



Red River Ramblings

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Church Calendar
for the next 30 days



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January Sunday Mornings ~To Enrich our Lives

Sunday, January 6, 2013

**You don't drown by falling in the water.
You drown by staying there.**

The Rev. Douglas Morgan Strong, *preaching*

For over seventy years the UU Service Committee has been helping people get out of the water. Starting with a daring program of helping Jews escape Nazi Germany, the Service Committee has over the years been involved in an array of projects - all aimed at helping people help themselves. On Sunday we will take a look at the history, the innovation, the projects and the people whose lives have been made better because of UUSC. It is a proud and remarkable part of our free faith tradition and worthy of our understanding.

We will also distribute *Guest At Your Table* boxes so we, too, can be part of the work of the Service Committee (what's "Guest At Your Table?" See page 3).

Next Sunday we will screen a new documentary film *Two Who Dared: The Martha and Waitstill Sharp Story* who co-founded the service committee.

Sunday, January 13, 2013 ~ 11:00 a.m.

(Note early start time)

**Two Who Dared:
The Martha and Waitstill Sharp Story**
A special screening of a new documentary

We're excited about being able to screen the forthcoming documentary *Two Who Dared*". This film, which will premiere the week of April 7-18 to celebrate Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, tells the story of a Unitarian minister and his wife whose work on helping Jews flee Nazi Germany resulted in the

formation of the UU Service Committee.

This remarkable story of courage, documenting the lives of Reverend Waitstill Sharp and his wife Martha is told from the point of view of Martha and Waitstill, drawing on their recorded interviews, letters and unpublished memoirs. The film also includes interviews with children rescued and noted scholars. (More about the film on page 3.)

NOTE: The film is 78 minutes long. We will start the service at 11:00 - fifteen minutes early. There will be no Adult Forum this morning.

Sunday, January 20, 2013

The Art of Giving...
Carla Murphy, *speaking*

If it is better to give than to receive, why do we wait until we feel obligated? Join me in an exploration of why the "Season of Giving" should be all year long.

Sunday, January 27, 2013

**O Brave New World:
the Future of Liberal Religion**
The Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, *preaching*

Like live theater, liberal religion is a "fabulous invalid," always in danger of dying but managing to miraculously recover nonetheless. Over the past few hundred years in the West, liberal religious ideas have spread into the mainstream churches while reactionary religions bubble up in response to other pressures. What would the future of liberal religion look like if it were left up to you?

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



Epistle from Elbert

Marion and I delivered the Christmas gifts (toys, puzzles, games and books) all of you contributed to the Grayson County Shelter (the county's only homeless shelter and

RRUU's near neighbor) on December 20. The staff expressed appreciation, with comments such as "Looks like Christmas in here!" Other churches in the area also donated gifts for the residents, including clothing and shoes, so RRUU has participated in a community-wide effort to help homeless adults and children make the best of a bad situation at this season.

Attendance at services has been down some the last few weeks. It seems to me that our worship team and Adult Forum planners have been providing excellent, interesting, and vivid programs. So I wonder, is something in particular keeping people away, beyond the usual reasons of illness and traveling, something we need to address as a congregation? The board plans a church-wide workshop soon, and perhaps this is a topic we should discuss then. The date of February 2 had been chosen for the workshop, but it has to be changed because of conflict with a NTAUUS workshop on Reproductive Justice that same date. An announcement about the new date for the RRUU workshop will be made after our January 10 board meeting.

RRUU seems to be at a good place in many ways, though. Together, we continue to explore various facets of what being human—spiritual, compassionate, socially active

Carolyn Honored ~ Jan. 12th!



On Jan. 12th, Carolyn Cameron will be given the Marty Robinson Award for Volunteers. Elbert Hill said when he got the call to tell him she would be receiving it he learned that the Awards Committee got a lot of applications and decided to give the award to several people (as they have done in previous years). "The committee's easiest decision to make was regarding Carolyn, because Carolyn is well known and appreciated throughout the denomination." he was told.

Four years ago NTAUU (North Texas Association of Unitarian Universalists) established the Marty Robinson Award for Volunteer. Our tiny congregation is the only one to have a member win the Award *every year!* Amy Hoffman-Shehan, Marla Loturco, Bruce Cameron and this year Carolyn Cameron. Winning four years running is a living testament to the devotion, commitment, enthusiasm and affection that abounds within our congregation.

The Board of Trustees applied for three separate grants and we will find out if we will be given any during the luncheon.

Come be a part of this monumental occasion. Sat. Jan 12th @ 12:30 - Oak Cliff UU Church in Dallas. Tickets are \$15. and are available from [Marla](#). The keynote speaker the Rev. Tamara Lebak, Associate minister at All Souls, Tulsa will speak on "What's Our Net Worth?"

human beings—is all about. The past few months have brought us new members who have contributed knowledge, experience, and understanding that enhance the church's ability to serve our congregants and the wider community. We also are making progress in closing our anticipated budget deficit for the 2012-13 fiscal year. Last week, we received two special year-end contributions beyond the amounts already pledged by those individuals. Other donations will be welcome, of course, but I want to acknowledge these generous folk with a big THANK YOU.

Our building also continues to see improvements, both inside and outside. THANKS to all those who have contributed time, effort, and know-how to bestow TLC on our meeting place. When we dedicate the building on March 24, we'll be proud to give visitors the grand tour.

See you in church, friends!

Elbert

30 Days of Love ~ Join In!

Last year's "30 Days of Love" brought together thousands of people in a month of intentional reflection, action, education and witness for love.

Across the nation people stood on the side of love at local city council meetings, detention centers, pride parades, state houses, prayer vigils, Walmart stores and even the US Supreme Court. Over 2,000 messages of love and support were sent to victims of the shooting at the Sikh temple in WI.



The 2013 annual *Thirty Days of Love* campaign is under way. You can take the pledge to be part of this unique UU project. If we all can stand on the side of love in new and profound ways we can help change the world. You can sign up (it doesn't cost anything) [here](#).

Texas UU Justice Ministry



Our UU values give us a valuable perspective for considering local and state policies. In the current political environment of Texas, it is especially important that socially progressive and thoughtful denominations unite

in their efforts and organize to speak out and act on state and local issues. We need our UU voices and the creative energy of our faith to be part of the social and political debate that will define the future of our state and local communities. Flyers about this new Justice Ministry are in the foyer or you can visit their web site [here](#) or on Facebook [here](#).

Time to Appreciate Us All

Now that you have your 2013 calendar, it's time to mark Thursday, Feb 21st at 6 pm for the second annual Appreciation Dinner - a **really** big event. We hope everyone (even those who never 'do' events) will come. Whether you make an appearance every



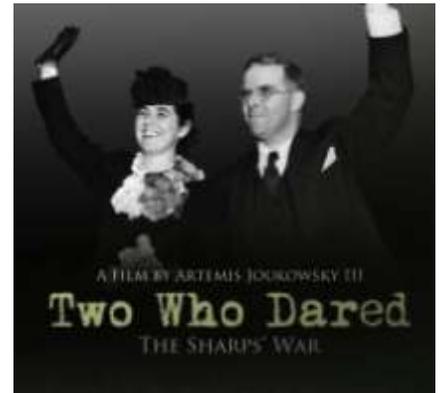
time the doors are open or just when you like what's 'playing' please come and add your voice to thank all of us for making RRUU possible. This will be a pot luck so bring anything you like. Non-alcohol beverages will be provided. Bring wine

More about the film *"Two Who Dared"* ~

In February 1939, Waitstill Sharp, a young Unitarian minister from Boston, and his wife Martha left for Czechoslovakia on a refugee mission. For months, the Unitarian Church had been receiving alarming reports from Prague over the plight of refugees. The Sharps arrived in Prague, home to the largest Unitarian church in the world, with \$28,000 in monetary aid. The Unitarian church was already a step in front of the Nazis, having set up a secretive network of volunteers and agencies to secure the safe passage of both Jews and non-Jews out of Prague. The task became even more difficult when on March 15, 1939 the Nazis entered Prague. For the next five months, the Sharps continued their work undaunted by the presence of the Gestapo and the possibility that they would be arrested or killed. In August 1939, the couple left Prague and headed back to the United States, barely escaping arrest. Only 10 months later, the Sharps returned to Europe on their second mission, setting up a refugee office in Lisbon, Portugal. Eventually, they made their way to Nazi-controlled France, to find ways to help refugees escape. In an elaborate plan, the Sharps

helped a renowned German-Jewish author, Lion Feuchtwanger, and his wife escape to New York via Spain. During their sixth months stay in France, the Sharps worked closely with another American rescuer, Varian Fry.

Finally, in December 1940, after rescuing a plethora of people from the horrors of Nazi persecution, Waitstill and Martha Sharp returned to the United States. Following the war, Martha Sharp remained very active in efforts to assist the Jews around the world and the establishment of Israel.



Adult Forum ~Sundays at 10 a.m.

- January 6 - Marilyn Alexander will lead a two-part discussion comparing and contrasting the celebrations and myths of the Winter Solstice as found in a number of different religions and beliefs. She will begin with the story of the birth of Jesus and how it became convoluted in the scriptures to fit other religious beliefs and celebrations. Discussion will follow each session.
- January 13 - **No forum this morning**
- January 20 - Part Two of "The Celebrations and myths of the Winter Solstice" with Marilyn Alexander
- Jan 27 - Introduction to *Building Your Own Theology*



Guest At Your Table

Jan 6th-Feb 10

By celebrating Guest at Your Table in our congregation, we are helping nurture a spirit of gratitude and "justice, equity, and compassion in human relations." Guest at Your Table fosters understanding and awareness of UUSC's human-rights work.

This year, the boxes are featuring some of our particularly innovative partnerships. These people are your "[guests](#)," and you are asked to share your blessings with them to support our shared mission.

Financial Update

We continue to do better than budgeted, primarily due to lower expenses. However, we are still using our savings to fund part of the cash payments of principal on our loan.

We still have \$3,663 remaining for general renovations. There was no renovation expense in November.

We contributed \$77 to the Grayson County Shelter from the Share the Plate program in November.

In the month of November we had income of \$2,050 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,821, we had a net income from operations of \$229.

For the year to date period of July through November 2012, cash decreased by (\$1,801) year to date. This amount was funded from our savings.

As of the end of November 2012, we had cash of \$36,639 and debt of \$45,847.

Carole Harner, *treasurer*

A Special 1-Day Workshop

Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling

Saturday, Feb 2 at First Church Dallas

Delegates at the 2012 General Assembly in Phoenix, AZ, selected "Reproductive Justice: Expanding Our Social Justice Calling" to be the 2012-2016 Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) of Congregations.

The Congregational Study/Action Issue is an invitation for congregations and districts to take a topic of concern and engage it, reflect on it, learn about it, respond to it, comment on it take action—each in their own way. A Congregational Study/Action Issue is NOT a statement—it is a question.

This workshop will help us better understand how to use the resources available and what individual congregations can do to further a study of this topic.

Board Bits ~ From the December 13, 2012 board meetings.

The RRUU Board has decided to terminate our commitment to the Adopt-A-Street program for our old Harrison St. location, under which we agreed to keep the street near our church clean of trash. Since we no longer are located there, we have not picked up trash in that area since we moved. We will check with Adopt-A-Street about making a commitment to clean a street in our current neighborhood.

RRUU will be providing a meal once every quarter for the residents of the Grayson County Shelter, which is the only homeless shelter in the county and is located only a block from our church. We took a meal there recently, and a few church members ate and visited with residents, who

seemed to appreciate our contribution and involvement with them. Marion Hill will coordinate future meals with the shelter and will be announcing our next scheduled "meal date" early in 2013. If you wish to help by providing food and/or serving at the shelter, please contact [Marion](#).

Plans are humming along for the church-wide Appreciation Dinner on Thursday, February 21. Be sure to reserve the date on your calendar, and be thinking of specific reasons you appreciate individuals within our congregation.

We plan to replace the Memorial Tree donated by Pam Nelson, a former member of RRUU (now living near Austin, TX), after the death of her daughter. That particular tree was too big to take with us when we left the Harrison

St. location. Both corners in front of the church, as well as the space between garage and playground, have been suggested as possible locations for the replacement tree. If you wish to have input about location and type of tree selected, please see Carolyn Cameron.

See you in church!

Elbert

"RRUU will continue to provide a meal (once every three months) for the residents at the Grayson County Shelter."

The 'New to UU' Series ~ Jan 13th

On Jan 13th the New-to-series will focus on why our name is so long and how two religious traditions, dating back several hundred years were able to consolidate. The American Unitarian Association and the Uni-

versalist Church of America each had a rich tradition (in 1850's the later was the third largest Protestant denomination in the US) and left us some impressive legacies. Open to all. We meet from 12:35 - 1:35 in the chapel

Booked for Lunch returns ~ Jan 10th

On Thursday, January 10 we will gather at 11 am in the Adult Forum room to discuss what we are reading, or what we have read, or what we are planning to read. We have no rules; we just like books, talking about books and getting together. Light refreshments will be provided and you may bring a sack lunch if you like. For more information - show up. Bring a friend if you like. It's fun.

Whale Coast Alaska 2013



WhaleCoast Alaska 2013 Have you always dreamed of visiting Alaska?

If so, **WhaleCoast Alaska 2013** is for you!

Four Alaskan UU fellowships invite you to experience our eco-cultural and spiritual program this summer! See Alaska through the eyes of local UUs in Anchorage,

Fairbanks, Juneau, and Sitka with friendly homestays and unique tour activities. See wildlife, including moose, bear, whales, bald eagles, seals, and caribou. Visit Denali National Park. Experience Native Alaskan culture. Enjoy all that our beautiful state has to offer. Programs led by Dave Frey, a member of the Fairbanks, Alaska UU congregation, an expert in Alaska travel. To find out more about your Alaskan trip of a lifetime, visit www.WhaleCoastAK.org, email dfrey@whalecoastak.org, or call 907-322-4966. We would love to share our Alaska with you!

The After Church Lunch Bunch ~ Jan 20th



is heading to Las Brisas Mexican Restaurant, two blocks from church at 613 North Austin St. on Jan 20th. Everyone is invited to come, in fact we can walk from church! This 'Dutch-treat' gathering is a great way to get to know others from church. Folks general arrive around 12:40. This once-a-month event is an

"all church" happening - everyone and anyone, member, friend, visitor, guest - and you! Do come!

South West UU Women's Conference ...



The SouthWest UU Women's Conference ~ will be Feb 22-24 at the Omni Bayfront Hotel in Corpus Christi with keynote speaker [Kimberly Dark](#); Storyteller / Speaker / Performance Artist / Activist / Scholar and musician [Kit Holmes](#) Grammy Award Nominee / Multi-Instrumentalist / Singer-Songwriter. You can register [here](#).

Radical Hospitality: Creating Beloved Community for All Children

is the name of a half-day *Involve* workshop on Sat. Jan 26th at Westside UU Church in Fort Worth. Cost is \$20 and details are [here](#) (or you can see the poster on the Info Wall outside the chapel).

District Annual Meeting...

The South West district Spring Festival and Annual Assembly will be at First UU Church of San Antonio April 19-21. The Rev. Dr. William Schultz will be the keynoter. Special musical guest will be Peter Mayer. Come renew old friendships and make new ones. [Read more and register here](#).

Leadership

Board of Trustees

Elbert Hill, *president*

Carolyn Cameron, *vice president*

Carole Harner, *Treasurer*

Doug Strong, *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: *Open*

Communications: *Doug*

Chalice coordinator: *Open*

Finance/Endowment: *Dan*

Good Times: *Carolyn, Carole,*

Lura, Marilyn & Marion

Long Range Planning:

Amy, Gil, Marilyn

Membership: *Marion*

Nominations: *Faye, Marie, Marla*

NTAUUS Rep: *Marla*

Safe Congregation Panel: *Elbert*

Social Action: *Open*

Ways & Means: *Open*

Worship:

Carla, Doug, Faye, Marla

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Let's Have a Memorial Garden ~

At the December meeting the Board discussed starting a Memorial Garden. We decided that the space between the garages and the playground would be a great location for meditation or contemplation or just resting on a bench under a tree. Now we would welcome input from everyone as to what type of tree to plant there. Some that have been discussed are sweet gum and live oak. Please give this some thought and talk to any board member. We will probably make a decision at the January 10th board meeting since Winter is the best time for tree planting. Thoughts? email board@rruu.org

Chalice Circles/Interest Groups ~ for us all!

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle is working on the upcoming Earth Day Festival. Facilitator [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#).

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle will not meet in January and in February Feasters will join the Appreciation Dinner on Feb 21st. Speak with the facilitators: [Elbert & Marion Hill](#).

"OMMMM..." Meditation Group will meet the last Sunday of every month when they resume in March. 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 meets the second Thursday from 11 - 1. 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 Las Brisas, 613 N. Austin, Denison Details on page 5. Email announcements@rruu.org if you have a restaurant suggestion.