



# American Ethical Union

*Inspiring Ethical Communities*

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## ANNUAL SOCIETY REPORT

### Society Report for: Ethical Society of Austin

Leader(s): N/A

President(s): Carolyn A. Parker (Jan-Sep), Hani Farid (Sep-present)

Administrative Director/Office Contact: N/A

**Please provide brief updates on the following areas of your Society that occurred or developed in 2020:**

*Ethical Action:*

- Climate: Platform on oil fracking in Texas
- Racial Justice: Platform on white supremacy
- Voting and Democracy: Platforms on mail-in voting in Texas, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and separation of church and state; individual members participated in the Reclaim Our Vote postcard campaign
- Social Justice: Platform on transgender cultural competency
- Other: Major donation and continued fundraising for Central Texas Food Bank; continued to pay rent to Worker's Defense Fund despite not meeting in-person to provide support for their efforts on behalf of Texas workers

*Ethical Education (children ages 2-13) & Youth of Ethical Societies (teens ages 14-18) & Future of Ethical Societies (young adults ages 18-35):*

The Society had no children or youth in 2020. Young adults were invited to participate in FES.

### *Communications:*

The Society maintains internal communications with MailChimp, G-Suite, and Google Calendar. Social media and web-based apps helped the Society maintain its public face (MeetUp, Facebook, Twitter).

### *Finances:*

With the COVID-19 quarantine, beginning in mid-March 2020, the lack of in-person meetings (for in-person donations), a faulty mail system at our rented meeting space, and other factors, the Society experienced a decline in income of about 35%.

### *Membership:*

Four members left ESOA, three new members joined, one member was reinstated due to an error in records for a net change of zero.

### *New Developments:*

Austin began meeting virtually in March, 2020, maintaining its regular Sunday meeting schedule without interruption. Meeting virtually (via Zoom), the Society held its two regular semi-annual membership meetings as well as a special meeting, which would otherwise have been unlikely, to discuss business matters before Assembly 2020. In addition, Austin held 4 additional “process” meeting (month of giving, etc.), 11 colloquies, 4 ritual meetings and special events (including a virtual reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a celebration of the Society’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary). The Society welcomed Leaders-in-Training, Sarah Tielemans and Je Hooper, and Clergy Leader Richard Koral as Visiting Leaders. With the opportunities provided by Zoom and the increased ease of meeting virtually, the Society could participate in All-Society Platforms as well as visiting other Societies and viewing pre-recorded platforms from other Societies. A significant advantage of virtual meetings has been the renewed participation of “away” members in other cities and states, who can now attend, present, and volunteer in ways that had previously been impossible.

The Society voted to suspend its SEEK program pending development of appropriate policies for child safety and availability of sufficient human resources to implement such policies.

### *Goals for 2021:*

- Continue revision of Board policy manual;
- Develop capacity for hybrid virtual and in-person meetings;
- Recruit part-time Clergy Leader