



WILDFLOWER CHURCH

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

August 2009

Transforming lives

Volume 9 No 8

Covenant of Right Relations Workshop

Saturday, September 12, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Committee on Ministry is facilitating a church-wide workshop on Saturday, September 12. We hope to get the same outstanding participation we had at last year's Search for the Future gathering. Joe Sullivan will be with us again to guide us through the process. What will come out of this day will be a Covenant forged by our congregation that will serve as the framework for how we shape our relationships, conduct our church affairs, and manage conflict when it happens. It is how we translate our faith into daily practice. Healthy congregations create such a Covenant so that they never lose sight of what it actually means to be healthy, to always strive for civility, and to hold that up to our children as our church's behavioral standard.



A light lunch will be served. We'll also have childcare and activities for the kids. The workshop will be at the Shady Hollow Community Center at 3303 Doe Run in far South Austin (more specific directions forthcoming). Please save the date – September 12.

Speak Out for Health Care

Tell Your Story

Sunday, August 16, 11:35 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

Are you concerned about the health care system? Then speak out! After the August 16 worship service, stay for just 35 minutes. We'll sit in groups of eight and each person will have two minutes to describe a troubling personal experience with the health care system.

Austin Interfaith will combine Wildflower's concerns with those of other congregations and, if there is enough interest, will develop specific actions to increase access to health care in Austin. Because Austin Interfaith represents 50,000 people, it can hold local politicians accountable for implementing specific actions.

Please take a few minutes to speak out for health care. You could save a life.

Child care provided. For more information, contact Kathy Murphy at kmurphy@austin.rr.com.

Write a Letter

Sundays after church

On July 19, 40 Wildflowers stayed after church to watch the PBS Frontline documentary *Sick Around the World* and to write letters in support of universal access to high quality health care for all Americans. You can participate too! Everything you need to write a letter to your elected officials is available after church at the Social Action Table: paper, envelopes, printed address labels, stamps, and pens. All you need to provide is your commitment to improved health care. After you write your letter, put a dot on the poster so everyone can see how many letters we've sent.

Many thanks to Tom and Evelyn Bookout for providing lunch and the movie on July 19, and to members of the Social Action Committee and Wildflower's Austin Interfaith Team for organizing the event.

Michael Stanbury, Jim Patterson, and Phil Hewitt put a dot on the "Speak Out for Health Care" poster for every letter written to a congressperson.





Dear Wildflowers,

After being away from Wildflower for over a month, off on various adventures of both work and play, I am finding myself ready to roll up my sleeves (though that may just be because of the heat), and getting back into the Wildflower world.

With a new Board of Trustees, a new Stewardship team that is also willing and able to take the lead on the capital campaign (with your help, of course!), and a Building Committee that is working hard at scouting out our future home, I feel extraordinarily lucky to be moving into my third year with you all, to see where we will be able to go together in the coming year. The Committee on Ministry-led covenanting workshop on September 12 will certainly be a healthy, fun, community building way to move still deeper into beloved and just community. See you there, and everywhere!

Rev. Eliza C. Galaher

—Rev. Eliza Galaher

Mission: Wildflower

Message from the Stewardship Committee

It seems hard to believe in days of triple digit temperatures, but summer begins a time of renewal for Wildflower Church. We look towards the next year and develop a budget. It is a dossier of sorts, on how the church will fulfill its mission.

The work is not over when a budget is approved. We all become 'agents' for our mission. We're not secret agents, skulking in shadows and engaging in espionage. We become very visible agents and are given important duties to carry out. We are called to live our values.

Consider what our mission means to you. Be a mission agent. It may seem daunting, like Mission: Impossible. But it's not. We are a generous people and we all play a role in making things possible. Read our mission statement. It's your mission...should you choose to accept it.

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.

Minister's Schedule

- Monday: day off
- Tuesday: in office (available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
- Wednesday: making visits
- Thursday: in office (available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
- Friday: in office (available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
- Saturday: reading/writing day

Rev. Eliza is available by appointment at other times and for evening meetings on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

In the event of an emergency on her day off, please call Eliza on her cell phone at 674-5559. If she does not answer, leave a message, and she will call you back. Please do not rely on email for emergencies. If you have questions, email Eliza at minister@wildflowerchurch.org.



RE classes made beaded bracelets with Sheila Rae

Connection Circles: Looking for Connection?

New Program Begins in October

If you'd like more of a sense of community and connection within Wildflower, the new Connection Circles program could be just what you're looking for! You can sign up through August, and the groups will start in October. The Circles will meet monthly to explore important topics, focusing this year on our Wildflower mission statement. They'll be led by trained facilitators exploring questions suggested by the Small Group Ministry Team (Joan Harman, Judy Morgan, and Rev. Eliza Galaher). You may also want to consider the wide variety of other excellent small groups at Wildflower, listed at the Wildflower website. For more information, look for the Connection Circles table after service, or contact Joan Harman, 454-3160, or Judy Morgan, 804-0123, email: groups@wildflowerchurch.org

July Worship Services

August 2

A Celebration of the Celtic Lughnasadh – Wildflower Pagans
 The Wildflower Church Pagan Group will lead a celebration of this ancient festival. (Rev. Galaher will be preaching in New Braunfels this Sunday).
 Service Coordinator: Peter Knight

August 9

Washing Feet: A Practice in Intellectual Humility – Rev. Galaher
 Rev. Galaher will reflect upon the wisdom shared by poets, preachers, and academics at this summer’s General Assembly, and add her own thoughts to the shared call of humility and understanding in our religious movement.
 Service Coordinator: Allen Fisher

August 16

Sunday Walking in a Stranger’s Shoes – Rev. Galaher
 On Sunday mornings, are we happy to see a visitor simply because it means one more potential member in our church, or are we truly curious to hear and know that person’s story and to understand what is calling them to seek beloved community?
 Service Coordinator: Peter Knight

August 23

Creating and Sustaining the Beloved Community – Scottie Johnson
 In 1913, American philosopher Josiah Royce said, “...the office of religion is to aim towards the creation on earth of the Beloved Community...” What are the characteristics of such a beloved community and how many of them does Wildflower Church exhibit?
 Service Coordinator: Eva Andries

August 30

Drifting Here with My Ship’s Companions: The Annual Water Ceremony – Rev. Galaher
 Bring some water from your summer travels (whether from across oceans or your own backyard), and celebrate with us in this intergenerational ingathering service.
 Service Coordinator: Helen Burnette

All Children Invited to Sing!

Sunday, August 30

All children in grades K-8 are invited to sing in the children's chorus during the Water Ceremony on August 30. The children will meet from 10:00 to 10:20 a.m. on August 23 and 30 to learn the song and the hand motions. There will be a sign in the SASAC lobby indicating which room the rehearsals will be held in. If you have questions, please contact Gay Patterson at gspatterson@austin.rr.com.

Children Experience Summer Solstice Ritual

On Sunday, June 21, the RE children in grades K-8 experienced a Summer Solstice ritual, performed by the Wildflower Unitarian Universalist Pagans (WUUPS). We talked about the importance of rituals in honoring the rhythms of the Earth and her seasons. The Wildflower Drummers played a processional as the children filed outside to the ritual space under the beautiful trees. After the ritual, we grounded ourselves with solstice snacks and enjoyed more drumming and dancing. The children of Wildflower have a good sense of what it means to honor the earth and were enthusiastic participants. WUUPS thoroughly enjoyed teaching this part of our UU heritage found in the "Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature."

Right: The Summer Solstice ritual

Bottom left: The children helped create the ritual by offering suggestions for inviting the four directions

Bottom right: The Wildflower Drummers: Anna Bartkowski, Sara Barker, and Lois Brown





New Coming of Age Program

Wildflower’s brand-new Coming of Age program, which I introduced in last month’s newsletter, is taking root! We will implement this program for Fall and Spring for the 8th through 12th graders. This program will be an important part of establishing a successful youth program at Wildflower.

Penny Burnette

Coming of Age helps youth learn more about Unitarian Universalism and articulate their own beliefs. Components include workshops, mentors, retreats, social action projects and rites of passage. Participants will explore theology, spirituality and history through discussion, drama, music, writing and art. The program culminates in a ceremony that features the youth reading their statements of personal belief to the congregation. We will have classes on Sunday mornings that are open to all youth, including visitors. Other activities will take place outside of church for the youth signed up for the program.

For this program to be successful, we need teachers and mentors that are not parents of youth in this class. Teachers will help organize the program and work with the youth on Sundays and during workshops and retreats. Mentors will be matched with a youth and will work with them one-on-one outside of Sunday morning classes. Please contact me soon at dburnette@austin.rr.com or 447-7994 and let me know if you are interested in this program for your children or if you are interested in being a teacher or mentor.

—Penny Burnette, Director of Religious Education

Learn More About RE!

- Contact the Director of Religious Education, Penny Burnette, at dburnette@austin.rr.com or 447-7994.
- Find out more about the high school group by visiting <http://wildflowerchurch.org/node/122>.
- To receive email updates about the religious education program, sign up at Wildflowerre-kids@yahoo.com.
- For more information about the monthly family game night, look at the calendar in Sunday’s Order of Service or go to www.wildflowerchurch.org.

August RE Schedule

This summer, Wildflower GUESTs (Gifted UU Expressively Sharing Talents) from our congregation are sharing their hobbies, talents and interests with our children in the elementary and middle school classes. We need teachers to sign up and help the GUESTs each Sunday. Here is the schedule for August:

Aug 2

Linda Gravatti will present a lesson in stewardship. The children will learn how stewardship involves sharing time, talent, and treasure and gain understanding of stewardship in three settings: congregation, community, and Unitarian Universalist faith.

Aug 9

Jim Patterson shares his architectural expertise to show the kids what our own church building could look like and allow the kids to dream of how they would like for the Children’s Religious Education classrooms and playground to look.

Aug 16

The children will create artwork to sell after the service for a fundraiser for our own church building.

Aug 23

Holly Cooper shows kids how to do weaving with a small project and a portable table loom.

Aug 30

Children are invited to attend the intergenerational Water Ceremony service.



Above: Decorating frames in the photography class with Betty McCreary and Joan Denson

Left: Enjoying binoculars and building blocks during a childcare session

New Task Force Forming

“Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice” is the title of our new Congregational Study Action Issue. It is a huge topic, covering ethical eating, human rights, animal welfare, and environmental stewardship. For the next two-and-a-half years we will be addressing this issue, and thinking up projects to help us understand it, to ready us for a ballot at the 2011 General Assembly.



All Study Action Issues are opportunities for us to examine our lives and our congregations, to help us better live our values. Wildflower has just completed participating in the last Study Action Issue on Peacemaking.

Please contact Helen Burnette, helenburnette@hotmail.com, or 454-0809, with your questions, ideas, or comments, and let me know if you are willing to be part of a Task Force on this issue or on a certain part of it. The task force will make plans and recruit other Wildflowers to help create projects and events.

Green Neighbor Reminder

If you haven't already signed up for the Green Neighbor program, created by the City of Austin to encourage actions that promote a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, stop at the Social Action table to pick up the Green Neighbor form. We are still hoping for 30% of church members to become involved, so that we can qualify as a “Green Neighbor” and be listed on the City website. For more information, contact Karen Schrupp, kasa1947@hotmail.com, 394-1169, or Paula Pulaski, ppulaski6@yahoo.com, 292-0723.

Sustainability Tip

Please recycle, donate or reuse things you no longer need. Here are places in Austin that will take your used items.

- Habitat for Humanity - building materials
- The Caring Place - stoves, washers, dryers
- St. Vincent de Paul, Safe Place - mattresses and box springs
- Acess Technologies - copy machines
- Goodwill, Salvation Army, Thrifttown - clothing, shoes, accessories, books, furniture, housewares, electronics, toys and more.



Wildflowers Attend Health Care Rally

Nine Wildflower members attended a May 30 rally at Austin City Hall to support the single payer Health Care approach (i.e., a national health insurance system similar to Medicare) sponsored by Health Care for All Texas. Attending were Barbara Dickens, Evelyn and Tom Bookout, Bobbie Erb, Joan Denson, Bruce Hurtley, Faye Maxwell, Mary Cullinane, and Judy Morgan.

Social Justice at Wildflower

Wildflower congregants work with Austin Interfaith to implement specific system-wide changes to improve the lives of people in Austin.

The church also participates in several social action projects that implement our mission:

- Super Cooler Program
- Green Neighbors
- Adopt-a-Highway
- Hands on Housing
- Food and toiletry packets for the homeless
- And much more.

For more information about social action projects, go to www.wildflowerchurch.org.



Helen Burnette reads the story for all ages

Classes and Small Group Ministry at Wildflower

All groups and classes are open to members and non-members. To find one that's right for you, visit <http://www.wildflowerchurch.org/node/60>.

Calling All Wildflowers Who Want to be Part of an Exciting Committee!

The Adult Programming Committee invites you to help us develop and grow our programs, especially our new initiatives in religious education and small group ministry. As Wildflower grows and moves to become a program-sized church, this work becomes extremely important. Be involved in creating our quality adult programs! Talk to Dee Adams, Joan Harmon, Gerry King, Eric Miller or Judy Morgan about your interest. You can also call or email Judy Morgan at 208-0123 or judymorgan711@yahoo.com.



Sunday Morning Qigong Healing Practice

Sunday mornings, 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.
SASAC Game Room

Cobi Bentley, a certified Sheng Zhen qigong instructor, will guide us in this mind/body/spirit practice of graceful meditative movements that encourage the body's innate ability to heal. This form of qigong is practiced while sitting in a chair and is suitable for everyone. Cobi's gentle spirit creates a safe space to enter into this practice.

Everyone is welcome. Join the class at any time – for one session or find it a “not to miss” experience. A donation of \$10 is suggested. For more information email Gerry King at gerryking@austin.rr.com or call him at 462-9484.

*Whether you have come here with heart full or heart empty,
with spirits high or low, rested or tired, hopeful or despairing,*

*Whether you have come here out of habit, conviction,
loneliness, or curiosity,*

*You belong here because you are here, and all that you have
and all that you are is welcome here.*

*This morning we are, together, the heartbeat of this
congregation.*

—Krista Taves

Sunday Afternoon Tarot 101 Class

Continues through August 30, 2009

Are you interested in learning to read tarot cards? Tarot cards can serve as an excellent guide to your personal spiritual journey. Frances Osborne will be continuing her eight-week Tarot 101 class on Sunday afternoons through the month of August. The class meets on August 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 12:30-3:30 p.m. at her home, 3400 Stoneridge Rd., Austin. All levels of experience are welcome. All that is needed is a Rider-Waite style tarot deck, a notebook, a bag lunch, and you! If you don't have a deck, one can be provided. For more information email Frances at osborne35@hotmail.com or call 468-9542.

Conversation Café

Saturday, August 8, 2 to 3 p.m.
Scooter's Coffee House

Topic: *What are the five (or fewer) questions you are living in your life?*

Wildflowers and the general public convene on the second Saturday of each month at Scooter's Coffee House, NE corner of MoPac and William Cannon near Taco Cabana,

for meaningful conversation. Everyone is welcome. There are no books to read, no assignments, and no dues (except a bit to eat or drink at the café). Topics change monthly and reflect the interests of those present. Looking to switch from small talk to BIG talk? Join us. For more information email wildflowerconversationcafe@gmail.com or call Joan Harman at 454-3160.





Jan Austin

Dear Members and Friends of Wildflower Church,

I wish that every single one of you could attend the annual General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations! The energy that abounds among the more than 3,000 UUs is palpable, and the inspiration of the speakers, the music, and the images lingers long after the last amen.

One of my goals for the coming year is to identify a group of people from Wildflower who are interested in attending General Assembly, either as official delegates from our congregation or as non-voting participants. We are now eligible to send four voting delegates, and we budget for at least a \$500 stipend for each.

If you would like to learn more about attending General Assembly, please talk to Eva Andries, Helen Burnette, Michael Stanbury, Rev Eliza, or me. We would love to help you get there!

Here are some high points for me with links to the UUA website so you can experience them, too:

- The Ware Lecture, Melissa Harris-Lacewell: <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2009/ga2009/144263.shtml>
- Sunday Morning Worship Service, Rev Abhi Janamanchi – “Faith in the Borderland”: <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2009/ga2009/144303.shtml> (Rev Janamanchi’s sermon begins at 50:00. After the sermon, be sure to fast forward to hear the wonderful singing of “Stand.”)
- Sermon Award Worship Service, Rev Alison M. Cornish – “What Can’t You Eat?": <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/2009/ga2009/144229.shtml> (Rev Cornish’s sermon begins at 10:43)

In hope and peace,

—Jan Austin, President

Melissa Harris-Lacewell delivers the Ware Lecture. From <http://blogs.uua.org/ga2009>.



Potluck and Line Dance for Singles and Couples

Saturday, August 29, 6 p.m.

The Circle of Friends singles group and the First UU Couples group invites you to a potluck and line dance. Come and visit with old friends from both First Church and Wildflower and meet new friends. All adults (singles and couples) are invited. Bring a yummy dish, wear comfortable clothes and shoes, and be ready to learn a new step or two. No line dancing experience or partner needed. For more information contact Mike Wilkes at 657-4227 or wilkesinfo-1@yahoo.com.

- When: Saturday, August 29, 6 p.m.
- Who: Adults (singles and couples)
- Where: Howson Hall, First Church
- Why: Fun and Fellowship



Wildflower Women’s 2009 Retreat
Spiritual Deepening and Connections

October 16 to 18

Save the dates! October 16-18, 2009, our women's retreat will take place at Mo Ranch in Central Texas. More details coming next month! Contact Liz Hiles-Fisher at 417-2582 with any questions.



Wildflower women at the 2008 retreat



Minister

Rev. Eliza C. Galaher

minister@wildflowerchurch.org

Director of Religious Education

Penny Burnette

dburnette@austin.rr.com

Church Bookkeeper

Jennifer Almond

**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

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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.

September newsletter editor: Carol Knight

Thanks to everyone for their August submissions!

August newsletter editor: Amelia Koford

August newsletter copyeditor: Holly Gonzalez

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Martha Allan, Jan Austin, Steve Brooks, Ceryta Holm, Lynn Hubertus, David Hume,
Brian Lambert, Jonathan Pratter (**welcome!**), Paula Pulaski, and Rev. Eliza Galaher (*ex officio*)