

Red River Ramblings

Volume 7, Issue 9

September, 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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September 5th
Worship Arts Team
"Summer Sharing"

For our Labor Day Weekend service the Worship Arts Team at RRUU invites you to bring a 2-3 minute reading to share with the congregation. Whether this is a poem, a piece of prose, something written by your favorite author, or an original piece, it should be spiritual and/or inspirational in nature. Since it is the end of summer, perhaps you'd like to choose something with a summer/recreational theme, or maybe you'd like to commemorate the holiday with a work-related topic. Come and share your reading, and let others share with you.

September 12th
The Rev. Barbara Morgan, preaching
Journey & Transformation

We welcome again, Rev. Morgan who will preach a three-part series based on "The Divine Comedy" by Dante Alighieri. This Sunday she will examine "Hell"; Oct 17th "Purgatory" and

Nov 14 "Heaven". You don't have to read Dante's masterwork in order to "get" the message of her sermons. She has delivered these sermons once before, and some people were so moved they went out and bought "The Divine Comedy" and read it in-between sermons!

September 19th
Worship Arts Team
Annual Ingathering and Water Communion



With summer behind us and autumn closing in, it is time again for our annual water communion. This unique and meaningful ritual, in which each member or family representative pours a sample of water into a common vessel, represents our coming together as a society of like minded individuals, united by our strong love and desire for diversity. Often, members like to bring a sample of water they collected during a summer vacation, or they might bring it from their own kitchen tap. Choose which water sample best represents

you/yours, and add it to RRUU's 2010 water communion vessel.

September 26th
Rev. Dianna Niemann-Harris, preaching

Dianna will speak with us "On Being Real" complete with the Velveteen Rabbit for our Time For All Ages. Celebrating the 20th anniversary of her ordination the last day of September, she will reflect on how we become and remain "real" as embodied spirits in a not-so-spirit-friendly culture. Dianna was ordained in the United Church of Christ and has begun the process of being in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist organization. Dianna is an Associate Chaplain at Texoma Medical Center, and works part-time at Bonham Nursing Center and as a social worker/chaplain for Victory Home Health and Hospice.



Come One, come all to the Service Auction
Fri. Sept 10
7 pm! Food, Drink, & Fun.



Adult Forum
 Worship & Children's RE

10:00am
 11:15am

Calendar of Events

September, 2010

1-- Wed at 7 pm; SPIRIT WITHIN, a New Thought Chalice circle

3--Fri at 7 pm; UJJAM, a Music Interest Circle

10--Fri All Church Service Auction 7 pm

11--Sat PFFFT, an Outdoor Activity Interest Circle

12--Sun at 12:45; FREETHINKERS, a Humanist Circle

15--Wed at 7 pm; SPIRIT WITHIN, a New Thought Chalice Circle

16--Thurs at noon; MINDFULNESS, a Meditation Chalice Circle

17--Fri at 6:30, MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking & Dining Chalice Circle

21--Tues at 7:30; GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Interest Circle

24--Fri at 7:30; RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT, a Nature-Based Chalice Circle



Save The Date

One way to get to know UU's from other congregations in a relaxed setting. RRUU has been asked to join Community UU in Plano and Horizon UU Church for a camp out at Eisenhower State Park on April 8-10, 2011. More details and registration will be available in the early spring

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All October newsletter submissions are due to
newsletter@rruu.org
by September 25th, at 5:00 p.m.
.....

September Birthdays

4 - Judy Donahue

7 - Eliot Tracz

10 - Kara Harrelson

18 - Gerry Shehan

26 - Paula Blackshear

30 - L. D. Clark

30 - Dianna Niemann-Harris



Borrowed Hope by Eloise Cole

Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Lost and hopeless feelings accompany me daily,
pain and confusion are my companions.
I know not where to turn.

Looking ahead to future times
does not bring forth images of renewed hope.
I see troubled times pain-filled days, and more tragedy.
Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have mislaid mine.

Hold my hand and hug me; listen to all my ramblings,
recovery seems so far distant.
The road to healing seems like a long and lonely one.
Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have mislaid mine.

Stand by me,
offer me your presence, your heart and your love.
Acknowledge my pain, it is so real and ever present.



Green Team Tip of the Month

Give a hoot, don't pollute!

Member News

Kudos of the Month, and Thanks, go to....



...Gerry Shehan for delivering five bags and one box of "Fill the Plate" gifts to the food pantry in Durant and to The Hills for standing ready to do so if/when/as needed.

...our Worship Arts Team for recruiting awesome people, new and familiar, to serve as pulpit guests at RRUU and to the Recommenders who are out there being attentive to the possibilities and passing on information to WAT about potential speakers.

...Megan Dolby Jones for her faithful ministry among us especially during the last year, to Douglas Morgan Strong for setting a magnificent table for Megan's "Swan Song High Coffee"; and to Chalice Art for providing a marvelous parting gift for the church to give Megan.

...grateful thanks to Charlie Mathis, Tim Riek, Don Mathis and Dianna Niemann-Harris for making arrangements and picking up the RRUU room dividers from storage. The dividers are now clean and ready for use as part of the sanctuary space reconfiguration.

...Jim Murphy and Tim Riek, Sound System Junkies who have spent untold hours choosing equipment, planning layout and preparing to install the new sound system which comes to us via a grant from the North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalist Societies.

...the generous RRUU Second Mile Givers! RRUU provided a backpack and school supplies along with \$150 in gift certificates to the needy high school senior, plus we had three volunteers who helped with *Operation Warrior*.

...Don Durland, Board of Trustees Vice-President who is supervising our contract staff: custodian Penny Armstrong and child care attendants Beth Wells, Melissa Holbrook, Amanda Chandler and Annabelle Dunn (support attendant). Thanks also to Jim Murphy, Board Member-at-Large who coordinates mowing.

...our ongoing and infinite gratitude to our RRUU Musicians who offer song, guitar, banjo, dulcimer, flute and keyboard music which enrich our weekly gatherings beyond measure

...Charlie Mathis, teenage mover and shaker at RRUU who grew the idea for RRUU logo printed grocery bags, researched the possibility and presented it to the Finance Committee. Watch for news of this teen-inspired project and great bags for two bucks a piece!

...Board President Marla Loturco who gives 20 hours or more of her time weekly attending to details, follow-up, communications and the various and asunder needs of a growing church family administered by, for and with the congregation.

...Dianna Niemann-Harris for organizing and overseeing the RRUU Logo Polo/Tee Shirt fundraiser. See the rack in the entryway for tees (\$15) and polos (\$20) which remain in stock for sale!

...people helping people help people Marla Loturco and Kat Watson who donate time as witnesses to advance directives for the homebound when needed. (Note: when they did so this month for an elderly gentleman he wanted to "keep" them both!)

We Remember and Give Thanks

August 2010 marked a difficult journey for RRUU members Jackie Blue and Christine Davis. After an out-of-the-blue diagnosis of multiple cancerous brain tumors in July, Christine chose to decline treatment and instead spend her time at home with the partner she loved and surrounded by friends. Christine quickly became a Hospice patient, sharing her acceptance, love, humor and resilient spirit from an electric hospital bed in the corner of her cozy apartment.

During her final weeks, Christine listened to custom made country music CD's, cried when she needed to, laughed when she was able, hosted the wedding of a dear friend in her bedroom and savored the Cotton Patch chicken dinners lovingly purchased and delivered for her by many of her RRUU family. On Sunday, August 22, 2010 with her beloved partner beside her, Christine died and moved on to whatever is beyond this physical life.

While her quiet presence and gentle spirit will be missed, we give thanks at RRUU that her journey intersected with many of ours. We remember with joy the day Jack and Christine stood in sacred space at RRUU and exchanged their wedding vows. We recall with awe the loving care Christine gave when Jack was ill, and which Jack returned during Christine's dying process. We are thankful for Christine's life and were humbled to host her Life Celebration memorial service August 28th in the place where she married the love of her life.

Children's Religious Education



Helen Schulze continues to study our seven principles with our children in September. Offers of help and involvement are always welcome. If you are willing to help with the Children's RE program, please alert Helen or a Board member.

Service Auction



Friday, September 10th, 7-9:00 p.m. in the sanctuary at RRUU. Watch the Wednesday e-news for details.

NEWSLETTER / E-NEWS Survey results:

A total of 22 people, or 24% of members/friends responded to the survey. The overall patterns of responses were very positive, and several people offered written comments. The survey asked 10 questions. Here's a summary of what people said (note: not all numbers add to 100 because some people didn't reply to each question).

1. What is your reading style? All of the respondents receive their newsletter via email and 61% read and refer back to it throughout the month, while 22% read it and either delete or rarely look at it again.

Comments: *I read the newsletter - but not necessarily when it arrives. Sometimes, it takes me 10 days!* ~ *Not mailing the newsletter saves money and paper - it is eco-friendly.* ~ *Do you want us to take the survey each week, or just once? This is my 2nd time.* ~ *The information and articles are well written.* ~ *Will be interesting to see if anyone says they read it online at the website.* ~ *I save it to my desktop, usually read it later but occasionally the same day. I refer back to it once or twice a month to refresh my memory beyond the weekly update.*

2. How do you receive your newsletter? Everyone receives their newsletter on their computer and like it that way. Comment: *I think we should be flexible and do what is needed. I hope the recent practice of mailing to those who need it mailed is working. Are we supplying paper copies on the visitor table for new visitors to pick up?* {Note: Newsletters are mailed to those who request it and copies are on the visitor table.}

3. How much of the newsletter do you read? Over half (56%) read each issue cover to cover with another 44% reading at least 3/4th of each issue. Comments: *I don't look at links or videos but read everything else.* ~ *I find the articles thoughtful and appropriate.* ~ *The whole thing with the exception of links and/or videos.*

4. What articles do you read? In descending order: A month of Sundays, **This month's worship leaders**, Schedule of events, **President's Letter/Adult Forum/Birthdays/Social Action news** (tied), Chalice Circle news/Board Bits/Caring news/wider UU community, **Treasurer's report**, Social Events, **Children's Religious Education**.

5. What's missing from our newsletter? The thing people most find missing is "Personal Spiritual Essays" (63% of respondents checked this), followed by poetry (50%); biographical sketches on members (new or long-term) (44%); letters to the editors (31%); with 25% wanting Sunday statistics; updates on church committees, stories. 19% would like to have information and updates on stewardship information. Comments: *It's fine the way it is.* ~ *I think the board bits and letter from the President can be shortened and make room for more of the personal touch items.*

General Feedback: *It is important tool for the congregation and provides a running history of who we are.* ~ *We are*

blessed by having people with both the skills and time to put our newsletter together. They deserve our thanks. ~ *How about a new name? Red River Ramblings sounds corny to me.* ~ *I love it! The team does a great job but see #5 if you want to expand the newsletter further. You guys ROCK!* ~ *Think it's pretty damn good, better than many and it looks very professional.* ~ *Think we might be ready to have a renaming? Suggestions from the Readers?* ~ *I enjoy the newsletter. I think the team has done a wonderful job.*

When asked to rate the newsletter on relevance, appearance, graphics, importance and effectiveness, respondents ratings were all "excellent" or "good", with one person feeling relevance of articles was "average" and one checked "rather not say" in reference to the newsletter's effectiveness. Comments: *I am a friend of the church and though I do not attend much any more, I really enjoy keeping up with my old acquaintances at RRUU.* ~ *Don't know the reading habits of others, if people don't bother to read then its cause is lost.* ~ *Need more about Adult Forum upcoming.* ~ *We need to have multiple approaches to promote activities.* ~ *The newsletter is an important document, not only for today, but as a historical record of our past.*

Survey results relating to the weekly e-news: Asked how often people read the e-news, 89% said they read it every week, with another 6% saying "nearly every week." Comments: *Effective, attractive and efficient* ~ *I think it is very well done!* ~ *I like it a lot - helps me keep track of what's going on.* ~ *I'm disappointed that we don't have updates from Adult Forum or children's RE every week* ~ *I appreciate that it is short and seems to limit content to the specific week in question, unless it is some really important future event (i.e. annual meeting, service auction, etc.)*

What people like about the e-news: **Knowing what's upcoming next Sunday** ~ 94%; Reminders of upcoming activities/programs ~ 89%; The look of the publication ~ 78%; Web links useful ~ 50%; Good PR tool ~ 50%; UU Video clips ~ 28%.

SUMMARY: It appears that the church newsletter and the e-news are well received, appreciated and read documents. Thanks for all who participated.

How To Begin (*Changing Your Life*) by [Forrest Church](#)

Begin by cleaning up your slate. Don't erase the past. File it by experience, to keep it handy should you need it. But don't obsess over it. Ticking off a growing list of grievances gets you nothing from life's store. As for the things on your "To Do" list that you'll probably never do, place them under a statute of limitations.

When they serve no longer to inspire but only to haunt you, x them off. Not only is there no reason to carry over unnecessary indictments from one day to the next, but you'll also never reform the things you can about yourself, until you stop trying to reform the things you can't. **Begin by cleaning up your slate**

This is the 7th of 10 suggestions by Forrest Church. The other 9 can be viewed at UUA.org, , [Spiritual Life](#)

Board Bits

What your Board did at their last meeting, August 10, 2010



Board Members in attendance included Penny Armstrong, Don Durland, Amy Hoffman-Shehan, Jim Murphy and Marla Loturco. Doug Strong and Dianna Niemann-Harris were invited to contribute their experience to several of the discussions.

The meeting began at 6:40 pm and finished at 9:20 pm. See full board minutes for details.

In addition to the standard agenda the board discussed: Voted that standard reports by board members be made in writing prior to the meeting.

RRUU current Mission & Vision statements (Penny and Douglas formed a task force and will report back to the board at the next meeting).

Dianna Niemann-Harris was appointed Treasurer through June 2011 on the recommendation of the nominating committee.

The board has voted not to appoint another trustee-at-large at this time. When all board members are present the president will abstain from voting.

Final research is being done to determine the date for rearranging the sanctuary.

Membership attendance/Growth: Current membership is 49. RRUU needs to have a more intentional process for visitor greeting and follow-up. Marla Loturco is acting as ex-officio chair of the Membership Committee.

Board members will assist with greeting visitors when present in lobby prior to worship service.

Sunday Board Rep Duties expanded to include attendance count & program in history book.

New Business

Set date of October Membership Meeting – October 24, 2010.

Ways & Means committee needs to write the policy for directed donations and major fundraisers.

Money donated by Chalice Arts from the DBLE jewelry sales was put into the DBLE scholarship fund.

If you would like to see the full board minutes – they will be posted in the “Board Book” in the back of the Sanctuary as soon as they are available. The next board meeting is September 14th, starting at 6:40 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 September 9th. Those wishing a few minutes during the “open mic” will want to be ready to speak around 7:00 pm.

Treasurer's Report



And here you and I thought the last Treasurer's Report from my computer had been sent out already! When our newly elected Treasurer, Paula Blackshear found the position she had accepted was simply more than she could tackle in

light of personal and family responsibilities, RRUU was again in a financial recording quandary. After a diligent search, the nominating committee approached me to ask for “one more year” managing our church book keeping. After prayerful reflection, I agreed to accept the position of Treasurer working with an apprentice, which the Board of Trustees unanimously accepted. Our nominating committee is working to find the right person to work beside me and learn the far-less-complicated-than-last-year duties of this office.

I celebrate the far-less-complicated-than-last-year with no small amount of relief and pride as our son, Tyler Harris, re-programmed the donated laptop and set up Quick Books so that this year the book keeping categories actually correspond to the budget! In addition, we also have only contract staff at RRUU this year which means the calendar year end accounting will be a snap.

For the month of July, RRUU had an income of \$2,740.91 and experienced expenses of 3,396.31. This leaves us in the red for the month at -665.40. It is noteworthy that \$541.42 of the expenses are to be reimbursed from the NTAUUS grant money. This means in reality our giving fell only with 123.98 short of expenses in July...not a bad start to a new fiscal year, considering July is a high vacation month which resulted in lower attendance and therefore less offering than average.

Membership Meeting and Requirements



October semi-annual Membership Meeting is scheduled for Sunday October 24, 2010 after the worship service. Everyone, members and friends, are invited to attend the meeting. One item on the agenda is the change to the bylaws. This change was originally proposed for the May 2010 Membership Meeting, however, we did not have the necessary two thirds of voting membership attendance in combination of personal attendance or in proxy to hold a vote. All voting members need to consider either attending or giving a proxy.

Eligibility for voting is set in our bylaws. “Section 2: Requirement for Voting Membership. Individuals who have been members of the Church for 30 days or more and who have (as an individual or part of a family unit) made a contribution of record during the last 12 months, which must have occurred at least 30 days prior to the meeting, shall have the right to vote at all official Church meetings.”

If you are not yet a member and would like to be able to vote in this meeting you must sign the book by September 23, 2010. All voting members must make or confirm a contribution of record by September 23.

Message from Marla

Marla Loturco, President, RRUU



For the past few weeks our church mission statement has been placed on the front of the order of worship. It was adopted over eight years ago. It is there as a reminder of what we hold dear, and what we expect and hope for ourselves as a people of faith.

It is important that we ponder what it is that brings us together and keeps us engaged. When you read the mission statement does it reflect what you want from and for the church? Churches, like many human institutions, stay healthy by looking critically at goals, covenants, missions, values and visions. It is time that we revisit our mission and vision. Why? So that we can collectively embrace a way to fulfill the mission and vision we claim. (In business and politics this process concludes with a "five-year" plan.)

Your board has set up a task force to design the perfect approach for us to think, ponder, consider, muse, and mull over some pretty hefty and important questions: Why are we here? What do we expect from our faith, our community and one another? Where do we see ourselves in days and years yet to come? Are we fulfilling what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist individually and collectively? WHEW!

The task force will report to the Board at our September meeting with a process everyone is encouraged (and dare I say, expected) to be part of. Fortunately we have funding from NTAUUS (North TX Association of UU Societies) to have a consultant work with us and guide us through what is called a Mission/Vision process.

Missions and Visions are statements that explain our purpose for existence, now and in the future. Some experts say that the Vision Statement is the general dream, the Mission Statement the answer to who we are and why we exist.

For me, I like thinking about vision as "Our Dream." We need to develop a picture of the congregation's future based on the values we hold dear. Perhaps we start by asking, "What do we want the congregation to look like in five or ten years as a result of its efforts in ministry, programming, and outreach?" The vision of the UUA might be "to become an antiracist, anti-oppression, multicultural institution." What is ours? Out of "Our Dream" comes a definition, brief and to the point and consistent with the Mission of "who we are and why we exist". Healthy congregations think about these things.

Peter L. Steinke, a consultant with the Alban Institute talks about healthy congregations. (see <https://www.uua.org/events/uuuniversity/2006/13113.shtml> for the entire article.) He outlines one characteristic of a Healthy Congregation as: "Healthy congregations **focus on mission.**" This does not mean merely that the congregation has a mission statement, but that it uses that mission statement to organize its activities. A good mission statement, Steinke noted, is no longer than a sentence, with no more than one comma, "can be understood by a 12-year-old and can be repeated at gunpoint." Mission helps mobilize the energy of the community; if the congregation isn't focused on mission, it will focus on its past, its budget, problems or something else.

To be effective, "Our Dream" and "Who we are and why we exist" will be owned by everyone who calls RRUU their religious home. To be fully lived, Mission statements require the development of specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound goals and objectives. If this sounds arduous and grueling, it really isn't. While not a walk in the park, the

process is a deeply spiritual one that promises to bring our religious life into focus.

From many voices (as in *everyone*) will come clarity, direction and insight. Imagine a religion that actually invites, authorizes and (dare I say) expects that the people in the pews shape, mold and even **dictate the essence of what their religious community's mission and vision shall be.** A really rare privilege and utterly unique experience. **I know I want to be part of the process, don't you?**

P.S. Another UUA source you might want to check on is <http://www.uua.org/documents/congservices/visionmissioncovenant.pdf>

Voices of our Liberal Religion: "Come to Church Anyway!"

- Victoria Weinstein

Last Sunday morning I picked up the phone in the office at the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. After I said, "Good morning, Unitarian Church," a woman's voice said, "Good morning! Can you tell me what the topic is this morning?" Uh-oh. I thought real fast and said, "The topic is, "COME TO CHURCH ANYWAY!" Come no matter what the topic is, because your church needs you and you need your church, and it doesn't matter what the preacher's going to say!" **I was the preacher that morning, and I knew it was true.**

The woman patiently waited while I finished my enthusiastic pitch, winding down by lamely adding, "Um, the topic is actually 'On Resilience.'" "Thank you," she said, and hung up. I'm glad she had a good sense of humor and was nice enough to greet me enthusiastically at the coffee hour after the second service. I had told the story to the congregation as an introduction to the Offering and she was a big enough sport to get a kick out of it, and to thank me for urging her to "Come Anyway!"

Sometimes I wish we could do away with advertising sermon topics in advance altogether and just say for every week, "Today's sermon is called COME ANYWAY." Sermons are living things. They are a response to our life together and may wind up taking a very different direction than what the preacher originally advertised. You never know. Come anyway. The church needs you. You are, in fact, the church. Worship services are very consistent around here: The Music Director and choir prepare beautiful music, the lay readers are terrific, the Children's Message is adorable and meaningful, the ushers and the flowers gracious and lovely, the coffee hour sumptuous, and your minister does her utmost best to craft a relevant, thought-provoking sermon. But for my money, the most powerful moment that we share comes in the silence right before our meditation. How does that happen? It happens simply by virtue of all those people in all those pews, breathing and being together as one in the spirit of hope and healing, gathered not by common belief (amazingly enough) but by common values and common need. Come be a part of that. Come "Anyway!"

Victoria Weinstein is a minister at [First Parish Unitarian](#), Nor-

Share the Plate

with...

The Callie Clinic



"Share the Plate" offerings in August were designated for back to school assistance. Our cash collection the second Sunday of \$30 went to the Salvation Army along with about \$150 worth of school supplies. These gifts are in addition to the \$160 cash and \$100 worth of school supplies given to *Families Feeding Families* in early August. (The Back2School program at FFF closed when classes began there so they declined any additional supplies).

Our ongoing "Fill the Plate" donations of cash, paper/hygiene products, and nonperishable food continue to be awesome! Early in August we sent five bags and a box of items to the *Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry* in Durant for distribution. All are encouraged to bring smaller sized toothpaste, deodorant, hair care products, cleaning products and/or paper products (tissues, toilet paper, feminine needs items, paper-towels) and place them in the green bins in the rear of the sanctuary. A small lock box is also on the table for those who prefer to give money for the food pantry to purchase food items at 10 cents a pound.

Our September "Share the Plate" is Sunday 9-12-10 when all cash and designated checks in the offering will be donated to the Callie Clinic. Throughout the Texoma area (Grayson, Fannin and Cook counties in Texas, and Bryan County, Oklahoma), the Callie Clinic is the only program serving exclusively those who are HIV positive or have AIDS. Please keep this in mind as you make a choice about giving on September 12th.

The Rainbow Principles

Respect all beings

offer fair and kind treatment to all

Yearn to learn

Grow in spirit and mind

Believe in my ideas and act on them

Insist on peace, freedom, and justice for all

Value the connections in creation



Social Action Committee News



On Sunday, September 19th at 2 pm the Annual Alan Ross Texas Freedom Pride Parade, aka the Gay Pride Parade will be held in Dallas. It begins at the junction of Cedar Springs Road and Wycliff Avenue and ends at Robert E. Lee Park. From noon until 5 pm the North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalist Societies (NTAUUS) will staff a booth at the Texas Freedom Pride Festival. The Festival takes place in the park, with a variety of musicians, speakers, and other performers. Noted activist and author Larry Kramer is the parade Grand Marshal this year, and entertainment includes AIDS Memorial Quilt founder and San Francisco AIDS Foundation co-founder Cleve Jones, and musician Anton Shaw and Her Band. For more information see our NTAUUS representative Jim Murphy or email him at pappa.smurphy@suddenlink.net

Are you interested in how RRUU is engaged in Social Action? Would you like to be a part of deciding where our *Share the Plate* and *Fill the Plate* gifts are distributed? Do you have ideas of how our congregation might be more involved locally and/or globally? If you answered YES, or even MAYBE to any of the above, please join us for a Social Action Focus in Adult Forum on Sunday, September 26, 2010! All Social Action Advocates are warmly invited to be a part of our process as we make decisions for social action over the next 6 months and determine how the congregational action gifts will be given for use in the Texoma region. The Social Action Team meets twice a year during Adult Forum and via Email if there are decisions to be made between meetings. This is a significant way to become involved, to be a part of changing the world. As Edward Everett Hale writes:

"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do keep me from doing what I can."

"But I don't have TIME to..."

One Hour (or less) Ways
to Do Your Part



REFRESHMENTS for the after worship coffee time are needed each week. Prerequisites: A willingness to make or bring one or two light items on a given Sunday and place them in fellowship hall. Time Involved: 30 minutes total if you choose to bring something from the store, a bit longer if you want to make something. To Get Involved: Sign up on the white board in the entry way (to your left as you face the sanctuary doors) and bring whatever on whichever week you signed up for.

Community Social Action Opportunities



All of us have them but we certainly don't tell other people. We dust over or around thinking we really *should* do something, then they sit untouched until the dust piles up again. "They" are those DVD's we just don't watch anymore. Many great movies we've seen enough times are now designated dust depositories.

Transform those flicks into social action! With the switch over from VHS to DVD and many nursing homes have "lost" their movie collection! Get out the dust rag, clean those covers, and bring DVD movies you no longer watch to RRUU...and they will find homes in nursing care facilities in our area. Just place your used-but-usable movies in the box marked Entertainment for the Elderly on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you attach a note with your name and the value of the DVD our treasurer will include it as an "in kind" gift on your annual giving statement!

Other great dust collectors in our homes can also make life more wonderful for those living in nursing homes. Many residents have very little money and do their gift shopping via Bingo prizes. Knick Knacks, lotions or creams, wall decorations, men's hats, photo albums, stationary, gift books and small toys are all good items to donate for seniors in nursing homes to "buy" with Bingo Bucks to give as gifts.

Bring your small items for nursing home shoppers to RRUU and place them in or by the basket marked Bingo Prizes. They will magically morph into delight for some resident who is able to give a gift because of you! If you are in doubt as to the "appropriateness" of an item, just bring it in. When something is donated which cannot be used in a facility, the Activity Directors take the items to thrift stores and barter for more suitable items!

A Real Life Fairy Tale "The Brilliant, Smart, Very Wise Teenager" or "How Spiffy Grocery Bags are Born"



Once upon a time there was a brilliant, smart, very wise teenager. Unlike many people his age, this teenager thought his church was a fairly good place (for a church) and really liked the new logo. The brilliant, smart, very wise teenager saw a crazy woman selling logo embroidered shirts one day and thought, "Wouldn't it be cool to have shopping bags with that logo on them?"

So he talked to the crazy woman selling the shirts, even though that was sort of a scary thing to do. To his surprise, she said, "Good Idea! Why don't you check and see how we could do that?"

The teenager sort of thought the adult could have just taken the idea and run with it, but he said, "Okay." That day he got on-line and checked one site after another until he found a place where the bags could be made at a very, very good price. He emailed the crazy lady who told the finance committee the details who took the matter up with the Board of Trustees who said, "Let's go for it!"

The brilliant, smart, very wise teenager and the crazy lady then talked to the graphics magician who tweaked the logo and twisted some words and designed a specially adapted logo to go on the bags. After the design was sent to the bag ladies, the teen and lady and magician all eyeballed the sample, and it was good. It was very good.

And so the bags were ordered for people at the church to buy for \$2 and to use as a gift for new members and to haul things and stuff around here and there, now and again from place to place. And that, dear readers, is how the spiffy grocery bags at RRUU were born, thanks to a brilliant, smart, very wise teenager named Charlie Mathis!

Ads as Conversation Starters

RRUU has some awesome advertising upcoming in the Fall issue of *Texoma Living!* Magazine, and in the full season of playbills for the *Sherman Community Players* and *Theatricks!* Thanks to some members who appreciate the importance of letting people know we are here, (and who recognize a limited budget leads to limited advertising) who have funded these two projects.

While these well designed and inviting ads speak boldly for themselves, they can also be a conversation starter for all of us in promoting RRUU. It's easy to ask others if they read *Texoma Living!* and then ever-so-casually mention our church advertises with them. Now there is a simple way to encourage friends or co-workers to look for our ad and read it! Attending a performance in Sherman is a good time to comment on the RRUU ad to someone you know (or someone you don't know) during pre/post play conversation. A casual comment of how interesting that church advertised sounds may be enough for a like minded person to read it more carefully and find their way to this haven of liberal theology.

The folks at *Texoma Living!* (903-892-2400) are always looking for people to help distribute the free magazine and are especially interested in having it available in new places. Give them a call to get a supply to leave out for people where you work, or get your nails done, or see the doctor, or get your car serviced. Waiting rooms are great homes for *Texoma Living!* Let's be proactive and make the most of these wonderful ads!



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 Circle, meets Thurs Sept. 16 at noon at the home of Carla Murphy in Whitesboro. Facilitator is Richard Newlin. **NEW AND EXPERIENCED MEDITATORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**



RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT, a Nature-Based Spirituality Circle, meets seasonally at the Church. Facilitator is Penny Armstrong. **NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**



FREETHINKERS, a Humanist Circle, meets the second Sunday of each month in Fellowship Hall at 12:45. The next meeting will be Sept. 12. Facilitator is Jim Gauthier. **ALL FREETHINKERS ARE WELCOME!**



UUJAM, a Music-Making Interest Group, meets the first Friday of each month at 7 pm at the home of Jan Fletcher in Sherman. The next meeting will be held Fri, Sept. 3. The JAM meets in an informal circle to share favorite songs and all musicians and listeners are welcome. Bring your instruments, songs and snack/drink to share. Facilitator is Jan Fletcher. **ALL MUSIC MAKERS AND LISTENERS ARE WELCOME!**



GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle, meets the Third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the home of Amy Hoffman-Shehan in Sherman. Sept. 2nd the Green Team will represent the Earth Day Festival at a shared table with RRUU at the Austin College Service Opportunity Fair, & on Sept. 18th we'll share a booth space with Texoma Landscapes at Sherman Arts Fest to promote the Earth Day Festival.



LAI D BACK BOOK GROUP, a Book Reading and Discussion Interest Group, meets periodically to discuss the selected reading and share insights. The group discusses the selection via email. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. **ALL WHO ENJOY THOUGHTFUL LITERATURE ARE WELCOME!**

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle, meets on moveable dates at moveable locations. The next Movable Feast is September 17, at Amy's house, with Mexican food all cooked by Amy with Carolyn Cameron's able assistance. Please let Amy know as soon as possible whether you plan to be there, and watch for an announcement about the time.



SPIRIT WITHIN, a New Thought Chalice Circle, will meet at Marla Loturco's home in Whitesboro the first & third Wed at 7 pm. The group continues to study *Spirit of Life: Exploring Spirituality for UU's*, a new UU Tapestry of Faith program.



PFFFT, an Outdoor Activities Interest Circle, meets each month on a Saturday. The next meeting is Sept. 11. Facilitator is Suzanne Durland. **ANYONE WHO LOVES THE OUTDOORS IS 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

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.RRUU.ORG

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Team Leaders

Adult Forum:	Penny Armstrong & Suzanne Durland
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Caring:	Doug Strong (Acting)
Chalice Circles:	Jan Fletcher
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