

UUF Galveston Gazette



September 2007

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

502 Church Street, Galveston, Texas 77550-5502

(409)765-8330

Online at <http://www.uugalveston.org>

A Month of Sundays

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

President's Message— Laura Murrell

September 2

"Water Ceremony"

"Coming home like rivers to the sea...Join us as we celebrate the beginning of the church year. As we return from summer, we share water as a symbol of our connectedness. Please bring a small amount of water (authentic or symbolic) and share a story from your travels."

Greeter: Stephanie Nwadié
Facilitator: Amanda Prather/Gerry Carr

Board Member: Laura Murrell
Music: Margaret Canavan

September 9

Ruth Seeliger, "Who Are You?"

Explore this issue based on the I AM statements in the Gospel of John, the Gospel of Thomas and other sources, and Ruth's own experience. Mrs. Seeliger is an ordained minister and a student of myriad religious backgrounds. She is a hands-on healer and a Reiki Master. Ruth is Administrator for the Foundation for Contemporary Theology, founded by her late husband, Wes Seeliger.

Greeter: Fanny DeGesero
Facilitator: Gerry Carr

Board Member: Pete Olsen
Music: Stephen Hodgson

September 16

Tony DiNuzzo, "Understanding Homelessness"

Homelessness is the condition and societal category of people who lack fixed housing, usually because they cannot afford a regular, safe, and adequate shelter. This service will provide experiences and perspectives on homelessness. It will NOT provide concrete solutions, unless you consider deep, sincere displays of love (not pity) to those who make a home in our doorways and alleys to be a possible "solution". Tony has been a member of UUFGC for over 10 years and is a past President of the Board. He has 2 wonderful teenagers who grew up in UUFGC.

Greeter: Vickie Francil
Facilitator: Pete Olsen

Board Member: Gerry Carr
Music: Margaret Canavan

September 23

Laura Murrell & Friends, "Meeting of Minds & Souls: UU General Assembly"

Several of our members made the trek to Portland, Oregon in June for the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association. They will share with us what they learned and what enriched and inspired them.

Board Member: Doris Lee

Greeter: Amber Booth

Music: Stephen Hodgson

September 30 POT LUCK AFTER THE SERVICE

Dr. Ahmed Ahmed, "Hajj Pilgrimage"

Last December, along with his wife, a dozen Galvestonians and more than three million Muslims from around the world, Dr. Ahmed visited Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Their journey is documented by photographs of every ritual and sacred site. Dr. Ahmed is a Professor at the University of Texas Medical Branch, and member of Galveston Islamic Center.

Greeter: Mitch Philpot
Facilitator: Stan Blazyk

Board Member: Amanda Prather
Music: Margaret Canavan

"Things are happening. For starters, look at Amanda Prather's report on the Dwight Brown Leadership Experience that Gerry Carr, Amanda and I attended in July. It was fabulous and tiring, but we brought a lot back with us.

A first follow up was a very lively discussion on what the congregation feels we do well and what we need to improve on during the July potluck. This will be continued during the August potluck. Gerry is starting a Spirit Circle covenant group.

The Adult Forum recently watched "The Great Turning," which was the subject of numerous break-out sessions at the UUA General Assembly. This video will be shown as a part of the Provocative Film Series in September with the idea of organizing broader community activities based on the concept. "The Great Turning" contends that the world has to change from an "Empire" approach to one of "Earth Community" that is more bottom up and inclusive to prevent problems, such as global warming, from destroying everything. The book and movement also contends that such change is possible, and that the process is already underway. I know this sounds implausible at first blush, but I am reading the book, and even as conservative as I may seem in the UU context, I am beginning to believe that this is very important to learn more about.

So keep tuned, and come to the September Provocative Film presentation. The board will focus on our finances during the September 12 board meeting. A positive financial note is that the Service Auction task force already has some amazing services lined up (with more to come), that you will want to bid on or sign up for at the Service Auction on Sept. 28. It will be a fun evening followed by more fun when you enjoy the services that you bid on and won."

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.

Leadership Experience

From July 15-20, Laura Murrell, Gerry Carr, and I (Amanda Prather) attended the Dwight Brown Leadership Experience. The "experience" part of the title isn't hype; this was the most rigorous, condensed, and meaningful training I have ever attended.

Prior to the trip, we were instructed to complete over 25 "homework" assignments that required deep reflection, research, and even travel. The schedule kept us busy from 7:30am till 11:30pm with fewer than 3 total hours of free-time (read, not much "me-time") in-between.

The hectic schedule was necessary, though, in order to accommodate the many sessions addressing issues of Congregational Health and Vitality, Organizational Development, Leadership, and Faith Development.

In these sessions we learned much about our shared faith: its history, current challenges, and its ability--even without a creed--to offer excellence in worship and in ministry.

Different groupings allowed us to get to know almost all of the 50 participants from around the Southwest UUA District; we planned and executed a worship service with one group, role-played, evaluated case studies, and planned parties with another, and met to share the most personal parts of the experience in a third group Credo (a working model of Covenant Groups). Through study and reflection, and through discussion, we also learned much about ourselves.

We look forward to sending a new group next summer. Until then, we hope that

we can unfold this new toolbelt together, sharing its contents with the congregation and board. The construction projects may be finished, but the work of building and maintaining our strong, beautiful fellowship is blessedly never-ending.

Amanda J. Prather.

Adult Forum

For the next few weeks, the Adult Forum group will be doing a comparative religion study and discussion. Participants have chosen one of the world's religions to study, and a list of domains (i.e. concept of god, holy book, holy places, values, rituals, afterlife, etc.) will be used to compare the various religions.

Following the conclusion of this process, we have agreed to read David Korten's book, The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community.

This book addresses the central issues of our day; climate change, poverty, the environment, peace, water, hunger, social justice, conservation, human rights and more. These concepts were presented in several exciting forums and sessions at General Assembly this June in Portland, Oregon, and offer us a way to learn and focus our local efforts.

Books have not yet been ordered. Interested persons can contact Laura Murrell. Further information can be found at www.thegreatturning.net.

UU Choir

We're reinventing the Choir! We ask that singers or singer wanna-be's gather at the piano on Sunday at 10am to rehearse the hymns for the day. Many in the Fellowship have said this helps them with their own singing. Ability to read mu-

sic is not a requirement!

Program Committee:

We would like to hear from folks about your service ideas, what you like and don't like, want and don't want, and your feedback on recent services. Send them to Gerry Carr. We're planning a Facilitator workshop for the morning of October 27, for both seasoned and new facilitator. Details later. Save the date on your calendar.

Local Farmer's Markets

The Galveston Farmer's market is held the 2nd Saturday of each month at Sangerfest Park starting at 8:00 a.m.

The Mainland Farmer's Market is held the 1st Saturday of every month at the Mall of the Mainland in Texas City. It is open 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Buying locally and encouraging our grocers to buy locally is better for all of us in many different ways. Check with Madeleine Baker if you have questions.

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.

Reminders

- Friendly Sunday morning "Greeters" are needed—Sign-up in the kitchen or contact **Vickie Francil**
- Please bring **clean plastic grocery bags** for **Shirley Hollingsworth's** Saturday work to feed the homeless. Leave them in the small room behind the kitchen.
- We can get free paper with your **used printer cartridges**.
- **Fair Trade Coffee** sales benefit the small coffee farmers and our Social Action Committee.



Our microfinance fund has made \$350 in loans to six people in developing countries. You can view our online portfolio at <http://www.kiva.org/lender/unitarianuniversali3384>.

News & Coming Attractions

Member NUUws

Eighteen folks joined **Allison Rutledge** and her brother, **Jon**, for the August Supper Circle. A good time was had by all with tasty "hors d'oeuvres" potent sangrias, beautiful green salads, and two mighty pasta casseroles, followed by French Silk ice cream. Conversation was lively in three or four groups at a time.

Jeanette Winfree, friend and long-time member, passed away Monday evening after a long illness. Her family will hold a funeral and burial in the family cemetery in Orange on Saturday. A memorial service will be held here at the Fellowship on Friday evening, August 31 at 7pm. Our sincere condolences go to Madeleine Baker and all in Jeanette's family

UUpcoming Events

Spirit Circle
3rd Tuesday 7-8:30 pm
Contact Gerry Carr at 765-6380 or
gcarr@tlc-galveston.org

Spirit Circle is a small group of 8-10 people which offers an opportunity to explore our beliefs and practice deep listening and right relations in order to deepen our connections to each other and our UUFaith.

September Supper Circle: Will be hosted by Amanda and Derek Prather on Saturday, September 22nd 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at their home in League City. Please sign up on the bulletin board for directions and car-pooling. They have 4 indoor cats so if you allergic to cats, you

need to be aware. Amanda and Derek's theme is **Breakfast for Supper** and they are going to prepare a variety of baked egg dishes. Please join Amanda and Derek for a fun evening.

Book Club: This month the book club will be discussing *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai.

Game/Poker Night: Poker at Tony Di-Nuzzos' (1419 Ball). Other games at Madeleine Baker's (1619 BayouShore Dr.). Bring snacks and drink.

For visitors and newcomers: Our members receive the *UU World* magazine, and have donated copies of past issues to share with you. Feel free to take copies from the display in the RE hallway.

Gardening Update: Our summer rains have created a wonderland in our back garden! Morning gardeners helping to trim back the excess growth included Susan Persons, Cheryl & Red Henry, Bev Frannea, Margaret Canavan, and our friend Sally Chapman. Evening workers included Susan Persons, Bev Frannea, Carlos & Linda Price, Stan Blazyk & Margaret Canavan. We're working on a plan to reduce the Bermuda grass that is taking over the play area. We're tired of grubbing it out; we turned Pete Olsen loose with Round-Up but it did no good; the grass laughed at our application of vinegar. Next plan is LOTS of layers of newspaper, covered with a thick layer of weed-free mulch. Anyone with a better idea, please let us know. Next evening work party will be Friday September 14 at 6pm, followed by pizza and beverages. A morning workday will be announced when we get inspired.

Service Live Auction Coming September 28

Much work is going on behind the scenes to create a fun activity that raises money for our fellowship.

See Fannie DeGesero, Marilyn Schultz, Mardi Mitchell, Cheryl Sanders Henry or Susan Persons if you have any questions.

BUT We still need your help.

Committee members are busy contacting folks to answer questions about the event and get the word out. The auction catalogue is coming together and we have a draft for you to view. Check the easel in the hallway at the fellowship.

So far we have parties for Halloween, the Kentucky Derby, and Super Bowl; a margarita party, a fabulous home in the hill country for a long weekend, polymer clay class, kids' art class, handyman services, dog obedience, counseling sessions, architectural services, and unique personalized art, to just mention a few.

Now we need you to get the word out to your neighbors and friends to help us make this first event a great success. Items can always be split with a friend or friends.

Thanks so much to those of you who have already contributed as well as volunteered. The treasure of this fellowship is its large hearted, hard working members and friends.

Service Auction
Friday, September 28
7-9 pm
Come!

**Bring your friends
and checkbook!**





“UU Bowlers” meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm, to create ceramic bowls for the annual Jesse Tree “Empty Bowls” fundraiser. No experience is necessary. Questions, contact Madeleine Baker (madbaker@houston.rr.com).

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

Spirit Circle meets 3rd Tuesday of each month 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Social Action Committee meets the 3rd Sunday of each month after service. Come and share your ideas, energy and enthusiasm for Social Action projects. Contact Mary Hodgson at 409-762-0193. Our *Equal Exchange* fair trade coffee and tea sales benefit the activities of this committee.

Program Committee meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 6:15 pm at the Mosquito Café to plan Sunday services. Please come to help plan Sunday service. Contact Bets Anderson, Margaret Canavan, Gerry Carr, or Katrina Chamberlain.

Book Clubs meet the 4th Sunday and 4th Wednesday of each month. Contact Fanny DeGesero for information at (409) 740-2355.

Adult Forum meets Sundays at 9:00 am to explore topics in religion, philosophy, history and politics. For information, contact Neil Huddleston at 409/744-2369.

Course in Miracles Study Group meets every Thursday at 7pm. Contact Laura Murrell (LauraMurrell@houston.rr.com) or Susan Persons (SPersons@houston.rr.com).

Gardeners meet monthly to weed and maintain our native foliage and flower beds. See the calendar for this month’s workday. For more information contact Margaret Canavan at (409) 771-6252.

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

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

Zen Meditation meets Saturdays at 9am, and is an activity of the Zen Island Fellowship. All are welcome to participate. If you wish to learn more about Zen Buddhist practice, contact Cara Geary (gcara@houston.rr.com) or visit galvestonzen.org.

UUFGC Board of Directors

President	Laura Murrell
President-Elect	Karen Brykczynski
Past-President	Gerry Carr
Secretary	Amanda Prather
Treasurer	Woody Dickson
Members at Large:	Doris Lee
	Pete Olsen
	Susan Persons

Committees

Administrative Team	B. Anderson, M. Baker, M. Canavan, & J. Glaister, & C. Henry
Archives	Ellie Porter
Communications	Madeleine Baker
Landscape	Margaret Canavan
Membership	Bets Anderson
Music	Woody Dickson
Policies & Procedures	Tony DiNuzzo
Program/Worship	Gerry Carr
Religious Education	Neil Huddleston
Supper Circles	Judy Glaister
Social Action	Mary Hodgson
Webmaster	Amber Booth

Social Action Committee News:

PROVOCATIVE FILM SERIES
"The Great Turning"

Friday, September 7, at 7:00pm

The planet is rapidly confronting us with limits to the exploitative, dominator system of the past 5000 years. David Korten implores us to replace the old dominator control stories with new stories affirming life values of cooperation, community and interdependence.

Facilitator Dr. Alan Griffin will lead us in discussing the film

Open to all - come and bring your friends

We hope this will be the start of real community dialog and action.

FREE TO ALL - SNACKS PROVIDED [DONATIONS ACCEPTED]

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.

SEPTEMBER 2007

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston County

Activities are held at the Fellowship unless otherwise indicated

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat										
						<p>1 9am - Zen Meditation</p>										
<p>2 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - "Water Ceremony"; Children/Youth Religious Education</p>	<p>3 Weekly Bulletin Info Due</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 5:30pm - Bowlers</p>	<p>6 7pm - Course in Miracles</p>	<p>7 7pm—Provocative Film, The Great Turning</p>	<p>8 9am - Zen Meditation</p>										
<p>9 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - Ruth Seeliger "Who Are You?"; Children/Youth Religious Education</p>	<p>10 Weekly Bulletin Info Due</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 5:45pm - UUFGC Board Meets</p>	<p>13 7pm - Course in Miracles</p>	<p>14 6pm--garden work party</p>	<p>15 9am - Zen Meditation</p>										
<p>16 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - T.DiNuzzo, "Homelessness"; Children/Youth RE Social Action Committee 6:30pm Game Night at DiNuzzo's/M. Baker's</p>	<p>17 Weekly Bulletin Info Due</p>	<p>18 7pm - Spirit Circle</p>	<p>19 5:30pm - Bowlers</p>	<p>20 7pm - Course in Miracles</p>	<p>21 Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p>22 9am - Zen Meditation 6pm - supper circle at Amanda Prather's</p>										
<p>23 9am - Adult Forum 10:30 am - "UU General Assembly"; Children/Youth Religious Education</p>	<p>24 Weekly Bulletin Info Due</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 7pm - Book Club</p>	<p>27 6:15pm - Program Cmte @ Mosquito 7pm - Course in Miracles</p>	<p>28 7pm - Service Auction!</p>	<p>29 9am - Zen Meditation</p>										
<p>30 9am - Adult Forum 10:30am - A.Ahmed, "Hajj Pilgrimage:Children/Youth RE Book Club</p>	<p><i>Happy September Birthday to:</i></p> <table> <tr> <td>Kat Joel-Reich</td> <td>9/1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Billie Rinaldi</td> <td>9/16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doris Lee</td> <td>9/23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don Stubbs</td> <td>9/26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Steve Reubens</td> <td>9/30</td> </tr> </table>						Kat Joel-Reich	9/1	Billie Rinaldi	9/16	Doris Lee	9/23	Don Stubbs	9/26	Steve Reubens	9/30
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