

UUF Galveston Gazette

December 2009



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

502 Church Street, Galveston, Texas 77550-5502

(409)765-8330

Online at <http://uugalveston.org>

A Month of Sundays

Services and Children's Religious Education 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum 9am

December 6

Jean Goodwin, "Saints and Animals; Animals and Saints"

What was the cow's experience of the birth in the manger? Did Jesus have pets? Which saint spoke to the Loch Ness Monster? Why did Francis preach to the birds? Answers to these and to other interesting questions will be the focus of this program. Jean is a physician who practices general and forensic psychiatry. Her talks are always fun and provocative.

Greeter: Vickie Francil Board Member: Susan Persons
Facilitator: Bets Anderson Music: Woody Dickson

December 13

Laura Emerson, "4000 Years of Christmas"

Many Unitarian Universalists have ambivalent feelings about the Christmas season. Is it Christian? Is it Pagan? What's UU about it? Don't be like the Puritans, who banned it! Let's celebrate its synchronicity and universality! Let's appreciate how contemporary habits, like gift and card giving, connect us to the ancient Romans, the gaudy clothes - the Renaissance, celebrating a god's emergence near the winter solstice, from a cave, greeted by sheep - Mithraism, etc. Our end-of-year celebrations connect us to the far reaches of the globe, now and long ago. How very UU! Laura is a frequent speaker at our Fellowship. She is a member of Emerson Unitarian Church in Houston and teaches liberal religion to adult education groups all over the country.

Greeter: Vickie Francil Board Member: Patrick McGuffey
Facilitator: Cheryl Henry Music: Steve Hodgson

December 20

Gerry Carr, "Moravian Love Feast"

This annual service celebrates the Christmas season with carols, readings, candles and a traditional Moravian Love Feast (a shared communion of rolls and sweet coffee). Gerry Carr will lead this service with the help of other members. Gerry is past president of our Fellowship and chairs the Program/Worship Committee.

Greeter: Stan Blazyk Board Member: Pete Olsen Music: Margaret Canavan

December 27 POT LUCK AFTER THE SERVICE

Cheryl Henry, "Endings: Clearing the Deck"

Holding on to losses, grievances, resentments, or regrets can keep us stuck in the past. "Clearing the deck" helps us take advantage of the opportunity for a new beginning in 2010. We will end the year by conducting the Burning Bowl ceremony in which everyone has the opportunity to let go of anything that may be an obstacle to moving forward.

Please consider what you'd like to leave behind in 2009 to make room for your New Year. Cheryl is a member of the Fellowship, Secretary of the Board, and chair of the Membership Committee..

Greeter: Sandra Sullivan Board Member: Cheryl Henry Music: TBA

President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

The holiday season is upon us! In these materialistic times I am trying to keep foremost in my mind the underlying spirit of Thanksgiving and Christmas. For me that means savoring the companionship of family and friends, sharing and giving to those in need, and recapturing the simple joys and pleasures I felt as a child during this time of the year.

Margaret Canavan recently challenged us to speak out to the community about the need for affordable housing here on Galveston Island. Look to our UU Principles, including the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the practice of justice, equity, and compassion in human relationships for inspiration as we raise our voices on this important community issue.

The Board is working to insure we stay on top of maintenance and repair issues around our Church building. I will likely call a special Congregation meeting to seek your approval for some pressing matters including off street parking and adding a building maintenance account to our annual budget. More to follow on this!

First UU Church of New Orleans has again sent a generous donation, of \$233 from their October Special offering to our Church. They are in recovery themselves and this is incredibly generous of them. After polling the Board, we have decided pass this gift on to a deserving recipient in our Galveston community.

Happy Holidays and my best to you and yours!

John E. Hunger

Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its gift.

This is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.

Books by UUs and About UUs

Jay Miller: *Ersatz Eden: Mind Your Own Garden*

The story takes place in 1979 with the background of social activism and garden party politics. It is fully family friendly fiction. If your favorite book store doesn't have it, Amazon and BetterWorld both have it online. BetterWorld.com purchases benefit worldwide literacy.

Rick Bellingham: *The Fables of Boris*

The Fables of Boris addresses 50 learning objectives and encourages discussion of over 100 life skills. It is designed to be a fun and entertaining way to build character in children and to start them on a life-long quest to strengthen their soul. The stories present puzzles for kids to think about and to solve. My biggest hope for this book is to transform the lessons we have learned as adults into stories that are accessible to kids. If you believe that adults need to connect more deeply with children by engaging in meaningful conversations about how to navigate life's difficult challenges, then send this link to all your members. www.fablesofboris.com

Robert D. Richardson: *William James*

The biographer of Ralph Waldo Emerson takes another great New Englander writer as his subject, William James. View it online at *Harvard Square Library Review* (www.harvardsquarelibraryreview.com). James's book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, can be found free online: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WJAMES/cover.html>.

Theodore Parker: *The Transient and Permanent in Christianity*

Ralph Waldo Emerson surrendered his prized Boston pastorate and quietly moved to Concord, but his open anti-supernaturalism persisted in the pulpit work of Theodore Parker, whose South Boston ordination sermon in 1841 on *The Transient and Permanent in Christianity* was just the start of his humanizing of Jesus. Soon 2,000 to 3,000 people filled the Boston Music Hall to hear Theodore Parker's prophetic preaching of a Transcendentalist manifesto affirming both abolition and women's suffrage.

Reminders

- **Shirley Hollingsworth** needs your **clean plastic grocery bags** for work feeding the homeless.
- Bring old (clean) socks and rags for **Judy Glaister** to use for cleaning & polishing on the *Elissa*.
- We can get \$3 credit at Office Depot with your **used ink-jet printer cartridges**.
- **Fair Trade Coffee & Tea** sales benefit small coffee farmers & our Social Action Committee.
- **For visitors & newcomers:** Our members receive the **UU World** magazine, & want to share with you. Feel free to take copies from the display in the foyer.
- **Sunday morning "Greeters"** are needed! Sign-up in the kitchen or contact **Vickie Francil**.

Right Relations Covenant

We will communicate openly, honestly & respectfully. We will listen carefully with open minds & open hearts. We will assume good intentions, practice tolerance & resist the temptation to become offended. We will take responsibility for our speech, actions & feelings, & we will be sensitive to possible conflicts & willing to work toward solutions. We will consider other perspectives & will strive not for unanimity but for mutual respect. We will honor our own boundaries & the boundaries of others. We will respect & support the diversity within our congregation & work to foster a welcoming environment.

Deeds, Not Creeds

How many times have you said those three words? And how many "deeds" included your participation? One way to "put your money where your mouth is" is through our own Social Action Committee chaired by **Mary Hodgson**. Here's what we are doing now:

- ◆ Making bowls of clay for the **Empty Bowls** event. We meet weekly on Wednesday evening from 5 – 7 and have a goal of providing 350 bowls for the event that is planned for April 16. Of course we'll need lots of volunteers for that event as well. No experience necessary.
- ◆ Choosing and showing a **"provocative" film** each month on the first Friday evening at 7. The film often engenders discussion and is
- ◆ always accompanied by refreshments. It's free and a fun way to meet with fellow UUs and others.
- ◆ Conducting a **"special collection"** on the last Sunday of each month. The committee chooses the recipient of the collection. Recent collections have been contributed to Galveston Island Humane Society, The Animal Alliance, The Jesse Tree, Resource and Crisis Center, American Red Cross, and St. Vincent's House.
- ◆ Giving children's gently-used books out from our 'float' at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade.
- ◆ Beginning a new project this month – we are initiating an effort to reduce the use of non-renewable **plastic bags** in Galveston. The first step is

an invitational meeting [businesses and service clubs] that will be facilitated by Betty Massey who chaired the City's Recovery Committee after "Ike" [and still does]. Our goal for this meeting is a plan for the elimination of plastic bags. This is a great opportunity for you to become involved in an important project that could have far-reaching effects on our environment. Come to our meeting after church on December 13. Lunch will be included.

If you'd like to join us for any of the activities, please do; or, if you have an idea for another social action project, let Mary know your thoughts. We think our efforts truly do illustrate "deeds, not creeds." All

News & Coming Attractions

Member NUUs

Thinking of YoUU: Please keep in your prayers & thoughts: those persons in need of some extra positive energy.

Tom Hargrove's wife, Susan, passed away on October 27. Susan will be remembered for her loyalty and fighting spirit during the time Tom was held captive in Colombia, and throughout her illness.

Congratulations to Judy Glaister and Richard Orange as the proud grandparents of Ryan Joseph Kubota born November. 16.

What great Thanksgiving feast we had, with 45 participants. Many thanks to **Cheryl Henry** for organizing us, and to all who helped set up, eat up, and clean up!

We have discovered a shortage of **kitchen towels** at the Fellowship. If you have some you don't need, they would be quite useful.

UUpcoming Events

Greet the New Year: Join a Zen meditation at 11pm on December 31 at the Fellowship. Hot chocolate, tea and cookies afterward. Open to all.

Free Concerts December 7 & 8: hear the Galveston College and College of the Mainland choirs as they present a sterling holiday concert, twice! Monday night will be at 7:30pm at Galveston College (Fine Arts recital hall, room FA207), and Tuesday will be at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Texas City. UUs singing for you will be **Bets Anderson, Madeleine Baker, John Hunger, Alison Rutledge,** and Fanny's favorite **Roy DeGesero.** Don't miss it!

Supper Circle: Laura Murrell is hosting the December Supper Circle on Sunday December 13 at 6pm. Limit is 12, so sign up right away. Main course will be shrimp.

"Spirituality of Poker" and Game Night: December poker night is Sunday, December 20 at John Hunger's, 6:30pm. Other games TBA.

Book Club: The UU book club will not meet in December. **The Bluest Eye** by Toni Morrison will be discussed on

Wednesday January 13 at 7pm in the Fellowship living room. Upcoming books will be **Rocket Boys/October Sky** in February, and **The Hungry Tide** in March.

Used Book Sale: There will be no used book sale in December. The next sale will be on January 9 from 9am till 2pm.

Microfinance at UUFGC: Our microfinance "revolving" fund has used our donation fund of a few hundred dollars to make 90 loans, totaling \$2925, to recipients in developing countries, and we have donated \$160 to support the activities of Kiva. We make loans as we receive donations and re-lend as existing loans are repaid. All are welcome to help select loan recipients. We are part of the Unitarian Universalist lending team which has 294 members. Take a look at our microfinance portfolio and history at

<http://www.kiva.org/lender/unitarianuniversalist3384>.



Around UU

In Memoriam, Jerry Davidoff: The Unitarian Universalist Association is sad to report the death of Jerry Davidoff on November 7. He was a nationally active lay leader in the Unitarian Universalist faith movement. Mr. Davidoff was chair of the Unitarian Universalist Association's Election Review Committee and chaired the Election Campaign Practices Committee. He was a member for eight years of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, nationally responsible for credentialing UU ministers and, when necessary, disciplining them. Along with his wife, Jerry Davidoff received the Distinguished Service to the Cause of Unitarian Universalism Award by the UUA in 2006. For the complete story on Jerry Davidoff's passing, see <http://www.uua.org/news/newssubmissions/152626.shtml>

News from Unitarian Universalist Association: We have been very busy and have several important announcements for you.

The Cathedral of the World: A Unitarian Universalist Theology, by the late Rev. Forrest Church, is now available from Beacon Press. In his final book, Church draws from his life's work—including public addresses, articles, and previously unpublished pieces—to present his universalist theology and liberal faith.

The General Assembly (GA) staff are now accepting exhibit space and program ad requests for GA 2010. The final deadline to submit these requests is January 15, 2010. Timely completion of online request forms will be a great help to the GA staff group as they assign exhibit space.

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries and the Youth Caucus Co-Deans invite youth to apply for open GA Youth Caucus staff and Program Facilitator positions. Applications are available online and are due back to the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries by December 15.

The monthly Congregational Bulletin is also available on our website at <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/congregationalmonthly/index.shtml>.

2009 - 2010

UUFGC Board of Directors

President	John Hunger
President-Elect	Mike Hennen
Past-President	Susan Persons
Secretary	Cheryl Henry
Treasurer	Pete Olsen
Members at Large:	Fanny DeGesero Kathy Domsky Patrick McGuffey

Committees and Task Forces

Communications	Madeleine Baker
Landscape	Martha Terrill
Membership	Cheryl Henry
Program/Worship	Gerry Carr
Religious Education	Neil Huddleston
Supper Circles	Judy Glaister
Social Action	Mary Hodgson

Administrative Team	B. Anderson, M. Baker, M. Canavan, J. Glaister, & C. Henry
Webmaster	Amber Zainfeld



Alcoholics Anonymous Phoenix Group meets Sunday & Wednesday evenings at 8pm. Contact Robert G. for information at 409-392-7005.

Adult Forum meets Sundays at 9am to explore topics in religion, philosophy, history & politics. Contact Neil Huddleston at (409)744-2369.

Board of UUFGC meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 5:15 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Book Club meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm. Contact Fanny DeGesero if you have suggestions for readings. No December meeting.

Used Book Sale monthly on second Saturday, 9am . Come help out! Donate your used books! No December sale.

Bowlers meet throughout the year on Wednesday evenings to make bowls for the annual "Empty Bowl" fundraiser for Jesse Tree.

Comedy Defensive Driving: "Pokey" Simmons teaches this three Saturdays each month, for \$35. Contact him at (409) 789-8451 to sign up. No classes in December.

Course in Miracles Study Group meets every Monday at 11 am. Contact Laura Murrell for information(lauramurrell@att.net).

Dance Classes: Meet each Tuesday & Thursday, 7pm: Questions, call Betty at 281-337-0441. UU members can join for half price. See <http://www.galvestondanceclub.com>. Note holiday break in December.

Program/Worship Committee meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6pm, at Mosquito Café in Galveston. Meetings are open to all.

Poker and Game Night is monthly and held in members' homes, open to all. Check the calendar & weekly announcements for date & location.

Social Action Committee meets the first Sunday of each month after service and welcomes your ideas, energy and enthusiasm.

Spirit Circle Covenant Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 6:15pm. Contact Gerry Carr gcarr@tlc-galveston.org or leave a message at the Fellowship if you would like to be contacted by phone.

Supper Circles meet monthly. Call Judy Glaister at (409)762-8187 to schedule a supper, sign up for one, or for information.

Zen Meditation meets Mondays at 5:30pm, and Thursdays at 5:15pm. Contact Cara Geary (gcar@comcast.net) or visit galvestonzen.org. about Mondays, or Terry Conrad (409)599-7268 about Thursdays.

Send us your news! Provide information to administrator@uugalveston.org or phone 409-765-8330, or leave a note at the Fellowship.

The Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association

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

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

Social Action Committee Provocative Film Series

7 P.M. Friday, December 4

ARRANGED

When Rochel and Nasira -- an Orthodox Jew and a Muslim, respectively -- meet as new teachers at a Brooklyn school, co-workers and students expect friction. But the women discover they have a shared expectation of entering into arranged marriages. As they experience tension between their traditional cultures and life in contemporary America, Rochel and Nasira form a special bond.

Free admission
Please bring a friend and a snack to share.

DECEMBER 2009

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

Activities are held at the Fellowship unless otherwise indicated



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Happy Birthday to:</p> <p>Vickie Francil 12/9 Dale Hogan 12/10 Sharon Booton 12/23</p>		<p>1 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>2 5pm - Bowlers 6pm - Pro- gram Cmte @ Mosquito 8pm - AA Phoenix</p>	<p>3 5:15pm - Zen Medita- tion 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>4 7pm - Provocative Film, ARRANGED</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Jean Goodwin, "Saint & Animals, Animals & Saints"; Children/Youth Religious Education 12n - Social Action Cmte; 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>7 11am - Course in Miracles 5:30pm - Zen Meditation</p>	<p>8 6:15pm - Spirit Cir- cle 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>9 5pm - Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>10 5:15pm - Zen Medita- tion 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 <i>No Book Sale this month No Defen- sive Driv- ing this month</i></p>
<p>13 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Laura Emerson, "4000 Years of Christmas"; Children/Youth Religious Education 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>14 11am - Course in Miracles 5:15pm - UU Board Meets 5:30pm - Zen Meditation</p>	<p>15 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>16 5pm - Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>17 5:15pm - Zen Medita- tion 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>18 Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Gerry Carr, "Moravian Love Feast"; Children/Youth RE 6:30pm - Poker at John Hun- ger's 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>21 11am - Course in Miracles 5:30pm - Zen Meditation</p>	<p>22 6:15pm - Spirit Cir- cle 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>23 5pm - Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>24 No Zen Meditation No Dance lessons</p>	<p>25 </p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 Potluck 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Cheryl Henry, "Endings: Clearing the Deck"; Children/Youth Reli- gious Education 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>28 11am - Course in Miracles 5:30pm - Zen Meditation</p>	<p>29 No Dance lessons</p>	<p>30 5pm - Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>31 No Dance lessons 11pm - Zen Meditation</p>		