poverty while others live a life of luxury? Why do some people raised in and what are your circumstances now? Come to our forum and we will discuss these questions and others like them.  

**10AM SERVICE We Need To Become Healers** - Rev. Peter E. Bauer

February 15 BOOK CLUB 7 pm in the Annex is *The Lacuna* by Barbara Kingsolver. The book for March 21, 7 pm in the Annex is *The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien.

February 17 Friday 11:30AM MEN’S FELLOWSHIP LUNCH in The Annex

**February 26 Sunday FORUM 9AM A discussion on genealogy** Some family trees have beautiful leaves, and some have just a bunch of nuts. Remember, it is the nuts that make the tree worth shaking. Presented by Joyce Randle

**SERVICE 10AM Alan Conley will discuss Gay, Lesbian and Transgender issues.**

**March 2 Friday 11:30AM MEN’S FELLOWSHIP LUNCH in The Annex**

**March 4 Sunday 10AM SERVICE Navigating the News** The Rev. Mark Skrabacz. Time spent reading, watching or listening to the news can result in a distaste for life. There's so much negativity. How can we rise above the fray and maintain our equanimity? What's the prognosis for happiness? Let's talk about how we can remain inspired and informed people in this day of information overload.

**NEWSLETTER MISSION**

The board recently established a mission and guidelines for Our Church Life newsletter. The primary mission will be to convey information about our programs, activities and inspiration. Emphasis/space will be allocated according to the following:

A) Calendar of Sunday services and events  
B) Information about religious education programs  
C) Communication from the board, staff, church committees.  
D) Brief announcements/news of church members/friends.  
E) District and denominational news  
F) As space permits community news of organization of particular interest to the church or its members; however, no announcement will be included that conflicts with a scheduled event at the UUCHC.

Get your coffee and fixings, then make way for others in line. Return your cup to the sink in the building where you filled it.

We do not need any more donated dishes at this time. Take your dishes home after pot luck. Labeling helps! If you are kind enough to take the linens home to wash, please return them promptly.

Thanks from Jim, Sheri Gore, and her Pot Luck Set Up Helpers
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<td><strong>10AM SERVICE</strong>&lt;br&gt;Our UU Service Committee and Us, The Rev. Mark Skrabacz</td>
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<td>FORUM 9AM  What The Hell is the Meaning of Life Anyway?  10AM SERVICE  We Need To Become Healers &quot;&quot;- Rev. Peter E. Bauer</td>
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<td>10AM SERVICE  Ask the Minister  The Rev. Mark Skrabacz  POTLUCK</td>
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GETTING TO KNOW YOU  
Profiles of Our Church Family  
Troy Fannin  
From an Interview with Meredith Hensley

Troy has been a Unitarian Universalist for more than 50 years! And what a delightful story.

Born in Kentucky in 1925, Troy describes his family home as in a hollow outside Sandy Hook, a tiny town of 500 to 600 people and the seat of Elliott County. Nestled in a mountainous area some distance from Morehead, most people lived on small farms where two or three acres were dedicated to tobacco, this size being limited by the Roosevelt administration to maintain the price. Troy describes this yearly harvest as the single cash crop for most of the farmers.

Troy was the sixth of seven brothers, no sisters. Although his family had been in Kentucky for generations, when Troy was a small boy his father decided this was not an adequate living for their family, and moved them to Portsmouth, Ohio so he could work in the steel mills.

After high school, Troy attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kingspoint, New York (on Long Island). During this time, at a roller rink in New York City, he met his future wife, Cecile, who was from Long Island and was in the Cadet Nursing Program, a government program to train nurses for the war. After dating for a couple of years, they married.

In 1945, at the age of 20, Troy graduated from the Merchant Marine Academy. He relates that his five brothers (one had died as a small child) were in the military during World War II, and one was lost in the Philippines.

As Merchant Marines were not given the GI Bill until some 20 years after World War II, Troy had been saving his money for college, and began studies in the College of Optometry at Ohio State University. After graduation, he worked for an Optometrist in Columbus, then returned to Portsmouth to open his own practice.

After one of Troy’s instructors at Ohio State became the first Dean of the College of Optometry at the University of Houston, a friend contacted Troy and asked if he would consider coming there to teach. Troy accepted the position and found that he truly loved teaching; he taught there until he retired in 1990.

Two years later, Troy received a Teaching Excellence Award from the University of Houston, which included, Troy smilingly relates, $2,500.

Troy and his wife were blessed with one daughter, Heather, who now lives near Hunt. A psychiatrist, she works for the State Hospital in Kerrville. She is married and has two sons, Rory and Owen

More than 12 years ago, Troy’s wife Cecile was diagnosed with a form of Alzheimer’s. Troy decided to leave Houston and move to Kerrville to be near his daughter for assistance with his wife. After only a couple of years, however, Cecile passed away from a brain hemorrhage.

About becoming a UU, Troy recalls that when his wife was pregnant with their daughter, they decided to look for a church where they could feel they belonged. Raised a Pentecostal, Troy had been away from religion for many years. They lived in Northshore, a suburb of Houston, and began visiting area churches of several denominations, but none seemed right. Finally Troy suggested they visit that “odd church” just a short distance from their home, whose sign read First UU Church, especially as the church was located at 5200 “Fannin” Street. Horace Westwood, the minister spoke that first day, and by the end of the sermon Troy knew he had found the right church for him. Soon after, he and his wife joined. As noted at the beginning, this was over 50 years ago!

Regarding his life now, Troy expresses the same amazement that many of us feel: how very busy retired life can be. He loves to read, subscribes to two newspapers and several journals. He has a workshop where he sometimes works with furniture kits and especially enjoys giving away the finished products. He also relates that a cat has adopted his house and visits several times a day.

An interesting aside, Troy is related to country singer Billy Ray Cyrus. Billy Ray’s grandfather, Lindsey Cyrus, married Troy’s first cousin, which makes Billy Ray Troy’s third cousin by marriage. He describes Lindsey Cyrus as a tall, handsome, very dynamic Pentecostal preacher who officiated at Troy’s mother’s funeral.

What a pleasure it is for Troy to be a member of our church. We appreciate his presence as well as that of his lovely friend, Julie. Thank you for sharing your life’s experiences with us, Troy. It is an honor to be a fellow UU with you.

A TRIP OF A LIFE TIME  
By Peg Hainey

When your life is challenged by poverty, it is hard to hope. And it is hard to dream. Floral arches, colorful banners, hundreds of Lenca Indians, native to Southwestern Honduras and Eastern El Salvador, were lined up on both sides of a dirt road. For us you ask? I should mention there was a band, dancing and much hugging by young and old as we led a procession into “our” village along with our beloved 4-year-old Mirtala Vasquez and her parents. (There are mostly single Mothers in this region.) We were taken to the village pavilion for speeches by the family, the mayor and so many others. They shared cultural dances, song, and personal gratitude and gifts. I spoke about the value of education through a translator. Belen Gualcho is a very poor region, but with fertile land and a strong traditional background. The climate there is warm, which is good for growing coffee, corn, cabbage and onions. The countryside is mountainous and rugged. About 8000 people inhabit small villages.

Why this adulation? John and I discovered an organization through some dear friends in Kerrville. Carol and John Aceti. CFCA, Christian Foundation For Children and Aging, is an international non-profit organization helping families in 22 developing countries create a path out of poverty. When we committed to sponsoring our child for $30 a month we found as a result of this mission awareness trip that it impacts the family as well. Our family will now be provided with food, clothing and access to medical care. There too is community support, small loans, and livelihood training. Our family makes about $16 a month picking coffee beans. We made a home visit. Mirtala wanted this very much. I climbed a very steep hill to the home. The dirt floor was strewn with pine needles, instead of rose petals, being a tradition in welcoming special people. I left this day knowing my godchild is in a safe place to grow and develop in a loving, secure, and stable environment with personal attention. Mirtala will be able to attend school regularly, have the required uniform and shoes, school supplies and books. These are heroic people with heroic efforts to build a path out of poverty.
As I write this article for the February newsletter, I am also working on this Sunday's sermon entitled *Examining the Divine Mystery*. Please bear with my musings as they take place within a month of the Christmas holiday. In my research many questions arise about the stories found in the Bible. I, and many of us, were raised on these. Some find them to be factual, as in literally true. Some think of them as myths, meaning they point to a truth that limited words and questionable history cannot embrace or fully express. This latter method of Biblical interpretation is along the lines of mine.

Hidden beneath these myths are expressions of the human hope that even in the darkness of winter we are not alone in this universe. There is within all human life a yearning to know that eternal spirit enters and indeed does permeate the earthly realm that we inhabit. In history people tended to locate that spiritual realm above the sky. So many myths speak of mysterious signs in the sky. For example, the star that announced the Christmas claim -- the Christ Child as the one in whom God is experienced as fully present in the human realm.

These symbols can remind us that this planet earth is not just a tiny clod related to minor star located about two-thirds of the way toward the edge of our galaxy, but rather makes the claim that on this earth we bask in the direct gaze of the God, who is the source of the life that fills the universe. There is another claim that within this life itself we find meaning and purpose and that is how we know that we are not alone. In a way that is very much the same as the Christmas claim and its appeal is a very powerful one. That is also why we cling to our interpretive myths so tenaciously.

No myth is literally true. As stated, it is the nature of myth to point to a truth that limited words cannot embrace. That is what the biblical stories of Jesus’ birth do and that is why many love them passionately and respect them so deeply. The assertion in these stories is that there is a place in this world where God and human life come together. As in the Christmas myth, some call it Bethlehem. Yet it is not an external town located on a map, but a place deep within each of us. There is a space within our human journey where each of us connects with spirit, where our spirit comes alive, but to find it we must go deep within ourselves. There is a hunger in the human heart that we seek to fill and so we are on a journey of hope. That is why the search for God is always identical with and part of the search for ourselves. These kinds of meanings in the Christmas narratives never emerge until we surrender our need for truth to be literal. Perhaps that means that literal religion must die before God can be known. That idea grows on me the longer I live.

### Adult Education Course—Building Your Own Theology

This is an eight to ten week course, designed by the UUA. In a safe, supportive, atmosphere participants are encouraged to explore their religious past, learn about Unitarian, Universalist history and beliefs and to construct their own religious "work in progress" through reading, writing, and small and whole group discussions.

We are trying to find out if we have enough interested people to run an Introductory and a second level class. If this intrigues you call Marie Brown 830-895-5138 to sign up or for more information. The day and time will be arranged at each groups convenience

**Deadline** Feb 6th

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**From Our Minister’s Desk**

**CHURCH CONTACTS**

Board of Directors 2011-2012
- President: Ken Wardlaw 634-7043, kenwa@omniglobal.net
- Vice President: Sherry Wardlaw 634-7043, kbwardlaw@omniglobal.net
- Secretary: Meredith Hensley 830-522-6934, amepsi@yahoo.com
- Treasurer: Judy Ashcraft 896-8319, whodit@hotmail.com
- Membership Chair: Joyce Randle 257-2346, rjpa47@stx.rr.com
- Past President: Steve Galland 634-7668, sgalland@afgmail.com
- Minister: The Rev. Mark Skrabacz 890-5784, markskrabacz@hotmail.com

**Other key contacts**
- Music Director—Meredith Hensley (above)
- Directory of Religious Education—Joyce Randle (above)
- Men’s Fellowship—Rev. Mark Skrabacz (above)
- Care—Shari Gore 367-3142, Marie Brown 895-5138, Fran Davis-257-9672
- Chalice Lighter—Ken Wardlaw (above)
- Newsletter—Joyce Randle (above)
- Chalice Table Coordinator—Shari Gore (above)
- UU Book Club—Roy Shaver-896-6422
- Librarian—Shari Gore (above)
- Maintenance—Ken Wardlaw (above)
- Publicity—Judy Ashcraft (above)
- Chat & Chew—Joyce Randle (above)
- Forum—Marie Brown 895-5138

Address: 960 Barnett St, Kerrville TX 78028  
Church phone: 830-792-3626  
Webpage—uuchc.org

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**February Chalice Lighter/Greeter**

Following is the roster for decorating the chalice table. If you cannot participate on the Sunday listed please contact Shari Gore, 367-3142.

- Feb 5  Davis Family  
- Feb 12  Fannin Family  
- Feb 19  Galland Family  
- Feb 26  Gore Family

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**UUCHC**

960 BARNETT  
KERRVILLE, TX. 78028