



A Month of Sundays

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

January 4

Margaret Canavan, "The Value of Imperfection"

Resolving to improve ourselves is often the order of the day with the beginning of each new year. This sermon by Rev. Lori Staubitz of UU Fellowship of Southern Maryland explores the impact our attempts to be "perfect" have on our lives. Margaret is a member of the Fellowship and is ever perfecting her quest for imperfection.

Greeter: Bets Anderson
Facilitator: Stan Blazyk

Board Member: Fanny DeGesero
Music: Steve Hodgson

January 11

Gerry Carr, "Hold on to Your Hats: All of UU History in 15 Minutes"

This sermon by Rev. Jane Rzepka promises to educate and/or remind us of how our Unitarian Universalist faith has evolved. Gerry is past President of UUFGC and the chair of the Program Committee.

Greeter: Judy Glaister
Music: Margaret Canavan

January 18

Bets Anderson, "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Cherish the Dream"

A sermon by David E. Bumbaugh will provide a focus for this program remembering the legacy of Dr. King whose "I Have a Dream" speech was presented at the Lincoln Memorial 45 years ago. Bets is a member of the board of the UUFGC and one of its volunteer administrative team members."

Greeter: John Hunger
Music: Steve Hodgson

Board Member: Amanda Prather

January 25

POT LUCK AFTER THE SERVICE

John Pepper, "The Easiest Thing in the World"

Exactly what is the easiest thing in the world? Maybe not what you would expect. From two very different world religions, the Buddhist and Jewish traditions, come two thought-provoking and amazing theologies. Both of these theologies seem to come together creating one unifying idea, an idea that is beautiful and easy to comprehend. Please join me as I explore both of these trains of thought and the need for their purposeful application in the world we live in and love. John Pepper is new candidate for the UUA ministry and a member of the Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. He recently completed his Masters of Divinity degree from the Houston Graduate School of Theology. Currently John is an engineer with the federal government in the Office of Pipeline Safety and is making plans to be a hospital chaplain in retirement.

Greeter: Vickie Francil
Facilitator: TBA

Board Member: Donald Lee
Music: Margaret Canavan

President's Message

2009 is here, thank God! I love the hope of new beginnings. And this has certainly been a time to wish for one. But in truth Ike has taught me much.

1. What is really important-family, friends and community-not things.
2. Having others use our space, like OLLI, the Galveston County office for a run off election, a site for Galveston Reads, feels good and builds community connections
3. Simple living really is easier when less stuff helps to create more space in my life.
4. Weekly Sunday morning programs instill hope and bring me peace.
5. Opportunity to start again; like redo the garden differently this time now that Ike has created more sun in my yard.
6. Gratitude for the hard working talented young men who are putting my home back together.
7. Appreciation for all our members who set aside their Ike trials to contribute time and creativity to the function of our fellowship.

Not only has our fellowship survived, I think we are healing as we reach out to one another through our many activities. Just take a look at our calendar and look around on Sunday morning-attendance is healthy and hearty.

What has Ike taught you?

Wishing you peace and love,

Susan

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.

How do we Welcome Visitors?

Note: this article was published in UU InterConnections December 15, 200, with the title of "(Un)welcoming Churches: How Do Visitors See Us?", as the report of a congregation's president's experience visiting another UU congregation.

Recently, I was traveling and took the opportunity to attend services at the closest UU congregation. As a board member and congregational president, I look forward to visiting other congregations when traveling. I arrived thirty minutes prior to the service to have some coffee and chat with the local people. A membership committee member met me at the church entrance and gave me a different color nametag, which I was told would identify me as a visitor.

I followed my nose to the coffee area and walked the length of the large room, where coffee and fellowship abounded. Upon getting a cup of coffee, I began my mission to chat with like-minded souls and see how they did church. To that point, no one had looked at me. But, armed with a friendly smile on my face, a special visitor nametag, and a full cup of coffee, I wandered around a room filled

with folks chatting and laughing with one another. First, I worked a string of tables with easels, literature, and sign-up sheets. Since only two of the positions behind the easels were staffed, I spoke with one of them about what her easel was advocating. She quickly filled me in, and then without additional chatter, she turned back to the only other person behind the tables to continue their conversation.

At the beginning of the service, the board member making the announcements invited visitors and guests to meet with members of the church leadership after the service. With anticipation of a new beginning, I went to the designated place after the service and found the leaders engaged in conversation—among themselves. It became obvious that it was up to me, the visitor, to try to break up their chat clusters and introduce myself. I did just that, but found they were more interested in conducting church business with one another than in making an effort to welcome a visitor or potential new member.

The whole experience reminded me of the membership seminars held at UU University before General Assembly 2005. There, members of the Jefferson

Unitarian Church of Golden, CO, tried to teach us that every member of a congregation needs to be proactive in making visitors feel welcome. They also told us that church business should not be conducted during the Sunday morning experience.

Would I return to that church? Definitely not. But as I reflected later upon my own home congregation and that Sunday morning experience, I thought: We are a lot like them. I've been just as guilty as their leaders—many times! After that experience, I returned to my home congregation with great enthusiasm for improving our greeting of guests and visitors.

Being welcoming isn't hard. Look a visitor in the eye and tell them you're glad they've come. Help them find a seat and chat with them at coffee hour. Years later many UUs can still remember who greeted them on their first Sunday. It's a memory worth making, and if visitors take away one good memory they might overlook a cobweb in the bathroom or a glitch in the sound system. To ensure that your congregation is truly welcoming to visitors, share and discuss this article with others in your congregation.

Friendly Sunday morning "Greeters" are needed! Sign-up in the kitchen or contact Vickie Francil. Don't wait for Vickie to call you, go ahead & contact her or sign up in the kitchen! You know how wonderful it feels to be welcomed when you enter the Fellowship, so go ahead and plan to offer that warm welcome to others.

2008-2009

UUFGC Board of Directors

President	Susan Persons
President-Elect	John Hunger
Past-President	Bets Anderson
Secretary	Amanda Prather
Treasurer	Pete Olsen
Members at Large:	Fanny DeGesero Donald Lee Patrick McGuffey

Committees and Task Forces

Communications	Madeleine Baker
Landscape	Margaret Canavan
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



Our microfinance fund has made loans totaling \$1,550 available to recipients in developing countries, and we have donated \$70 to support the activities of Kiva. We will continue to make more loans as we receive donations or loans are repaid. All are welcome to help select loan recipients.

News & Coming Attractions

Member NUUs

Thinking of YoUU: Please keep in your prayers & thoughts: **Cheryl Henry, Rusty McGowan**, John and Bev Frannea's daughter **Andy Walker**, and all still struggling with the aftermath of Hurricane IKE.

Madeleine Baker has bought a house on Avenue R. Welcome back to the Island!

Letter from Jerry & Caecilia Fryrear:

Dear Fellowship members,

We have been thinking about you and hurricane Ike. We read your newsletter regularly and are relieved that all of you are well. We were sad to hear Madeleine's house was destroyed and that some of you had significant flooding and damage.

Our family situation has changed here in Washington. Caecilia's sister passed away recently (we have been helping with her care) and we have decided to return to Galveston and to our many friends at the UU. We have put our house on the market but the real estate market here is dead! When it picks up, look for us back down there.

UUcoming Events

Used Book Sale and Fellowship Workday: Put on your blue "Volunteer" t-shirt and come on down Saturday, January 10 at 9am to help out! **Bets Anderson** is keeping the book sale going thanks to many new bookcases lining the back wall of the sanctuary. **Margaret Canavan** will help you find a garden chore you will enjoy. The storage room needs arranging.

The children's RE area is under "renovation". Our recycling pile is growing. And more! Come to help, to supervise, or to appreciate.

Supper Circle: Judy Glaister & Richard Orange will be hosting the January Supper Circle—"A Chili Night" on Sunday, January 18th at 5:00 p.m. Richard will be making his famous Texan chili and Judy will her award winning wimpy chili. Please sign up on the bulletin board.

Spirituality of Poker: Poker will be Sunday evening, January 25, at **Stan Blazyk's**.

Announcements

Call for 2009 Supper Circle Hosts: Hosts are needed for Supper Circles for the coming year. Please sign up on the bulletin board and indicate if there is limit for your house. This is a wonderful way to enjoy delicious food and engage in interesting dialog with fellow UUs.

Other Events

"Conscious Acts of Grace" Workshop at Thoreau UU Congregation, Sunday January 4, 1-4 pm: Led by **Liza Ely**, author of **Conscious Acts of Grace - A Collection of End-of-Life Stories**, will explore: Listening, Support, Dignity, Faith, Letting Go, Forgiveness, and then some. The workshop will be following the 11:15 am Sunday worship service, at which Liza will offer a sermon on this topic. For further information and to sign-up for the workshop contact Joe Sullivan @ 281-342-8133 or je-sull96@aol.com, and find directions to

Thoreau at <http://www.tuuc.org>. Liza Ely, M.S., is a licensed professional counselor and contributor to *More Random Acts of Kindness*. Her book and her CD, *Breathe in Life*, provide positive alternatives when faced with a loss of a loved one. Liza shares tools for living our best life. She was for several years on the staff our Southwest UU District's Dwight Brown Leadership School. Learn more about Liza's work and read excerpts from her book on her website at <http://www.centerofwellbeing.com/>.

Galveston Dance Club: Classes will resume at UU in January. On Tuesday January 6 from 7-8pm they will offer new Salsa classes with Robert Barnes. Beginning Thursday January 8 from 7-9pm East Coast Swing classes will resume with Betty & Louis. Remember your first class is FREE when you visit GDC and after you join all classes are included, plus free practice parties & free CD music to practice by! Classes are free to members of the Galveston Dance Club, and members of UUFGC can enjoy a full year's membership for half-price of \$30 per person. GDC is continuing to grow-one dance at a time come join the fun! Call Betty at 281-337-0441 to pre register. See you then!

Reminders

- Please bring **clean plastic grocery bags** and small **plastic food containers with lids** for **Shirley Hollingsworth's** Saturday work to feed the homeless. Leave them in the box outside the Administrator office.
- Bring old (clean) socks and rags for **Judy Glaister** to use for cleaning on the *Elissa*.
- We can get reduced-price paper with your **used inkjet printer cartridges**.
- **Fair Trade Coffee and Tea** sales in our foyer benefit small coffee farmers & also our Social Action Committee.
- **For visitors & newcomers:** Our members receive the **UU World** magazine, & donate copies of past issues to share with you. Feel free to take copies from the display in the foyer.

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.



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 and politics. For information, contact Neil Huddleston at (409)744-2369.

Board of UUFGC meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 5:45 pm. Committee members are invited to send Committee reports or present them in person at the meeting. All are welcome to attend.

Book Club is on vacation right now. Please contact Fanny DeGesero if you have suggestions for next year's readings..

Bowlers meet first and third Wednesdays of each month to make and decorate bowls for the fall Jesse Tree fundraiser. All are welcome to participate, no experience necessary.

Comedy Defensive Driving: Joseph "Pokey" Simmons teaches his Comedy Defensive Driving class at UU, three Saturdays each month from 9-3. Cost is \$35. Contact Joseph at (409) 789-8451 to sign up.

Course in Miracles Study Group meets every Thursday at 7pm, and meets beforehand for dinner. Contact Laura Murrell for information (lauramurrell@att.net).

Dance Classes Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7pm: See page 3 for details. Questions, call Betty at 281-337-0441. See <http://www.galvestondanceclub.com>.

Gardeners meet monthly for indoor and outdoor work that is so important to keeping our Fellowship looking good & working properly. Work dates are on the calendar.

Program Committee meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6pm, location to be announced, to plan Sunday services. For information please contact Gerry Carr. Meetings are open to all.

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

Social Action Committee meets the first Sunday of each month after service and welcomes your ideas, energy and enthusiasm. Contact Mary Hodgson at 409-762-0193.

Spirit Circle Covenant Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 6pm. 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 Sundays at 4pm as an activity of the Zen Island Fellowship. To learn more about Zen Buddhist practice, contact Cara Geary (gcara@comcast.net) or visit galvestonzen.org.

Send newsletter information to administrator@uugalveston.org or phone 409-765-8330, or leave a note at the Fellowship.

Social Action Committee
Provocative Film Series
"WAR DANCE"
Friday, January 9 7 pm

Set in civil war-ravaged Northern Uganda, this Best Documentary nominee for the 2008 Oscars follows the lives of three youngsters who attend school in a refugee camp and find hope through a rich tradition of song and dance. Coming from a world in which children are abducted from their families and forced to fight in the rebel army, these kids give it their all when they travel to the capital city to take part in the prestigious Kampala Music Festival.

Please come, bring a friend and a snack to share

Martin Luther King Parade (date TBA). Will keep you posted. Let's have a good showing this year.

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.

JANUARY 2009

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

Activities are held at the Fellowship unless otherwise indicated



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>Happy January Birthdays to:</i></p> <p>Mardi Mitchell 1/2 Rusty McGowen 1/8</p>						
<p>4</p> <p>9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - M.Canavan, "Imperfection"; Children/ Youth Religious Education 12n - Social Action Cmte; 4pm - Zen Meditation 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>7</p> <p>5pm - UU Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7pm - Course in Miracles 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>9</p> <p>7pm - Provocative Film War Dance</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9am - noon Book Sale & Garden Workday 9am-3pm Comedy Defensive</p>
<p>11</p> <p>9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - G.Carr, "UU History"; Children/Youth Religious Education 4pm - Zen Meditation 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:45pm - Board Meets</p>	<p>13</p> <p>6pm - Spirit Circle 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>15</p> <p>6pm - Program Cmte 7pm - Course in Miracles 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>Newsletter Deadline</p>	
<p>18</p> <p>9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - B.Anderson, "Cherish the Dream"; Children/Youth RE 4pm - Zen Meditation 5pm - Supper Circle @ Glaister/ Orange 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>19</p> <p><i>Martin Luther King Holidays</i></p>	<p>20</p> <p>7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>21</p> <p>5pm - UU Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7pm - Course in Miracles 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9am-3pm Comedy Defensive Driving</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Potluck</p> <p>9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - John Pepper, "Easiest Thing in the World"; Children/Youth RE 4pm - Zen Meditation 8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6pm - Spirit Circle 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8pm - AA Phoenix Group</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7pm - Course in Miracles 7pm - Dance lessons</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>