

Red River Ramblings

Volume 8, Issue 5

May, 2011

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

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A Month of Sundays

May 1

Rev. Pamela Wat, preaching

"Awakening the Moral Imagination"

Pam Wat, Denton UU's consulting minister, returns to our pulpit today. Her sermon will pose the question: "In the midst of ongoing conflict and war, how do we promote peace locally and globally? What is at stake if we do not promote peace?"

IN RE: Joyce Peak and Carolyn Cameron will talk with the children about May Day and make May Baskets.

May 8

Rev. Douglas Morgan Strong, preaching

"Wanted: One Church Mom ... Apply Within"

"My mom meets me after school and walks home with me. She brings a surprise most days." "My mom's a drunk and I often find her passed out on the floor when I get home from

school." **Two kids – two mothers – two lives.**

Motherhood is an institution – blessed by society, supported by culture, affirmed by Hallmark. This Mother's Day (a holiday invented by a Unitarian, you know), we will take a look at the human need for "Motherhood", not only for us as individuals, but also as a community. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a Church Mom?

May 15th

Worship Arts Team, leading

Flower Communion

Don't forget to bring a flower to represent you and yours as we once again hold our annual Flower Communion. Flower Communion, in its unique way of representing both our community and our diversity, is one of our most beloved rituals.

May 22

Daniel Polk, leading **"UU Faith: Not an Oxymoron"**

Spring Congregational Meeting Sunday

Daniel Polk, our NTAUUS president returns to our pulpit today to preach for us prior to our annual congregational meeting.

May 29

5th Sunday Forum

"The Connections

between Eastern spiritual thought and traditional Western medicine.

Rev. Jennifer Laing, MD, speaking

Dr. Laing received her MD degree from Wayne School of Medicine in Detroit and has been in private practice for the last 20 years. She is one of the few physicians in the area who believes traditional Western medicine is enhanced with Eastern spiritual thought.



Adult Forum
Worship & Children's RE

10:00am
11:15am

Calendar of Events

May, 2011

- 1 Brisket Brunch
- 3 Tues 6:40 pm- RRUU Board Meeting
- 6 Fri 7:00 pm- UUUJAM, new location
- 7 Sat 10:00 am Worship Arts Meeting
- 14 Sat 10:00 am PFFFT at Hagerman
- 14 Sat 6:00 pm Moveable Feast
- 15 Sun 12:45 After Church Lunch Bunch
- 17 Tues 7:30 pm Green Team
- 22 Sun 12:45 Spring Congregational Meeting
Looking Ahead (deadline to register is in May)
- June 4 8:00 am—NTAUUS *Standing on the Side of Leadership*

Spring Congregation Meeting: Sunday, May 22

Our Spring Congregational Meeting is fast approaching. At the meeting we shall

- ♦ Elect members to the Board of Trustees, the Nomination Committee; the Committee on Ministry
- ♦ Hear annual reports from the President, Treasurer, Membership and Committee on Ministry
- ♦ Approve a budget for the upcoming fiscal year
- ♦ Approve the minutes of the Oct 2010 and Mar 2011 meetings
- ♦ Speak about our goals for the upcoming year

The warrant for the meeting along with the agenda will be emailed to all members by May 5th. Proxy forms, for those unable to attend, will be available on line at that time.

All members are urged to attend, friends are invited to attend as well, but only members may vote.

.....
All June newsletter submissions are due
to
newsletter@rruu.org
by May 29th, at 5:00 p.m.
.....

Green Team Tip of the Month



Like to camp in the great outdoors, but the idea of going for days without a wash isn't for you? Consider a solar shower bag - it's an economical, earth friendly, water and energy efficient way of staying clean while out roughing it!



Harmony House Concert Series

"Chill Out" to the Music of Chuck Brodsky at Harmony House Concerts. On Sunday, May 15, 2011, 4 pm, Asheville, North Carolina's Chuck Brodsky, will be performing his original tunes at Wildscape Acres (10 miles North of Bonham, TX & 65 miles NE of Dallas area) in the intimacy of Harmony House Concerts. Just a quick visit to Chuck's website, www.chuckbrodsky.com, will give you an idea of what talent this troubadour has and what fun will be in store for you when you attend his



Harmony House concert. Take a look at his Photo Gallery online....it looks like a musical travel log....from Latvia & Lithuania to Denmark to Ireland to Nova Scotia to Canada to Kerrville Folk Festivals and beyond! Yes, and pretty soon, Wildscape Acres in Ravenna, TX, will be in that Photo Gallery of his venues! You can also listen to some song clips and get the lyrics to many of his songs online.

Reservations for this event can be made by calling 903/583-2661. Please leave the number of seats desired and your contact information (preferably an e-mail address).

May Birthdays

10 Juanita Sue Wells
15 Tobin Baird
21 Suzanne Durland
21 Andi Sturm
27 Don Mathis



Member News

Kudos Go To...



... our RRUU casserole cooks, juice jugglers and biscuit bakers who cooked, delivered and served breakfast at Eisenhower State Park for over 100 campers from Horizon and Community UU churches at their campout. The early morning hospitality was followed by an outdoor worship service at the campsite conducted by lay leaders from the congregations represented.

... everyone who participated in any way in the grant writing, component procurement, cleaning and rearranging, sanctuary adaptations, installation and training for our new sound system. We remain exceedingly grateful to the North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalist Societies (NATUUS) for funding this important project, and to Jim and Carla Murphy, our NATUUS representatives for their tenacity in seeing this project through to completion.

... to Marla Loturco for delivering our first quarter Fill the Plate non-perishables and cash to My Neighbor's House food pantry in Whitesboro.

... our faithful Durantians Elbert and Marion Hill who loaded up all the pet products donated at our Celebration of Animals service and delivered them to the no-kill shelter in Durant.

... our hard-working Board of Trustees who is diligently striving to adapt the proposed budget so it will be in harmony with our anticipated income pledged by members and friends. If you have not yet turned in a pledge card, please speak with Marla Loturco.

... Kat Walston who serves as our on-call nursery attendant by special arrangement when we have little one's present. The Board continues to seek an appropriate person from outside the congregation to attend our nursery.

... all of those who have provided snack finger-foods for nibbling during hospitality time in the foyer after Sunday Services.

... those who came early and stayed late to set up and break down our outdoor worship service blessing the animals.

... our ever diligent newsletter co-editors Shann Schubert and Cynthia Evetts for producing interesting and attractive newsletters for the church family on a monthly basis.

... members of the Social Action Committee (Dianna

Nieman Harris, Elbert Hill, Trier Ward, and Amy Hoffman-Shehan) for the Blessing of the Animals on April 17th and all of the behind the scenes people who helped move the service outside.

... the Green Team (Amy Hoffman-Shehan, Marie Bellman, Don Mathis, Marla Loturco, and Kat Walston) for the Texoma Earth Day Festival.

... all of the many volunteers from RRUU who helped with the Texoma Earth Day Festival.

... Gayle Marie Bellman for accepting an appointed Trustee position on the board until the end of June 2011.

... the Nominations team (Elbert Hill, Shann Schubert, and Cynthia Evetts) for finding members to run on the May Slate.

... the Finance team (Marion Hill, L.D. Clark and Cynthia Evetts) for all of the work on the initial budget and their participation in the Stewardship Dinner.

UUs Celebrate Earth Day with theme of Sacred Waters

The UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE) and the UUA have launched the 40/40 Campaign to help congregations take steps toward a more just and sustainable relationship to the environment. On April 22, 2011, Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations celebrated Earth Day by holding worship services and making commitments focused on the theme of Sacred Waters. Congregations participating in the campaign enlisted at least 40 percent of their members to commit to an environmental action for 40 days, starting on Earth Day. View the introductory video, The 40/40 Challenge for Earth Day on YouTube.com.



Spotlight on: The Worship Arts Team



“What’s the buzz? Tell me what’s a happenin’.

What’s the buzz? tell me what’s a happenin’. * (*from Jesus Christ Superstar) Here is the latest and what the Worship Arts Team has been up to on your behalf to create diverse, stimulating and dynamic worship.

In April we had a “first time” guest in the pulpit, seminarian Nathan Ryan who was a breath of fresh air in our midst. Someone read about Nathan in UUWorld magazine and suggested we make contact to see if this non-traditional seminary student might be our guest. Likewise, speaker Kathryn Schmidt of the Ann Fry Cancer Support Group who presented an informational service on cancer, was recommended by a member as a speaker. May worship services promise to be special as we welcome old friends and new to the pulpit.

Please remember the Worship Arts Team depends on the input and ideas of all in the congregation. If you have a suggestion for a speaker at RRUU please email worship@rruu.org to share your input! As we plan for the future worship life at RRUU your help is needed to:

- find a relief pianist/keyboard player who can play for us at least once monthly
- recommend people you know who you feel would be interesting pulpit guests
- recruit 2-3 people to rotate preparing the table with chalice and candles weekly
- 2-3 members/friends with a commitment to **“do church right” to serve on Worship Arts Team**

Your diligent and creative Worship Arts Team welcomes your input and ideas that our Sunday mornings might reflect not the few, but the many.

UU JAM Parties On at a New Location



All players of instruments, singers of songs and listeners of music are warmly welcome to join in UUJam Chalice Circle which meets the first Friday of each month. Jackie Blue has stepped forward and volunteered to facilitate the group, and arranged for the May meeting in the Community Room across from her apartment.

UUJam will gather Friday, May 6, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Community Room at Meadows of Wesley Village, 2603 Meadows Drive, Denison, TX. Directions: From Hwy 75, exit at Loy Lake (Exit 67) and turn East (toward downtown Denison). Take the second right turn onto S. Wesley Village Drive (right before Wesley Village Assisted Living) and turn South (right). When street dead ends, turn right on Meadows Drive. The community center is about 2 blocks down on the right.

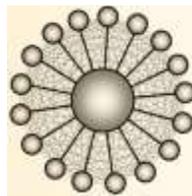
Old Jammers, new Jammers, never-been-but-might-like-it Jammers are welcome. Please bring your own cup or glass (tea and coffee provided), a snack to share and your own beverage if you are not interested in tea or coffee. Use of adult beverages is allowed at the Community Room, drunkenness is not tolerated. Smoking is allowed outside in designated areas.

UUJam creates a circle of performers and listeners and simply moves around the circle. Each performer chooses and does a number and then the next person offers a piece. Listeners are welcome to request a **song when it is their “turn” and whoever knows it will play.** A typical JAM lasts 2-3 hours with people coming and going at will, eating, drinking, laughing, sharing. Generally the music is inside and general conversation is outside

For additional information, directions, a ride to/from JAM or questions please contact Jackie Blue (903-327-8710).

UUA Worship Web Site

Ever considered what it takes to put a worship arts service together? The UUA hosts a WorshipWeb website with resources for those brave enough to try! The search engine lets you search resources in topics such as worship theory, words for worship, holidays and ceremonies, multi-generational worship, and more. Visit the UUA website, click on worship, and start exploring this resource built by people who believe that the coming together on a weekly basis that we do as UUs is the most significant event of our community life. The symbol below was created for the Worship Web.



“The snowflake-wheel-buckyball image—created by Erik Wikstrom—represents both the interconnected modules of the WorshipWeb and the vision of our congregations as truly interconnected laboratories of worship arts.”

Board Bits

What your Board did at their last meeting, March 8th, 2011



The board meeting was held on April 12. All members were present with the exception of an unexcused absence of Penny Armstrong. Marie Bellman was also in attendance at the request of the board.

In addition to normal board business the following topics were covered.

- Gayle Marie Bellman was appointed to the open trustee position until June 30, 2011.
- It was determined there were not enough congregants willing and able to attend DBLE.
- Thanks and Appreciation campaign.
- Planning the Spring Congregational Meeting .
- Determine a new-home team – we need to find a cheaper place to rent.
- Leadership Issues left by recent resignations.
- Determined we needed an additional special board meeting on April 19, 2011.
- At this special meeting (on April 19) we discussed the budget, goals for 2011-2012, and Congregational Concerns.

The next board meeting is May 3rd, 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 May 2. Those wishing a few minutes during the “open mic” will want to be ready to speak around 7:00 pm.

Treasurer's Report

Because attendance was down in March, we had a lower than average income. In reality, our March income essentially covered only our monthly expenses for rent and custodial services. We finished out the month in the red \$1,070.04 with \$2,823.50 total expenses and \$1,753.56 income.



Our Annual Stewardship Campaign continues to receive financial commitments (pledge cards) and commitments to engage in action at RRUU (time and talent sheets). The Stewardship committee did an awesome job expending only \$450 of their \$600 budget for our

gala dinner at the Mary Karam Art Gallery. With commitment cards completed by 20 of our 34 household giving units, the total pledged is \$ 11, 790.00. If you wish to complete a commitment card and/or a time and talent sheet both are located in the church office in the Stewardship mailbox.

In addition to the regular aspects of the treasurer's role, this month I also tallied the Gifts-In-Kind receipts and created a report categorizing our “in-kind” gifts with specific line items in the FY11 budget. While I have since located some additional receipts to enter, from July 1, 2010 to the end of March, 2011, we have documentation of \$5,965 gifts given in-kind. The categories range from postage and copying to committee expenses and advertising. An “in-kind” gift is anything you purchase, make or give to or in the name of RRUU. Miles driven for the church may be claimed as “in-kind” gifts as well. In order to accurately estimate our expenses and faithfully record the generosity of the RRUU family, it is important “in-kind” gifts be submitted. Please save receipts or write a note indicating what you did or bought including the actual or estimated value. Add your name, “in-kind gift” to the receipt/note and place it in the offering or in the treasurer's mailbox in the church office.

For instance, if you bring refreshments for hospitality, purchase stamps to mail out materials from RRUU, drive from Pottsville to Sherman for a meeting, provide dinner for a Board Meeting... these are all examples of “in-kind” giving. Some hesitate to do this perhaps feeling they asking for kudos or credit. That is not the purpose of recording “in-kind” gifts at all... it is simply an opportunity to let those working with our budget have a clearer estimate of what it costs to “run” the church. Also, by turning in these types of expenditures, your “in-kind” gifts can be added to your annual giving statement for use as a tax deduction. It puts in a few more tax dollars in your hands rather than under governmental control (and every person of any belief or disbelief I have ever met is a better steward of financial resources than any government I know).

Respectfully submitted,
Dianna Niemann-Harris, Treasurer

Message From Marla

Marla Loturco, President, RRUU



May is upon us and that brings the RRUU Spring Congregational Meeting. It will be held on May 22, 2011. The spring semi-annual meeting is when the elections take place for the Board of Trustees, the Nominations Committee and the Committee on Ministry. The current slate will be available by May 5th. In addition, a 2011-2012 budget will be presented for congregational approval, as well as the Goals for 2011-2012. The Board of Trustees hopes that all members will either attend in person or submit a proxy. We need to know what your desires are and that we have your support.

Times are changing, money is short for all of us, including RRUU. Pledges are down this year and our budget is being revamped from the one that was handed out at the Stewardship Dinner to meet the pledge reduction. When you receive the budget please look it over carefully and be prepared to discuss it on May 22. Remember we are a democratic community, pledged to the democratic process which requires all of us to be involved.

Voices of our Liberal Religion: Why Climate Change is a Faith Issue

Posted in Environmental Justice, Religious Education, Resources on April 7th, 2011 by Robin Nelson

Paul Krugman wrote an Op-Ed for The New York Times **“The Truth, Still Inconvenient.”**

Krugman goes on to talk about how scientist, Prof. Richard Muller of Berkeley, was called to testify for a Congressional hearing on climate science. Since Prof. Muller is a climate skeptic and has been leading the Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature project – an effort partially financed by the Koch foundation – Republican’s had been hoping that the Berkeley project would conclude that global warming is a myth.

They were shocked when Prof. Muller admitted that his group’s preliminary results find that there is a global warming trend “very similar to that reported by the

prior groups.”

The Op-Ed goes on to say:

“For years now, large numbers of prominent scientists have been warning, with increasing urgency, that if we continue with business as usual, the results will be very bad, perhaps catastrophic. They could be wrong. But if you’re going to assert that they are in fact wrong, you have a moral responsibility to approach the topic with high seriousness and an open mind. After all, if the scientists are right, you’ll be doing a great deal of damage.”

Basically, if you knowingly deny scientific knowledge – you are the one who is responsible for the fall-out when the scientific knowledge is found to be true.

As Unitarian Universalists, we believe in:

- **The inherent worth and dignity of every person;**
- **Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;**
- **Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;**
- **A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;**
- **The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;**
- **The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;**
 - **Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.**

As such, it is our responsibility as people of faith to **take on the climate change fight. If we don’t, if we sit back and disagree, or if we even just sit back and decide to let others tackle the issues, it is each of our responsibilities to all those that are affected. We know that there are things that we can do as individuals, as congregations, and as a faith community to slow down, if not reverse, the trend of climate change. And so we are called to do so. If we don’t how can we truly say that we believe in the Seven Principles?**



Social Action Committee

Your Donations at Work in the World
Discussion-Deliberation-Decisions



The Social Action Team led a “Celebration of Animals” worship outdoors in April. People either brought a pet to services or chose an item to represent an absent or deceased pet as the congregation gathered under the canopy. Those who wished joined in a special Blessing of the Animals as each received blessing on their pet then blessed the pet of the next person. A special collection of pet food and products was received at the service and donated to the Free-to-Live no kill animal shelter in Durant, OK. Much appreciation goes to all who helped to make this service happen.

Share the Plate

This month’s Share The Plate will be on Mother’s Day with all cash and designated checks going to Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Texoma. In April we raised \$64.95 for the Texoma Earth Day from Share the Plate.



Fill the Plate Update



Our Fill the Plate nonperishable and cash gifts for the first quarter of 2011 were delivered to Your Neighbor’s House pantry in Whitesboro. Second quarter Fill the Plate money and non-perishables will go to Loaves and Fishes pantry in Durant.

The International Human Right to Water

UUSC’s Environmental Justice Program seeks to promote and defend the human right to water. To achieve this goal, UUSC supports civil society and grassroots groups in the struggle against water privatization and depletion and promotes citizen involvement in the utili-

zation and management of water as a common resource. UUSC works to influence government policies related to environmental justice and mobilize activists to hold government, agencies, and socioeconomic elites accountable for water-rights violations.

Recently, our partners in Ecuador, South Africa, and Tanzania have won amazing victories in the defense and promotion of the human right to water.

Through its Color of Water Project, our partner Massachusetts Global Action, in Boston, Mass., has done extensive research on the human right to water, including challenging the disproportionate number of water shut-offs in low-income areas of the city.



Got Water? is a campaign to ensure sustainable access to safe, sufficient, affordable water to every person by enshrining the human right to water into law — internationally, nationally, statewide, and locally. [Learn more about the campaign at uua.org_social_justice.](http://uua.org_social_justice)

“Standing on the Side of Leadership”

The “Standing on the Side of Leadership” conference is aimed at members of our congregations who are or who are considering becoming leaders. It is specifically designed to provide these people with training and tools that will help them take the next step in leadership.



The conference will be June 4 at Community UU church in Plano. The keynote speaker will be the Rev. Meg Riley, minister of the Church of the Larger Fellowship and former director of the UU Washington Office.

This conference is for anyone who is thinking about helping our congregation by being a team leader, a coordinator or a committee chair and for anyone currently wanting to enhance their leadership skills. You can read all the details [here](#)



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, e-mail your request to chalicecircles@rruu.org.

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle, will meet May 17 at 7:30 at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's home. Facilitator is [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#). ALL THOSE WHO LOVE THE EARTH ARE WELCOME!



UUJAM, a Music-Making Interest Group, meets the first Friday of each month at 7 pm at a new location (see the article on page 4 of this publication). The group meets in an informal session circle with guitars, dulcimers, flutes, keyboards &



voices to share favorite songs of all genre and all musicians and listeners are welcome. Bring your instruments, songs and snack/drink to share. Friday, May 6, is the next gathering. Facilitator is [Jack Blue](#). ALL MUSIC MAKERS AND LISTENERS ARE WELCOME!

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle, meets on moveable dates at moveable locations. The group will travel to Gainesville on Saturday, May 14. Facilitators are [Elbert & Marion Hill](#). ANYONE WHO LOVES COOKING AND/OR EATING IS WELCOME!



PFFFT, an Outdoor Activities Interest Circle, meets the 2nd Saturday of each month (May 14) at 10:00 am at Hagerman Wildlife Refuge. Facilitator is [Suzanne Durland](#). ANYONE WHO LOVES THE OUTDOORS IS WELCOME!



RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT, a Nature-Based Spirituality Circle, has no announced meeting for May. Watch the weekly E-News for more information. Facilitator is [Penny Armstrong](#). NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!



Call for Chalice Facilitator Coordinator

The Chalice Facilitator Coordinator helps the current Chalice Circles tell the congregation what's upcoming; guides those who would like to start a new Chalice Circle and reports Chalice Circle activities to the board. The time commitment is 4-5 hours a month and involves sending upcoming monthly activities to both the e-news and newsletter. The coordinator also answers questions people may have.

If you might enjoy being the coordinator for a year, please speak with any board member.



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

Church Leadership

Board of Trustees

Marla Loturco,

President

Don Durland,

Vice-president

Dianna Neimann - Harris,

Treasurer

Amy Hoffman-Shehan,

Trustee-at-Large

Jim Murphy,

Trustee-at-Large

Marie Bellman

Trustee-at-Large

Penny Armstrong

Trustee -at-Large

Safe Congregation Panel

Jim Gauthier, Suzanne Durland,

Marla Loturco, Helen Schulze,

Penny Armstrong

Team Leaders

Worship: Darrah Dunn

Chalice Circles: Open

Adult Forum: Penny Armstrong & Suzanne Durland

Children's Religious Education: Helen Schulze

Youth Advisor: Open

Membership: Open

Social Action: Open

Building and Grounds: Doyle Adams

Communications: Doug Strong

Caring: Everyone!

Finance and Endowment: Marion Hill

Hospitality: Carolyn Cameron & Joyce Peak

Historian: Open

Newsletter: Cynthia Evetts & Shann Schubert

Website: Open

Ways and Means: Don & Suzanne Durland

Committee on Ministry

Jim Gauthier, Carolyn Cameron, Peter Schulze