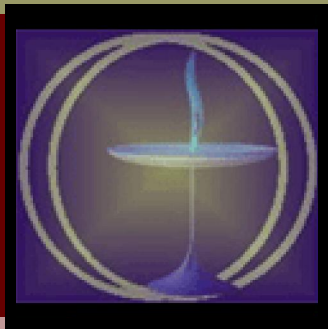


April 2011

www.uumidland.org



AN OASIS OF SPIRITUAL SEEKERS NURTURING OUR PLANET & COMMUNITY

# UU Church of Midland

## On the Journey with Jennifer

Congratulations! You have a candidate for the next minister! On March 20, the Ministerial Search Committee announced with great joy that the Rev. Byron Miller wants to be part of the future of this wonderful church. Everyone will have a chance to meet Rev. Miller in the first week of May, and on May 8, members will be asked to vote on whether to call him as your next minister. Check out the update from the Search Committee on page 4 to see a short introduction to Rev. Miller. Please be sure to thank the members of the Search Committee for their months of good work.

The good news of a candidate minister is a great way to begin the annual budget drive. What might attract a Unitarian Universalist minister to this church? In my letter of



Reverend Jennifer Innis

introduction for the Search Committee, I described the congregation as welcoming and generous, with firm roots in the community and great potential to be an anchor for a larger Unitarian Universalist presence in West Texas. The coming year is a fresh opportunity to explore this potential in a few ways. Calling a minister to serve with you on a full-time basis and live in Midland is a new adventure for those of you who have joined in the last decade. Children and youth religious education leaders are planning to expand the classes to serve more young people and a wider range of ages.

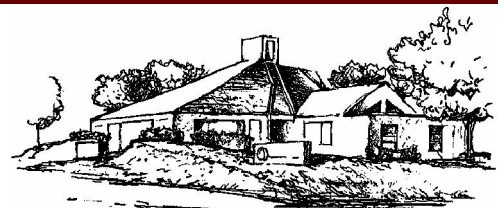
Relationships being built with Unitarian Universalists and other religious progressives all over the region in the course of the ministerial search can foster ongoing individual connections and be the foundation of a stronger shared voice in the region.

On April 10, I will offer more of my hopes for your next year with the sermon, *Bound for Big Plans*. On April 16, all are invited for a special dinner to celebrate the generosity of this congregation and to share fellowship while looking to the future. The Fellowship Dinner begins at 6:30 pm and features the excellent skill of your volunteer chef, David White. Contact David with questions, to RSVP, and reserve childcare.

Come and go with us!  
Jennifer

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# April 2011 At A Glance

## April 3

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Getting Garden Ready Question Panel* led by Emmy Ulmschneider

11 a.m. Worship: *Gardening Experiences* led by Emmy Ulmschneider and Friends

## April 10

9:30 a.m. Forum: *The Search for Compassionate Communication* led by the Rev. Jennifer Innis

11 a.m. Worship: *Bound for Big Plans* led by the Rev. Jennifer Innis

## April 17

9:30 a.m. Forum: *MARC Program Earth Day Sustainability* led by Program Committee

11 a.m. Worship: *Earth Day for All Ages* led by Religious Education

## April 24

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Easter Brunch Potluck* — All are invited to bring your favorite breakfast foods to share.

11 a.m. Worship: *Got Salvation?* Easter Service led by the Rev. Jennifer Innis

Look for news about children activities, including an Egg Hunt!

Please help us keep our new carpet looking great by enjoying food and drinks outside the sanctuary.

UU Children participate in religious education from 9:30 to 10:30 each Sunday morning.

At 11 a.m., children join the adults for the beginning of each service.

## April Calendar

April	6	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy
April	8	7 pm	Program Committee at Ulmschneider's
April	8-12		Jennifer in Midland
April	9		
April	9	10 am—3 pm	West Texas Cluster Gathering in Lubbock
April	11	7 pm	Board Meeting
April	16	11:30 am 6:30pm	Religious Ed. Committee at Murray's Fellowship Dinner for Annual Budget Drive
April	17		Deadline for May Newsletter
April	20	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy
April	22-26		Jennifer in Midland
April	30		Candidating Week Begins!
		2-4 pm	Quantum Dreamers
May	1		Sunday Worship led by the Rev. Byron Miller
May	1		Deadline for submissions to Annual Writers' Anthology

## April Highlights

New growth is the theme of the month with forums on gardening and sustainability, a service for Earth Day, and the start of the annual budget drive for 2011-2012.

Learn about the technique of Compassionate Communication from Rev. Jennifer at the forum on April 10.

On April 24, we will celebrate Easter with the annual Easter Brunch Potluck at 9:30 am. The sign-up sheet for the brunch is on the welcome table in the foyer.

# April Mystery Member

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Given her love of classical music, modern art and folk dancing, its no surprise that our March Mystery Member would also be a huge fan of opera. Add in a deep appreciation of artists in general and you will often find her supporting the work of several museums in Texas and New Mexico. As a matter of fact, wherever this mystery member calls home, an exquisite variety of art will grace the space.

Tolerance and the desire to learn more about human relations is how she would describe her spiritual leanings. The UUCOM is the only church she has been a member of. The learning and companionship she has found at the UUCOM has kept her hooked for 27 years.

One of her most enjoyable achievements was as a school teacher in Mexico. She taught

elementary school, then Spanish and English to Jr. High students. In addition, she served as a school counselor. A joy is still seeing some of her students now and hearing them talk about their lives.

Currently, she is active in the family business in Midland where her daughter, son-in-law, five grand children and three great grandchildren keep her busy. As the eldest of nine children herself, this aunt loves her extended family which is full of nephews, nieces and their children.

She definitely enjoys travel. Spain, China, Egypt, Central Europe, Mexico and Argentina, to name just a few of the places she has explored. Her favorite book is *A Hundred Years of Solitude* by Garcia Marquez.

Scroll (or turn) to the newsletter back page to name our Mystery Member.

## Children and Youth Religious Education

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The Religious Education committee is hard at work preparing for the next school year. There are some great things in store for the youth of our church! More on that to come...

In the mean time, there has been much discussion on holding some events for our youth that combine social opportunities with social outreach opportunities. One idea was to spend a Saturday morning volunteering at ReStore – the store run by Midland Habitat for Humanity. Another idea was to

have a “Christmas in July” event where we hold a food drive for a local food pantry followed by a roller skating outing.

If you're a youth or the parent or guardian of a youth - I'd like to hear your thoughts on these plans or any suggestions you may have for other events. Feel free to drop me an email at [LJebesen@aol.com](mailto:LJebesen@aol.com) or see me at church!

Thanks!  
Lisa

## UUCOM Board

Carol Kullman, President

Open, President Elect

Emmy Ulmschneider, Programs

Nancy McGlasson/Barbara Handley,

Membership

Kathryn Shelley, Secretary

Alice White, Treasurer

Open, Social Outreach

David White, Building & Grounds

Barbara Handley, Religious Ed Rep.

Lisa Jebesen, Religious Ed Dir.

## UUCOM Staff

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## Auction Appreciation

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Thank you to everyone who participated in the annual auction on March 5. Your donations, bids, and attendance all made great gifts to the church. A few items remain available and there may be room in some of the social events. Contact Carol Kullman and Barbara Handley to learn more.

# Ministerial Search Committee Announces: “We Have a Candidate!”

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Following a year-long process involving over forty official Unitarian Universalist Association-sanctioned benchmarks, the Search Committee has announced the name of its candidate for a full-time minister for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland. The candidate is the Rev. Byron Carl Miller, currently serving as pastor in Momence, Illinois. Everyone will have a chance to get to know him in early May. He will visit our church April 30 through May 8 to meet members, friends, and children of the congregation as well as the various committees, groups, and organizations that help define our church and its work.

The Rev. Miller brings a vast background in theology, history, languages, business, and technology, with outstanding experience in both religious and academic roles. During the interview process, he commented that “In the first place, I view the ministry as, at once, a position of leadership and a position of service.” That theme emerged often during his visit to Midland as a pre-candidate, and members of

the Search Committee felt his definition resonated well with the needs of our church. He also stressed that he has a “high regard for lay participation and leadership.” As a reflection of that commitment, he volunteered to schedule his candidating visit to coincide with our church’s annual garage sale so that he could participate actively in that project.

The Rev. Miller lists “History of Theology” and “Concepts and Perceptions of Time” among his several secondary fields of research and serves as a member of such academic societies as the American Historical Association, American Academy of Religion, Society of Biblical Literature, and Collegium, among others. He is familiar with ten languages, and is the author of nine grants on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, which were funded with over a million dollars.

He has delivered numerous academic papers and guest lectures over the years and has served as editor, collaborator and writer on numerous academic and

religious publications. He is adept at computer-based technology and has served as a technician and consultant in that role. Currently, in addition to his position as a minister, he is affiliated with the Institute for Advanced Studies in History and Religions.

During his extended stay with us April 30 - May 8 as part of the candidating week, he will deliver sermons May 1 and 8. **Save the date and attend on May 8** because a congregational meeting will follow the worship. All members of the congregation are urged to attend the meeting and vote on whether to call the Rev Miller as the next minister. More information about the candidating week schedule will be available at the end of April.

Members of the committee are Cristi Branum, Alice White, Jane Hellinghausen, John Kullman, Barbara Handley, and Tom Parks, chairman. They are glad to respond to questions from the congregation about the search.

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## Program Committee

The Program Committee schedules the Sunday worship and forum. The next meeting is at 7 pm on April 8 at Rene and Emmy Ulmschneider’s house. Contact Emmy if you are interested in attending this meeting.

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## Have We Got a Job for You!

Join our merry band of volunteers who rotate the behind-the-scenes tasks each Sunday. On your chosen date, you’ll arrive early enough to turn on the lights, make the coffee, and set out the cups. After service, you’ll put it all away,

take out the trash (or ask a strong helper to do it) and lock up. There is an easy checklist and you will be thanked! See Kathryn Shelley at 352-5728.

## Building Your Own Philosophy

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The BYOP book discussion group meets at the church on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays each month from 7:30 – 9:00 pm. All are invited to participate. For more information, contact Michael Wright at 432-425-5279.

Remaining readings in our current book *Great Conversations 2*:

April 6 — *The Playboy of the Western World* by John M. Synge

April 20 — *Planning and Democracy* (from *The Road to Serfdom*) by Friedrich Hayek

May 4 — *Distributive Justice* (from *Collected Papers*) by John Rawls

May 18 — *Guests of the Nation* by Frank O'Connor

June 1 — *Which New Era Would That Be?* by Nadine Gordimer

June 15 — *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love* by Raymond Carver

## Let Your Voices Sing!

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All voices are invited to join the choir and add your joyful sound to the music we share. Most rehearsals are right after Sunday worship. If you would like to participate, contact Beverly Wise at 686-2791 for more information.

## Quantum Dreamers

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*Quantum Dreamers* examines the many levels and possibilities of existence, including understanding our dreams, using our dreams to live a full life, and examining the quantum influences that affect us. Our current book is *Lucid Dreaming: Gateway to the Inner Self* by Robert Waggoner. "Lucid dreaming provides a path to greater creativity, self understanding, and exploration.--- It is a unique psychological tool with which to consciously investigate dreaming and the subconscious." ---From the Acknowledgments and Preface of [Lucid Dreaming: Gateway to the Inner Self](#) by Robert Waggoner.

We will be meeting on Saturday, April 23, from 2-4 pm.

Contact Alicia Gardner for any questions at 570-0703.

## West Texas UU Cluster Meeting, April 9

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Unitarian Universalists from all over West Texas will gather from 10 am—3 pm at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Lubbock on Saturday, April 9. Join Rev. Jennifer, Rev. Susan Smith and Jennifer Nichols of the Southwest UU Conference along with leaders from Amarillo, Midland, Lubbock and other cities to explore ways to develop leaders in the churches and reach out to the larger communities. See Rev. Jennifer for information.

## Annual Anthology Writers Needed!

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For our annual anthology of literary works by Midland writers, we welcome your manuscript. Deadline is May 1 (think Mayday!), and you may submit in any of the following ways: As a Word document attachment to an e-mail (preferred), document typed directly on an e-mail, typed document sent by regular mail, or even a handwritten document sent by regular mail.

The book will be published in August, and those whose works are selected by the judges will be invited to read and comment on their works and respond to questions by the audience at a public presentation in mid-August. NOTE: include a 4-5 sentence "About the Author" bio.

All writers whose works are selected for publication will receive two free copies of the book, with additional copies available on request.

Please send us your writing today – we're eager to hear from you and will acknowledge every manuscript received!

Send to: [tparks9@suddenlink.net](mailto:tparks9@suddenlink.net) or Tom Parks, Editor, 3508 Trinity Meadows Drive, Midland, TX 79707

## Catch Up on Pledges!

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Now is a great time to catch up on pledges for this fiscal year. Check with Treasurer Alice White about the status of your financial giving to the church. And thank you for your generosity!

## Mystery Member Revealed

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**Rosa Clark**, just one of the fascinating people you'll find at the UU Church of Midland. Be sure to enjoy her now as you'll only

find her at the UUCOM during the winter months. Each summer she returns to her other home in Taos, NM – a place of deep connection. There she continues maintaining and fixing her home since 1962 – a home originally built in 1878. That is, when she's not at an art opening or the Santa Fe Opera.

## Our Mission and Covenant

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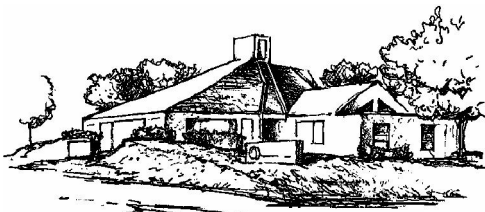
The Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland is an oasis of liberal religion empowering people to pursue spiritual growth and work toward a just, equitable, sustainable society. As a congregation, we covenant together before the wonder and mystery of life to provide a welcoming, safe, and tolerant religious community that both nurtures and challenges us in our diverse and yet shared journeys. Striving together in the spirit of love, we will listen and respond to the ethical and spiritual concerns of one another, seeking to foster a deeper sense of fellowship that strengthens us each in service to life.

- *adopted 2003*

### **We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:**

- o the inherent worth and dignity of every person
- o justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
- o acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations
- o a free and responsible search for truth and meaning
- o the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large
- o the goal of world community with peace liberty, justice for all
- o respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

**Membership** in our church is open to all who wish to covenant in the free, responsible search for truth and meaning. Contact the church office for more information.



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