

Awakening the Heart, Living the Love: A Summer of Universal Love At the Washington Unitarian Universalist Church Summer, 2013



Route 110, Washington, Vermont www.washingtonvtuu.org

Worship Service Sundays at 10 AM, followed by a potluck lunch. All welcome. Childcare provided.

Adult Religious Exploration Group following the potluck on most Sundays.

Films, Sing-alongs, Adult Religious Education, Potlucks, Young Adult Group throughout the week.

Dear Friends,

It's with a happy heart that I write to invite You to join us this summer at the Washington UU Church. Because we get to meet on a regular basis only in the summer, there's something very special about our few months together. We get to savor our time together. This Summer, our theme is "Awakening the Heart, Living the Love." We'll explore together how we can become more loving, more compassionate people. The Universalist message is, "God Is Love." How do we live this message, not as a theory in the head, but as a way of the heart that is evident in all we do, think and say? We'll celebrate a "Summer of Universal Love" as we share stories of where and how love has triumphed in our lives. Those who are inclined are invited to read and be challenged to practice from Karen Armstrong's Book "Twelve Steps to a More Compassionate Life." Some of our summer Adult Religious Education Programs will be on this theme.

We have a much more happening besides our Sunday Morning activities. This Newsletter has details on the upcoming films, potlucks, sing- a-longs, summer solstice celebration, book discussions, hikes and more. I hope You'll join us. In addition, we are planning to offer a year-round program "The Universalist University" which will give those of us who are interested, an opportunity to get together on a monthly basis to keep growing in our capacity for compassion. More details below. See you at Church!

*with Love,
Rev. M'ellen*



Sunday Morning Worship Services 10 AM

June 23 “Give Yourself to Love: Living Universalism” with Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy. Universalism is a way of being in the world with an open, awakened heart. It invites us to commit ourselves to being a channel of love and healing even in challenging situations. Join us for this Sunday of Universalist Revival. Helen Wilson, accompanist. This service will include an opportunity for new members to sign the book. (See more below). We’ll have an Impromptu Choir Rehearsal at 9 AM. Please join us.

June 30 “Universal Love in Buddhist Teachings--Cultivating Lovingkindness and Awakening to Inherent Goodness” with Laelia Tawnamaia. Buddhist theory of human nature asserts that we share with all sentient beings an essential basic goodness. Buddhist practices for spiritual development in the Mahayana lineages (Tibetan, Chinese etc.) foster at their core a commitment to uncovering compassion for all beings. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

July 7 “Happiness Runs In a Circular Motion,” with Ginny Sassaman. We’ll explore why cultivating individual happiness is such an important spiritual practice, not only for personal well- being but also out of compassion for ourselves, others, and the world around us. Ginny will share findings from happiness research and provide some key strategies -- especially those involving compassion -- that anyone can choose to follow. Music will be provide by friends.

July 14 “Our Authentic Selves: Telling Our Stories” with Rev. M’ellen Kennedy & Rev. Gregory Wilson. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

July 21 “Friends on the Path” with Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

July 28 “Becoming Xenophilic: Loving the Difference” with Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

August 4 Topic To Be Announced with Rev. Abigail Stockman. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

August 11 “Health is Our First Wealth” with Rev. M’ellen Kennedy. With Helen Wilson, accompanist..

August 18 Ordination of Laelia Tawnamaia. With Anna Weisenfeld, accompanist. Details below.

August 26 “Who Are We Becoming? Learning to Live Love” Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy. With Helen Wilson, accompanist.

September 1, Labor Day Picnic at the church.

Info on our minister, guests in the pulpit, and accompanist:

Rev. Dr. M’ellen Kennedy serves as our summer minster, preaching about half of the Sundays that we meet. She is a Unitarian Universalist minster and is just finishing a two year interim ministry in Barre, Vermont. She is co-founder of the UU Small Group Ministry network. She is also founder of Peace and Unity Bridge, a program to cultivate friendship and understanding among Muslims and non-Muslims, sponsored by this congregation.

Ginny Sassaman preaching left the D.C. fast track in 2001 with her husband Bob and moved to Vermont. In 2006, Ginny returned to school, earning a Master’s in Mediation and Applied Conflict Studies at Woodbury College in Vermont. Since then, she created the position of staff mediator for Home Share Now; co-founded Gross National Happiness USA; and created The Happiness Paradigm Store and Experience in Maple Corner. Today she works as a mediation coach, an artist, a workshop facilitator, and a writer/advocate for happiness at Happnessparadigm.wordpress.com. She also logs many happy hours as a grandmother. She is a member of the Montpelier, Vermont Unitarian Church.

Laelia Tawnamaia is a UU minister living in Marshfield. See her letter below for more info.

Rev. Gregory Wilson has been Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brevard, in Melbourne, FL since 2004. Gregory lives in Port Saint Lucie, FL, and in the summers, in Vershire, Vt.

Helen Wilson, our summer accompanist, lives in Vershire, Vermont part of the year. She is the Director of Music at UU Church of Brevard, Melbourne, FL, and a technical writer for a software firm.

WELCOME LETTER From Sue Stukey, President

The Washington Unitarian Universalist Church will begin summer worship services at 10 am on Sunday, June 23. This will be an exciting year for the church, with a focus on returning to our Universalist roots of love and compassion. Worship and discussion will explore this theme, including how to actually live compassionately in our world today. There will also be lots of summer activities, (a summer camp for UU's?) with two sing-a-longs, a hike in the hills, and maybe even campfires. Please join us!



Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy continues as minister, sharing the pulpit with guest ministers and lay speakers throughout the summer. As always, each Sunday service will be filled with music, thoughtful reflection, and meaningful discussion. Children are always welcome to stay during the service and/or childcare upstairs in the loft will also be available. A schedule of speakers is printed above.

Each Sunday morning, following the service, we'll continue our tradition of hosting a potluck lunch on the front lawn, around our community picnic table. All are welcome!

Please note below one very special event: at our church service on August 18, we will have the honor and privilege, along with our friends from the St. Johnsbury UU church, of participating in the ordination of our friend, website designer and frequent guest speaker, Laelia Tawnamaia, to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry. Laelia is a graduate of Meadville Theological Seminary and was granted Fellowship by the Unitarian Universalist Association this past fall. The UUA receives a UU minister into Fellowship, but only a congregation can "ordain" a minister. By ordaining Laelia, we will not be "calling" her as our very own minister, but simply and officially recognizing her as a minister and conferring upon her all the rights and privileges of the ministry, including the use of the term "Reverend" before her name. It will be a moving and wonderful ceremony and we hope you can all be there. We welcome your participation. (If you would like to join a special choir, contact Steve Finner at steve@finner.info or to help organize the potluck for that event, contact Rev. M'ellen Kennedy at mellenken@aol.com or 802-453-5469).

Annual Meeting Sunday, June 23 after the worship service.

Please join us for a short meeting of the congregation to approve the budget and vote on the slate of candidates for the board. We hope You'll join us as we attend to the important business of continuing to keep this congregation on a strong, positive track. Voting is for members. If You're not yet a member and would like to join, speak with one of our Board members, Sue Stukey, Art Stukey, Roberta Carrier, George Plumb and Steve Finner.

Universalist University: Our New Year Round Program

At the end of the summer, those who wish are invited to join our "Universalist University." We'll meet once a month to continuing our focus together on awakening our heart, learning to live love, and becoming more compassionate people. For a guide, we'll drawn on the book "Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life" by Karen Armstrong. Used copies of the book are available for purchase at the church. The year round program will be lead by Revs. M'ellen Kennedy and Laelia Tawnamaia. If You're interested in participating speak with M'ellen, Laelia, or president, Sue Stukey, or add your name to the Sign Up Sheet at the church.

SOLSTICE CEREMONIAL FIRE & VIGIL
SUNRAY MEDITATION CENTER AND PEACE VILLAGE
Lincoln, VT

Thursday, June 20, 2013

7:30 pm -

Lighting Solstice Fire & 24 hour Fire Vigil
All Welcome



There is no cost to attend the Solstice Fire Ceremony and Vigil. This free event on Thursday is part of a weekend long program called the "Arbor Renewal Weekend."

You can find info on their web site sunraypeacevillage.blogspot.com/
Directions are also on the site.

**Young Adult Potluck and
Friends on the Path Spiritual Exploration Group**
Wednesday, June 26, 6 PM

This is an opportunity for young adults (age 18-35) to get together for food, fun and deep conversation. Facilitated by Rev. M'ellen Kennedy. The potluck will followed by a Friends on the Path group where we create and environment conducive to the purposes of developing friendship and exploring our spirituality. Looking forward to seeing You. RSVP to M'ellen at mellenken@aol.com or 802-453-5469. If You're interested and can't make this date, let me know and we'll try to find a date that works for You later in the summer.



Rise Up Singing! Potluck and Sing-Along
Monday, July 15 and August 12
Gather starting at 5:30, Potluck at 6,
Sing-Along starting at 7.

Come lift your voice in song! We will gather together to sing songs from the Rise Up Singing songbook. Each erson will have a chance to choose a song or two, and the group will share the songs together. Bring your Rise Up Singing songbook if you have one, or there will be some extras to share. Erica Mitchell and friends will lead the singing.

LOCAL TALENT NIGHT CONCERT?

Anyone interested in helping plan a local talent night with area artist? Please talk with Rev. M'ellen.

New Member Sunday

June 23rd during the worship service.

If You've found a spiritual home at the Washington UU Church, You're invited to join the congregation. Please speak with president, Sue Stucky or with Rev. M'ellen. We'll have another opportunity to join later in the summer.

SUMMER READING

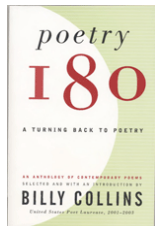
We're hosting some book discussions this summer on titles that some of us have been reading and are eager to talk with others about including "Proof of Heaven" by Eben Alexander and "Caleb's Crossing" by Geraldine Brooks. If You're interested, speak with Rev. M'ellen or add your name to the sign-up sheet at the church.



Also, In collaboration with the Washington Calef Library, we'll be hosting a discussion as part of Vermont Reads at a date to be determined.

VERMONT READS: **Celebrate Poetry in Honor of the 10th Anniversary of Vermont Reads**

A poem "begins in delight and ends in wisdom."- Robert Frost



Celebrate the tenth anniversary of Vermont Reads by exploring poetry. Your community is invited to take part with this statewide read of **Poetry 180: A Turning Back to Poetry**, an anthology of contemporary poems selected by former **US Poet Laureate Billy Collins**.

Join us and discover with others in your community the insight, beauty, and joy that poetry offers. Libraries, schools, and other nonprofit organizations may apply; collaboration among town organizations and businesses is strongly encouraged.

An Inspiring Message from the Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, from his book, "The Compassionate Life."

"Because we all share an identical need for love, it is possible to feel that anybody we meet, in whatever circumstances, is a brother or sister. No matter how new the face or how different the dress and behavior, there is no significant division between us and other people. It is foolish to dwell on external differences, because our basic natures are the same.

"Ultimately, humanity is one and this small planet is our only home. If we are to protect this home of ours, each of us needs to experience a vivid sense of universal altruism. It is only this feeling that can remove the self-centered motives that cause people to deceive and misuse one another. If you have a sincere and open heart, you naturally feel self-worth and confidence, and there is no need to be fearful of others.

"I believe that at every level of society – familial, tribal, national, and international – the key to a happier and more successful world is the growth of compassion. We do not need to become religious, not do we need to believe in an ideology. All that is necessary is for each of us to develop our good human qualities.

"I try to treat whoever I meet as an old friend. This gives me a genuine feeling of happiness. It is the practice of compassion."

Soul and Cinema Documentary Series

Several Tuesday Evenings Potluck at 5:30 Film starts at 6:30

June 25 “Celtic Pilgrimage with John O’Donohue” *“In the Irish psyche, landscape has a unique presence. One of the wonderful insights of the Celtic imagination is that landscape is alive.”*

In Celebration of the Summer Solstice we’ll begin our summer documentary series with this gorgeous film. With *A Celtic Pilgrimage*, you have the opportunity to walk with Irish poet and philosopher John O’Donohue through the breathtaking landscape of western Ireland. Weaving ancient wisdom with personal history and stunning imagery, this documentary reveals the Ireland that gave rise to the spiritual wisdom of the Celts—and inspired John O’Donohue throughout his remarkable life.

“A pilgrim travels differently,” observes O’Donohue. “Always in a pilgrimage, there is a change of mind and a change of heart.” With mischievous humor, keen awareness, and a poet’s gift for the truth, O’Donohue invites you to see the landscape of Ireland through his eyes—as a living source of wisdom, beauty, and transformative spiritual power. A discussion will follow led by Rev. M’ellen Kennedy.

July 9, “Inside Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think” This documentary presents the fascinating and surprising results of official Gallup Poll interviews conducted with Muslims world-wide after 9/11. It "explores the expertly gathered opinions of Muslims around the globe. Researchers began by asking the questions on every American’s mind. Why is there so much anti-Americanism in the Muslim world? Who are the extremists and how do Muslims feel about them? What do Muslims like and dislike about the West? What do Muslim women really want? Focused on the issues of Gender Justice, Terrorism, and Democracy -the film presents this remarkable data deftly, showing how it challenges the popular notion that Muslims and the West are on a collision course. Like the research, the film highlights a shared relationship that is based on facts – not fear. A discussion will follow led by Laelia Tawnamaia. Film begins at **6:00 pm**.

July 30, “El Sistema” “El Sistema is a network of children’s and youth orchestras, music centres and workshops in Venezuela, in which more than 250,000 children and young people are currently learning to play an instrument. It was set up over thirty years ago by José Antonio Abreu, who was driven by the utopian vision of a better future. The story, which has all the makings of a fairy tale, is the extraordinary account of a vision that has become reality. Several of El Sistema’s young graduates now rank amongst the most coveted young talent in Europe – the most prominent being the conductor Gustavo Dudamel. This documentary, *El Sistema*, shows how Abreu’s astonishing ideas have led the way out of the vicious circle of poverty and how the power of music has been able to change the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people. The film shows the gripping way El Sistema functions on a daily basis in a typical núcleo: the La Rinconada núcleo is located adjoining the barrio of the same name. The area around the núcleo is considered one of the most dangerous and poorest areas in Caracas. Up to 300 children find their daily destination here.” A discussion will follow led by Rev. M’ellen Kennedy.

August 20 “Mystic Iran: The Unseen World” This is a beautiful and intriguing film that is sure to make You think. The first known written declaration of freedom of faith was discovered on a stone scroll dating back to the time of Cyrus the Great, King of ancient Babylon. Persian filmmaker Aryana Farshad recently journeyed through Iran, which borders the ancient lands of Cyrus the Great, to film the great variety of ancient religious rituals still practiced deep within her native country. Over a period of nine months, Farshad filmed spiritual rites hidden for centuries from the outside world and in 2002 she completed the documentary *Mystical Iran: The Unseen World*. Farshad's camera crew traveled into women's chambers in the great mosques, captured a spontaneous fire ritual in a cave occupied by followers of Zarathustra, and filmed dervishes in the Kurdistan mountains performing sacred dances to pulsating drumbeats. From the narrow alleyways of Qom to the stunning interior of the great mosque, *Mystic Iran: The Unseen World* takes the viewer on a breathtakingly beautiful spiritual journey. A discussion will follow led by Rev. M’ellen Kennedy.

HIKE Friday Morning, August 9

Rev. M'ellen will lead us on a short hike to a spectacular view of the Champlain Valley. All are welcome. We'll meet in Lincoln, hike up to a lookout where we'll have lunch. When we're ready we'll go back down. A stop for a swim at a lovely local swimming hole is an option for those who wish. This hike is a benefit for our Universalist University, our New Year Round Program. (See article above). Suggested donation based on your ability. Add your name to the sign-up sheet at the church or contact Rev. M'ellen at 802-453-5469 or mellenken@aol.com

VERMONT INTERFAITH POWER AND LIGHT

VTIPL seeks to educate faith communities and individuals about the threat that global warming presents to Creation and Earth, and to engage communities of faith in promoting energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy as a solution. The goal of the organization is to move Vermont's faith communities toward sustainable energy use and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, while living out our covenant with the Creator. This summer the group has many worthwhile programs that it's publicizing. Some of them are listed below. Check out their June newsletter for more info .<http://www.vtipl.org/newletters>

TAR SANDS FREE KINGDOM WALK – July 19–20

The Northeast Kingdom walk, to oppose allowing the Portland Montreal Pipe Line to carry tar sands oil, will follow a 20-mile stretch of the pipeline from Troy to Irasburg. This 60-year-old pipeline (which now carries conventional oil) passes through Jay, Troy, Newport, Irasburg, Barton, Sutton, Burke, Victory, Lunenburg, and Guildhall, VT. It also crosses the Missisquoi River (which flows into Lake Champlain) and 13 other rivers and streams before crossing the Connecticut River. Join in for the whole walk, part of it, the midway "Pizza Not Pipeline" celebration, or at the end in Irasburg. Info will soon be at <http://world.350.org/vermont/> or contact Andy Simon: andy@350VT.org.

Let's get a Washington Group taking this trek together. Anyone interested? Contact Rev. M'ellen at mellenken@aol.com or 802-453-5469.

OUR CHILDREN, CLIMATE, FAITH – Strafford Symposium

This event, held in the Strafford Town House on Aug. 16 & 17, will be "an inclusive symposium on moral, ethical, spiritual, and religious consciousness addressing climate disruption, social justice, and the rightful future of all children." The churches of Strafford are co-hosting the symposium. A diverse roster of 16 speakers, including Bill McKibben, will participate. To find out more and to register, go to: <http://faithclimateconference.org>

Dear Members and Friends of the Washington Unitarian Universalist Church,

As a newly fellowshipped minister with the Unitarian Universalist Association (Sept. 2012) and serving as a Unitarian Universalist Community Minister in Vermont, I am delighted and honored that your minister and Board of Trustees have offered to ordain me this year, and we settled on August 18. Ordination is an acknowledgement of professional ministry which only congregations can offer ministers in our faith. Since, as part of my community ministry, I have been working with Rev. M'ellen Kennedy on the Peace and Unity Bridge project sponsored by this church, and because I know many of you from preaching here and in Barre, Montpelier and St. Johnsbury, it seems natural and appropriate to accept ordination from you.



I've been asked to share an overview of my background: I grew up outside Chicago with multi-ethnic extended family connections, and was very involved in a fairly liberal Lutheran congregation with lots of music. Just before my teens I left that faith, read about Eastern religions, and began practicing Hatha Yoga and meditating. In high school I served as student leader of the environmental action club and became excited about collaborative justice advocacy. Work on an organic farm inspired my hope for a more egalitarian and simple lifestyle valuing interconnection over consumption. Subsequent work in bookstores showed me the human longing for meaning, connection and compassionate listening. My undergraduate degree deepened my understanding of holism, psychology, counseling, and education. I co-founded a women's sacred ceremony circle and began working with adults in spiritual development. After years of meditation practice and both informal and formal study of Buddhism, I officially took vows as a Buddhist.

When we moved to Cabot, VT, I began attending the Universalist Unitarian Congregation in St. Johnsbury. Through my participation there I quickly felt called to professional ministry in our faith. I took courses in graduate theology at St. Michael's College in Colchester and spent a year as a Chaplain Intern at Fletcher Allen Medical Center Hospital in Burlington for my Clinical Pastoral Education. I completed my seminary degree at Meadville Lombard Theological School, one of our two Unitarian Universalist seminaries, in their modified residency program. As part of my studies, I served as a student minister at my home congregation for eighteen months, and another several years unofficially affiliated with the Montpelier church. Finally, it was my great pleasure to serve a year as intern minister with the Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau, WI.

From summer 2011 to the present, I have been leading worship as guest minister at UU congregations around Vermont, officiating at a few weddings and working on the Peace and Unity Bridge project. Last year I created the website for the Washington congregation and one for Preaching By Heart (another project of Rev. Kennedy and colleague Rev. Stephen Shick). While appreciative of the community ministries with which I am currently engaged, I am hopeful to someday serve as parish minister in one of our Unitarian Universalist congregations.

*With affection and in faith,
"Laelia" Tawnamaia, M.Div.*

**The honor and joy of your presence is invited for
the ordination of 'Laelia' Tawnamaia, M.Div.,
currently ministering in community**

at 10:00 AM, on Sunday, August 18, 2013

**by the Universalist Church of Washington, VT
(sponsor of the Peace and Unity Bridge project:
<http://www.peaceandunitybridge.org/>)**

**in our beautiful, historic, & lovingly preserved building
(pictures and directions, etc.:
<http://www.washingtonvtuu.org/>).**

Please be free of products with scents & chemical smells.

**Service will likely run around 90 minutes.
Outdoor potluck reception to follow.**

If you wish to sing in the choir, please contact Steve Finner.

**If you wish to help organize reception food,
please contact M'ellen or Laelia.**

**Parking is on street and at Town Hall--
across the street and a bit north.**

Preaching by Heart: An Extemporaneous Preaching Workshop

Facilitated by Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy
Wednesday June 26, 2013, 10AM – 4:30 PM

At the Washington Unitarian Universalist Church, Washington, VT

*“There is a place where words are born of silence.
A place where whispers of the heart arise.” Rumi*

If You are moved by the message of Universalism, "God is Love"; and if You feel draw to exploring a different relationship with the sermon text, this workshop is for You. This is a faith-based approach to preaching. The art of preaching in this style has all but disappeared from our congregations and with it rich opportunities for deepening ministry and connecting with the hearts and minds of our people. The workshop will incorporate short lectures, discussion, exercises, and small group work. It is open to ministers, seminarians, and lay leaders who preach. It is open to people of all faith traditions and with any level of experience with preaching. A version of this workshop has been accepted as a continuing education program by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association's CENTER Committee.

Purposes:

- To help You fulfill your call in ministry;
- To assist You in continuing to find your authentic voice in the pulpit;
- To help You explore and forge a new relationship with the text that is authentic for You and your ministry;
- To help You explore and strengthen regular spiritual practices and your commitment to them -- given that attention to the heart (i.e. regular spiritual practice) is the wellspring for preaching from the heart;
- To build community by getting to know one another.

“I enthusiastically recommend the ... workshop on preaching without a prepared manuscript, presented by Rev. Stephen Shick and Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy. Having attended one of Stephen and M'ellen's workshops last year, I can testify to the power and practicality of their teaching. The topic is of great importance to our ministry and the presenters are inspiring, knowledgeable, and deft.” Rev. Fred Small, First Parish in Cambridge, MA

Rev. Dr. M'ellen Kennedy is a Unitarian Universalist minister, a Sufi minster and a community psychologist. Rev. M'ellen has been preaching extemporaneously for six years. She has co-taught a version of this workshop multiple tiems with Rev. Stephen Shick. She lives in Bristol, Vermont and serves as consulting minister with the Washington UU Church. Her sermon, "The Triumph of Love: The Gospel of Universalism", won the Universalist Heritage Society Sermon Award a few years back, and was preached in an extemporaneous style. She is co-founder of the U.U. Small Group Ministry Network and works as a Small Group Ministry Consultant. She is also founder of Peace and Unity Bridge, an organization dedicated to developing friendship and understanding among Muslims and non –Muslims and to overcoming Islamophobia.

Washington UU Church is located about 8 miles south and east of Barre in the center of the village of Washington on the West side of Rte. 110 at the corner of Firehouse Lane. For directions, please visit our web site www.washingtonvtuu.org. The church is an outstandingly beautiful historic building with adequate but not fancy facilities. We do have a handicap accessible ramp and bathroom and we do not have air conditioning.

Registration: Please fill out one form for each person attending and send it and your check by June 21th to Rev. M'ellen Kennedy, 1655 Lincoln Gap Road, Lincoln, VT 05443. Contact info: mellenken@aol.com 802-453-5469
Registration form available at www.preachingbyheart.org

NAME _____
MAILING ADDRESS _____
E-MAIL _____ PHONE _____
CONGREGATION/ /SEMINARY _____
CITY/ STATE _____

FEE: The workshop fee, which includes an information packet, is \$50 for ministers and based on ability to pay for seminarians.

Please bring a sack lunch. Washington is a tiny village with a simple, not very fancy, general store.

I enclose a check to "**Rev. M'ellen Kennedy**" for this amount: _____