

UU Church of Midland

On the Journey with Jennifer

The search for a new minister continues with parts to play for everyone in the congregation. The Ministerial Search Committee soon will be talking with prospective ministers. On January 22, the congregation is asked to attend the morning workshop on **Beyond Categorical Thinking**.

This workshop is a chance to think about your expectations for the new minister: Single? Partnered? Gay? Straight? Somewhere in between? Black? White? Brown? Native Texan or From Away? I find this workshop offers a rich conversation about the possibilities of who might be a good match. Please attend!

The second opportunity is **Telling Our History**. This workshop will be a time for the congregation to fulfill one of the most important tasks of a congregation in



Reverend Jennifer Innis

transition: *Coming to Terms with History*. It is important for congregations to know their history so that they can appreciate their heritage and at the same time be aware of the issues and concerns that need to be resolved in order to move freely into the future. Telling Our History is a chance to talk about the background of the congregation and hold up a mirror to the highs and lows as well as patterns and habits and how those might inform the future relationship with a new minister. Due to the demands of the search process and the very full life of the church, the

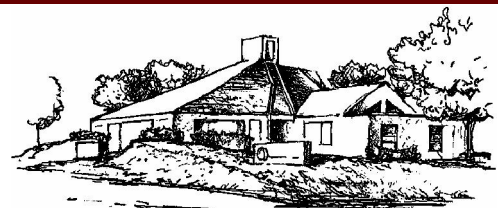
Board and I still need to settle on a date. The date will be announced as soon as possible. Mark Palmer of the Nonprofit Management Center is expected to facilitate. Bring your memories, stories, and insight whether you have been with the church for a year or 30.

I close with a note of thanks for the generosity of the congregation for the last few months. Barbara Handley and Nancy McGlasson were able to purchase 42 books for children in need just in time for Christmas. Also, many thanks to those who gave to the pavers campaign for the new performing arts center. This church's name will appear on two pavers, one at the \$1500 level, and another at the \$500 level.

Namaste,
Jennifer

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January 2011 At A Glance

January 2

10:30 a.m. New Year's Brunch **Note the special time!**

Bring favorite brunch food to share and reflect on the coming New Year together.

January 9

9:30 a.m. Forum: *The Soul of Money* led by the Rev. Jennifer Innis

11 a.m. Worship: *Wrestling with a Just Grace* led by the Rev. Jennifer Innis

January 16

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Stone Soup, a Meal for All Ages* led by the Board

11 a.m. Worship: *Say Yes to a Guest At Your Table* led by the Board

January 23

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Abortion in the 21st Century* led by Nancy McGlasson

11 a.m. Worship: *Taking Time Seriously: The Life of James Luther Adams* led by the Rev. Jennifer Innis

January 30

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Experience in Afghanistan* led by Chris Cherry

11 a.m. Worship: *Missional Church* led by the Rev. Tony Lorenzen

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.

After the children leave the service, they engage in supervised projects or play through second hour.

Free childcare is available each Sunday.

January Calendar

Jan	5	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy
Jan	7-11		Jennifer in Midland
Jan	8	10 am	Program Committee
Jan	8	11:30 am	Religious Education Com. at Murray's
Jan	10	7 pm	Board Meeting
Jan	15	TBA	Circle Supper
Jan	16		Deadline for January 2011 Newsletter
Jan	19	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy
Jan	20-25		Jennifer in Midland
Jan	22	9 am—Noon	Beyond Categorical Thinking
Jan	22	2-4 pm	Quantum Dreamers
Jan	29	2 pm	Showing of Film "Fresh"

January Highlights

Share good food and reflection on the New Year at the Brunch on January 2. The sign up sheet is in the foyer. Consider the status of *Roe v. Wade* during the forum on January 9. On January 16, see how one little stone can make a sustaining and filling soup, for us and for our neighbors. Come join us January 30 for a visit to Afghanistan and its challenges and celebrations with Chris Cherry. Extend a warm welcome to first-time guest minister the Rev. Tony Lorenzen on January 30.

January Mystery Member

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland is full of people with immensely diverse backgrounds, talents and interests. For this first month of a new year, see if you can guess who our 2011 January Mystery Member is.

“What keeps me “hooked” as a UU is the knowledge that wherever I go and there is a UU church, I will find openness and liberal thinkers”.

When you think of this UU, think Cha-cha-cha, Rumba, Samba and Salsa as she’s been an avid ballroom dancer for the past decade. Her favorite type of dance is Latin dancing. As if that high-energy exercise wasn’t enough, she took up the world’s most popular martial art, Tae Kwon Do and Judo, studying those disciplines for five years.

She considers her greatest achievement her two children. Her

daughter is a political advisor and her son is a talented singer and actor. Theatre must be in the family since she’s been doing acting in non-professional theater for six years and loves it.

Favorite books include the Harry Potter series. Since her favorite genre of music is rock ‘n roll, it makes sense that her favorite musician is the era’s biggest star, Elvis Presley. (Perhaps it has something to do with his sequined karate-style jumpsuits).

When asked about her career she says she’s been blessed to have a career that she loves. She’s been a high school religious education teacher and also a liaison for an HIV and AIDS clinic. Currently she’s a nurse and reproductive health care provider and educator, making a difference daily in the lives of those she sees.

Turn (or scroll) to the back page to learn our January Mystery Member.

UUCOM Board

Carol Kullman, President

Harry Nutter, President Elect

Emmy Ulmschneider, Programs

Linda McConathy, Membership

Kathryn Shelley, Secretary

Alice White, Treasurer

Open, Social Outreach

David White, Building & Grounds

Barbara Handley, Religious Ed Rep.

Lisa Jebson, Religious Ed Dir.

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About Our Guest Preacher on January 30

Rev. Tony Lorenzen is the settled minister at Pathways Church in Southlake, Texas. He is a native of Leominster, Massachusetts and a graduate of Fitchburg (MA), State University and Harvard Divinity School. He has served churches in Weston, MA and Billerica, MA before coming to Texas. He was the 2002 Green Party candidate for Lt.

Governor in Massachusetts. He considers himself a Universalist and has a strong interest in church history and congregational growth and vitality. He currently lives in Fort Worth, TX with his partner Tina, a fourth grade teacher and his son Zackary an eighth grade student.

Collection for Soup Kitchen, January 16

Our next benefit lunch will be part of the Stone Soup and Guest At Your Table events on January 16. Donations will go to the Midland Soup Kitchen Ministry. More people than we know need a safe place for a hot meal. Please give generously. Thanks!

Workshop for Congregation on “Beyond Categorical Thinking”

What does your ideal candidate for our new full-time church minister look like? Now consider that question in terms of age, gender, race, nationality, physical ability, marital status, and sexual orientation. Does the picture change for you? The answer may give you an idea of how different our various images of “the ideal minister” can be as we continue in the search process for our new minister.

And that situation is addressed specifically in a special workshop for the congregation entitled “Beyond Categorical Thinking”

scheduled at the church from **9:00 am -12:00 pm** by Keith Kron of the Unitarian Universalist Association on Saturday morning, **January 22**. It will be an important session for everyone in the church, and you are urged to mark your calendar and plan to attend.

The workshop is designed to promote inclusive thinking and help prevent unfair discrimination in the search process for a new minister.

Those attending will:

- consider the hopes, expectations and concerns they have for a new minister
- learn more about the ministerial search process

- explore how thinking categorically about people sometimes interferes with choosing the best candidate

Members of the Search Committee feel that this workshop is another opportunity for everyone in the congregation to be a part of the search process for a new minister. All are encouraged to attend.

Committee members include Jane Hellinghausen, John Kullman, Cristi Branum, Barbara Handley, Alice White, and Tom Parks, who will be happy to answer any questions about the workshop.

Children and Youth Religious Education

Happy New Year!

A couple of quick notes from the RE Department...

December was a lot of fun. Thanks to everyone who helped prepare for the Hanging of the Greens and make it such a fun event. The edible ornaments that we made ensured that we had the best fed birds in Midland! I would also like to thank everyone who attended the December 12 service, making our "Instant Christmas Pageant" such a success. I'm still smiling!

As we begin the new year, I would like to take this time to remind you that we have many open spots for Second Hour volunteers, as well as

teachers for our new curriculum called "Windows and Mirrors." Please let me know if you would like to help. Our youth would love to spend some time with you!

Guest At Your Table

On January 16, we'll open our Guest at Your Table program with an intergenerational meal and with a worship led by the Board. Guest at Your Table is a chance to learn about real struggles for justice around the world through the work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Gifts of \$100 or more are eligible to be matched, dollar for dollar! The Guest at Your Table program runs through February 20. See www.uusc.org for more.

“Fresh” Movie Ahead!

Mark your calendar for Saturday, January 29 at 2:00 PM. Stephen Porter and the UUCOM are hosting a Permian Basin public screening of FRESH. FRESH is not just a movie, but a platform to raise awareness of sustainable food systems within our community. In the words of Michael Pollan, "FRESH is a bracing, even exhilarating look at the whole range of efforts underway to renovate the way we grow food and feed ourselves." So if you enjoyed Stephen's forum or would like to know more about sustainable agriculture in the U.S. and what is being done and what could be done within our area, please join us. (P.S.: Michael Pollan will be lecturing at Texas Tech, Fall 2011!!!!)

Building Your Own Philosophy

The BYOP book discussion group meets at the church on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays each month from 7:30 – 9:00 pm. All are invited to participate. We have located several "lightly used" copies of our current book *Great Conversations 2* from the Great Books Foundation. If interested, contact Linda McConathy at 432-687-5221.

Upcoming readings:

January 5 *The Nose* by Nikolai Gogol

January 19 *The Grand Inquisitor* (from *The Brothers Karamazov*) by Fyodor Dostoevsky

February 2 *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Edgar Allan Poe

February 16 *Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street* by Herman Melville

Auction Ahead! Auction Ahead!

Tis the season...to be planning your donations for UUCOM's annual auction! Perhaps you might receive a gift that is just not "you". No problem! Re-gift it at the auction. Traveling this holiday season? Be on the look out for that little something that will make a great donation to the auction. The auction will be held on Saturday, March 5 so mark your calendars and invite some friends to join in the fun!

Quantum Dreamers

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 the 4th Saturday from 2-4 p.m. in January. Contact Alicia Gardner if you have any questions at 570-0703.

Program Committee

Our forums and lay led worship services make UUCOM the UUnique place it is. Come help us shape the spiritual and intellectual path of the congregation. The next meeting is at 10 a.m. on January 8. If you are interested in making a difference to our church, contact Emmy Ulmschneider or a member of the program committee.

Membership Matters

Have you been getting to know the church and Unitarian Universalism? Do you feel that this congregation might be a spiritual home? Are you considering a deeper commitment to the church? Membership comes with great gifts and opportunities, as well as responsibilities to the community, such as voting in the upcoming congregational meeting. If you are considering membership, see Linda McConathy, Membership Chair, a Board member, or the Rev. Jennifer Innis.

Come to Choir

The choir is up and singing. Most rehearsals are right after Sunday worship. If you would like to participate, contact Beverly Wise at 686-2791 for more information.

Joys & Sorrows

If you or someone you know in the church could use a friendly call or a visit, please contact Rev. Jennifer.

Circle Supper

A Circle Supper is a gathering of about 8-10 people at someone's home or for a Dutch treat at a restaurant. These dinners are a great way to meet people at the church for conversation and to enjoy good cooking. If you would like to be a host or be added to the list future events, see Carol Kullman.

Mystery Member Revealed



While this Unitarian has been a UU for 31 years, she's been a member of the UUCOM for less than six months. New to Midland and new to our church, we

welcome new member Nancy McGlasson. She says, "What keeps me "hooked" as a UU is the knowledge that wherever I go and there is a UU church, I will find openness and liberal thinkers." When asked what her spiritual leanings are she says she feels comfortable in doing [yoga](#) so Buddhism is comfortable to her and American native philosophy is comforting to her." She likes the open-mindedness and kindness of the UUCOM.

Our Mission and Covenant

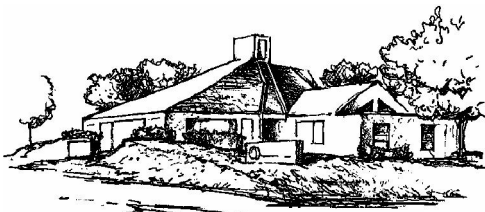
The Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland is an oasis of liberal religion empowering people to pursue spiritual growth and work toward a just, equitable, sustainable society. As a congregation, we covenant together before the wonder and mystery of life to provide a welcoming, safe, and tolerant religious 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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