



Red River Ramblings

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Sunday Mornings ~To Enrich our Lives

Sunday Nov 6, 2011

"Conventional Wisdom and Natural Circumstances"

Dave Henderson, *speaking*

"It is my opinion that most people view the world through a prism of conformity to conventional thought. The society within which we live, and the global scene beyond, operate by written and unwritten rules of humanity passed down from generation to generation. That which is commonplace is all too often mistaken for the natural. On Sunday it will be my pleasure to share some thoughts regarding the natural circumstances of a world unlimited by borders of mind or matter. Step outside the box of conformity, and let us view the world as we did on the first day of our lives..."

Sunday, November 13, 2011

CARE GIVING: The Agony and the Ecstasy

The Rev. Doug Strong, *speaking*

Be it an illness, accident, disability, addiction, disease - care giving and care receiving will become a very personal chapter in our lives. Last year 55 million Americans were providing some sort of ongoing care giving. Care giving is a mix of isolation, hope, separation, and joy. You may firmly believe that you are independent and self reliant, but the facts indicate you probably, at some point in your lives, will depend on the goodness of others for your own care. What plans should we make, how can we cope and what can we, as a community, do to help?

Adult Forum~10
Worship~11:15
Fellowship Gathering~12:15

Sunday, November 20, 2011

A Thanksgiving Pilgrim's Feast

An all-church celebration of Thanksgiving with a merging of worship and pot luck feasting. Those familiar with the Passover Seder will see parallels with this service, for the similarities between the Exodus from Egypt into Israel and from Europe to America are strong. While the format of the service follows somewhat a Seder, it is more than reciting lines. It is a morning to celebrate our heritage through words and songs, toasting wine/juice and breaking bread and sharing in a collective feast. It is a morning to remember our past and once again touch the roots of our history. Coming together a few days before Thanksgiving may make Thanksgiving more than a two hour culinary orgy followed by a football game. It gives us more space to think, share and celebrate the whole "being" of thanksgiving. Look on page 3 for all the details.

Sunday, November 27, 2011

Empowering Women for a Better World

United Nations Sunday
Hanging of the Green

Following World War II, the United Nations was founded on 24 October 1945. With aims to protect human rights and achieve world peace, it is a center for governments to communicate and develop strategies to reach these ends. In celebration of this annual event, the Unitarian Universalist-United Nations Office provides a voice to connection our UU principles with the vital issues affecting the UN. We hold a UN Sunday as part of our encouragement and support of our UU UN office.

On Sunday three women from our congregation will speak and following the service we, as a community, will decorate the church for the holidays.

"Participants offered words of praise to those who have worked so hard getting the building up to snuff."

Fall Congregational Meeting ~A joyous success

The fall congregational meeting was an upbeat, joyful time with 72% of the congregation represented. It was a morning of wonderful news!

Marie Bellman, treasurer, presented a revised budget which included a total of \$14,500 in cash gifts along with a bank wire from William Findley who purchased

the Wedding Chapel building for \$12,011.69. A new item for janitorial services was added. The revised budget of \$127,096.40 was unanimously approved.

Participants offered words of praise to those who have worked so hard on getting the building up to snuff and learned that more projects

are still in the works, including a handicapped ramp and some sort of kitchen.

The potluck lunch was a success even though our church dishes etc. are still packed away.



Manna from Marla

As many of you are aware, because you have been coming on Sunday mornings, the work on the building is continuing. A new porch is the current large project, which must be completed before we can pass all our inspections. Last week the gas meter was installed so we now have both hot water and heat. Our 100 year old building is getting modern! Bruce Cameron is putting in many hours of work and supervision on our new home.

The enthusiasm from everyone is wonderful and I understand that most of us have ideas about what we would like to see happen at the church. I ask however, that on Sunday morning, we refrain from giving suggestions, criticism, and/or 'you shoulds' – thanks and appreciation are appropriate.

Sunday morning is a time for celebration of our community and worship/spirituality for ourselves. While it may be hard to resist, after all we are all there, in order that the right people hear your ideas, please jot down your suggestions and send them to aesthetics @ rruu.org. as they are the ones who need to know. Equally important

to your suggestions are your helping hands, volunteer to help with some of the work. There is lots that can still be done by unskilled labor and if you are skilled, even better.

November 5, 2011 is Austin College's Great Day of Service. There will be students who will be working at RRUU to help with many tasks. Everyone in the congregation is also invited to attend. Let's make it a Great Day of Church Work Service!. The goal for the day is to liberate the dining room windows by scraping off the paint covering the glass; scrub down the walls and floor in a room in the basement, wash down the wood paneling on the second floor, and doing some yard work. Come anytime from 9:30 - 12:30.

Two major projects are being addressed by the board at this time. One is the Building Use Policy, the other is changes to the By-laws. If anyone has suggestions/ideas they would like to share regarding either of these projects, please email Richard Newlin at: trustee1 @ rruu.org. The board hopes to have a building use document ready before the first snow fall!

Other things going on at church include the Adult Forum's upcoming *Building Your Own Theology* class and our first major meal in the building at the Pilgrim's Feast. I want to thank everyone who came to the Fall Congregational Meeting. The participation was excellent, the conversations lively and engaging.

Look for a town hall meeting in early January to talk about the revisions recommended to our bylaws.

See you in church, friends.

Marla Loturco
president

"I ask, however, that on Sunday morning, we refrain from giving suggestions, criticism, and/or 'you shoulds'. Sunday morning is a time for celebration of our community. Instead, jot down your ideas and email them to the aesthetics team."

Newsletter Deadline

Sat. November 26th

@ 5:01 pm

Send stuff to:

newsletter@rruu.org

Thanksgiving Pilgrim's Feast ~ What you need to know

This special morning promises to be a really nice event and a unique way to start your Thanksgiving holiday. The worship team will coordinate the service and George Gravley is going to make sure we have a wondrous variety of appropriate things to eat.

In order for the morning to accommodate everyone who shows up and to assure we have enough food, a simple signup sheet will be passed around on Sunday Nov 6 and 13. You can also sign up by sending an email to info@rruu.org (or click [here](#)).

Four things are needed when you sign up:

- Your name
- Your contact phone number
- How many are coming with you
- What you wish to bring

The church will provide the turkey, rolls and beverages.

If you enjoy setting tables and would like to help, we need you.

Our turkey needs an oven! Do you enjoy cooking a turkey? If so, please speak up!

Questions? Suggestions? Volunteering? - Email info@rruu.org, or call the church and leave a message - 903.231.3232.



Adult Forum ~ Endings & Beginnings

Ending ...

On November 6th the Forum will take a break from their current topic as Marion and Elbert Hills will speak about their 5-week sojourn through Europethe cuisine, the Orient Express, nightlife, and the Parisian influence!



Then on Nov 13th, the Adult Forum will end their discussion of addictions with a look at the variety of 12-step programs available.

Beginning...

"Building Your Own Theology" class starts

Based on the assumption that everyone is their own theologian, this classic UU adult education program invites participants to develop their own personal credos.

From the blog "[No Forbidden Questions](#)" comes comments which might help entice you to take the class:

One of the aspects of Unitarian Universalism that I

have a whole lot of respect for is the emphasis on figuring out one's religious beliefs for oneself. There is no authority structure ready to kick you out if you have a slightly deviant opinion or a moment's doubt. Given the havoc that such hierarchies have wreaked throughout history, I think it's worth saying — good job, UUs. Building a community that allows free, independent thought is so important.

The quest for truth is presented right from the get-go as a quest for spiritual truth, as a process of determining your own religious beliefs — as opposed to simply truth or beliefs. This presumes that the right answer you find will have a strong spiritual component, and will be something rightly described as a religion. This understanding clicked into place for me when I first learned about the book series and accompanying adult religious education course called Building Your Own Theology, by Richard S. Gilbert.

If we say you're "building your own theology", then it's clearly implied that you are building a theology right from the start. Unitarians are not asking, "Do you have any supernatural beliefs?" They are asking, "Which supernatural beliefs do you have?" Even if they will accept the answer, "None," the premise of the question will shape the answers typically

Something New for us ~ Our own holiday tradition

The Seven Days of Chalica

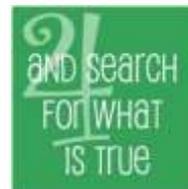
a Unitarian Universalist Holiday

Chalica is a weeklong holiday, starting the first Monday in December, with each day focused on one of the seven UU Principles.

This holiday season consider devoting time each day to do some specific act which reflects our UU seven principles. Look for a threefold brochure outlining the de-



tails coming your way later in November. The Seven days start on Monday, Dec 5th and will culminate in a special Sunday morning service on Dec. 11th.



What to do ~ with 3,813 square feet?

All that lovely space in our new RRUU building.... what to do.... what to do.....

What would you like to see taking place in these grand rooms? Yoga? Cooking classes or demonstrations? A book group? Meditation? Women's group? Acoustic music?

These are among the suggestions that arose from a recent Adult Forum and conversations among members.

What about Free Thinkers? 12-Step programs such as AA and OA? Crafts? Reviving movie night? Learning CPR? What about Zumba?

We already have volunteer leaders for meditation and

acoustic music and need more to lead.

What interests can you share? Do you Zumba or do yoga, or do you know someone who does?

Show us the real you and share your skills or come learn about new hobbies and interests. Suggestions are welcome as to classes, circles and entertainment.

Our RRUU board is in the process of developing a building use policy so that in a few weeks we can begin to use all of our space.



UU Jam ~ Friday, November 4th

“Fine music to hear, or play. It is the UU Jam.”

The first Friday of each month folks gather for the UU Jam. Whether you come to play or listen you will find fine music to hear, or play.

UUJam meets in the Meadows of **Wesley Village**

Community Room, 2603 Meadows Dr, Denison, TX 75020-7280. (click the address to see a map) Use of adult beverages *in moderation* is allowed at the Community Room. Questions? Need a ride? Call Jack Blue

who is coordinating the gathering. Her number is 903.624.0004

Board Bits ~from the Sept 6th Board Meeting

The board meeting was held on October 18, 2011. All members were present except for Elbert Hill who was traveling in Europe.

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

- Motion to allow Marla Loturco and Marie Bellman sign the documents to sell the wedding chapel
- Motion to allow Marla Loturco and Marie Bellman to change

the type of checking account at the bank

- Discussion of Board Rep Duties on Sunday morning
- Beginning discussion for Building Use Policy
- Richard Newlin is in charge of review of by-laws
- How to handle board work by email
- Looking at board retreat for one weekend in January
- Final organization of October Congregational Meeting

- Discussion of recognition of workers

The next board meeting is November 15th, 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 November 8. Those wishing a few minutes during the “open mica” will want to be ready to speak around 7:00 pm.

Financial Update ~the treasurer’s report

“October was a good month for the renovation account.”

RRUU is now operating as if it had two main accounts – one for renovating our church building and one for taking care of church operations. October was a good month for the renovation account. Through a generous donation, the cash fund increased by \$3,500 and now totals \$14,000. This fund is in addition to the \$50,000 loan. RRUU has raised \$64,000 for church renovations! Nearly \$30,000 has been spent on com-

pleted work, leaving approximately \$34,000 for continuing renovation projects. I am working closely with Carolyn Cameron so that I know what has been spent and the Cameron Team knows how much money is left in the coffers.

The general savings fund was also enhanced in October. The wedding chapel was successfully sold for \$12,011.69, with the money wired to our bank account on October 28th. The general savings fund has been used in the past to pay bills that could not be covered

by Sunday offerings and other monthly income. The bills are usually for church operations; in the future, the fund may also be tapped for building needs. This was never an “opportunity” in the past!

The only area that fell short in October was that of incoming funds needed for everyday bills. Offerings and other income totaled \$2199.00; this was \$996.00 less than bills that totaled \$3195.00. The general savings fund was used to make up the difference.

Marie Bellman
Treasurer

Our Chapel ~ People prefer chairs

After trying both pews and chairs in different arrangements, the consensus is that chairs are more inviting, provide better comfort and make the chapel more flexible for multiple uses (like meals, weddings, dances).

A small Anglican congregation in Houston is very interested in purchasing our pews as they have just rented space and want it to look more "like a traditional sanctuary".

The arrangement of facing the

back wall of the chapel has two important advantages. It is more conducive for sound reproduction and the placement of the speakers on the wall (upcoming soon) will enhance the ability for all to hear. Also it makes the



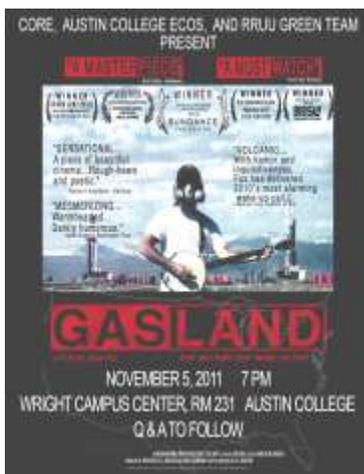
room more usable for video presentations by facing the back wall.

Someday perhaps we can remove the wood paneling which will enhance the beauty of the chapel.

"Chairs provide better comfort, and make the chapel more flexible for multiple uses."

Green Team Event ~ Screening of *Gasland*

Our Green Team is co-sponsoring a screening of the movie *Gasland* on Saturday, Nov 5th @ 7 pm in the Wright Campus Center (Austin College) room 231.



HAPPENINGS THIS MONTH:

Fri	Nov 4	7:00	UU Jam
Sat	Nov 5	9:30 7:00	Work Day (until 12:30) Movie <i>Gasland</i>
Sun	Nov 6	10 am 11:15 12:15	Adult Forum - <i>The Orient Express</i> Worship - "Nature & Wisdom" Fellowship Gathering
Sun	Nov 13	10 am 11:15 12:15	Adult Forum - <i>Addition</i> Worship - "Care giving" Fellowship Gathering
Tue	Nov 15	6:40	Board of Trustees meeting
Sun	Nov 20	10 am 11:15	Adult Forum - <i>BYO Theology</i> Worship - <i>Pilgrim's Feast</i> (includes lunch)
Sat	Nov 26	5:01 p	Newsletter Deadline
Sun	Nov 27	10 am 11:15 12:15	Adult Forum Worship - <i>Empowering women</i> Fellowship Gathering
Wed	Nov 30	11:00	Worship Team

Leadership

Board of Trustees

Marla Loturco, *president*
 Don Durland, *vice president*
 Marie Bellman, *Treasurer*
 Elbert Hill
 Richard Newlin
 Kat Walton

Committee on Ministry:

Carolyn Cameron
 Gerry Shehan
 Peter Schulze

Team Leaders:

Adult Forum: *Suzanne Durland*
 Building/Grounds: *Doyle Adams*
 Communications: *Doug Strong*
 Finance/Endowment: *Marion Hill*
 Hospitality: *open*
 Membership: *Marion Hill*
 Worship: *no single leader, duties are rotated among members*
 Ways & Means:
Don & Suzanne Durland

RED RIVER

Unitarian Universalists

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 Phone: 903.231.3232
 Web: www.rruu.org

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NTAUUS hires an executive director ~



The North TX Association of UU Society board took a major step at the October meeting, hiring a half-time executive director to help improve communications and networking among our congregations, expand educational programming, and coordinate social action efforts. Daniel Polk, NTAUUS President, will take on the staff role while Mark Coomes of our Denton congregation will step up as the new president.

You can learn more about the work of NTAUUS by speaking with Jim Murphy or Gerry Shehan, our NTAUUS representatives.

Won't you \$erve? ~

The Ways and Means Committee is looking for team members. It is time to gather and plan our fund raising events for the church year and to begin thinking about our Congregational Celebration after our pledging has been completed

next spring. If you are interested in becoming a member of this committee please contact [Suzanne Durland](mailto:Suzanne.Durland@rruu.org) [waysmeans@rruu.org] so a convenient time can be set for a meeting.

Thank you,
 Suzanne Durland

Chalice Circles ~ Everyone is invited!

EARTH SPIRIT, a Nature-Based Spirituality Circle. Facilitator is [Penny Armstrong](#).

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle - check out the movie on page 6. Facilitator is [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#).

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle, meets on moveable dates at moveable locations. Facilitators are [Elbert & Marion Hill](#).

PFFFT, an Outdoor Activities Interest Circle, generally meets the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10:00 am at Hagerman Wildlife Refuge. Facilitator is [Suzanne Durland](#).

UUJAM, a music making and music listening Circle – highlighted this month on page 5. Facilitator is [Jack Blue](#).