

# Red River Ramblings

Volume 6, Issue 8

September, 2009

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church  
...a home for religious liberals in Southern Oklahoma and North Texas.

## A Month of Sundays

Inside this issue:

Calendar, Birthdays	2
Making E-mail Connections	3
Healing Circle, Religious Education	4
Board Bits, Grandparent's Poem	5
Message from Marla	6
Welcome, Caring Circle, Participation Fair	7
Chalice Circles	8

### September 6

#### Mindfulness Meditation Circle

##### A Mindfulness Meditation Experience

As the world around us celebrates Labor Day, MINDFULNESS, a meditation circle here at RRUU, will be leading us in "A Mindfulness Meditation Experience". Explore with them how contemplative relaxation, the antithesis of labor, can have a powerful impact on our work-a-day lives.

### September 13

#### The Worship Committee

##### Water Communion

Summer is over, school has started, and once again life seems to focus on family, community, and our common bonds. Join us as we ponder our togetherness by participating in our annual Water Communion.

Please bring with you a sample of kitchen tap, the creek down the road, or the mountain lake you visited on your summer travels - it should be water that represents you, yours, and the unique spirit you add to the ongoing community experience known as Red River Unitarian Universalist Church.

### September 20

#### Earth Spirit Chalice Circle

Mabon, the celebration of the Autumnal Equinox, occurs on September 21st this year. In honor of this ancient festival, Earth Spirit, an RRUU chalice circle which focuses on pagan and nature-based worship traditions, will help us celebrate this amazing time of year when leaves change, animals begin to migrate, and the golden days of summer yield to the increasing darkness of winter's night.

### September 27

#### Megan Dalby Jones

##### Surrender

Last month we explored liberty and liberation. This month we turn our attention to surrender and submission, honoring the fall holidays of Yom Kippur and Ramadan.

Megan Dalby-Jones is a candidate the for Unitarian Universalist ministry. She and her partner Kristi came to Texas in 2006 so that Megan could serve as the ministerial intern at First Unitarian Church of Dallas. Currently, the family focus is on Kristi's career and their one year old son, Parker. While Megan is on leave from seminary, she is enjoying her secular job as a bookseller and her new role as a modern day circuit rider.



Adult Forum  
Worship & Children's RE

10:00am

11:15am

## Calendar of Events

September, 2009

- 4 - Fri, 11 am - MINDFULNESS Meditation**  
**7 pm - UJJAM**
- 8 - Tues, 7:30 pm - GREEN TEAM**
- 11 - Fri, 11 am - MINDFULNESS Meditation**
- 13 - Sun, 12:45 pm - PARTICIPATION FAIR.** Learn about RRUU groups. Contact Jan Fletcher, Chalice Coordinator
- 15 - Tue, 6:30 pm - Board of Trustees**
- 18 - Fri, 11 am - MINDFULNESS Meditation**
- 19 - Sat, 9 am to 5 pm, Sherman Arts Fest, Green Team**
- 20 - Sun, 12:30 pm - Baby Shower for Kate Cherry and Chris Gillentine**  
**12:45 pm - FREETHINKERS at Fellowship Hall**
- 25 - Fri. 11 am; MINDFULNESS Meditation**  
**7:30 pm - RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT at the church**
- 26 - Sat, 6 pm - Healing Circle at the church**

## September Birthdays

- 4—Judy Donahue**  
**7—Eliot Tracz**  
**10—Kara Harrelson**  
**12—Viki Reeder**  
**18—Jerry Shehan**  
**26—Paula Blackshear**  
**30—LD Clark**  
**30—Dianna Niemann-Harris**



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



Green Team  
 Tip of the Month  
 September, 2009

Reducing Waste at Restaurants:

1. Take your own flatware and cloth napkins into fast food restaurants or keep them in your car for times you have to eat on the run.
2. In sit-down restaurants, try to avoid styrofoam containers. Bring your own reusable food storage containers into the restaurant to pack leftovers, or request a piece of foil to wrap food in.

---

All October newsletter submissions are due to  
[newsletter@rruu.org](mailto:newsletter@rruu.org)  
 by September 26th, at 12:00 p.m.

---

## RRUU E-Mails

The following e-mail addresses have been established (and are linked through the RRUU website) to ensure that your information is forwarded to the appropriate person. The current list of recipients is:

[AdultForum@rruu.org](mailto:AdultForum@rruu.org)

Amy Hoffman-Shehan

[Announcements@rruu.org](mailto:Announcements@rruu.org)

Douglas Strong

[BeingPeace@rruu.org](mailto:BeingPeace@rruu.org)

Richard Newlin

[Bulding@rruu.org](mailto:Bulding@rruu.org)

Doyle Adams

[CaringCircle@rruu.org](mailto:CaringCircle@rruu.org)

Kris Riek

[ChaliceCircles@rruu.org](mailto:ChaliceCircles@rruu.org)

Jan Fletcher

[COM@rruu.org](mailto:COM@rruu.org)

Darrah Dunn (committee on ministry)

[Communications@rruu.org](mailto:Communications@rruu.org)

Douglas Strong

[DRE@rruu.org](mailto:DRE@rruu.org)

Helen Schulze

[EarthSpirit@rruu.org](mailto:EarthSpirit@rruu.org)

Penny Bertrand

[Feast@rruu.org](mailto:Feast@rruu.org)

Marion Hill

[FreeThinkers@rruu.org](mailto:FreeThinkers@rruu.org)

Jim Gauthier

[GreenTeam@rruu.org](mailto:GreenTeam@rruu.org)

Amy Hoffman-Shehan

[Historian@rruu.org](mailto:Historian@rruu.org)

Marla Loturco

[Hospitality@rruu.org](mailto:Hospitality@rruu.org)

Amy Hoffman-Shehan

[info@rruu.org](mailto:info@rruu.org)

Marla Loturco

[Membership@rruu.org](mailto:Membership@rruu.org)

Carla Murphy

[Newsletter@rruu.org](mailto:Newsletter@rruu.org) / r2u2news@gmail.com

Shann Schubert & Cynthia Evetts

[PFFFT@rruu.org](mailto:PFFFT@rruu.org)

Suzanne Durland

[President@rruu.org](mailto:President@rruu.org)

Marla Loturco

[Secretary@rruu.org](mailto:Secretary@rruu.org)

Cynthia Evetts

[SocialAction@rruu.org](mailto:SocialAction@rruu.org)

Dianna Niemann-Harris

[Treasurer@rruu.org](mailto:Treasurer@rruu.org)

Dianna Niemann-Harris

[Trustee1@rruu.org](mailto:Trustee1@rruu.org)

L.D. Clark

[Trustee2@rruu.org](mailto:Trustee2@rruu.org)

Jim Murphy

[Trustee3@rruu.org](mailto:Trustee3@rruu.org)

Amy Hoffman-Shehan

[vicepresident@rruu.org](mailto:vicepresident@rruu.org)

Don Durland

[Village@rruu.org](mailto:Village@rruu.org)

Gerry Shehan

[WaysMeans@rruu.org](mailto:WaysMeans@rruu.org)

L.D. Clark

[Webmaster@rruu.org](mailto:Webmaster@rruu.org)

Marla Loturco

[Worship@rruu.org](mailto:Worship@rruu.org)

Darrah Dunn



# Healing Circle

## RRUU

*September 26th, 6:00 pm*

PAIN! HURT! ANGER! RESOLUTION! FORGIVENESS! LOVE! Not everyone has recovered from the altercations which rocked RRUU in May and June. The board has made arrangements through the Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference of the UUA to hold a healing circle. Margaret Borden from Austin will be flying in to facilitate this session. Here is a time and a safe space to vent the feelings which have been preventing you from continuing in your own spiritual growth, whatever that path may be. Please take advantage of this Healing Circle.

*“Grandfather, look at our brokenness. We know that in all creation only the human family has strayed from the Sacred Way. We know that we are the ones who are divided, and we are the ones who must come back together to walk in the Sacred Way. Grandfather, Sacred One, teach us love, compassion, and honor, that we may heal the earth and heal each other.”*

Ojibway Indians of North America

It is important that we have a count of the number of people desiring to attend. Please RSVP to [President@rruu.org](mailto:President@rruu.org).

## Children's Religious Education



Teacher Helen Schulze is ready to study the UUA curriculum, *Learning and Living the UU Principles*, with the children of RRUU. Children's RE begins after the children are sung out by the congregation. Snack and a drink are provided, and there is a huge emphasis on having FUN!

Anyone interested in helping should speak with Helen at the church on Sunday morning.

## Adult Forum

Anyone who wants to develop a meditation practice or improve an existing meditation practice, feels a need for deeper spirituality, or simply



wants to live a more deliberate life will want to join Adult Forum while we explore *Living by Heart*. *Living by Heart* is a workbook and DVD by Rev. Dr. Laurel Hallman, former lead minister of First Unitarian Church of Dallas, based on the devotional practices of Rev. Harry Scholefield. The twelve sessions each introduce a different meditative practice that is designed to heighten awareness and being in the moment. Attendance at any of the earlier sessions is not required, and workbooks will be made available as needed for a fee of \$10. Areas explored so far have been memorization of poetry and developing a practice of waiting.

**September 6: The Attentive Heart: Waiting**

**September 13: The Open Heart: Welcome**

**September 20: The Wise Heart: Discernment**

**September 27: The Relational Heart: Kinship**

## Board Bits

What your board did at the last meeting  
(August 18, 2009)



- We were all present except for Jim Murphy who was on a business trip. We started the meeting at 6:13 p.m. with a check in. We went home at 8:21 p.m.
- Don Durland acted as our Process Observer and timekeeper for the meeting.
- Minutes were approved for the last meeting. Reports were accepted.
- Still have many leadership positions open and all on the board are going to be looking for people who would volunteer to fill those positions including the Safe Congregation Panel
- Dianna Niemann-Harris has agreed to be interim chair for the Social Action Committee as she will be working on the NTAUUS Social Action Committee as well.
- Membership intent to join card was discussed – tabled until after the bylaws are rewritten.
- Reviewed current to-do lists of individual board member projects
- Discussed Board Email Policy – Unanimous acceptance by board for our own email policy – will be presented to the congregation for approval as RRUU Email Policy at the next congregational meeting.
- Review of August 15<sup>th</sup> workshop presented by Daniel Polk, President of NTAUUS. Overall consensus – it was very worthwhile. A couple of immediate ideas to be pursued – 1. Short range planning committee for RRUU direction (5 year plan is due to be reworked beginning in the spring) – 2. Develop an all church covenant of how we treat each other.
- Letter of apology to the congregation was approved and will be mailed to members within the next month.
- Healing Circle will be held on September 26<sup>th</sup> with Margaret Borden from Austin Texas as mediator.
- Concerns of Congregation – Doyle Adams expressed his concerns.
- RRUU ads will be placed in the playbills for SPC & Theatrics. Planned to reach approximately 8000 individuals and also to support a local community event.

If you would like to see the full board minutes – they will be posted on the “Board Board” in the back of the Sanctuary as soon as it is available. The next board meeting is September 15<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30 p.m. Board meetings are open to all, if you wish to be on the agenda please contact a board member. Deadline for the agenda is September 11. Those wishing a few minutes during the “open mic” will want to be ready to speak near the end of the meeting.

## Grandparent’s Day

The impetus for a National Grandparents Day originated with Marian McQuade, a housewife in Fayette County, West Virginia. Her primary motivation was to champion the cause of lonely elderly in nursing homes. She also hoped to persuade grandchildren to tap the wisdom and heritage their grandparents could provide. President Jimmy Carter, in 1978, proclaimed that National Grandparents Day would be celebrated every year on the first Sunday after Labor Day. In 2009, Grandparents Day falls on September 13<sup>th</sup>. (from [www.grandparents.com](http://www.grandparents.com))

### Grandparents' Poem

As the sun sets in Owasso,  
the geese fly overhead,  
quacking for our arrival.

Grandpa G is lying back  
in his easy chair.  
Grandma is getting ready  
for the ten o'clock news.

The nurses are coming  
down the hall.  
They are coming in, saying,  
"How are you doing, G?"

And they say,  
"Do you want orange juice or water?"  
He says, "Orange juice."

We are talking to Grandma.  
She is talking on the phone  
to one of my dad's brothers.

The ten o'clock news comes on.  
My dad is making the bed.  
Grandpa G is talking about the news.

We give them kisses and hugs  
and tell them, "Good Night!"  
We close our eyes and dream  
of the very next day.

Charlie Mathis  
Sherman, TX



## Message from Marla

Marla Loturco, President, RRUU



A warm and loving thank you is in order for Daniel Polk, current NTAUUS President, for the workshop he presented at RRUU on August 15, 2009. I hope those of you who attended were as pleased by the results of the day as the board and I were. For those of you who missed the opportunity I would like to share some of the information from the day that I found the most helpful.

The morning session was devoted to Governance Models and Goal-setting.

The governance model that Red River Unitarian Church currently is developing looks to be closest to Board-Committee. In this model each board member also serves on a committee and acts as a liaison between the committee and the board. Committees have some decisional capabilities which are currently being determined. This is an ongoing learning situation and will take time for us to work out exactly how this will function.

RRUU has a Mission Statement (on the website if you are not familiar with it) which was adopted in March 2002 and a five year plan which ends this year. Another part of the morning seminar was a look at how 5 year plans are developed. First a Vision and Mission statement are devised. From there goals are set by the board to accomplish that mission, along with strategies to reach each goal. Committees then develop specific action items. Daniel recommended we have an outside facilitator trained in growing churches assist us in beginning this process when we are ready.

The tone of the afternoon session was set by a quote from Hosea Ballou. **“If we agree in love, no disagreement can do us injury; if we do not, there is none that can do us any good.”**

During the afternoon session the participants developed a covenant to govern our time together as a group. There were some beginning statements which participants were encouraged to add to, change, or remove from the covenant. The goal was to create a covenant that all participants could agree to. When it was finished everyone signed it to show that they chose to live by this agreement. The covenant we developed for the workshop is paraphrased as follows:

We, the members of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church, agree that in our interactions with each other we will:

- \* **Speak from our own experiences and use “I” statements.**
- \* **Remember the other person’s perspective while avoiding making assumptions.**
- \* Separate the person and the behavior.
- \* Participate in community but reserve the right to pass.
- \* Stay within clear boundaries and ask ourselves if we are within the guidelines.
- \* Address the other person respectfully and listen respectfully.
- \* Remember the positive in the other person.
- \* Refrain from side conversations and triangular communications.
- \* Look for common ground.
- \* **Respect other’s privacy and confidentiality.**
- \* Learn to expect unfinished business.
- \* Learn to let go.
- \* Practice forgiveness and find our own absolution.
- \* Support the congregation.

Please look over this covenant and think about what you would like to change to make this a covenant that RRUU members could affirm to live by. We would like to create this covenant in the next congregational meeting and adopt it as our guideline for living together in right relations. Just in case others have the same misconception I had, I thought the statement we make each Sunday during the worship service was a covenant. In fact, it is an affirmation we say each Sunday and is not a covenantal relationship between members of RRUU.

The rest of the afternoon was spent discussing conflict management, respectful listening, overcoming the obstacles to resolution, and small group discussions on various topics. It was a learning filled day and many of us followed up by going to the PFFFT (outdoor chalice circle) gathering in the evening to relax and enjoy each other in a informal setting. **To those of you who didn’t join us – we missed you!**

## Meet our new members for August, 2009

**Paula Blackshear of Hendrix, OK**



# WELCOME



Dear Congregation,

Please think about the need for a kind remembrance to another in our community, or others, by making a phone call, sending a card, being there to hold a hand, perhaps give a hug or maybe just sitting quietly with someone who is in pain and doesn't want to be alone. We all could be on both sides of that fragile state so we need to learn now how to reach out to care for each other appropriately.

Giving is so much easier than receiving and we need to practice both. Is there someone you can touch this week; maybe someone that you have not seen at a service lately? We need to care for one another; we are community; we are family.

Please realize that as congregation members and friends, we *are all the caring circle* and we need to touch each other with our unconditional love. Be courageous and do what you do best; be unconditionally loving to someone this week. If you don't, who will? Thinking of all of you, we're a few Caring Circle members and friends...

Suzanne, Kris, Doug and Carolyn

## PARTICIPATION FAIR IN SEPTEMBER

Have you ever wondered what FREETHINKERS think? Or what IT TAKES A VILLAGE to do? Sunday, September 13 is your opportunity to learn. Representatives from Chalice/Interest Circles and RRUU Committees will be set up in Fellowship Hall after services to answer those and other questions. Each group table will provide information concerning their activities and purpose to Friends, Members and Visitors of RRUU at the First Annual Participation Fair. All are encouraged to take this chance to browse our small groups for activities of interest to you. Also, a Time & Talent Survey will be available to help you identify how you can take part in serving RRUU.



## Email Etiquette Tip of the Month



Do not use email to discuss information that is confidential, controversial, complex, or subject to misinterpretation.

## RRUU Chalice Circles: Which Small Group Is Right For You?

Chalice Circles are small groups of people who meet regularly for the purpose of getting to know one another while learning, discussing, and acting on topics of common interest. All members and friends are welcome! If you are interested in attending a particular circle, contact Circle Coordinator, Jan Fletcher, at [chalicecircles@rruu.org](mailto:chalicecircles@rruu.org).



**AGAPE**, a UU Christian Circle, meets the third Sunday of each month at the church at 12:45 pm. Next meeting is TBA. This circle needs a new facilitator. **ALL LIBERAL CHRISTIANS AND UUs WHO WANT WORSHIP WITH A CHRISTIAN FOCUS ARE WELCOME!**



**MOVEABLE FEAST**, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle, meets on moveable dates at moveable locations. Next meeting will be announced. Facilitators are Elbert & Marion Hill. **ANYONE WHO LOVES COOKING AND/OR EATING IS WELCOME!**



**MINDFULNESS**, a Meditation Circle, meets every Friday at 11 am at the home of Sue Wells in Whitesboro. Facilitator is Richard Newlin. **NEW AND EXPERIENCED MEDITATORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**



**PFFFT**, an Outdoor Activities Circle, meets each month on a Saturday. Next meeting is TBA. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. **ANYONE WHO LOVES THE OUTDOORS IS WELCOME!**



**FREETHINKERS**, a Humanist Circle, meets the third Sunday this month in Fellowship Hall at 12:45 pm. Next meeting is Sept 20, as they continue to enjoy discussing the new frontier of a new way of looking at nature for philosophers, scientists, and all truth-seekers. Every day new discoveries are unraveling the mysteries. Facilitator is Jim Gauthier. **ALL FREETHINKERS ARE WELCOME!**



**RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT**, a Nature-Based Spirituality Circle, meets seasonally at the Church. Next meeting is Friday, Sept 25th, at 7:30 to celebrate the Pagan harvest festival of *Mabon*. Facilitator is Penny Bertrand. **NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**



**GREEN TEAM**, an Environmental Action Circle, meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the home of Amy Hoffman-Shehan in Sherman. Next meeting is Sept 8 to further discuss plans for Arts Fest on Sept 19, and Earth Day, April, 2010. All are invited to attend and work with the Green Team. Facilitator is Amy Hoffman-Shehan. **ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE EARTH ARE WELCOME!**



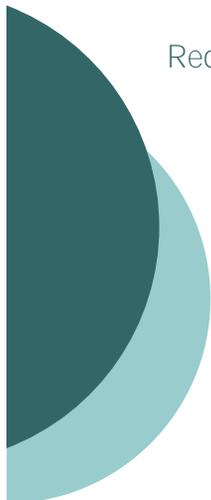
**UUJAM**, a Music-Making circle, meets the first Friday of each month at 7 pm at the home of Jan Fletcher in Sherman. Next meeting is Sept 4. Bring your instruments and songs to share. Facilitator is Jan Fletcher. **ALL MUSIC MAKERS AND LISTENERS ARE WELCOME!**



**LAID BACK BOOK GROUP**, a book reading and discussion interest group, meets approximately every 4 to 6 weeks to discuss a selected reading and share insights. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. **ALL WHO ENJOY THOUGHTFUL LITERATURE ARE WELCOME.**



**IT TAKES A VILLAGE**, a Circle of Parents Supporting Parents, meets on various dates at locations pertaining to the activity. Next meeting is a trip to the Dallas World Aquarium, TBA. Facilitator is Gerry Shehan. **ALL FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ARE WELCOME!**



Red River Unitarian Universalist Church  
 ...a home for religious liberals in Southern Oklahoma and North Texas

102 West Harrison Street  
 PO Box 1806  
 Denison, Texas 75021

Phone: 903-465-5515  
 E-mail: [info@rruu.org](mailto:info@rruu.org)

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**WWW.RRUU.ORG**

## Church Leadership

---

### Board of Trustees

Marla Loturco,

President (2010)

Don Durland,

Vice-president (2010)

Dianna Niemann-Harris,

Treasurer (2010)

Amy Hoffman-Shehan,

Trustee-at-Large (2010)

Jim Murphy,

Trustee-at-Large (2010)

L. D. Clark,

Trustee-at-Large (2011)

Cynthia Evetts,

Secretary (2011)

### Committee on Ministry

Darrah Dunn, Elbert Hill

### Team Leaders

Worship: Darrah Dunn

Chalice Circles: Jan Fletcher

Adult Forum: Open

**Children's Religious Education: Helen Schulze**

Youth Advisor: Open

Membership: Carla Murphy

Social Action: Dianna Niemann-Harris

Building and Grounds: Doyle Adams

Communications: Open

Caring: Kris Riek

Ways & Means: L.D. Clark

Hospitality: Open

Historian: Open

Newsletter: Cynthia Evetts & Shann Schubert

Website: Open