

emerson UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST church
the emersonian

The Great Summer Sabbatical

Emerson Co-Ministers Travel Across U.S.

The sabbatical is a tradition for Unitarian Universalist clergy as it is in universities. It offers an extended time for study, reflection, rest, and renewal. Co-Ministers Becky and Mark Edmiston-Lange have been traveling this summer investigating the intersection of landscape, spirituality, and environmental morality as they visited different areas of the United States. Their travels took them to California, Arizona and Florida, and with each stop, Mark and Becky sent a postcard commenting on the national park they were visiting.



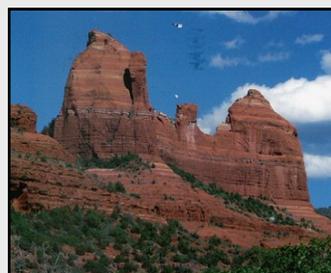
Everglades National Park

“Awe inspiring and yet heart rending to study this Ecosystem of ecosystems up close enough to see its amazingly complex and yet fragile diversity and beauty — and to

know that, for example, 95% of the birds are GONE! So much that needs to be restored.”

- Becky and Mark

Not the one we climbed – we did Cathedral Rock but an impressive sight as well. We visited all the “Vortex” areas but, had to say, did not feel anything particular. But then it



Cathedral Rock

was an extremely windy day – so maybe the energy was just too dissipated. But who needs vortexes when the scenery “takes your breath away” - spectacular!

- Becky and Mark

We watched the sunrise over El Captain and ½ Dome on the horizon. We are reminded of the Flower Communion Sunday we missed at Emerson and wished that we could share the sight of the profusion of wildflowers that have graced us here – yellow poppies, purple milkweed; fields of



Yosemite National Park

the blue-purple lupines interspersed with bushes we can't identify laden with nodding racemes of white blooms profligate in their abundance – and so many more we can't name for certain. (High spring here and yet it snowed yesterday.) We are overcome with gladness and gratitude at this beautiful planet and the life we have been given. May you all know you are “part in parcel” of that grace. - Becky and Mark

The Grand Canyon really is this magnificent and it changes endlessly with the angle of the view and change in light. A hundred years of looking would not exhaust its intrigue or interest—epiphanies at every turn!!! It is staggering—at times we just had sit down and advert our eyes we were so overcome with the vastness and complexity of it all -too many emotions to describe. What a wonderful gift it is to have this time to experience this. - Becky and Mark



Grand Canyon Viste

A Note From Katy



In July, we flew up to Massachusetts to attend my husband's family reunion. Everyone could trace our lineage back to his great-grandfather Max Carpmann of Montreal. We studied the family tree, and I encouraged everyone to wear nametags, as prior to the event I'd met less than a third of those gathered.

Friday night began with the family matriarch (one of Max's daughters) leading Shabbat blessings outside-half the family reciting, the other half singing. We forgot a bread knife, so the challah was torn into chunks thrown to each of us as a sweet start to our time together. During the weekend there was feasting to be certain, and the sharing of stories from last week and decades before we were born. We left with an invitation to the next gathering, offers of hospitality in an assortment of states and Montreal, and a bunch of new Facebook friends.

On August 14, I'll lead the worship service talking about the many connections of life—the stories we share and who we can get in the room (physical or virtual) together. Summer Sunday School continues through August, and we're looking forward to the new opportunities of our 2016-2017 church year, kicking off with Homecoming Sunday, the second week of September.



Katy's family taking a ride on the Provincetown ferry.

Summer Sunday School August

- 7: Devasheesh (Sikh) - Kenny Jones
- 14: Maria (Christian) - Florrie Snively
- 21: Sumalee (Buddhist) - Marci Collier
- 28: Ravi (Hindu) - Florrie Snively



Katy Carpmann, Director of Religious Education

Becky and Mark Invite Everyone to a Rolling Open House



August 27, 3–8 p.m.
10619 Tupper Lake Drive
Houston, TX 77042

We'll be back from sabbatical and eager to see all of you. Join us at our home for light appetizers and beverages (both "adult" and attractive alternatives). We ask that you stagger your arrival by last name if possible:

A-H at 3:00 p.m.
I-P at 4:30 p.m.
Q-Z at 6:00 p.m.

If you can't make the allotted time slot, don't stay away—just come when you can.



SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Typical Summer Sunday Schedule

9:45 AM Professional Childcare Begins

10 AM Adult Ed and Kids' Activities • 11 AM Worship • 11:15 AM Kids' Programming

**August 7 - Chuck Freeman
Fling Off Your Bushel:
Let Your Reproductive Justice Light Shine**

Vital rays of light leading to the Roe v. Wade decision were sparked at 1st UU Dallas. In the late 60's, the Women's Alliance of the church began to study the abortion issue, eventually signing the amicus brief of the landmark case for women's autonomy that beamed a nationwide beacon of light!

**August 21 - Becky and Mark Edmiston-Lange
Glad to Be Back**

We've had outstanding adventures and deeply enriching experiences over the months of our sabbatical. We return renewed in our enthusiasm for our faith's capacity to address the many pressing problems of our day. Can't wait to see you all! - Becky and Mark

P.S. We invite Students of all ages to bring your backpacks, laptops, and brief-cases for a special back to school blessing!

**August 14 - Katy Carpmann
Making Connections**

In this digital world, a person can have seven hundred Facebook friends, thousands of Twitter followers, but how connected are we really? Nineteenth-century creatives, the Peabody Sisters, can teach us much about being a laboratory for change.

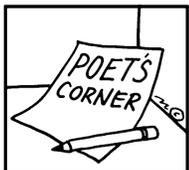
**August 28 - Becky and Mark Edmiston-Lange
Who Are You?**

We live in a culture which provides very few options for supporting a positive sense of self-worth. And the most potent rewards for success are truly out of kilter when it comes to creating a real future of abundance. How about we create some more healthy alternatives?

10 am ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Immigration Justice July 10 through August 21

Motivated by the growing numbers of migrants entering the United States via the Mexico border, Africa, and the Middle East, the importance of the issue in our political discourse, and its connection to current events this summer Adult RE offering will provide a platform of study and discussion for Emersonians and the larger community to reflect on historic patterns of migration, the role the United States has played (and still plays) in Latin America, and how we might engage meaningfully with immigration reform as a moral and social justice issue. Room 205/206.



Third Sunday Poetry

A casual gathering of those who love poetry. Bring something you have written or a poem you wish you had written. August 21, Room

Emerson Needs Volunteers To Expand ESL Program

Free ESL Classes Start This Fall

By: Norbert Welk and Deborah Wotring Landis

This is the third year of Emerson's community outreach program offering Saturday afternoon classes free of charge to area immigrants. It is our hope that we have enough teacher volunteers this semester to add Tuesday and Thursday night classes each week. These classes will build on each other in addition to our traditional Saturday afternoon classes. **We have a variety of volunteer opportunities which include full-time teachers, part-time teachers, substitute teachers, classroom assistants, volunteer coordinators, beginning of semester placement testers and graders, bookkeepers, and grant writers.**



Teachers Gerry Shawa and Elisabeth Lindheim with Level 2 students.

Childcare Volunteers

This semester we are also hoping to find volunteers who are experienced pre-school and grade school teachers willing to work with the children whose parents are attending our classes here. **Our research indicates that our program is unique since we are the only ESL program in the Houston area that provides free childcare for its students.** We are also encouraging high school students to volunteer to help with structured activities for the children of our students.

To learn how you can be apart of this growing program come to one of our free lunch information sessions: Sundays August 7, August 14 and August 21 from 12:30—1:30 p.m.

For more information on volunteer sign-up and opportunities please contact our ESL program coordinator Deborah Wotring Landis at 713-504-0819 or dlandis570@aol.com.

Student class registration will take place on August 27; classes begin September 10.

Come join us as we build a better world!



Teacher Norbert Welk with Level 1 students.



Teachers Clara Kosloff and Norma Atherton with Level 3 students.

Funding for our program which provides free work books and childcare comes from the one- year grant we received from the Unitarian Universalist Funding Program and donations from members of our congregation and people in our community.

ESL Emerson, continued



From left to right: Deborah Landis, ESL Coordinator, Leticia Anderson, Lead Volunteer, and teachers Norma Atherton, Clara Kosloff, Gerry Shawa, ELisabeth Lindheim, Tina Obut, and Norbert Welk.



Ann and David May, ESL Assistant Coordinators.

Teacher Tina Obut with Level 1 student.

Book Club Groups

Women's Evening Book Group:

Wednesday, August 17,
7:30 p.m. in the Library.
The book of the month is
The Art Forger by Barbara
A. Shapiro. Contact: Jill
Rose, jillrose@gmail.com.

Men's Book Group:

Wednesday, August 17,
6:30 p.m. at Luby's,
2730 Fondren. This
month's book is *The Moral
Case for Fossil Fuels* by
Alex Epstein. Contact:
Dave Bergt,
dbergt@comcast.net.

Daytime Book Group:

Thursday, August 18,
10 a.m. in the Library. This
month's book is *An Officer
and a Spy*, by Robert
Harris. Contact: Dave
Bergt, dbergt@comcast.net.

Recurring Activities

Stitchers: Every Wednesday, 11 a.m.
in Delaney Hall. Come for conversation,
if not for craft!

Caregiving Support Group: Saturday,
August 20, 10 a.m. in Room 204.
Contact Sarah Rossmiller at
sarahrossmiller@gmail.com.

Sandwiches for SEARCH: Will resume
in August. Contact: Barbara Hopkins,
bbhopkins@sbcglobal.net.

Amazon for Emerson

Amazon donates 6% of your purchase price to
Emerson for simply connecting to Amazon.com us-
ing our special link. In 2015, we received \$342.98.
So far this year, we have received \$126.30.

Help us double that amount by using the **Amazon
for Emerson** link found on our website under the
Support Emerson tab or using the live link in our
weekly E-blasts.



Emerson Bookstore — Stop by the bookstore to see the new titles in stock.
While you're there, check out the great assortment of bumper stickers and hand-made cards.

Fund-A-Need Project

Summer Work Update

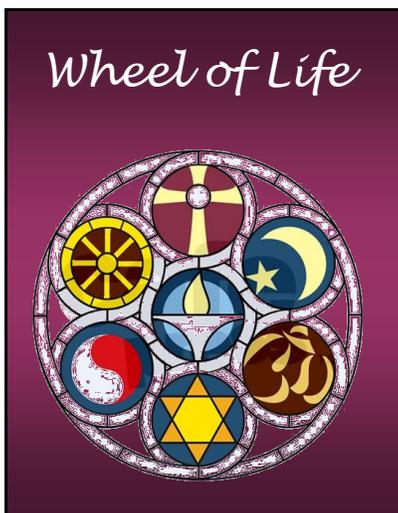
Pocket Prairie—In July, we had the area outside the side entrance of the school prepared for a Pocket Prairie.

We will be working with Jaime Gonzalez of Katy Prairie Conservancy to plant native prairie plants.



Shrub Clean-up—Are you finding it easier to locate sidewalks and doors? We had many shrubs pruned. Check out the sidewalk near the Memorial Garden and the choir door.

Next Up: Leveling and repairing broken and uneven concrete on sidewalks and the patio area. Carole Huelbig and Ann May are getting bids for this work now.



- All are invited to a celebration of life for **Bill Atkerson**, longtime member, friend, and Emerson Intergenerational Orchestra (EIO) founder and former conductor. Service will be held August 13 at 4:30 p.m. at Wirt Road Fellowship, 1504 Wirt Road, Houston, TX 77055.
- Rick Lloyd and Beth Hill are very much in our hearts. Rick suffered a severe bicycling accident while he and Beth were vacationing in Colorado. There is a Caring Bridge site (caringbridge.org) set up for him if you would like to send messages of support.
- Ellen Small, former beloved Emerson member, age 93, died peacefully at her home in California on July 15, surrounded by her family. Ellen had made the decision to begin a “terminal fast”. Her son Fred writes, “she was able to complete her life as she lived it; courageously and on her own terms. During her three-week fast, she was in good spirits, suffered no hunger pangs, and expressed no second thoughts about her decision.”
- Our hearts are with Vanessa Moreales-Knight and her family as they mourn the death of her father “Eddie” Louis M. Webster.

Circle of Religions

The Story Behind the Rehnberg Memorial Window

The Rehnberg Memorial Window was created by Rockford, Illinois, artist, Frank Houtkamp, in 1974, on commission from the family of Axel Fritiof Rehnberg (1883-1966), an inventor and co-founder of Rehnberg-Jacobsen Manufacturing. The Rehnberg Memorial Window design has become popular with Unitarian Universalists, and stained glass replicas of it hang in a number of UU churches and fellowships across the country. The design also appears in jewelry, magnets, and other items available for sale.

Mr. Houtkamp, however, has not profited financially from this popularity. Although he receives frequent requests for permission to use the image, he sees it as being in the public domain and refers requests to use it to the Rockford UU church, which has copyrighted it.

According to Mr. Houtkamp, design suggestions for the window were made to him by the Reverend Dave Weissbard, who served as minister of the Rockford UU Church for twenty years beginning in 1978. The church provided Mr. Houtkamp with images of the religious symbols; Mr. Houtkamp added the interlocking circles to the design.

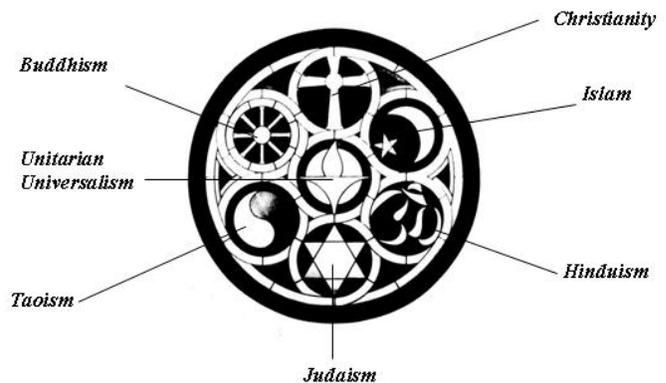


Mr. Houtkamp has added his own interesting comments on the design:

“One of the less talked about advantages to living in this universe is that if you draw a circle and six other circles identical to it on each of its 60° radii that same distance from its center, the six will all invariably lie the same distance from each other. Simple mathematics offers various reasons and even “proof” of this fact based on equilateral triangles, parallel lines, etc., but these reasons are only tools to understanding—related phenomena—but equally mysterious and unprovable. Still, there is an underlying truth within them without which they could not exist. Symbolically depicted in the six circles are six traditional paths humans have taken to experience and recall the truth. Despite their differences, they are all bound by the laws of the universe. Like the interlocking circles, these laws are overlapping, infinite, and elusive. Each is a mirror image of the center, but each encompasses infinite variety.”

The Rehnberg Memorial Window features the following symbols from the world’s great religions (moving counter-clockwise):

- The Celtic Cross from Christianity
- The Eight-Spoked Wheel from Buddhism
- The Yin and Yang from Taoism
- The Star of David from Judaism
- The Sign of Ohm from Hinduism
- The Star and Crescent from Islam



The symbols are all interlocked by the infinity symbols that circle each of them as well as the Flaming Chalice of Unitarian Universalism, representing our tradition’s “willingness to accept whatever insight each of the major traditions may offer—as well as a determination to explore all new claims to truth and understanding.”

Becky and Mark Edmiston-Lange, Co-Ministers

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Come Learn What Membership Means at Emerson.

Join Emerson Sunday - The Membership Committee welcomes you to a conversation about Emerson and to sign the membership book if you are ready to join. Meet in the Library at 12:30 pm. **Next Class: August 28.**

Child care is provided. Please RSVP to the office at mary@emersonhouston.org at least five days before the event.

Stay Connected!



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PR News

Please send all submissions for the Eblast, Order of Service and website weekly by Tuesdays to pr@emersonhouston.org.

**Next Newsletter deadline is
Tuesday, August 23.**