

emerson UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST church the emersonian

Emerson Switches to Green Power and Saves Money

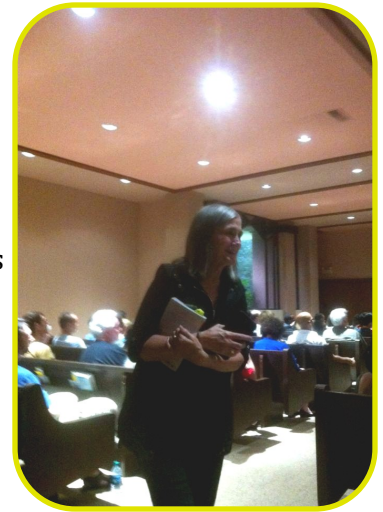
In 2015, the Board of Trustees agreed to switch to renewable energy as soon as possible, and accept donations of Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) until that time. Emerson sought advice from independent expert Elisa Kaplan (who happens to be a UU). She obtained and compared 14 detailed quotes for green energy from three retail electric providers, along with 66 non-green quotes from other providers. Elisa recommended APG&E's 60-month fixed rate of \$0.04426/kWh, combined with the purchase of 400 RECs per year from TriEagle Energy, at a cost of \$400 per year of contract. This results in an effective rate of \$0.04526/kWh with annual savings of \$5,136 versus our current rate.

In May 2017, Emerson switched to this plan providing the best, longest term annual savings for a green rate. The plan has no monthly meter fees and provides protection from extra charges being assessed during periods of congestion on the grid. It also allows us to have a 25% change in our annual usage without penalty. This is a 100% green rate. To reduce our cost further, Emerson members can purchase Renew-

(Continued on page 6)

Amy Goodman at Emerson

On Saturday, May 20th, Emerson hosted the KPFT fundraiser event featuring the host of *Democracy Now*, Amy Goodman. Ms. Goodman spoke to an audience of at least 400 people! The pews were packed with folks standing in the back and sides of the Sanctuary. Her remarks focused on her recent experiences with the Water Protectors in North Dakota, including the circumstances surrounding her arrest and its aftermath. The thrust of her talk was that while we



should ardently demonstrate for the causes about which we are passionate, we should never assume that we can determine the outlook or positions of those we initially deem as the opposition. She relayed a poignant tale of an encounter with a law enforcement officer who not only sided with the protesters, but provided tangible aid to many. Ms. Goodman stayed to sign books and take photos with all who wished to purchase it. Her latest book, *Democracy Now!: Twenty Years Covering the Movements*

Changing America was in high demand, with many purchasing multiple copies. The line was long and the singing went on until 11:30 pm. This was quite the event for KPFT, the community, and for Emerson!

Becca and April Smith with Amy Goodman



Revels

As I write this column I am about to leave for General Assembly (GA), the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association. This year GA is in New Orleans and many Emersonians will be there. But this will be the first GA in twenty-seven years that I have attended without Mark. That is hard to imagine! I anticipate that it will be difficult for me in many ways, but I also look forward to seeing colleagues and friends that I haven't seen since before Mark's death. I have heard from many of them through cards and emails, but seeing their faces and exchanging hugs – well, there's no substitute for real human contact, is there?

One of the traditional elements of GA is the Service of the Living Tradition which honors our UU religious professionals - welcoming those who have received fellowship or credentialed status in the past year, recognizing those who have completed active service, and remembering those who have died. Mark's name will, of course, be included in the roll call of ministers who have died. The Service of the Living Tradition had always been an emotional one for Mark and me. And it has become more so over the years as we have known more and more of our colleagues who are retiring or who have died and fewer of the newer ministers being fellowshiped. I can only imagine how emotional it will be for me this year, to hear his name called, to not be standing side by side, holding hands as we have for all these many years. But I am glad that he will be honored in this way and I would not be anywhere else.

After General Assembly, I will be taking my vacation and study leave time. I hope to make a few trips to visit friends and family. I'm still figuring that out as we try to sync schedules. Life at church continues, of course. The Worship Committee, under the leadership of Ken McLeod, has a promising slate of Sunday services planned. The Board and committees continue to function. The Lay Pastoral Ministry Team continues its ministry of caring presence. And, in the event of an emergency, I can always be reached. I will be in Houston for a lot of the time and, if I am away, Karen Van Horn, our Business Administrator, will know

where to reach me.

I am grateful to have this time away from normal church responsibilities and I thank you deeply for this gift of time. It will be time to sit with my grief and time to rest (it has been a hard year). But it will also be a time to read and reflect, to recharge and simply to enjoy life. I look forward to coming back at the end of August refreshed and eager to start a new church year. And I am very pleased that we will be welcoming our new $\frac{3}{4}$ time transitional assistant minister, Sam Schaal. I am very impressed with our candidate and think he will be a tremendous asset to us all.

Dear people, I hope you all have some time for refreshment and renewal this summer. And I look forward to being in your midst again.

In faith and affection,

Becky Edmondson-Lange



Wheel of Life

Kenneth Sanders, brother of Frances Jones, died June 18 in Center, Texas, after a lingering illness. He was 82.

Ben Lee's grandmother died and Ben is making arrangements to make the trip to Taiwan.

Congratulations to Becca Smith on the birth of her grandnephew. Congratulations to April Smith on her new job.

We wish Michele Corron a speedy recovery after her bout with pneumonia.

Jan King, former Emerson member, died on June 6. Jan was active in many spheres at Emerson, including the Women's Alliance, the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees. Jan was president of the Board in 1993. Our condolences go out to her family.

We wish April DeConick a speedy recovery after her surgery in June.



Sunday Morning Schedule

Summer Sunday Schedule

9:45 a.m. Professional Childcare Begins

10 a.m. Adult Ed • 11 a.m. Worship • 11:15 a.m. Children's Programming

Please join us on Sundays for Worship service.

**JULY
2**

The Emerson GA Delegation—So What Is General Assembly Anyway?

Some Emersonians who attended this year's UUA General Assembly will talk about their personal experiences of GA. (Adult Education will discuss the issues and business raised at GA.)

Adrian Rodriguez—Forget About Talent

Together we will explore the how concepts of collective music-making inform the way transform community in order to build a future distinct from the past.

**JULY
9**

**JULY
16**

Katy Carpman—SWAGGER

Katy, a religious educator certified by the UUA, has been our Director of Religious Education for the past six years.

Jill Rose—Keeping Our Balance in a Wildly Whirling World

Do.... Be.... Do.... Be.... Do.... We are human beings AND we are humans doing. The tension between a need to do for others on whatever scale and a need to sustain our own spirit seems to be part of an eternal religious duality. Keeping up with the need to work for justice and to be responsible citizens of the world.... Keeping in touch with our spiritual energy.... The balance can be difficult. Sometimes one or the other may get minimized or lost in the "whirl". Some reflections on keeping our balance....

**JULY
23**

**JULY
30**

Rev. Susan Buchanan—"It's a story about...."

The parable from the Christian tradition that has typically been called "The Prodigal Son" is rich in metaphor for reflecting on divided relationships, both personal and communal. Perhaps it can even give us some insight into the divisions in our nation. This retelling will be an opportunity to step into the story and find ourselves.

Adult Education

The Adult Religious Education program is held in Room 205/205 on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am.

July 2 - GA Recap & Report! - What happened? What did we learn? What inspired us? Kenny Jones and the Emerson GA Delegation

July 9 - Reproductive Justice - Session 1 of the renowned UUA Curriculum. What is reproductive justice? Kenny Jones - presenting

July 16 - The 8th Principle Inquiry - Dealing with racism or learning how to be wet in the water in which we swim! Presenter(s) to be determined.

July 23 - Reproductive Justice - Session 2: What is a sexually healthy congregation? Kenny Jones presenting.

July 30 - To be determined



Under Construction!

How are you under construction right now? What are you working on, professionally and personally?

While our Sunday School schedule is a little lighter, I can make space for special projects. One tangible thing I'm excited about right now is working with our library team to restock the family shelves in the church library upstairs, filling it with story-book favorites and many resource books I've been collecting down-

stairs – making these books accessible to families at most any time!

And learning is inherent in any development- in June I attended General Assembly in New Orleans and in July I spend a week on staff at Goldmine Youth Leadership School in Ohio. I take time not just for planning the logistics of our next church year, but for reading and taking part in conversations with colleagues and Emersonians as we ponder how all of us might grow together.

And here's our Summer Sunday School schedule for the month-

July 2: All ages attend worship together, hearing about General Assembly adventures

July 9: Henry David Thoreau, Living Deliberately

July 16: Lydia Maria Child, Writing for Freedom*

July 23: Beatrix Potter, Sharing Our Gifts

July 30: Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Learning from Others and Nature

Katy Carpman, Director of Religious Education

*And oh yes- I'll preach July 16th!

July Share-the-Plate Supports Plant It Forward Farms



Houston is settling a record number of new refugees every year, many of whom have fled violence in their homelands and are starting new lives without the job or language skills needed to succeed. Plant It Forward Farms is helping these refugees become self-reliant entrepreneurs who can support their families and help our city grow. Each farmer must have had prior farming experience, usually in their home countries, and must complete a rigorous 12-month training program to be certified as a Plant It Forward farmer and entrepreneur. Each farmer is trained to farm using organic methods and to sell their produce through farmers markets, farm stands, restaurants, and farm shares. Each farm has the potential to generate a fair wage for a family of four while providing premium sustainably-grown produce to Houstonians.



Plant It Forward Farms provides refugees with the tools, training, and business skills needed to become successful urban farmers. Your donation is a vote for

local produce and the future of refugee farmers and their families. You can help even more by signing up for a weekly Farm Share, delivered to Emerson every Sunday. Subscribe any time, at the pro-rated amount. For details, check <http://plant-it-forward.org/our-produce/farm-share/>.



New Organization Empowers the Faith Community

Emerson UU Church is a founding member of the new **Interfaith Environmental Network of Houston** (a Houston chapter of Texas Interfaith Power and Light, see [Texas Impact](#), an Austin-based interfaith justice advocacy organization and recipient of an Outreach Grant from Emerson.) The purpose of the new organization is to empower the faith community in Houston to advocate and to act collectively as stewards of the environment. The organization also includes staff of local environmental non-profits, so that a strong connection between them and the faith community can be nurtured.



Upcoming events include Justice Advocacy Workshop, **Sunday, July 9, 4 – 6 p.m.** at the University of St. Thomas, Robertson Hall, as well as online, via web meeting. Led by experts from Texas Impact. Learn how to effectively raise your voice for the voiceless. Free but please [register](#) for this event. The training will be recorded and available afterward. **Sunday, August 6**, Jim Blackburn, noted local environmental lawyer and professor, speaks about carbon neutral projects.

More friends for you and for Emerson

When you attend an event at Emerson – ANY event – please wear your nametag and please introduce yourself to two people you don't know. What will that accomplish? The membership committee has a specific goal in mind: everyone who walks into an event at Emerson will leave thinking: "Friendly people!"



What does it mean to introduce yourself? Well, I'm writing this note, so I say "Hi, I'm Betsy Gelb and I'm a member of this church." Then I wait for the name of the person I've greeted, put out my hand, and say "Hi, Pat." I might ask whether he or she has been here before. I might ask whether he or she has ever been to a UU church before. I have now offered Pat a chance to ask about the church, or not. If not, I will sincerely say "Great to meet you!" and move on. If asked about the church, I can answer specific questions if I know the answer, and can always say "it's www.emersonhouston.org if you want to know more."

We are friendly people; why not demonstrate it? And the reason for asking PLEASE to wear your nametag is (1.) to help every "Pat" who processes names visually, and (2.) to raise the odds that the folks you are greeting aren't already members, because if they were, they would have on tags. But if they are, fine; they will be extra-happy to have met you.

Feel appreciated!

-Betsy Gelb

Our New Stewardship Team: Caring for Emerson's Future

Emerson has formed a new stewardship team to build on our past success—and we give a big *thank you* to the 2016-2017 team. Our additional challenge is to ensure financial support for the congregation's decision to hire a part-time transitional minister while we discern Emerson's future pathway. The members of our new team are Nancy Lipp, Mark Andersen, Ruth Alkons-Wolinsky, Beth Hill, Kathy Davis, and David Neilson.

A consultant from *Stewardship for Us*—a UUA program—will help us in this endeavor. The cost of the consultant has been completely underwritten through the generosity of several Emersonians.

The consultant will assist and guide our team through the many aspects of stewardship. In the next six months, you will notice a significant activity around stewardship.

- Educating the congregation about giving and sharing, the meaning of stewardship for members individually and for the congregation as a community.
- Planning and conducting a successful stewardship drive.
- Coordinating the endeavors of stewardship with key people and committees of Emerson.
- Establishing a plan for future years, including refreshing stewardship team membership through the years to ensure continuing stewardship success.

Together, we can ensure the financial health for Emerson's future.

(Continued from page 1—Green Power)

able Energy Credits (RECs) and donate them to Emerson. See Dan Rigney for details; he can help arrange a purchase through TriEagle Energy. Each REC offsets 1,000 kWh. Since Emerson uses about 400,000 kWh, we need 400 RECs per year. [Read more](#) on our website.

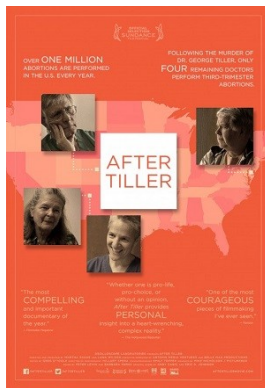
Green Power in Texas

All power plants, green or dirty, put their electricity on the same grid. There is no way to separate the electricity once it's on the grid, and there are no separate wires to your home for clean power. So, we are all using the same mix of clean and dirty power, even those who are paying more for green. That said, those who choose to pay more for green are helping the environment because some of the extra money they are paying goes to the clean power producers via Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). This extra money makes them more profitable, and that encourages more clean power generation. The percentage of clean power on our grid has been steadily increasing, which is good for all of us.

Emerson Justice Advocates | July Events

Resistance Summer Kickoff Cook-out / Potluck—Saturday, July 1
Emerson UU Church, Westwood Hall & Grounds, 2:00 p.m.—Since November, Americans have been engaged in nonstop peaceful resistance to the dangerous rhetoric and actions of the Trump administration and the GOP. Millions of us have marched, protested, called, written, and otherwise stood up. **It's time to take a moment and celebrate what we've achieved — and recharge for the work ahead — with a summer social gathering: a Resistance Summer Community Cook-Out/Potluck!**
[RSVP Here](#)

Film Screening, *After Tiller*—Saturday, July 22
A deeply humanizing and probing portrait of the only four doctors still performing third-trimester abortions in the wake of the 2009 assassination of Dr. George Tiller. Rather than offer solutions, *After Tiller* presents the complexities of these women's difficult decisions and the compassion and ethical dilemmas of the doctors and staff who fear for their own lives as they treat their patients. There is a [study guide](#) that participants will find useful to review prior to the screening. Socializing and light refreshments, 6:15 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., film starts at 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary.



For all events, additional resources will be posted on the [Emerson Justice Advocates Corner](#) web page.

Emerson Activities

Stitchers

Every Wednesday, 11 a.m. in Delaney Hall.

LGBT+Allies Emersonians

Potluck Lunch

Sunday, July 9, in Room 209, at 12:15 p.m. [More information](#)

Sandwiches for SEARCH

Thursday, July 13, at 10:30 a.m. in Westwood Hall. Contact: [Barbara Hopkins](#)

Emerson Poetry Group Sunday, July 16, at 9:45 a.m., Room 204.

Ministry for Earth

Next meeting takes place Sunday, July 23 at 9:45 a.m. in the Library.

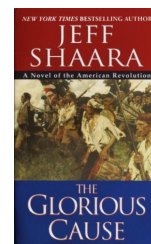
ESL

Registration for our Fall Classes will be Saturday, September 9. For more information, please call 713-782-0825.

Book Clubs

MEN'S

Monday, July 17. Book: *The Glorious Cause* by Jeff Shaara
For time, location or more information contact: [Gabe Gelb](#)



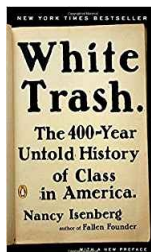
WOMEN'S

Wednesday, July 19, 7:30 p.m. in the Library.
Book: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
Contact: [Jill Rose](#)



DAYTIME

Thursday, July 20, 10 a.m. in the Library.
Book: *White Trash* by Nancy Isenberg
Contact: [Dave Bergt](#)



Meet Our New Members!



Nina Alford

Nina is a returning member. Welcome back to Emerson, Nina!



Cory Eckert

Cory has lived in Houston for 3.5 years and is a school librarian. She enjoys reading, blogging, chasing her toddler and knitting. Fun fact: She has a BA in Mythography.



Fran Elin

Fran has lived in Houston for 40 years and is a retired HS Spanish teacher. She enjoys games like Jeopardy, Trivial Pursuit, among others and has an interest for the stock market, Spain and old movies. Fun fact: Fran volunteers for ESL here at Emerson!



Kate Christian

Kate has lived in Houston for one year and is a retired teacher. She loves to garden, sew and enjoys childcare. She is interested in climate reality and the resistance movement. Fun fact: She has lived in New Mexico, Michigan, Ohio and Arizona. Welcome to Texas!



Nikki McCorkle

Nikki has lived in Houston for three years and is currently a student in her last semester of nursing school. She enjoys reading, hiking, spending time with family, cooking and exercise. Fun fact: She changed her career at 48 after her husband died and she went back to school to become a nurse!



Miguel Rivera

Miguel has lived in Houston for 20 years and is a professional photographer. He enjoys birding, diving and environmental issues. Fun fact: He enjoys cooking!

Jean Gilruth-Rivera

Jean has lived in Houston for 20 years and is a sociocultural anthropologist. Most of her work has been in central Mexico. She enjoys hiking, nature and birds. Fun fact: She loves animals of all types and has two small parrots and a dog.



Tina and Tanju Obut

Tina and Tanju have lived in Houston for 28 years and both are engineers. Tina's hobbies include travel, reading, learning, and fitness—hiking, skiing, snowshoeing and yoga. Fun fact: She met her husband at Penn State and they have one daughter, Nicole, who is 17 years old. | Tanju enjoys travel, walking his yellow lab, Maisy, reading, listening to podcasts, skiing, hiking, snowshoeing and biking. Fun fact: He is from Izmir, Turkey and first came to the U.S. as an exchange student in high school!



Becky Edmiston-Lange, Minister
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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 12:15 p.m. **Next Class: July 9**

Child care is provided. Please RSVP to the office at alejandra@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, July 18