



# WILDFLOWER CHURCH

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

June 2010

Transforming lives

Volume 10, No 6

## BEAT THE HEAT AND TAKE THE SURVEY!

Yes, it's that time of year again. The temperatures are climbing and finding excuses to stay indoors in the air-conditioning takes on more meaning. With that in mind, why not stay inside in the cool, fix yourself a fresh glass of iced tea, go to your computer and fill out the **Wildflower Church 2010 Congregational Self-Assessment Survey**.

You'll find it at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/B23HY9D>.

This annual survey helps us to ensure that Wildflower Church provides services and opportunities that are in alignment with our Mission—to be "...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."

That's why it is so important for all of you to complete the survey! The survey is your opportunity to tell us how well Wildflower Church is meeting your needs and honoring our values of caring, community, children, spirituality and social justice.

So sit in the cool for a few minutes and fill out the survey!



## LISTENING MINISTRY AVAILABLE

Are you looking for a compassionate ear? Wildflower Church now has a Listening Ministry Team whose purpose is to companion people while they go journey through difficult stretches of their lives.

Contact Rev. Eliza at [minister@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:minister@wildflowerchurch.org) for more information.

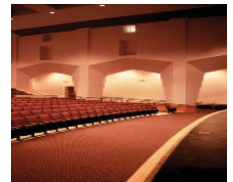
## SASAC CLOSED 4 SUNDAYS IN JUNE AND JULY



Please mark your calendars for the four upcoming Sundays when we will be worshipping at a site other than SASAC. SASAC will be undergoing major repairs this summer as well as being closed for the Fourth of July holiday.

Sunday, June 13, South Austin Recreational Center, 1101 Cumberland Road. For directions, see the following link: [http://maps.google.com/maps?rlz=IT4RNWE\\_enUS315US315&q=south%20austin%20recreation%20center&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&hl=en&tab=wl](http://maps.google.com/maps?rlz=IT4RNWE_enUS315US315&q=south%20austin%20recreation%20center&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&hl=en&tab=wl)

Sunday, June 20, South Austin Recreational Center, 1101 Cumberland Road



Sunday, July 4, Austin Waldorf School, 8700 South View Road. For directions,

see the following link: [http://www.austinwaldorf.org/index.php/about/contact\\_us/](http://www.austinwaldorf.org/index.php/about/contact_us/)

Sunday, July 18, South Austin Recreational Center, 1101 Cumberland Road

## AUSTIN INTERFAITH UPDATE

Wildflower has been active in several Austin Interfaith (AI) areas recently. Nine Wildflowers attended the AI Civic Academy on Education April 27 and our President, Jan Austin, was one of the speakers on educational topics. Several also attended a recent AI immigration workshop, as well as a march in downtown Austin for immigration reform. There is an immigration accountability session tentatively planned for July 25 at San Jose Catholic Church from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. for which we hope many of you will turn out. Education and immigration rights will be a continuing focus—if you are interested in helping with these efforts, contact Kathy Murphy, 444-8606, [kmurphy@austin.rr.com](mailto:kmurphy@austin.rr.com), or Jodine Alpern, 892-3552, [jodpower@yahoo.com](mailto:jodpower@yahoo.com).



Rev. Eliza Galaher

## Walking Together into Summer

Amazingly, the time has come again when the school bells ring for the last time, and children are set free for the summer to experience new adventures and no school buses. It really does seem like just a moment ago we were gathering for our Christmas Eve service. But here it is, hot, sunny, light into the night. I will be heading off on my own various adventures beginning June 20, just a week or so after returning from a week of working in New Orleans with eight wonderful Wildflowers. June 20, I will fly to Minneapolis, where I will take part in a training called "Whose Are We?" *Spiritual Discernment and Theological Reflection*. Then I will attend, as I do most years, Ministry Days, followed by our Unitarian Universalist Association's General Assembly. July will bring me vacation, study leave, and one week of serving as a chaplain at the SWUUC high school youth camp, at U Bar U. I will return to the pulpit July 25, and will be happy to see you all then. In the meantime, while I'm off on my various adventures, I hope each and every one of you will have joyous, peaceful, wonderfully unfolding days of your own. Peace to all!

~Rev. Eliza Galaher

## ARIZONA LAW PRESENTS GENERAL ASSEMBLY WITH DECISION

The newly instituted law in Arizona (SB 1070) which criminalizes any person who cannot prove citizenship status by carrying appropriate documents when challenged by police, caused the Board of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) to meet by teleconference days after it was signed into law. At this meeting a resolution was prepared and will be presented to those gathering in Minneapolis for General Assembly (GA), June 23–27. The resolution, if approved by GA delegates, will cancel the UUA's plans to hold the 2012 GA in Phoenix, AZ.

Locations for GA are decided five years in advance and are designed to provide national witness of Unitarian Universalism across the whole country, and to enable people from all parts of the country to travel easily to GA, at least every several years. In 2005, it was held in Ft. Worth which enabled many Texans to attend that year.



The reasoning behind the resolution is that by economically boycotting Arizona, at great expense to us (\$600,000), our opposition to this law will be unmistakable, and will give aid and strength to others in opposition.

However, the Standing on the Side of Love campaign of the UUA hopes the resolution does not pass. They feel that we should go to Arizona, stand with Arizona UUs and all other oppressed people there, and thus provide a greater witness to our principles and more support to those needing it. Our delegates will join in the decision of how best to live our values. You can contact them before they leave to ask questions and give your insights to them—they are Janet Spencer, [janetinbastrop@gmail.com](mailto:janetinbastrop@gmail.com); Karen Schrupp, [kasa1947@hotmail.com](mailto:kasa1947@hotmail.com); Jan Austin, [jhaustin@austin.rr.com](mailto:jhaustin@austin.rr.com); Tom Moran, [tmoran1@austin.rr.com](mailto:tmoran1@austin.rr.com); and our minister, Rev. Eliza Galaher, [minister@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:minister@wildflowerchurch.org).

### A BLESSING FOR JUNE

Forgive do I creatures all, and let all creatures forgive me.

Unto all I have amity, and unto none enmity.

~from a Jainist prayer

### From the Heart of a Woman Women's Retreat at U-Bar-U June 18-20, 2010

On Friday, June 18, arrival is set from 5 to 9 p.m. Our retreat then begins with a musical event entitled **Heart of a Woman**. Music is a powerful tool for integrating intellect and emotion. Musicians Kit Holmes, Dana Clark, and Wave Harless present music that evokes things common to every woman's journey: love, family, healing, personal growth, relationship, empowerment, spirituality and sexuality. Activities on Saturday and Sunday expand on this and help us leave our hectic worlds for a while, gaining perspective to return, renewed and refreshed. You may register with PayPal at [ubaru.org](http://ubaru.org), or contact Sandy Barnwell, 803-864-4120, [director@ubaru.org](mailto:director@ubaru.org). The fee is \$65.00.

### 90 IS THE NEW 60!

Long-time Wildflower members, Mark and Maxine Barkan, along with friends, Vicky and Bob Bergin, prove that you are as young as you feel.



**JUNE WORSHIP SERVICES**

**June 6 – Rev. Galaher**

*Teach Your Children Well*

19th century Unitarian minister William Ellery Channing wrote “the great end in religious education is not to stamp our minds upon the young, but to stir up their own....” Rev. Galaher will explore the question, If we agree with Channing, are we willing and ready to stir? Tom Bookout, *worship leader*; Allen Fisher, *service coordinator*

**June 13 – Rev. Galaher**

*Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans?*

Members of this year’s annual Amy Young Memorial Service trip will join Rev. Galaher in sharing with the rest of the congregation their experiences working in New Orleans. Eliza Galaher, *worship leader*; Eva Andries, *service coordinator*

**June 20 – Rev. Mark Walz**

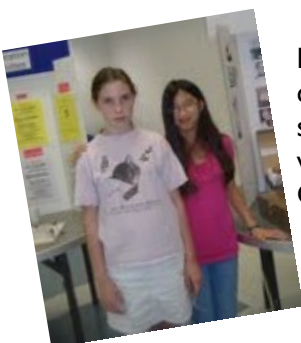
*Transforming Lives Through Passion and Action*

Father’s Day affords us a wonderful opportunity for all of us to reimagine our roles in our many relationships and to recommit to our personal core values. Alex Traugott, *worship leader*; Eva Andries and Janet Spencer, *service coordinators*

**June 27 – Martin Bryant**

*The Good Dirt*

Is the concept of “personal enlightenment” consistent with a UU Faith? Why might it not be? What might the koan inherent in this fundamental concept of Buddhism show us about a UU Faith and UU Church life? Martin is a former Wildflower who lives in Houston, TX. Barbara Carrington, *lay leader*; Helen Burnette, *service coordinator*



Middle school students cheerfully collect donations for the handmade stationary. The collected money will benefit to the Wildflower Church Building Fund.



Pre-K girls show the puppets they made to demonstrate emotions for their We Are Many, We Are One lesson.

**CONNECTION CIRCLE SURVEY RESULTS**

The results are in from the March survey sent to Connection Circle members. Forty-nine members received a survey and 31 responded. With this 63% response rate, there is rich information to identify what to continue or to change or practices to add that will make Connection Circles even more meaningful.

The questions receiving the most favorable responses were:

1. Our facilitator is very helpful to our group’s process. (Combined strongly agree and agree was 90%).
2. I have found that my participation in Connection Circles has greatly enriched and deepened my relationships with people in the church and with the church in general. (Combined strongly agree and agree was 86.6%).

The questions registering the greatest need for improvement or change were:

1. I have found the session topics and the discussions stimulating and worthwhile. (Combined disagree and strongly disagree was 10%).
2. My Connection Circle is nurturing me on my spiritual journey. (Disagree was 10%).

The main things for which members most wished were to have more members (30%) and for members to come more consistently (30%). What members appreciated most about their circle were the new friends they have made (83.3%). However, they also appreciated the enjoyable and stimulating discussions (73.3%). Asked about participation in a circle in the future, 60% would like to continue with their current circle and 20% would like to continue but with a new circle.

The Connection Circle Leadership team of Rev. Eliza Galaher, Joan Harman and Mary Ober greatly appreciates the information Connection Circles members have provided. They are currently working on the new October 2010 to September 2011 Connection Circles plan using the information gained from the survey to make this next year even more meaningful for participants.



**JUNE CLASS SCHEDULE FOR UU WORLD TRAVELERS**

The destinations have been selected, the itineraries decided upon, the passports updated, and now we're anxious to begin our summer journey. We plan to have a LOT of fun adventures and experiences, with some learning cleverly woven in.

The middle and high school aged youth will meet a couple of times a month. If they are not meeting, the youth are welcome to join in the UU World Travelers class.

**Penny Burnette**

We've discovered that all the adults who have signed up to lead tours are just as enthusiastic as the kids! We will have two teacher helpers for our Tour Guides during our summer travels. So, we hope that lots of kids plan to attend RE this summer, in between "real" vacation travel and adventure, of course! Below are our first four journeys:


June 6: All aboard! Join in a detective story as Linda Gravatti and Phil Hewitt travel from Galveston to England, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Poland in search of trains that were used by the Nazis in World Wart II. We'll talk about what we learned about the cultures of the different countries and also how Phil used his knowledge of history to solve the puzzle.

June 13: G'day mate! Take a journey to Queensland, Australia with Cara Harrison where we will take a gander at pineapple plantations, surfers, and the Great Barrier Reef. Hear the story about Ayers Rock as told by Indigenous Australians and learn some Australian slang. This will be a dazzler!

June 20: Travel with John Cooper, Peace Corps volunteer, to Guatemala's western highlands stretching from the outskirts of Antigua to the Mexican border. Two main features define the area: a chain of awesome volcanoes that lines its southern side, and the high Cuchumatanes mountain range that dominates the north of the region. Between these two natural barriers is a series of forested ridges, lakes, gushing streams and lush valleys. Join us and learn about the geography, history, and daily life of a rural population.

June 27: Vive La France! Join our voyage to France with Martha Allen and experience *en plen air*, (outdoor) painting. There will be a brief story about Claude Monet, his gardens and painting in them, as well as some pictures of the surrounding countryside for students to look at during class. The majority of the class time the students will paint using their own ideas. [Hopefully we will be able to do this with dry media rather than wet paint, but even so, painting is a wonderful and fun activity, and can be messy. It might be helpful for the students to wear washable, comfortable clothes.]

~Penny Burnette



**SWUUC SUMMER CAMP OPPORTUNITIES**

There are four week-long camp experiences for children and youth this Summer being offered through SWUUC Camps ([swuuc.org/pages/services/camps.php](http://swuuc.org/pages/services/camps.php)) at U-Bar-U, staffed by ministers, DREs, and Youth Advisors. The Elementary/Primary Camp, July 4-9, is for rising third through sixth graders. The Junior Camp, July 11-17, is for rising seventh through ninth graders. The Senior Camp, July 18-24, for rising 10th graders through 2010 high school graduates. SWUUC has scholarships available for all three camps, with information available at the above webpage. Camp Murray ([campmurray.org/cms/](http://campmurray.org/cms/)) is hosted by First Church OKC and offers a camp experience in Southern Oklahoma for High School youth from June 13-19. Please feel free to contact Mark Anderson, U-Bar-U board member, with questions about any of these camps ([mandersuun@gmail.com](mailto:mandersuun@gmail.com), 512/981-5620).

**SEE A GIANT CATAPULT IN ACTION!**

Kids of all ages, not just RE families, are invited to an informative and exciting Medieval Trebuchet/Giant Catapult event 6:30-9 p.m., Saturday, June 26. Trebuchet Master Mark Winkler and his safety expert team will teach us about the history and physics of a full-size medieval trebuchet while we launch watermelons as well as real fireballs after dusk. Attendance is limited to first 40 people to sign up and provide \$6 donation per adult and \$4 donation per child to Laurel Martin. For more information, contact [dre@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:dre@wildflowerchurch.org) or visit the RE table during coffee hour.



**UPDATE ON SEARCH FOR A HOME FOR OUR OWN**

The various committees who have been actively involved in our search for a spiritual home of our own have met in the last six weeks to review what we have learned in our last year’s efforts and to discuss the next steps we need to take toward realizing this dream. These conclusions are summarized in the following table.

AREA OF CONCERN	LESSONS LEARNED	NEXT STEPS
<u>Process/Organization</u>	Good leaders We know a lot now that we didn’t know when we started and it will help make the next search easier Process was complicated	Encourage our leaders to continue, if possible Refer to documentation of these efforts when we begin another search  Simplify the process as much as possible
<u>What do we want?</u>	It is very expensive to renovate and re-purpose old buildings The building we made an offer on was much bigger than we need and made our work both more expensive and more complicated We could have looked at a greater variety of properties	Obtain rough estimates of cost of any changes needed to a building very early in the process Establish the size that we need for our own use and stay within that size range when we are looking  Think “out-of-the-box” about our options (strip mall? land with temporary building? existing warehouse? etc.?)
<u>Community, Communications, and Covenant</u>	Some people hesitated to voice their doubts or shared them only with their friends Conversations with the Board are a good way to communicate, but very few people attended them Some congregants didn’t read announcements in the Weekly News, articles in the newsletter, information on website, etc. Disagreements were not always handled in an open, caring way	All of us must speak up with our ideas, whether they be positive, negative, or cautionary; share them with leaders of project. Leaders need to create more opportunities for people to meet in different-sized groups, and members need to participate in them Congregants need to take advantage of and participate in all avenues of communication  Our Covenant of Right Relations must guide all of our interactions with each other.
<u>Human Resources</u>	Too few people did too much work (about 30 people were actively involved) Some key positions not filled at the start  Some leaders are not willing/able to continue in their roles	More of us need to lend our time and talents to this project if it’s going to be successful Fill all positions from the very beginning of a new search Rebuild leadership
<u>Financial Resources</u>	Our nest egg is not adequate Our fundraisers typically involve only Wildflower members and friends <b>No one is going to accomplish this dream of ours except ourselves.</b> <b>We are It!</b>	Find creative ways to increase our nest egg Involve people outside of Wildflower Church in our fundraisers <b>All of us need to take ownership of this dream and work to make it happen</b>



## ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**Building Your Own Theology**, June 6 and 13 (last two classes), 9:15–10:15 a.m., SASAC Game Room; Gerry King and Christian Schmidt, co-facilitators. This course provides the tools to create a personal theology that captures how we want to relate to the great issues of life. For more information, contact Gerry at 462-9484 or [gerryking@austin.rr.com](mailto:gerryking@austin.rr.com).

**Justice, What's the Right Thing to Do?—Book Discussion**, June 1 and June 15, 7–9:00 p.m., Gay Patterson's, 7102 Eganhill, Austin, 78745. For more information call Gay, 447-8829, or email her at [gspatterson@austin.rr.com](mailto:gspatterson@austin.rr.com).

### Invitation to Facilitate an Adult Religious Education Course at Wildflower

The Adult Programming Committee is building this coming year's schedule of courses. We NEED new ideas and facilitators to keep our offerings fresh and emerging from the Wildflower community. The following questions/answers may help you take the next steps:

*Who offers courses at Wildflower?*

**Answer:** You

*What does it require?*

**Answer:** Having an interest in something and willingness to share your experience and knowledge

*What topics are we talking about here?*

**Answer:** Anything that further explores aspects of our Mission—spiritual practices, UU religion, religious of the world, faith and spiritual beliefs areas, social justice, . . .

*When should I share my thoughts about a topic?*

**Answer:** JUNE 2010!

*How do I make my thoughts known?*

**Answer:** Contact Jodine Alpern at 892-3552 or [courseproposals@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto:courseproposals@wildflowerchurch.org). She will connect you with a Committee sponsor who will guide you through the process.

**Conversation Café**, Saturday, June 19, 10:30–11:30 a.m., Hampton Branch, Oak Hill, Austin Public Library, 5125 Convict Hill Road. Don't miss June's opportunity for meaningful conversation on an interesting question. We welcome your presence. There are no books to read or assignments, just interesting conversation. In early June, the Weekly News will have information about the Café's focusing question. For more information, contact Joan at 454-3160 or [wildflowerconversationcafe@gmail.com](mailto:wildflowerconversationcafe@gmail.com).

**Food for Thought:** The theme for Food for Thought Forum on Sunday, June 20, at 11:45 a.m., will be the Death Penalty. Panelists will answer questions and discuss the impact of the death penalty on Immigration Reform, Education, Jobs, and Police Relations. Leaders from the three major Capitol Punishment organizations in Texas will be panelists. Activists from Live Oak UU Church will explain how their death row "letter writing committee" has lifted the spirits of inmates and saved lives by facilitating retrial efforts. It is no coincidence that Texas executes more inmates per capita than any other state and also has the worst record on social services. One third of all those executed were diagnosed as mentally ill. Another third had the symptoms, but were turned away from receiving mental health care "before their crime." The death penalty generates a climate of fear that distracts us from progressive programs to remedy social issues. Henry Skinner was due for execution last month and DNA tests could have proved him innocent but Gov. Perry refused to allow DNA results. Days before the execution was scheduled, the US Supreme Court issued a stay and Skinner's life has been spared for the time being. Let's bring Texas into the 21st Century and affirm progressive Unitarian values.



**FOOD FOR THOUGHT  
APRIL 25, 2010**



Jan Austin

I am nearing the end of four years as a member of the Wildflower Board of Trustees, and it has been one of the richest experiences of my life. I have served two years as treasurer of the Board and two years as president. The support I've received from Eliza, fellow Board members, and other members of the congregation has helped me stay afloat, even on some fairly choppy seas.

I have learned much through this work:

- Our lay leadership is sincere, dedicated and very generous with their time and talents;
- I've had the privilege of working closely with Eliza and learning from her creative spiritual leadership;
- Personal growth is a worthier goal than perfection;

We have some real challenges ahead of us, many of them rooted in the work to balance the needs of our growing congregation with the reality of our financial resources.

- We're developing excellent programs, and we need adequate space for them;
- Our membership is growing, while our physical space stays the same;
- Our leaders are weary of the inconveniences of having to relocate a several times each year, often on some of the major celebratory Sundays;
- Some of our leaders are feeling tired and overworked; we need to develop a wider, deeper pool of volunteers so that each of us contributes to the life and work of our congregation and none of us is overburdened;
- Some of these issues can be addressed by our finding a space to which we have access all the time, but some of them will follow us wherever we go. We need to understand the difference and know that finding our own space is not the panacea for all our rough spots.

I dream of our congregation's living out our Mission Statement in ever more creative and impactful ways. May we frequently remind ourselves of our mission and truly understand that it includes some action verbs like "nurture," "commit," and "transforming." Those action verbs are a challenge to us to move out of the safety of our discussion and study groups to act on what we come to understand and learn through them. There is a time and place for study and discussion, and we're really good at that; there is also a time to speak out publicly, to act on behalf of social justice, to "Stand on the Side of Love." We need to keep a balance between talking about and acting on our values.

And finally, I treasure our caring relationships within the congregation and urge that we keep them as a high priority. Through these relationships, we gain the courage and strength to perform acts of compassion, love, and social justice. These loving relationships are the heart and soul and spirit of our congregation.

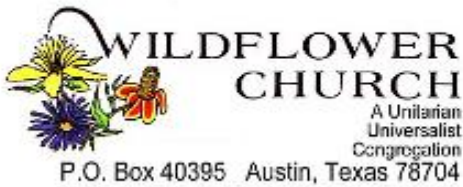
In hope and peace,  
~Jan Austin, President

## 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

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**Director of Religious Education**

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**Office Administrator**

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**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 July issue is June 15.

Send submissions to [newsletter@wildflowerchurch.org](mailto: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](mailto:board@wildflowerchurch.org)  
Martha Allan, Jan Austin, Steve Brooks, Ray Cooper, Lynn Hubertus, David Hume,  
Matthew Markert, Gay Phillips, Jonathan Pratter, and Rev. Eliza Galaher (*ex officio*)