

UUF Galveston Gazette

January 2010



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

President's Message

January 3

Alison Rutledge, "What's Belief Got to do With it? Creeds & Non-Credal Denominations"

Unitarian Universalism claims to be "non-credal," and draws members with that promise. If UUs have no creed, then what do we share? Are our principles roughly equivalent? And what exactly is a "covenant"? In this presentation, Alison will review credalism, non-credalism, what it might mean to "believe" something and yet NOT share beliefs with others in the fellowship. Alison has lived in Galveston and attended UU for almost ten years. She works at UTMB in research & loves parties.

Greeter: Madeleine Baker Board Member: Fanny DeGesero Music: Woody Dickson

January 10

Carla Wills-Brandon, "The Mystery and Meaning of Deathbed Visions"

We live in a seriously death-phobic society, and don't want to talk or think about it. Historically people died in the home, with family around the bed, talking, settling disputes, saying goodbye. When the dying had visions, it was accepted. Stories from many cultures and historical eras hint at reunions with a dead loved one, or a vision of an angel or religious figure just before death. Some survivors report a reassuring communication from someone who has died. Therapist and author Carla Wills -Brandon lives in Galveston.

Greeter: Vickie Francil Board Member: Patrick McGuffey Facilitator/Music: Margaret Canavan

January 17

Raymond Lewis, "Inside, out side; left side, right side: Progressions (perhaps) of my 'Island Mentality'"

Raymond is a longtime Galvestonian who has been active on many fronts, including boards and other volunteer work. As such, he states he has "attempted to be an impediment to collective foolishness wherever possible". He will speak to us about that role, why he has assumed it, and what it means to him. Ray is a recent UTMB retiree who chose social work and activism over a career in music and hopes to figure out what it is he wants to be when he grows up.

Greeter: Bets Anderson Board Member: Susan Persons Facilitator: Bets Anderson Music: Margaret Canavan

January 24

Tony DiNuzzo, "Fishing Lines: The Need for Open Conversation"

The scene is simple. Four legs and two fishing lines dangling off a pier. It always seems easier to make conversation when there's fishing involved. But can true feelings & the need to broach difficult topics be achieved during those moments when the goal may not be so much to catch a fish, but to cross a barrier? When do we decide it is time for that difficult conversation, that moment for reconciliation? Some never do & maybe regret it the rest of their lives. For those who do, it can be the ultimate freedom. This service will explore the power of freeing the spirit to have that conversation before it's too late - and catch some fish at the same time. Tony is a UTMB researcher, gifted musician, and member of the congregation.

Greeter: Martha Terrill Board Member: John Hunger Music: Tony DiNuzzo

January 31

POT LUCK AFTER THE SERVICE

Laura Emerson, "Passages and Transitions"

Gail Sheehy's book, Passages, describes predictable issues and transitions confronted by people in their 20's, 30's and subsequent decades of life. Do these transitions also apply to stages of involvement in a congregation? Are "church shoppers" analogous to the "Try-Out 20's"? Do church leaders have mid-life crises? If the analogies hold up, do they suggest ways we can support each other through both our life and membership transitions?

Greeter: Mary Hodgson Board Member: Cheryl Henry Facilitator: Cheryl Henry Music: Steve Hodgson

Dear UUFGC Colleagues,

As we begin the new year, taking stock of how we did in the past year is really good way to "count our blessings". And it turns out, our Fellowship has a lots to be thankful for. During our most recent board meeting, Mike Hennen talked about his visit to the December UU Net meeting (where representatives of the eight Houston area UU Churches meet to discuss matters of common interest and concern). Mike represents our Fellowship at UU Net.

Our Fellowship participates in UU Church radio broadcasts in the Houston area by paying our share of the costs. Maybe you've heard them on Houston public radio (88.7 FM). Mike also attended a recent meeting of area UU Presidents and Vice Presidents, where the group had a meal and conversation with our newly elected President Peter Morales during his visit to Houston. If you have a chance, ask Mike about his impressions of Rev. Morales.

Among other matters discussed among members at the UU Net meeting

Continued on Page 2

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.

were some of the problems and challenges facing several of our sister congregations in Houston, including budget woes, etc. Which brings me back to "counting our blessings"...

I am pleased to report that our membership has grown to 76 members. Our Social Action Committee is launching a "Stop using plastic bags" campaign and inviting community participation. Our "Empty Bowl" fundraiser has become a much anticipated annual event. Our church building is used by a variety of groups during the course of the week. Your Treasurer Pete Olsen reports we are on budget for both our fundraising (income) and expenses!

We are a robust and thriving lay led Fellowship that is growing. Every one of you that participates in our community deserves a lot of credit for making that happen! Please take a moment over the new year to reflect on how blessed we are and think of ways we can continue on this path. And share those thoughts and ideas with your board members.

All the Season's Best to You and Yours,

John



Spotlight: How Does our Congregation "Work"?

UUFGC is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a religious organization that combines two traditions: the Universalists, who organized in 1793, and the Unitarians, who organized in 1825. They consolidated into the UUA in 1961. Our membership in the Association provides services that we cannot provide for ourselves. Examples of this are presence in national and international public policy and social action arenas, and publications such as the **UU World** magazine which is mailed to all members. We help to govern the UUA by sending delegates to the annual Delegate Assembly which is held in various locations around the country. You can read about UUA at <http://www.uua.org/aboutus/index.shtml>.

Like all of the 1,041 member congregations in the United States, Canada, and overseas UUFGC is democratic in operation; we govern ourselves. We are a "lay led" congregation, because we do not have a hired minister. Our governing body is our Board of Directors. We have no hired staff so all activities of the Fellowship are carried out by volunteers. At present the Administrative Team and a few other hardy volunteers carry out the day-to-day operations necessary for our happy functioning.

Each spring we hold a congregational

meeting. This is when we elect Board members for the year beginning July 1, set our annual operating budget, approve any proposed by-laws changes, and generally discuss Fellowship issues. All members are encouraged to attend and vote at this meeting, but may have a proxy vote for them if unable to attend. Special congregational meetings may be called if an important issue arises during the year which is beyond the scope of the Board. Our By-laws are on the UUFGC website, and are also included in the Membership Directory provided yearly to each member.

Our Board consists of seven members, President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and three at-large members. They meet monthly to discuss issues needing attention and make appropriate decisions. Members are welcome to attend these meetings and may request that items be placed on the agenda for discussion. A Board member also participates in meetings of the UU Network (see President John Hunger's column).

Standing committees report to the Board on their ongoing progress, needs, and wishes. In coming newsletters we hope to have information about those various committees and what they do. Of course your volunteerism is welcome!

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.*

--adopted 12/05

News & Coming Attractions

Member NUUs

Congratulations: We are so proud of **Amber Zainfeld** and **Andrea Hodgson**, both of whom have just graduated with high honors from their respective universities!

Healing Thoughts Needed: **Mary Beth Romeo**, a past long-time member, is experiencing health challenges. She would enjoy emails and cards. 5903 Babcock #1203, San Antonio 78240. Let's keep her in our thoughts and prayers.

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

Upcoming Events

Start the New Year with a Group of Discerning and Curious UUs: The Sunday Adult Forum will meet on January 3 at 9am in the RE Room to discuss the focus of our next discussion. Please join us. Everyone is welcome! If you have any questions or suggestions, contact Madeleine Baker madeleine-baker@att.net or Bets Anderson betsanderson@sbcglobal.net.

Introduction to Zen: This workshop on Sunday, January 3, from 2-5pm will include an overview of Zen practice, specific instructions on the main practices of Zen meditation, and a question and dialog period. A \$10-20 donation is suggested (not required.) For details contact Cara Geary. See page 4 for more information.

Provocative Film: There will be no provocative film in January.

January Supper Circle: **Alan Griffin** will host the Supper Circle on Thursday, January 7 at 6pm. Theme will be "Watching the Texas-Alabama National Championship Game". Alan will provide a meat dish. Sign up soon as it is limited to nine attendees!

Used Book Sale: There will be a book sale at the fellowship on January 9 from 9am till 2pm.

Book Club: The book club will meet on Wednesday January 13 at 7pm in

the living room. The book to be discussed will be **The Bluest Eye** by Toni Morrison.

"Spirituality of Poker" and Game Night: Poker on Sunday January 17, 6:30pm at **Alan Griffin's**. Other games TBA. If you'd like to host, let us know!

Creativity Workshop: Our recent speaker Mylène Dressler, author of **The Deadwood Beetle**, **The Medusa Tree**, and **The Floodmakers** will be presenting the sermon, "What is the Creative Spirit?" on February 21 for our Sunday service. That afternoon from 1-3pm she will conduct **Moving the Spirit: A Creativity Workshop** at the Fellowship. There will be no charge for UU members; non-members will be asked to give a \$10 donation. For more information, please contact Cheryl Henry.

Microfinance at UUFGC: Our microfinance "revolving" fund added five loans this month! We have used our donation fund of a few hundred dollars to make 95 loans, totaling \$3050, to recipients in developing countries, and we have donated \$170 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 314 members. Take a look at our microfinance portfolio and history at <http://www.kiva.org/lender/unitarianuniversalist3384>.



Around UU

Dance Classes: Classes will resume after January 7.

News from UUA: In partnership with the Estate of Martin Luther King, Jr., Beacon Press is compiling Dr. King's writings and printing new editions of

previously published King titles. Two new Beacon books, **Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story** and **Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?** are now available.

The 2010 edition of the UUA Directory is different than in past years. This year the Directory is only available online, as a PDF document that you can download for free from UUA.org. You may view, search, and print the directory as needed for your congregation.

The Ministry and Professional Leadership staff group announces the introduction of the Addictions Ministry, to help those with addictions, their families, and their communities along the path to recovery.

Thank you from the Social Action Committee: Thanks to those who participated in the Salvation Army's angels program. It was a huge success. We had 25 angels and all of them were taken. The Salvation Army is very appreciative. For those who were curious as to why they did not want the gifts wrapped, Belinda, who is in charge of the program says that the mothers want to see what their children are getting for Christmas. She further said that the gifts are sent out the way they come in. They are put in a black bag and taken to the family. If the gifts come to them wrapped, they are sent out that way.

from Mary Hodgson, Chairman.

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 second 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.

Used Book Sale monthly on second Saturday, 9am. Come help out! Donate your used books!

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.

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>.

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 at 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.



AN INTRODUCTION TO ZEN

BY THE ZEN ISLAND FELLOWSHIP

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

2:00PM - 5:00 PM

unitarian universalist Fellowship

An open heart, clear mind and a strong center are the primary elements of a balanced compassionate life. This is true within any faith. Meditation can be a path towards finding your true self and expressing compassion in your life. Please join us for this afternoon Introduction to Zen Meditation. Come start off 2010 and learn the basics of Zen practice with the Zen Island Fellowship. Zen meditation is compatible with any belief system and can enrich one's relationship with life. This introduction will involve an overview of Zen practice, specific instructions on the main practices of Zen meditation, and a question and dialog period. Please visit our website: <http://www.galvestonzen.org>.

Our guiding teacher, Zen Master Dae Gak is the founder of the Furnace Mountain retreat Center in Eastern Kentucky (<http://www.furnacemountain.org>). He comes to lead retreats with our group 3 times a year - his next visit will be in March.

Pre-registration would be appreciated. A donation of \$10-\$20 for the church is appreciated (at the door) but is not required. For details or to register contact Cara Geary at gcar@comcast.com or 409-935-5116. Please provide your name, contact phone number and email.

JANUARY 2010

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

Activities are held at the Fellowship unless otherwise indicated



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Happy Birthday to: <i>Mardi Mitchell 1/2</i> <i>Kat Edwards 1/31</i>					1	2
3 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - A.Rutledge, "What's Belief Got to do with It?"; Children/Youth RE 12n - Social Action Cmte; 2-5pm - Introduction to Zen 8pm - AA Phoenix Group	4 11am - Course in Miracles 5:30pm - Zen Meditation	5	6 5pm - Bowlers 6pm - Program Cmte @ Mosquito 8pm - AA	7 5:15pm - Zen Meditation 6pm - Supper Circle at Griffin's	8	9 9am - Book Sale 9am- Defensive Driving
10 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Carla Wills-Brandon, "Deathbed Visions"; Children/Youth Religious Education 8pm - AA Phoenix Group	11 11am - Course in Miracles 5:15pm - UU Board 5:30pm - Zen Meditation	12 6:15pm - Spirit Circle 7pm - Dance lessons	13 5pm - Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group	14 5:15pm - Zen Meditation 7pm - Dance lessons	15	16 9am- Defensive Driving
17 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Raymond Lewis, "Island Mentality"; Children/Youth Religious Education 6:30pm - Poker at Griffin's 8pm - AA Phoenix Group	18 11am - Course in Miracles 5:30pm - Zen Meditation	19 7pm - Dance lessons	20 5pm - Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group	21 5:15pm - Zen Meditation 7pm - Dance lessons	22 Newsletter Deadline	23 9am- Defensive Driving
24 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - T.DiNuzzo, "Fishing Lines"; Children/Youth Religious Education 8pm - AA Phoenix Group	25 11am - Course in Miracles 5:30pm - Zen Meditation	26 6:15pm - Spirit Circle 7pm - Dance lessons	27 5pm - Bowlers 8pm - AA Phoenix Group	28 5:15pm - Zen Meditation 7pm - Dance lessons	29	30 9am- Defensive Driving
31 Potluck 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Laura Emerson, "Passages & Transitions"; Children/Youth Religious Education 8pm - AA Phoenix Group						