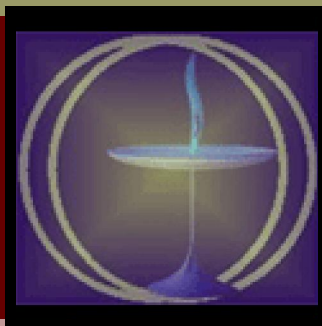


September 2011

www.uumidland.org



AN OASIS OF SPIRITUAL SEEKERS NURTURING OUR PLANET & COMMUNITY

UU Church of Midland

New Minister Brings Excitement, Eagerness for the Church's Future

**By Tom Parks
Search Committee
Chairman**

With the onset of the new church calendar, our congregation has endorsed the future with an overwhelming vote to call its new full-time minister. The Reverend Thomas Schmidt spent nine days in Midland at the end of August visiting with members, attending meetings and functions, and delivering two sermons during his busy candidating visit.

Reverend Schmidt will arrive in Midland for the start of his full-time duties around the third week in September. Because the Program Committee has already established September's Sunday schedule, the new minister will have time to experience a number of regular Sunday programs

serving as a future guide. "After meeting the warm and wonderful people who make up this congregation and getting to know this church and its many programs, I am eager to begin," he commented.

Both sermons delivered during his visit as a



"I feel that this is a good match, and it is my pleasure and honor to accept this call to serve this church, this community, and our shared UU movement for many years to come."

- Rev. Thomas Schmidt

candidate were met with uniform endorsement by the congregation. His first sermon, entitled "Home Again for the First Time," coincided with the church's annual home-coming observance. Directly following his second sermon, "UU in a Nutshell," the

congregation voted to call him as its new minister.

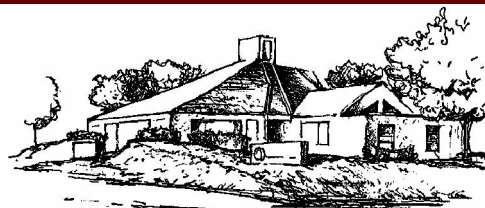
Reverend Schmidt served for five years as the minister for the UU Church of the Lowcountry in Hilton Head, South Carolina, before accepting the call from our church. His Master of Divinity degree is from Claremont School of

Theology in California.

His appointment is the result of a lengthy process established by UUA national policies and carried out by UUCOM's Search Committee. The committee expressed that the considerable effort was well worth it.

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September 2011 At A Glance

September 4

9:30 a.m. Forum: *Editorial Discussion* led by John Kullman
11 a.m. Worship: *Water Communion* led by Barbara Handley

September 11

9:30 a.m. Forum: *The Spirit of First Responders*, introduced by Maureena Benavides
Guest Speaker: Professional Firefighters Association of Midland President, Lee Wise
11 a.m. Worship: *National Day of Remembrance and Service*, lay led.
12:15 p.m.: Join us in saying thank you to Fire Stations 5 and 8 as we deliver lunch made by UU Youth.

September 18

9:30 a.m. Forum: *An Exciting New Roadmap for Our Church* led by Barbara Handley
11 a.m. Worship: *What is Unitarian Universalism?* An Albuquerque DVD presentation

September 25

9:30 a.m. Forum: *About Haiti* led by Christina Branum-Martin
11 a.m. Worship: *With Eyes Wide Open* led by the Cristina Branum-Martin

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.

September Calendar

Sept	4	11am	Water Communion
Sept	7	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy
Sept	10	10:00 am	Program Committee
		11:30 am	Religious Education Comm. at Murray's
Sept	18		Deadline for October Newsletter
Sept	19	7 pm	Board Meeting
Sept	21	7:30 pm	BYOP/Building Your Own Philosophy

September Highlights

9/4. Bring the water that represents your travels, however far from or close to home for our annual Water Communion.

9/11. Commemorate the 10th anniversary of 9/11. We'll say thank you to Midland firefighters, get a local update in Forum, remember 9/11 during Service, then deliver lunch to Stations 5 and 8. A special collection will supplement the firefighter emergency fund.

9/18. Noisy people doing things, racial and age diversity, greater community presence ... just a few dreams we can achieve at UUCOM. Join us to learn how.

With Eyes Wide Open September 25th Report on Haiti



"I came home with sore muscles, muddy work boots, a heart full of emotions, beautiful handmade artwork, and stories about Haiti and the people I met, stories about myself and stories about a deeper understanding of what I am doing with this religion of mine." To prepare, please read the article at www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/6337/

Christinia Branum-Martin

What a joy it will be to come back to be with you September 25th. This past May I went on an incredible week-long trip to Haiti. It was organized by the UU Service Committee, the UU Association plus two seminaries of our denomination. Ten seminarians participated in the trip. We went to help build homes and community gardens for families still displaced from the earthquake in January 2010 in the Central Plateau of Haiti, in the region of Papaye.

I'll introduce the UUSC partner organization in Haiti, the MPP (Papaye Peasant Movement) in the forum before the service along with photos from the trip.

Join me. I look forward to seeing you again.

Christina Branum-Martin is a seventh generation Unitarian. She attends the Meadville-Lombard Theological School in Chicago as a non-resident student.

New Hymnal Fundraiser—Singing the Journey

After hearing about Jane Hellinghausen and Barbara Handley's great time singing at the UUA General Assembly in June, the Board decided to have a dedicated fundraiser to purchase at least 30 of the new hymnal

supplement, *Singing the Journey*. The total amount needed is \$500. We already have pledges of close to \$150! If you would like donate, please contact David White or Barbara Handley.

UUCOM Board

Carol Kullman, President
Barbara Handley, President-Elect
Emmy Ulmschneider, Programs
Alice White, Membership
Kathryn Shelley, Secretary
David White, Treasurer
Edith Stanton, Social Outreach
John Kullman, Building & Grounds
Sally Flores, Religious Ed. Rep.

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9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Email: office@uumidland.org

In Times of Need

One of the reasons we are here is to care for each other in our search for truth and meaning. If you or another member or friend are aware of an update or need, please contact the church office or Alice White at aaaw55@yahoo.com

Fun, Interesting Year Planned for Children and Youth

By Lisa Jebson, UUCOM Religious Education Director

Greetings from the RE Wing at UUCOM! The Religious Education committee and I are excited about the relevant topics UUCOM kids will be exploring in their spiritual development. Classes start September 4 and we have two separate curricula for the youth this year. For upper elementary through high school we will offer *Sacred Threads* and *Gospel According to The Simpsons*. For kindergarten through lower elementary, we will offer *Timeless Themes*.

Sacred Threads

This is an exploration of the unique elements of modern Asian religions



and the characteristics that they share with each other and with Unitarian Universalism. Your child will learn how attributes of these religions have relevance to their own spiritual journey. *Sacred Threads* will also help youth understand the nature of religion in human society as it influences their own lives and relations among communities and nations.

Gospel According to “The Simpsons”

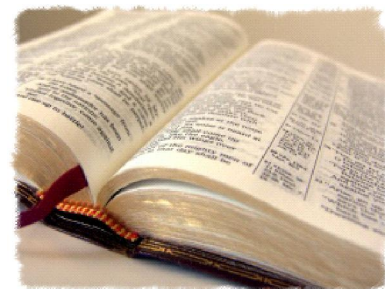
A lively exploration of religion through an unlikely source: “The Simpsons”!

In each session, we’ll view an episode and use it as a springboard for discussion of many of life’s “big questions.”



Timeless Themes

This series will introduce children to religious literature that is central to



North American culture and to Unitarian heritage. The Bible stories are taught from a UU perspective and center on the human issues that inspired these scriptures. We will explore “timeless themes” like human responsibility, love of freedom, speaking out against injustice, respect for the beliefs of others, love of one’s neighbor and forgiveness.

Barbara Handley, Maureena Benevidas, Sally Flores, Amber Scott and I are committed to providing UU kids a safe, inclusive and exciting place to explore life’s big questions. We begin promptly at 9:30 each Sunday morning. Your kids make the discussions lively. Join us!

Wanted: Second Hour Volunteers!

Second Hour is what we call the time of activities for the children after they leave worship and return to the religious education rooms until the end of service. Second hour volunteers do **not** have to be parents of the children in our religious education program. Second hour provides an

opportunity for members of our congregation to get to know our children. This can be done supervising them at play or sharing a planned activity. If you have a hobby or interest that you would like to share with our youth, second hour is the perfect time! Holidays

make great opportunities to organize a craft, i.e., pumpkin decorating, gift making, etc. Please sign up often! For more information, please contact our Director of Religious Education, Lisa Jebson, or Sally Flores.

Grab a Ride to the Cluster Gathering in Lubbock Sept. 17

Ever feel isolated in West Texas as a UU? Come meet UU's from all over West Texas as we gather again at the First UU Church of Lubbock for a day of education and working together. Themes include stewardship, water conservation and sharing OWL sex education programs. Carol Kullman and Barbara Handley have full information.

News & Notes

Reverends Jennifer Innis and Patrick Price are expecting ... sleepless nights, weird cravings, and oh yes, a baby girl. She is due on January 19th. Email or snail mail are good for well wishes. 1501 Lilac Lane, Plano, TX 75074. Nate, who just turned three in August, has yet to agree to being a big brother.

Sherryll Johnson's father, Windell Peters passed away in Lubbock Texas on August 18th. We offer Sherryll our deepest sympathy. Share your thoughts with her via email at sherrylljohnson@yahoo.com.

Linda McConathy is back home after undergoing a successful stem cell transplant in Dallas for multiple myeloma. The doctor said she is now in complete remission. While her immune system is still "rebooting," Linda may attend church occasionally and hopes you will understand her need to take a rain check on hugs and handshakes for a few more months. In the meantime, Linda would enjoy calls or emails : mc123@att.net and phone 687-5221.

Quantum Dreamers

Quantum Dreamers will be taking a sabbatical until further notice. Contact Gerriana Koeniger for any questions at 563-2721.

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.

Program Help Needed

Check out the energetic group who are working diligently to ensure your Sunday worship and forum experiences are top notch. They need your assistance. Saturday, 10 am September 10th at the Church.



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 for a total of \$26.95.

BYOP is open to anyone. It meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays from 7:30 - 9:00 pm at the church. Below is a sampling of the upcoming readings. Contact Walter McConathy at 687-5221 for information.

9/7, Leo Tolstoy: Second Epilogue to War and Peace

9/21, Rudyard Kipling: The Man Who Would Be King

10/ 5, Luigi Pirandello: Six Characters in Search of an Author

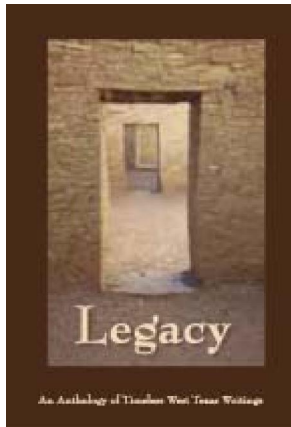
10/19, Stephen Crane: The Open Boat

Kudos & Applause

Huge thanks to Search Committee members **Tom Parks, Cristi Branum, John Kullman, Barbara Handley, Jane Hellinghausen** and **Alice White** for their successful minister search. **Michael Wright** led the way to another fascinating Summer Arts and Film Festival with much help from **Emmy Ulmschneider** and various Sunday contributors. Through **Tom Parks'** generosity, writers and listeners all gained a keepsake anthology of West Texas writers. (See back page). Kudos to **Barbara Handley** for ensuring lights were on, coffee was brewed and the logistics were in order each Sunday during August.

Anthology of West Texas Writings Available Now

Dedicated to UU members **John and Carol Kullman**, this year's anthology is a treasure of essays, poems and short stories by West Texas writers (along with a few non-Texans). A ten dollar donation to the UU Church will secure your copy of this compelling edition. Copies are in the church office or see Tom Parks.



Our Mission and Covenant

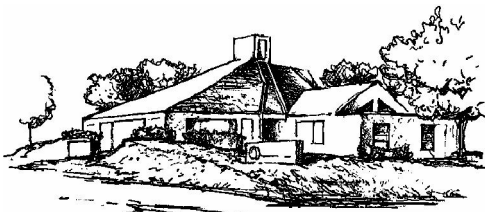
The Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland is an oasis of liberal religion empowering people to pursue spiritual growth and work toward a just, equitable, sustainable society. As a congregation, we covenant together before the wonder and mystery of life to provide a welcoming, safe, and tolerant religious 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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Come learn about UU work in Haiti through guest minister Christina Branum-Martin on September 25th.