



Red River Ramblings

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November Sunday Mornings ~To Enrich our Lives

Sunday, November 4th

We return to standard time this morning!

The Many Faces of American Indians Today
Steven Denson, *speaking*

Mr. Denson serves as the Director of Diversity at SMU's Cox School of Business. He will discuss the evolution of Indian attitudes and approaches, the differing perceptions of Indians between each other and the non-Indian community, approaches to spirituality. We'll have an Open Dialogue following his remarks.

Mr. Denson, a member of the Chickasaw Nation, earned his Masters of Public Management from Carnegie Mellon University. In addition to his work at Cox School as Diversity Director and Adjunct Professor of Organizational Behavior, he is a Scholar in Residence at Paul Quinn College. He has a life-long commitment to promoting diversity and enhancing the general public's understand of Native American life.

Sunday, November 11th

The Bible's Greatest Hits

The Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, *preaching*

Come to this service for a brief lesson in how to cherry-pick the Bible for your own purposes, since everybody does it. Some UUs think the Bible is hopeless as a resource; we've all heard more than one sermon on how terrible it is. Might there be some gems in the literature, even for those whose beliefs have taken them in other directions? Let's find out.

Sunday, November 18th

Five or Six Sound Persons

The Rev. Douglas Morgan Strong,
preaching

The title, taken from William Bradford's 'History of the Plymouth Plantation' is the foundation of this sermon, in which we will explore what gives some people the tenacity and persistence to do good and care for others even if at their own peril. Without five or six sound persons, the Pilgrims probably would have never made it through their first winter.

We will celebrate our individual ethnicity through a unique Communion of Heritage Breads, sing familiar songs of thanksgiving and reflect on the bounty of our lives.

For the communion: *Please bring bread that reflects your own cultural or ethnic or tribal heritage.*

Sunday, November 25th

Music and Poetry

A morning to come, relax, listen and meditate in this special service designed to allow us to be more introspective and still. A selection of intriguing poems along with harmonious music will invite us to leave the mundane and ponder what joy there is in community. Dan Althoff & L.D. Clark will perform.

Soul Café - 9:30 ♦ Worship - 11:15
Adult Forum - 10 ♦ Fellowship - 12:15



Epistle from Elbert

In case you haven't seen our church's back yard recently, you need to take a look. We now have a playground area that is fenced in for children's

safety. (Surely we'll soon have youngsters to use and enjoy it.) Many thanks to the Alexanders, Marilyn and Gil, for getting this important task completed. Marilyn spent many hours planning the dimensions and location of the playground, getting needed permits from the City of Denison, and purchasing materials. The Alexanders also brought workers from their Oklahoma ranch to build the fence, and one worker was injured while doing it. Also, thanks to others in the church who donated money for materials and labor. The fence looks terrific!

On October 28, we began a new volunteer program to insure that the jobs necessary to running the church get done. We don't have, nor can we currently afford, paid staff to do many tasks around our building. Mostly, these are small jobs that really need to be done in order to provide a welcoming atmosphere and services to our community—jobs such as cleaning, mowing, greeting, and so on. The next time you're

at RRUU, please check out the "Say Yes and Do It!" display at the back of the chapel, select one (or more) small job, and sign up to perform the task for whatever specific period of time you indicate. Several jobs have already been claimed, and many more are available! Our volunteerism will help our church carry on its mission.

At the recent congregational meeting, we discussed having a "Fragrance-free" policy at RRUU. Some in our congregation, both current members and potential visitors, have allergies to ingredients used in colognes and perfumes. So let's all keep that in mind and refrain from wearing fragrances at church events. Thanks, everyone!

Big plans are under way for a formal dedication of our new home, on March 24, 2013. Much has been done to improve our building over the past year or so, and this will be an opportunity to invite guests from the denomination and the community to enjoy it with us. More about that later.

See you in church, friends!
Elbert

Fall Congregational Meeting ~Short, Sweet and Full of Info

Our bylaws require us to have a fall meeting and while no votes were needed, we had a quorum and accepted the reports from various church committees and teams (they are available [here](#) if you want to read them).

We had an open conversation about requesting that people refrain from wearing fragrances at church because several

people in the congregation are highly allergic to various scents. A straw vote to ask the board to bring a policy to the spring congregational meeting was overwhelmingly approved.

The meeting adjourned after 45 minutes - probably a records for RRUU!

Have you seen the new playground fence?

For most of us, it just appeared last week. A lovely, well constructed chain link fence which met with city restrictions, that was clearly designed with a lot of forethought. For example there is a set of double gates so large playground equipment can easily get inside. There is an area fenced only on two sides where perhaps a labyrinth or a meditation garden could reside.



For most of us, it just appeared last week, but for Gil and Marilyn Alexander it was the culmination of many, many hours of research, shopping, dealing with the City of Denison (a task made less arduous by Bruce Cameron's profound understanding of matters bureaucratic). Sometimes what seems, from the outside, to be simple is, in actuality, very complex. Fences for church yards, for example.

Three cheers and much appreciation to Marilyn and Gil for quietly overseeing this project. A job well done! Do let them know how much we value their hard work the next time you see them.

Name This Room ~Deadline is December 15th

Great minds seem to think alike. At the October congregational meeting someone raised the question of whether we are ever going to name the various rooms in our church home. The same question was brought to the October board meeting and the board decided that it is time.

Starting in November and running until mid December, everyone is invited to offer suggestions for what to name individual rooms.

A "Name This Room" sheet is posted in each room so people can write down their suggestions (please write clearly!). There are no rules or guidelines for this process. Many churches name rooms after UU nobles, congregational lay or clergy leaders, local landmarks, flowers, numbers. Some rooms are named by function, some by location.

Some rooms are being skipped (the Men's Room and the Women's Room do not have sheets soliciting names) but that leaves 12 rooms longing for an identity! →

Something different ...

With the holidays coming, the Good Times Team is helping us refrain of over doing it by stopping having food before things on Sundays.

Not to despair, each Sunday culinary delights will still await us in the foyer of the house after things!

→ Each list will be pared down by a yet-to-be-named ad hoc group and the final selections will be made by congregational vote (hopefully before the building dedication service).

Say YES ~And Do It.

Thanks to those who have taken a card and agreed to "Do It":



- **Marilyn Alexander** will bring refreshments once a quarter for a year
- **Scott Bowie & Pablo Cohen** will do the fall yard clean up (and weed the flower beds) AND mow the lawn as needed from Nov - April
- **Amy Hoffman-Shehan** will print hard copies of the newsletter and print/mail copies to those w/o email for six months
- **Kat Walston** will tidy the chapel weekly for 3 months
- **Helen Schulze** will assure that our five bathrooms are stocked with all the needed supplies for a month
- **Joyce Peak** will be a greeter on the fifth Sunday for the next year
- **Doug Strong** will mow the yard monthly from Apr- Oct

Cards are available in the back of the chapel, won't you say YES ~ And Do It?

Adult Forum ~Sunday Mornings at 10 a.m.

During all of November...

Ralph Waldo Emerson mused that *A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds* and the Adult Forum schedule for November would surely please him! There is not a lot of consistence simply because our speaker, **Gil Alexander** is unsure which Sundays he has to be away (at press time).

The solution is simple: We going to be flexible! The Sundays Gil can be here he will continue leading our ongoing discussion of evolution - focusing intentionally on geographic evolution and what it tells us about life.



The weeks he has to be away, we will continue with our video series of lectures by historian and legal scholar **Edward Larson** entitled *The Theory of Evolution*.

Professor Edward Larson teaches at Pepperdine University and a visiting professor at Stanford University. He frequently is the guest on NPR and national television.

Financial Update ~ the Treasurer's report

The first quarter is complete and we have done much better than the budget thanks to some very generous donations and lots of hard work by many people. I'm proud to be part of such a great group!

In September we received donations of \$2,700 for renovations and spent \$1,104. At the end of September we had \$1,500 available for the playground plus \$4,018 available for general renovations.

Excluding the renovations discussed above, in the month of September we had income of \$1,701 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,541, we had a net income from operations of \$160.

For the year to date period of July through September 2012, we had income of \$890 from operations on the P&L. However, this amount does not include the cash payment of principal

on our loan. The change in cash from general operations including the payment of principal was a loss of (\$153) year to date.

As of the end of September 2012, we had cash of \$39,188 and debt of \$46,901.

In September we contributed \$88 to the Grayson County Shelter from the Share the Plate program.

Carole Harner
Treasurer

"We have done much better than the budget thanks to some very generous donations and lots of hard work by many people. I'm proud to be part of such a great group!"

"

Our Building Dedication is coming! ~ Sun. March 24, 2013

The Board of Trustees set Sunday, March 24, 2013 for the building dedication service and celebration @ 3:00 p.m.. The worship team is in charge of the details and are looking for ways we can dedicate our first-ever church home.

The date was selected because it is two days before our 16th birthday (March 26).

The service will include remarks from the Rev. Peter Morales, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association who cannot be with us in person, but

volunteered to prepare his sermon and send it to us on a video.

If you've ever attended a building dedication service .. if you ever created a celebration or a party or a gathering that turned out to win the hearts of humanity, share your good news.

The choir from Community UU Church in Plano has volunteered to come and sing. There is talk of a photo slide presentation - filled with "before and after" pictures, along with images of our 15 years.

The current thought is that there won't be a morning service that

day, so everyone can pitch in and get the place ready for the service.

Now's the time to get out your calendar and lock in MARCH 24, 2013 @ 3 P.M. for our Building Dedication Service and Celebration!

Send your idea to worship@rruu.org.

"The Rev. Peter Morales, UUA President, will deliver the dedication sermon"

The 'New to UU' Series ~ Just what DO you UU's believe, anyway?

Ask God Fearing Evangelists what they believe and without an instant of hesitation they can articulate, with confidence, certainty and conviction, exactly what their doctrine and dogma entails. They know it from the depth of their souls.

Ask most UUs what they believe and they stammer and stumble without stating any clear answer. For a tradition older than the

Evangelists, one might think we could explain what we hold dear and sacred. How do you answer the question "*What DO you people believe, anyway?*"

Marion Hill and Doug Strong invite anyone who wants to better understand our liberal faith to join them on the second Sunday of each month for an hour and explore with them what it is we UUs believe. (Spoiler Alert: There is no simple answer).

In November the focus will be on the

many ways we are radically different from other faiths and the many ways we are identical.

In December the hour will spotlight a historical retrospective of how two faiths: Unitarian and Universalist joined forces, now 51 years ago.

In January the question changes: "What is the Divine within our faith?"

Each New-to-UU meeting is open to everyone - especially to newcomers, visitors and those who wish to deepen their understanding of our uncommon denomination.

Our first meeting is Sunday, Nov. 11th from 12:35 - 1:35, in the chapel.

Future meetings will always be on the Second Sunday. Each gathering is self contained, you aren't obligated to attend previous meetings in order to come to the current one.

Booked For Lunch ~ Back in January!



BOOKED FOR LUNCH is out to lunch until January. It isn't that we don't like coming together - actually those attending love and look forward to the monthly discussion of what people have been reading or are on the library waiting list for their turn at a new book. The thing is that people get too busy as the Holidays of December descend upon us and rather than going around and wishing we had more time to read, Booked for Lunch is going to take a break. The Jan 10th meeting (from 11 - 1) will see us gather again.

The After Church Lunch Bunch ~ Heads to King's Buffet on Nov. 18th

Sharing a meal together is more than just fulfilling our biological need for food. Sharing a meal together reminds us of our connection to other humans - especially in our community. Everyone needs to eat, we all have this in common. Once a month we got out to eat together - because it is fun; because we get to meet people and we get

to deepen our friendships. So we break bread together in what probably is the least organized event we have at church! There is no agenda, no minutes, no reports, no votes and no budget (we each pay for what we order). We find a place, and plan on getting there by 12:35 (but you can come earlier or later if you wish). Some go home and grab their family; some come later because they are doing "stuff" at church.

Come break bread with us! November 18th, at King's Buffet - a stone's throw from Office Depot in Sherman (SW corner of 74 and 82). For your GPS: 2916 U.S. 75, Sherman 75090 (903) 893-9988. Everyone is warmly invited - friends, visitors, members, newcomers, young, old - even YOU!



Leadership

Board of Trustees

Elbert Hill, *president*

Open, *vice president*

Carole Harner, *Treasurer*

Carolyn Cameron, *Secretary*

Paula Blackshear, *Trustee*

Marla Loturco, *Past President*

Committee on Ministry:

Gerry Shehan, Peter Schulze

Joyce Peak

Team Leaders or Team:

Adult Forum: *Joyce*

Aesthetics Team:

Bruce, Joyce, Maura, Doug & Kat

Building/Grounds:

Communications: *Doug*

Chalice coordinator: *open*

Finance/Endowment: *Dan*

Good Times:

Carolyn, Carole, Faye, Lura & Marion

Long Range Planning:

Amy, Gil, Marilyn

Membership: *Marion*

Nominations: *Faye, Doug, Marla*

NTAUUS Rep: *Marla*

Safe Congregation Panel: *Elbert*

Social Action: *Open*

Ways & Means: *Open*

Worship:

Carla, Doug, Faye, Marla

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The Meditation Group ~ November 25th

In our hectic lives, it is a gift to find time and a place to meditate. If this sounds like something you need or want, then come to the next Meditation group gathering - we meet the last Sunday of each month at 12:30 and conclude, an hour later, with a potluck lunch for those who participate.

Meditation takes all sorts of forms, come and learn how you can carve out a time each day, or week at home to give yourself the gift of meditation. The rewards are plenty!

Chalice Circles/Interest Groups ~ for us all!

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle generally meets on the second Tuesday at 7:30 pm Facilitator [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#)

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle meets next in October. The next feast will be Nov 2. Speak with the facilitators: [Elbert & Marion Hill](#).

“OMMMM...” Meditation Group Will meet the last Sunday of every month. The date for the next meeting is Nov. 25th. CD Meditations and Drumming Circle with Potluck to follow – come join the fun at 12:30 PM in the Adult Forum Room. Facilitators [Joyce Peak and Paula Blackshear](#).

BOOKED FOR LUNCH, an informal book discussion group that generally meets the second Thurs of each month from 11 - 1 pm at church. Open to everyone. Facilitator: [Carolyn Cameron](#). NOTE: Next meeting is January 10th

THE AFTER CHURCH LUNCH BUNCH, One Sunday a month after things we go out for a Dutch-treat lunch. There is no agenda, no reports, no minutes - just everyone heading out and breaking bread together. This month's gathering will be at King's Buffet in Sherman on Nov 18. (details on page 5). Have a suggestion where we can go in the months ahead? Email announcements@rruu.org