

# Universalist Anchor



November 2005

## A New Look at the Old Testament

Beginning Wednesday, November 9, and for five additional weeks, we will host a Study of the Old Testament from an entirely new perspective. It will explore the way materials were gathered, edited and finally put into its present form. It will deal with the use of history as a medium for revelation and the understanding of the prophets in the context of Israel's need for a sense of community. The course will examine the psalms and the wisdom literature and establish their place in the Covenant given by God.

The course will begin at 7:00 p.m. and run until 8:15 p.m. with a time for questions and interaction. The course is designed for those with a limited knowledge of the Old Testament as well as for those who are advanced. There will also be some refreshments at the end of each session.

Our Pastor will be teaching the course, which will end in December. Plan to be with us.

## A GALA GATHERING

On Sunday, November 20th, after the 11:00 a.m. Morning Service, we will have a Gala Gathering to celebrate our past and look forward to our future. We will have a great catered meal and special entertainment to assist us with our connecting to both pieces of our rich history/dreams.

There will not be a charge for this experience, but we do need to know how many you will be bringing with you. Either call the office or send us an e-mail. We want it to be a highlight for us, so bring family/friends and come prepared to rejoice with "all the saints." It is also Thanksgiving Sunday. What a splendid way to honor the Day, giving thanks to God for all that God has done for us and will continue to do for us.

## November Worship & Activity Schedule at UNMC

### Wednesday, Nov. 2

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Faith and Fairness event at First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ at 9th and G NW. It will focus on the issues that arise at the intersection of religion and GLBT rights. UNMC is a co-sponsor of this event. See Third Wed Theology Discussion on page 2.

**Nov. 3-6** Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship Revival 2005 conference, Fort Worth, TX. Brochures on the information table.

### Saturday, Nov. 5

10:30 a.m. There will be a memorial service for Miriam Browne, at the church. She was a very active member whose membership goes back to 1925.

### Sunday, Nov. 6

11 a.m. Worship: Coming Home "The Long and Winding Road" Jim Morgan, preaching.

### Monday, Nov. 7

7:00 p.m. Board of Trustees Meeting

### Wednesday, Nov. 9

7:00 p.m. Bible Study: "Understanding the Old Testament – A New Look" Jim Morgan will be teaching. The class will run for 6 Wednesdays.

### Thursday, Nov. 10

UNMC 7:30 Rev. Jim Adams, President of The Center for Progressive Christianity, speaks at UNMC and signs his new book, *From Literal to Literary: The Essential Reference Book for Biblical Metaphors*.

### Saturday afternoon, Nov. 12

Leland Place dinners. See article on page 4.

## Beacon House and SOME

Two charitable organizations long associated with our church are raising money through the United Way/Combined Federal Campaign -- Beacon House and SOME (So Others Might Eat).

SOME is an interfaith organization that feeds more than 900 people daily. For the past decade, our church has cooked monthly dinners for residents of a SOME facility, Leland Place, a halfway house for men recovering from homelessness and addiction. Its charity code is 8189. Learn more about it at [www.some.org](http://www.some.org).

Beacon House, supported by Unitarian Universalist congregations in the D.C. area, provides after-school tutoring, mentoring and cultural and recreational programs for low-income, at-risk youth in Ward 5 of Northeast Washington. Many years, our church has either collected school supplies or Christmas gifts for Beacon House youth. Its charity code is 7529. Learn more about it at [www.beaconhousedc.org](http://www.beaconhousedc.org).

## David Fox Named Head Verger

In recognition of the broad nature of his long-standing service to Universalist National Memorial, David Fox, formerly Head Usher, has a new title -- Head Verger.

One definition of verger, found in the American Heritage Dictionary, defines the position as "one who takes care of the interior of a church and acts as an attendant during ceremonies."

David has indeed been taking care of the church -- and us -- for many years.

Incidentally, the title of verger is not a new one for our community. It has been used in the past to recognize sustained exemplary service. Our last verger was Russell Chapman.

--Dave Skidmore, Head Deacon

## Third Wed Theology Discussion

Seven persons were in attendance for our 3rd. Wed. series on Oct. 19 to hear Sharon Groves from the Human Rights Campaign talk about the important work being done on Gay Lesbian Bi-Sexual and Trans-gender rights in the churches and countering the message from the Christian Right and other anti-gay faith groups. It was agreed that liberal faith groups need to come out with our message of full support and acceptance of all persons in our congregations. It was agreed by LGBT persons that UMNC was a strong welcoming congregation and that this was a strength that we should build upon. Participants discussed sexuality as a gift from God with most persons agreeing that sexual orientation is often determined biologically and should be seen as "given by God." We were thus challenged not just to accept another persons sexuality but to consider laws that prevent love relationships between two persons as wrong and contrary to God's plan. Following from this reasoning we should oppose those that try to make laws to prevent love relationships among GLBT persons. So UMNC has decided to co-sponsor the upcoming "Faith and Fairness Town Hall" event on Nov. 6. (See Activity Schedule, page 1.) We will have more opportunities to work with HRC in the future in their work with faith communities. Our next discussion will be one of the bible study series taught by Rev. Morgan. We will resume our Third Wed discussion in Dec.

### Parish Notes

Jim Estes elatedly reports that he has been granted Candidate status by the appropriate subcommittee of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee for the UUA. The committee has reviewed his educational and professional program to date, approved his progress, and is allowing him to move forward in the process that leads eventually to ordained ministry in fellowship with the UUA. Jim is pursuing a graduate theological degree at Wesley Theological Seminary and will also need to complete an internship and clinical pastoral education, but this is an important milestone! For those who want to follow his progress, Jim maintains a blog at [http://www.peregrinato.com\[1\]](http://www.peregrinato.com[1]).

## From the Pastor's Desk

Usually things go well in Churches until someone mentions money. Then all kinds of responses occur. That is a major reason why I have always been reluctant to discuss or explore this "electric" topic. Yet in a very real sense the Church is engaged in and pursues a program which resembles in every respect a commercial enterprise. It has a building to maintain, property for which to account for, a staff, which includes musicians, to compensate and a mission program to generate for the poor and broken of the world. It's tough to do any one of those tasks without funds.

Someone has said there are three kinds of givers: the flint, the sponge and the honeycomb. To get the flint to give you must hammer it and then you get only chips and sparks. To get something from the sponge you must squeeze it. The more you squeeze the more you get. Then there is the honeycomb that just overflows with its own sweetness. How wonderful it would be if there were many among us who were honeycombs, who just delight in giving to God's work without being asked. There would not be a need to hammer or squeeze.

We will be having a gala gathering on Sunday, November 20th after our morning worship to think about some of the issues involved. We will have a meal, some entertainment and do some celebrating about our rich and extensive past. Plan now to join us and to rejoice over what God has done.

Jim

### Chancel Flowers for November

Mary Simmons, Chair

November 6 : Flowers are given in memory of Hope's grandmothers, Mabel E. Fogwell and Marion B. Carter by Esther and Hope Fogwell.

November 13: Flowers are given in memory of Sunny Ambursen and Kay Cronister by Mary Simmons.

November 20: Flowers are given in memory of Dr. and Mrs. Clarence Weaver.

November 27: Open

## Special Presentation: Troublesome Words in the Bible

Come and hear Jim Adams, founder and president of The Center for Progressive Christianity, decode the myths and meanings of troublesome words in the Bible. Adams will be discussing his newest book, *From Literal to Literary – The Essential Reference Book for Biblical Metaphors*, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 10, at UNMC. Adams, who is also the author of *So You Think You Can't Stand Evangelism*, which the UNMC Welcome & Membership Committee has found very useful, is the former pastor of St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill. For more information, contact the office at 202-387-3411.

If you are planning to attend this special event, please consider volunteering to help set up chairs, provide refreshments, or assist with book sales, and contact Sue if you can do that.

If you can't make the Thursday presentation, Adams will be speaking at several other locations in the Washington area that week. For details, visit the <http://www.tpc.org> web site.

## November Worship & Activity Schedule at UNMC, continued from page 1

### Sunday, Nov. 13

11 a.m. Worship: Coming Home - "Home, At Last" Jim Morgan, preaching  
Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting, following the service.

### Wednesday, Nov. 16

7:00 p.m. Bible Study: "Understanding the Old Testament – A New Look"

### Sunday, Nov. 20

11 a.m. Worship: Stewardship Sunday "The Deceitfulness of Riches" Jim Morgan, preaching  
After worship, a Gala Gathering, with food, entertainment, and fun.

### Sunday, Nov. 27

11 a.m. Worship: The First Sunday in Advent "A Voice in The Wilderness", Jim Morgan, preaching

## Are You A Connector?

You may have seen the signs in the church asking that very question. We hope your instinctive answer was, "Yes!" even if you didn't quite know what the signs were getting at.

As Jim reminded us recently, "connecting" with other people, and to God, is what life is all about. All of us should strive to be "connectors" -- connecting the people in search of a church home with our congregation.

As part of the new push, we'll be renewing our effort to offer visitors a warm welcome at the door, with "greeters" handing them an Order of Worship and inviting them to sign our guest book with contact information. "Connectors," waiting in the back of the sanctuary, will escort visitors to an open pew and, after the service, will re-connect to invite the visitors to our hospitality hour. After the service, greeters and connectors will follow up by sending a friendly note to visitors. Anyone interested in participating should contact Welcome and Membership Chair Perry King or the office at 202-387-3411.

## Community Event Success

After many days of rain, the sun shined brightly on our fall community event on Sunday, October 16, as members, friends, and neighbors gathered on the lawn to enjoy refreshments and "adopt" the dozens of plants provided by members and, in a very generous donation, by Garden District, a neighborhood business at 14th and S Streets. Up on the third floor, a book sale helped make room on the church's shelves and netted some \$700. Many neighbors took advantage of the church and tower tours, some seeing the interior of the church for the first time, although they'd lived nearby for years. One neighbor said, "I love the church - it is one of the friendliest I have ever encountered. And of course having the church as a neighbor is terrific."

Many thanks to all those who donated plants, helped with refreshments and publicity, and worked on the book sale, tours, setup, or cleanup, including Liz Crawford, Jim Estes, Lisa Harris, Perry King, Jim Morgan, Sue Mosher, Bob Myers, Mary O'Connell, Greg Wigle, and a special thanks to Donna Simonton.

## Make Your Dinner Reservation At Leland Place

Our Leland Place dinners are cooking along nicely - so to speak. After something of a lapse, we've revived our decade-long ministry to Leland, a halfway house for men recovering from addictions and homelessness. It is part of S.O.M.E (So Others Might Eat).

At our first dinner, on October 1, seven Leland residents ate heartily (as did the volunteers!). The menu: Midwestern meatloaf, Asian string beans, mashed potatoes a la Bill Baker (10 lbs. of them!), salad, iced tea, Italian bread and, for dessert, ice cream, pound cake and strawberries.

The second dinner, on October 15, was attended by six appreciative Leland men. We dined on Monterey chicken, served over egg noodles. That's a colorful chicken fricassee that includes onions, carrots, garlic, yellow and zucchini squash, red peppers, orange juice and crushed tomatoes. It went down nicely with salad, crusty Italian bread, iced tea and ice cream and strawberries.

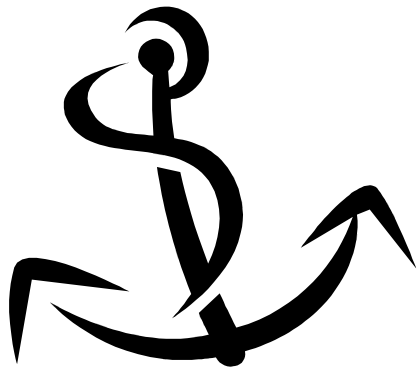
After both meals, plenty of leftovers were squirreled away in the Leland fridge for men absent to attend 12-step meetings or visit family.

Leland has been spruced up since early 2004, when we last visited the facility on North Capitol Street. It has a new stove and dishwasher - both industrial-quality - and new dining room chairs. The "day room" has been moved from the second floor to the first and the vacated second-floor space has been remodeled into new rooms.

Also, we made a start toward restoring the UNMC kitchen to comfortable cooking condition - but have a ways to go on that front.

Thanks for all the hard work and fellowship to last month's volunteers: Bill Baker, Marti Martinson, Jim Morgan, Emily Skidmore and Liz Crawford. (Little-known fact: Jim is speed demon at peeling potatoes and chopping onions. Just don't let your fingers stray near his work!)

If you'd like to volunteer for Saturday dinners scheduled on November 12 and December 17, please contact the office at 202-387-3411. At least three volunteers are needed each time; four or five is a comfortable number. When you RSVP, let me know if you are signing up to be a "helper" or the "planner-shopper." The planner-shopper does what the title implies - chooses the menu and shops for the ingredients - enough to feed about 18 to 20 Leland residents and volunteers. We divide up the cost of the meal by the number of volunteers and the helpers reimburse the planner-shopper for their shares - usually an amount between \$12 and \$25.



The *Universalist Anchor* is published monthly for the members and friends of the Universalist National Memorial Church in Washington, DC.

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Dr. James R. Morgan, Interim Minister

The Rev. Dr. William L. Fox, Minister Emeritus

Board of Trustees: Rob Bertram, David Burton, Richard Hurst, Perry King, Clint McCully (Assistant Treasurer), Mark McNabb (Secretary), Brian Pepper (Treasurer), Jennifer Sandberg, Greg Wigle (Moderator)

Mr. David Skidmore, Head Deacon

Mr. Kirk Denton, Organist

Marguerite Bogle, Church Office  
[office@universalist.org](mailto:office@universalist.org)

**Our Mission (adopted May 2002)**

We create a loving community  
for worship and service  
in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

We welcome all and respect individual  
beliefs as we grow together.

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Universalist National Memorial Church  
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