



WILDFLOWER CHURCH

A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION
AUSTIN, TEXAS

August 2011

Transforming lives

Volume 11, No. 8

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – SUNDAY, AUGUST 7 VOTE ON SPACE SHARING WITH FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The congregation of Wildflower Unitarian Universalist Church will come together on August 7, at 12 p.m. to vote on whether to enter into a space sharing agreement with Faith Presbyterian Church. This could be one of the most important decisions we will make in our journey into the future.

Wildflower Church has, from our beginning, planned to find a permanent home to call our own. In the past two years, we have seriously considered the purchase of a building we would have remodeled to be our church home and the purchase of a piece of land on which we would eventually build our home. We learned a great deal from these efforts, and the final lesson with which we concluded was that we are not financially ready to buy property. That was hard to accept, as we've been somewhat nomadic for all of our ten and a half years as a church, and we're eager to "settle down."

Our next step was to begin looking at space-sharing possibilities as an interim measure, and we visited a couple of congregations whose membership was dwindling and who had more space than they needed for their current numbers. Neither of those seemed promising, but in the midst of this, we received an invitation from Faith Presbyterian Church to talk with them

about sharing their space. It seems that Faith Church has been looking for several years for another congregation to share their campus, but they just hadn't found one that shared their very progressive values.



Accordingly, on August 31, 2010, members of the Building Committee met with Rev. Lou Snead, Minister of Faith Presbyterian Church, and several members of their Session, the governing body of a Presbyterian Church, to begin this discussion. When the Building Committee was temporarily retired at the end of 2010, a Space Sharing Task Force was formed. Since that time, our task force has met frequently with the task force at Faith Presbyterian to negotiate the terms of our agreement to share space and to work out a very complex Sunday schedule for use of the buildings at Faith Church. The congregational vote on August 7 will be a culmination of that work, and is met with great joy and anticipation on the part of our task force.

The members of the Task Force are: Jan Austin, Chair; Rev Eliza Galaher, Minister; Penny Burnette, Director, Children's Religious Education; John Cooper, Facilities Liaison; Donnis Doyle, Board Liaison; Gerry King, Adult Programming Liaison; Gay Phillips, Committee Council Liaison.



UU CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

This group is a place for UU singles to network and socialize. We are adults of all ages getting together for mutual fun and support. The group includes members from multiple UU groups in the central Texas area. Join us at our Yahoo group on http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UU_Circle_of_Friends/. The contact person for Wildflower is Marilyn at marilyn934@yahoo.com.



Rev. Eliza Galaher

Rev. Galaher has taken the month of July for vacation time, study leave, a week of being with senior high students at U-Bar-U, including a month off from her newsletter column writing duties. Look for her return in the September issue!

LISTENING MINISTRY AVAILABLE

Are you looking for a compassionate ear? Wildflower Church has a Listening Ministry Team whose purpose is to companion people while they journey through difficult stretches of their lives. Contact Rev. Eliza at minister@wildflowerchurch.org for more information.

NEW BOARD MEMBER LOIS SMITH



The Board of Trustees has elected Lois Smith to fill the unexpired term left by Amy Flanigan due to her resignation from the Board.

Lois has written this brief autobiography: "My childhood and youth were largely spent in northern New England before a serendipitous landing in Costa Rica, where I graduated high school and—much later—met my husband, Norberto Jimenez. Subsequent years were spent as a human rights activist and trainer with Amnesty International USA, and writing on Latin American history and society for the now-defunct Times of the Americas and assorted academic journals. My principal focus, a ten-year project documenting the Cuban government's conceptualization of and policy initiatives related to gender, culminated in the publication of Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba (Oxford University Press, 1996). Work as a carpenter helped fund the writing, travel, and research.

"I came to Austin in 1993 to attend graduate school at UT and, like many, stayed. My family attended First UU church, but enthusiastically joined the Wildflower offshoot in 2000. In 2004, we moved with our three children, Ana-Lucia, Elena, and Julian, to Costa Rica, returning in 2009 to find Wildflower Church firmly established and flourishing, with the excellent Rev. Eliza at the helm! While in Costa Rica we realized that one of the things we missed most about living in the US was Wildflower Church, and rejoining the congregation helped us make the difficult transition back.

"Life as a bicultural family has given us a new appreciation for the bias and ignorance that too often structure cross-cultural relations in the US. We hope to put our experience to positive use in all our church activities, and particularly as we engage in Wildflower's partnership with the Dove Springs community initiative."

Welcome, Lois! We look forward to your input as a member of the Board and as a member of Wildflower.

GIVING FROM THE SIDE OF LOVE



Cathy Cramer

Times are tough. There's no doubt about it. Some in our congregation have lost their jobs in the last year. Others have had to move in with relatives. Nearly all of us have cut back expenses in one way or another as the Great Recession has hit Austin. The obvious question is: How can I possibly give to the church when times are so tight? The answer, for me, is: How can I not? Now, more than ever, I need what Wildflower gives me—friendship, support, community. I need to know that there is a place I can go that makes me feel whole and challenges me to be the best that I can be.

When I give a portion of my income to Wildflower Church, it feels good. It feels good to know that I am prioritizing myself and my community. And it feels good to challenge myself to give more than I have before, knowing that these dollars—more than the dollars I give to the credit card companies—will be spent on helping to make the world a better place. Don't miss Stewardship Sunday on September 25 when we can all give from the side of love and help to make Wildflower, the world, and ourselves the best that we can be.

~ Cathy

AUGUST WORSHIP SERVICES

August 7 – Rev. Galaher

A Lotus for You, a Buddha-to-Be

Rev. Galaher will explore journeys toward healing, kindness and compassion through the teachings of Buddhist teachers Thich Nhat Hanh and Pema Chodron. *Lay Leader:* Mark Briody. *Service Coordinator:* Jan Austin.

August 14 – Rev. Galaher

Bound by Covenant

The word *religion* comes from the same root as does the word *ligament*. There is a *binding* that religion calls us to and asks of us. Seeing that we are not a creedal religion, bound by one belief, what exactly does bind us? Rev. Galaher will discuss the central role of covenant among Unitarian Universalists. *Lay Leader:* Tom Moran. *Service Coordinator:* Allen Fisher.

August 21 – Wildflower Earthseed Pagan Group

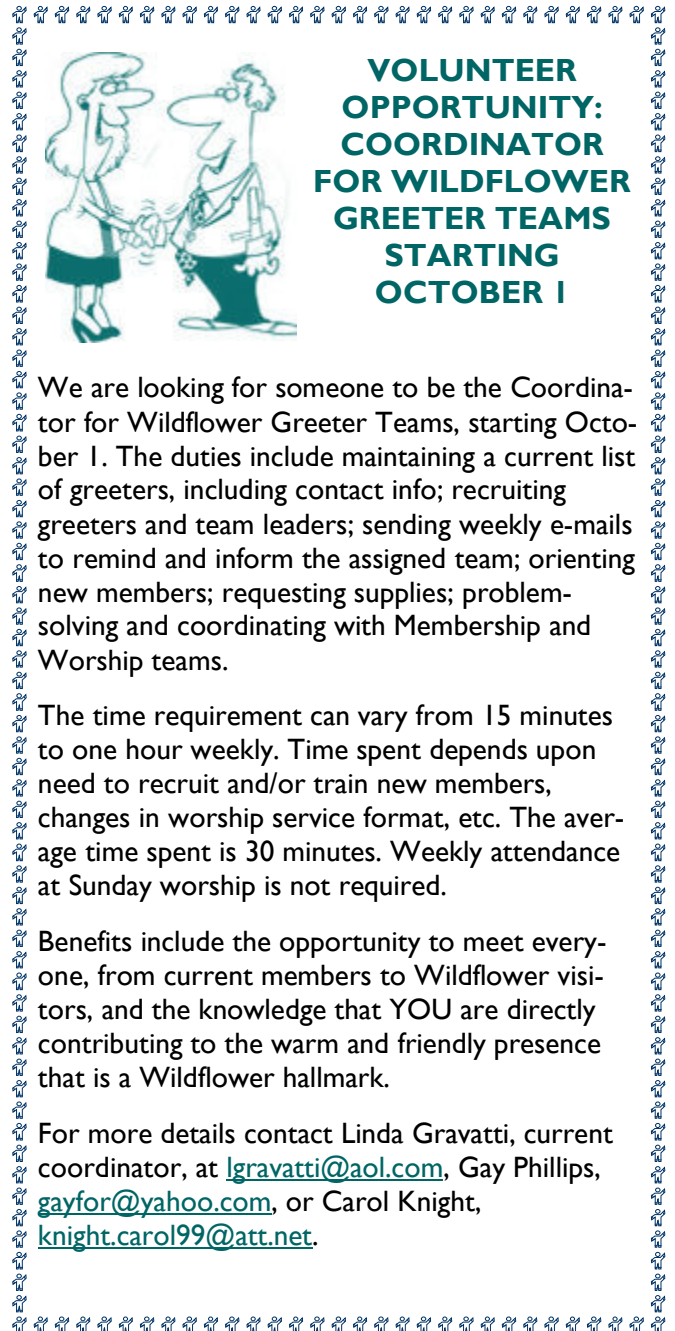
Why I am a Pagan

For our sermon, three Wildflower Earthseeds members will talk about their journeys in paganism. Consider this a Pagan version of "This I Believe!" If you have been curious about why people choose paganism as their spiritual journey, this is the service that will answer that for you. Come learn about this very new but very old religious tradition. *Lay Leader:* Robert Heil. *Service Coordinator:* Janet Spencer.

August 28 – Rev. Galaher

Go Back to the Water, Turn the World Around

Please join us for our annual intergenerational ingathering service, in which we share a water communion and celebrate the power, the essence, and the beauty of water! Bring with you a small bit of water from your travels, local and global, so you can add it to our communion bowl. *Lay Leader:* Annice Ellington. *Service Coordinator:* Donnis Doyle.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: COORDINATOR FOR WILDFLOWER GREETER TEAMS STARTING OCTOBER 1

We are looking for someone to be the Coordinator for Wildflower Greeter Teams, starting October 1. The duties include maintaining a current list of greeters, including contact info; recruiting greeters and team leaders; sending weekly e-mails to remind and inform the assigned team; orienting new members; requesting supplies; problem-solving and coordinating with Membership and Worship teams.

The time requirement can vary from 15 minutes to one hour weekly. Time spent depends upon need to recruit and/or train new members, changes in worship service format, etc. The average time spent is 30 minutes. Weekly attendance at Sunday worship is not required.

Benefits include the opportunity to meet everyone, from current members to Wildflower visitors, and the knowledge that YOU are directly contributing to the warm and friendly presence that is a Wildflower hallmark.

For more details contact Linda Gravatti, current coordinator, at lgravatti@aol.com, Gay Phillips, gayfor@yahoo.com, or Carol Knight, knight.carol99@att.net.

JOIN THE PARADE!

Once again, Wildflower members and friends will be marching in the Austin PRIDE Parade sponsored by the Austin Gay and Lesbian Pride Foundation. This year's parade will be held on Saturday, September 10, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in downtown Austin. More information will be provided later, but we encourage you to put this date on your calendar and join us in showing that our church stands on the side of love. Also, please note that all Wildflowers, including our young people and children, are encouraged to participate in the parade. For further information, contact Bill Walker at wwalker2@uh.edu.





Penny Burnette



WILDFLOWER GUESTS

For ages approximately 6 to 12 years old: Wildflower GUESTs (Gifted UUs Expressively Sharing Talents) from our congregation will share their hobbies, talents and interests with our children. Here is the schedule for August. We need teachers to sign up and help the GUESTs each Sunday.

- August 7 Laurel Martin will lead the children in creating cards for the Wildflower Card Ministry. Craft some beautiful cards to give and some to keep.
- August 15 Lucia Markert will demonstrate the art of paper folding. The children will learn how to create some origami figures.
- August 21 David Frenkel will teach some fun magic tricks. Learn some magic to impress your friends!
- August 29 Intergenerational Water Ceremony Service



STORY TIME FOR 3-6 YEAR OLDS

The Pre-K class will continue to enjoy a summer curriculum titled "Story Time." A teacher will begin the class with a popular storybook and then lead the kids in activities related to the story. The class will be combined in the childcare room. Childcare will be provided for the little ones while the older kids can participate in Story Time or free play.

GUEST CHRIS BREWSTER

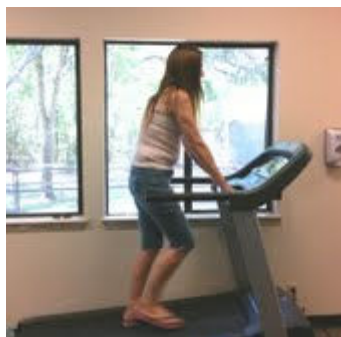
On Sunday, July 10, Chris Brewster shared his talents with Wildflower children by showing them his knowledge of the banjo and dobro.



THANK YOU FROM ALAMEDA HOUSE

The clients at Alameda House, ATC-IC transitional living facility, would like to thank Wildflower for their new exercise equipment. They are enjoying the ping-pong table, treadmill, stationary bicycle, and weight machine.

~ Beverly Floro, LPHA





**FREE CLASS OFFERED BY AREA AGENCY ON AGING:
A MATTER OF BALANCE**

The Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area is offering a class, "A Matter of Balance." The eight-session class begins on September 8, and will continue on Thursday mornings through October 27, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. The class is being held at the South Austin Senior Activity Center, 3911 Manchaca Road. The classes are free, but registration is required before the first session. Please call SASAC at 512-448-0787 to register.

This award-winning program is designed to help adults 60 years of age and older reduce their fear of falling. This is accomplished through group discussions, problem-solving strategies, and physical activity. Many older adults experience concerns about falling and restrict their activities. "A Matter of Balance" is designed to manage falls, increase activity levels, and emphasize practical strategies to manage falls. You will learn to: view falls as controllable; set goals for increasing activity; make changes to reduce fall risks at home; exercise to increase strength and balance

Who should attend? Anyone 60 years or older who: is concerned about falls; is interested in improving balance, flexibility and strength; has fallen in the past; has restricted activities because of falling concerns; and is able to understand and remember instructions and participate in class discussions,



2011-2012 WILDFLOWER BOARD OF TRUSTEES

From left to right, the members of the Board for this year are: Charlie Moss, secretary, Kelly Ramsey, Andi Napier, treasurer, Chris Brewster, Matthew Markert, vice president, Larry Thompson, Lois Smith, and Eva Andries, president.

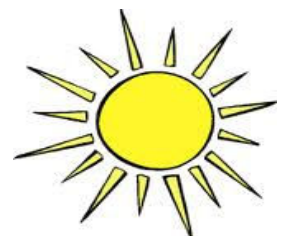
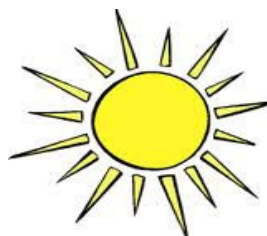
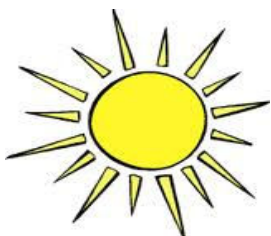
**LOOK FOR
BOOKS-R-US
ON
SUNDAY,
AUGUST 14**



Join us for the next Books-R-U's on Sunday, August 14, after worship.



Bring your books, CDs and DVDs to sell to benefit the Amy Young Service Fund. If you have nothing to bring, you can still shop for some good items.



ADULT PROGRAMMING

We have completed another full year of courses. We will be taking the summer to review the results of our needs assessment and develop a schedule of courses for Fall 2011–Spring 2012. Thanks to all who participated in giving us information to help us plan for next year. At any time, email adultprograms@wildflowerchurch.org to let us know how we can best meet your needs or to propose a course that you would like to teach.

LIFE ENRICHMENT

Life Enrichment at Wildflower Unitarian Church is part of Adult Program Committee's curriculum, and is coordinated by Joan Denson. Joan would like to hear from you about things you've been dying to offer to Wildflowers that just do not fit with the adult religious education purpose. Topics that might be offered in one time workshops or courses are: Introduction to the Work of Byron Katie, Facelift Without Surgery, Introduction to Emotional Freedom Technique or EFT (tapping), Weight Loss, Poetry Writing, Body Workshop (all about our self image), Metaphysical Phenomena, Tubing in the San Marcos River, Scrapbook/Photo Album work sessions. What might you teach? You do not have to be an expert, only willing to share something you know about. We want to offer a variety of fun and helpful things for members and non-members. If you are interested in offering a course, workshop or introductory session for the enrichment of Wildflower members and newcomers, please contact Joan at 512-291-9984 or at lifeenrichmentcourses@wildflowerchurch.org.

SMALL GROUPS

August Group of Focus: Buddhism Meditation and Study Group. On Sunday, August 7, members of the group will be available to provide information and answer questions about the group. Come to the Adult Programming table to learn more. The group meets Thursday, August 11 and 25. If you are interested in Buddhism and in developing a meditation practice, this group is a resource and support for you. We meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Church Conference Room, 1714 Fort View, Suite 106. We study and discuss books by Buddhist teachers and sit for 25 minutes at each meeting. Contact Helen Burnette, burnette.helen516@gmail.com for more information.

Small Group Meetings for August

Wildflower Minds Connect meets Tuesday, August 2. People who have been diagnosed at any time in their lives with a mental illness are invited to join. We meet to encourage deep connections with one another as well as foster an environment of sharing, support, and encouragement. We meet on the first Tuesday of each month from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the Church Conference Room, 1714 Fortview, Suite 106. If you have any questions, please contact Danna Luther at danna@dluther.com or 512-567-6997.

7/12 Recovery Ministry meets Monday, August 1 and 15, and are based on 12-step programs and the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism. This group is open to all Wild-

flowers whose lives are (or have been) affected by addiction or compulsive behaviors. We meet twice a month, on the first and third Monday evenings, 7 to 8:30 p.m., in members' homes. Contact Helen Burnette, burnette.helen516@gmail.com or Bobbie Erb, 512-825-1373, for more information.

Conversation Café meets Saturday, August 20, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Hampton Branch of the Austin Public Library, Oak Hill, 5125 Convict Hill Road. Don't miss this opportunity for meaningful conversation and great fellowship. There are no books to read or assignments, just interesting conversations. For more information, contact Joan Harman at 512-454-3160 or wildflowerconversationcafe@gmail.com.

Earthseeds meets Sunday, August 28. Earthseeds is an open group that welcomes anyone interested in earth-based spirituality. The meeting occurs the fourth Sunday of the month at Frances Osborne's home, 3400 Stoneridge Road, 78746. An ingathering begins at 5 p.m., a ritual occurs at 5:30 p.m., the potluck and pagan-related discussion follows and the meeting closes around 8 p.m. Contact Frances Osborne, osborne35@hotmail.com or 512-347-1705 for more information.

Grow Your Inner Wildflower meets Wednesday, August 10 and 24, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. This is a self-development and support group that shares emotional support, practical coping skills, and strategies with the goal of empowering members toward personal growth, positive changes, and healing. The group meets in members' homes. If interested, contact Marilyn Stone at marilyn934@yahoo.com or 512-644-1814.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST GROUPS (draw membership from area UU churches/fellowship)
Heritage Book Club meets Friday, August 12. All are welcome even if you have not read the book. We meet at 7 p.m. for a pot luck dinner and start the discussion at 8 p.m. Contact Donnis Doyle at sweetgran@austin.rr.com for more information or directions.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Austin Philosophical Discussion Group informally examines the philosophical ideas and assumptions that influence our contemporary worldviews. The exact topic and date for the meeting is set at the previous meeting of the group. Meetings are on a Tuesday evening each month at 5930 Republic of Texas Blvd., 78735. For more information, contact Mike Pore at 512-892-4790.



Eva Andries

SEEING THE WHOLE

We are on the cusp of making one of the biggest decisions in our ten year history—whether to share space with another church community.

The current schedule sets this decision for early August, with a proposed lease beginning September 1. Based on informal polling and other informal feedback, it appears there is a wide variety of views on this subject, running the full spectrum from unequivocally positive to unequivocally negative.

Oh, the agony of the democratic process! Oh, the beauty of the democratic process! How we long for assurance that things will turn out the way WE want them to. But how we also long for the community harmony that requires fairness to, and serious consideration of, every view—that requires a willingness to accept the will of the majority, and also how we long for the peace and calm that comes with “trusting the process.”

The first time I heard the term “trust the process” was from Wildflower Church member Pat Pore in an intense (ahem) discussion at a Board meeting years ago. It hit me like a lightning bolt and I immediately felt both calm and enlightened. “Oh, I get it—I don’t carry the entire responsibility for the outcome—this is a shared responsibility—it is about creating the whole and my views are only part of the whole.” You would think that would be obvious, but that was the first time I really became aware of the whole. Trusting the process is essentially seeing the whole and knowing that the democratic process, however potentially traumatic, is not only the best way to find out who we are as a community, but also nurtures and instructs us individually through its demands.

So, I am facing our big decision with equanimity and calm, with gratitude for the multifaceted quality of our community and how that enriches our lives, and for knowing that whatever the outcome, it is the true expression of who we are, and we know each other better, and hopefully love each other better, because of it.

In covenant,
~ **Eva King Andries**, President
Board of Trustees

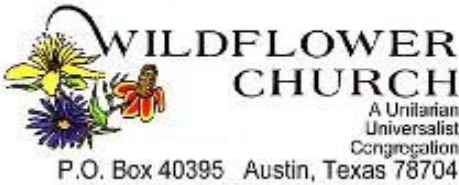


COVENANT OF RIGHT RELATIONS

We, the members of Wildflower Church, covenant:

- ☼ to extend the welcome, hospitality, and acceptance at Wildflower Church that we would wish to receive
- ☼ to keep the well being of the whole Wildflower Church community at the forefront of our work
- ☼ to practice caring for one another, especially in times of need
- ☼ to contribute to the mission of Wildflower Church while practicing self-care and staying mindful of our own needs
- ☼ to practice mutual responsibility and shared leadership
- ☼ to inform ourselves and others about church roles and resources
- ☼ to engage in direct, respectful communication and active listening, particularly in times of conflict and misunderstanding, and
- ☼ to honor and celebrate our differences.

In the spirit of openness and transparency, thus do we uphold this covenant.



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Penny Burnette

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Dotti Sizer

office@wildflowerchurch.org

Bookkeeper

Cindy Steel

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**Sunday Worship Service and
Children's Religious Education
10:30 a.m.**

Most Sunday services held at the
South Austin Senior Activity
Center

3911 Manchaca Road
Austin, Texas

(Located about two blocks north of
Ben White/Hwy. 290)

Website: Please visit our website for
the latest information:

www.wildflowerchurch.org

Message Phone: (512) 428-9464

Email: office@wildflowerchurch.org

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Wildflower Church Mission

Wildflower Church is a deliberately inclusive, open-minded religious community in the Unitarian Universalist tradition. We joyfully nurture one another in our lifelong spiritual journeys, and we commit to transforming ourselves and the world around us through acts of compassion, love, and social justice.

Newsletter Submissions

The deadline for the September issue is August 15.
Send submissions to newsletter@wildflowerchurch.org.

Newsletter editor: Dotti Sizer

Newsletter copyeditor: Holly Gonzalez

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Send questions and/or comments regarding church matters to board@wildflowerchurch.org

Eva Andries, Chris Brewster, Donnis Doyle, Matthew Markert,
Charlie Moss, Andi Napier, Kelly Ramsey, Lois Smith, Larry Thompson,
Jan Austin (past president, ex officio), Rev. Eliza Galaher (ex officio)