

# Red River Ramblings

Volume 7, Issue 5

May, 2010

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

## A Month of Sundays

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### May 2

#### Worship Arts Team

#### Flower Communion Sunday



*In 1926, Norbert Capek, founder of the Unitarian Church in Czechoslovakia, created the ritual of flower communion. This time-honored practice, in which each person present adds a flower to a common vase, and later takes a different flower home, is filled with lovely and far-ranging symbolism. Join the Worship Arts Team for this beloved tradition, which will be celebrated today, the first Sunday in May. Don't forget to bring a flower to symbolize your unique presence at RRUU.*

### May 9

#### Megan Dalby-Jones

#### Mother's Day

*Ministerial Candidate Megan Dalby-Jones usually ministers to us on the first Sunday of each month. For the month of May, however, she chose to be scheduled to the second Sunday---*

*-Mother's Day. Her warm and inspirational explorations about life and the art of living are sure to be most appropriate as we recognize the significance of all the nurturing women in our lives. Megan and her partner, Christy, by the way, are young mothers themselves.*

### May 16

#### Worship Arts Team

#### Annual Congregational Meeting

*Prior to our Annual Congregational Meeting, Dianna Niemann-Harris and the Worship Arts Team will lead us in a service which explores the value and power of RRUU for its members. Several lay persons will speak to us about what our congregation means to them, and about what the spirit of RRUU adds to their lives. This unifying and uplifting service is sure to be a perfect lead-in to the practical tasks of church business scheduled for afterwards.*

### May 23

#### Moveable Feast

*For the first time in several years, Moveable Feast, one of RRUU's favorite Chalice Circles, moves away from the table and onto the stage to minister to us about the art and philosophy of cooking and dining. Explore with them the spiritual significance of preparing and serving meals, and be sure to watch the weekly announcements for more information about a pot-luck luncheon following the service.*

### May 30

#### Fifth Sunday Forum

*In the event of a fifth Sunday in a month, RRUU sits back, forgoes traditional worship, and indulges in hearing special guests speak on a variety of topics. This lecture/Q and A format is always refreshing and informative. Tentatively scheduled for this time around is a heart transplant recipient whose first-hand knowledge of the miracles of modern medicine is sure to be both informative and inspiring. Watch your weekly announcements for updates or schedule changes.*



Adult Forum  
Worship & Children's RE

10:00am  
11:15am

## Calendar of Events

May, 2010

- 5 - Wed, 6 pm SPIRIT WITHIN, New Thought Chalice Circle
- 7 - Fri, noon MINDFULNESS, Meditation Chalice Circle
- 7 - Fri, 7 pm UJJAM, Music Interest Circle
- 9 - Sun, 12:45 pm FREETHINKERS, Humanist Circle
- 11 – Tues, 6:30 pm RRUU Board of Directors
- 14 - Fri, noon MINDFULNESS, Meditation Chalice Circle
- 14 - Fri, 7:30 RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT, Nature-Based Spiritual Chalice circle
- 18 - Tues, 7:30 pm GREEN TEAM, Environmental Interest Circle
- 19 - Wed, 6 pm SPIRIT WITHIN, New Thought Chalice Circle
- 21 - Fri, noon MINDFULNESS, Meditation Chalice Circle
- 28 - Fri, noon MINDFULNESS, Meditation Chalice Circle

## May Birthdays

- 10 - Sue Wells
- 15 - Tobin Baird
- 21 - Suzanne Durland
- 21 - Andi Sturm
- 27 - Don Mathis
- 30 - Stephanie Gould



## Harmony House Concert

On Friday night, May 7, 2010, at 7:30 pm, Harmony House will be hosting one of our biggest "crowd-pleasers".....Jack Williams, an amazing acoustic guitarist/singer/songwriter! You can read more below about this South Carolinian musician (now lives in Arkansas with wife, Judy), whom Peter Yarrow (of Peter, Paul, & Mary) called, "*The best guitar-player I've ever heard!*"

Harmony House is located at Wildscape Acres, 10 miles North of Bonham, in a serene setting amidst the wildflowers now blooming. The concert will be held inside the vintage home reclaimed and moved to its new home in the meadow. An optional Potluck Picnic/Cookout will be held outdoors (weather permitting) at 6:30 pm. To make reservations, please call 903/583-2661



## Green Team Tip of the Month

Check out [planetgreen.com](http://planetgreen.com) and [TreeHugger.com](http://TreeHugger.com)—they offer original, inspiring, and entertaining content related to how we can evolve to live a better future.

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All June newsletter submissions are due  
to  
[newsletter@rruu.org](mailto:newsletter@rruu.org)  
by May 28th, at  
5:00 p.m.

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## Member News

### Kudos of the Month go to....



Everyone Who Joined the Celebration to be part of the Campaign Kick-Off dinner! Special thanks to those who completed a commitment card to help the Finance Committee in prepare the new budget. \*Psssst members and friends– if you have not yet completed a commitment card please do so or email [treasurer@rruu.org](mailto:treasurer@rruu.org).

Anabelle Dunn who willingly serves (even without advance notice) as another set of caring hands and loving arms in our nursery when one of our regular attendants is out or there are an unusual number of little ones.

Bruce Cameron who faithfully, regularly and quietly attends to a wide variety of needs around the property in delightfully sneaky ways to maintain our rented space.

Dianna Niemann-Harris, who designed and sent out the awesome invitations, provided recycled, reused table decorations and coordinated child care arrangements for the Campaign Dinner knowing she would be out of the country and unable to attend.

Doyle Adams, building committee chairperson who checks our property multiple times each week, arranges for mowing and is working with the city to get the weeds cut and trash removed from Harrison Street across from RRUU.

Tim Riek and Miss Martin, Friends of RRUU who joined members Dan Altoff, Doyle Adams, Marla Loturco, Elbert Hill and Marion Hill in providing some awesome entertainment at the Campaign Kick-off dinner.

The RRUU Congregation for continued support of our **“second mile” giving programs**. We *Share the Plate* with donation of all cash offerings each second Sunday and *Fill the Plate*, through our ongoing collection of paper goods, hygiene products and food items.

## Good news! Good news!

The late breaking good news item of the month was reported by Dan Altoff and Dianna Niemann-Harris who served as our delegates to the Southwest Unitarian Universalist Conference (SWUUC) Annual Meeting. They learned at the meeting both of our nominees to

attend the Dwight Brown Leadership Experience this summer, Penny Armstrong and Joyce Peak were accepted into the program and the North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalist Societies (NTAUUS) will help with expenses to send these awesome congregational leaders to the DBLE program.

## Texoma Earth Day Festival, 2010



The Earth Day Festival went as smoothly as it could with rain delays in the early morning and high winds all day. We received many compliments about how well organized the festival was. Our biggest improvement from last year was the addition of signage to post schedules and honor sponsors. We received many compliments on the printed program, which was designed and sponsored by CORE (through Paula Brennecke's contributions).

We were honored to have Tom "Smitty" Smith, Director of Public Citizen of Texas and Texas' most decorated environmentalist, as key note speaker. The timing couldn't have been better, as two Grayson County communities are facing the possibility of cement plants being licensed. The festival featured 4 workshop areas, a wide variety of vendors, and fantastic children's activities. Workshops were well received and offered information on gardening, health and nutrition, and alternative energy.

The festival was organized by the Green Team (primarily 2 people at this time) and a handful of community leaders from other organizations. We're grateful for the members of RRUU who came through for us to volunteer at the event. We wouldn't have made it through the day without them.

A wide number of area and local events (Jazz Fest in Denton, German Fest in Muenster, an Earth Day event in McKinney, and a Home & Garden Show in town) hurt our attendance numbers. The vendors felt it in their pocket books.

As a reflection of the economy, funding for the festival was very tight. We'll be lucky to meet all of the expenses of the festival and will have no startup money for next year's festival. RRUU members can help by shopping the Green Team table for left over volunteer t-shirts for \$5 or canvas shopping bags or Better Shopping Guides for \$10 each.

## Ribs For Rehab

### June 18, 2010

RRUU has been asked by one of its members to provide a donation basket to The Rehabilitation Center: Therapeutic Solutions for Children and Adults. They are sponsoring a Ribs for Rehab event on June 18, 2010. Two years ago RRUU provided a selection of fair trade items in a basket. We would like to support this event again this year, however it is not in the budget. We do have a basket to use and two RRUU coffee mugs to add. If members would support this effort with some cash donations to pay for the fair trade items it would be nice to include two different bags of coffee, one of hot chocolate, one of tea, and maybe a candy bar or two. Please make your donations on May 2nd or 9th so we can get the basket put together.

## Register for GA by April 30

Be sure to register for General Assembly by this Friday, April 31. Rates increase on May 1. GA registrants receive access to all workshops, performances, lectures, and events listed in the GA Printed Program, as well as an official name badge to identify them to fellow participants, event staff and security.



## Children's Religious Education



Many thanks for Helen Schulze for meeting each week with the children in RE during the sermon. Help is needed to provide back up when the group is large, and to fill in when Helen cannot be in attendance. If you are willing to sit in or fill in to help with the Children's RE program, please alert Helen

or a Board member.

## Find Balance in May Adult Forum Gatherings

In a society where ringing cell phones, text messages, beeping chiming laptops non-stop data overload it is easy to become **burned-out**. If you've ever felt burned-out, depleted or drained, this program is for you.



The Balance Driven Life: From Burnout to Balance. In this 4 week course, using the book **'Balance Matters'** by Bent O'Bannon as a resource, we will examine burnout and how to reestablish balance into our lives. Week 1: We will look at the types of burnouts, the warning signs and effects. Week 2: We will examine balance as an antidote to burnout--what it is, the categories, how to achieve it as well as many tips and tools. Week 3: In week 3, Professional Balance, we will consider ways to **"love" our job and institute balance** in our daily professional functions. Week 4: We will conclude this program with Playful Balance, how to identify it, how to inject it into our daily lives and why it's important.



## How To Begin (Changing Your Life)

by [Forrest Church](#)

Begin as you are. At your fingertips is a treasure trove of memories and dreams. Put one good memory together with one good dream and you are ready to begin. (Good memories are memories that make you feel good about yourself. Good dreams are the stuff of which tomorrow's good memories are made.) Begin as you are.

This is the third of 10 suggestions by Forrest Church. The other 9 can be viewed at [UUA.org](http://UUA.org), , [Spiritual Life](#) , [Today's Readings](#).

## Board Bits

What your Board did at their last meeting, March 9th



Everyone on the board was in attendance with the exception of Dianna N-H. We started at 6:40 pm and went home around 9:00 pm. Dan Altoff attended at the board's request to report to the board on the nominations and finance committees' work. Doyle Adams attended to express cares and concerns and give a brief report on the Buildings & Grounds Committee.

Amy H-S acted as our Process Observer and timekeeper for the meeting.

Minutes were approved for the last meeting and reports were accepted.

Board decided to nominate Joyce Peak and Penny Bertrand to attend DBLE

Dianna N-H and Dan Althoff volunteered to be SWUUC representatives for the meeting to be held on April 24, 2010.

Special reports on the Sound Equipment (using the \$2500 Grant from NTAUUS), Stewardship Campaign, By-Laws Changes, RRUU Sign status, and NTAUUS were given.

We have a new sign to put up for the church - now we need permits from the city.

Brief update on the policies & procedures report and some feedback from non-board members, reports from the nominations committee on the status of the slate and the finance committee on the status of the budget - both needed for the May Congregational Meeting.

Discussion of the Congregational Meeting on May 16 and the steps that need to be accomplished prior to the meeting. Decision was made to post all materials for the May 16 meeting on the website and send emails as well as a postcard to let people know the materials are available on line. People without email will receive the normal packet via USP mail.

Amy will be contacting Joe Sullivan to see if he will assist RRUU in developing a comprehensive 5 year plan, including goals and actions. RRUU received a \$3300 grant from NTAUUS for that purpose, and to purchase church leadership books. We need to report back officially to NTAUUS in September on the status of the process.

Next board meeting we will be talking about a timeline for re-arranging the sanctuary for the new sound system.

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 they are available. There is also a Book with the minutes that have been removed from being posted. The next board meeting is May 11th, 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, and reports to the board, is May 7th.

**Those wishing a few minutes during the “open mic” will want to be ready to speak near the end of the meeting.**

## Treasurer's Report



As your reluctant treasurer a few weeks ago I experienced an emotional, intellectual, spiritual and soul satisfying **time of indescribable relief... and burst into singing the Halleluiah Chorus... we have a candidate for election as the new treasurer!** While I have done my best to fill this role for the past 10 months and learned a phenomenal amount, it will be with great relief I pass the task on and share with the new treasurer as she learns the job. Thanks to you each and all for the support as I made my way fumbling and bumbling through the year as treasurer.

The emphasis for April was supporting, encouraging and assisting our Campaign Co-Chairs Suzanne and Don Durland **to kick off this year's pledge drive.** This included composing the list for the Celebration Dinner, putting together the invitations and mailing them out. As treasurer I was also involved in recording and encouraging the pre-pledges by the leadership of RRUU and have the continued responsibility of tracking all pledges as they come in. My final part of this process will be to join with others in contacting members who have not yet responded and encouraging them to make a commitment for giving in fiscal year 2011 (June 2010 to May 2011).

Our March income was \$2,765.34 and our expenses were \$2,865.43 for a net loss of \$109.00. Considering we had three paid Pulpit Guests in the month and purchased our new sign for display at the corner of Armstrong and Harrison, the loss is justified. The income includes the \$2038.80 special collections for Haitian Relief.

**RRUU also does significant “Second Mile” giving, sharing our resources to help meet the needs of others.** In March our **Second Sunday “Share the Plate” offerings for March in the amount of \$144 went to the Callie Clinic for AIDS/HIV relief.** RRUU also provided six canvas shopping bags of food, paper products and hygiene items to the Grayson County Shelter food pantry and passed on eight boxes of books for sale at the Earth Day Festival.

If you have questions concerning this report or other aspects of our financial status, please email me at [treasurer@rruu.org](mailto:treasurer@rruu.org) or call 903-327-2069 and I will respond as quickly as possible.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dianna Niemann-Harris, RRUU Treasurer

## Message from Marla

Marla Loturco,  
President, RRUU



My communication will be short and sweet this month. I have been very busy this last month preparing for church events. The April 10th dinner was a resounding success with lots of good fellowship, wonderful entertainment, and a resounding good start to our annual stewardship drive. I want to thank all who made this delightful event possible. I also want to thank everyone for the lovely surprise of recognition and a chalice art pin.

The new RRUU logo was unveiled at the dinner this month as well. Many thanks go out to everyone who worked on the logo in one phase or another. Also to all who gave feedback about what they liked and wanted to see in our logo. While some of the process was slower than I was hoping for I think that all of the time was worth getting a new logo that had lots of input from the congregation. I hope you are all happy with the results.

Another big happening for the Green Team and also for RRUU this month was the 2nd Annual Texoma Earth Day Festival which was held on Saturday April 24th. Kudos piled in heaps to Amy Hoffman-Shehan for organizing and pulling this off. I am always amazed at Amy's fantastic organizing skills. Thanks also to all of the wonderful volunteers from RRUU. We had seventeen or eighteen of our members at the festival volunteering, many for all of the day. We could not have done it without all of your support!

## *A Psalm of Commitment* Created by participants in the RRUU adult forum April 18, 2010

Spirit of love,  
Force of Good in the Universe,  
Power of Oceans, Spirit of Life, Universe

We are sick and tired of ultra conservatism  
Of those who assume a right to decide for others  
Of us verses them competition.  
We are troubled by waste, by greed,  
By uncivil discourse, by chaos  
And death as entertainment  
Everywhere

We need connections,  
Love, acceptance, hope humor  
Wisdom and power.  
We need to be heard,  
To feel we make a difference,  
To be understood  
To take time out.

We are grateful for our abilities and accomplishments.  
We are thankful for friends, pets, family,  
Jobs and civil rights.  
We are grateful for another day.

We will help others, live our beliefs and celebrate  
the now.  
We will serve and promote Unitarian Universalism,  
Take risks, speak out and keep getting back up.

We will vote, heal, recycle, reuse,  
Embrace tolerance  
And love without condition.

We will support RRUU  
And have a party.

## Share the Plate with CASA

A significant piece of how we share the wonderment that is Red River Unitarian Universalist church is in our **“second mile” giving**. Each month 10-15% of the monthly resources which come in to RRUU are given to programs and projects outside of the church. On May 10<sup>th</sup> all cash offerings will be given to the CASA, the Court Appointed Special Advocates Program in Grayson County. The mission of CASA of Grayson County, Inc. is to provide trained, court-appointed volunteers, who investigate, monitor and serve as advocates in court to help abused and neglected children secure permanent placement in safe, nurturing homes. Please remember to bring some folding green (or write a check clearly designated for CASA) the second Sunday in May. What better way to honor or remember she who mothered you than with a gift to help insure children who have been mistreated find the nurture and love which defines “home” and “mother”?

## “Fill the Plate” Update

We continue the journey toward Social Justice in our ministries at RRUU in ways large and small and somewhere in between. Our ongoing efforts to help meet the needs of our neighbors continue through the food/paper products/hygiene items collections. During April we collected two canvas bags very full with food, paper and hygiene items which were delivered to the Grayson County Food Pantry along with the \$72 donated for this purpose during March and April.

The large green containers in the back of the sanctuary can be added to any Sunday with paper products like tissue, diapers, feminine products and personal items such as toothpaste, mouthwash, soap, deodorant or household cleaning products. None of these necessities can be purchased with food stamps. To help buy food for the hungry, donations of money are recommended as pantries can buy food in bulk at a highly reduced rate making the \$1.00 we would spend for a can of tuna actually purchase 6-8 cans of the same size if purchased by the pantry.

Our May and June food pantry donations of items

and money will travel across the Red River to help supply one or more of the pantries in the Durant area. Remember to bring your items any week of the month and/or add some cash to the small black lock box which is always either on the table in the back of the sanctuary or conveniently located on the bar height chair to your left as you leave worship.

## A thought from The Care Team

The Care Team now has a direct phone line so anyone who is in need of temporary emergency assistance can call for help. The call connects you to a voice mail system. By leaving your name, number and message – your voice message will

be instantly transcribed and emailed immediately to a Care Team volunteer. The number is 903.363.7717. Look for it each week in the Order of Worship; the e-news; and in the monthly newsletter. The number is available day or night.

In order to alert people to needs expressed during **the Candles of Community**, a new **“Among Ourselves”** section has been added to the weekly e-news so people can reach out to others. The aim of the Care Team is simple: *To love everyone by our actions.*



## E-mail Etiquette Tip of the Month

*Clearly summarize your message in the subject line. Properly titled messages help people organize and prioritize their e-mail.*

## 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).



**MI NDFULNESS**, a Meditation Chalice Circle, meets at the home of Sue Wells in Whitesboro. Facilitator is Richard Newlin. This circle is taking a break and will not be meeting in May and June. NEW AND EXPERIENCED MEDITATORS WILL BE WELCOME to join when the group resumes.



**FREETHI NKERS**, a Humanist Interest Circle will meet the second Sunday, May 9 at 12:45 pm in Fellowship Hall. Facilitator is Jim Gauthier. ALL FREETHINKERS ARE WELCOME



**GREEN TEAM**, an Environmental Action Circle will meet Tues, May 18 at 7:30 at the home of Amy Hoffman-Shehan. ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE EARTH ARE WELCOME



**CHRISTIAN UU**, a Christian-Centered Chalice Circle is suspending meetings for a season. Please contact the Chalice Coordinator.



**MOVEABLE FEAST**, a Cooking, Dining and Fellowship Chalice Circle will not meet during May. Volunteer hosts for May and after need to contact the Hills. Facilitators are Elbert and Marion Hill.

ANYONE WHO LOVES COOKING AND/OR EATING IS WELCOME.



**PFFFT**, an Outdoor Activities Interest Circle meets each month on a Saturday. However, no May activities are planned at this time. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. ANYONE WHO LOVES THE

OUTDOORS IS WELCOME.



**RED RIVER EARTH SPI RIT**, a Nature-Based Spirituality Chalice Circle will meet Fri, May 14 at 7:30 at the Church for Drumming. Facilitator is Penny Armstrong. NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.



**UUJAM**, a Music-Making interest circle will meet Friday, May 7 at 7 pm at the Sherman home of Jan & Ken Fletcher. The group meets in an informal circle to share favorite songs of all genres. Bring your instruments and song books to share and call Jan to reserve your chair in the circle. Remember to bring a snack to share. ALL MUSICIANS AND LISTENERS ARE WELCOME.



**LAI D BACK BOOK GROUP**, a Book Reading and Discussion Interest Circle will be announcing the next selection via email. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. ALL WHO ENJOY THOUGHTFUL LITERATURE ARE WELCOME.



**SPI RIT WI TH I N**, a New Thought Chalice Circle will meet the first and third Wednesdays in May at 6 pm at Jan Fletcher's home in Sherman. If this time is not convenient, please contact Jan or Kris to discuss your situation. A study and sharing manual has been developed and members alternate directing the discussion. Facilitator is Kris Riek. ALL SPIRITUAL SEEKERS ARE INVITED.







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

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**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**WWW.RRUU.ORG**

## Church Leadership

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### 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)

### Safe Congregation Panel

Marla Loturco, Helen Schulze,

Jim Gauthier, Suzanne Durland,

Penny Armstrong

### Team Leaders

Worship: Darrah Dunn

Chalice Circles: Jan Fletcher

Adult Forum: Penny Armstrong & Suzanne Durland

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

Youth Advisor: Open

Membership: Carla Murphy

Social Action: Dianna Niemann-Harris (Acting)

Building and Grounds: Doyle Adams

Communications: Open

Caring: Kris Riek

Ways & Means: Marion Hill

Hospitality: Carolyn Cameron & Joyce Peak

Historian: Open

Newsletter: Cynthia Evetts & Shann Schubert

Website: Open

### Committee on Ministry

Elbert Hill, Carolyn Cameron, Peter Schulze