



# WILDFLOWER CHURCH

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

March 2010

Transforming lives

Volume 10, No 3



We are well into the process of acquiring a spiritual home of our own, and it is getting more and more exciting! We will have a permanent address, with all the possibilities of becoming rooted in the community that that implies. And with that new address will come greater opportunity to live out our mission in South Austin.

## TESTIMONIALS FOR A HOME OF OUR OWN!



Wildflower's thrilling success story will be able to move into another phase. Although we have done wonderful things as nomadic renters, a building that is big enough for growth will enable us to do so much more than we have been able to so far. Imagine, we will be able to have weekday or weeknight meetings for more than eight people at a time; just think what possibilities that simple thing opens up.

I am eager to have our own space to shape into our own worship space, with surroundings that enhance and support our Unitarian Universalist services. I am willing to invest a lot, because I want this place so much I can taste it!

—Helen Burnette



In 2003 we became Wildflower members. We had joined First Church in 1996 but wanted to be a part of a Unitarian Church in South Austin. From the very start, the people at Wildflower treated us as a family unit, just like any other couple. It's impossible for someone who has not had their relationship marginalized to understand how that felt and what it has meant to us in the years since. It is almost impossible to describe what this church means to us. We have grown as individuals as we have become involved in the work and life of the church. But more important, we have fallen in love with scores and scores of people who we have come to know well. Love is a many splendored thing, indeed.

We are investing in this property because it's time for us to plant our roots. We are like a kitchen window sill garden that has spilled over onto counters and into the sink. We are strong and healthy, but we need our own space so that we can stay healthy, grow, and live long and abundantly, and give back to the community.

—Sara Barker and Kathy Murphy



### INSPECTIONS

February 11–March 12, 30 Days

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| What happens?         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Architectural review</li> <li>⊗ Structural engineer</li> <li>⊗ Mechanical, electrical, plumbing engineer (with Austin Energy)</li> <li>⊗ EPA Phase I</li> <li>⊗ Title Land Survey</li> </ul> |
| What will we learn?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Whether there are any “show stoppers”</li> <li>⊗ What condition property and building are in</li> <li>⊗ Very rough estimate on upgrades, repairs and remodel</li> </ul>                      |
| What will be decided? | Whether to proceed with next phase  |
| Who is involved?      | Building, Steering and Board decide; congregation informed  |
| What is the cost?     | \$20,000  |

As of February 22, all contracts have been signed and the inspection process has begun. We've done a walk-through of the property, have received historical documents on prior inspections, plat, and floor plans from the seller.



Rev. Eliza Galaher

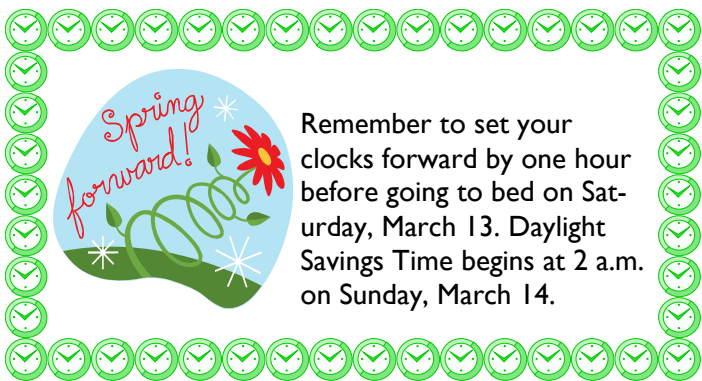
WALKING TOGETHER—STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER

As Wildflower Church continues on its very exciting adventure toward a home of our own, I invite us all to remember the importance of good self care. The coming days, weeks, and months are going to involve a lot of work on all our parts, and it's important that none of us over-do it. That means, in part, that others of us need to step up and help those who might otherwise take on more than necessary. It also means some of us will need to learn to ask for help, and not feel we have to take things on all on our own.

Amidst all of us working hard together to see our dream of our own home coming true, we also need to make sure we do things like eat and sleep well, get exercise, and see our health care providers as needed. Finally, remember to take time to play. Whether that

means going to the movies, reading a good book, throwing a ball around, or going out and hearing some good music, let's all give ourselves time to just take a break. When we pace ourselves well, and remember to take care of ourselves, we will all have more energy and enthusiasm when returning to the very good, important work of creating and maintaining a spiritual home of our own.

—Rev. Eliza Galaher



Remember to set your clocks forward by one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 13. Daylight Savings Time begins at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 14.

AUSTIN INTERFAITH UPDATE

Austin Interfaith (AI) work continues, with Wildflower participating actively in living wage and immigration issues. On January 17, over 30 Wildflower members attended a living wage "academy" after the service, led by Rev. Eliza Galaher, Kathy Murphy, and Judy Morgan. At several City Council hearings, AI was a significant presence—advocating a living wage for corporations receiving tax subsidies. We successfully educated the Council about the importance of looking at the entire wage spectrum when considering subsidies. Several Wildflowers attended events on immigration, which directly affects some of the AI churches. If you'd like to participate in AI activities, please contact Kathy Murphy, [kathymurphy99@gmail.com](mailto:kathymurphy99@gmail.com).

WILDFLOWER FUNDRAISER

Have you ever totaled up the money you spend at HEB and Central Market every month for food, gas, prescriptions and bills you pay at the Customer Service Counter, such as registering your vehicle, in other words, anything you purchase at HEB or Central Market? Just take a moment and estimate your monthly spending, then multiply that amount by the number of families at Wildflower. The total will be a serious amount of money.

HEB has a program open to all nonprofits, including churches, whereby it will let Wildflower sell HEB Cards, and Wildflower will keep 3 percent OR 4 percent, depending upon how many cards it purchases at a time. It is likely that Wildflower could earn \$10,000 each year with our members/friends purchasing items they must purchase anyway. Contact Tom Bookout at 433-9374 or Linda Gravatti at 296-7855 with questions or comments.



WILDFLOWER ORIENTATION

Sunday, April 18  
12 to 2:45 p.m.

Want to know more about Wildflower Church? Interested in joining? You are invited to Peter and Carol Knight's house after church for lunch, friendship, and information. Attendance at this one-session orientation is an important step on the path to membership. Childcare provided by request before April 10. For more information, please visit the Membership Table on Sunday or contact Nancy Martin at [nacmart@gmail.com](mailto:nacmart@gmail.com) or (806)535-0836.

**MARCH WORSHIP SERVICES**

**March 7 – Rev. Galaher**

*Arjuna and Krishna on the Battlefield*

Where does struggle live? When is it right to continue on in struggle, and when is it time to lay down one’s weapons? Rev. Galaher will use the *Bhagavad Gita* to examine these questions. Steve Brooks, *lay leader*; Helen Burnette, *service coordinator*

**March 14 – Gini Courter**

Guest speaker Gini Courter has been UUA Moderator since 2003 and served on the UUA Board of Trustees for eight years prior to that. In her professional life, Gini is an Information Technology consultant, author of 28 books, and a nationally-recognized speaker on collaboration and productivity software. Rev Galaher, *worship leader*; Allen Fisher, *service coordinator*

**March 21 – Rev. Galaher**

*The Intricate Web of Life that Water Supports*

In honor of women’s history month, Rev. Galaher will explore how women and their families around the world are affected by water scarcity. Anna Bartkowski, *lay leader*; Eva Andries, *service coordinator*

**March 28 – Rev. Bob Lively**

*The Power of Kindness*

Every expression of genuine kindness is a visible demonstration of the kind of love that liberates the human soul from an always unnecessary bondage to fear. If heaven’s message to humanity is, "be not afraid...", acts of kindness, no matter how seemingly insignificant, are then proclamations of a mysterious grace that whispers to the soul that all real love is the ineffable experience of freedom. As Dr. M. Scott Peck put it so well in his classic work, *The Road Less Traveled*, love liberates, while dependency suffocates. Tom Moran, *lay leader*; Peter Knight, *service coordinator*

**SUPPORT GROUP FOR UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF WILDFLOWER CHURCH**

A group is forming to provide mutual support for Wildflowers who are seeking employment or better employment. In this group we will focus on members becoming more competitive as candidates for employment, learning to leverage networking, sharing resources, and supporting each other in our efforts to find an appropriate job. The next meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 2, at the apartment of Michael Finney, who will host the meeting. The address is 1117 Hollow Creek Dr. Apt. 104. For more information, call or email Michael at 696-3019 or [mfinney001@austin.rr.com](mailto:mfinney001@austin.rr.com).



**FIVE WILDFLOWERS URGENTLY NEEDED TO MENTOR YOUNG PEOPLE!**

The Social Action Committee has committed to recruit mentors for an innovative new collaboration called Mentoring Matters. Two wonderful non-profit organizations, Communities in Schools (CIS) and Big Brothers Big Sisters, have teamed up to create a unique program that supports mentoring relationships both on school campus and out in the community. Mentoring Matters matches caring adults with students in need to build one-on-one relationships with lasting impacts. Matches begin their meetings on school campuses, and after several months begin to do activities out in the community. The volunteer commitment is three to four hours per week for at least one year.

Bedicheck Middle School, near William Cannon and South First, is close to our possible new home, and has five kids there who have been waiting for a mentor since last spring. Several other south Austin schools, including Paredes, Ann Richards, Becker and Fulmore also have kids waiting.

The Mentoring Matters Spanish Club is a great opportunity to help a child and regularly practice your Spanish! Members of Spanish Club are “advanced beginners” in Spanish who are matched with a child whose parents have limited English skills. They participate in free, fun, Spanish conversation classes twice a month, and outings to Spanish-only cultural events with their mentees.

For more information call Wildflower member and CIS program coordinator Eileen Nehme at 698-4987, or visit the CIS website: [www.cisaustin.org](http://www.cisaustin.org). We need applications by March 15.





**CongrUUity 2010**

A Middle School Youth Group Social Action Conference  
**April 9 and 10, 2010**, First Unitarian Church of San Antonio

**Penny Burnette** **Can UU make a difference?** Youth in grades 5-8 to join us in learning how the actions we take and the words we speak can make a real difference in the world. This year, we will be exploring environmental issues.

**What are we going to do?**

- ⊗ Explore how to make the world a greener place
- ⊗ Learn new songs and play new games
- ⊗ Practice the seven principles in a safe and affirming community
- ⊗ Meet other awesome “cool-possum” Unitarian Universalist middle school youth
- ⊗ Have oodles and noodles of fun

**What to expect**

- ⊗ Arrive Friday evening between 6 and 8 p.m. for registration, snacks, and settling in

- ⊗ Opening Circle will begin at 8 p.m., followed by socializing and a nighttime worship. Lights out at 11 p.m.
- ⊗ Breakfast Saturday morning at a local San Antonio restaurant
- ⊗ Saturday’s activities will include environmental-themed activities plus games and fun
- ⊗ Pizza at 5 p.m. on Saturday followed by closing circle and good-byes

**What else**

You must pre-register; we must know of all participants prior to the conference. The cost is \$20. This event is not appropriate for those youth who have already taken part in high school YRUU events. There will be a one to five ratio of adults to youth.

If you would like for your child to attend or you would like to be a chaperone contact Penny Burnette at [dre@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:dre@wildflowerchurch.org).

**SCHEDULE**

March Class Schedule: Elementary-aged children begin in the service with their parents and will be sung out to their classes after the time for all ages about 10:45 a.m.

|          |                             |  |
|----------|-----------------------------|--|
| March 7  | Pre-K and K-I at Starbright | 2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> , and 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> at SASAC |
| March 14 | Pre-K and K-I at Starbright | 2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> , and 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> at SASAC |
| March 21 | Pre-K and K-I at Starbright | 2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> , and 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> at SASAC |
| March 28 | Pre-K and K-I at Starbright | 2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> , and 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> at SASAC |



“Sundae Sunday.” The 2nd-4th grade class enjoyed an ice cream sundae party for filling their jar with gems of goodness. They received gems of goodness each Sunday for doing nice things for others like sharing toys and helping siblings.

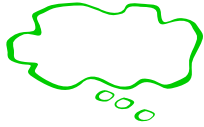


The 2nd-4th grade class played a cooperative game with a hula hoop. They held hands in a circle, and had to crawl through the hoop without letting go of each other’s hands.

The pre-K class plays on the Starbright playground




  
**BLESSING FOR MARCH**
  
 May light and love surround us,  
 And guide us to right action.
   
 ~The Universalist Church  
 New York City



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT: THOUGHT FOR ACTION

The second “Food for Thought: Thought for Action,” Sunday, March 21, 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., will focus on Rev. Eliza Galaher’s sermon that day on water issues and how they impact women and families around the world. Jean Davison and others will share related personal experiences and insights. Jean is an anthropologist and international development specialist, with extensive experience working with women and girls in developing countries, in improving access to water, food, and education. She has been a consultant to numerous development agencies and foundations that support grassroots, equitable and sustainable development. Come join in the snack potluck (even if you haven’t brought a snack)! There will be small informal group discussions following the presentations—a great way to connect with other Wildflowers around a fascinating topic!

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SWUUC SPRING CONFERENCE

On March 1 registration for the 2010 General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) began. Anyone who is considering attending this big annual meeting should register now and get lodging arranged, while some less expensive rooms are still available. The UUA Board has been working for several years to design a manner of governance more agile, direct, and accountable than the current form. At present, authority is located in four different bodies: Districts, the UUA Board of Trustees, Congregations, and General Assembly. Communication and accountability are often unclear among them, and progress is hard to measure. The UUA Board will begin the process for reorganization at GA in June, which will be an example of self-government at its most basic. It is also a wonderful opportunity for attendees to participate in the management of our free faith.



Closer to home, the Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (SWUUC) will hold its Spring Conference the weekend of April 23–25. Contact Jennifer Nichols at [jnichols@uua.org](mailto:jnichols@uua.org) or Connie Nolen at [swduua@aol.com](mailto:swduua@aol.com), both at (817)446-0099 for more information and registration forms.

## A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS

Wildflower’s Finance Committee is one of many groups involved in making the dream of a home of our own come true. The church plans to raise over half of the money necessary to purchase the property on Corral Lane during the capital campaign; however, the remainder will come from a mortgage. One possible source of funding is the Unitarian Universalist Association. Finance members also made exploratory visits to four local banks who were all receptive to lending money to our church, not a given in the current financial climate. Wildflower Church has been blessed with dedicated and talented members who have kept our financial, as well as spiritual, house in order. Read more about financing a Home of Our Own by clicking on the logo at [www.wildflowerchurch.org/node/182](http://www.wildflowerchurch.org/node/182), Case Statement. Finance welcomes new member Scott Caudle.

## WILDFLOWER FUN(D)RAISER

Try something different this Easter!

On March 28 after church

Take your loved ones out to

Enjoy a delicious brunch

Sip a Mimosa (over 21 only)

Be creative – paint eggs

Bring your kids

Make a gift to the building fund

Help a dream come true

Go home feeling good with

Easter decorations for your house

Plenty of eggs available for you

Pet the chicken that laid your egg

Where?

At Terry and Dagmar

Grieder’s

502 West Live Oak Street

Between S. Congress

and S. First

Hurry!

Reserve your spot at

916-8961



## ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

New Classes Beginning in March

**Buddhism—The Four Noble Truths**, March 7–28, Sunday, 9:15 to 10:15 a.m., SASAC, Ceramics Room. An-nice Ellington will help you explore the basic tenets of this world religion that has influenced Unitarian Universalism and discover its place in your faith tradition. Contact Gerry King 462-9484 or [gerryking@austin.rr.com](mailto:gerryking@austin.rr.com) for more information.

**Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?**, First and third Tuesday of month starting March 2 through July 20, 7 to 9 p.m., Patterson home, 7102 Eganhill, Austin 78745, limited to 10 people. Gay Patterson and group members facilitate this book discussion group as it reads Michael J. Sandel's book and relates the big questions of political philosophy to the most vexing issues of the day. Participants will purchase a book and use online study questions as a guide. Contact Gay at 447-8829 or [gspatterson@austin.rr.com](mailto:gspatterson@austin.rr.com) for more information.

**Continuing Book Discussion on Ethical Eating**, March 10, 7 to 9 p.m., Church Office, 1714 Fortview Rd. #106, Austin 78704. Helen Burnette will focus this final discussion on two books (due to cancellation of the Feb. 10 meeting): *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan and *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver. Join Helen for this lively finale!

### Preview of April Classes:

**Building Your Own Theology**, April 4–June 13 (10 sessions), Sunday, 9:15 to 10:15 a.m., SASAC, Ceramics Room. To one extent or another we all ponder the great questions. Without examining our beliefs, we are likely to be ruled by inherited prejudices and limiting beliefs. Christian Schmidt and Gerry King are the co-leaders of this class, which is designed to provide us with the tools to create our own personal theology that captures how we want to relate to the great issues of life. The class will be highly participatory and will finish with your personal credo. Christian is a UU ministerial student at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and a frequent visitor to Wildflower. For further information contact Gerry at 462-9484 or [gerryking@austin.rr.com](mailto:gerryking@austin.rr.com).

**Trauma, Justice and Forgiveness: Historical and Religious Perspectives**, April 11–May 16, Sunday, 7 to 9 p.m., Adams/King home, 2507 Keepsake Dr., Austin 78745

In this six-session class, Rev. Eliza will lead the group in discussions about how we move from trauma to justice, and how forgiveness fits into the journey of healing. Using writings from theologians, political activists, and lesser-known survivors of trauma from around the world, participants will read in advance for each session, bringing their insights and questions back to the group. Sign up in advance, so Eliza can provide you with the first reading a week before the first session. Reading assignments will average between 20 and 40 pages per week.

### Small Group Ministry

**Connection Circle Survey Coming!** Connection Circles are the small groups of Wildflowers who gather monthly for closer community and to enrich their Wildflower experience. There are currently seven Circles meeting with over 50 people participating. One Circle has even decided to hold a second meeting each month focusing more on socializing and playing games! The groups are continuing to consider each aspect of our Wildflower mission statement. To help us with the planning for next year's Connection Circles, we will be sending a survey to members of current Circles during March. Please take this opportunity to help us shape the future of this small group ministry at Wildflower. If you are interested in joining a Circle now or at the beginning of the new cycle, contact Joan Harman, 454-3160, or email [groups@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:groups@wildflowerchurch.org).

### Affinity Groups

**Conversation Café Changes Day, Time, and Location in March:** Saturday, March 20, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., Hampton Branch at Oak Hill Austin Public Library, 5125 Convict Hill Rd., Austin 78749

**Wildflower Conversation Café** has been providing great conversation for 14 months. Starting in March, Wildflower Conversation Café will begin meeting with the Conversation Café at the Hampton Branch at Oak Hill Austin Public Library. Joining this group will provide all the benefits of our prior situation—meaningful conversation on interesting topics with no books to read or assignments. What this change offers is increased interface with the south Austin community by joining an established café in a quieter location. For more information email [wildflowerconversationcafe@gmail.com](mailto:wildflowerconversationcafe@gmail.com) or call Joan Harmon at 454-3160.





*Jan Austin*

The countdown to a Home of our Own has begun! The Effective Date of the Earnest Money Contract was Thursday, February 11, and that is the beginning of the 120-day period we have to complete our inspections, have a capital campaign, receive a building loan, and make a final decision to buy or not to buy this property.

We want and need as many people involved in reaching this goal as possible, so please think how you want to be a part of the project. Click on this link, <http://wildflowerchurch.org/node/183>, and then click on "Volunteer Form" to see some of the ways you can help. Email Paula Vaughan at [building@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:building@wildflowerchurch.org) or Jan Austin at [president@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:president@wildflowerchurch.org) if you have any questions. We'll be glad to help you find your place.

For the next 30 days, our architects and engineers will be making inspections of the building and surrounding grounds. We should receive their final reports by March 12, at which time the Board will make a "Go/No-Go" decision about moving forward in the process.

If we decide to continue, we'll enter Phase II where the architects will create preliminary designs for remodeling, estimate the cost of their designs, and we will refine and update our projected income and expenses for the next five years. This period will end with another "Go/No-Go" decision by the Board.

If it's a "Go," we'll move into Phase III during which we'll begin the capital campaign and apply for a mortgage. We'll have a congregational meeting on May 16 to approve applying for a mortgage, and we'll have another congregational meeting on June 6 to make a final decision about buying the property.

It looks simpler on paper than it really is, but we're on our way, and we want *you* to go with us!

In peace and hope,  
Jan Austin, President

Dear Wildflowers,

I want to send a sincere thank you to everyone who helped my mom, Grace Hitzfelder, my family and me during her illness and after her death. So many did so much and I want to be sure everyone gets a big hug and Thank You for all the rides, food, visits, phone calls, songs, milkshakes, lunches, listening, and everything else you did.

I can't imagine a more caring group.

Love, Esther, Adam, and Jay

**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.



**Minister**

Rev. Eliza C. Galaher

[minister@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:minister@wildflowerchurch.org)

**Director of Religious Education**

Penny Burnette

[dre@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:dre@wildflowerchurch.org)

**Office Administrator**

Dotti Sizer

[office@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:office@wildflowerchurch.org)

**Church Bookkeeper**

Jennifer Almond

[bookkeeper@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:bookkeeper@wildflowerchurch.org)

**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](http://www.wildflowerchurch.org)

**Message Phone:** (512) 428-9464

**Email:** [mail@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:mail@wildflowerchurch.org)

**Office:** (not always staffed)  
1714 Fortview Road #106  
PO Box 40395  
Austin, TX 78704-7659

**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 April issue is March 15.  
Send submissions to [newsletter@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:newsletter@wildflowerchurch.org).

Newsletter editor: Dotti Sizer  
Newsletter copyeditor: Holly Gonzalez

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Martha Allan, Jan Austin, Steve Brooks, Ray Cooper, Lynn Hubertus, David Hume,  
Matthew Markert, Gay Phillips, Jonathan Pratter, and Rev. Eliza Galaher (*ex officio*)