members and 82% of our leadership were pledged before the campaign officially began
- On Kick-Off Sunday, and on every Sunday throughout the campaign, members were given a brochure with messages (case statements) from the minister, the board president and the campaign co-chairs; also in the brochure was a copy of the "Suggested Giving Guide"
- "Potluck Pledge Dinners" were, once again, the center of the campaign; they were fairly well attended and generated enthusiasm in the congregation; a board member and a trained stewardship facilitator were present at each dinner
- Thank you letters, signed by the board president, the minister and the campaign co-chairs, were sent to every pledging member

Numerous volunteers assisted with this year's campaign – far too many to name individually. Volunteers hosted dinners, made phone calls, facilitated dinner discussions and assisted with the design of campaign materials.

This year's campaign success is directly related to the work of our volunteers and we are *extremely grateful* for each and every person who helped in this important effort!

Respectfully Submitted,
Alan and April Chase
Stewardship Co-Chairs

Special Fundraising Committee Annual Report

Co-Chairs: Mara Jewell & Vicki Journey-Taylor
Members: Dorothy Wallace & Linda Whittington

Event Totals Raised During '07-'08*

Fall Music Festival '07	\$3,015.86
FUUnd Lunches	2,945.78
Rummage Sale '07	2,428.64
Casino Night '08	6,533.00**
Total Raised in '07-'08	\$14,923.28

*These totals do not include expense disbursements.

**Casino Night total includes New Orleans condo auction sale.

Status of Upcoming Events

Summer Winetasting at WineStyles--This event will be scheduled for sometime in July at the Winestyles in Inwood. It will feature live music, heavy hors d'oeuvres, and winetasting. Price will be \$20.00/person at the door.

Endless Summer LUUau--We are in the process of scouting for locations to have this family friendly event off campus in September. We are also beginning to interview caterers specializing in authentic Hawaiian cuisine.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Journey-Taylor
Co-Chair, Special Fundraising Committee

Report of Adult Learning Classes

1. The Religious Explorations class continues to meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning except for the first Sunday each month when they meet in the Thoreau Building if the Religious Education classes hold a worship service. We are studying philosophy with a special emphasis on the philosophy of religion.
2. The Spiritual Seekers continue to meet at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday in the Sanctuary Classroom. The class looks in-depth into world religions.
3. The UU Buddhist study group meets on the first Sunday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary Classroom.
4. The Parenting Class meets every 2nd and 3rd Sunday at 9:35 am in the Mary Shelly Room of the Thoreau Building.

5. The Young adults usually meet the first and third Tuesday evenings around 7 p.m. in the church library. Call or email Steve Feinstein if you have any questions. He can be reached at 393-6213 or feinstei@swbell.net.”
6. Bruce Beck conducts a philosophy class on consciousness. The seminar meets on the first and third Sundays each month from 6:45 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Thoreau Building. For further information, please contact Bruce Beck at brucebeck@yahoo.com.
7. The Faith and Reason Fellowship meets each Thursday night in the Fellowship Hall at 7:00. The class is planning to review religious thought on India.
8. The Simplicity Circle continues to meet under the leadership of Jessie Dominguez for those who are trying to deal with the emotional, physical and financial fallout of our excesses. Meetings are held quarterly. The last meeting was held in April.
9. Other educational activities include the Chrones’ Chalice Group, the Mens Chalice Group and Book Club. These activities have limited membership opportunities, but other similar groups may be formed. Jeff Addington is chairing a committee on covenant circles and small groups.
10. Rev Bret has concluded his series on sitting meditation and Buddhism. The series may resume later.
11. The **Bereavement Support Group** meets on the second Sunday of the month. Marianne Ross, group facilitator, will be glad to talk to anyone with questions or concerns at 408-1676.

Respectfully submitted,
 Bryant Mauk
 Co-chair, Adult Learning Classes

Youth Religious Education Annual Report

We want to thank the wonderful people in this church for all your assistance throughout the year. Our previous Director of Religious Education’s last day was September 23, 2007, and our new Director of Lifespan Religious Education started part-time in January and full-time April 1, 2008. In the intervening months, our program remained stable due to the understanding and commitment of our teachers, volunteers, parents and the church at large, from individuals, groups and church leadership. Thank you to the members of the YRE Council for taking on extra duties, to Julie Lusk and Bill Ross for their assistance, and to Rev. Bret for his support and for attending many planning meetings. We are all most sincerely appreciative and grateful for the love and support we’ve received in a challenging year. We’ve enjoyed working with DLRE Sheri Phillabaum and look forward to years of creative and joyful collaboration. Welcome, Sheri!

The following people committed to teaching two weeks per month for the whole year. They did a wonderful job!

- Pre-K – Sue Williams, Janessa Manning, Honor Phillips, Maris Van Heynigen
- Spirit Play (K/1) – Helen Mauk and Dorothea Wallace (with support from Faith Rathman and Cindy Lortie)
- 2/3 – Aloise Miller, Jessie Allen, Ron Dodson
- 4/5 – Rich Rathman, Michael Byars
- Middle School -- David Rodriguez, Nicole Meneses
- High School – Nancy Pridgen

Mike Brand, Jessie Allen, Tess Bobo and Steve Stechschulte served as emergency substitutes.

Curriculum – This year we completed our two-year study of the 7 Principles. Art Sundays organizer Debra Loya and Social Action Sundays organizers Liz Holbrook and Chara Laureles designed creative, fun activities that complemented and reinforced the classroom studies. Additionally, our pre-K class interacted with their environment with Celebrating Me and My World. Our K/1 class completed its transition to Spirit Play. Helen Mauk, in particular, devoted a great deal of her time and energy establishing the Spirit Play class, creating the ideal classroom environment, assembling stories and ensuring its success. Our high school class used Beyond Pink and Blue, a curriculum exploring gender stereotypes.

Our program depends on many volunteers, and chances are good we'll forget to mention some, but we'd like to thank a few people who volunteered to share their gifts and passions with our youth. Vicki Jurney-Taylor, her mom Loyce, and Linda Hamilton led a social action class about Pet Pals of Texas; the kids were enthusiastic, both about Vicki's organization and the ways they can help. At our April family worship, Dale Moore and Joan Wells led us in a labyrinth walk and drum session. Once again, everyone who participated enjoyed the morning. We greatly appreciate the time Dale and Joan took to lead us and share their knowledge and spirit.

Summer RE – We took a trip through time, learning about famous UUs. The following people generously donated their time to lead or assist in a class: Austen Chase, Peggy Lippert, Honor Phillips, Sue Williams, Helen Mauk, Faith Rathman, Aloise Miller, Debra Loya, Diane Hileman, Michael Byars, Shawn Cayson, Karen Wesley, Polly Noel, Meggan Partain, Moon Brand, Sarah Politte Debra Budd, Nicole Meneses, Jessie Allen, Chara Laureles, David Rodriguez, and Stacy Barnwell.

OWL (Our Whole Lives) – This sexuality education course was created as a joint effort between the UUA and the United Church of Christ and is presented at age appropriate levels for kindergarten through adult. It provides children, youth and adults with the knowledge they need at various stages in their lives and does so from the vantage point of the values which are the basis of Unitarian Universalism. Leaders of the courses are trained and follow a faith-wide curriculum.

- OWL classes for Middle School students in grades 7-9 met for the entire church year. The nine students taking the class began meeting in September and ended with a final session in May. At 27 sessions this is the most comprehensive OWL curriculum the UUA provides.
 - Kindergarten and 1st grade OWL classes were offered in the fall. Nine K/1st students took the classes. This age group has shared a double bond, first in their Spirit Play class and then again in OWL.
 - Seven youth in grades 5 and 6 are currently participating in their own OWL classes this spring. Classes for this age group will finish up in the middle of May.
- Debra Loya, Tess Bobo, Todd O'Neill, Megan Kutac, Mark Van Heynigan and Rob Hines were our OWL leaders. Jan Realini and Tess Bobo also provided up-to-date medical information not covered in the curriculum.

Youth Groups – Our wonderful youth advisors have continued to give the needed support, structure and guidance for our middle school youth group, Club M2U, and for our high school program, YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists). M2U held weekly meetings, monthly social activities and monthly service projects. They helped set up the haunted house for the Halloween party, collected and sorted food for the San Antonio Food Bank, participated in the MLK March, painted their room ultramarine, held an animal dedication and food drive for Pet Pals of Texas, and most recently did service projects at UBarU over a weekend campout. M2U advisors are Chara Laureles and Steve Stechschulte. YRUU held a kick

off retreat at the Frio River in early September. This was at no cost to the youth and was paid for by fundraising they did throughout the previous year. They hosted a rally over Halloween weekend for over 100 youth from around the Southwest UU Conference at our church. We really appreciate the great support we received from the congregation in making the campus available and coming to the church in the middle of the night to work as rovers. In addition, our youth attended several rallies at other churches in the conference. In December, they sponsored a bike build for Clayton's Backyard Crew, a charity that provides bicycles to children whose parents are incarcerated. They also planned and presented the annual Youth Sunday worship, the 7 Principles in Beatles Music. The Tim and Bob Show and the choir provided wonderful music for this service. YRUU advisors are Donna Harrison, Daron Sachs (Community UU), Nancy Pridgen, David Rodriguez and Cindy Lortie.

COA (Coming of Age) – In November 2007, a middle school COA retreat was held at the church. The event was organized by two YRE council members, Aloise Miller and Melanie Constantinides, and facilitated by M2U leaders Chara Laureles and Steve Stechschulte; Rev. Bret also participated. During the retreat the students discussed what it means to be a UU, how to explain what a UU is, and how to begin a spiritual journey. They participated in a variety of team building activities, each leading to a discussion where spiritual topics were addressed. The YRE Council is considering ways to incorporate similar content throughout the year to build on the retreat activities and topics.

Camp UU, Me Too – Our UU answer to vacation bible school. In its third year, camp was filled with activities from for ages 5 – 12. Thank you to Polly Noel for the development of this innovative program and thanks also to the many volunteers who made the experience fun and inventive.

Playground monitoring – Moon and Michael Brand continued their hard work in developing and overseeing our monitoring co-op. Our parents also provided consistent support to create a well-supervised playground environment.

Parenting Trilogy – Dawn Byars led the parenting curriculum class, which met twice each month. The class used a UU curriculum, the Parenting Trilogy, and this year's discussions covered the topic "Parents as Social Justice Educators."

Food Bank Project – Our November project for the San Antonio Food Bank was even more successful than last year. We raised \$865 and 360 pounds of food. Thank you to everyone at church who supported the fundraising lunch and donated food and also to David Rodriguez for taking all 360 pounds of food to the Food Bank in his pick up! After our fundraising project, the middle school and some of their parents participated in a pre-holiday food sort at the Food Bank's new building.

If we've neglected to mention anyone's contribution, please excuse us. We value and appreciate each and every one of our volunteers. Thank you for everything you do to support this program. Finally, we'd like to acknowledge Polly Noel, our Director of Worship and Education, for her unflagging spirit and energy in a busy year. Polly covered all gaps and helped make sure nothing was forgotten. Thank you also to the members of the YRE Council who have always been one of the best parts of volunteering.

2007-2008 Members of the YRE Council:

DLRE, Sheri Phillabaum

Director of Worship and Education, Polly Noel

YRE Co-chairpersons, Moon Brand and Stacy Barnwell

Scribe and Library, Kathy Stechschulte

Youth Programs, Aloise Miller

7th Principle Explorations, Susan Dumph
Physical Environment, Patrick Kendrick
Physical Environment, Steve Stechschulte
OWL Representative, Debra Loya

With gratitude,

Stacy Barnwell, Co-chairperson

With contributions by Donna Harrison, Aloise Miller, Debra Loya and Chara Laureles

Worship Committee Annual Report

Achievements:

- Implementation of a Worship Associates Program. Maggi Joseph, Ron Dodson, Luci Golla, David Rodriguez, Shannon Hawkins and Arline Terrell served throughout the year.
- Standardized the welcome script and created an electronic format version. We have also cut out general announcements.
- We successfully scheduled guest speakers for times when Bret is away. We are months ahead on the schedule.
- We have successfully transitioned to a silent Joys and Sorrows with more people participating than before.
- We have wired the sound from the service to the Fellowship hall and have been recording the services in a digital format.

Ongoing Efforts

- Susan Bruenger will be filling in for Bill Ross while he is on sabbatical, but we need to find more musicians to come and play the special music.
- Timing of the services is long but we are comfortable with a 70 minute service for now.
- Luci Golla is being trained to work the sound board. We need to get all the sound technicians trained on the new sound board.
- We have found reliable sources to get candles, oil, and other supplies. We need to keep that up.

Future Issues

- Increasing the diversity of our congregation through diversity in the service.
- Increasing the pool of musicians to play hymns and special music.
- Developing a pool of candidates for lay services and guest speakers.
- We need to add more worship associates and train them for some expanded duties during the service including readings.
- We will need to look at any further upgrades of equipment, furniture, pews, hymnals, etc. for the sanctuary.

David Rodriguez, Chairperson

Committee on Ministry Report

Process

The COM consisted of Michael Brand (chair), Debra Loya, April Chase, Jim Brown, Brian Evans and Rev Bret Lortie.

The COM's primary role this last year was to support Rev Bret in his first year as our Minister. The COM met monthly with good attendance by all members. The first 30 minutes of each meeting were

reserved for general congregational input and the final 90 minutes were conducted as a closed session. Only twice did anyone from the congregation meet with us in the first 30-minute period. Once the Board and Personnel Committee used that time as a convenient means of addressing a change in personnel policy. A second time a member brought forward an issue that was actually germane to the Worship Committee.

The 90-minute closed sessions were generally structured discussions following an agenda pre-determined by Rev Bret, Michael and any other committee members who had noted issues worthy of discussion. Discussions were frank and amicable. All committee members expressed general satisfaction with the course of the discussion. Since the discussions were in closed session, details are not included here.

Minister

The COM is very impressed with the work that Rev Bret has done in his first year. He has shown an incredible amount of enthusiasm for all aspects of his many roles as Minister. Rev Bret's worship services in general and sermons especially have been very well received. It is apparent that he invests considerable time and effort into both and the result is a consistently high caliber worship experience for both members and guests. Rev Bret has made himself very available for pastoral emergencies and social justice issues and has exceeded expectations regarding denominational connections.

At times his personal skills and enthusiasm led him to spend large amounts of time on tasks that in many congregations of this size would be either contracted out or done by volunteers. Examples include resolving technical issues with the sound system, addressing computer network issues in the office and selecting a phone system. By the end of the church year Rev Bret had correctly concluded that he should no longer play a key role in such technical issues.

His enthusiasm for his role as minister has sometimes led him to put in hours at an unsustainable rate. At points he was working 70-hour weeks. While his work schedule has not yet been reduced to a sustainable level, he has made great progress in limiting his involvement in areas that do not require his direct participation.

Congregation

The congregation as a whole has warmly embraced Rev Bret as their new minister. If there is a problem, it is that members like him too much as many people want him to labor on their projects. This has in part led to the above-mentioned long working hours.

Worship attendance and pledged monies have both increased since Rev Bret's arrival.

Community

The congregation continues to attempt to serve the community as a means of liberal expression of religious values. Visitors continue to attend service. The congregation has been active in social justice issues, particularly through involvement in COPS/Metro Alliance.

Suggestions for the Future

Minister: The ministries of the church would benefit if Rev Bret would articulate a vision for a few highly valued programs. The result could be a focused effort on areas at which the church can excel.

Congregation: The congregation would benefit if members were to view Rev Bret as their leader while the members work to accomplish the church's goals. It is too easy to view the minister as the labor who should work to accomplish the members' goals.

Community: The community is doing a good job of finding our church. Several new visitors attend service every week. The congregation would benefit from a more effective path from visitor to member.

Sincerely,
Michael Brand

Annual Report for Celestial Celebrations Circle

Celestial Celebrations Circle (CCC) organized and led rituals for the 8 sabbats: Summer Solstice, Lammas, Fall Equinox, Halloween, Winter Solstice, Imbolc, Vernal Equinox, Beltane. Drumming circles with a labyrinth walk were held on the months which do not include one of the sabbats. These were better attended than our previous "workshops" in those months. We are continuing to add rocks as markers.

Organization

The Planning Group began using the format of a Covenant Group for our planning meetings and believes that it has improved our process. We also fed into starting an Earth Centered Covenant Group which includes some of the most active CCC members as well as newcomers. Three members new to the Planning Group joined--Atalie Watts, Arline Terrell, and Lucy Norton.

Worship and Other Services at FUUCSA

CCC presented a worship service on chant on Sept 30th for FUUCSA during this church year.

Outreach in the community

CCC provided the closing ritual at Pagan Pride Day in October. The ritual celebrated the Pagan Pride and was well received. CCC cooperated with another local pagan group, the Re-Formed Congregation of the Goddess to staff a booth with information about both groups at the event. Dale Moore also led a workshop on drumming. CCC presented a ritual honoring adult victims of domestic violence at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in downtown San Antonio in October. This was attended by people who work with victims of domestic violence and also the relatives of some of those victims. We collect food for the Food Bank at events where we don't have a potluck.

Communication

CCC has provided representation at all Council Meetings. This year responsibility for attending and reporting has been shared by Dale Moore and Maggi Joseph. Monthly reports have been made to the Council and the representative who attends the meeting reports back to the CCC Planning Group from the Council and posts to the CCC web site. CCC responded to requests for input to the Facilities Task Force and the Long-Range Plan. We have tried to work closely and consistently with the Grounds Committee and with the YRE Council to resolve issues regarding our shared space in the Jefferson Bldg and in the playground and we recognize with gratitude their efforts to discuss changes and problems with us. We realize that the Jefferson Bldg is a shared space and is used by a variety of different groups, including renters. It is often difficult to determine the source of problems that occur. We hope to be given timely feedback if something is amiss following one of our gatherings. We do try to leave things in good order, but at least once in the past year, we had a smokey fire that left the rooms unpleasantly scented. A well-

meaning individual discarded our maypole base during a playground cleanup as it was not recognized as ours and, unbeknown to us, it had become an attractive nuisance as it was being used by the kids. An apology was offered and accepted and we offer our apologies for not realizing that it was causing a problem. Because our altar cloth was found in the walk-in closet and our bread basket also was found being used for craft supplies, we accepted the suggestion to get a lock for our cabinet to protect our supplies and “props” from being used by anyone else. We are committed to trying to work in harmony with the others who also meet regularly in the Jefferson Bldg.

Finances

We placed our small treasury in a reserve account in accordance with the recommendations of the Finance Director. These funds are used to pay our annual dues to our national organization, the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPs), occasionally for supplies, and to donate to FUUCSA. Our web domain is donated by Dale Moore. <http://www.CelestialCelebrationsCircle.org>

Respectfully submitted, Maggi Joseph for the Celestial Celebrations Circle Planning Group

Nominating Committee report (Fifth attachment)

**FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH
and
FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO**

Presidents

1945-1946 Eric P. Haye
1946-1947 Pat Arsers
1947-1948 Mr. Wm. Brockhausen
1948-1949 Harry B. Berry
1949-1950 Miss Caroline Hineks
1950- 1952 Clyde R. Stevens
1952-1954 Roy L. Pope
1954-1956 Mrs. F. W. Steinberg
1956-1958 Mrs. E. H. Powell
1958-1959 James G. Joyce
1959-1961 Woody W. McGill
1961-1962 Winthrop M. Barnes
1962- 1964 James Millar
1964- 1965 Carl W. Reed Jr.
1965-1967 Keith Rodgers
1967-1968 Dave Arnett
1968-1970 Nancy Mottweiler
1970- 1971 Glen Grimes
1971-1973 Gilbert Duterroill
1973-1974 Hulse Wagner
1974-1976 Charles Bowden
1976-1978 Olivia Phillips
1978- 1979 Ernie King
1979- 1980 Nancy Mottweiler
1980-1981 Ernie King
1981-1983 Charles Bowden
1983-1984 James Saunders
1984-1985 Bruce Beck
1985-1986 June Kachtik
1986-1987 Herb Allison
1987-1988 Sandi Boyd
1988-1989 Roger Kramer
1989-1990 James Waldron
1990-1991 Maggi Joseph
1991-1992 Trent Cheyney
1992-1993 Judy Sadegh
1993-1994 Chris Heinrichs

1994-1995 Jean Loden
1995-1996 Sylvia Wheeler
1996-1997 Hank Lippert
1997-1998 Ed Garrison
1998-1999 Earl Jones
1999-2000 Lisa Reitzes
2000- 2001 Jayme Trott
2001-2002 Nevin Rupp
2002-2003 Ira Lerner
2003-2004 Martha Cooley
2004-2005 Brian Lyttle
2005-2006 Diane Duesterhoeft
2006-2007 Lee Hampton
2007-2008 Allan Kropp
2008-2009 Jan Realini

Ministers

1945-1951 Rev. N. W. Lovely
1952-1964 Rev. Phil Shug
1964-1970 Rev. William A. DeWolfe
1971-1984 Rev. Rolfe Gerhardt
1984-1985 Rev. Sam Wright
Rev. Billie Wright
1985-1990 Rev. Jan Vickery Knost
1991-2006 Rev. Arthur Severance
2006-2007 Rev. Eric Posa, Interim
2007- Rev. Bret Lortie

Directors of Religious Education

1948- 1950 RE Committee
1950- 1951 N. W. Lovely, Chair
1051-1953 Mr. Brad Logan, Chair
1954- 1955 Mrs. Winfred Huebner, Chair
1956- 1957 Mr. Roy Pope, Chair
1957- 1958 Dr. John R. Cox, Chair
1958- 1959 Mr. A. J. Lewis, Chair
1959-1960 Mrs. George Pankratz, Chair
1960- 1961 Mrs. Harold Scherr, Chair

1961-1964 Bettye Arsers
 1964- 1968 Barbara DeWolfe
 1968- 1969 Jan Austin, Chair
 1969-1970 Rowena Rodgers, Chair
 1970- 1971 Tom Lee, Chair
 1971-1972 John Phipps, Chair
 1972- 1974 Mary Wagner, Chair
 1975-1979 Sheryl Ross
 1978- 1979 Peggy Lippert
 1980-1981 Kathy Phillips
 1982-1987 Mary Grace Ketner
 1988-1990 Lorna Knost
 1991-1995 Chris Lopez
 1996-1998 Kevin Baker
 1999-2000 Sara Sautter
 2001-2001 Andrea Learner
 2001-2002 Jean Hackett

Shannon Hawkins
 2002-2003 Melanie Constantinides
 2003-2004 Nancy Howard
 2004-2007 Mary Alice Partain
 2008 - Sheri Phillabaum

Choir Directors

1973-1977 Kay Kutchins, Organist
 1995- 2008 William J. Ross, Minister of Music

Office Administrators/Secretaries

1961- 1991 Bettye Arsers
 1992- 2005 Mary Lampkin
 2005- Elena J. Manzano-Lusk (aka Julie Lusk)