



Red River Ramblings

INSIDE:

- Jim Scott in concert on Jan 22nd.
 - Town Hall meeting - Jan 15th
 - Guest at your Table Boxes
 - Recognition and Appreciation Dinner coming Feb 18th
 - Congregational Meeting - Feb 5
- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Lunch Bunch | 2 |
| Marla's Letter | 2 |
| Movable Feast | 3 |
| Conferences | 3 |
| Concert Info | 4 |
| Women's Conference | 5 |
| Town Hall mtg | 5 |
| Good Times Team | 5 |
| UUJam | 6 |
| Board Bits | 6 |
| Financial Report | 6 |
| Calendar | 7 |
| Jim Scott bio | 7 |

Sunday Mornings at church ~To Enrich our Lives

January 1st - 11:15 a.m.

"Words Worth Considering"

This is our annual "Sharing Service" - a time when you are encouraged to bring a **brief** reading, poem, reflection or ode that you find inspiring and would like to share. We'll sing a couple of familiar songs and following a ritual Megan introduced to us a couple years ago, we'll have a **Burning Bowl ceremony** where you can write down things you wish to leave behind as we commence the new year and burn them in a large bowl. Then, those brave enough can publically and proudly proclaim your New Year's resolutions so we can all help encourage one another to stick to them!

January 8th- 11:15 a.m.

"The Orator who Saved a Nation"

The Rev. Doug Strong, speaking

He died, in 1864 at 39, having created, in nineteen years of his ministry, one of the largest influences in American history, yet many of us probably have never heard of him (unless you live in California). Sometimes it is good to know who our ancestors were and how their faith forced them to act in ways that literally changed the course of history. This week and next we'll explore some of the people who strengthened our Unitarian and Universalists roots.

January 15th - 11:15 a.m.

"Our Radical Saints/Sainted Radicals"

Mr. Daniel Polk, speaking

We welcome again to our pulpit Mr. Polk, now in his new position as the staff leader for NTAUUS. Of his remarks he writes, "A celebration of a few of the folks who have built the foundations, pushed the envelope, and expanded the boundaries of our beloved faith."

A native of Iowa, Daniel has lived in Texas for nearly thirty years and a member of First Unitarian Church for 24 years. He is the new executive director of NTAUUS, our association of the thirteen UU congregations in northeast Texas. It was started in the late 1960's and is involved with some exciting projects and possibilities.

January 22nd- 11:15 a.m.

"America's Approach to Environmental Politics"

Dr. Brooks Flippen, speaking

This Sunday, Brooks Flippen will talk about the development of American environmental politics. Brooks received his doctorate in modern American history from the University of Maryland and is presently Professor of History at SOSU, where he has been for sixteen years. He has authored three books: *Nixon and the Environment* (University of New Mexico Press); *Conservative Conservationist: Russell E. Train and the Emergence of American Environmentalism* (Louisiana State University Press) and *Jimmy Carter, the Politics of Family and the Rise of the Religious Right* (University of Georgia Press). Brooks has commented on environmental politics for NPR and spoken at the Nixon Presidential Library, among other locations. He lives in McKinney with his wife and two daughters.

January 28th - 11:15 a.m.

"One Planet, One People . . . Please "

Mark Gilman, speaking

As part of our ongoing exploration of other faith traditions Mark Gilman will provide a very brief summary of the origins and central tenets of the Bahá'í Faith and illustrate how a belief in the essential oneness of the human family and the necessity of constructing a world predicated on concepts of mutualism and justice influence his own life and the activities of the global Bahá'í community.

Mark Gilman serves as secretary of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dallas and is a member of the Regional Council of the Bahá'ís of the Southeastern States. A world citizen with a lifelong interest in community building, he studied applied, urban anthropology at the University of Memphis and spent nine years serving in the secretariat of the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, Israel. He embraced the Faith at age 17 while living in New Hampshire. He works as a public librarian in downtown Dallas, and is married to Harriet, whose father, Sam Ferguson, was born and raised in Denison. Their daughter is Catherine, a sophomore at Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas.

After Church Lunch Bunch ~ heads out on Jan 8th

"All RRUU members & friends are invited to this low-key, no-agenda, free-flowing gathering of folks."

The After Church Lunch Bunch will go to the North Rig Grill for lunch following the service on Sunday, January 8. All RRUU members and friends are invited to this low-key, no-agenda, free-flowing gathering of folks.

After church, all who are interested will head over to the restaurant, which is expecting the group but reservations are

not required. Each person orders from the menu, with a Dutch treat tab. The North Rig Grill is located on the north-bound service road of Highway

75, a short distance south of Morton Street. It is accessible from the commercial area on the south side of Morton.



Manna from Marla

Dear Friends,

As we start a new year, I know you're enjoy reading about several wonderful events that are in the making at church. I want, however, to focus on one aspect of church management - our by-laws. I know bylaws are boring and not a high priority for most people but bear with me please for, while not as exciting or glamorous as other articles in this newsletter, this is really important.

We need the help of every voting member in the Red River Unitarian Universalist Congregation. The Board, Committee on Ministry and the Nominations

Team are working with some by-law handicaps. We need to change our by-laws and that takes lots of assistance from the voting members of the congregation.

Why do we need changes, you ask? With the current size of the congregation being under 40 members and only 36 voting members, it is difficult to find enough people who want to accept leadership positions in these three groups. Therefore, the board of trustees proposes that the size of the board should change based on the number of congregational members. While the congregation is small, we would like to have a board with only 5 members. As the congregation grows, we propose in the by-law changes that the board will grow.

For the Committee on Ministry

and the Nominations Team we propose a change of term to be three years instead of the two currently for the COM and one for Nominations. If people rotate with one new person elected to a team, and one retiring from the team each year, we will be able to maximize the experience on each team.

In addition, while we are small we want to relax the requirement that spouses, co-habitators, blood relatives cannot serve on the Board of Trustees and the Nominating Team.

If you have any suggestions for other changes, or different ways you would like to see these changes worded. Please send the changes to board@rruu.org and/or attend the town hall meeting on January 15, 2012 after the worship service.

NTAUUS Volunteer of the year!



For the third year in a row*, someone from our tiny congregation has been selected the "North Texas Association of UU Societies Volunteer of the Year."

Bruce Cameron was chosen and will receive the "Marty Robinson Award for Volunteerism" at the annual Awards Lunch at

the UU Church of Oak Cliff on Saturday, Jan 21st. We are all invited to attend.

Tickets are available from Jim Murphy and Gerry Shehan, our NTAUUS representatives.

It is pretty amazing and impressive that of the 13 congregations, our small group keep producing such talented and dedicated Unitarian Universalists!

*Previous recipients:

Marla Loturco, 2010

Amy Hoffman-Shehan, 2009

Guest At Your Table ~ Bring 'um back!

You can return your Guest at your Table boxes on Sunday, January 1st. It will be most helpful if you would count the contents of your box and write a check (payable to UUSC) rather than bringing cash to church.



Also, by filling out the form on the side of the box and returning it with your check will help UUSC and credit our congregation with your gift. If you have any questions, please contact [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#).

Movable Feast ~ New Year's Eve

Movable Feast will usher in 2012 with a dinner/party at the home of Carla and Jim Murphy, starting at 8 pm. All Feasters are reminded to let the Murphy's know what your food contribution will be. Festive attire is always welcomed!

EVERYTHING IS HOLY

A WINTER RETREAT
WITH SINGER-SONGWRITER
PETER MAYER

JOIN LAY LEADERS & RELIGIOUS PROFESSIONALS
FROM THROUGHOUT OUR REGION FOR THREE DAYS OF
INSPIRING MUSIC, HANDS-ON TRAINING, SOULFUL
WORSHIP & TIME ENOUGH TO TAKE IT ALL IN.

FEBRUARY 10-12, 2012
FRIDAY, 7:00 P.M. UNTIL SUNDAY, NOON
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS DFW NORTH,
DALLAS, TEXAS

WORKSHOP INFORMATION & DETAILS TO FOLLOW
ONLINE REGISTRATION NOW OPEN AT
www.uuworld.org/2012/01/10/retreat

WHO IS THIS CONFERENCE FOR!
ANYONE WITH AN INTEREST IN THE WAYS WE NURTURE FAITH
AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN OURSELVES, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS.
LAY LEADERS INCLUDING TEACHERS, PARENTS, YOUTH ADVISORS, RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION (R.E.) COMMITTEE CHAIRS, DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION,
MINISTERS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND PARISH MINISTERS ARE ALL INVITED!

From the UUA ~ Will giving up a building revitalize a congregation?

What happens when a congregation gives up its building because it's too much to maintain and then focuses its energy on programming and outreach? First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit is about to find out.

The 80-member congregation, located in Detroit's central core, has labored for years to keep its three-building complex--the church building itself, a house, and a religious education building, all built between 1891 and 1917--going. It takes much of the congregation's resources and time to keep things in repair. [Read more.](#)



Our first major community-wide event! More details about Jim on page 7.

UU SINGER JIM SCOTT IN CONCERT SUN. JAN 22

An exciting acoustic
guitarist and composer of
powerful songs (like "Gather The Spirit")
that further
the Unitarian Universalist ideals
of ecology, justice and peace.



**RED RIVER
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH**

515 N. BURNETT AVE ♦ DENISON ♦ 3:00 P.M.

Tickets: \$7 - \$15, at the door

Town Hall Meeting ~ Jan. 15th

All members and active friends were notified last month of the upcoming Town Hall meeting devoted to discussing some proposed changes to the church by-laws.

Changing bylaws is not something that we should undertake lightly, as they are the foundation of our faith, and the source of how we operate as a free church. In order to amend the document, we must have a 2/3 affirming vote (either in person or by proxy). We will vote at a special congregational meeting on Sunday, February 5, 2012 and in order to give everyone time to understand the changes and the reasons for them, the Town Hall meeting is the perfect forum.

Please look at the proposed bylaw changes [here](#) and stay after church on Jan 15th to join the discussion. We will not vote, but based on the conversation, the board may modify the proposed changes to reflect everyone's wishes. Then on Feb 5th, we can sail through the meeting and pass the changes.

The Good Times Team ~ New at church for the new year!

"People who respect the worth and dignity of every person also appreciate laughter, good eats, and good times with friends," according to the team's mission statement.

The team will create opportunities for RRUU members and friends to share good times. By creating stronger bonds between friends the team hopes to strengthen the congregation and help the church achieve its goals and objectives.

At the launch, the team has five members: Carolyn Cameron, Carole Harner, Marion Hill, Lura Moitozo, and George Gravley, team leader.

All church members and friends are invited to submit ideas for programs and activities.

The first initiative will be an earlier start to Sunday morning coffee, providing an informal gathering place for RRUU people. Coffee, tea, juice and light food items prepared by volunteers will be served.

Later the team will revive the earlier practice of an occasional lunch after church, perhaps once each month. Some lunches will be in the church, others at nearby restaurants.

People who would like to be involved in some way are asked to contact any of the team members listed above.

Women's Retreat ~ Feb 24-26



Exploring the UUniverse of Women's Spirituality" with speaker Meg Barnhouse!

Please join us at the Hilton Houston NASA Clear Lake, TX. Where is that? Clear Lake City is really a part of Houston but don't think of the downtown skyline or busy freeways. The 2012 SWUOW Conference will be held in the beautiful Hilton hotel overlooking Clear Lake and across from NASA Space Center. It is located 25 miles south of downtown Houston, 17 miles from Houston's Hobby Airport and is a perfect place to relax, rejuvenate, reconnect and join us in Exploring the UUniverse of Women's Spirituality. Contact convener Lynn Young at conference@swuow.org if you have any questions.

We'll share details here and on our [Facebook](#) page as plans progress.

- [JOIN](#) our mailing list!
- [DOWNLOAD](#) a PDF [1-pg flyer](#), a [2-pg trifold](#) or the full-details [BROCHURE](#) to print out and share.
- [RESERVE](#) your room at the Hilton by January 30.
- [APPLY](#) to be a VENDOR by February 1.
You may [REGISTER ONLINE](#) or download a [printable registration form](#).

DON'T FORGET!

Special Congregational Meeting
Sunday, Feb. 5, 2012
12:30 p.m.
in the chapel

Purpose: Vote on Bylaw Changes

UU Jam ~ Friday, Jan 6th

*"Listeners
are welcome
to request a
song"*

Musicians, Singers, Listeners...lend your...presence! Everyone is warmly invited to come.

UUJam meets in the Meadows of **Wesley Village Community Room, 2603 Meadows Dr, Denison, TX 75020-7280**. Use of adult beverages *in moderation* is allowed at the Community

Room.

UUJam creates a circle of performers, moving around the circle as each chooses and performs a number, then the next person offers a piece. Listeners are welcome to request a song when it is their "turn". UU Jam last 2-3 hours with the opportunity to come and go at will, eat, laugh, share,

sing, hum, whistle and be at ease. Generally the music is inside and conversation is outside.

Questions? Need a ride? Call Jack Blue who is coordinating this monthly (on the First Friday) gathering. Her number is 903.624.0004

Board Bits ~from the Dec 16th Board Meeting

Everyone on the board was in attendance. We started at 6:40 pm and went home around 9:00 pm. See full board minutes for details.

Elbert Hill acted as our Process Observer and timekeeper for the meeting. In addition to normal business, our agenda covered the following:

- Plan for By-Laws proposed changes – Hold a Town Hall Meeting in January, Congregational Meeting in Feb. Both to have people bring finger foods.
- Talk about the current insurance policy and the proposed one from Guide One – Chose to go with Guide One instead of Church Mutual.
- Holding a Thanks and Appreciation Dinner on February 18th, 2012.
- Plan topics for the Board to address for Jan-June of 2012

If you would like to see the full

board minutes – they will be posted in the "Board Meeting Book" in the office as soon as they are available. The next board meeting is Tuesday, January 17, 2012 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 January 10th. Those wishing a few minutes during the "open mic" will want to be ready to speak around 7:00 pm.

Financial Update ~the treasurer's report

*"With respect to
the treasury, 2011
will stand out as a
highlight in RRUU
church history. ...
The church coffers
have been greatly
enhanced."*

December began and ended on a high note. On December 1st, \$3,000 was deposited in our General Savings Account, thanks to Doug Strong's advertising, negotiations and sale of the RRUU pews. The money will be used to purchase chairs for the chapel. After paying all our bills, we ended the month with a \$394.00 surplus. Key Memorial Food Bank received Share-the-Plate funds this month (\$44.00.)

So far, checks for the renovation have been written in the amount of \$44, 270.25.

What a bargain! Thanks go to Bruce Cameron and his wise oversight of the project. Approximately, \$20,000 remains of the renovation funds, and upcoming bills will be related to work in the kitchen.

If any friend or member has receipts for in-kind gifts, please give them to me. I have started to work on obtaining tallies for both pledges and donations and in-kind gifts.

With respect to the treasury, 2011 will stand out as a highlight in RRUU Church

History. We have gained a huge asset in 515 N. Burnett. With the addition of the donated wedding chapel and its sale, the loan from congregational members, and the large donations of renovation funds, both the church building and the church coffers have been greatly enhanced.

Marie Bellman
Treasurer

Recognition and Appreciation Dinner ~ An evening to celebrate

“Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”

Ever thought, "Wow, that person really does a lot for our church," but somehow haven't gotten around to express it?

Over the last year we've accomplished a lot and it is time to pause and come together for an evening of food and fellowship with the aim at offering individual words of appreciation and recognition to anyone in the congregation you wish to thank.

We all have people we would like to thank and after dining on a scrumptious dinner, you can stand and point out something someone has done which you appreciated.

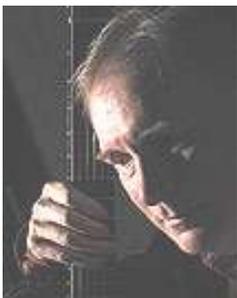
Now, since we all love to ramble on, each table will have pieces of yarn and to keep our appreciations concise, as you speak you must wrap the yarn around your finger. When you run out of yarn, you're finished talking and the next person gets to twist yarn and offer words of thanks.

"Appreciation." Voltaire wrote, *"is a wonderful thing: it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."* How true, because we all benefit from the efforts of individuals amongst us.

Come be part of an evening of good stuff! Save the date now - the Dinner will be **Saturday, February 18th** from 6:30 - 8:30 in the chapel.

You can start thinking of people you want to appreciate. You might want to get your own piece of yarn and practice being pithy! A fun challenge.

More about Jim Scott ~



Starting out at the Universalist Church of Norwell MA, where his father sang in the choir. Jim lives in Shrewsbury MA, after a dozen years residing in Oregon. His hymn "Gather the Spirit" has become a staple for many congregations and was even used as a theme for the UUA's annual fundraising campaign. It's one of three he has in our hymnbook.

As well as being active in the UU Musicians' Network, Jim has been the Co-Chair of the ecological group the Seventh Principle Project and helped develop their "Green Sanctuary" program for congregations to follow to become more ecologically sound. This past year, with help from a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, he's completed Book One of the "Earth and Spirit Songbook" an anthology of songs of earth and peace.

In his world travels he's performed concerts or lead services at more than 300 UU churches. Jim played for years with the Paul Winter Consort and is known for his lyrical songs of nature, peace, and other positive values. In recent years, he's concentrated more on choral music and has composed many anthems and hymns for worship settings. Pete Seeger has called Jim "...Some kind of a magician." Paul Winter said of his long-time collaborator "His music sings of the life spirit."

We are excited to bring Jim Scott to our church. His concert will be Sunday, January 22nd - starting at 3 pm. Tickets are on a sliding scale from \$7.00 - \$15.00 depending on what you can afford.

Spread the word! Take posters to put up! (they are at church).

HAPPENINGS THIS MONTH:

| | | | |
|------|--------|---------------------------------|--|
| Sat | Dec 31 | 8 pm | Moveable Feast New Year's Eve Gathering |
| Sun | Jan 1 | 10 am 11:15 12:15 | Adult Forum Worship "Words Worth Considering" Fellowship Gathering |
| Fri | Jan 6 | 7 pm | UU Jam |
| Sun | Jan 8 | 10 am 11:15 12:30 | Adult Forum Worship "The Orator who Saved a Nation" After Church Lunch Bunch |
| Tues | Jan 10 | 7:30 pm | Green Team meeting |
| Wed | Jan 11 | 9 pm | Board reports due |
| Sat | Jan 14 | 10 am | PFFFT meets at Hageman |
| Sun | Jan 15 | 10 am 11:15 12:15 | Adult Forum Worship "Our Radical Saints/Sainted Radicals" Town Hall Meeting |
| Tues | Jan 17 | 6:40 pm | Board of Trustees meeting |
| Sun | Jan 22 | 10 am 11:15 12:15 3:00 | Adult Forum Worship "America's Environmental Politics" Fellowship Gathering Jim Scott Concert |
| Sat | Jan 27 | 5:01 pm | February Newsletter Deadline |
| Sun | Jan 28 | 10 am 11:15 12:15 | Adult Forum Worship "One People, One Planet...Please" Fellowship Gathering |

Leadership

Board of Trustees

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

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
 1515 Burnett Ave
 Denison, TX 75021

mail to:
 PO BOX 1806
 DENISON, TX 75021-1806

How to reach us:
 Email: info@rruu.org
 Phone: 903.231.3232
 Web: www.rruu.org

Subscribe to the weekly
 E-News:
announcements@rruu.org

Will you be eligible to vote? ~ Best read this!

Want to Vote in the Special Congregational Meeting – February 5, 2012?

A special Congregational Meeting will be held on February 5, 2012 after the worship service. Everyone, members and friends are invited to attend the meeting. The only item on the agenda is to approve the by-law changes. All voting members need to consider either attending or giving a proxy.

To vote, one must be a member. Eligibility for voting is set in our by-laws.

- "Section 2: Requirement for Voting Membership. Individuals who have been mem-

bers of the Church for 30 days or more and who have (as an individual or part of a family unit) made 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 at this meeting, you must sign the book by January 6, 2012.

All current members must make or confirm a contribution of record within the last year by January 6, 2012. Contribution of record does not have to be financial – it can be a pledge of time.

Chalice Circles ~ Everyone is invited!

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle will meet this month on Jan 10th at 7:30. Facilitator is [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#).

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle, meets on moveable dates at moveable locations. The group will gather Jim and Carla Murphy's home on Dec 31st to usher in the new year. Facilitators are [Elbert & Marion Hill](#).

UUJAM, a music making and music listening Circle – highlighted this month on page 6. Facilitator is [Jack Blue](#).