

Red River Ramblings

Volume 7, Issue 6

June, 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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June 6

Megan Dalby-Jones

"Father Sky and The Green Man"

Megan, one of our most frequent and beloved guest speakers during the last several years, graces our pulpit this morning. In preparation for Father's Day, come and explore with her the Archetype of the Sacred Masculine. Megan has accepted in internship at Horizon Church in Carrollton and will be beginning that in September, so this will be one of the few remaining opportunities to hear her preach at RRUU. Please join us.

June 13

George Leonberger

"UU Stars---Astronomy from a Unitarian Universalist Viewpoint"

Professional storyteller George Leonberger, a retired chemistry and astronomy teacher from the Paris area and the current leader of the Valley of the Caddo Star Gazers Club, returns for his third

visit to RRUU. At this service, we will have a lighthearted look at our Universe---after all, it is part of our name! The planets, our Moon, several stars, star clusters, galaxies, and constellations will be evaluated to see which might be used as the best symbol to represent we Unitarian Universalists. Some speculation as to "the reason for it all" may be provided along the way. A current star map will be given out should anyone wish to explore our beautiful night sky on their own.

June 20

Dianna Neimann-Harris

"Many Voices Remember"

Our own Dianna Neimann-Harris, an ordained minister and one of RRUU's hardest working lay leaders, steps into the pulpit today with a Father's Day service drawing on the experiences and contributions of the congregation. Members have been asked to submit remembrances, reflections, and anecdotal tidbits about their own experiences with fatherhood.

Join us as we share together what it means to have a father figure in our lives---or to be someone else's father!

June 27

Daniel Polk

"What? You Mean I'ts Not Always About Me?"

NTAUUS president Daniel Polk, a lay speaker who claims First UU Dallas as his home church, returns to the RRUU pulpit today. His sermon will ponder the notion that it isn't always easy to maintain our "Big Tent" of religion. Explore with him some ways for balancing our unique UU quality of "multi-ness of worship".

Father's Day June 20, 2010



Adult Forum
Worship & Children's RE

10:00am
11:15am

Calendar of Events

June, 2010

- 2 - Wed, 6 pm SPIRIT WITHIN, New Thought Chalice Circle
- 4 - Fri, 7 pm UJJAM, Music Interest Circle
- 8 - Tues, 6:45 pm, Board Meeting
- 13 - Sun, 12:45 pm FREETHINKERS, Humanist Circle
- 15 - Tues, 7:30 pm GREEN TEAM, Environmental Interest Circle
- 16 - Wed, 6 pm SPIRIT WITHIN, New Thought Chalice Circle
- 18 - Fri, Earth Spirit - Summer Solstice

We Remember Poppa

Jog your memory, jiggle your thoughts and share your brief memories of fathering or being fathered! On Father's Day, June 20, 2020 we will celebrate incorporating YOUR fond thoughts and memories of Pop, Poppa, DOD, Dad, Daddy, Father, Pops. The Worship Arts Team has asked Dianna Niemann-Harris to craft a service of worship for Father's Day and serve as pulpit guest. Worship Associate Don Mathis will join in leadership with as many congregational submissions included as possible.

Some had the blessing of a biological father growing up, others had awesome step-fathers, a grandfather or some other relative or friend who stepped in to act as father. What do you remember? What was special for you? How was/is it for you to be somebody's Daddy? The request is for very brief personal memories...just a sentence or two and at most a paragraph which is no longer than ½ page double spaced. Please give your written memory to Dianna at church or email it to treasurer@rruu.org. These offerings are needed by or before June 13 for what promises to be a rich worship experience.



of

All July newsletter submissions are due to newsletter@rruu.org by June 26th, at 5:00 p.m.

June Birthdays

- 2 - Chelsea Armstrong
- 3 - Rebecca Crystal
- 9 - Richard Newlin
- 12 - Cathy Mancill
- 18 - Milli Thomas
- 19 - Ted Gould



Harmony House Concert



Anytime, Bill Staines performs, it is cause for a Celebration!! Bill has sustained his gift for songwriting for at least 3 years and shares that with his audience in a very human, genuine way. His songs are like snapshots or short stories about the images of places and persons he's met in his journey, which adds up to millions of miles. The house concert is from 4-6 pm, Sunday, June 6, '10, at Wildscape Acres, inside Harmony House. Reservations can be made by phone, 903/583-2661.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday night, July 10th, Jimmy LaFave & some of his band members from Austin, will be performing from 7:30 -9:30 pm at Harmony House. This is a first-time appearance for Jimmy here...such a treat (we just heard him at the Richardson Wildflower Festival in early May). Just to let you know how widespread Jimmy's popularity is, I received my first two reservations for his show on 4-19 in a "certified letter" from the Netherlands.



Green Team Tip of the Month

If possible, choose products with less packaging or recyclable packaging when making a purchase.

Member News

Kudos of the Month go to....



Abundant thanks to Joyce Peak and those who helped along the way for the creation of the astoundingly awesome banners gracing the sanctuary which reflect many streams of belief,

With blessing on retiring Board members Cynthia Evetts, Dianna Niemann-Harris and L.D. Clark and thanksgiving for their guidance of RRUU this past year.

All good wishes to our new RRUU Board members Paula Blackshear, Joyce Peak and Penny Bertrand along with re-elected President Marla Loturco, Vice-President Don Durland, and members at large Jim Murphy and Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

Warmest welcome to our two new members Marie Bellman and Laura Shehan who each made the choice to sign the membership book during May.

Blessings on the Silent Faries who responded to the need for more nursery space by lovingly switching rooms out by moving the classroom and nursery furniture. With so many babies in our nursery most morning and all of them close to crawling, enough room for them to move and play will make their first church experiences very positive!

Thanks to the Moveable Feast Chalice Circle for their interesting, provocative, educational and spiritually meaningful worship leadership May 23rd and for the awesome feast following.

The end of May we bid a farewell with much gratitude to Vicki Bradshaw who has contracted with us for some time to clean our shared, rented space weekly. We welcome our new custodians (who happen to also be RRUU members) Chris Gillentine and Kate Cherry.

Special thanks and appreciation to our Finance Committee, Dan Altoff, Marion Hill and treasurer Dianna Niemann-Harris along with ex-officio member President Marla Loturco for grappling with the realities of facts and figures to present a balanced budget with increases where possible. The budget was approved by the congregation for fiscal year 2011.

To Darrah Dunn, Worship Arts Chairperson and Musi-

cian who faithfully works behind the scenes to guide, direct and sometimes corral the WA Team, insure the chancel area is neat, clean and aesthetically pleasing each week, provide service music all summer and once or twice a month the rest of the year, schedule pulpit guests on a regular basis, leads or assists leading worship whenever needed and is willing to bring his “can do” attitude to everything he does.

Did you notice the high weeds are gone from across Harrison Street? We have Building Chairperson Doyle Adams to thank for contacting the city about the height of the weeds and gently reminding them of the need to clear that area.

Continuing thanks goes to Membership Committee Chairperson Carla Murphy for her monthly and sometimes daily attention to our membership records, needs of membership and energy in making newcomers feel welcome and wanted in our midst.

In The Loop



While RRUU has no regular employees, we do enjoy the assistance of contract staff in caring for needs in our church. Currently Jim Murphy does contact and oversight for our mowing needs contracted through Quiroz Lawn Care. Dianna Niemann-Harris is responsible for contact and oversight for custodial needs (Chris Gillentine and Kate Cherry, contractors) and our nursery/child care needs (Beth Wells-Lead Childcare Attendant, Melissa Holbrook – Childcare Attendant and Annabelle Dunn, Assistant Childcare Attendant).

Should you as a Friend or Member of RRUU have any questions, concerns, ideas or input on mowing or weed control speak with Jim. If you have a concern regarding the cleanliness of our shared space or child care, please speak with Dianna.

*The first duty of love
is to listen.*



Online Forums at NTAUUS

Every congregation has members involved in a wide range of Ministries. Though our sizes and structures differ, those Ministries have much in common. The North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalist Societies (NTAUUS) is opening new communication channels to help address some of these shared concerns. As a service to our thirteen congregations, our online forums allow people to share ideas, to discuss common problems and solutions.

Found on the NTAUUS website under "affinity groups" (www.ntauus.org/affinity.shtml) are discussion groups for:

- COA Teachers
- Lay Leadership Forum
- Membership & Church Stewardship
- Music
- Newsletter Editors and Reporters
- Property Managers
- UU Seminary Students Forum,
- Social Action Network (SANE)
- Webmasters

These groups are available to anyone. There are also five groups that have been created as private forums for pre-approved members:

- NTAUUS Board Members
- Directors of Religious Education (NATUURES)
- Our Whole Lives (OWL) Instructors
- Congregation Presidents
- Youth Advisors

To participate you simply need to register on the website. If you'd like to join one of the private forums and haven't been invited, just drop a note to webmaster@ntauus.org. Have a topic you'd like to discuss that's not on the list? Please let us know.

NTAUUS has also joined the world of Twitter and you can follow us at @NorthTexasUUs. We're tweeting on upcoming events of interest to our congregations and breaking news from within the UU universe in North Texas. We also have a Facebook page- just search for NTAUUS. Please add us to your friends list and join in the activity on our wall.

Children's Religious Education



Helen Schulze is not able to be with our children in June. Help is needed to fill in for her. If you are **willing to help with the Children's RE program**, please alert Helen or a Board member.

Adult Forum



No information was available for Adult Forum at the time of newsletter publication. Please watch the E-News for updates.

How To Begin

(Changing Your Life)

by [Forrest Church](#)

Begin by doing what you can. No more, but also no **less. Don't throw yourself against the wall. Walk around it. You can't do the impossible, but so much is possible. So many of the things you haven't tried you** still can do. To get around the wall, you can set out in either direction—the wall has two ends. The important thing is to start walking. Begin by doing what you can.



This is the fourth of 10 suggestions by Forrest Church. The other 9 can be viewed at UUA.org, , *Spiritual Life* , *Today's Readings*.

Board Bits

What your Board did at their last meeting, May 11th, 2010



Everyone on the board was in attendance with the exception of Cynthia Evetts. We started at 6:40 pm and went home around 8:30 pm. No additional members of the congregation were in attendance.

Don Durland acted as our Process Observer and time-keeper for the meeting.

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

Due to UUA recommendations and the small size of RRUU, the board voted to restructure the Membership Committee, Caring Team and Hospitality. The Caring Team and Hospitality will be subcommittees of the greater Membership committee. It should make coordination of their work easier.

Special reports/discussions were held on the the Board Manual (which will now be organized on flash drives instead of a notebook); Stewardship Campaign; Policies and Procedures Manual; and the dinner for the incoming / outgoing board members.

Planning was done for the Congregational Meeting on May 16, 2010.

The Committee on Ministry is expected to determine which two will serve the 2 year term and the one person for the one year term. It is recommended that the chair serve for two years if possible.

Further planning has been accomplished by Jim Murphy for the sound system and other necessary sanctuary changes. Before the June board meeting, interested parties should meet in the sanctuary at 6:00 pm for open discussion. We will need to plan a Church Work Day for rearranging the sanctuary.

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 June 8th, starting at 6:45 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 June 4th. Those wishing a few minutes **during the “open mic” will want to be ready to speak around 7:00 pm.**

Treasurer's Report



During May our Annual Campaign continued receiving a portion of my time and attention as treasurer. As of the Spring Congregational meeting twenty-four giving units (representing thirty-two members) had completed pledges for FY 2011 with a \$29,852 pledged. While we still have members to contact in order to determine their giving intentions, the newly approved budget for FY 2011 enjoys over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the budget covered in committed funds.

We do need a higher average of members and friends making some type of pledge/commitment in order to qualify for grants and other special considerations. If you have not yet turned in a commitment card or emailed one to treasurer@rruu.org now is the time. The recommendation for giving is to commit to what you know you can give (barring unforeseen circumstances) and then be a delight to the RRUU money managers by exceeding your pledge! If you need a commitment card please talk with or email the treasurer.

At the congregational meeting I was delighted to report for Fiscal Year 2010 year-to-date as of May 1, 2010 RRUU profit and loss was at a positive of \$10,543.83 less grant and matching funds of \$8,300.00 for a net profit of \$2,243.83. A remaining responsibility to be completed before my tenure as treasurer ends July 1, 2010 is to complete a recording of gifts-in-kind received and be able to include the dollar amount of in kind gifts in my final treasurer's report for the newsletter.

For the month of April RRUU income was \$1636.55 and expenses were \$3171.61 for a monthly loss of \$1535.06. The loss was related to a high insurance premium paid that month, three paid pulpit guests and expenditure of the budgeted amount for the stewardship campaign. **Our second Sunday “Share the Plate” offering in the amount of \$36.46 went to the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program in Grayson County. We also provided another 4 large bags of grocery and paper items to the food pantry with our “Fill the Plate” ongoing food drive.**

Should you have questions concerning this report or other aspects of our financial status, please email me at treasurer@rruu.org or call me at 903-327-2069 and I will happily respond to you.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dianna Niemann-Harris, Treasurer

Message from Marla

Marla Loturco, President, RRUU



Thank you to all who attended the May Congregational Meeting, either in person or by proxy. I appreciate the support you show by your participation. We accomplished all of the proposed business tasks but one. A new Board of Trustees was elected, a new Committee on Ministry was elected, a new Nominations Committee elected, new Goals were set for 2010-2011, and a new budget was approved. We could not take a vote on the By-Laws Amendment because not enough voting members who could not attend turned in a proxy. The amendment required 31 votes to pass (2/3 of voting membership) and there were 30 members in attendance or by proxy. The amendment has been postponed until the fall membership meeting. In case you haven't seen the results of the elections any place else -

Your new Board of Trustees:

Marla Loturco (2012) - President

Don Durland (2012) - Vice President

Paula Blackshear (2012) - Treasurer

Joyce Peak (2012) - Trustee At Large

Penny Bertrand (2011) - Trustee At Large

Amy Hoffman-Shehan (2011) - Trustee At Large

Jim Murphy (2011) - Trustee At Large

The Committee on Ministry

Carolyn Cameron, Jim Gauthier, Peter Schulze

The Nominating Committee

Cynthia Evetts, Elbert Hill, Shann Schubert

This has been a productive year for the Board. Those of you who attended the congregational meeting have heard the following in my report but I believe it should be repeated for those who read the newsletter. The following was my annual report.

The Board would like me to thank you, the congregation, for your wonderful support this last year. It has been a challenging learning experience for all involved. The Board, who mostly began this process as acquaintances, has become a cohesive supportive unit. **While we don't agree on all topics we have practiced talking out the differences, really listening to each other, and valuing each other's input.** I personally want to say to the board members, thank you, I have really appreciated working with all of you this past year.

None of us could have accomplished the work we have done without each member of the board taking an active part.

And we have accomplished a lot of church governance work in the year. A list of the major accomplishments includes:

- **Rewrote the Church ByLaws** – Adopted November 2009. Special thanks to Jim Murphy, L.D. Clark, Don Durland and Gerry Shehan.
- **Policy regarding certification of Petitions.** Special thanks to Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

- **Behavioral Covenant** – Adopted November 2009. Special thanks to Daniel Polk for our workshop, to all who participated in the workshop, and to Cynthia Evetts for her elegant writing of our ideas into a covenant.

- **Green Guidelines** – Adopted November 2009. Special thanks to Amy Hoffman-Shehan and the Green Team.

- **Planning and holding the three Town Meetings in October** and the Membership Meeting in November.

- **Active participation in NTAUUS.** Special thanks to Jim Murphy and Carla Murphy.

- **Developed a short term plan of action.**

- **Developed a new Logo.** Special thanks to the logo team which included Kris Riek, Don Durland, Douglas Strong, and others at various times. Thanks to Allen Shaw for his company's expertise in changing the resulting ideas into a graphic form.

- **Have taken major steps in the cleanup process to handle the mold problem.** Special thanks to Bruce Cameron for personally doing so much of the work and Amy Hoffman-Shehan for working with the owner. We still need to get the carpet professionally cleaned.

- **Have held one fundraising event with more in the thought stages.** Very special thanks to Chalice Art and everyone who purchased jewelry from them.

- **Have moved the church website to a more secure environment and a new look is in the works.** Special thanks to Allen Shaw for this process.

- **Have written and received two grants from NTAUUS** for our sound system and our long range planning. Very special thanks to Jim Murphy and Tim Riek for the sound system and Amy Hoffman-Shehan for the long range planning.

- **Work has been started on a Board Manual for the incoming board.**

- **Work has been started on a Policies and Procedures Manual.** Special thanks to all who attended the P&P Workshop and have contributed to the writing. Special thanks to Amy Hoffman-Shehan for her Building Use Policy & Jim Murphy for his Building Policy.

- **Successful stewardship drive is in process** – between our fundraisers and pledge increases we have reached our short term goal of an increase in income of \$5000. Special thanks to Suzanne Durland, Don Durland and Dianna Niemann-Harris.

- **New Budget Proposal.** Special thanks to Dan Althoff, Marion Hill and Dianna Niemann-Harris.

If I have missed any projects, or missed naming people who worked on projects, I apologize. I also want to thank the quiet heroes who have so graciously donated specific extras to assist RRUU and the board.

Not all of our goals have been totally met. Our average attendance is about 40 instead of the 55 goal we had set.

We had set a goal of five new members and five new friends between October 1, 2009 and Feb 1, 2010 which we did not meet. We have been concentrating on the underlying structure, when that is solidly in place it will be much easier to address the growth issues.

Share the Plate with *SpiritHorse*

Every penny, dime, nickel, quarter and dollar put in the offering in the form of cash the second Sunday of each month is gratefully received and lovingly given away by Red River Unitarian Universalist Church as part of our Social Action Stewardship. The social action team determines which programs will receive our gifts on which month while the rest of us dig a bit deeper on second Sundays to insure the light of the RRUU chalice glows beyond the walls of our rented space.

The June “Share the Plate” offering will go to *SpiritHorse*, a therapeutic riding program in Corinth, TX which serves 11 counties (including Grayson) at NO CHARGE to the participants. Some learned more about this program May 30 when we were blessed to have Charles Fletcher, founder and owner of *SpiritHorse* as our 5th Sunday Forum speaker.

SpiritHorse is the only center in America that provides all private therapeutic horseback riding services free to people with disabilities, children who are victims of abuse, at-risk-youth, youth after drug-rehab and battered women. They currently serve over 400 children and adults at the Corinth location with 55 children on our waiting list. In eight years of operation, as the result of research and development and the faithful application of their methods by certified instructors, 62 children have spoken the first word of their lives, 39 children walk their first steps to reach their ponies, and 38 children have sat up for the first time at *SpiritHorse*.

You may learn more about this program online at: <http://www.spirithorsetherapy.com/> or by contacting acting social action chairperson Dianna Niemann-Harris. Also if you

prefer to give by check rather than cash for “Share the Plate” please put your check in one of the pew envelopes and clearly mark it *SpiritHorse*.



Letter of Thanks to RRUU



from the Callie Clinic

May 4, 2010

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church

Ms. Neimann-Harris,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Callie Clinic staff, and especially our clients, I would like to thank you for your recent donation to our food pantry. Our agency provides services through state and federal grants which can fall short in certain areas so our agency relies on donations to reduce these shortfalls. Your donation will enable us to provide additional services to our clients and is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,
Gwynne Palmore
Executive Director



-mail Etiquette Tip of the Month

Do not forward an email message to a group that was sent to you as private message, unless you have the permission of the original sender.

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.



MI NDFULNESS, a Meditation Chalice Circle, is not meeting during the month of June. Facilitator is Richard Newlin.



FREETHI NKERS, a Humanist Interest Circle will meet the second Sunday, June 13 at 12:45 pm in Fellowship Hall. Facilitator is Jim Gauthier. **ALL FREETHINKERS ARE WELCOME!**



GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle will meet Tues, June 15 at 7:30 at the home of Amy Hoffman-Shehan. They'll get updates on the research in progress and finalize the theme and publicity schedule for 2011 Earth Day. **ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE EARTH ARE WELCOME!**



CHR I ST I A N U U, a Christian-Centered Chalice Circle is suspending meetings for a season. However, along with the Worship Arts Team, they will host a carpool to an early morning Easter service on April 4, 2010 for those who wish to participate in a traditional Christian worship prior to Sunday services at RRUU. Please contact the Chalice Coordinator.



MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking, Dining and Fellowship Chalice Circle will not meet in June. 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 June activities are planned at this time. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. **ANYONE WHO LOVES THE OUTDOORS IS WELCOME.**



RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT, a Nature-Based Spirituality Chalice Circle. Earth Spirit will meet Friday, June 18th, at 7:30 at RRUU to celebrate summer solstice. Facilitator is Penny Armstrong. **NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**



UJJAM, a Music-Making interest circle will meet Friday, June 4 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. Members hope to attend several of this summer's free music programs in Denison and Sherman. **ALL MUSICIANS AND LISTENERS ARE WELCOME.**



LAI D B A C K B O O K G R O U P, 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 R I T W I T H I N, a New Thought Chalice Circle will meet the first and third Wednesdays in June at 6 pm at Jan Fletcher's home in Sherman. A study of Emily Cady's book, "Lessons In Truth" is the current study and discussion topic. 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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 PO Box 1806
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Phone: 903-465-5515
 E-mail: 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 (2010)
 Cynthia Evetts,
 Secretary (2010)

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: Doug Strong
 Caring: Doug Strong
 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