



WILDFLOWER CHURCH

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

September 2009

Transforming lives

Volume 9 No 9

A Message from the Stewardship Committee

As “agents” for change, all of us are looking forward to implementing our mission—to expand the spiritual health of our beloved community and assist in bringing social justice to greater Austin. “Accepting this mission” involves a close look at the balance between our love for Wildflower and our individual financial capabilities.

We, on the Stewardship Committee have in mind possible targets, which are in keeping with the Unitarian Universalist Association’s fair-giving recommendations. Please consider the targets below when deciding your role in building our church for the here-and-now and for the future. The targets are based on an adjusted gross income of \$50,000.

- **Supporter:** The congregation is a significant part of your life. At 3% of income, a pledge of \$125 a month.
- **Sustainer:** The congregation is *central* to your identity. At 4% of income, a pledge of \$167 a month.
- **Visionary:** You are committed to present and *future* growth of our beloved community. At 5% of income, a pledge of \$208 a month.
- **Full Tither:** As a way of living out your spiritual principles. At 10 % of income, a pledge of \$417 a month.

Will you accept this mission?

Wildflower Women with Wings

Wildflower women will migrate to the MoRanch Conference Center on October 16-18, 2009 for the 7th Annual Women’s Retreat. Join us for spiritual deepening with Rev. Eliza Galaher, worship, music, singing and drumming around a campfire, and a talent show.

Registration is from September 6 to September 21, 2009. Only 60 spaces are available, so register on September 6! See the website, www.wildflowerchurch.org, for the registration form, fact sheet, and more information, or contact Liz Hiles-Fisher at 417-2582 or sheldun@earthlink.



The cost is \$149 per person for two nights lodging, four meals, and all programs. Limited scholarships are available.

Covenant of Right Relations

How do we want to treat each other?

Let’s decide during a compelling workshop on September 12, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Shady Hollow Community Center, 3303 Doe Run.

Please see [page 2](#) for more information about this exciting opportunity and a message from Rev. Eliza about the workshop.

“...the manners of faith are to be found in covenants or promises to practice behaviors grounded in the teachings of the congregation.”

“...Learning how to forgive and to risk practicing forgiveness are behaviors that should be grounded in the faith community and belong to the domain of obedience to the unenforceable. We are to do it simply because it is right to do.”

— from Gil Rendle’s article, *Holy Manners*



Dear Wildflowers,

I was never much of a science student. But the one science class I kind of caught onto in high school was physics. I liked it because it was about relationships and movement, actions and reactions. Now, ask me to describe the word momentum in terms of physics, and I'm not sure how well I'll do, but I

Rev. Eliza C. Galaher think it has something to do with an object gaining energy behind or within it, and thus gaining more speed, more force.

So it is that I see physics alive and well at Wildflower Church as the building committee, the stewardship committee, the Board, and other groups join forces to really move us forward toward finding a home of our own. Friends, we have momentum!

And we also have momentum in creating programs that speak to what we are seeking as individuals and as a community. Thanks to Penny Burnette and others, we are offering a fabulous Coming of Age program for our older students this year. Thanks to Gerry King, Dee Adams, and team, adult programming is taking off with exciting offerings for the adults. Similarly, Judy Morgan and Joan Harman are working diligently to revitalize our small group ministry, introducing Connection Circles to our community this fall. Thank you, all!

However you can, help us all keep the momentum going. A pat on the back, words of thanks, and offers to help go a long way to keep this community moving in a wonderful direction!

—Rev. Eliza Galaher

A Buddhist Blessing for Food

*Earth, water, fire, air and space
combine to make this food.
Numberless beings gave their lives and
labors
that we may eat.
May we be nourished that we may
nourish life.*

Church-wide Covenant of Right Relations Workshop

Beloved people of this congregation, to further strengthen our commitment to “joyfully nurture one another in our lifelong spiritual journeys” and to “transform ourselves and the world around us through acts of compassion, love, and social justice”—that is, to strengthen our commitment to our mission—we ask you to dedicate the day of September 12 to attending our church-wide covenant of right relations workshop.



As with last year's workshop, when we democratically worked together to create our mission statement, we ask that all of you participate in creating a covenant for the entire congregation. This covenant will serve to document how we wish, promise, and agree to be in relationship together as a religious community.

The workshop will take place at the Shady Hollow Community Center, 3303 Doe Run. Please arrive no later than 8:45 a.m., so all will be present when the workshop begins at 9:00 a.m.. It will end at 3:00 p.m.

Lunch and onsite childcare will be provided.

We are honored that consultant, Joe Sullivan, will return to serve as our facilitator.

In preparation, we ask that you read Gil Rendle's article, *Holy Manners*. A link to the article is on the church website. Thank you, and peace.

Minister's Schedule

- Monday: day off
- Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: in office (available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
- Wednesday: making visits
- 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. Please email Eliza at minister@wildflowerchurch.org if you have questions.

September Worship Services

September 6

This I Believe

Wildflower Church members Dee Adams, Marty Parker and Don Young share their most heartfelt beliefs and inspirations in the third “This I Believe” service of 2009. Service Coordinator: Allen Fisher

September 13

Mission: Wildflower!

Don’t miss this exciting, exhilarating, nail-biting service as the Wildflower Mission Force, also known as the Stewardship Team, launches the 2009 stewardship campaign! Your assignment, should you choose to accept, is to be a part of saving the day and watching Wildflower grow! This blurb will self-destruct in five seconds. Service Coordinator: Eva Andries

September 20

O Source of Peace, Lead Us to Peace

In honor of Rosh Hashanah and the turning of the year, Rev. Galaher will invite the congregation to reflect on our own turnings, including the work we will have done collectively on creating a Covenant of Right Relations the week before. Service Coordinator: Helen Burnette

September 27

Hashivenu: Turn Us Toward You

The lyrics of the Hebrew song, “Hashivenu” translate loosely to “Turn us to You, and we will return. Renew our days as of old.” Understanding Yom Kippur as a time of atonement, Rev. Galaher will speak to how the practice of Sabbath time is a means of atoning for too often forgetting to return to what is most important in our lives. Service Coordinator: Peter Knight



Patterson Barrett and Dana McBride play for worship service.



Kevin Engbretson plays for worship service.

Steering Committee Oversees Building Search

A Steering Committee has been appointed to provide oversight for the process of finding a “home of our own.” Its members represent all facets of the project, and they have authority to make decisions within their designated areas.

Paula Vaughan, program manager, coordinates the overall project and supports the Steering Committee. Graham Agar, a certified project manager, manages project planning and supports the committee.



Phil Hewitt and Paula Vaughn co-chair

Other members include Rev. Galaher and several congregants who represent various aspects of church life: Jan Austin, Board of Trustees; Phil Hewitt, Building Committee; Michael Stanbury, Stewardship; Renee Kingsland, Communications; and Evelyn Bookout and Pamela Nelson, Finance. Penny Burnette serves as Programs Liaison.

An Implementation Team will be responsible for the smooth transition from SASAC and the church offices to our new home. The team’s work will include choosing furniture, recruiting and scheduling volunteers to complete the work that we can do ourselves, and coordinating the move into our new home. A leader for the Implementation Team is yet to be appointed.

The Steering Committee has established a timeline of events necessary to move into our new home. Detailed spreadsheets will define tasks, identify the groups responsible for completing each task and the due dates, and illustrate the ways in which groups and their tasks must interact.

Wildflower Church has set its sights on a home of its own. The Steering Committee has set its sights on helping us move into that home as efficiently as possible. Many thanks to the dedicated people who are serving in a dual capacity as members of the Steering Committee and as chairs or co-chairs of their key committees!



Penny Burnette

Dear Wildflowers,

Welcome to the exciting new classes that start on September 6! Before we say good-bye to summer, we owe a big round of thank yous to everyone who participated in the GUUEST program and shared their talents with our children. Because of you, the program was a huge success!

We also extend thanks to all of the dedicated teachers who worked with the kids over the summer and throughout the year. The success of our RE program depends on volunteers, whose presence and commitment are gifts to the children and the entire church.

Most of our teachers are parents of children in the RE program. It would be wonderful if more congregants without children in the program would participate. It is truly an enriching experience to be with the kids, to witness their “light bulb” moments, and to listen to them share their remarkable insights. Our children are the future of our church. We need to come together now to give rise to the church leaders of the tomorrow.

Many Blessings, **Penny Burnette, Director of Religious Education.**

Childflowers Raise Money for Building

Congratulations to Wildflower’s self-named, Childflowers, who raised \$162.50 for the building fund during an after-church bake and craft sale! Thank you for helping raise money for a home of our own.



Bill Walker, a GUUEST, shares his business ethics talent with children in RE.



Debbie Groves, a GUUEST, taught children how to make car ornaments.

Fall Classes Start September 6!

- **Pre-K for 3 & 4 year olds: We Are Many, We Are One**

This class introduces Unitarian Universalism and its seven principles, welcomes children, and offers grounding for our religious community and its traditions. Through a rich array stories, games, songs, and projects, the class encourages children to honor themselves, their religious community, nature, and cultures from around the world.

- **K-1st Grades: Wonderful Welcome**

This class engages and challenges teachers and children alike to explore how and why we welcome others into our lives. It explores the intangible gifts of welcoming, a core Unitarian Universalist value, and it helps children understand and practice values central to Unitarian Universalism, such as friendship, hospitality, and fairness.

- **2nd-4th Grades: Moral Tales**

Each day our children go forth into a complex world where they are faced with difficult decisions and situations. Through stories, this class provides children with the spiritual and ethical tools they will need to make moral choices and to take actions that

reflect their Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values.

- **5th-7th Grades; The Questing Year**

This class includes four quests to help children develop answers to questions about human faith and the web of all existence. The four quests connect social action and the spiritual search. The class explores the lives of outstanding Unitarian Universalists and uses music and meditation to explore religious mystery. It includes a social action project.

- **8th-12th Grades: Coming of Age**

This year-long class teaches youth more about Unitarian Universalism and how to articulate their own beliefs. It offers mentors and workshops for youth, retreats, social action projects, and rites of passage. Participants explore theology, spirituality and history through discussion, drama, music, writing and art. The program culminates with participants reading their statements of belief to the congregation. Sunday morning classes are open to all youth, including visitors. Other activities, occurring outside the church building, are open to youth who have registered for the program.

Caring / Pastoral Care Committee Seeks Caring People



The Caring Crew seeks people who can prepare an occasional meal for a Wildflower member who is sick or needs help. We're also looking for people who can visit one of our members, help them run errands, or drive them to the doctor when needed. Call Gary Lichtenstein at 263-1821 or visit <http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/612331/> where you can sign up electronically.

Ethical Eating

Each year, the Unitarian Universalists identify study action issues for the coming year. This year the issue is "Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice." The issue is divided into three areas of concern:

1. Climate change and environmental degradation
2. Human rights, social inequality, environmental justice
3. Animal rights and human responsibilities

A comprehensive study guide is available at the Unitarian Universalist Association website. Go to uua.org, then search for Ethical Eating Study Action Guide.

Helen Burnette says, "Sometimes the topic seems too huge to even contemplate. Then I remind myself that the issue is personal because we and the earth are all connected, and everyone eats. During this year of study I plan to say a blessing at meal times and I'd like to know what yours is, even if you use it only occasionally."



Congregants listen during Wildflower's after-church meeting on health care reform

Speak Out for Health Care

Wildflower continues its commitment to speak out for health care reform.

- *Fifty congregants* attended Wildflower's after-church small meeting on health care reform, organized by our church's Austin Interfaith (AI) Team. Participants committed to write letters to their elected officials in support of universal access to comprehensive, affordable health care that's paid for by those who can afford it, not just by the poor and disenfranchised.
- More than 60 people, including *eleven Wildflowers*, attended the Austin Interfaith Leadership Training on August 19. Ann Dunkleberger, deputy director of the Center for Public Policy Priorities, explained proposed health reform bills. Attendees will encourage their congregations to write letters to their elected officials to support health care reform. Rev. Galaher, Judy Morgan, and Kathy Murphy helped lead the training, which was organized by AI's Health Care Research and Action Team, co-chaired by Judy Morgan.
- The Wildflower Austin Interfaith Team is coordinating Wildflower's health reform initiatives. For information on how to participate on the team, or to participate in specific activities, e.g., rallies, letter-writing, etc., contact Judy Morgan at 804-0123 or judymorgan711@yahoo.com.



Carol Knight facilitated a small group during Austin Interfaith's August 19 leadership training.

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

Adult Religious Education

Our Adult Religious Education and Life Enrichment classes are back! The Adult Programming Committee was busy over the summer developing new programs for the coming year. Data from the Community Survey and the rich results of the interest survey informed our planning. The class that Rev. Eliza will teach results from Wildflower's very high interest in the "critical study of religion and society" and "cultural and historical studies of religion." A full yearly schedule of classes will be available soon, along with descriptions of how each class supports Wildflower's mission and your interests.

Adult Religious Education Classes

New! Testimonies of Faith: A MultiFaith, Multicultural Study of Religion

Sunday evenings from September 13 through November 22, 2009, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Location TBA.

In this ten-week class, Rev. Eliza Galaher will lead participants in discussions of sermons, speeches, and essays by theologians from many different faiths, to explore how religion has shaped our lives—or how we have shaped religion—for centuries. Authors include Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 19th-century Unitarian minister Theodore Parker, 20th-century Universalist minister Russel Skinner, Womanist theologians Rebecca Weems and Emily Towners, Native American scholar Vine Deloria, progressive evangelist Jim Wallis, Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh, and many others. Podcasts and videos will be used.

Rev. Eliza requests that you commit to attending all sessions, or as many as you are able. She will hand out/send copies of reading the week before each session. If you are interested in attending, please contact her at minister@wildflowerchurch.org. The size of the class will determine the number of copies she makes and the location.



Conversation Café

No Conversation Café in September

The Conversation Café on September 12 is cancelled because the congregation-wide Covenant of Right Relations Workshop occurs on that date. Join us for the usual second Saturday Conversation Café on October 10 at 2:00 p.m. at Scooter's. For more information call Joan Harman at 454-3160 or email wildflowerconversationcafe@gmail.com.

Life Enrichment Classes

Continuing! Qigong Healing Practice

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

Cobi Bentley, a certified Sheng Zhen Qigong instructor, guides us in a 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. Qigong is inspired by the world's great spiritual traditions and is centered in the philosophy of unconditional love. Cobi's gentle spirit creates a safe space to enter into this practice.

Everyone is welcome. Join the class on Sunday morning for one session or for many. A donation of \$10 is suggested. For more information email Gerry King at gerryking@austin.rr.com or call him at 462-9484.

Connections

Our new emphasis on opportunities to form connections results from your deep interest in spirituality and spiritual development.

New! Connection Circles

Registration deadline is September 10

Want to be more connected? Join a Connection Circle. They're forming now!

If you want to deepen your sense of community and connection at Wildflower, please join a Connection Circle! The circles will consist of 5-10 members that meet once or twice a month in members' homes. The focus will be on building a sense of closer community as we explore important topics. This year we will explore the church's mission statement and how it is expressed in our lives. The groups will be led by trained volunteer facilitators. After the deadline, individuals can join later, subject to available space in groups. Request a registration form at groups@wildflowerchurch.org. For more information, contact Joan Harman, 454-3160, or Judy Morgan, 804-0123.

All are Welcome!

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>.



Jan Austin

Dear Members and Friends of Wildflower Church,

Having spent most of my life in an academic setting of one kind or another, I still consider this time of year a time to assess what's gone before and what I hope to happen in the months ahead. It's a time of new beginnings.

Since a year ago at this time, we've welcomed 33 people into membership in Wildflower Church, and some of those people have become very active in congregational work. Some of them, however, haven't found their niche, yet, and I miss seeing them on Sunday mornings.

The year brought our most successful Stewardship Campaign in the church's history. All of us stepped forward to provide the needed funds to support our professional leaders and our programs. Now it's time for a new Stewardship Campaign, and I am confident that Wildflowers will rise to meet the needs of our church yet again.

We're actively engaged in the search for a home of our own. Our Building Committee has already looked several times at one piece of property and will be guided by our realtor to see other properties of interest. This long-held dream has become a tangible goal that we hope will soon become a reality.

This tells me that we are a vibrant, healthy congregation with a successful past and the makings of an even more successful future. Each of us holds the key for making that happen. What is your part going to be?

In peace and hope,

—Jan Austin, President

Leadership Skills: Learn to Delegate

Delegating effectively is one of the most important skills of leadership. Learn how to do it at the next Leadership Skills Training Potluck on Sunday, September 27, 2009 from 5:00 to 7:30 pm! It will be held at the home of Dee Adams and Gerry King. RSVP at 365-0665. The event is open to current leaders and those interested in learning or brushing up on leadership skills. The potluck will be from 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The workshop will be 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

**Wildflower Auto Donation Program
aka
Cash for Church Clunkers \$\$\$\$\$**

Not everyone is in the mood to buy a new car but your old heap need not go to waste. With Wildflower's new Car Donation Program you can donate your car and it will be picked up from your home and sold, with the proceeds going straight to Wildflower. You get a charitable donation credit and the church budget gets a boost. Just call Gary Lichtenstein at 263-1821



Graham Agar, project manager, leads group in planning for a home of our own



Jim Patterson, architect, shows children his model of a church building



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

Message Phone: (512) 428-9464

Email: mail@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 October issue is September 20.

Send submissions to newsletter@wildflowerchurch.org.

October newsletter editor: Carol Knight

Newsletter copyeditor: Holly Gonzalez

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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