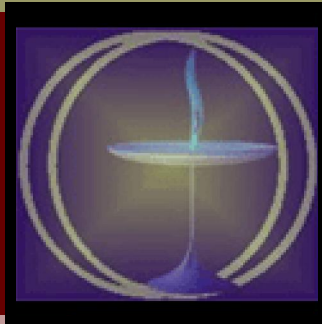


May 2011

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AN OASIS OF SPIRITUAL SEEKERS NURTURING OUR PLANET & COMMUNITY

UU Church of Midland

On the Journey with Jennifer

As I compose this column at the end of April, the array of beautiful flowers reminds me of the last few lines of *Beginners*, a poem by Denise Levertov:

*We have only begun to know
the power that is in us if
we would join
our solitudes in the
communion of struggle.*

*So much is unfolding that
must
complete its gesture,

so much is in bud.*

Indeed, so much is unfolding, endings and beginnings alike. The Rev. Byron Miller, the candidate for your next minister, will be getting to know the congregation as much as you need to become familiar with him if both congregation and minister are to make an informed choice about sharing a future together. I encourage you to sign up for a time to meet him



Reverend Jennifer Innis

outside of Sunday morning. No two conversations will be the same, so sign up for as many events as you can.

Attending the services on May 1 and May 8, as well as the congregational meeting on May is essential to deciding whether to call Rev. Miller as your next minister. However, that vote is not the end of the process. The second part of the unfolding for the coming year is the congregational meeting on May 22 and the opportunity to vote on the budget and the slate for 2011-2012. Without that vote, nothing goes forward. Members need

to participate in that meeting, too.

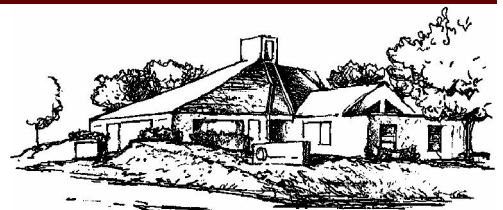
One bud that has been unfolding for almost five years is my service as your minister. I hope you and I will have a chance to say more goodbyes at the party hosted by the Kullman's on May 14. On May 15, I offer my last full sermon and my hopes for your future. I will return for the first weekend in June to lead Flower Communion and finish clearing my office before your new minister begins in August.

In the last few years, I feel that you have just begun to know the power that is in you. I am grateful for the privilege of being your minister and to help you sow the new bud that is about to bloom.

Namaste,
Jennifer

Inside this issue:

Calendar & Program Schedule	2
May Mystery Member	3
Garage Sale	3
New Minister Visit	4
BYOP New Book	5
Party for Rev. Jennifer	5
Writers Needed	5



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May 2011 At A Glance

May 1

9:30 a.m. Forum: *What Midland Means to Me* led by the Program Committee and Friends

11 a.m. Worship: *So Great a Cloud of Witnesses* led by the Rev. Byron Miller

May 8

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Technology and Philosophy* led by Glenn Aaron

11 a.m. Worship: *The Future Ain't What It Used To Be* led by the Rev. Byron Miller

May 15

9:30 a.m. Forum: *The Economics of Public Education* led by Hugh Franks,

Chair of the Social Studies Department at Midland High School

11 a.m. Worship: *From You I Receive, To You I Give* led by the Rev. Jennifer Innis

May 22

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Metaphysics and Painting* led by Antonio Flores

11 a.m. Worship: *Service Committee Justice Sunday: Justice Is Aid with Dignity* led by the Board

May 29

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Letters to the Editor* led by the Program Committee and Friends

11 a.m. Worship: *Women and War* led by the Program Committee and Friends

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 the second hour.

Free childcare is available each Sunday.

May Calendar

May	1		Worship Led by Ministerial Candidate
May	2	7 pm	Board Meeting
May	4	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy
May	6	6 pm	Garage Sale Preview Party
May	7	8 am – 2 pm	Garage Sale at UUCOM
May	8		Worship Led by Ministerial Candidate
May	8	12:15 pm	Congregational Potluck Lunch and Meeting
May	13-17		Jennifer in Midland
May	14	10 am	Program Committee
May	14	11:30 am	Religious Education Com. at Murray's
May	14	7 pm	Goodbye Supper for Jennifer
May	15		Deadline for June/July 2011 Newsletter
May	18	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy
May	22	12:15 pm	Congregational Lunch and Meeting
May	28	2-4 pm	Quantum Dreamers

May Highlights

Lay down the burdens filling your house by contributing to the Garage Sale on May 7 and then take up the vote on a new minister on May 8.

Show your support for guest speakers and member participation by attending the forums on May 1, 15, and 22 and the worship on May 22 and 29.

Come to the second congregational on May 22 and vote to approve the budget and the new Board for 2011-2012.

May Mystery Member

May's Mystery Member decided to investigate Unitarian Universalism after reading about UUs through StumbleUpon on the Internet. She was brought up a Jehovah's Witness, but was ousted as a heretic at the age of ten because of her persistent unanswerable questions. She has read five different versions of the Bible repeatedly, with and without study aids. She's studied and practiced Catholicism, Judaism, Christian non-denominationalism, Christian fundamentalism, Buddhism and Paganism. Yet, polytheistic Paganism is the spiritual leaning she associates herself with.

"As a new UU, it is a real privilege to sit in on a Forum with such friendly, interesting, intelligent people who share so openly."

She's lived 39 years, but claims she's just getting started doing what she really want to do with her life. Her

greatest achievement so far is raising her children to live and think with open hearts and minds.

A few of her favorites include the book, *The Complete Medicinal Herbal* by Penelope Ody, the song "King Without a Crown" by American Hasidic Jewish reggae singer Matisyahu, a well made hamburger and two movies with a good plot and unexpected ending, "Unbreakable" and "The Game."

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

Catch Up on Pledges!

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!

Garage Sale, Saturday, May 7 - 8 am to 2 pm

Please make plans to participate in this major fundraiser for the Church. We want donations, set-up crew members, people to organize, shoppers, donation retrievers, day of the sale workers, and clean-up crew members. Remember, May 1st after church, you may start bringing your donations. Additionally, donations may be brought to the church from 6-8 pm Monday-Thursday, May 2-5, or during church office hours. Pick-up of large items can be scheduled.

The Garage Sale Preview Party will take place on Friday, May 6th, at 6 p.m. and this will be another opportunity to meet with Rev. Byron Miller. Savory or sweet finger food and \$2 cover charge will get you in. Sign-ups to work the sale and the Preview Party are at the church and the committee will be calling you for help. Should you have any questions, Carol Kullman (692-4942) or Barbara Handley (978-5977).

UUCOM Board

Carol Kullman, President

Open, President-Elect

Emmy Ulmschneider, Programs

Barbara Handley/Nancy McGlasson,

Membership

Kathryn Shelley, Secretary

Alice White, Treasurer

Open, Social Outreach

David White, Building & Grounds

Barbara Handley, Religious Ed. Rep.

Lisa Jebson, Religious Ed. Director

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Membership Matters

Have you been getting to know the church and Unitarian Universalism? Membership comes with great gifts and opportunities, as well as responsibilities to the community, such as voting in the upcoming congregational meetings. If you are considering membership, see Barbara Handley or Nancy McGlasson.

Candidate Minister to Meet and Preach April 30 through May 8

Candidating Week is here! The Rev. Byron Miller, candidate for full-time minister, will deliver the message at our church on May 1 and 8, before the congregation votes whether to call him.



The sermon for May 1 is entitled "So Great A Cloud of Witnesses," which he has said will be oriented

toward the role that heritage plays in our lives, both as individuals as well as fellow churchgoers, and will likewise lead to challenges and expectations resulting from that heritage. The intent of this first sermon, he has said, will be to

bring a focus on our collective heritage and, and, using that as a foundation, look ahead to where that heritage may lead us. As a prelude to that sermon, the focus on the Forum earlier that day will be on individual members who discuss how they came to live in Midland and why they remain here.

The sermon for May 8 is "The Future Ain't What It Used To Be" and will in large part serve as a follow-up to the points covered in his first sermon, where the focus was on the past. The focus will be on the future for us as individuals and as churchgoers. Music is very important to him, and he already is working with members and staff to choose hymns that will support and enrich his message.

A strong believer in the importance of music in church service, Rev. Miller hopes to feature music of all kinds to enrich Sunday services, including his two sermons when he is here as a candidate. "Can the whole congregation be 'deputized' as a choir?" he asked recently.

Members of the congregation are urged to attend both services. It is not too late to sign up for one of the events that will take place during the week and visit with Rev. Miller outside of Sunday morning. Sign-up sheets are in the foyer or contact Tom Parks. **A formal vote will be taken following the sermon on May 8** prompted by a motion by the Ministerial Search Committee to call Rev. Miller as our full-time minister.

Children and Youth Religious Education

Can you believe another school year is almost behind us? It's that time of year for graduations and celebrations of all kinds. We are finishing our series for this semester – just a few more lessons before we will display the windows and mirrors panels. Then on May 29, we will have a special end of the year party at 9:30 am with snacks, games and fun for all.

Speaking of celebrations, thanks to everyone who attended our special Earth Day service on April 17 and a huge thank you to everyone who helped: Barbara, Maureen, Sally on the RE Committee as well as

Zach, Alex, Robert, Zaine and Sarah. During this service, members our congregation joined other UUs all over the USA to take the 40/40 for Earth Challenge. It's not too late to join us - you can find a list of 40 actions at the link below. They are small steps you can take to save water and make the world a better place.

<http://uumfe.org/2011-ED-40/40SampleActions>

Lisa Jebson
Director of Religious Education

Summer Arts and Film Festival Starts June 12

Our Summer Arts and Film Festival will run from June 12 through August 7. We gather at 9:30 am for a welcome, sharing joys and sorrows, and the collection before starting the program and discussion. Michael Wright is creating a diverse menu of engaging films and presentations. The final schedule will be announced at the end of May. Nursery care is available every Sunday, and the older children have a summer program as well. If you would like to host coffee and snacks on a given Sunday, please see Michael.

Deadline Nears for Writer's Anthology

Imagine, if you will, future members of this UU Church of Midland a hundred years from now in the spring of 2111 as they look back in time and wonder aloud, "I wonder who they were and what was on their minds back then a century ago?" And then imagine that, maybe as a research project for RE or as a Forum topic, they research the church archives and lo! discover that we published books that reflected our thoughts, our cares, concerns, fears, dreams, and ideas – a treasure trove for historians. What better way to know that your thoughts and cares and concerns will outlive you than to see your written work published in the annual summer anthology as part of the Arts and Film Festival sponsored by the church?

Tom Parks, the editor, has extended the deadline till May 15 to give members time to work through what he terms "a very busy spring for everybody." Be sure to submit your poems, articles, short stories, essays, opinion pieces, excerpts, and other works to him by May 15. For questions, he may be reached at 697-6530 or e-mail to tparks9@suddenlink.net.

Program Committee

The Program Committee schedules the Sunday worship and forum. The next meeting is at 10 am on May 14 at the church. Contact Emmy Ulmschneider with any questions.

Farewell Party for Rev. Jennifer on May 14

Come and party with Jennifer on Saturday, May 14. This will be an outdoor party (weather permitting) at the Kullmans (1202 Storey). The party will begin at 5:30 pm with plenty of time to socialize. Dinner

will begin at 7 pm. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided; Bring an appetizer, side dish, dessert or beverage. Sign up for this party will be at church or call Carol Kullman at 682-4942.

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 Saturday, May 28, from 2-4 pm.

Contact Alicia Gardner for any questions at 570-0703.

Let Your Voices Sing!

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.

Building Your Own Philosophy

BYOP, the Building Your Own Philosophy book group, has selected Great Conversations 3 for its next title. The cost is \$24.95 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling for a total of \$26.95.

The deadline to order is June 1st. Checks are to be made out to Walt McConathy and given to him before the order is placed on June 2nd. Walt will pay for the entire order by VISA. For more details, contact him at 432-212-2416.

BYOP is open to all in our church and the community. It meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays from 7:30 - 9:00 pm in the fellowship hall of the church.

Below is a sampling of the upcoming readings. Wow! Where else would you find such diversity?

The Open Boat by Stephen Crane
Death in the Woods by Sherwood Anderson

The Garden of Forking Paths by Jorge Luis Borges
Introduction to *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir
An Interest In Life by Grace Paley

Mystery Member Revealed

April's Mystery Member works as a pharmacy technician at Midland Memorial Hospital. She is currently



studying herbalism and aspires to be a clinical herbalist and ethno botanist in order to help others use plants for better health.

"I think I have the best kids, best sister and best fiancé in the world! That's just my opinion, but the fates have surrounded me with some pretty awesome people. They all do their best to support me, challenge me and keep me in check." We welcome Victoria Duran to our UUCOM family.

Our Mission and Covenant

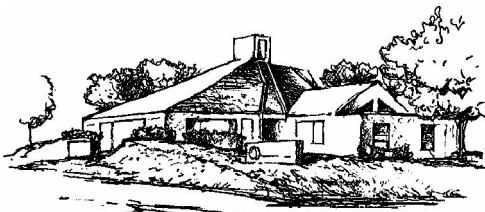
The Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland is an oasis of liberal religion empowering people to pursue spiritual growth and work toward a just, equitable, sustainable society. As a congregation, we covenant together before the wonder and mystery of life to provide a welcoming, safe, and tolerant religious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